



## POLICY 2.12

### COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

#### *Harassment*

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#### **POLICY INTENT**

To ensure a safe and positive working environment within AUSU by making all individuals aware that there is an expectation of appropriate behaviour at all times. AUSU is committed to creating a climate of understanding and mutual respect where each person is treated fairly.

#### **POLICY RESPONSIBILITY**

Council

#### **POLICY**

##### **Definitions**

2.12.01 Harassment is any action or objectionable conduct or comment that a person knows or should know would be unwelcome, offensive, embarrassing or hurtful. Harassment may result from one incident or a series of incidents. Harassment can occur between co-workers, management, staff, councilors, AUSU members, or members of the public..

2.12.01.01 Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- a) frequent angry shouting/yelling or blow-ups,
- b) regular use of profanity and abusive or violent language,
- c) physical, verbal or email threats, intimidation, bullying,
- d) spreading gossip, rumours, negative blogging, cyberbullying,
- e) unsubstantiated criticism, unreasonable demands,
- f) insults, name calling, public humiliation, or
- h) any communication that is demeaning, insulting, humiliating, or deliberately hurtful.
- i) comments that denigrate or stereotype the race, gender, age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation of a party

2.12.01.02 Harassment does not include:

- a) legitimate performance/probation management,
- b) appropriate exercise of delegation of managerial authority,
- c) operational directives,
- d) a disagreement or misunderstanding,
- e) appropriate discipline,
- f) a single comment or action unless it is serious and has a lasting harmful effect,
- g) rudeness unless it is extreme and/or repetitive, or

h) mild sarcasm or playful teasing.

### **Policy Application**

- 2.12.02 This policy applies to all councillors and staff and relates to conduct that may arise during the course of AUSU business, activities and events. This includes but is not limited to, email correspondence, telephone conferences, or any other activities where an individual is acting as a representative of AUSU.
- 2.12.03 This policy also applies to conduct that may occur outside of AUSU's business and events when such conduct adversely affects relationships within AUSU's work and business environment or is detrimental to the image and reputation of AUSU.

### **Responsibilities**

- 2.12.04 Councillors and staff have a responsibility to proactively ensure that the working environment remains free from harassment. They must ensure that harassment is not condoned, tolerated or ignored.
- 2.12.05 Councillors and staff must strive to have a clear understanding of what constitutes harassment and what their responsibilities are in relation to this policy. Councillors and staff are responsible for respecting the dignity and rights of each other and the members they serve.

### **Reporting an Incident**

- 2.12.06 AUSU strongly urges the reporting of all incidents of harassment. Individuals who believe they have experienced conduct that is contrary to this policy or who have concerns about harassment should file their complaints with the Executive Council. Should the matter concern a member of the Executive Council, a report should be made to the remaining members of the Executive Council.
- 2.12.07 Because the line between acceptable and unacceptable social conduct is not always clear, AUSU encourages individuals who feel they are being or may have been harassed to tell the harasser that the behaviour is unwelcome and request that it stop immediately.
- 2.12.08 If the individual is uncomfortable with speaking to the harasser directly, or has done so, but the perceived harassment has not stopped, the individual may file a complaint as per 2.12.06.
- 2.12.08 AUSU prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment is a serious violation of this policy and shall be subject to disciplinary action as per the AUSU discipline policy.
- 2.12.09 A councillor or employee who knowingly makes a false or malicious allegation under this policy may also be subject to discipline as per the AUSU discipline policy.

### **Response**

- 2.12.10 Any reported allegations of harassment or retaliation shall be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially by the Executive Council.

- 2.12.11 The investigation shall include, but is not limited to, individual interviews with the parties involved, ensuring that the perspectives of all involved are considered, and may also include interviews with any individuals who may have been a witness to the matter
- 2.12.13 Confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the investigation process to the greatest extent possible.
- 2.12.14 Misconduct constituting harassment shall be dealt with promptly and appropriately as described in AUSU dismissal and discipline policy.

## **POLICY HISTORY**

Original Approval Date: July 4, 2011

Updated Date:

Mandatory Review by Date: July 4, 2013