

Civility, Anti-Racism, Anti-Bullying and Religious Acceptance Statement

As a church-related institution, Presbyterian College delivers a transformative education that empowers students to develop the mental, moral, and spiritual capacities for a lifetime of personal and professional fulfillment and impactful service to our democratic society and the world community. Our academic programs are designed to develop thoughtful, engaged citizens who pursue successful and meaningful careers, serve their communities, and lead purposeful lives. Therefore, in alignment with our unique history, identity, and core values, we commit to fostering a culture of respect and accountability by actively opposing any form of bullying, racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, as well as all forms of hate or intolerance based on any federally protected class, including race, gender, sexual identity/orientation, ability/disability status, class, religion or culture.

Civility and Respect

Civility is more than politeness; it is the foundation of a healthy learning, living, and working environment. We expect all members of the Presbyterian College community to engage in thoughtful dialogue, mutual respect, and accountability to one another. All disagreements and criticism must address ideas, behaviors, and actions. While it is appropriate to call attention to the actions or positions of a group, it is not acceptable to target individuals or groups with demeaning, hostile, or harmful language. Freedom of thought and expression are essential to academic life; however, this freedom must never serve as a shield for hostility or harm. Skill building leads to empowerment; therefore, at Presbyterian College, we are committed to building the skills and opportunities that empower every member of our community to thrive.

Anti-Racism

Presbyterian College is a multicultural community of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Each member of our community is valued, and each is responsible for behaving in ways that show respect for racial and ethnic differences. Bigotry directed at such differences will not go unchallenged, and no form of racial abuse, threat, intimidation, or violence will be tolerated. The College recognizes no right, individual or otherwise, to denigrate or favor another human being or group in a way which implicitly or explicitly demeans another group. Alcohol abuse, substance abuse, ignorance, or “just joking” are not excuses for racist behavior. Because each of us has chosen to be part of the PC community and uphold its values, we must commit to these principles and guard against racial misconduct. Doing so is consistent with the focus, goals, and mission of PC.

As we declare ourselves an institution opposed to racism, it is essential we be clear as to how we define and interpret the term.

- Racism is the treatment of others differently on the basis of race or the expression (direct or implied) that one or more racial groups is superior to one or more other racial groups. Racism includes the celebration of cultures, subcultures, institutions, or states that were

founded on and remain today associated with beliefs about the moral superiority or implied supremacy of one group of persons over another group of persons on the basis of race, ethnicity, and/or national origin.

- Racism can occur as a single incident or repeated incidents, and may take the following forms, which are not exclusive: a. Events, displays, or other acts or expressions using the cultural markers of a race or group in a way which can reasonably be understood as demeaning and which do not have legitimate educational, learning, or appreciation purposes; b. Events or displays celebrating the Confederate States of America

Anti-Bullying

Bullying fosters fear, humiliation, and exclusion and it has no place in our campus community. Presbyterian College defines bullying as unwelcome acts – verbal, written, physical, nonverbal, or digital - that are intended to humiliate, harass, mentally or physically injure or intimidate, and/or control another individual or group of individuals; and which are sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a material impact on the ability of a member of the community to participate in the living, learning, and/or working environment. Such aggressive and hostile acts can occur as a single, severe incident or repeated incidents, and harms not only individuals but our entire campus community.

The following terms and behaviors are defined to provide clarity and understanding of what constitutes bullying and its various forms within the Presbyterian College community.

- **Bullying:** the unwelcome acts of an individual or group of individuals that are intended to humiliate, harass, mentally or physically injure or intimidate, and/or control another individual or group of individuals, and which are sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a material impact on the ability of a reasonable member of the community to participate in the living, learning, and/or working environment of Presbyterian College. Such aggressive and hostile acts can occur as a single, severe incident or repeated incidents, and may be observed in the following forms, which are not exclusive:
 - **Physical bullying** includes striking, pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, and/or tripping another; assaulting or threatening a physical assault; or damaging a person's work or living area, personal property, or work product.
 - **Verbal/Written bullying** includes ridiculing, insulting or maligning a person, either verbally or in writing; addressing abusive, threatening, derogatory or offensive remarks to a person; and/or attempting to exploit an individual's known intellectual or physical vulnerabilities.
 - **Nonverbal bullying** includes directing objectively threatening or intimidating gestures toward a person or invading personal space after being asked to move or step away. Nonverbal bullying may also involve stalking, unconsented photography or recording of

private acts, and/or the disclosure of private facts or images of a person as to which the person has a reasonable expectation of privacy.

- **Cyber bullying** is defined as bullying an individual using electronic media or devices, including but not limited to the internet, interactive and digital technologies, social media, and/or personal electronic devices. Cyber bullying may include verbal/written bullying and/or nonverbal bullying.

Religious Acceptance

In accordance with the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the values of Presbyterian College, we reject antisemitism, Islamophobia, and all forms of religious discrimination, bias, or harassment. We denounce rhetoric and actions that demean, stereotype, marginalize, or threaten individuals or communities based on their faith, spiritual practices, religious identity, or worldview. We recognize the historic and ongoing harm these forms of prejudice cause and affirm the right of all individuals to worship freely, express their beliefs without fear, and participate fully in every aspect of the college experience.

We also recognize that members of our community hold a wide range of beliefs, identities, and perspectives, including individuals with no religious affiliation, faith tradition, or spiritual identity. Those who identify as secular, humanist, agnostic, atheist, or otherwise nonreligious are equally valued members of our community and deserve the same respect, dignity, and sense of belonging afforded to all.

Academic Freedom & Civil Interaction

As a community of imperfect human beings who learn, live, and work together, Presbyterian College must honor both freedom of thought and civil social conduct. Honestly held and reasonable differences of opinion are protected at Presbyterian College, in and out of the classroom. Discussion of an academic subject, even when the ideas are controversial, is protected. Disagreements and criticism, even when strongly asserted, are not bullying if they are aimed at ideas and actions, rather than at hurting or humiliating individuals. And while kindness and civility are virtues and aims of the College, not every unkind or uncivil remark or act is punishable. Social interactions sometimes result in hurt feelings. This is always unfortunate, but a social slight, criticism, or rebuff is not bullying unless it satisfies the definitions above.

For additional guidance on the academic freedom for faculty members retain, please refer to the Academic Freedom Policies outlined in the respective undergraduate and graduate *Faculty Handbooks*.

Reporting and Addressing Incidents

We encourage all members of our community to report any behavior that violates our Civility, Anti-Racism, Anti-Bullying, & Religious Acceptance Statement, whether you are a complainant, bystander/witness, or a concerned member of the PC community. Incidents may be reported using the

BIAS INCIDENT REPORT FORM on the college's website or by contacting the Vice President for Justice and Community Wellbeing and Title IX Coordinator. When necessary, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Dean of Students, and/or Executive Director of Human Resources will be consulted. In case of an emergency or if you feel in immediate danger, contact the Presbyterian College Campus Police immediately.

The College's existing conduct policies in applicable faculty, staff, and student handbooks were designed to address behavior inconsistent with this Statement. Any such behavior that is reported to the College will be addressed in accordance with those existing policies.

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