

# DISCRIMINATION, DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT, AND BIAS- MOTIVATED ACTS AND BEHAVIOR POLICY

## Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to promote an environment of mutual learning and respect at Quinnipiac University (“Quinnipiac” or “university”), and to clearly define prohibited behaviors that are contradictory to the university’s commitment to inclusive excellence.

## Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Bias-Motivated Acts and Behavior

Quinnipiac University values diversity, multiculturalism and respect for others. The university is committed to providing a safe and respectful educational experience and work environment free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of an individual’s race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, alienage, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law. Students, faculty and staff are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all parties.

Accordingly, the following behaviors are prohibited and will not be tolerated at Quinnipiac:

**Discrimination:** Conduct or speech that denies an individual participation in or access to the benefits of a university program or activity, or adversely affects an individual in the terms, conditions or privileges of the individual’s employment, because of the person’s race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, alienage, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

**Discriminatory Harassment:** Conduct or speech that is:

1. based on race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, alienage, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law; and
2. sufficiently serious that it unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance, terms or conditions of employment, or participation or ability to benefit from a university program, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for study, work or social living.

To qualify as harassment under this policy, the speech or conduct must be considered to be harassment by the listener/observer(s) and be objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that the speech or conduct constitutes harassment. In determining whether reported speech or conduct qualifies as harassment under this policy, the university will consider all circumstances surrounding the reported incident(s), including, without limitation, the frequency, location,

severity, context and nature of the speech or conduct, including whether the speech or conduct is physically threatening or humiliating, rather than a merely offensive remark. The university may also consider the intent of the alleged party/parties.

**Bias-Motivated Acts and Behaviors:** An expression of hostility against the person or property of another, which reflects bias against a legally protected identity and contributes to or creates an unsafe or unwelcoming environment.

For the purpose of this policy, bias is defined as the personal, unreasoned judgment or attitude that inclines an individual to treat someone negatively because of the individual’s actual or perceived race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, alienage, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

Bias-motivated acts and behaviors may be verbal, graphic and/or physical in nature. Incidents may qualify as bias-motivated acts or behavior even when delivered with humorous intent or presented as a joke or a prank.

**Examples of bias-motivated acts and behaviors may include:**

- Use of an identity-related slur in the presence of, or in communication with, one or more parties
- Mimicking or mocking an individual or group based on their legally protected identity (e.g., appearing in blackface)
- Creating derogatory graffiti or images/drawings related to a legally protected identity
- Imitating someone with a disability or imitating a cultural norm or practice
- Making jokes or using stereotypes when talking to someone

**Hate Crimes:** Hate crimes are a type of bias-motivated act or behavior in which the conduct constitutes a criminal offense against persons or property. Hate crimes are defined by Connecticut law and must be reported to the Quinnipiac University Department of Public Safety.

## Scope of this policy

This policy applies to all members of the Quinnipiac University community, including students, faculty and staff, as well as applicants to any university program. This policy extends to all aspects of the university’s educational programs, including academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities. This policy applies to speech and conduct that occur on campus, off campus or online, where such conduct may endanger the health, safety and welfare of the Quinnipiac University community and/or adversely affect the university and its goals and objectives.

## Protection Against Retaliation

Quinnipiac University will not tolerate retaliation against persons who report or charge discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior, or against those who testify, assist or participate in any investigation, proceeding or hearing involving a report of discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior.

Retaliation is speech or conduct that targets an individual or group because of their participation in a procedure related to this policy, where such conduct adversely impacts participation in a university program or activity and/or terms or conditions of employment.

## Reporting Discrimination, Harassment and Bias-Motivated Acts or Behavior

Quinnipiac University encourages the reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior. Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior, the university will conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the allegations.

Complaints of discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior **against students** or registered student organizations will be addressed pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

**Individuals reporting incidents pertaining to this policy are encouraged to file a report at [qu.edu/report](https://qu.edu/report) (<https://qu.edu/report/>) or contact:**

Brittany Swett  
Interim Title IX Coordinator  
275 Mount Carmel Avenue, CCE-180  
Hamden, CT 06518  
[brittany.swett@qu.edu](mailto:brittany.swett@qu.edu) ([sarah.hellyar@qu.edu](mailto:sarah.hellyar@qu.edu))  
203-582-7757

Complaints of discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior **against employees** will be addressed by the Office of Human Resources or designee, pursuant to established policies and procedures.

**Individuals reporting incidents pertaining to this policy are encouraged to file a report at [qu.edu/report](https://qu.edu/report) (<https://qu.edu/report/>) or contact:**

Anna Spragg  
Office of Human Resources  
554 Mount Carmel Avenue  
Hamden, CT 06518  
[anna.spragg@qu.edu](mailto:anna.spragg@qu.edu)  
203-582-7722

Upon completing the investigation, the university will take appropriate action, consistent with the results of the investigation. Disciplinary action may be taken against students, faculty or staff who violate this policy, up to and including dismissal from the university or termination of employment.

Quinnipiac University reserves the right to investigate circumstances that may involve discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior in situations where evidence suggests that discrimination, harassment or bias-motivated acts or behavior may have occurred, regardless of whether or not a formal complaint has been made.

## Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

This policy addresses speech and conduct that may be the subject of a disciplinary investigation.

The university complies with all federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination. The university does not discriminate on the basis of

race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, alienage, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law.

If a student, faculty or staff member or other participant in a university program feels they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of sex or gender, they are encouraged to contact the Title IX coordinator. Complaints of sex or gender-based discrimination will be addressed pursuant to Quinnipiac's Title IX Policy Against Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct.

If a student, faculty or staff member or other participant in a university program feels they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of another protected characteristic, they are encouraged to file a report at [qu.edu/report](https://qu.edu/report) (<https://qu.edu/report/>) or contact:

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