

The nature of and common circumstances relating to bias related crime on college campuses;

Hate crime laws are designed to send the message that hate and bias-motivated crimes will not be tolerated, because they are often attempts to silence and instill fear into entire groups. Reporting hate-related incidents helps survivors take advantage of recovery services and enables our community to build up statistics and patterns of crime, providing an opportunity of catching offenders or preventing the violence altogether.

The key criterion in determining whether or not any crime or not any crime or incident fits into the definition of a hate or bias-related crime is the motivation behind the incident. A hate or bias related crime is one that is motivated, at least in part, because of someone's bias or hatred of a person's or group's perceived race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other characteristic. Victims of hate and bias related crimes often have intense feelings of vulnerability, anger, depression, physical ailments, learning problems, and difficult interpersonal relations. Hate crimes also have a psychological and emotional impact that extends far beyond the victim. Attacks motivated on the basis of bias against a person's beliefs, values or identity undermine freedom of expression, association, and assembly and tear at the pluralistic fabric of our society.

Using slurs and epithets is a way of showing someone that you believe they are less than human and undeserving of respect. Hate crimes are a way to send a message to members of certain groups or individuals that they are unwelcome in a particular neighborhood, community, school or workplace. Calling someone a name, refusing to rent them an apartment, verbal threats, vandalism, abusive phone calls and Internet hate mail are all examples of hate crimes. The most common form of bias motivated incidents on college campuses are demeaning jokes or harassing or threatening phone calls or e-mails. However, bias related physical attacks and vandalism do also occur. You can make a difference by speaking out when jokes or comments are made that are hateful or demeaning and by asking yourself if you use derogatory, degrading or offensive terms in describing others.

Observing general safety tips may help you to avoid becoming the victim of a hate or bias related crime. Be alert to your surroundings, both inside and outside. Listen to and act upon your feelings and instincts. Notice people, the lighting, and access to phones and exits. Use elevators, stairs and

restrooms in well-trafficked areas. Don't study alone in an empty classroom. Avoid deserted parking lots, empty laundry rooms and other poorly lit or poorly populated locations. When possible, walk with a friend instead of walking alone in secluded area or at night. When riding the subways during less traveled times of day, ride in the middle car with the conductor or the first car with the engineer.

Carry a whistle and blow it for attention when necessary. If you feel threatened while walking, cross the street, change direction or run to a place where there are other people. If a car is following you, turn around and walk quickly in the opposite direction. Get the license plate number and description if possible. If you are being followed on foot, turn around to let the person know you have seen them and then run to a place where a number of people will be.

Always keep your apartment and car doors locked. If you live in an apartment with a fire escape outside a back window, you should secure it with a fire department approved gate, an alarm, or some barrier system. A window lock is not enough. Always close your blinds/shades/curtains at night. If you decide to bring someone home, introduce him or her to a friend, acquaintance or bartender so that someone knows whom you left with. When driving a friend home, establish a signal that the friend is in the home and safe before you drive away. If a stranger is at your door, do not give the impression that you are home alone. Shout over your shoulder or indicated in some way that there is another person present. Never open the door to strangers without verifying their identity by asking for an identification tag. Do not give out personal information over the phone or Internet.

Finally, report all incidents of violence or harassment. Contact City Tech Public Safety (718.260.5550) or call 911 as soon after the incident as possible. If you saw the perpetrator, try to remember gender, age, height, race, weight, build, clothes and other distinguishing characteristics. If anything was said, such as anti-gay epithets or threats, make a mental note about them and write them down as soon as possible. If you want the crime to be reported as a hate or bias-related crime, tell the officer to note that on the report. If Public Safety or the New York City Police Department do not assist you properly, file a complaint and contact the Office of Student Affairs (718.260.5430; Namm 300) or the City information number, 311.