

GrBC Policy on Harassment

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. Commitment
3. Definitions
 - a. Harassment
 - b. Activity which constitutes harassment
 - c. Sexual Harassment
4. Implementation of policy

1. Introduction – Statement of Intent

The Greek Bible College (henceforth GrBC) is a Christian academic institution whose aim is the academic excellence and spiritual growth of its students and staff, in accordance with its mission statement as described in this manual and the exhortations and boundaries set in the Christian Scriptures. In order to ensure the above, the GrBC:

- Recognizes and promotes the inherent dignity of all people, as objects of God’s love and care.
- Aims to establish and maintain a community rich in equality and free from all forms of harassment and discrimination, that would hinder the aforementioned goals and would conflict with the claim on inherent human dignity.

The aims of this policy, therefore, are:

- To promote a positive environment, in which people are treated fairly and with respect.
- To make it clear that harassment and victimization in all their manifestations are unacceptable, and that all members of the GRBC community have the responsibility to create and maintain a community free from harassment.
- To provide a framework of support for staff and students who feel they have been subject to harassment and victimization.
- To provide a mechanism through which complaints can be addressed in a timely manner, aiming to provide appropriate disciplinary measures for perpetrators, and consolation and protection to the affected person(s).

2. Commitment

GrBC is committed to:

- Being a community in which equal opportunity and respect of one’s inherent dignity is a reality for all students and staff.

- Encouraging students and staff to excel in the academia and progress in their knowledge of God.
- Fostering an inclusive Christian culture, which promotes equality and diversity in all areas of its community, given the positive contribution it makes to the learning experience at the school.
- Identifying and eliminating unfair and unlawful discrimination due to disability, pregnancy and maternity, marriage status, race (including color, ethnic origin or nationality), Christian affiliation, sex and sexual orientation or age. Harassment and bullying in all its manifestations will not be tolerated.
- Taking seriously complaints of harassment, bullying, victimization and unlawful discrimination from all members of the GrBC community. Affected people will be treated with utmost respect and sensitivity. Disciplinary measures will be taken towards the perpetrators when required.

3. Definitions

A. *Harassment* is where one person engages in unwanted and uncalled-for behavior which has the purpose or effect of:

- violating another person's dignity or
- creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.

A person does not need to have clearly stated at the time that the behavior was unwanted for it to be harassment.

There are various types of harassment, which could include the following:

- **Bullying** may be characterized as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior, or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.
- **Sexual harassment** is harassment which is either of a sexual nature, or which is based on a person's sex, and which is regarded as unwelcome or offensive to the person to whom it is directed.
- **Stalking** is a type of harassment which takes the form of unwanted or obsessive attention and may include following the victim in person or monitoring them.
- **Victimization** occurs where an individual is treated less favorably than others because they have taken action to assert their legal rights or assisted another in their legal rights to make what they believe to be a genuine complaint of mistreatment.

B. Activity which Constitutes *harassment*

Harassment can be committed:

- through individual behavior face to face,
- either verbally or physically
- towards one or more individuals
- through other forms of communication, including but not limited to, written communications and communications via any form of electronic media or mobile communication device
- directly to the person concerned, or to a third party
- through a prevailing workplace or study environment which creates a culture which tolerates harassment or bullying.

Harassment is characterized by, but not limited to, such behavior as any of the following repeated and unwanted behaviors:

- unwanted physical contact, ranging from an invasion of space to an assault (this includes sexual harassment)
- open hostility, verbal or physical threats

- offensive comments or body language, insults, jokes and banter based on race, religion, gender or other ‘protected characteristics’
- malicious rumors, insulting, abusive, embarrassing or patronizing behavior or comments,
- persistently shouting at, insulting, threatening, disparaging or intimidating an individual
- behavior which causes the victim to feel intimidated, humiliated, patronized or harassed, such as persistent teasing, and/or demeaning criticism
- constantly criticizing an individual without providing constructive support to address any performance concerns
- posting offensive comments on electronic media, including using mobile communication devices
- threatening to disclose, or disclosing, a person’s sexuality or disability to others without their permission
- isolation from normal work or study place, conversations, or social events
- publishing, circulating or displaying pornographic, racist, or otherwise offensive pictures or other materials.
- or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities or exclusion from normal work place conversation or social events.
 - The intentions of the alleged harasser are not always determined by whether harassment has taken place. The perception of the complainant and the extent to which that perception is in all the circumstances reasonable will also be relevant.
 - The recipient does not need to have explicitly stated that the behavior was unwanted.
 - Being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or otherwise intoxicated is not an excuse for harassment.

C. *Sexual Harassment*

Sexual harassment is an extremely damaging form of harassment, which may affect a person’s sense of self-worth and self-respect, often in irreparable ways. Such behaviors will not be tolerated by the GrBC. Sexual harassment can take many forms and may:

