

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

Policy:	Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying
Policy Number:	HRM-135
Effective Date:	November 2024
Revisions:	
Next Review Date:	November 2025
Review Officer(s):	Office of the Human Resources, Division of Student Success, Office of Student Life & Development, Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Status:	Approved by the President and LU Board of Trustees

I. Purpose

This policy aims to safeguard the well-being of Lincoln University of Pennsylvania's campus community by addressing the harmful impacts of anonymous, hyperlocal digital platforms that are accessible through university resources. As modern technology advances, our community benefits from increased collaboration and connection. However, it also faces challenges as these tools are sometimes misused to facilitate harassment, threats, and cyberbullying. This policy strives to create a safer campus environment by restricting access to such platforms through university information resources while balancing the university's commitment to free expression, mental health, and physical safety.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all faculty, professional staff, students, visitors to the College, and members of the public utilizing University spaces.

III. Definitions

- a. Bullying: The repeated mistreatment by words or actions that are intended to embarrass, humiliate, degrade, demean, intimidate, and/or threaten an individual or group.
- b. Behavior that foreseeably places bystanders or unintended targets at risk or in fear, or causes them to feel threatened or humiliated, is within the scope of this definition.
- c. Bullying can take a variety of forms and may include behaviors that are physical, verbal, nonverbal, direct or indirect, and may take place face-to-face, via written communications, or by electronic means. Some examples of bullying include, but are not limited to:
 1. Shouting or yelling at, berating, ridiculing, or demeaning others;
 2. Repeated name-calling and attacks on one's character, using a person as an object of ridicule, using nicknames after being warned by the Complainant that the nickname is considered to be offensive, or spreading gossip and rumors about the person to others;
 3. Mocking, ridiculing, punishing, or putting someone down in front of others, constant unwarranted criticism, or making offensive remarks regarding a person's known intellectual or physical attributes;
 4. Persistently interrupting a person or otherwise preventing a person's legitimate attempts to speak;
 5. Undermining or sabotaging the work performance of others by:
 1. Withholding merited resources
 2. Preventing an employee/student from performing their responsibilities, negatively impacting their work-life/academic-life and recognition and/or advancement
 3. Treating an individual or group in an unequal manner, such as differing distribution of responsibilities, the application of divergent standards of workload/hours/acceptable conduct, blatant disregard for an employee or student's position or stated job duties.

6. Spreading false or sensitive information about another that may interfere with that person's ability to function or perform their duties within the scope outlined in B.2 of this Policy;
7. Deliberately excluding, isolating or marginalizing a person from normal workplace activities;
8. Tampering with a person's personal effects or work equipment; damage to or destruction of a person's work product, work area, including electronic devices, or personal property;
9. Punishments or negative consequences designed primarily to shame, exclude, and/or draw negative attention from others;
10. Violent behavior, such as pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, or tripping; assault or threat of physical assault; making threatening gestures toward a person or invading personal space after being asked by the Complainant to move or step away. Bullying that is physically violent may violate criminal law as well as other university policies.
11. Making threats, either explicit or implicit, to the security of a person's job or position when not part of a legitimate process by the supervisor to set expectations or engage in progressive discipline as outlined by the University. This may include, but is not limited to, manipulating the workload of a person in a manner intended to cause that person to fail to perform legitimate functions.
12. Educational Interference
 1. Intentional and repeated actions or words that interfere with or negatively impact the ability of a student or group of students to meet the student learning outcomes of a course or program
 2. Intentional and repeated failure to maintain a safe learning environment that respects all others who use the office/classroom.
13. Abuse or misuse of power in the exercise of authority, supervision, or guidance. Criticism, complaints, and negative feedback are not considered bullying when they are reasonable and directly address issues of performance and/or conduct.

IV. Policy Overview

Lincoln University values the well-being of its community members and recognizes that bullying on campus is unacceptable. Under this Policy, bullying is prohibited. Bullying prohibited by this Policy may include, but is not limited to, unwarranted physical contact, sabotage of another person's work, abuse of authority, abusive expression directed at another person that is outside the range of commonly accepted expressions of disagreement or critique or other conduct that is severe, pervasive or persistent in that it caused the Complainant substantial emotional distress and would cause a reasonable person in the same circumstances substantial emotional distress.

