

Policy on Protection Against Retaliation for Reporting Discrimination

I. Purpose

Urdaneta City University (UCU) is dedicated to creating a safe and inclusive environment free from discrimination and harassment. To uphold this commitment, UCU enacts this policy to protect individuals who report discrimination from any form of educational or employment disadvantage. This policy encourages the reporting of discriminatory actions and assures that those who come forward are shielded from retaliation, ensuring they are not disadvantaged academically or professionally.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the UCU community, including students, faculty, administrative staff, contractors, and visitors.

III. Policy Statement

UCU strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against individuals who report discrimination, participate in investigations, or oppose discriminatory practices. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents of discrimination without fear of losing opportunities, facing academic or employment disadvantages, or enduring any negative repercussions.

IV. Definitions

1. **Discrimination:** Any unfair or unequal treatment based on race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected characteristic.
2. **Retaliation:** Any adverse action taken against an individual for reporting discrimination, participating in investigations, or opposing discriminatory practices. This includes, but is not limited to, denial of academic opportunities, unfair grading, exclusion from activities, termination, demotion, harassment, or any form of professional disadvantage.

V. Guiding Principles

1. Protection Against Retaliation

- UCU prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination in good faith, participates in an investigation, or raises concerns about discriminatory practices.
- Retaliation can include academic disadvantage (such as biased grading or exclusion from classes or projects), employment disadvantage (such as demotion, reassignment, or termination), or social disadvantage (such as exclusion from university activities).

2. Confidentiality

- UCU commits to maintaining confidentiality for all individuals involved in the reporting and investigation process to the greatest extent possible. Information about the report or investigation will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.
- The university ensures that all reports of discrimination and retaliation will be handled with sensitivity and respect for privacy.

3. Fair Investigation Process

- UCU provides a fair and impartial investigation process for all discrimination and retaliation reports. Any retaliatory actions will be thoroughly investigated, and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken if retaliation is confirmed.

- Investigations will be conducted by trained personnel from the Office of Academic Affairs, Human Resources, or other designated offices, ensuring an unbiased and thorough examination of all allegations.

4. Academic and Professional Safeguards

- To prevent educational or employment disadvantage, UCU guarantees that any individual reporting discrimination will retain their current academic standing, professional role, and employment benefits throughout and after the investigation process.
- Individuals will be assured of fair treatment in academic assessments, employment evaluations, promotions, or other forms of university participation, regardless of their involvement in a report of discrimination.

5. Education and Awareness

- UCU will regularly educate the university community about the policy against discrimination and retaliation, emphasizing the importance of reporting discrimination and the protections provided to those who come forward.
- Training sessions, workshops, and informational materials will be provided to students, faculty, and staff to ensure a clear understanding of the policy and its provisions.

VI. Reporting and Resolution

- Any member of the UCU community who experiences or witnesses retaliation for reporting discrimination should report the incident to the Office of Academic Affairs (for students) or the Office of Human Resources (for employees).
- All reports will be addressed promptly and impartially, with measures taken to prevent further retaliation and to support those affected.

VII. Consequences for Violations

Any individual found responsible for retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension, termination, academic penalties, or other sanctions as outlined in UCU's code of conduct and disciplinary procedures.

VIII. Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with legal standards and alignment with UCU's commitment to a fair and inclusive educational and professional environment.

IX. Conclusion

Urdaneta City University is committed to protecting the rights and well-being of all community members. This policy on Protection Against Retaliation for Reporting Discrimination underscores our dedication to a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus where individuals can report discrimination without fear of reprisal.

Effective Date: May 16, 2022

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