

Graceland University Policy HR-33

TITLE: Sexual Harassment (Title IX)

POLICY:

Graceland University affirms the importance of community and is committed to its value, is committed to the worth and dignity of all persons and seeks to foster an environment of learning and work that encourages open, supportive, non-threatening relationships among students, faculty, administration, and staff. Since sexual harassment damages the possibility of a desirable environment, such behavior will not be tolerated at Graceland. All Graceland employees and students are personally responsible for their own actions and behaviors.

RATIONALE:

To protect students, employees, and other members of the Graceland community, and provide for the protections/safeguards afforded under the Campus SaVE Act, and Title IX.

Title IX is a clause of the 1972 Federal Education Amendments, signed into law on June 23, 1972, which stated that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Of particular concern to this policy is the most recent amendment to Title IX regarding sexual harassment.

FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS:

Non-Discrimination: Graceland University reaffirms its commitment to a safe and nondiscriminatory educational environment for all members of the community. Graceland does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, veteran status, religion, physical or mental disability, creed, genetic status, or any other legally protected class. This statement applies to admission, employment, housing, athletics, and participation in programs, services, and activities. Graceland will not tolerate discrimination. All complaints will be investigated and dealt with according to the privacy statement below.

Privacy: Graceland is committed to protecting the privacy of all individuals in the Graceland community while complying with all notice requirements provided in Title IX regulations. In any report, investigation, or resolution under this policy, reasonable efforts will be made to protect the privacy interests of all individuals involved in a manner consistent with the need for a thorough review of the allegation(s). At all times, privacy of all parties will be respected and safeguarded. Information will only be shared with those University employees who need to know in order to assist in the review, investigation, or resolution of the complaint. All employees who are involved in Graceland’s grievance process receive specific training and guidance about safeguarding private information. Records of any Title IX investigation (including matters related to the Violence Against Women Act) will be kept in a secure location, accessible only to the Title IX Coordinator and his/her designees. Records that are discarded will be discarded in a secure manner. To the extent such confidential information obtained by or in the possession of

Graceland is shared with parties to a proceeding under this policy, such parties are responsible to maintain the confidential nature of such information/documents.

At Graceland, confidential assistance can be provided only by professionals whose confidentiality is protected by statute, including the Personal Counselors, Campus Health Services Professional(s), and/or the Campus Ministers. Employees (and students on the Independence, Missouri campus) may access confidential assistance through the Employee Assistance Program. Information shared with these confidential resources will not be shared with others without written consent unless required by law such as circumstances posing an imminent risk of harm to self or others. All other employees are required to report all incidences of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator.

Non-retaliation: Graceland University will not tolerate any retaliation against any community member as a result of reporting allegations or being a Complainant, Respondent, or witness under this or any other Graceland policy. This includes retaliation against an individual, group or third party. Any perceived retaliation will be dealt with in accordance with the applicable disciplinary policy. Complaints of retaliation should be filed with any member of the Title IX response team.

Consensual Relationships: Faculty, staff, and others (including volunteers) who educate, supervise, evaluate, employ, counsel, coach, and/or otherwise guide students and/or employees should understand the power differential in the relationship they have with students and/or employees. Intimate or sexual relationships where there is a differential in power or authority produce risks for every member of the community, and such relationships undermine the professionalism of faculty and staff. Both faculty and staff members are expected to maintain professional, non-sexual relations with students.

When a member of the faculty or staff is in a position to evaluate and/or supervise a student, sexual relations are unconditionally unacceptable (with the exception of marital relationships wherein a faculty member may have a spouse as a student). When such a supervisory relationship is present, sexual relations are clearly detrimental to the educational process and to an environment free of favoritism and/or the appearance of favoritism.

Even when no supervisory relationship is present, sexual intimacy between a student and a member of the faculty or staff can be detrimental in a professional education environment. Although the initiator of a sexual relationship may be a student, it is the institutional responsibility of the faculty or staff member to deal with such a situation, at its inception, in a professional manner. In the event of a formal complaint and investigation, although credibility determinations will not be made based on the faculty or staff member's status as a Respondent, an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence may include a consideration of the difference in status between the persons involved in order to make a determination regarding the issue of consent.

COMPLIANCE:

- Any questions and concerns should be directed to Human Resources or the Vice President for Student Life.
- This policy applies to all employees, adjunct faculty, faculty associates, independent contractors, and students.
- In addition to its Title IX obligations, Graceland is committed to ensuring that it investigates all instances of sexual harassment between its students and/or

employees. When an instance of sexual harassment does not occur in a Graceland-sponsored educational program or activity in the United States, the investigation procedures and remedies for such instances of sexual harassment will be governed by Graceland's Code of Conduct rather than the Title IX grievance procedure documented elsewhere.

- Graceland will appoint a Title IX Coordinator who will coordinate Graceland's efforts to comply with Title IX responsibilities. Graceland will provide contact information for the Title IX Coordinator to students, employees, and applicants for admission and employment. Contact information will include the Title IX Coordinator's name or title, office address, email address, and telephone number. Graceland will also prominently display the Title IX Coordinator's contact information on its website.
- As part of Graceland's commitment to providing a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment, this policy shall be widely disseminated to the university community through orientations, websites, handbooks, and other appropriate channels of communication. In addition, the university shall provide periodic awareness training for employees, students, as well as investigatory training for Title IX response team members. Training materials will be posted on Graceland's website. Prevention education and awareness campaigns will be offered to students throughout the year.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

[Title IX Grievance Procedure](#)

[Title IX Reporting](#)

[Title IX Resources](#)

[Title IX Supportive Measures](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

APPROVED:



Joel D. Shrock, Ph.D., President

Date

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Shared Governance Review and Approval

Note: This list should include any and all departments that are responsible for the policy and accountable for its enforcement. Add as many lines as needed for each group, committee and department.

Role*	Entity	Complete
I, R	Institutional Effectiveness	7/3/2024
I, R	SME department: HR, Dave Schaal	7/3/2024
I, R	Directors Council	6/28/2024
A	Executive Council	3/18/2025

*I=Input; R=Review; D=Decide; A=Approve

Version History

For a complete version history, consult the policy archives.

Rev#	Reason	Dates	
		Final Approval	Publication
	Original Publication Date	9/24/2014	N/A
1	Changes in Title IX Regulations and update Title IX Coordinator contact information.	8/13/2020	N/A
2	Update template. Changes in Title IX regulations and updating appeals process. Injunction against the updates from the federal government was upheld and so this version represents a reversion to the 2020 Title IX.	3/18/2025	