



Targeted Harassment: Faculty Support Guidance

Issued By: The Division of Inclusive Excellence, Community and Belonging Subcommittee on Promoting and Supporting Inclusive Scholarship, Teaching and Professional Development, Office of the Provost, University Senate, Human Resources, Public Safety, Media and Public Relations, and Office of General Counsel.

Rowan University

Faculty Support and Safety Guidance for Targeted Harassment

This guidance document is designed to assist the Rowan University campus community in responding to situations in which faculty members are targeted by individuals or groups outside of the university based on the faculty member's scholarship, teaching, clinical care, or service content. While this guide primarily applies to faculty members, it also applies to staff and sometimes students. The guide addresses potential concerns and informs the campus community about resources available to assist individual faculty members, department chairs, deans, and other administrators.

The foundation and development for this guide is Rowan University's commitment and support for academic inquiry and freedom. The faculty's right to engage in academic freedom in teaching and research in an inclusive and responsive environment is essential to the university's educational mission, even with regard to controversial issues or ideas that may provoke disagreement in the public. Targeting faculty for their ideas or views not only impacts the wellbeing of academic scholars but also disrupts the fundamental role of an institution of higher education, which is to teach and learn.

Through this guide and other means, the university seeks to protect faculty against the intimidation or violence that the expression of controversial ideas may sometimes generate.

The attached guide is "content neutral," meaning it is designed to offer support for faculty members and other members of the Rowan community across a broad spectrum of views and areas. The guide focuses on threats or harassment to faculty members from external and outside sources from the university. Concerns about targeted harassment and discrimination from within the university toward faculty and professional staff should be brought to the Office of Employee Equity and Labor Relations <https://sites.rowan.edu/equity/harassment.html> and concerns related to students should be directed to the Office of Student Equity and Compliance <https://sites.rowan.edu/osec>.

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Introduction

Over the past decade, as more academic discourse has moved online and social media usage has increased, institutions of higher education have also seen a corresponding rise in coordinated campaigns against faculty, staff, and students, based on academic research.

These campaigns often result in intimidation and may create a hostile environment for academic inquiry for those whose identities, pedagogies, and research are congruent with categories from protected classes.

The effects of targeted harassment run contrary to the visionary mission, goals, and values of Rowan University. We are committed to the success of all learners and the recruitment and retention of diverse talent. As an Institution of Higher Education, Rowan University supports and is dedicated to making our campus a safe place for academic freedom for all members of its community.

Targeted harassment is a threat to knowledge creation on a scale beyond a single university, as it attempts to shut down research on certain types of topics. Because harassment campaigns are a relatively new phenomenon, this guide presents a collection of recommendations and resources for individuals and departments who find themselves targeted by harassment campaigns.

Background and Timeline of the Development of the Guidance

This policy developed from conversations related to the 2015 Senate-approved and recommended “[Statement of Principles](#),” which was adopted as University policy in October 2015.

In the years following the policy’s adoption, and particularly in 2020, national events heightened concern for targeted harassment campaigns against higher education faculty. These campaigns include practices such as online harassment, “doxxing” (or the public release of individuals’ private information in public space to encourage further harassment), and threats or acts of violence to the targeted individual, their loved ones, and property. Further, such campaigns frequently target historically underrepresented faculty such as women and people of color. There remained a concern among many faculty members, however, that Rowan’s academic freedom policies would not be sufficient to guide a response to a targeted harassment campaign.

In response to this growing concern and reported experiences of a number of Rowan faculty, the IECB Council’s subcommittee dedicate to Strategic Priority 3 (SPC3)

charged a group of its members and strategic collaborators from the Rowan community to draft a document of guidelines that could go through the Senate and be adopted as actionable university policy. Thus, the Targeted Harassment Subcommittee worked over the 2020-2021 academic year to create the document based on extant guidelines from other universities around the country. The members of that subcommittee were Leslie Allison allisonle@rowan.edu; Whitney Cox (co-chair) coxw@rowan.edu; Veronica Lynn Lex lexlex@rowan.edu; Stephanie Lezotte (co-chair) Lezotte@rowan.edu; and Edward Kazarian Kazarian@rowan.edu.

The following guidelines reflect the current approved version, adopted following extensive and repeated revision based upon review by the following groups between 2021-2024: SPC3 members, the Division of IECB leadership team, the Division of IECB's IECB Council, the University Senate Executive Committee, the Senate DEI Committee, the University Senate, General Counsel, the Provost's Office, and the President's Cabinet.

