Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Regulations

Title	Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination Regulations
Approving Body	University Administrative Council
Initial Approval Date	July 2026
Effective Date	November 2026
Next Review Date	Academic Year 2027–28
Responsible Unit	Vice Rectorate for Integral Human Development (VRIHD)

Considering that Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights establishes that everyone has the right to life, liberty, and security of person;

Considering that sexual harassment contravenes the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1966;

Considering that violence in all its forms, whether psychological or physical, undermines human honor and dignity;

Considering that sexual harassment, whether verbal or physical, constitutes a form of violence and a violation of fundamental rights enshrined in international treaties;

Having regard to Law No. 205, adopted by the Lebanese Parliament on December 21, 2020, concerning the criminalization of sexual harassment and the rehabilitation of its victims;

Having regard to Law No. 81 of October 10, 2018, concerning electronic transactions and personal data;

The following Regulations are hereby established.

Statement of Principles

Faithful to its mission, vision, and values, Antonine University (UA) is committed to creating and maintaining an environment conducive to fulfilling its teaching and research missions, both for members of the University community and for external individuals concerned. The University seeks to ensure a harmonious working, learning, and service environment in which everyone's dignity is respected and their physical and psychological integrity is protected.

In keeping with its commitment to integral human development and to a healthy environment free from discrimination and harassment, UA seeks to uphold the principles of Convention No. 190 of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which recognizes everyone's right to a world of work free from violence and harassment, as well as the provisions of Law No. 205, adopted on December 21, 2020, which aims to criminalize sexual harassment and provide for the rehabilitation of its victims.[1]

Statement of Responsibility

Antonine University adopts appropriate measures to promote and maintain an environment free from all forms of harassment and discrimination.

The University is committed to preventing harassment and discrimination and to putting an end to such conduct as soon as it is duly informed of it. These Regulations shall not, under any circumstances, be interpreted as limiting or excluding the responsibility of administrators to address, diligently and in accordance with the principles of sound administrative management, any inappropriate conduct brought to their attention.

Every member of the University community is required to respect the dignity, fundamental rights, and integrity of other members of this community. Accordingly, each member must conduct themselves with fairness, respect, and justice toward others.

Each member is also responsible for actively contributing to the creation and maintenance of a learning, working, and living environment free from harassment and discrimination, in accordance with Article 1 of these Regulations.

[1] Article 2(a) of the law clearly defines its scope and extent of application, as it establishes sexual harassment as a punishable offense, regardless of the victim's identity, profession, or status. Accordingly, it applies to any Lebanese or foreign national who has experienced sexual harassment, regardless of their location or the nature of their work.

Objectives of the Regulations

- Prevent all forms of harassment and discrimination by promoting respect for human dignity in working and educational relationships.
- Inform and raise awareness among the University community about the different forms of harassment and discrimination, the rights and obligations of those concerned, and the resources available.
- Establish fair, diligent, and transparent procedures for receiving and handling reports and complaints.
- Ensure the effective implementation of these procedures.

To achieve the objectives established by these Regulations, UA provides for the following measures:

- Offer appropriate nonfinancial support and assistance to the parties concerned through support and recourse mechanisms.
- Designate a resource person on each campus to advise and guide the individuals concerned, in accordance with the provisions of Article 3 of these Regulations.
- Conduct periodic consultations to review and improve these Regulations.

Article 1: Definitions

Harassment refers to a pattern of hostile conduct intended to harm an individual. It may include repeated and intentional abuse, threats, or humiliation in a professional, university, or personal context.

Harassment and violence in the workplace may result from inappropriate conduct by one or more individuals. Such conduct may be physical, psychological, or sexual in nature. It may adversely affect the working environment and seriously undermine the physical and mental health of those concerned.

Sexual harassment, according to the definition reproduced from Lebanese Law No. 205:

“Sexual harassment is any reprehensible, repeated, unusual conduct of a sexual nature that is unwanted by the victim and constitutes a violation of the victim’s body, privacy, or feelings, regardless of the victim’s location. Such conduct may occur through words, actions, gestures, allusions, or sexual or pornographic suggestions, regardless of the means used, including electronic means.

Any act or approach, even if not repeated, that exerts psychological, moral, material, or racist pressure for the purpose of obtaining a sexual favor for the harasser or another person is also considered sexual harassment.”

1.1. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes repeatedly subjecting another person to statements or conduct of a sexual nature that, either individually or together:

a. undermine the person's dignity through their degrading or humiliating nature;
b. create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for that person.

Sexual harassment also includes, even in the absence of repeated conduct, any use of serious pressure intended, whether explicitly or implicitly, to obtain an act of a sexual nature, whether for the benefit of the perpetrator or a third party.

1.2. Moral and Psychological Harassment

Moral and psychological harassment involves repeated conduct intended to destabilize an individual, particularly in a professional or personal context. This form of psychological violence may have serious consequences for the mental and physical health of the person concerned.