The following behaviors may, in certain circumstances, constitute bullying within the context of the university:

- a. Mocking, berating, ridiculing, intimidating, or demeaning others;
- b. Name-calling and attacks on one's character, using a person as an object of ridicule, or using nicknames after being warned that the nickname is considered offensive;
- c. Making offensive remarks regarding a person's physical attributes;
- d. Persistently interrupting a person or otherwise preventing a person's legitimate attempts to speak;
- e. Undermining or sabotaging the work or university performance of others;
- f. Spreading false or inappropriately sharing sensitive information about another;
- g. Deliberately excluding, isolating, or marginalizing a person from workplace or university activities that affect their ability to do their job;
- h. Using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, mobile phones, e-mail, social media, or other electronic sources to spread false rumors, threaten, make offensive remarks, inappropriately share sensitive information, insult, or ridicule others;
- i. Tampering with a person's personal effects or work equipment; damaging or destroying a person's work product, work area, or personal property, including electronic devices;
- j. Punishing or imposing negative consequences that foreseeably and unnecessarily lead to shame, exclusion, or negative attention from others;

- k. Making threats, either explicit or implicit, to the security of a person's job or position, other than as part of a legitimate process;

Bullying behavior may also include making threats or physical contact (such as pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, physical assault), and may violate criminal law.

The following behaviors are not, in certain circumstances, do not constitute bullying within the context of the university:

- b. One-time disagreements or incidents.
 - c. Unintentional social mistakes and general non-targeted rude behavior.
 - d. Offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about one's conduct or performance.
 - e. Expressing differences of opinion.
 - f. Stern/blunt delivery of expectations, information or feedback.
 - g. Reasonable action taken by an employer, supervisor, etc. relating to the management and direction of workers or students in the place of employment, classroom, or any program in which Regis exercises substantial control. (i.e. managing performance, taking reasonable disciplinary actions, assigning work).
2. Retaliation against employees making good faith reports as provided for in this policy, even where the concerns are ultimately unsubstantiated, is prohibited and should be taken into consideration as a factor in evaluating an employee's performance, subject to university evaluation procedures.
 3. False reports of bullying that are found to have been made intentionally are also a violation of this policy and should be taken into consideration in evaluating the individual's performance, subject to university evaluation procedures.

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies (for example, cellular phones, digital cameras, computers and PDAs) for the purpose of engaging in deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group with the intention of harming others.

- a. Cyberbullying may include cyber harassment, cyber stalking, and the invasion of privacy, all of which constitute violations of the Student Code of Conduct
 - b. Cyberbullying can cause significant harm to students, including loss of reputation, humiliation and embarrassment, clinical depression, fear and anxiety, loss of self-esteem and even self-injurious and suicidal behavior.
4. Cyberbullying in any form will not be tolerated, and any student found responsible for engaging in cyberbullying will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may result in suspension or permanent separation from Lincoln University of Pennsylvania.
 5. If a case of cyberbullying is determined to be of a criminal nature, it will be referred to local authorities in addition to being adjudicated as a Code of Conduct violation. Cyberbullying is inconsistent with the Mission of Lincoln University of PA and unacceptable for any member of the Lincoln Community to harass another for personal reasons and/or based on their race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or religion.

Students and Employees impacted by bullying may also access support services from appropriate campus resources.

- a. Students can access confidential resources through Counseling Services, the Office of the General Counsel or the Office of Institutional Equity/Title IX.
 - b. Information regarding the various resources available to faculty and staff can be found in the University's Employee Handbook.
6. Reporting Procedure:
 - a. Students may report allegations of bullying through the Community Standards Procedures outlined in the Student Handbook.
 - b. Faculty & Staff may report allegations of bullying through the procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook.
 - c. Volunteers, individuals using University resources or facilities, and representatives acting as agents of the University may report allegations of bullying to the Office of Human Resources located in the International Cultural Center (ICC). Their office number is 484-365-8059 and their email is LUhr@lincoln.edu.

7. Witness: Persons who witness the bullying.
8. Retaliation: Any adverse action threatened or taken against a person because an individual has filed, supported or provided information in connection with a complaint of bullying, including but not limited to, direct and indirect intimidation, threats and harassment. An “adverse action” is any conduct or action that would dissuade a reasonable person from reporting an allegation of bullying or participating in an investigation of bullying.

V. **Cyber Harassment and Compliance with Pennsylvania Law**

In accordance with Pennsylvania law ([18 Pa.C.S. § 2709](#)), Lincoln University strictly prohibits any acts of cyber harassment, especially those targeting minors within our community. Cyber harassment encompasses digital communication intended to threaten, harm, or cause severe distress to another person. Examples include, but are not limited to, sending intimidating or offensive messages, posting embarrassing or harmful images, or sharing defamatory information about others.

Lincoln University’s policy extends to cyberbullying behaviors that infringe on students' rights, disrupt academic or residential life, or otherwise contradict our community standards. Any student or staff found engaging in cyber harassment may face university disciplinary action and, where applicable, criminal charges. For incidents of cyber harassment that meet criminal standards, the university will cooperate fully with law enforcement.

Lincoln University reserves the right to amend or revoke its policies at any time. The policies found on this Web site are not conditions of employment and do not create a contract between the University and its employees.