



PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR

P.O. Box 619 Butare Rwanda- Phone: (+ 250)788310 811

Web site: www.piass.ac.rw Email: vice.chancellor@piass.ac.rw, fathebu@yahoo.fr

PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)



SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY



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1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The institution which later on became the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences was founded in 1970 by mainline protestant churches that were operating in Rwanda. The institution was then called “Ecole de Theologie de Butare: ETB” (Butare School of Theology). In 1990, it was upgraded into Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare (FTPB) which got official accreditation in 1993 by the convention No 1552 of 09 December 1993. In the same year, the convention No 1554/09.2/01/02 acknowledged the degrees delivered by the FTPB.

In the aftermath of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the founders of the institution, in the collaboration with the FTPB national and international partners deployed a lot of efforts to help FTPB resume its activities in such a way that specific needs of a recovering society could be met. In that perspective, a so-called Special Program was launched in 1995 and lasted till 2001: three successive intakes of students have been trained over two years and educated in contextual and practical theological training through those kinds of crash courses. The graduates of the Special program were awarded with Diploma in Protestant Theology. As of 1999, the FTPB returned to the ordinary four years’ program of Hon. Bachelor’s degree in Protestant Theology.

In 2009, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: The Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)”. Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. In 2010, the French name was changed to Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the Ministerial Order no 09/11 of November 2009 licensing “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)” and the ministerial order n°29 of 19/07/2010 recognizing the Institute under the new name of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS).



1.1. PIASS Philosophy

PIASS holds the view that faith and science are indispensable tools for any society to survive and harness moral obligation of people to creatively improve the socio-economic environment in which they can survive and realize their potential. This can only be achieved through a well-conceptualized educational and scientific package through which everyone must rightfully experience and acquire the tools to facilitate this philosophy.

1.2. PIASS's Statement of Faith

PIASS affirms the following as fundamental to Christian belief, practice, and behavior.

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word originally given by God through revelation to humans, are inspired, true, and entirely trustworthy in all that it intends to teach, and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct since they contain all things necessary for salvation.
2. There is ONE GOD, eternally existent in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the world and of life thanks to His universal sovereignty over all that He has made in heaven and on earth.
4. Our Lord Jesus Christ, incarnated God, was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, true God, and a true man without sin. His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His present mediatorial work, and His personal return in Power and Glory to judge the living and the dead remain a firm source of our hope for the present and life to come.
5. The Holy Spirit, one of the persons of the Trinity, witnesses to Christ, regenerates, and sanctifies us. His indwelling enables us to witness and serve the Triune God and humankind through different spiritual gifts and talents.
6. Man and woman were created by God in His image, free and responsible to choose good or evil. By sin, human beings were corrupted in their nature and were separated from their Creator.



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7. Salvation for humans remains the work of God, accomplished through Jesus Christ's expiatory death and bodily resurrection. In His grace, God justifies the sinner through faith alone.
8. The unity of all those who, through believing and confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, form a community of children of God, the Church, the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. The bodily resurrection of all the dead, the final judgment, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom of Christ.

As a Church-owned institution, PIASS's overall conviction and calling are to build a world in which the love of God for His creation and that we have for one another is visible and lived in concrete experiences. To stand firm in its faith and succeed in its mission, the following commitments and strategies are set as safeguards:

1. PIASS is committed to reading, teaching, and preaching the Holy Scriptures in their plain and canonical sense through an in-depth analysis, and to applying their message.
2. PIASS is committed to promoting Ecumenism within it and among Protestant Churches in Rwanda and beyond as an opportunity and strategy to affirm our Christian witness and fight against separatism, destructive fundamentalism, and any form of extremism.
3. PIASS is engaged in the ministry of reconciliation and search for peace within surrounding communities, in the Rwandan society, and in the Great Lakes sub-region.
4. PIASS is committed to supporting initiatives likely to improve the living conditions of communities.
5. PIASS is committed to supporting the weakest among us and to building healing communities where everyone finds a place.

1.3. PIASS Vision

“To be a reference university, fostering knowledge development and research that is relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.”



1.4. PIASS Mission

“To provide Society and Churches with well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are moving to a global, modern and pluralistic world.”

1.5. PIASS Moto

Fides et Scientia (Faith and Science): By this moto, PIASS assumes that faith and science are interwoven to ensure the quality of life.

1.6. PIASS Objectives

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:

- To develop practical and applicable knowledge in social as well as economic development.
- To impart a high-quality teaching enabling creation of employment and that proves relevant to communities is close to reality, helpful for the society at large.
- To contribute to the positive transformation of society using short teaching and training, research, consultancy and projects and respect to ethical dimension.
- To contribute to local and national sustainable development by promoting scientific and technological research as well as research for integrated development.

1.7. Principles and values

Being a Protestant institution of Higher Education, PIASS ethical values are grounded in its statement of faith.

