

Office of Sexual Harassment
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Sexual Harassment



Do you know what it is?
Do you know what you can do about it?

A guide for Faculty, Staff and Students at UCLA

What's Happening Here?

Student's Story:

I was excited about my research project. I was flattered when my graduate advisor suggested we discuss it over dinner. At first I felt uncomfortable meeting him in a social setting but, deciding that I was being paranoid, agreed. During dinner, we began to discuss class and my project. As the evening progressed, the conversation shifted to very personal topics, including my present and past boyfriends. I tried to shift the conversation back to something related to class but he kept drifting back to more personal issues. Occasionally he touched my hand and told me he thought I was attractive. As we were getting ready to leave, he stood uncomfortably close to me and patted me on the arm. I felt very self-conscious and nervous about the way my advisor was relating to me but I was afraid to offend him by saying anything. Now I find myself avoiding him even though I respect his opinions and need his guidance to do well in my department.

Professor's Story:

I was interested in her work, especially since her topic has been a special interest of mine. I thought her project had real potential. I invited her to dinner so we could talk over her ideas in a more relaxed atmosphere. I thought this would be helpful since she seems very bright but is nervous and shy in class. I enjoyed getting to know her better and I could tell the feeling was mutual. We had a good time and the discussion was productive. Since our meeting, I haven't seen much of her. I'm surprised that after such a promising start she seems less interested in my help. I guess she changed her mind about the project. It makes me wonder if she's really grad school material.

And Remember....

Sexual Harassment is Against the Law

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. It can occur between men and women, men and other men, or between women and other women. Sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; California state law; and University of California policies and procedures. If you believe you have been harassed, you may use the UCLA Sexual Harassment Procedures; or you may file a formal complaint within 365 days from the date of the alleged unlawful conduct with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH). The Los Angeles Office DFEH is at 322 West First Street, No. 2126, Los Angeles, CA 90012, (213) 897-1997. Charges of sexual harassment may also be filed at any field office of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Field offices are listed in your local telephone directory under U.S. Government. Information about all EEOC-enforced laws may be obtained by calling toll free to 800-669-EEOC.

Deans, Chairs, Department Heads, Managers and Supervisors are Responsible for Providing Harassment-Free Environments

Deans, chairs, department heads, managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the working and learning environment is free of all forms of sexual harassment. They are also responsible for immediately responding to any incident of sexual harassment that comes to their attention. University liability is significantly increased when deans, chairs, department heads, managers and supervisors are aware of sexual harassment but fail to take appropriate action.

Camps Human Resources
Employee & Labor Relations
10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 200
(310) 794-0860

Office of Ombuds Services
Strathmore Building, Room 105
(310) 825-7627

Office of Vice Chancellor
Graduate Division
1237 Murphy Hall
(310) 206-3269

Center for Student Programming
105 Kerckhoff Hall
(310) 825-5941

Chancellor's Office
2241 Murphy Hall
(310) 206-3417

Student Psychological Services
221 Westwood Plaza
Wooden Center West
(310) 825-0768

Office of Residential Life
Residential Life Building
370 De Neve Drive
(310) 206-2895

Student Services—University Extension
214 UNEX Building
(310) 825-2656

**Office of Vice Chancellor
Dean of Student's Office**
1206 Murphy Hall
(310) 825-3871

Human Resources—University Extension
629 UNEX Building
(310) 825-4287

The Center for Women & Men
Student Activities Center
220 Westwood Plaza, Suite B44
(310) 825-3945

LGBT Center
220 Westwood Plaza, Suite B36
(310) 206-3628

Student Legal Services
70 Dodd Hall
(310) 825-9894

Medical Center—Healthcare
Human Resources
Employee Relations & Support Programs
10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400
(310) 794-0500

Office of Ombuds Services
Center for the Health Sciences
52025 CHS
(310) 206-2427

Medical Center—Human Resources
David Geffen School of Medicine
10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 400
(310) 794-6802

