

OLYMPIC COLLEGE POLICY

TITLE: Acts of Hate/Bias Policy

POLICY NUMBER: OCP 200-22

REFERENCE: RCW 28B.50.140(13), RCW 9A/36, 18 U.S.C. § 249, WAC 132c-120-065(3)

I. Introduction

Olympic College is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment in which every person is valued and respected, inclusion is assured and free expression and debate are encouraged.

Hate crimes are completely unacceptable, unlawful and will not be tolerated at the College (see citations above).

The College accepts the task of educating the College community to understand and appreciate the values, culture, ideas and opinions generated by an increasingly global community. The Acts of Hate/Bias Policy establishes mechanisms for addressing situations involving a real or perceived act of hate/bias. In such an instance we wish to proceed in a thoughtful and timely manner, providing support to all of those affected.

II. Purpose

The goal of the policy is to promote a climate of respect. This policy is not intended to be used as a means of censorship or to limit in any way, dialogue and the free expression of opinions and ideas.

OLYMPIC COLLEGE POLICY

III. Definitions

A. Acts of Hate/Bias

For the purpose of this policy, an act of hate/bias is conduct that adversely and unfairly harms an individual or group on the basis of one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics:

1. Gender
2. Gender identity
3. Race
4. Color
5. Mental, Physical or Sensory Disability
6. Religion
7. Sexual Orientation
8. National Origin

B. Hate Crimes

Some acts of hate/bias may rise to the level of a hate crime. A hate crime is any conduct that would be a crime under Washington or federal laws and which is committed whole or in part because of one or more of the above characteristics (or perceived characteristics) of the victim or victims. Hate crimes can include but are not limited to the following: physical assault, vandalism, threats of harm, criminal harassment, including threatening or repeated telephone calls or electronic communications.

IV. Guiding Principles for Responding to Reported Acts of Hate/Bias

It is a violation of both Washington law and Olympic College's Acts of Hate/Bias Policy to commit a hate crime.

Acts of hate/bias that do not rise to the level of a hate crime may involve constitutionally protected speech. Engaging in constitutionally protected expressive activities will not subject a student or employee to disciplinary action.

The College may respond to acts of hate/bias through education. Acts of hate/bias (or perceived acts of hate/bias) will be addressed by the College on a case-by-case basis.

OLYMPIC COLLEGE POLICY

A. Attention to the Victim and Community impacted by an act of hate/bias

When an act of hate/bias (real or perceived) has occurred, immediate attention will be focused on the well-being of the victim and any community members impacted by the incident.

B. Attention to the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator

When an act of hate/bias has occurred and a student or employee has been identified as the alleged perpetrator, he/she will be treated with due process according to College policies, collective bargaining agreements and state or federal law.

A hate/bias incident that violates state or federal law will be reported to a law enforcement agency and Olympic College will cooperate with that investigation. Referral to a law enforcement agency will not preclude Olympic College from following its own policies and procedures to address the issue.

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*Joan Hanten, Vice President of College Relations
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