- **Liberation:** As the Gospel of Christ liberates from all human alienations here and now, bearing witness to it cannot go without running social dialogue with the society and serving the poor.
- **Relevance:** Higher education plays a key role in construction and development of a just, equitable and stable society through the training of committed, responsible and professionally competent citizens.



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- **Unity in Diversity:** Open and respectful exchange of ideas along with evidence-based documentation is essential to higher education contribution to a pluralistic society.
- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** Finding out the optimal and cost-effective way to reach objectives, in changing environment and limitation of resources and keeps on being result and solution oriented.
- **Quality Service Delivery:** Training, research, and services to both national and international communities must be qualitative and competitive.
- **Innovation:** Teaching and learning processes are considering changing needs of churches and society and therefore programs are continually assessed and improved accordingly in a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels.
- **Responsibility:** Teachers, students and administrative staff, to achieve their job, are expected to make decisions, act upon their choices, delegate and report openly.
- **Solidarity:** Promoting a gender balanced culture and stressing on the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering team spirit and looking for win-win partnerships with other institutions of higher learning.
- **Transparency:** Managing resources of the institution in a rigorous and transparent manner.
- **Good Governance:** Fairness, equity without discrimination, clear delegation and decentralization are adopted at all levels of the institution.
- **Prayerful life:** Prayer as a conversation with God and a means for self-examination can bring about a sense of inner peace, spiritual refreshment, and more commitment to sever God, fellow humans, and the whole creation.
- **Hard work:** The necessity for hard work is not only a way to attain prosperity and wealth for oneself and society, but it also remains a calling to fulfill the mandate given to human beings to take care of creation and fructify it in a sustainable way.
- **Equality and Inclusivity:** All members of the PIASS community are equal. We believe in a fair and respectful manner so that each member of the PIASS community has an equal opportunity to contribute to the University's operations. We promote the safety,



security and wellbeing of society and our environment by acting in accordance with the University's equality and diversity policy.

POLICY STATEMENT /PURPOSE

The Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences strives to provide a safe and secure educational and workplace environment. Sexual harassment in the University environment, and activities is prohibited, which includes sexual assault and abuse, dating, domestic violence, and stalking, collectively called “Sexual Harassment” for the purposes of this Policy. The prohibited conduct under this Policy also includes attempting or aiding and abetting sexual harassment or reacting against another for exercising his/her rights under this Policy.

Objectives of the Policy

1. To evolve a mechanism for the prevention of sexual harassment cases and other acts of psychological violence in the institution.
2. To ensure the implementation of the policy in the letter and spirit through proper reporting of the complaints and their follow-up procedures.
3. To provide an environment free of gender-based discrimination.
4. To ensure equal access of all facilities and participation in activities of the college
5. To create a secure physical and social environment which will deter acts of sexual harassment
6. To promote a social and psychological environment that will raise awareness about sexual harassment in its various forms.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

The strict legal understanding of sexual harassment includes two forms: quid pro quo and hostile environment sexual harassment” (Meyer, 2008). Moreover, sexual violence based on the sexual abuse lens includes direct physical contact, such as unwanted touching or any kind of rape, known as “defilement” for young people under the legal age of consent. (USAID, 2016). Summarily, any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual favour, unwanted sexual comments or



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advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home, school, and work (Krug et al., (2002). This is explicitly seen in the following three lenses,

1. Physical contact and advances;
2. A demand or request for sexual favours;
3. Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature

Where any of these acts is committed in circumstances in which, the victim of such conduct has a reasonable apprehension that relates to the victim's employment or enrolment in the institution where she is earning a salary, or honorarium or otherwise. Such conduct can be humiliating and may constitute a health and safety problem. It is discriminatory for instance when the woman has reasonable grounds to believe that her objection would disadvantage her in connection with her employment or work or studentship including recruiting or promotion or academics wherein a hostile work environment is created. Adverse consequences might be visited if the victim does not consent to the conduct in question or raises any objection thereto.

Jurisdiction

The rules and regulations outlined in this policy shall be applicable to all complaints of sexual harassment:

1. By a member of the institution against any other member irrespective of where the harassment is alleged to have taken place within or outside the campus.
2. By an outsider against a member of the college or by a member of the college against an outsider if the sexual harassment is alleged to have taken place within the campus.
3. By a member of the college against an outsider if the sexual harassment is alleged to have taken place outside the campus. In such cases the Committee shall recommend that the college authorities should initiate action by making a complaint with the appropriate authority. Furtherance to this, the committee will actively assist and provide available resources to the complainant in pursuing the complaint.



Composition of the Anti – Sexual Harassment Committee

1. The Committee shall be headed by a senior woman and shall be designated as the “**Chairperson**”
2. The committee shall have two senior women drawn from the teaching staff, at least one senior male teaching staff, including one-woman administrative staff, and the Dean of Students.
3. The committee shall have three nominated student representatives.
4. The committee shall have one nominated person from the top management.

