



GSFC UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON

GENDER SENSITIVE CAMPUS

AND

REDRESSAL OF GENDER RELATED GRIEVANCES

A. PREAMBLE:

1. GSFC University is committed to creating and maintaining a gender-sensitive and congenial democratic working environment in which students, teachers and non-teaching staff can work together in a community free of violence, harassment, exploitation, intimidation and stress. The University is committed to create a very healthy and conducive environment of learning free from bias towards gender, treating everyone equally while recognizing and respecting the inherent biological differences. Proactive and positive actions are being taken by establishing a framework directed towards empowering the girl students and women faculty & staff so that their full potential is realized.
2. GSFC University is committed to develop an environment free from gender-based discrimination and the University is averse to all forms of gender violence, sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex/gender and harassment including sexual assault and all other forms of gender-based discrimination or misconduct. Every member of the University should be aware that while the University is committed to the right to freedom of expression and association, it strongly supports gender equality and opposes any form of gender discrimination and violence. In addressing issues of gender-based misconduct, all members of the University must respect and care for one another in a manner consistent with our deeply held academic and community values. Towards this objective, the University by framing this policy has sought to establish a positive framework for women empowerment.
3. University Grants Commission has notified University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutes, regulations, 2015) in the Gazette of India. These regulations clearly describe responsibilities of higher educational institutions' grievance redressal mechanism, process for making complaint and conducting inquiry, punishment and compensation, consequences of non-compliance, etc.
4. In compliance with the above mandate, GSFC University has adopted the guidelines and procedure to prevent, prohibit and punish sexual harassment of women and men at the workplace. GSFC University is committed to providing for all who fall within its jurisdiction including its academic, non-academic staff and students at the place of work and study free from sexual harassment, intimidation and exploitation.
5. To achieve the above objective, a Gender Equality Committee is sought to be set up with a well defined terms of reference to provide safe, secure and congenial environment and positive actions leading to the overall development, apart from sensitizing the GSFC community on this sensitive subject. In compliance of the aforesaid statutory framework applicable to Institutes of Higher Education, Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) has also been constituted which provides an exclusive platform to any member of the University to air their grievances in writing and seek justice. The University is committed to disseminate the awareness amongst the University community of the rights, entitlements and responsibilities enshrined in this policy by imparting knowledge on this sensitive subject.

B. OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

1. Creating favourable environment to enable the girl students and women faculty or non-teaching staff to realise their full potential

2. Creating an opportunity for holistic development of girl students and women faculty and non-teaching staff.
3. Creating opportunities for girls to participate in various activities as well as an access to quality education.
4. Eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against girls through strengthening of policies.
5. Empowering and developing girls belonging to marginalised sectors such as SC/ST, etc.
6. Creating a safe campus for girls.
7. Taking strict disciplinary actions against acts of aggression, intimidation, stalking or hostility based on gender stereo-typing. To constitute harassment, the conduct must unreasonably interfere with another person's education or participation in educational programs or activities or create an intimidating, hostile, demeaning or offensive academic or living environment.
8. Arranging extra tutorials for girls who find it hard to cope up with the regular classes. The faculties shall assess the needs and requirements of the girl students and support them by providing extra lectures and counselling if required.
9. The University has also arranged for a separate girls hostel with spacious rooms and other facilities. Security has been provided there 24*7 for the safety of the girls.
10. To set up a permanent mechanism for prevention and redressal of sexual harassment cases and other acts of gender based violence at the University in compliance of UGC notification relating to Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutes, regulations, 2015.
11. To ensure the implementation of the policy in letter and spirit through proper reporting of complaints and its follow-up procedures.

C. PRELIMINARY DETAILS:

The document will be called Policy for Gender Sensitive Campus and Redressal of Gender related grievances at GSFC University for Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal.

The policy is applicable to the entire GSFC University community and Third Party as defined in Definitions.

D. DEFINITIONS:

1. Sexual harassment as stated in the Vishaka Guidelines includes any one or more of the following unwelcome acts or behaviour (whether directly or by implication) namely
 - a) Physical contacts or advances; or
 - b) A demand or request for sexual favours ; or
 - c) Making sexually coloured remarks ; or
 - d) Showing pornography ; or
 - e) Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

Determining what constitutes sexual harassment depends upon the specific facts and the context in which the conduct occurs. Sexual harassment may take many forms – subtle and indirect, or blatant and overt.