- Include, but are not limited to, sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, inappropriate comments, jokes or gestures, or other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Be blatant and intentional and involve an overt action, threats of reprisal, directly or indirectly, with a coercive aspect that may be stated or unstated.
- Include repeated incidents against a specific target, often with the intent to harm.
- Be committed by anyone, regardless of gender, age, position or authority. While there is often a power differential between two persons, perhaps due to differences in personality, age, social, educational or employment relationships, harassment can occur in any context.
- Occur by individuals or a group of people.
- Entail inappropriate body language, for example staring or gestures.
- Entail suggestive remarks, propositions or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti.
- Entail sexually explicit jokes, remarks or innuendos.
- Suggest that sexual favors may further a student/member of staff's academic or employment career/grade, or that refusal may hinder it.
- Refer to derogatory or demeaning remarks based on gender, or the display of sexually explicit material anywhere on the GrBC site.
- Include the circulation of material with sexual content, printed or digital, which affects a person's sense of self-worth and self-respect according to aforementioned definitions.
- Include *force*, use or threat of physical violence or intimidation to overcome an individual's freedom to choose whether or not to participate in sexual activity. Resistance will be viewed as a clear demonstration of non-consent. Although the GrBC doesn't approve of extra-marital sexual activities, in such a case consent is considered required. It must exist from the beginning to end of each instance of sexual activity and for each form of sexual contact. Consent should not be assumed. Consent is demonstrated through mutually understandable words and/or actions that clearly indicate a willingness to engage freely in sexual activity. Either party may withdraw consent at any time. Once consent has been removed, sexual activity must cease immediately.

4. Implementation of policy

GrBC does not tolerate harassment, victimization or objectification of any member of its community, and does not encourage any sexual activity outside marriage, in accordance with the Christian Scriptures and the tradition of the Church. Nevertheless, if any cases of harassment come to the faculty's attention, certain steps will be taken that honor:

- The inherent dignity in human beings
- The affected persons' self-respect and vulnerability
- The mandates of the Christian Scriptures regarding human dignity
- The spiritual welfare of all people involved in the case.

The GrBC has proceeded to the formation of a committee, consisting of members of the faculty, whose aim is to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct, protect and counsel the affected person(s) and proceed to disciplinary measures, when needed. Students, faculty members and staff who have been subjected to discriminatory harassment and/or sexual harassment may submit a report to the above committee, orally or in writing. Members of the committee will immediately begin investigation according to the report, while ensuring that the meeting with the parties involved will take place separately and discreetly. If needed, students, staff or members of the faculty will be interviewed, so that the committee will reach a conclusion about the severity of the allegation. Although every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality, it may be necessary for some information to be disclosed if the committee evaluates that this is absolutely necessary for the safety of the victim or other potential victims.

In order to ensure the transparency of the procedures and the integrity of the committee, its members will be accountable to an independent 3rd party, who will ensure:

- that all the necessary steps have been taken
- that the victim has been adequately protected
- that the members of the committee have acted, without bias, with integrity and true concern for all parties involved.

- that in the case that a member of the committee is the perpetrator, there will be no discrimination in the course of the investigation and/or disciplinary measures.

Reports of misconduct can reach the committee:

- In person
- Via members of the faculty
- Via persons who act on behalf of the affected person (s)
- Via the relevant portal at the GrBC website, where reports can be made either signed or anonymously.

Upon receipt of a report of a possible violation of GrBC's policy on harassment, the responsible committee will make an initial inquiry to determine what actions should be taken based on the report, including whether interim measures are appropriate.

As part of the initial inquiry, the committee will:

- contact the person who reported the conduct
- assess the nature of the report
- address immediate needs of the complainant and the campus community
- implement or recommend interim measures, as appropriate
- discuss available options for resolution with the complainant
- provide the complainant with information about resources both on and off campus
- assess for pattern evidence or other similar conduct by the respondent.

The committee may conduct the investigation or work with an investigator, who may be a GrBC employee or an independent contractor retained by the committee to conduct the investigation.

Within five (5) business days of receiving a complaint, the committee will provide the complainant and respondent a written notice of investigation that includes:

- the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known

- the behavior and/or actions allegedly constituting the misconduct and the specific potential policy violation(s)
- the date and location of the alleged incident(s), if known
- a description of any interim measures in place that may impact the parties
- the availability of interim measures

As a part of the investigation, the investigator(s) will attempt to meet or communicate separately with the complainant, respondent, and relevant witnesses. The parties may each consult with a collegial or professional support person/advisor who may accompany them to the interview with the investigator(s).

Ordinarily, within forty-five (45) calendar days of the submission of a complaint, the investigator(s) will prepare a summary of the information gathered and considered by the investigator(s), including a summary of the information provided by the witnesses and a list of any documents or other any materials considered. The investigator(s) will complete the investigative report within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the parties' comments or additional information following their review of the summary. This time period may be extended if significant additional investigative steps are required based on the comments or additional information provided by the parties.

The GrBC commits to treating the affected persons with sensitivity and respect of their dignity, ensuring that additional counseling will take place if required. Additional supportive measures may include:

- Modification of work or class schedules
- Extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments
- Mutual restriction of contacts between the involved parties
- Changes in housing locations
- Leaves of absence
- Additional security measures, according to the severity of each case
- Expulsion of the perpetrator

- Counselling sessions for the perpetrator(s) and referral to their spiritual community for counselling, discipline and discipleship.
- A series of seminars for students and faculty on the treatment of cases of harassment and the counselling support associated with it, as precautionary measures.

All students who have experienced or witnessed harassment, sexual or otherwise, are encouraged to contact the committee or a member of the faculty. The GrBC faculty are aware that reporting such incidents can be difficult, as well as that mistreatment can have long-lasting effects on our mental, psychological, spiritual and academic lives. Therefore, the GrBC urges the students to contact the responsible persons as soon as possible, so that all supportive measures can be implemented. The GrBC will handle the cases with the utmost respect, in a way that ensures the protection and support towards the victim(s), as well as the action required for the discipline of the perpetrator(s), in accordance with the Christian Scriptures.