Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention that is a form of illegal sex discrimination under federal and state law. It is usually repeated behavior, but could be one serious incident. Sexual harassment may be blatant, as in:

- sexual assault
- stalking
- deliberate touching, pinching, caressing,
- attempts to fondle,
- pressure for dates or sex,
- requests for sex in exchange for grades or promotions.

Sexual harassment may be more subtle—like staring, sexual jokes, or teasing, sexually demeaning remarks.

Although such forms of harassment may be unintentional, persistent or severe sexual behavior words are harassing if the conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. When the harassing conduct is not sexual, but is based on someone’s gender, it can also contribute to creating a hostile environment.

Sexual harassment usually occurs in situations where one person has power over another, but it can also occur between equals. Both men and women can be sexually harassed, though women are most often victimized. Sexual harassment can be sexually harassing, though can also occur between equals. Both men and women can learn and work in an environment free of sexual harassment. The Board of Trustees has adopted this policy.

The University of Maine System prohibits the abuse of power, even in relationships of apparent mutual consent. Decisions affecting the other person in the relationship develops, there is a potential for abuse of power. People who are involved in a complaint process may lead to complaints.

People who are subjected to sexual harassment often feel powerless to do anything. The University System community may sexually harass or who is involved in a complaint process may lead to complaints.

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Recognizing sexual harassment: Sexual harassment includes verbal conduct if it unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Verbal expression that is relevant to course performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Verbal expression that is relevant to course performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Verbal expression that is relevant to course performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. Verbal expression that is relevant to course performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment. "What is Sexual Harassment?"

Do you think you’ve been harassed? Have you been accused? What kinds of behaviors may lead to complaints? Non-Discrimination Notice

The University of Maine System does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Campus Equal Opportunity Directors or Equity Coordinators. The Office of Equity & Diversity, 701 State Street, Bangor, Maine 04401, voice (207) 581-4100, toll-free (800) 755-4474, fax (207) 581-4647, email: eoeo@maine.edu.

For University of Maine System faculty and staff, the Equal Opportunity Office is located at 701 State Street, Bangor, Maine 04401. For University of Maine faculty and staff, the Equal Opportunity Office is located at 2150 State Street, Orono, Maine 04469, voice (207) 581-4100, toll-free (800) 755-4474, fax (207) 581-4647, email: eoeo@maine.edu.

For University of Maine System students, the Equal Opportunity Office is located at 701 State Street, Bangor, Maine 04401. For University of Maine students, the Equal Opportunity Office is located at 2150 State Street, Orono, Maine 04469, voice (207) 581-4100, toll-free (800) 755-4474, fax (207) 581-4647, email: eoeo@maine.edu.
What Kinds Of Behaviors May Lead To Complaints?

Not all of the following examples are severe or pervasive enough to be sexual harassment, but all of them involve problematic or questionable behavior that may lead to complaints.

- Rachel's major requires an internship with a community agency. Her supervisor at the agency has been sending her sexually explicit e-mails with links to sexually graphic web sites. Rachel is nervous about continuing her weekly meetings with him.

- At June's work-study job, her supervisor repeatedly makes jokes with sexual overtones. He promises a promotion if she will work after hours in his apartment on a "special project.

- In one of Karen's classes, the professor frequently makes derogatory comments and jokes about women that have sexual overtones. Karen finds them so insulting that she is thinking of moving to a different class.

- Jim, a custodian in the women's residence hall, has a good relationship with the students. He likes to linger and chat with them, and sometimes goes into their rooms to talk. One young woman, uncomfortable with Jim's friendliness, is thinking of moving to a different hall.

- Robert is an older student with a 3.9 G.P.A. The graduate assistant teaching his lab section asked him to go out with her several times. Robert said no and made excuses. Now his papers are getting lower grades. He is sure that it is retaliation for his refusal.

- For some time, Vicki has listened sympathetically when her boss talks about his bad marriage. Now he wants her to listen over drinks after work. Vicki is uncomfortable and her boyfriend is jealous.

- Philip is a student who openly supports gay and lesbian rights. He was pushed to the ground by a group of other students and interrogated about his own sexual preferences while two students made blatant sexual gestures.

- Norma is in a tenure track position. She begins dating John, a tenured professor in the department. After several months, Norma realizes that John is interested in a more serious relationship than she is. But she is worried about breaking off the relationship because John sits on the peer review committee that will consider her reappointment.