2. **Complainant means –**

In relation to a workplace (i.e. GSFC University Campus), any member, of any age whether employed or not, who alleges to have been subjected to any act of sexual harassment by the respondent and it includes teaching, non-teaching employees and students.

3. **Teaching and Non-teaching Employee** means a person employed at GSFC University for any work on regular, temporary, ad-hoc honorary services or daily wage basis directly by the University.

4. **Employer** means GSFC University.

5. **GSFC University campus** includes all places of work at GSFC University and related to the University activities. It includes all places of instruction, research and administration as well as hostel, health centres, sports grounds, parks, streets, lanes and canteens etc. of the GSFC University campus.

6. **Defendant** means a person against whom the aggrieved person has made a complaint.

7. **Competent Authority** means ;

- a) Board of Management for all staff, officers and students of the University.
- b) Governing Body for those officers who fall in the category of officers of the University as provided in the Statutes, provided that the competent authority will be the Governing Body if either of the party to the complaint falls within the category.

8. **Third Party** means any person or persons not on the rolls of the University, but in the course of work related activities, interacting with the teachers, students or non-teaching employees of the University.

E. **JURISDICTION:**

The policy shall be applicable to all complaints of sexual harassment made by any member of GSFC University against any other member of GSFC University including third party, provided the harassment has taken place at the work place or anywhere outside but is related and affects one's work in the University.

F. **GENDER FRAMEWORK:**

1. With a view to creating gender friendly campus for assisting women students for realizing their full potential and ensuring holistic development and encouraging equal number of enrolment of girl students to join the University, both as a student as well as faculty/non-teaching staff, following provisions, to the extent applicable, are made:

- a) A Foundation course shall be imparted to girls belonging to disadvantaged and rural background.
- b) Additional tutorials shall be organized for girls who are academically weak in any subjects.
- c) To appoint a female student counsellor and assign the mentors for the girl students.
- d) A provision for separate hostel for the girls within the GSFC Campus.

- e) To provide for differential fee for deserving girl students.
 - f) To arrange for personality development classes for the girls.
 - g) Provision for crèche and separate rooms for women faculty and staff.
 - h) Girl students can form their exclusive clubs.
 - i) Girl students representative from every class/section to guide, mentor and motivate other girl students and meet Gender Equality Committee periodically with their suggestions.
 - j) Also, a provision for toilets for women with paid sanitary napkin dispensing and disposal facilities.
2. All the girl students shall be treated on par with boys without any discrimination while recognizing their biological differences, ensuring equal access and opportunity to every student, irrespective of gender and creating harassment free campus while adhering to the statutory provisions relating to the safety of women.
 3. The Director (Administration & Enabling Functions) shall be responsible for complying the provisions of F(1) and F(2) and receive suggestions/complaints in this connection. Provided that the Director (Administration & Enabling Functions) shall form a Gender Equality Committee of not more than 3 officers having at least two women officers as member for effective implementation of these provisions.

G. CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEE OF FOR PREVENTION, PROHIBITION AND REDRESSAL OF GENDER RELATED GRIEVANCES AT WORKPLACE:

1. The Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) for Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Gender related grievances at Workplace shall be constituted and will consist of the following members to be nominated by the University :
 - Provost as Chairperson
 - Two women members
2. Process of making complaint:
 - i) An aggrieved person is required to submit written complaint to the ICC within three months from the date of the incident and in case of a series of incidents within a period of three months from the date of the last incident.
 - ii) Provided that where such complaint cannot be made in writing, the Presiding Officer or any Members of the ICC shall render all reasonable assistance to the person for making the complaint in writing.
 - iii) Provided further that the ICC may, for the reasons to be accorded in writing, extend the time limit not exceeding three months, if it is satisfied that the circumstances were such which prevented the person from filing a complaint within the said period.
 - iv) Friends, relatives, colleagues, co-students, psychologist or any other associate of the victim may file the complaint in situations where the aggrieved person is unable to make a complaint on account of physical or mental incapacity or death.

