

Acts of Intolerance

The following section was created to provide students with information about options in addressing acts of intolerance they may directly experience or observe others experiencing. An act of intolerance is an action by an individual or group that fosters hatred or prejudice because of another's ethnicity, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, medical condition or disability. Although these incidents may not fit the legal definition of a crime, they often result in feeling belittled, threatened or intimidated. USF's commitment to advancing diversity is incorporated into our daily life at the University through consistent attempts by faculty, staff and students to prevent harmful behavior. Acts of intolerance can be subtle or direct, as noted in the following examples:

- A student's residence hall room door is defaced with graphic words about his/her presumed sexual orientation or racist graffiti is written on sidewalks and entrances to campus buildings.
- Disparaging remarks are made during a classroom discussion, at an extracurricular activity, or in the residence halls. For instance, a guest lecturer makes a "joke" about Jews being good with money or a demeaning comment about women such as, "Women don't belong in higher education."
- Flyers posted by a student organization are defaced with comments about the nature of the event or the purpose of the group. For example, flyers advertising a meeting or organization may be covered with slurs that serve to demean a group's membership based on its national origin.

Preventing Acts of Intolerance

A single act of intolerance can erode our sense of community. We must all take responsibility for speaking out against hatred and prejudice and for helping to prevent such occurrences. If you should witness or hear about an incident on campus, we encourage you to take action:

- Speak up and let others know that we do not accept acts of intolerance in any form. Work together to be part of the solution. Silence may be interpreted as disinterest or even approval.
- Ask for help and guidance from one of the resources included below.
- Show your concern for and support of any individual or group that experiences an act of hatred or intolerance on campus.

Filing a Report

Any student or community member who observes or is a victim of an act of intolerance can report the incident by contacting the Department of Public Safety (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at (415) 422-4201 or the Assistant Vice Provost and Associate Dean of Student Development's office on the UC 5th floor (M-F 8:30 am - 5:00pm) at (415) 422-5330.

Resources

Students are encouraged to respond to acts of intolerance whether or not they have been a direct victim; observing or witnessing an incident is reason enough to speak out. If you are uncertain what you would like to do or what your options are staff at Counseling and Psychological Services (422-6352); the Executive Director of University Ministry (422-4463); and the Ombudsperson (422-2761) can assist and offer confidential support in the following ways:

- Mediating differences between the victim and alleged offender in a safe environment.
- Providing advice on response options to seek redress under University policy.
- Providing psychological support through free, confidential, on-campus counseling.
- Providing referral to outside resources.
- Arranging an educational response (training, presentation, article in the Foghorn).

Other Helpful, Nonconfidential Resources

If you would like to initiate a formal process, other offices can provide assistance, but cannot

assure confidentiality since they are legally bound to report certain incidents.

For issues related to staff, contact:

- Human Resources—(415) 422-6707

For student to student issues, contact:

- Student Housing and Residential Education—(415) 422-6824
- Student Life—(415) 422-5330—Assistant Vice Provost and Associate Dean of Student Development
- Health Promotion Services—(415) 422-5797
- Public Safety—(415) 422-4222

For issues related to faculty, contact:

- Deans' offices in the appropriate school