

## *Harassment: A Guide for Students*

**If you feel that you are being harassed because of your race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, disability, or any other category protected by law, this card will guide you to the resources available to help you resolve the issue.**

### **What is harassment?**

Harassment is any conduct directed toward an individual or group based on one of the protected traits that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment and is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter an individual's education environment or participation in a university activity.

### **What behaviors constitute harassment?**

Harassment takes many forms, from inappropriate comments to the display of offensive material. At its core, harassment is an effort to gain power over someone else. If you feel demeaned because of someone else's behavior, and the behavior is frequent or severe enough that you find yourself doing something that you would not normally do, such as avoiding a particular class, you may well be the target of harassment.



**What is harassment within the student/mentor relationship?** Romantic liaisons are problematic even when they are consensual. The student may find it difficult to end an affair because the professor has the power to significantly affect the student's academic career. Also, other students may feel disadvantaged because of the affair.

**What options do I have for dealing with harassment?** With guidance from the Office of Employment Equity, you may choose to handle the problem **informally**, or to pursue a **formal** charge. This can result in a full investigation by the appropriate university office.

**How quickly will something be done?** In many cases, interim steps can be taken that will separate you from the offensive behavior while the problem is being resolved. However, you should know that an investigation could take time.

**Should I report harassment even if I'm not the target?** Yes. Victims are often afraid to report harassment themselves. You can help to create a safe and open atmosphere for everyone by reporting an incident of harassment you witness, whether you're involved or not.

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### **Where can I get more information?**

Office of Employment Equity:

<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/equity>

Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment:

<http://policies.rutgers.edu/PDF/Section60/60.1.12-current.pdf>

Preventing Sexual Harassment (online training program)

<http://uhr.rutgers.edu/psh>

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