

Cyberbullying and Cyber Harassment Policy Statement



A safe and civil environment is necessary for students to be successful in their educational pursuits. Cyberbullying or cyber harassment by any member of the University of West Alabama community (student, faculty, staff, etc.) toward another individual constitutes conduct that disrupts the educational environment of the University.

Examples of cyberbullying and cyber harassment include, but are not limited to, harsh text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are prohibited by state law (Ala. Code § 13A-11-8; AL HB 216) and by various federal laws. The University will not tolerate lewd, intimidating or other disorderly conduct by or toward members of its community. The following are examples of instances where social media can cause harm to the University or member of the UWA community or may violate policies:

- A UWA student establishes a Twitter account that encourages others to submit anonymous messages to an account that will be redistributed by the account holder.
- A member of the University community establishes a fake account under the name of an official University department or organization and uses the name and trademark to post vicious comments on other content.
- A member of the University faculty or staff uses his or her blog or social media account to berate or otherwise discuss engagement with or judgment of a student's work or other information considered confidential or proprietary by FERPA or HIPPA.

Cyberbullying and cyber harassment are direct violations of several standards of the Code of Student Conduct, which is published in the student handbook, The Tiger Paw. In particular, **misconduct standards 14, 17, 18, 34, 36 and 37** are violated by acts of cyberbullying and cyber harassment. The Code prohibits acts of cyberbullying or cyber harassment through the use of any electronic technology, which includes, but is not limited to, devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers and tablets as well as communication tools, including, but not limited to, text messages, chat platforms, websites and social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Vine, and blogs. Students who use University networks or technology to conduct such activity may be disciplined in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct.

All other members of the University community are likewise prohibited from engaging in cyberbullying or cyber harassment, and instances will be adjudicated through the proper established channels.

Students who feel that they are being bullied or harassed through electronic technology should immediately report it to Mr. Richard Hester, Director of Student Life (SUB 203B, 205-652-3577, rth@uwa.edu). Other members of the University community should contact Mr. Robert Upchurch (Webb Hall 344, 205-652-3533, rupchurch@uwa.edu) or Campus Police Chief Jeff Manuel at (205) 652-3682 or jmanuel@uwa.edu.



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