It may include humiliation, persistent criticism, threats, or social isolation.

To qualify as harassment under this definition, such conduct must be repeated and intentional. The competent committee is responsible for examining the facts and determining whether the provisions of these Regulations apply, without prejudging its conclusions.

In this regard, harassment must be distinguished from other forms of conduct or situations, including incivility, misconduct, interpersonal conflicts, stress inherent in professional or academic activities, and specific requirements or constraints associated with performing a role or pursuing studies.

1.3. Academic Harassment

Academic harassment refers to abusive, repeated, or systematic conduct occurring within hierarchical, educational, or administrative relationships in the University. It may include:

- acts of professional sabotage;
- grading students on the basis of personal relationships or physical appearance;
- harassment related to the exercise of administrative authority or elections;
- exploiting students for personal purposes.

1.4. Online Harassment

Online harassment is a modern and concerning form of psychological violence, intensified by anonymity and the speed of communication on digital platforms. It includes conduct such as:

- sexist online remarks and the spread of rumors;
- blackmail related to examinations or the acquisition of professional benefits through digital platforms;
- online harassment by students targeting faculty members or other students, particularly vulnerable individuals.

1.5. Discrimination and Inappropriate Conduct

Discrimination may take the form of statements, gestures, or written communications intended to treat an individual unfairly or exclude them. It may also result in the deprivation of certain rights.

Such conduct is prohibited when based on criteria including sex, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion, political opinions, language, origin, skin color, social status, or disability. Acts of intimidation related to clothing, inappropriate comments about female students' appearance or attire, and deliberately malicious conduct toward women are also prohibited.

Article 2: Scope and Application

These Regulations apply to all members of the University community, namely:

- students enrolled in any program, course, or activity falling under the University's responsibility;
- staff members, including regular, temporary, contractual, or occasional employees, regardless of employment status;
- any individual or entity acting as a subcontractor, supplier, or service provider carrying out duties on any of the University's campuses.

These Regulations also apply to any activity, initiative, or institutional representation taking place outside the University's campuses when an individual acts in connection with the University or on its behalf.

Article 3: Implementation of the Regulations

In implementing these Regulations, the University recognizes prevention, awareness, and education as essential means of achieving its objectives.

To this end, the University has established a Listening and Care Unit responsible for receiving and handling reports and complaints relating to harassment.

The University also undertakes to organize regular awareness, educational, and preventive activities for the entire University community.

These activities aim to promote a respectful and inclusive academic environment free from all forms of harassment and discrimination.

3.1. Establishment of the Listening and Care Unit

Objectives of the Unit

The Listening and Care Unit, within which the Complaints Handling Committee operates, is an institutional body responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing different forms of harassment within the University. It operates in accordance with the fundamental principles of dignity, equality, mutual respect, and protection of the rights of every member of the University community.

Fundamental Principles

The Listening and Care Unit acts in strict accordance with:

- the University's rules and principles;
- applicable legal provisions concerning the prevention of harassment and discrimination;
- the ethical values of integrity, impartiality, and transparency.

Responsibilities

The Listening and Care Unit is entrusted with the following responsibilities:

a. ***Monitoring and Prevention***

Maintain strict and continuous monitoring of situations that may constitute harassment, particularly through feedback, reports, and internal investigations.

b. Awareness Campaigns

Regularly conduct awareness campaigns targeting the entire University community (students, faculty members, and staff) through various channels, including posters, social media, and conferences.

c. Listening and Support

Ensure attentive and compassionate listening to individuals who believe they have experienced harassment.

Examine every report seriously and diligently.

d. Psychological and Social Support

Provide individuals who believe they have experienced harassment with confidential psychological support delivered by qualified professionals.

e. Legal Support

Offer legal assistance to individuals who believe they have experienced harassment to help them understand their rights, the applicable procedures, and available remedies.

f. Confidentiality and Professionalism

Act in strict compliance with confidentiality requirements, with competence and efficiency, while ensuring personalized support, prompt intervention, and rigorous follow-up on cases.

g. Sanctions

Propose or recommend disciplinary measures provided for under internal procedures and applicable regulations, according to the severity of the established facts (see Article 4.3).

h. Specialized Training and Sessions

Organize targeted awareness sessions, particularly for new students, faculty researchers, training coordinators, and administrative staff.

i. Immediate Intervention

Ensure prompt and appropriate intervention when a report is brought to the Unit's attention, in order to protect the individuals concerned and prevent further harm or recurrence.

3.2. Composition of the Listening and Care Unit

The Listening and Care Unit consists of a multidisciplinary team whose members are appointed or recruited on a full-time basis and are responsible for awareness, prevention, and the handling of harassment cases. The Unit welcomes individuals who believe they have experienced harassment and receives and handles reports and complaints submitted under these Regulations.