Recommended Roles and Actions

Role	Recommended Steps to Take and Things to Know
Individual Faculty Member	• Of primary importance when you've been targeted for harassment is your physical and emotional safety, both personally and through the university. <u>Outside</u> the university, you can look into the following: ○ Physical safety: ▪ Contact local police department ▪ On-campus: Public Safety ○ Emotional safety: ▪ Find a crisis hotline ▪ NJ Regional Hotlines ▪ Employee Advisory Service • Notify your department/college dean if you are a target. • Your department, dean, you, the Department of Public Safety, and/or Rowan's Emergency Preparedness Team will determine the risk and threat so you may plan a coordinated response moving forward. This can include classroom safety, safety when parking, and campus escorts if safety is at risk. • If you believe the harassers know where you live and you are concerned about safety in your home, and you are a victim of crime, speak with your local police directly and the Department of Public Safety may contact the local police department to keep them aware of the threat. You may be asked to speak with an officer to give details on the threats. These entities can provide resources and advice to create a personal safety plan outside of campus. • You may want to limit checking your inbox or voicemail for a time, but be sure not to delete any messages. Preserved messages may be of use in identifying the harassers and pressing any relevant charges. Seek out assistance to review and sort your incoming messages (e.g., find someone to read your messages and forward work-related ones to you and handle messages of a threatening nature as instructed by the Department of Public Safety.) • Create a log to document and archive all threatening emails, tweets, Facebook posts, and phone messages. If the harassment has compromised your psychological and emotional health, consider speaking with the Employee Advisory Service, department chair, or dean.

	• Consider not responding to threatening emails, tweets, blog comments, etc. Although responding may seem like the best thing to do, it may only provide harassers with additional material and serve to prolong social media harassment. If you choose not to respond, you may also want to encourage your friends and colleagues to do the same. • Know that you are not alone as an academician who has experienced this type of harassment. Several scholars have written about the coordinated and systemic patterns of attack against scholars and faculty members. The following resources may be helpful in considering your options when being harassed: 1. Fighting Targeted Harassment of Faculty 2. Facultyfirstresponders.com/administrators/ 3. Sociologists for Women in Society Recommendations for Institutions of Higher Education socwomen.org 4. What to do when you are an academic under attack by right-wing publications • Remember that all email communication you send and receive may be subject to a public records request under NJ's Open Public Records Act and the Federal Freedom of Information Act. • Protect your cyber-identity (e.g., cell phone, network access, social media). IRT can be of assistance. See IRT Security and Safe Computing. • You may wish to obtain counsel to help you navigate the different issues this targeted harassment may bring. • Consult with your chair/dean for assistance in responding to the situation. For example, you may want to consider preparing a concise message to articulate your position in your own words and distribute to colleagues as a form of reputation management. Communications staff can also be of assistance in deciding whether/how to respond to media requests that may arise. • Reach out to friends and develop a support system. The NJ Employee Advisory Service at 1-866-327-9133 helps employees with personal, family, or work related issues that may adversely impact their work performance. • If you feel this attack has hampered your progress toward promotion, tenure, or rehiring, work with your department chair and college dean to work to remedy this.
Department Chair/Head	• Contact the faculty member as soon as you become aware of the situation. Meet with them to offer support in the initial days of the

	attack and fill out the Faculty Safety & Support Checklist to document their experience. • Notify the Dean's office and remain in communication to ensure a coordinated response. Be mindful that all communication may be subject to NJ's Open Public Records Act www.nj.gov/grc/act.html and the Federal Freedom of Information Act www.foia.gov. • Assist the faculty member in preserving threats for investigation purposes sent via mail, e-mail, social media, or voicemail by referring them to IRT for assistance. • Work with the faculty to ensure on-campus and off-campus safety and security concerns are addressed. Be aware that the identity of the faculty may influence their personalized needs (e.g. parental status, faculty rank, minoritized identity). With the faculty member's consent, reach out to appropriate campus resources to address issues the faculty member identifies. If the faculty member does not consent, discuss safety measures that meet their needs. • Ensure departmental staff have need-to-know information, and are involved in crisis management protocols as necessary. For example, departmental staff may be on the front lines of receiving harassing phone calls or mail, so they may be provided with scripts for responding and given instructions on how to preserve messages and emails for investigation purposes. • Consider the wellbeing of all departmental faculty, staff, and students (e.g. co-authors, advisees, graduate assistants). Provide support resources as needed. • When necessary and if requested, facilitate the removal of faculty member's contact information from university web pages and directories in conjunction with HR and IRT. • After addressing the faculty member's safety and security concerns, have conversations with the faculty member about potential/perceived impacts on their academic career (e.g. research, scholarship, or publication trajectories). Discuss these concerns with the dean's office. • If you yourself become the target of harassment, consult with the dean's office and refer to the strategies recommended for faculty members above to ensure your own safety.
College Administration (Dean, Associate Dean)	• Notify (as appropriate): HR, the Department of Public Safety, the Office of the Provost, and the Division of Inclusive Excellence, Community and Belonging. • Notify and work with the Office of Media & Public Relations • Engage HR in coordination of college-wide response, including support for faculty and staff who may be directly or indirectly affected by the attacks (e.g. answering phone calls/mail, sharing

