

Intern Safety

The Nicholls College of Business Administration Internship Program offers junior and senior level students an opportunity to combine their academic preparation with practical, real-world business experience. Students accepted into the program are eligible for three hours of discipline specific academic credit. The program attempts to place business students in internships with both public and private organizations throughout the region and beyond. This document provides valuable information to interns should they experience sexual discrimination or harassment/misconduct onsite.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that is persistent or offensive and interferes with an employee's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment is defined by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can be physical or psychological in nature. An aggregation of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

- Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults, and intentional physical conduct that is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against another employee's body or poking another employee's body.
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or other sexual comments, such as sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks, jokes, or comments about a person's sexuality or sexual experience.
- Preferential treatment or promises of preferential treatment to an employee for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any employee to engage in sexual activity for compensation or reward.
- Subjecting, or threats of subjecting, an employee to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally making performance of the employee's job more difficult because of that employee's sex.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace by the company's employees.

What constitutes sexual discrimination or harassment/misconduct?

The following scenarios can help a student identify harassment in the workplace (Source: Intern Resource Network).

The onsite supervisor has suggested, in not so many words, the two of you develop a relationship outside of work and benefits might come your way.

- This behavior is an abuse of power, and the student is never at fault should this occur. A student should never feel pressure to have anything outside of a professional relationship with their supervisor.
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Another employee often brushes up against you, finds reasons to be near you, and you catch them staring at you throughout the day.

- This is a form of sexual harassment. It might be difficult to confront that employee directly and tell them to stop. A student can report this behavior to their site supervisor, and their internship coordinator at their campus.

Another employee makes lewd comments and jokes that are sexual in nature. It is often in your presence, and you are encouraged to play along.

- This behavior creates a hostile work environment. A student can report this behavior to their site supervisor, and their internship coordinator at their campus.

A student might never experience any of these scenarios, but might witness it happening to someone else in the workplace. This, too, creates a hostile work environment. If a student witnesses this happening to another intern or coworker, there are direct and indirect ways of intervening. A student can check in with the fellow intern or coworker, remind them this wasn't their fault, and offer to support them if they report this behavior to a supervisor.

How do I inform myself about my employer's sexual discrimination or harassment/misconduct policy?

You will likely be welcomed to your internship by your employer with an orientation. Discuss the organization's policies and reporting procedures for sexual discrimination and harassment/misconduct.

Who do I report to if I experience sexual discrimination or harassment/misconduct onsite?

- Internship supervisor onsite
- Employer's human resources director
- Internship faculty supervisor
- Dr. Guidry, CBA Internship Coordinator

What laws protect you as an intern in cases of sexual discrimination and harassment/misconduct?

FEDERAL AGENCY/LAW	PAID interns	UNPAID interns
EEOC	Yes, but only if you are receiving significant remuneration	No.
TITLE IX	Yes, as long as the internship is contributing to your education.	Yes, as long as the internship is contributing to your education.