Medical Expertise: A physician
Legal Expertise: A legal consultant
Psychological Expertise: A psychotherapist

3.3. Operation

The Listening and Care Unit meets at least once per semester and whenever circumstances require.

An annual activity report is submitted to the University's governing bodies. It outlines the actions undertaken, the reports handled in anonymized form, and recommendations for the following year (see Article 8).

3.4. Terms of Office

Members of the Complaints Handling Committee serve a two-year term.

This term may be renewed twice.

If a Committee member resigns, the Rector is responsible for appointing a new member to fill the vacant position.

3.5. Funding

Vice Rectorate for Integral Human Development (VRIHD).

Article 4: Description of the Process

4.1. Reporting

An incident of harassment may be reported without any specific time limit. Nevertheless, victims and witnesses are encouraged to report incidents as soon as possible to ensure prompt and effective intervention.

Reports may be submitted anonymously or with the reporting individual's identity disclosed, in accordance with applicable legislation on the protection of personal data.

4.2. Reporting Form

A reporting form is available to facilitate the reporting of harassment incidents. It may also be obtained directly from the Listening and Care Unit. A signature is optional, according to the individual's preference.

4.3. Procedures for Receiving and Handling Complaints

Through its Listening and Care Unit, Antonine University undertakes to receive and examine every complaint submitted to it with seriousness and confidentiality. Each case is examined by the Complaints Handling Committee to determine the nature of the reported facts and assess the appropriate measures to be taken.

Following this examination, the complaint or report is referred to the competent Committee members for handling according to their respective responsibilities.

A written report is submitted to the Rector, who decides, where appropriate, whether to refer the case to the Disciplinary Council. The Council rules on the case in accordance with the applicable procedures.

Depending on the severity of the established facts, preventive or disciplinary measures may be taken in accordance with internal regulations and applicable legislation.

Sanctions shall be determined according to the following hierarchy, with each penalty applied proportionately to the severity of the offense:

a. Reprimand.
b. Written warning.
c. Suspension from teaching or studies for a specified period or an entire semester.
d. Termination of the contract with the University or expulsion of the student.

The complainant is subsequently kept regularly informed of the progress of the procedure.

Depending on the circumstances, mediation may be proposed with the Committee's approval and the consent of both parties. Mediation shall be conducted by qualified and experienced mediators.

Article 5: Rights of the Parties

These Regulations aim, on the one hand, to protect individuals who believe they have experienced harassment and, on the other, to govern the handling of any disciplinary and criminal consequences arising from the reported incidents.

5.1. Rights of the Complainant

The complainant has the following rights:

a. The right to file a complaint and have it examined without being subjected to retaliation or intimidation, in accordance with the specific procedure established under these Regulations.
b. The right to choose between an informal and a formal resolution process.
c. The right to discontinue the process initiated:
- At any time before the formal procedure begins, without the consent of the person against whom the complaint was filed.
- At any time after the formal procedure begins, subject to the consent of the person against whom the complaint was filed.

d. The right to be accompanied by a person of their choice during interviews and hearings relating to the complaint.
e. The complainant's safety and well-being shall remain priorities throughout the process. Psychological support may also be offered to the individuals concerned.

5.2. Rights of the Person Against Whom the Complaint Is Filed

a. The person against whom the complaint is filed has the right to be informed of the allegations made against them, while respecting confidentiality and the ongoing procedure.
b. They have the right to present their account of the facts and provide any relevant information for the examination of the complaint.
c. They may be accompanied by a person of their choice during interviews and hearings relating to the complaint.

Article 6: Confidentiality

All information, evidence, statements, and documents collected, exchanged, or produced in connection with the handling of a complaint are strictly confidential. Unless required by law or expressly authorized by the individual concerned, this obligation applies to all persons participating, in any capacity, in the handling of the complaint.

To protect the dignity, safety, and reputation of everyone involved, any person participating in the procedure, including the complainant, the person against whom the complaint is filed, witnesses, and internal or external parties, is prohibited from disclosing, communicating, or commenting on any part of the complaint or its handling, by any means or in any form (oral, written, electronic, or otherwise).

This obligation is intended to safeguard the integrity and orderly conduct of the procedure, protect the privacy, dignity, and reputation of the individuals concerned, and prevent pressure, retaliation, and any unauthorized disclosure of sensitive information.

Article 7: Review of the Regulations and Oversight

Oversight and review of these Regulations are entrusted to the Complaints Handling Committee, which is responsible for the following duties:

7.1. Periodic Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Listening and Care Unit is evaluated regularly through feedback and data analysis.

7.2. Review of the Regulations

An initial review of these Regulations shall take place at the end of their first year of implementation, during the 2027–2028 academic year. Thereafter, they shall be reviewed every three years.

Article 8: Annual Report

The Complaints Handling Committee, operating within the Listening and Care Unit, submits an annual report to the Rector and the University Council detailing the implementation and evaluation of these Regulations, as well as the results achieved.