

2.1.1 HATE CRIMES AND BIAS-MOTIVATED INCIDENTS POLICY

“Acts of intolerance (hate crimes) in any form at the University of St. Thomas are not tolerated and must be condemned.” (Father Dennis Dease, university president, Bulletin Today, March 26, 2007)

“We respect the dignity of each person and value the unique contributions that each brings to the greater mosaic of the university community.” (University of St. Thomas Conviction #4)

POLICY STATEMENT

The University of St. Thomas continually strives to meet the highest standards of respect and civility that are both implicit and explicit in its vision, mission and convictions. It is the university’s goal that no member of the University community shall be subject to any physical or verbal harassment, abuse or violence based on the individual’s race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability. The value placed upon human dignity and diversity should be interpreted as augmenting, not infringing upon “freedom of expression” or “academic freedom.” As a result, the university has adopted a policy that is designed to investigate and resolve such claims in a direct and thorough manner while respecting the rights of all parties involved.

SECTION I APPLICABILITY AND SANCTIONS

This policy applies to all students, prospective students, employees, and campus visitors. This includes:

- all students taking courses, either full or part time, whether non-degree pursuing undergraduate, or graduate degrees;
- anyone living on campus;
- students who have been notified of their acceptance for admission;
- all employees while on campus; and
- all employees taking part in university-sponsored activities and/or university-related business.

In determining whether alleged conduct is a hate crime or a bias-motivated incident, the university shall consider the record as a whole and the totality of circumstances, including the nature of the incident and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. While related statements, practices and procedures are elaborated in other University documents (i.e., Code of Conduct, Faculty Handbook, Employee Handbook, Statement on Offensive Behavior), individuals determined to have violated this policy shall be sanctioned and subject to a range of disciplinary measures up to and including termination and expulsion.

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SECTION II DEFINITIONS

As used in this Policy, the following terms are defined:

Hate crime: At St. Thomas, a hate crime is defined as an actual criminal offense motivated in whole or in part by the offender's bias toward the complainant based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability.

Bias-motivated incident: At St. Thomas, a bias-motivated incident is defined as conduct, speech or act of intolerance motivated by another's actual or perceived race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, religion or physical or mental disability.

A bias-motivated incident may or may not be criminal in nature. Sufficient objective facts must be presented to lead a reasonable and prudent person to conclude that the actions in question may be motivated by bias toward or against a targeted individual or group.

The University of St. Thomas will determine how offenses and/or incidents should be classified. Multiple forms of evidence and professional expertise will be utilized in making appropriate distinctions between a hate crime and bias-motivated incident.

SECTION III REPORTING

For the welfare of individuals and the community, it is critical that anyone within the University of St. Thomas community who believes she or he has experienced or observed a hate crime or bias-motivated incident should report it by contacting the Public Safety Department at (651) 962-5555 for emergency or (651) 962-5100 for non-emergency. Individuals also may contact the police by dialing 911 from an outside line. Doing so allows authorities to take necessary action to preserve evidence, pursue the assailant or take other appropriate steps. The Public Safety Department will assist public law enforcement in a timely manner to obtain, secure and maintain evidence in connection with the reported hate crime or bias-motivated incident.

Reporting a hate crime or bias-motivated incident does not mean an individual must file criminal charges. No matter where individuals first report the incident, a report should also be filed with the Public Safety Department. This report may be made directly or with the assistance of a faculty/staff member at the university.

At the victim's request, the university will investigate and respond to an allegation of hate crime or bias-motivated incident.

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St. Thomas reserves the right to pursue a formal investigation if there is a possibility that one or more members of the community may be harmed by the university's failure to follow up on the hate crime or bias-motivated incident or it is in the university's best interest to investigate the alleged crime or incident.

The university urges complainants and witnesses to:

1. Contact the Public Safety Department at (651) 962 -5555 for emergency or (651) 962-5100 for non-emergency, and/or contact the police by dialing 911 from an outside line as soon as possible.
2. Remain at the scene, if it is safe, until an authority arrives; do not touch or tamper with evidence.

SECTION IV LEGAL CONTEXT AND NATIONAL REPORTING

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act or "Clery Act" is a federal statute codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), with implementing regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at 34 CFR 668.46. The Clery Act requires St. Thomas and other institutions of higher learning that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. The act also requires the university to publish and to distribute an Annual Campus Security Report to provide timely warnings of crimes that represent a threat to the safety of students or employees, and to keep the most recent three years of statistics on specific types of crimes that occur on campus, in the institution's residential facilities, in non-campus buildings, or on public property. The university must indicate if any of the offenses and especially those resulting in bodily injuries, were the result of a "hate crime."

SECTION V RESPONSIBILITIES

The appropriate Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee member will be responsible for communicating, disseminating, recommending revision, and broadly educating the campus community about this policy and its procedures. All students, faculty, staff and campus visitors are responsible for adhering to this policy. The appropriate Academic and Administrative Advisory Committee member will ensure fair treatment and the Public Safety Department will respect the rights of the complainants and the accused.