Administration—Human Resources
Neuropsychiatric Hospital
760 Westwood Plaza, B7-370
(310) 206-5258

Gender & Power Abuse Committee
David Geffen School of Medicine
Dean's Office
12-138 CHS
(310) 794-1958

School of Dentistry
23-087 Dentistry Bldg.
(310) 794-6621

Student & Alumni Affairs
School of Dentistry
A3-042 Dentistry Bldg.
(310) 825-7146

Associated Students UCLA (ASUCLA)
Human Resources
219 Kerckhoff Hall
(310) 825-7055

Collegiality or Sexual Harassment?

Employee's Story:

I am one of the few women who work in my department. Lately I've been having problems with my male co-workers. Some of them have gotten into the habit of calling me "Sweetie" and "Babe" all the time even though I've asked them to stop. They tell me it's their way of treating me like "one of the gang" and that I'm oversensitive. And to top it off, last week I walked into the locker room we all share to find pictures of women in suggestive poses posted on the wall. I'm now thinking of quitting because I'm feeling uncomfortable, intimidated and upset. I'm having a hard time concentrating and getting my work done. I'd talk to my boss but I see all of them hanging out together at lunch and after work and I'm afraid he'd take their side.

Boss's Story:

I'm glad she's joined our department, but, I must admit, it's been hard adjusting to having more women around. I've noticed that the guys joke around a bit with her but she doesn't seem to mind. Besides, everyone seems to be getting along well. I'm sure she'd let me know if there was a problem.

Keep in mind that whether or not someone intends their behavior to be hurtful or intimidating, the determining factor is the impact this behavior has on another person.

For individuals with specialized needs, services are available upon request with advance notice. You may call one of the numbers listed above or the following TDD numbers for assistance: (310) 206-6083 (students), (310) 206-2947 (staff & faculty). Consult the Campus Directory for a complete listing of TDD numbers.

What is Sexual Harassment?

The law of sexual harassment is still in a state of flux and development. Some types of conduct can clearly be labeled as sexual harassment. Other categories of conduct may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the circumstances involved in a particular situation and the way in which legal definitions continue to evolve.

Sexual harassment may occur between peers or between people with unequal power. Individuals should know that job or academic-related social interactions of a sexual nature (especially if behavior falls into categories described below) put one at risk of being charged with sexual harassment.

Basically, sexual harassment falls into two broad categories:

- unwelcome advances and requests for sexual favors that are implicitly or explicitly factored into decisions about grades, promotions or raises (otherwise known as “quid pro quo”); and
- a “hostile environment” created by such behavior as sexual jokes or remarks, sexually explicit pictures or unwelcome physical contact.

Because of the ripple effect created by sexual harassment, sometimes complaints are made by a “third party.” This is someone who is not the direct recipient of unwanted sexual attention but who feels that this behavior has created an offensive or intimidating environment for them. Remember, everyone at UCLA is entitled to an environment free of sexual harassment.

An important reminder: it is the **IMPACT** of the behavior, not the **INTENT**, which is used to determine whether the behavior constitutes sexual harassment.

- ◇ Tell someone who has the authority to take action, e.g., a Department Chair, supervisor, boss.
- ◇ You may decide that formal options are more appropriate for your particular situation. (See opposite page for more information.)
- ◇ Consult a Sexual Harassment Information Center for more information on the range of options that might be available for your particular situation. (See opposite page for more information.)

When Sexual Harassment Doesn't Stop

If you're unsure about a possible sexual harassment situation, or if efforts to stop a problem haven't worked, there are people who will listen and provide support and assistance. They can also provide information about formal and informal procedures for resolution. Call any of the following campus offices on the next page for more information →

Protect your personal space and move if someone gets too close.

Choose not to answer questions that are inappropriate, overly personal or probing.

Believe you have a right to put your own safety first rather than worrying about offending someone or hurting their feelings.

