

Statement on Sexual Harassment and Field Education

Preamble: We in theological education at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary are committed to making our seminary and our churches (field educational settings) safe places for all persons.

Definition: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when

1. Submission of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or a factor in the evaluation or grade determination of a student's work;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affect that person or a factor in the evaluation or grade determination of a student's work; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or learning performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment.

Sexual Harassment and Field Education: In Supervised Field Education, it is necessary to maintain boundaries in order to avoid role confusion. Many supervisory relationships become the basis of genuine collegial friendship; however, the bringing of sexual behavior, whether verbal or physical, into the supervisory relationship is clearly inappropriate due to the unequal status of the participants. At the same time, it is our hope that students and supervisors will develop a sufficiently trusting relationship so that dialogue about these kinds of issues might take place in supervision.

Both students and supervisors are responsible to Louisville Seminary as well as to their various congregations and denominations for their behavior in this area. Since the student is serving in the congregation as a pastoral intern, the expectation of appropriate pastoral behavior rests with the student. During the tenure of the student's field education placement, it is the policy of the Office of Field Education and Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary that a sexual relationship within the congregation or supervisory setting is incompatible with established ministerial ethics. Furthermore, field education students are expected to maintain appropriate pastoral behavior in conformity with school and/or congregational-denominational guidelines.

Allegations of actions that violate these guidelines should come to the Director of Field Education and will be handled in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Seminary, where applicable. Students may also have recourse to or be subject to the policies and procedures of the field education setting and their denominations.