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CERTIFIED: ISO 21001:2018 Educational Organizations Management System by DNV
ACCREDITED: Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA)

Article on Non-Discrimination Against Women

Misamis University's proposed Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Women provides a framework for protecting women's dignity and expanding equal opportunities in education and employment. Prepared for institutional review and approval, it sets out how fair treatment, accessible reporting, and accountability can support a university environment where women can study, work, and lead without gender-based barriers.

The proposal is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 5, which calls for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Its provisions relate particularly to Target 5.1 on ending discrimination, Target 5.2 on preventing violence, and Target 5.5 on equal participation and leadership. The policy also draws on the Magna Carta of Women and the Safe Spaces Act as Philippine reference frameworks for equality and protection.

In education, the proposed policy would require fair criteria for admission, scholarships, assessment, training, and student leadership. It expressly addresses pregnancy related discrimination and protects women's access to learning. In employment, it would guide recruitment, compensation, promotion, and professional development through relevant qualifications and documented performance. Support for eligible maternity benefits, breastfeeding, and pregnancy related health needs would help women continue their professional and academic participation.

Protection and accountability are central to the proposal. It identifies discriminatory conduct, sexual harassment, and retaliation as prohibited behavior and establishes a reporting framework through designated University offices. Complaints would be handled by impartial authorities, with attention to safety, confidentiality, due process, and applicable timelines. Annual review would help identify barriers and guide corrective measures.

If approved and implemented, this policy would provide a practical basis for strengthening gender equality at Misamis University. Its contribution to SDG 5 would be demonstrated through communicated procedures, fair decisions, accessible support, and documented improvements. Approval records and implementation evidence should accompany the policy in institutional reporting; this article describes the proposal and does not establish that it has already been adopted.

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Policy on Non-Discrimination Against Women

Sustainable Development Goal 5 Gender Equality

Policy statement

Misamis University shall uphold the dignity, rights, and equal opportunities of women in education and employment. The University shall prohibit discrimination against women and shall take appropriate measures to remove barriers to their participation, advancement, and leadership. This policy supports Sustainable Development Goal 5, particularly ending discrimination, preventing violence and harassment, and promoting equal opportunities for leadership.

Purpose and coverage

This policy establishes standards for fair treatment, prevention, reporting, and accountability. It covers women students, prospective students, faculty, staff, job applicants, and other persons participating in University activities. All administrators, employees, students, contractors, and visitors shall observe it within University premises, official online platforms, and University sponsored activities, including off campus placements, fieldwork, research, and training.

Definition of discrimination

For this policy, discrimination against women means a distinction, exclusion, restriction, or adverse treatment based on sex or gender that impairs women's equal enjoyment of rights, opportunities, or benefits. It includes direct unequal treatment and apparently neutral rules that create unjustified disadvantages for women. Protection applies regardless of marital status, pregnancy, motherhood, or caregiving responsibilities. Women experiencing overlapping disadvantages, including disability, poverty, ethnicity, religion, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity, shall receive equitable treatment.

Equal access to education

Admission, enrollment, scholarships, assessment, student services, clinical or internship placements, research opportunities, and participation in University activities shall use transparent and relevant criteria. Women shall not be excluded from courses, leadership roles, or learning opportunities because of gender stereotypes. A woman student shall not be refused admission, expelled, denied readmission, or otherwise disadvantaged solely because she is pregnant, including pregnancy outside marriage. Academic requirements shall be applied fairly, with appropriate arrangements for documented health needs.

Equal opportunities in employment

Recruitment, selection, appointment, compensation, work assignments, performance evaluation, training, promotion, and separation shall be based on relevant qualifications, responsibilities, documented performance, and lawful requirements. Women shall receive equal pay for work of equal value. Marriage, pregnancy, motherhood, or lawful use of leave shall not be used to deny employment or advancement. Recruitment and employment practices shall avoid unnecessary inquiries or conditions concerning women's marital or reproductive circumstances.

