

Helpful Definitions

The Response Team seeks to improve the overall campus climate, and thus defines the following terms that are relevant to its mission. Should the College's definition of these terms be updated, the new definition adopted will supersede the language in this document.

Information about college policy and procedures may be found in the non-discrimination policy and the [Trinity College Policy on Sexual Harassment \(https://www.trincoll.edu/title-ix/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2025/11/Trinity-College-Policy-on-Sexual-Harassment.pdf\)](https://www.trincoll.edu/title-ix/wp-content/uploads/sites/57/2025/11/Trinity-College-Policy-on-Sexual-Harassment.pdf)

Academic freedom and freedom of expression – See [Policy Statement on Academic Freedom \(http://internet3.trincoll.edu/FacMan/FacultyManual.pdf#page=99\)](http://internet3.trincoll.edu/FacMan/FacultyManual.pdf#page=99), Faculty Manual, Appendix B.1

The teacher is entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of his/her other academic duties; but research for pecuniary return should be based upon an understanding with the authorities of the institution.

The teacher is entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing his/her subject, but should be careful not to introduce into his/her teaching controversial matter that has no relation to the subject. Limitations of academic freedom because of religious or other aims of the institution should be clearly stated in writing at the time of the appointment.

The college or university teacher is a citizen, a member of a learned profession, and an officer of an educational institution. When he/she speaks or writes as a citizen, he/she should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but his/her special position in the community imposes special obligations. As a person of learning and an educational officer, he/she should remember that the public may judge his/her profession and institution by his/her utterances. Hence he/she should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that he/she is not an institutional spokesperson.

Bias incident

An offense which may not reach the threshold of criminality yet manifests evidence of the perpetrator's bias against the victim because of his/her actual or perceived race; gender; gender identity; religion; sexual orientation; ethnicity; national origin, or disability of criminality. Such incidents can include taunting, verbal harassment, bullying, intimidation, or the posting or circulating of demeaning jokes or documents.

Bullying and cyber-bullying

The repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber-bullying, directed at or referring to another person(s); or physical acts or gestures by one or more persons repeatedly directed at another(s) and which causes physical or emotional harm or damage to property, fear of the same, or otherwise impinges on a person's ability to participate in education or work purposes, (see CT Public Act 11-232).

Campus Climate

The behaviors, interactions, attitudes, policies, practices, and language that shape and inform student, faculty, and staff experiences and perceptions of inclusion, belonging, and respect within the Trinity community.

Harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination involving verbal, written, or physical conduct, based on or motivated by an individual's actual or perceived membership in a protected class, that has the purpose or effect of:

- a. substantially undermining and detracting from, or interfering with, an individual's educational or work performance or access to resources; or
- b. creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational, work, or school-related living environment.

Hate Crime

As defined by the Code of Federal Regulations, a criminal offense that manifests evidence that the victim was intentionally selected because of the perpetrator's bias against the victim because of his/her actual or perceived race; gender; gender identity; religion; sexual orientation; ethnicity; national origin, or disability (Department of Education 34 CFR 668.46(c)(4)). A hate

crime is not a separate, distinct crime, but is the commission of a criminal offense which was motivated by the offender's bias. Examples of hate crimes may include, but are not limited to: threatening phone calls, hate mail (including electronic mail), physical assaults, vandalism, and destruction of property.

Hostile environment

The living, learning, or "workplace permeated with discriminatory intimidation, ridicule, and insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive [living, learning, or] working environment." (Internal quotation marks omitted; citations omitted.) *Brittell v. Department of Correction*, 247 Conn. 148, 166-167(1998)

Incivility

Incivility involves behavior that can be viewed as rude, discourteous, impolite, inappropriate, or demeaning. Uncivil behavior erodes at the principles of honor, responsibility, and self-governance as outlined in the Student Integrity Contract.

Microaggressions

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership (Sue, Derald Wing, "Microaggression: More Than Just Race").

Retaliation

Retaliation involves taking materially adverse action against someone because that individual in good faith reported a possible violation of this policy or participated in the college's review or investigation of a reported violation of this policy. Examples of retaliation include:

- Terminating, demoting, ostracizing, or not hiring someone because that individual in good faith reported conduct under this Policy.
- Making frivolous allegations or complaints against someone because that individual in good faith reported conduct under this Policy.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that involves harassing, or otherwise abusive conduct towards an individual based on the individual's sex, gender, or gender identity or expression. Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, and other behavior of a sexual nature or based on a person's sex, whether it occurs on or off campus, when:

- a. submission to such conduct is made a condition, explicit or implicit, of an individual's employment or educational opportunities; or
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a factor in or basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment or educational opportunities; or
- c. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or educational opportunities by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational, living, or work environment.

Sexual harassment violates both this Policy and the [Trinity College Policy on Sexual Misconduct](http://www.trincoll.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct.pdf) (<http://www.trincoll.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct.pdf>).

- All students must sign the [Integrity Contract](https://www.trincoll.edu/dean-of-students/community-standards/student-integrity-contract/) (<https://www.trincoll.edu/dean-of-students/community-standards/student-integrity-contract/>) prior to official matriculation and commit to a code of honor that fosters moral growth and upholds academic and personal integrity.