	faculty member's identity). Consult with the Division of Inclusive Excellence, Community and Belonging and/or Wellness Center if the faculty member's identity is under attack so that appropriate support can be put into place for faculty and staff who share identity characteristics and may also feel threatened or unsafe, in turn. • Evaluate protocols for dealing with <i>internal</i> threats and harassment. • In the event of an emergency, consult with the faculty member to discuss how to publicly handle the emergency. Involve faculty member's chair in crisis management communications to ensure efforts are coordinated. Be mindful that all communication may be subject to NJ's Open Public Records Act, www.nj.gov/grc/act.html and the Federal Freedom of Information Act www.foia.gov. • Support department chair in working with faculty on filling out the Faculty Safety & Support Checklist. • When applicable, discuss faculty member's concerns regarding trajectory of academic career with the Office of the Provost to discuss options. • Ensure dean's office staff have need-to-know information, and are involved in crisis management protocols as necessary. For example, the dean's office staff may be on the front lines of receiving harassing phone calls or mail, so they may be provided with scripts for responding and given instructions on how to preserve messages and emails for investigation purposes.
Central Administration (Provost, Vice President, IECB)	<u>Office of the Provost</u> • Establish a line of communication with the faculty's dean for two-way updates. Be mindful that all communication may be subject to NJ's Open Public Records Act, www.nj.gov/grc/act.html and the Federal Freedom of Information Act www.foia.gov. • Reach out to the faculty member and reiterate Rowan's commitment to academic freedom and faculty safety. • Work with Media/Public Relations and the Office of the President, as needed, on statements affirming academic freedom and the university's mission and values. <u>Office of the President</u> • Maintain consistent communication with the Office of the Provost and work together, as needed, with Media/Public Relations and the Office of the Provost, as needed, on statements affirming academic freedom and the university's mission and values. <u>Division of Inclusive Excellence, Community and Belonging</u>

	• Provide resources and support to the faculty member when attacks involve identity and/or diversity-related scholarship, creative activity, or teaching. • Establish a line of communication with the Office of the Provost for two-way updates. Be mindful that all communication may be subject to NJ's Open Public Records Act. www.nj.gov/grc/act.html and the Federal Freedom of Information Act www.foia.gov.
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Faculty Safety & Support Checklist

Faculty should fill out this checklist with their department chair/designee to help document the nature of the targeted harassment and provide appropriate resources and support to create a safety plan. It may be useful to note as much information as possible to limit the number of times the information needs to be re-told.

1. What is the nature of the harassment? When did it begin? How has it changed since it began? Be specific to document the dates, times, and locations of the incident(s).
2. Describe in as much detail as possible the incident(s) that have taken place. Please include the name(s) of any witnesses or individuals who may have knowledge of the incident(s).
3. Who is initiating the harassment, an individual or group? If it is a group, what is the name of the specific organization and when was the last time they contacted you?
4. In what environment(s) is the harassment taking place? (check all that apply)
 - Email (personal or work)
 - Social Media
 - Voicemail
 - Media Requests
 - On-campus stalking
 - In the classroom
 - In the office
 - At home
 - Harassment of family members
 - Other (explain above)
5. Is law enforcement currently involved and if not, what support would you like to receive from Rowan University Department of Public Safety? If so, what police department/municipality?
6. What are the primary safety concern(s)?
7. What are some things that can be done to remain safe while on and off campus?
8. Who should be called (family/friends) in case of emergency?
9. Additional comments that were not covered?
10. In what other ways would you like for the Rowan community to support you?

