

Faculty Tips for Supporting Students

This general guidance is designed to support faculty members in fostering a safe and inclusive learning environment, by outlining their responsibilities under College non-discrimination and mandatory reporting policies and procedures. Links to those policies are contained in the online [College Policy Manual](#).

Supporting Students Who Have Experienced Discrimination and Harassment, Including Sexual Violence

A faculty member is often the first person to whom a student turns when experiencing unlawful discrimination or harassment. Such disclosures may occur in the context of:

- Explaining an absence or missed assignments
- Asking not to be teamed with or seated near another student
- Requesting assistance or support

It is important to know how to respond to such concerns to ensure students are directed to the appropriate resources, support, and reporting options.

What Are Faculty Reporting Obligations?

Faculty members are mandatory reporters of discrimination and harassment, including sexual violence, pursuant to the College's [Non-Discrimination Policy \(#200-19\)](#). In the vernacular of the Office for Civil Rights (Department of Education), which administers Title IX, they are deemed "responsible employees," whose knowledge of student-on-student sexual misconduct constitutes notice to the institution. Therefore, faculty members who learn of any incident of discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, have a duty to report all they know, as soon as possible, directly (by phone or email) to the Title IX or EEO Coordinator. Reports can also be made (anonymously, if desired) via the online OC Report It! system.

- **Report sexual misconduct and sexual violence to the Title IX Coordinator:**

Cheryl Nuñez, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

Phone: 360-475-7125; Email: cnunez@olympic.edu

Report online via OC Report It!: <https://www.olympic.edu/reporting-concerns-olympic-college>

- **Report all other forms of discrimination and harassment to the EEO Coordinator:**

Lee Felder, Vice President of Human Resources

Phone: 360-475-7300; Email: HRS@olympic.edu

Report online via OC Report It!: <https://www.olympic.edu/reporting-concerns-olympic-college>

Faculty members are also mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect, which they must report orally at the first opportunity and never later than 48 hours after having reasonable cause to believe it has occurred:

➤ **Report [Child Abuse and Neglect \(Policy #400-10\)](#):**

Make an oral report directly to local law enforcement or the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) at 1-866-ENDHARM (1-866-363-4276). For assistance, contact Human Resources at 360-475-300 or HRS@olympic.edu.

What Constitutes Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Violence And Retaliation?

Consistent with federal and state law, the College prohibits discrimination against and harassment of any person on the basis of “race, color, national origin, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or use of a trained guide dog or service animal.” Retaliation against anyone who participates in a complaint of such misconduct (including complainant, respondent, witness, Title IX/EEO coordinator, or investigator) is also prohibited. The [Olympic College Grievance Procedure \(#200-05\)](#) outlines the procedures for reporting, investigating, and resolving allegations of discrimination and harassment.

Unlawful Discrimination involves unfavorable treatment of an individual or group based on an actual or perceived protected characteristic, such as race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, disability, and age. Sex discrimination incorporates discrimination against an individual for reasons of pregnancy or childbirth. Harassment and violence based on these protected characteristics are forms of unlawful discrimination. Failure to make reasonable accommodations or adjustments to the learning, living, and working environment may also constitute unlawful discrimination.

Harassment is a form of unlawful discrimination consisting of unwelcome physical or verbal conduct based on actual or perceived protected characteristics. Harassment occurs when the conduct is sufficiently severe and/or pervasive and so objectively offensive that it has the effect of altering the terms or conditions of employment or substantially limiting one’s ability to participate in or benefit from one’s education. Examples include, but are not limited to, racial harassment, gender-based harassment, and sexual harassment.

- **Racial harassment** occurs when the unwelcome conduct is based on a person’s actual or perceived race.
- **Gender-based harassment** occurs when the unwelcome conduct is based on a person’s sex and/or gender, including, but not limited to, nonconformity with gender stereotypes.

- **Sexual harassment** consists of unwelcome verbal, written, electronic and/or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual violence includes nonconsensual sexual intercourse or other nonconsensual sexual contact, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Retaliation is adverse action for making a complaint or participating in an investigation of discrimination or harassment.

How Should a Faculty Member Respond to a Student Who Discloses an Incident of Discrimination or Harassment?

In addition to reporting it to the appropriate campus official above, faculty members to whom students disclose sexual misconduct can support them in the following ways:

- Encourage them to report it directly to the Title IX or EEO Coordinator as soon as possible.
- Apprise them of the option of reporting such misconduct electronically and, if desired, anonymously, through [OC, Report It!](#) in the footer of the College website (the system will direct it to the appropriate official based on the nature of the incident).
- Encourage them to report immediate safety concerns to Campus Security at 360-475-7185 or SecurityOfficers@olympic.edu, or to law enforcement at 9-1-1, especially if they are the victim of a crime.
- Listen empathically and without judgment. Do not demand to know all details, and refrain from giving advice.
- Cooperate with requests from the Title IX and EEO Coordinators for academic adjustments, such as changes in seating arrangements or in class schedules. Such requests are in the interest of stopping the misconduct and preventing its reoccurrence, and do not imply that an allegation has been substantiated.
- When in doubt about how to respond, consult with the Title IX or EEO Coordinator.

What Reasonable Accommodations or Adjustments Are Required to Ensure a Safe and Inclusive Classroom Environment?

Non-discrimination laws and related College policies require the provision of reasonable accommodations and adjustments to help ensure that students with disabilities, with pregnancy-related medical conditions, and who expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship due to the observance of a religious holiday, can access their education.

