

CITY OF SIOUX FALLS

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Jesus Peña,
Complainant,

v.

Southeast Technical Institute
Foundation,
Respondent.

SFHRC Charge No. ED-19-03-14

Complaint of Discrimination

1. Complainant(s):

Jesus Peña
520 N. Spring Ave. Apt. 304
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

2. The discrimination was based on national origin.

The discrimination took place in education.

3. Respondent(s):

Southeast Technical Institute Foundation
2320 N. Career Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD 57107

4. The most recent date on which this discrimination took place was February 2019.

5. Allegation:

I am an individual who is originally from Mexico. I attended classes at Southeast Technical Institute Foundation (Respondent) in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. During my education there, I experienced harassment and discrimination.

In the Fall semester of 2017, my Land Survey professor repeatedly harassed me based on my national origin. One time he asked if my family members were all Mexican, and then he said they're probably Indians. When I would attempt to offer an opinion he would tell me I was "just Mexican" in a derogatory manner. I asked him to stop making fun of my race and culture and he laughed at me and

did not stop. He made comments about how proud he was about his German heritage. He insulted me in other ways, once saying I was too old to be in school.

I also believe he was grading my assignments more harshly than other students' assignments because of his discriminatory attitude. I confronted him about this issue once, and (he) apologized for taking points away when (she) should not have. However, his unfair grading persisted. This professor would not let me use land survey instruments, but the rest of the students in the class were allowed to.

I reported to this professor's supervisor that he was making fun of my race and culture. The professor and supervisor are both white Americans from the United States. The supervisor told me he'd talk to the professor, but nothing changed.

In the Fall semester of 2018, the professor approached me when I was alone in a classroom, yelled at me regarding an issue with another student, and even grabbed my head and shook it. I began to fear for my safety. In February 2019 I attempted to speak with the Vice President of Respondent. After that, the professor approached me in an aggressive manner and asked if I had a problem with him. He asked me if I believe in discrimination lawsuits. The Vice President for Respondent never returned my call. I did not feel safe attending classes at Respondent, and so I withdrew from the institution.

I am an individual from Mexico who experienced harassment and unfair treatment in my education. By allowing this treatment, Respondent has violated my rights protected by Chapter 98 of the Code of Ordinances of Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

6. I will advise the Human Relations Office if I change my address or telephone number, and I will cooperate fully with it in the processing of my complaint in accordance with its procedures.
7. I swear or affirm that I have read the above complaint and that it is true to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.


Signature

3/27/19
Date

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27th day of March, 2019.


Notary Public

My commission expires: 10-31-23