Resources and Referral

Actions	Resource(s)
Offers a walking escort service for any student, employee, or visitor who may feel unsafe walking from one location to another on campus.	Rowan Department of Public Safety
If needed and if feasible, can arrange for relocation of the faculty member's classroom(s) and/or office.	Department/College Leadership
If needed and if feasible, can remove faculty member's office and classroom listings from public listings (e.g. Rowan directory, section tally). Can provide assistance regarding how to preserve email, voicemails appropriate for potential use of evidence.	Information Resources & Technology (IRT) Rowan Department of Public Safety
If threats are of a sexual nature or gender-based, can provide guidance regarding any relevant Title IX or Title VII issues and procedures	Title IX Coordinator
Can provide media training to prepare individuals for contact with reporters, request for interviews, etc.	Media & Public Relations
Can provide support to those who feel their social identity is a component of the attack (e.g., faculty of color, LGBTQIA+ faculty). Can provide resources and support for others in the unit who share the individual's identity and who may also feel threatened.	Division of IECB
Can provide support and guidance to researchers who may be the target of a threat due to research content or methodology (i.e. use of animal subjects)	Division of University Research
Can provide information about available campus and external resources to address stress management and counseling services.	Wellness Center New Jersey Employee Assistance Program nj.gov/njsp/eap/employee-assistance-program.shtml

Relevant Rowan University Policies and Resources

Policies & Guidance

Disruptive Behavior and Workplace Violence Policy

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Disruptive+Behavior+and+Workplace+Violence+Policy>

Free Speech Policy

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Free+Speech+Policy>

New Jersey State Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace

https://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/pdf/anti_discrimination_policy.pdf

Openness in Research Policy

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Openness+in+Research+Policy>

Political Activity on Campus: Guidelines

<https://sites.rowan.edu/generalcounsel/docs/rowan-university-political-activity-on-campus-guidelines-1-19-21.pdf>

Statement of Principles

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Statement+of+Principles>

Rowan University Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace and Educational Environment

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/display/POLICY/Policy+Prohibiting+Discrimination+in+the+Workplace+and+Educational+Environment>

Title IX Sexual Harassment/Sexual Assault Policy

<https://confluence.rowan.edu/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=132646706>

Campus Resources

These offices can assist during crisis management and/or provide longer-term guidance and support. Please be aware that email communication with these offices may be considered a public record subject to the [New Jersey Open Public Records Act](http://www.nj.gov/grc/act.html) www.nj.gov/grc/act.html and the Federal [Freedom of Information Act](http://www.foia.gov) www.foia.gov.

Division of Inclusive Excellence, Community and Belonging:

<https://sites.rowan.edu/inclusive-excellence-community-belonging>

Address: Savitz (street level)

Phone: 856-256-5520

Email: IECB@rowan.edu

Emergency Management:

<https://sites.rowan.edu/publicsafety/emergencyservices/officeofemergency/aboutemergencyprep.html>

Address: Bole Hall Annex

Phone: 856-256-4566

Email: kantner@rowan.edu

General Counsel: <https://sites.rowan.edu/generalcounsel/index.html>

Address: Bole Hall, 2nd Floor

Phone: 856-256-5110

Email: legalreview@rowan.edu

Human Resources: <https://sites.rowan.edu/hr/index.html>

Address: Oak Hall

Phone: 856-256-4134

Email: hr@rowan.edu

IRT: <https://irt.rowan.edu/>

Address: Memorial Hall

Phone: 856-256-4400

Email: support@rowan.edu

Media & Public Relations: <https://sites.rowan.edu/universityrelations/media.html>

Address: Bole Hall, 1st floor

Phone: 856-256-4236

Provost: <https://sites.rowan.edu/academic-affairs/officeoftheprovoast/index.html>

Address: Bole Hall, 1st Floor

Phone: 856-256-4011

NJ State Employee Advisory Service:

<https://www.nj.gov/csc/employees/programs/advisory/eas.html>

Address: 44 South Clinton Avenue, Trenton, NJ 08609

Phone: 1-866-327-9133 (24/7)

Email: EAS_Help@csc.nj.gov

Public Safety: <https://sites.rowan.edu/publicsafety/index.html>

Address: Bole Annex

Phone (Emergency): 856-256-4911

Phone (Non-emergency/Crime Prevention): 856-256-4922

Research: <https://research.rowan.edu/>

Address: South Jersey Technology Park, Suite 103

Phone: 856-256-5599

Email: research@rowan.edu

Title IX Coordinator: <https://sites.rowan.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/departments/osec/titleix/ix-reporting.html>

Address: Savitz Hall, Rm 203

Phone: 856-256-5440

Email: mulligan@rowan.edu

Wellness Center: <https://sites.rowan.edu/wellness/index.html>

Address: Winans Hall

Phone: 856-256-4333

Email: wellnesscenter@rowan.edu

References

The above guidelines consulted a range of resources but were particularly informed by the following:

- Elon University's "[Faculty Support and Safety Guidance for Targeted Harassment](#)," Policy D22C in the 2022-2023 Faculty Handbook
- The University of Iowa's "[Faculty Support Guidance](#)" document, updated June 10, 2021