Making Adjustments for Pregnancy- and Childbirth-related Absences

A student who requests an absence or other accommodation or adjustment due to a pregnancy-related condition should be referred to [Access Services](#): HSS (Bldg 4), Room 205; 360-475-7540;

AccessServices@olympic.edu. Director Karen Fusco will work with the student to obtain the necessary medical documentation and identify an appropriate accommodation or adjustment.

This procedure is in accordance with the Department of Education's (DOE's) regulations implementing Title IX, which prohibits discrimination against students based on pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, or recovery therefrom. Accordingly, Title IX requires the College to excuse a student's absences due to pregnancy-related conditions for as long as the student's doctor deems the absences medically necessary. The student should not be penalized as they would for an unexcused absence. If grading is partially based on class attendance or participation, the student should be allowed to earn the credit she missed so that she can be reinstated to the status she had before the leave. This should include giving her a reasonable amount of time to make up any missed work and allowing her to choose how to make up the work. Lactation is a pregnancy-related condition, for which a student may request leave from class.

While pregnancy-related conditions may sometimes necessitate medically necessary adjustments, it is important never to assume that a pregnant student is unable to participate in a class or class assignment merely because of pregnancy. A pregnant student should not be required to produce a doctor's note in order to participate in a class or related activities, unless the same requirement applies to all students under a doctor's care.

Making Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Federal law also requires the College to give students with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from their education by making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures where necessary, unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity provided. The Director of [Access Services](#) determines and approves such accommodations in consultation with the student and collaborates with the faculty member to ensure they are implemented in a timely fashion.

Students with disabilities bear primary responsibility for requesting the accommodations they need. Therefore, to ensure they are aware of Access Services and to encourage them to request accommodations as early as possible in the quarter, it is important to make a verbal announcement on the first day of class and include a disability statement in your syllabus (see suggested language on page 6). These simple actions communicate your interest in the success of your students with disabilities and normalize the accommodation process by incorporating it as an element of the course. If you suspect a student has a disability and may benefit from an accommodation, do not communicate this directly to the student, but rather, seek guidance from Access Services.

Accommodating Student Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience (Important Policy Update)

The revised [Student Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Policy \(#300-03\)](#) no longer limits the number of absences due to the observance of a religious holiday for which a student may be eligible. It also now requires that notice of the availability of reasonable accommodations under the Policy, a link to the Policy, and a link to the [Olympic College Grievance Procedures \(Chapter 132C-285 WAC\)](#), be included in all syllabi (See suggested syllabus language on page 6).

According to the revised policy, a student may request one or more absences for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. The request(s) must be made via the online [Reasonable Accommodation: Reasons of Faith/Conscience form](#), linked to the Policy, within the first two weeks of the course (or with as much advance notice as possible if the accommodation is needed within the first two weeks of the course). Upon receiving notification of the request(s) and determining the student's eligibility, Student Services and the instructor will determine what accommodations, if any, are necessary and reasonable regarding coursework, class attendance, testing, and/or assignments. Student Services will then notify the student and the instructor in writing of these accommodations in time to allow the student to complete or makeup any coursework, testing, and/or assignments. Questions about this process should be directed to the Dean of Student Development at 360-475-7528 or DeanStudDev@olympic.edu.

Suggested Syllabus Statements

To support faculty in communicating to students about the aforementioned policies and procedures, suggested syllabus statements are provided on page 6. One incorporates the content required by the [Student Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Policy](#).

Syllabus Statements to Support a Safe and Inclusive Classroom Environment

Non-Discrimination

Olympic College seeks to maintain learning and working environments that are safe and respectful of the dignity of all members of the campus community. Discrimination and harassment because of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, veteran status and all other illegal bases will not be tolerated.

Sexual Misconduct (and other discrimination and harassment)

Sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and stalking are prohibited forms of sexual misconduct. If you experience or witness sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Cheryl Nuñez,, at 360-475-7125 or cnunez@olympic.edu. All other forms of discrimination and harassment should be reported to the EEO Coordinator, Lee Felder, at 360-475-7300 or HRS@olympic.edu. You can also report sexual misconduct and other discrimination and harassment online (anonymously, if desired) through [OC, Report It!](#) located in the footer of the College website. For confidential support, you can schedule an appointment with one of the Counseling Faculty at 360-475-7540 or CounselFaculty@olympic.edu.

Disability and Pregnancy-related Adjustments and Accommodations

Any student who requests an accommodation based on the impact of a disability or a medically-necessary absence due to pregnancy or childbirth should contact Access Services at 360-475-7540 or AccessServices@olympic.edu, for information or an appointment. Video conferencing is available.

Authorized Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience (Required)

Under the Student Absences for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Policy (300-03), linked to the [Olympic College Policy Manual webpage](#), students who expect to be absent during certain days of this course due to the observance of holidays for reasons of faith or conscience or for organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or religious organization, should request such absence via the online [Reasonable Accommodation: Reasons of Faith/Conscience form](#), linked to the Policy. The request should be made within the first two weeks of the first day of this course, or as soon as reasonably possible, if the requested absence(s) falls within the first two weeks of the course. So that eligible absences under this Policy will not adversely affect your grades, I will work with you to provide a reasonable accommodation, such as rescheduling examinations, coursework, and/or other activities that are required for this course. Complaints regarding this policy and process can be addressed via the [Grievance Procedures](#), linked to the [Policy Manual webpage](#). For more information, contact the Dean of Student Development at 360-475-7528 or DeanStudDev@olympic.edu.