Workplace Violence Policy

Policy Statement
Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and the maintenance of a respectful working environment. A safe and secure environment is a fundamental prerequisite for fulfilling WPI’s mission of teaching and research. Therefore, WPI will not tolerate threats, threatening conduct, or any other act of aggression or violence in the workplace or in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, office outings, or at business related social events. WPI reaffirms the basic right of all faculty and staff to a safe and humane working environment. All members of the faculty/staff community will be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness at all times.

Workplace Defined
Workplace, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as any WPI owned, managed, or leased property, including WPI vehicles or private vehicles being used for WPI business.

Who is Covered
All faculty and staff

Prohibited Conduct
WPI will not tolerate any type of workplace violence committed by or against faculty or staff. Workplace violence, for the purpose of this policy, is defined as any behavior that creates a work environment that a reasonable person would find intimidating, threatening, violent, or abusive, regardless of whether the behavior may affect a person’s psychological or physical well-being and ability to do his/her job. Examples include but are not limited to:

a. Physical assault or battery
b. Threats to do physical harm that are made either verbally, non-verbally, electronically, or through a third party
c. Aggressive or intimidating behavior that would lead a reasonable person to feel physically afraid
d. Intentional damage or threat of damage to property, computers, or equipment owned, operated, or controlled by WPI
e. Unauthorized possession, use, or display of firearms or weapons, or any inappropriate use of other dangerous materials or devices on WPI property
f. Stalking
g. Domestic violence
h. Rape
i. Bullying

Reporting Procedures
All faculty and staff are responsible for notifying a supervisor or the Office of Human Resources of any threats which they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received. Faculty and staff should also report any behavior they have witnessed which they regard as threatening or violent when that behavior is or might be carried out on WPI property or in connection with WPI employment. In instances where immediate fear for safety is present, WPI Campus Police (x5555) or emergency personnel (911) should be notified first. All reports or incidents of workplace violence will be investigated by the Workplace Violence Prevention Team, and those warranting confidentiality will be handled appropriately and information will be disclosed to others only on a need-to-know basis. Retaliation toward an employee bringing forward a workplace violence complaint will not take place and will not be tolerated.

Workplace Violence Prevention Team
The WPI Workplace Violence Prevention Team is made up of the following individuals:

a. Vice President for Human Resources
b. Executive Vice President/CFO
c. Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police
d. Worcester Police Department Representative
e. The Employee Assistance Program representative

Investigations
All reports of workplace violence will be taken seriously and will be investigated by the Workplace Violence Prevention Team. If necessary, Respondents may be temporarily put on administrative leave with pay while the investigation takes place, and a Safety Plan will be devised for the Complainants. At the conclusion of the investigation, violations of the workplace violence policy will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination from WPI.

Workplace Violence Information for Faculty and Staff
WPI shall provide opportunities for all faculty and staff to receive educational resources on the risk factors associated with workplace violence, and the proper handling of emergency situations in order to minimize the risks of violent incidents occurring in the workplace.