



Women Empowerment Cell

Women Empowerment Cell (WEC) has been constituted to empower and safeguard the rights of female members; faculty staff and students of the University. The WEC works to promote gender sensitivity in the university and conduct diverse programmes to educate, sensitize both male and female members and produce harmonious atmosphere on the campus. It works for the welfare of the students and faculty towards preparing them in to competent professionals to take up greater challenges in the academic sphere. The Registrar nominates the members of WEC.

It organizes workshops and sensitization programmes both for staff and students by eminent Psychologists and social workers.

The committee also addresses similar kind of issues on various occasions like:

- Women's day
- Mother's day
- Father's day
- Orientation day

Composition of Woman Empowerment Cell:

Dr. N. Usha Rani - Chairperson

Mrs. A. Sharada – Co-Chairperson

As per guidelines of Vice chancellor, the **Women Empowerment Cell** has constituted a separate committee to look into and consider the complaints regarding sexual harassment. It conducts enquiries suggesting suitable action.

Anti Sexual Harassment Cell

The cell was constituted to meet the four basic objectives.

- a) To develop the guidelines and norms for a policy against sexual harassment.
- b) To develop principles and procedures for combating sexual harassment.
- c) To work out details for the implementation of the policy.
- d) To prepare a detailed plan of action, both short and long term.

The Chairperson and Members of the Anti Sexual Harassment Cell are as follows:

Chairperson: Dr. Usha Rani, Professor, ECE

Co-Chairperson – Mrs. A. Sharada, Assoc. Professor, S&H

Secretary – Dr. M. Nirupamabhatt, Asst. Professor, IT

Members

Mrs. N. Suman Chowdary, Asst. Professor, EEE

Mrs. B. Suvarna, Asst. Professor, CSE

Mrs. Ch. Hymavathi, Asst. Professor, MBA

Student Members:

1. Ms. M. Srija, ECE (121FA05036)
2. Ms. Ch. Sravani, ECE (131FA05009)
3. Ms. M. Bhavana, CSE (131FA04031)
4. Ms. K. Kavya, Biotech (141FA1076)
5. Ms. K. ISwarya, CSE (141FA04143)

The definitions and policies of Anti-Sexual Harassment Cell are as mentioned below:

a. Sexual Harassment

Any unwelcome sexually motivated behavior, whether directly or by implication involving physical contacts or advances, demand for sexual favors, sexually-tainted remarks, and other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal expressions of a sexual nature which affects women's right to work in a congenial environment at the workplace.

Scope

The provision of these rules and procedures shall apply to all students and academic and non-academic staff of VFSTR UNIVERSITY(VU). These rules and regulations shall be applicable to all complaints of sexual harassment made by:

- 1) A student against member/members of academic or non-academic staff or co-students or a member of the academic or non-academic community against a student/ students or another member of the academic or non-academic community within and outside the campus.
- 2) A service provider against a student/students or a member/ members of the academic or non-academic staff or a student or a member of academic or non-academic staff against an outsider or service provider, if the alleged sexual harassment is reported to have taken place within the campus.

Functions

Mediation of crises arising out of incidence of sexual assault or sexual harassment occurring in the campus, overview of campus security services to ensure prompt intimation to the Committee of VU of all incidents of alleged sexual harassment, organizing of training programmes for the staff and the students of VU to equip them well for handling sexual harassment cases and assistance to aggrieved parties in the campus to make complaints to suitable authority in deserving cases. Meetings of the committee with the students and staff members shall be organized to create awareness and to ensure a healthy environment on the campus.

B. Filing of complaints

- a. Complaints of sexual harassment shall be lodged with the Committee. Such complaints should be taken up by the Committee for resolution through mediation, conciliation, as promptly as possible, but by not later than two days after the complaint on the alleged incident is received.
- b. The complaints should be made in writing. If the complainant is not able to give in writing himself/herself, the complaint can be given in writing or his/her behalf by his/her companion.
- c. Normally, a complaint should be lodged within a week after the incident. In special circumstances, the time limit for the submission of complaints may be extended to a month. The special circumstances that led to the granting of such extension should be recorded by the committee.
- d. The complainant is at liberty to withdraw the complaint at any stage of enquiry, provided such withdrawal is made independently and under free will. The enquiry may be terminated on receipt of the request for such withdrawal.
- e. A restraint order may be served on the accused, giving him/her a summary of the complaint and warning him/her against making any attempt to exert pressure on the

complainant or any other person involved in dealing with the complaint.

- f. The complainant may bring to the notice of the Committee, attempts if any made by the accused to violate the order.
- g. The Committee is empowered to terminate the enquiry proceeding and to give ex-parte decision on the complaint, on valid grounds.
- h. The Committee may appoint an enquiry committee to make investigations into the complaint if deemed necessary.
- i. It shall submit a detailed report communicating its findings based on its investigations. The Committee shall pronounce its verdict, whether the accused is/are guilty or not guilty. The committee in cases in which the accused is/are found guilty, should indicate the gravity of the offence, whether it is major, serious or minor.
- m. The enquiry committee shall complete the enquiry in the shortest possible time, not exceeding a month from the date on which the complaint is referred to it, except for special reasons.
- n. The complainant/s and the accused shall be given reasonable opportunity to present and defend their cases. Witnesses may be called if deemed necessary. In case the accused fail/s to attend consecutively for three hearings despite call notices for the same, the enquiry may be terminated and the decision taken on the complaint on ex-prate basis.
- o. Counseling services may be made available to the victims and the accused, on request.
- p. If the complainant, the accused and the witnesses desire to be accompanied by a companion of their choice, they may be permitted to do so, provided the person so chosen will have only observer status and shall leave the meeting after making his/her testimony.
- q. The complainant and the accused shall have the right of cross-examination of all witnesses.
- r. The enquiry committee shall have the right to disallow questions from the victim or the accused, if the questions are deemed irrelevant and unnecessary.
- s. All persons heard by the enquiry committee, as well as observers, shall take and observe an oath of secrecy about the proceedings.

C. Redressive Disciplinary Action:

Committee would pass on the findings of the enquiry committee to the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, CURAJ for taking appropriate redressive action. If the Vice Chancellor finds that there is requirement for further investigation and, he may order for a review of the Report by the enquiry committee and may even refer the case to competent legal authority, if it is of a grave nature.

D. False/Baseless Complaint

- 1. If the enquiry committee finds no merit in a complaint, the Chairperson of Committee

may issue a show-cause notice to the complainant requiring him/her to explain within three days as to why disciplinary action should not be taken against him/her. In the event of a negative insufficient or unconvincing explanation, Committee shall pass on the papers to the Vice Chancellor, VU for imposing appropriate penalty in order to exclude the possibility of recurrence of such motivated complaints.

2. In complaints involving faculty and students, the faculty shall not teach or supervise the work of the student concerned during the period of enquiry and till the decision on the case. Members of the academic and /or non-academic staff involved in such complaints either as the victim or the accused shall not write the confidential reports of the complainant or the victim during the enquiry and decision of the case.