3. Process of conducting inquiry:

- i) ICC shall, upon receipt of the complaint, send one copy of the complaint to the respondent within a period of 7 days of such receipt.
- ii) Upon receipt of the copy of the complaint, the respondent shall file his or her reply to the complaint alongwith the list of documents and names and addresses of witnesses within a period of ten days.
- iii) ICC, at its discretion, can summon any witness for concluding the inquiry and the inquiry has to be completed within a period of 90 days from the receipt of complaint. The inquiry report, with recommendations if any, has to be submitted within 10 days from the completion of inquiry to the Board of Management or Governing Body, as the case may be. A copy of the findings shall be served on both the parties to the complaint.
- iv) In case the respondent remain absent consecutively for three hearings, the ICC can conclude the inquiry ex parte based on the documents available and witnesses, if any, examined by it.
- v) No legal practitioner will be allowed to represent either party. However, the principles of natural justice shall be followed.
- vi) Board of Management/Governing Body shall act on the recommendations of the ICC within a period of 30 days from the receipt of inquiry report.

4. Conciliation:

- i) ICC may, during the process of inquiry and at the request of the complainant take steps to settle the matter between her and the respondent through conciliation, which should be consensual, based on free will and free from coercion and/or incentive.
- ii) Provided that no monetary settlement shall be made as a basis of conciliation.
- iii) Where a settlement has been arrived, the ICC shall record the settlement so arrived and forward the same to the Board of Management/Governing Body, as the case may be, to take action as specified in the recommendations.
- iv) ICC shall provide the copies of the settlement to the complainant and the respondent.
- v) Where a settlement is arrived, no further inquiry shall be conducted by the ICC.

5. Punishment and compensation:

- i) Anyone found guilty of sexual harassment shall be considered as misconduct as per the service rules of the University and shall be punished accordingly if the offender is an employee. Depending upon the severity of misconduct, the punishment may include written apology, warning, reprimand, withholding of increment/promotion, termination of service, etc.
- ii) Where the respondent is a student, depending upon the severity of the offence, the following punishment/penalty may be inflicted;
 - Withhold privileges of the student such as access to the library, auditoria, halls of residence, transportation, scholarships, allowances and identity card;
 - Suspend or restrict entry into the campus for a specific period;

- Expel and strike off name from the rolls of the institution, including denial or re-admission, withholding the degree certificate, if the offence so warrants;
 - Any other action as may be considered appropriate.
- iii) Where the respondent is third party, depending upon the severity of the offence, the following punishment/penalty may be inflicted;
- Warning, reprimand or censure.
 - A letter communicating her/his misconduct to her/his place of education, employment or residence.
 - Declaration of the campus as out of bounds for her/him, and/or a bar on appearing for the entrance examination/interview to any program of study offered by University.
 - Withdrawal of the right to run/manage/work in any commercial enterprise, or to provide services, on the campus.
 - Any other action as may be necessary.
6. Action against frivolous complaint:
- i) If ICC concluded that the allegations made were false, malicious or the complaint was made knowing it to be untrue or forged or misleading information has been provided during the inquiry, the complainant shall be liable to be punished as per the provisions of sub-rule (i) of rule 5, if the complainant happens to be an employee and as per sub-rule (ii) of rule 5, if the complainant happens to be a student.

7. Criminal proceedings:

The proceedings under this policy shall not bar the filing of a criminal complaint by the complainant if she/he so chooses and it shall be the duty of the ICC to provide necessary assistance to the complainant.

H. GENERAL:

1. University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of sexual harassment of women employees and students in higher educational institutions) Regulations, 2015 as notified and amended from time to time shall be referred and applied, wherever called for, except for the express provisions of this policy.
2. ICC shall ensure that all stakeholders at University are adequately made aware about this policy and their rights and obligations by organizing workshops and awareness programmes at regular intervals for sensitising the employees/students with the provisions of this policy.
3. ICC shall, in each calendar year, prepare an annual report, inter alia, stating the number of cases registered and the type of action taken in such cases without mentioning the particulars, which can lead to identification of complainant, respondent and the witness. The report should be submitted to the University.

4. No information shall be disseminated by ICC or by any other person who became aware on a need to know basis regarding the name, address, identity or any other particulars of the aggrieved person, respondent and witnesses.
5. This Policy does not substitute or replace any applicable law/regulation and shall operate and apply together with other guidelines/policies of the University

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