Powers of the Committee

1. The Committee shall have the power to call witnesses and request documents or any information from any employee/student that shall help in the prosecution of the case.
2. If the Committee has reason to believe that any employee/student is capable of furnishing relevant documents or information, it may direct such person to produce such documents or information by serving a notice in writing to that person, calling the person, or calling for such documents or information at the place and within such time as may be specified in the written notice.
3. Where any relevant document or information is recorded or stored by means of a mechanical, electronic or other device, the Committee shall have the power to direct that the same be produced, or that a clear reproduction in writing of the same be handed to the committee.
4. Upon production of documents / information called for by it, the Committee shall have the power to (i) make copies of such documents / information or extracts; or (ii) retain such documents / information for such period as may be deemed necessary for purposes of the proceedings before it.
5. The Committee shall have the power to issue interim directions to / with regard to any person participating in the proceedings before it.
6. The Committee shall have the power to recommend the action to be taken against any person found guilty of (a) sexually harassing the complainant; (b) retaliating against /



victimizing the complainant or any other person before it; and (c) making false charges of sexual harassment against the accused person.

Functions of the Committee

1. Preventive Steps.

It will be the endeavor of the committee:

1. To facilitate a safe environment that is free of sexual harassment;
2. To promote behaviors that create an atmosphere that ensures gender equality and equal opportunities

2. Remedial Steps.

1. To ensure that the mechanism for registering complaints is safe, accessible and sensitive.
2. To take awareness of complaints about sexual harassment, conduct enquiries, provide assistance to the victims, recommend penalties and take action against the harasser, if necessary.
3. To advise the competent authority to issue warnings or seek the help of legal instruments to stop the harasser, if the complainant consents.
4. To seek medical, police and legal intervention with the consent of the complainant.
5. To make arrangements for appropriate psychological, emotional and physical support (in form of counseling, security and other assistance) to the victim if so desires.

Procedure to be Followed by the Committee

1. The Committee shall meet as and when any complaint is received by it. Complaint may be received by any member of the committee.
2. The Committee may direct the complainant to prepare and submit a detailed statement of the incidents if the written complaint lacks exactness and required more evidence, within a period of two (2) days from such direction or another time period that the Committee may decide.



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3. The Committee shall direct the accused employee(s)/student(s) to prepare and submit a written response to the complaint / allegations within a period of four (4) days from such direction or other time period as the Committee may decide.
4. Each party shall be provided with a copy of the written statement(s) submitted by the other.
5. The Committee shall conduct the proceedings in accordance with the principles of natural justice. It shall allow both parties reasonable opportunity of presenting their case.
6. The Committee shall allow both parties to produce relevant documents and witnesses to support their case. Documents produced by either party shall be attached with that party's signature to certify the document as original.
7. The Committee shall sit on a day-to-day basis to record and consider the evidence produced by both parties.
8. As far as practicable, all proceedings of the Committee shall take place in the presence of both parties.
9. Minutes of all proceedings of the Committee shall be prepared and duly signed by the members of the Committee.
10. The Committee shall make all endeavor to complete its proceedings within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of receipt of complaint.
11. The Committee shall record its findings in writing supported by reasons and shall forward the same with its recommendations, to the top management, within a period of five (5) days from completion of the proceedings before it. In case the Committee finds that the facts disclose the commission of a criminal offence by the accused person, this shall be specifically mentioned in the Committee's report.
12. If, in the course of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that the *case* of sexual harassment is made out against the accused employee(s)/student and that there is any chance of the recurrence of any such action, or that it is required to do so in the interests of justice, it may, on the request of the complainant or otherwise, disciplinary action could be initiated in the form of a:
 1. Warning
 2. Written apology



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3. Bond of good behaviour
 4. Adverse remarks in the confidential report
 5. Refusing from supervisory duties
 6. Denial of membership of statutory bodies
 7. Denial of re-employment/re - admission
 8. Stopping of increments and promotion
 9. Reverting, demotion
 10. Suspension
 11. Dismissal
 12. Any other relevant mechanism
13. If, in the course of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that any person has retaliated against / victimized the complainant or any person assisting the complainant as a result of the complaint having been made or such assistance having been offered, the Committee shall report the same in writing, to the top management, with reasons and with recommendations of the action to be taken against such person.
14. If, at the culmination of the proceedings before it, the Committee is satisfied that the complainant has knowingly brought false charges of sexual harassment against any person, it shall report the same in writing to the top management, with reasons and with recommendations of the action to be taken against such person.

Annual Report

The Chairperson of the Committee will prepare an Annual Report at the end of each academic year, giving a full account of the activities of the Committee during the year.

Approved By PIASS Council at Huye on 25th June 2023

Chairman of PIASS Council