



UC ISSUES ABUSIVE CONDUCT POLICY

To: All campus
Jan. 20, 2023

Campus community,

The University of California Office of the President has issued a [Policy on Abusive Conduct in the Workplace](#), effective Jan. 1, 2023. It is the culmination of several years of dedicated effort, with support from the Regents, to develop a policy that applies equally to faculty, staff and students.

UC Merced addressed this crucial issue in 2016, when it implemented the Policy on the Prohibition of Abusive Conduct and Acts of Violence by University Employees and Affiliates. With the implementation of the systemwide policy, the UC Merced policy sunsetted Dec. 31, 2022.

In a letter issuing the UC policy, President Michael V. Drake, M.D., explains why it represents a critical step in advancing his priorities:

"Abusive conduct compromises the vital mission of the University to educate students and serve the residents of California by interfering with an individual's participation in or benefit from instructional, research, employment, or other programs sponsored by the University. Abusive conduct also undermines the University's ability to achieve inclusive excellence. It is therefore essential that all members of the University community understand the risk that abusive conduct poses to the University's ability to thrive as an institution."

Key Policy Provisions:

- It provides a solid foundation and structure that makes clear what behavior does

and does not fall within the scope of abusive conduct as defined by the University of California. The policy's Frequently Asked Questions section provides examples of both.

- Academic Senate will continue to have the authority to adjudicate abusive conduct allegations involving faculty members and cases related to academic freedom. The policy is intended to protect members of the University community from abusive conduct, not to regulate protected speech.
- The policy prohibits retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports abusive conduct, assists someone with a report of abusive conduct, or participates in an investigation or other process under the policy.

More resources connected to the UC policy, such as training, forms and documentation, will be shared with the UC Merced community as they become available. If you have questions about the policy, please reach out to hr@ucmerced.edu.

In the meantime, for confidential support if abusive conduct has been experienced, the following offices and resources are good places to start:

- [Office of the Ombuds](#)
- [Academic Personal Office](#)
- [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Employee and Labor Relations](#)
- [INSIGHT Employee Assistance Program](#)

President Drake concluded his issuance letter by asking locations to join him in committing to the prevention of abusive conduct in the workplace. "This commitment is essential to the mission and future success of the University of California."

Sincerely,

Lela Dennis
Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer

UCMERCED

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