Pregnancy maternity and caregiving support

Eligible employees shall receive maternity leave and other applicable benefits under law and approved University policies. The University shall provide appropriate support for breastfeeding and consider reasonable adjustments for pregnancy related health needs and return to work or study. Requests shall be reviewed promptly and individually, with essential academic and job requirements clearly explained. Decisions and alternatives shall be documented without penalizing women for requesting support.

Leadership and participation

Qualified women shall have equitable access to administrative positions, committees, professional development, research support, and student leadership. Selection processes shall use published or clearly communicated criteria. Responsible offices shall review participation patterns and address barriers through appropriate mentoring, outreach, and development opportunities.

Prohibited conduct

Prohibited acts include sex based exclusion from opportunities; unjustified differences in pay, benefits, grades, or assignments; degrading comments or gender stereotypes; pregnancy related penalties; sexual harassment, coercion, or unwanted sexual conduct; discriminatory online behavior; and threats or retaliation connected with a complaint. Requiring sexual favors in exchange for grades, employment, promotion, or other benefits is strictly prohibited. University materials and communications shall avoid derogatory portrayals of women.

Prevention and responsibilities

The University President shall oversee implementation and authorize adequate resources. The Human Resource Department shall coordinate employee related implementation, orientation, and records. The designated student affairs office shall coordinate student concerns and support. Deans, heads, supervisors, and faculty shall apply fair criteria and promptly refer concerns. The duly constituted Committee on Decorum and Investigation shall handle sexual harassment cases within its authority. These assignments are proposed responsibilities and do not imply that particular offices or mechanisms are already operational.

Upon adoption, the University shall publish this policy and actual reporting contacts, orient employees and students, and review rules and materials for discriminatory provisions. Members of the University community shall treat others respectfully, cooperate with lawful investigations, and protect confidential information.

Reporting and assistance

A person may report discrimination orally or in writing to the Human Resource Department, the designated student affairs office, or the designated complaint receiving officer. Assistance shall be provided to record an oral report. Reports should identify the conduct, approximate dates, persons involved, and available evidence; a report shall not be refused merely because it is incomplete. Anonymous information may prompt assessment, although it can limit the investigation. If the receiving officer is involved, the report may be submitted directly to the University President or an independent alternate designated by the approving authority.

Assessment investigation and decision

The receiving office shall promptly assess safety and support needs, explain the process, and refer the matter to the competent impartial body. Sexual harassment complaints shall be referred to the designated officer and CODI and handled under applicable law and approved procedures, including legally prescribed timelines. The Safe Spaces Act requires educational institution mechanisms to investigate and decide covered complaints within ten days or less upon receipt. This general policy shall not extend that statutory period.

For other discrimination complaints, the University shall adopt a written procedure specifying acknowledgment, investigation, decision, and appeal periods before this policy takes effect. The procedure shall provide notice of allegations, a fair opportunity for each party to be heard, impartial assessment of evidence, written findings, and access to review or appeal. Conflicts of interest shall require recusal and replacement. Internal reporting shall not prevent access to appropriate external agencies or legal remedies.

Protection confidentiality and outcomes

Retaliation against a complainant, witness, support person, or participant in an inquiry is prohibited. Appropriate interim measures may include contact restrictions, supervision adjustments, counseling referrals, or arrangements to protect continued access to work and education. Measures shall avoid unnecessary burdens on the complainant and shall not presume guilt. Information shall be shared only as necessary for support, fair proceedings, or legal obligations; absolute confidentiality cannot be promised.

Established violations shall result in proportionate corrective or disciplinary action under applicable law and University rules, with due process. Measures may include restoring denied opportunities, correcting discriminatory practices, training, and applicable disciplinary sanctions. An unsubstantiated complaint alone shall not be treated as a knowingly false report.

Monitoring approval and effectivity

HRD and the designated student affairs office shall submit an annual anonymized review of opportunity gaps, training, complaints, response times, outcomes, and corrective actions. The University shall review this policy annually. Before effectivity, the approving authority shall confirm responsible officers, reporting contacts, procedures, and resources. This policy shall take effect only upon approval and communication to the University community.