- ◇ Avoid the natural inclination to become victimized by the situation, which may include:

AT SCHOOL: missing class, coming in late, leaving early, turning in assignments late, accepting special favors from the harasser (“I’ll let you turn the paper in late”).

AT WORK: calling in sick, coming in late, leaving early, taking extended breaks, giving up your territory (“Why don’t you let Mary take over that assignment for you”).

- ◇ Talk to others to share your feelings, gather support and gain information.
- ◇ Document all incidents and conversations that involve harassment, including date, time, place, people involved and what was said and done.
- ◇ Consider writing a letter that conveys your disapproval of the harasser’s behavior, your feelings and reactions and what you would like to happen. (For more specific details on this approach, contact a Sexual Harassment Information Center.)

Becoming a Part of the Solution

If you are in a position of power, the following suggestions may help you choose options for interacting with others that are respectful and appropriate rather than intimidating and hostile.

- ◇ Beware of the impact of your behavior.

You may be sending subtle messages by the words you use, the jokes you tell, your body language, etc. A word about compliments: Compliments or comments about someone’s appearance may be well-meaning but can send the wrong message. It is more appropriate to focus instead on someone’s job / academic skills, abilities and accomplishments.

- ◇ Develop sensitivity to other people’s discomfort.

Some may be able to communicate their discomfort directly; others may try indirectly to let you know they are uncomfortable or offended by your actions, for instance, looking or moving away, nervous laughter, fidgeting, redirecting conversation. Sharpen your listening and observation skills to pick up these cues.

- ◇ Be aware of the impact of your role on a person’s ability to speak out about discomfort.

If you are in a position of authority, your perceived or actual power to make decisions affecting others can be intimidating or threatening. When individuals are concerned that their grade, status or access to job / academic opportunities is at stake, they can have a lot to lose by speaking out. To minimize the risk, individuals may often choose to communicate indirectly, put up with the behavior or leave the situation. For this reason, it is essential that non-threatening opportunities are available so individuals who are uncomfortable can provide you with feedback.

- ◇ Understand culture differences.

Behavior and speech that may seem innocuous to you may be offensive or uncomfortable to someone else. Sensitivity to other's different tolerance levels, comfort zones and style of communication (e.g., personal space, eye contact, joking, interacting in a casual manner) is critical, especially if you and the other individual are from different cultures or backgrounds.

- ◇ Find alternative ways to mentor.

Create opportunities for providing support in ways that reduce discomfort and increase confidence. Some examples include pairing with a faculty or staff member when you are working on or supervising individual projects, closely monitoring projects in which individuals work in pairs, leaving your door open for one-on-one meetings and explicitly stating norms for non-discriminatory behavior openly in class or at staff meetings.

- ◇ Be aware of your potential to bring about positive change.

Speak up when you come across inappropriate, offensive behavior. Recognize your influence as a role model by establishing appropriate, respectful relationships and creating an environment in which discrimination of any form is not tolerated.

Reducing Your Risk of Being Harassed

How do you know when you're at risk of being sexually harassed? Trust your feelings and instincts. If an inter-

action feels uncomfortable, you have a right to say so. It is important to remember that, regardless of the ways an individual has chosen to respond to harassing behavior, no one asks for or deserves to have their personal freedom violated. If you or someone you know is being harassed, the following are some options for dealing with the behavior as well as gaining control over the situation.

- ◇ Clearly communicate your disapproval of behavior that makes you feel uncomfortable. It is especially helpful to be specific and definitive.

Some assertive responses include:

I'm not comfortable with that behavior. Please stop.

I'm not interested in getting together socially -

I'd prefer our relationship remain professional.

My name is _____, not Babe.

That joke wasn't funny.

- ◇ *Adopt a confident stance to underscore your verbal message.*

Look at someone directly rather than looking away.

Communicate in a firm, professional tone of voice rather than smiling or giggling (common nervous responses).