

Criterion-V
STUDENT SUPPORT & PROGRESSION

5.1 Student Support

5.1.5

Grievance redressal policy document with reference to prevention of sexual harassment and anti-ragging committees

SSR Cycle – 3



Since 1881

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE, MADURAI - 625002
(An Autonomous Institution affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University)



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An Autonomous Institution Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University

Re-accredited (2nd Cycle) by NAAC with Grade "A" CGPA – 3.46 on a 4 point scale

Since 1881

Grievance Redressal Policy

Introduction

The American College believes in total student autonomy in the campus. In fact, it is unique about the college that generation of students cherish. It believes strongly that we students learn everything for life better only when they experience autonomy. Our concept of total autonomy inculcates in them a sense of responsibility, mutual trust, respect for the other gender, persons otherwise challenged, the socially marginalized, economically weak, and the juniors. It does not foster any kind of discrimination in the name of caste, creed, community, race, language, and age. Once a student join the college, they get a feeling that they are members of the same family. This feeling of togetherness binds everyone in the campus and it fosters zero tolerance for any kind of discrimination. Senior students are involved in socializing freshers from Day One of the College Orientation and Welcome Parties at the Department Level and in the Residential Hall. The college has the policy of inclusive Hostel Day celebrations wherein 1500+ residents, both men and women celebrate and learn mutual respect for each other.

Rationale for Mechanisms

However, a campus with 9000+ student students, 300+ faculty members, and equal number of non-teaching can theoretically witness unwanted and undesirable experience due to diversity and heterogeneity of the background of the population. Hence, as a measure of caution, the administration has put in place all possible mechanisms in nip any untoward incident that might pose danger to the ecology of the college campus. It scrupulously follows the guidelines issued from the statutory and regulatory bodies. In addition, the college has been having several built-in systems of governance to supervise the overall smooth functioning of total autonomy for students.

The College Calendar as a Source of Support

The College Calendar is an important document for all direct stakeholders in the college. All students are given a copy of the same every year with updates. It contains all necessary information about all aspects of campus life. It starts with the college motto and objective followed by the detailed academic calendar for the entire year. It is scrupulously followed in letter and spirit except the unforeseen occasions. Any student who reads it will understand their

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responsibility from Day One. They understand that the college does not compromise with the quality of education. It subordinates all other activities thought they are complementary in nature. All stakeholders take pride in discharging their duties without waiting for any command from the higher-ups. The system takes care of everything.

Administration by Committees

The college has statutory and non-statutory bodies. One such statutory body is called the Senatus which is answerable straight to the College Governing Council. It has several sub-committees. Two senatus sub-committees that are relevant here are **Discipline Committee** and **Counselling & Guidance Committee**. The composition of these two committees are found on page 59 of the College Calendar for the academic year 2019-2020. As per the UGC guidelines, the college has an **Anti-Ragging Committee** whose composition is found on page 72 of the College Calendar for the academic year 2019-2020. The committees meet periodically as and when they received petitions or complaints. We have five residential halls with faculty-wardens living in official bungalows on the campus. All Halls are managed round the clock by **Residential Faculty Superintendents**. It ensures a kind of community life and there are very few cases of ragging and discipline-breaching cases. All students do understand that rules are to safeguard the safety and happiness of everyone.

Mechanism for Prevention of Sexual Harassment

The academic administration is taken care of by the Principal who is also the Secretary of the college, vice-principal who takes care of the overall discipline in the college, and the Bursar who takes care of all finance. These three Officers of the College are supported by Academic Administrators. Among them the Office of the Dean of Women Students plays an effective role to meet all the needs of women students. This office has one Dean and one Additional Dean of Women Students. They solve all problems related to women including sexual harassment, if any. The college administration has not received any case of sexual harassment. The very location of Women's Hall adjacent to a Men's Hall stands as a credible witness for community life in the campus.

Annual Feedback Sessions

In addition to academic feedback both at the department level and the college level through the Office of the Dean for Curriculum Development and Research, the college organizes two feedback sessions to the aided and self-financed students at the end of the academic year. Elected class representative and the class topper attend the session. It is organized by the Office of the Dean of Academic Policies & Administration and the student grievances about all aspects of campus life can be aired out and they are meticulously minuted and action taken on its basis.

Online and Offline Grievances Mechanisms

Students are encouraged to send in their grievances that they face in daily life through online and offline. In addition to the 'Intendent Slips' that are available in residential halls and all departments and 'Suggestion Boxes' that are kept in all buildings, all 9000+ students have access to the Principal's and Wardens' **Whats App Numbers** and they can send their grievances through texts and pictures. Students have created **American College Memes** through which they convey subtly and humorously their views. The Administration is sensitive to it and punitive as it is elsewhere. It appreciates students' creativity and novelty.

Evidence of Success

1. While unrest by students of city colleges on even trivial issues appear in the newspapers, NO such situation has arisen in The American College.
2. Academic events scheduled in the college calendar by the College Calendar Committee and approved by the Senatus and the Faculty are implemented.
3. 1500 men and women students live in the campus residential Halls without any problem arising out of either sexual harassment or ragging.
4. The Office of the Dean of Women Students has received NIL petition/complaint on sexual harassment.
5. No warden has reported any case of ragging in the Halls.
6. Senior students are conducting the Orientation Programme for the Freshers in their departments and within a month they are conducting welcome parties to the freshers in the department and the Halls so that all mingle with each other as members of the same family.