- A resident in Mary's hall has been "coming on" to her, though she tries to ignore his behavior, it is getting worse. He starts at her, comments on her clothing and plays with her hair. Late last night he came to her door loudly asking to sleep with her, and while two students made blatant sexual gestures.

- Rachel's major requires an internship with a community agency. Her supervisor at the agency has been sending her sexually explicit e-mail with links to sexually graphic web sites. Rachel is nervous about continuing her weekly meetings with him.

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- In one of Karen's classes, the professor frequently makes derogatory comments and jokes about women that have sexual overtones. Karen finds them so insulting that she is thinking of moving to a different class.

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What Is The University's Policy?

The University of Maine System is committed to providing a positive education and work environment for all students and staff. Sexual harassment, whether intentional or not, undermines the quality of this climate and is against the law. The University has a legal and ethical responsibility to ensure that all students and employees can learn and work in an environment free of sexual harassment. The Board of Trustees has adopted this policy regarding sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment of either employees or students is a violation of federal and state laws. It is the policy of the University of Maine System that no member of the University System community may sexually harass another. In accordance with its policy of complying with non-discrimination laws, the University System will regard freedom from sexual harassment as an individual employee and student right which will be safeguarded as a matter of policy. Any employee or student will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

In conformance with this policy, the University of Maine System will ensure fair and impartial investigations that will protect the rights of the person(s) filing sexual harassment complaints, the person(s) complained against, and the institution or unit. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint of sexual harassment or who is involved in a complaint process will not be tolerated.

Consenting relationships may constitute sexual harassment under this policy. When a professional power differential exists between members of the University of Maine System and a romantic or sexual relationship develops, there is a potential for abuse of that power, even in relationships of apparent mutual consent.

The University of Maine System prohibits the abuse of power in romantic or sexual relationships. To assure that power is not abused and to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment, a faculty or staff member must eliminate any current or potential conflict of interest by removing himself or herself from decisions affecting another person in the relationship. Decisions affecting the other person include grading, evaluating, supervising, or otherwise influencing that person's education, employment, housing, or participation in athletics or any other University System activity.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions that could affect the individual;
3. such conduct interferes with an individual's participation in or access to educational or living environment.

People who experience sexual harassment often blame themselves. Others may also blame them for the problem, rather than holding the harasser responsible for the behavior. All effects are harmful. Sexual harassment is not funny. It is degrading and upsetting. It is not "just the way things are." People who feel harassed have few effective courses, changed majors, avoided advisors, even quit jobs or school.
What About "Consenting" Relationships?

The University has an Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure to deal promptly and fairly with concerns and complaints about behavior that affects the student, faculty, or staff member. An employee or student who feels that he or she has experienced sexual harassment, and anyone with knowledge of an incident, may ask the Equal Opportunity Officer (if the alleged harasser is an employee), or Student Judicial Officer (if the alleged harasser is a student) as soon as possible after the incident. Any supervisor who becomes aware of a problem must promptly contact the Equal Opportunity Officer or Student Conduct Officer. The Equal Opportunity Officer or Student Conduct Officer has a substantial conflict of interest regarding either the complainant or the person accused, an alternate investigator may be appointed.

Complaints are handled as confidently as possible to protect the rights of both the complainant and the person accused. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint or participates in a complaint process is not tolerated. The complainant and the person accused have certain rights to representation during the complaint process. The Equal Opportunity Officer or Student Conduct Officer discourses informal and formal options for resolving the problem. The goal of the informal process is to seek a resolution acceptable to everyone involved. Many concerns can be addressed through the informal process, which provides the maximum privacy and an opportunity for the earliest possible resolution. If the complainant chooses or if a problem cannot be resolved informally, the complainant may request a formal investigation. When the person accused of sexual harassment is an employee, an investigator external to the campus conducts the investigation under the procedure in the Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure. When the person accused of sexual harassment is a student and a formal complaint is filed, the Student Conduct Officer conducts the investigation according to the procedure in the Student Conduct Code.

When the person accused is an employee or a person from outside the University, the Investigations Coordinator conducts the investigation. An appropriate administrator then decides whether the complaint has been substantiated and what corrective action will be taken. When charges of sexual harassment are filed, an informal process may result, up to and including termination for an employee or dismissal for a student. The Equal Opportunity Complaint Procedure is available online at http://www.maine.edu/system/hr/eocp.php and in the Equal Opportunity, Human Resources, and Student Affairs Offices. All members of the University community are encouraged to use this procedure. Sexual harassment complaints may also be filed with the Maine Human Rights Commission or another appropriate governmental authority.

PEAK UP!

As someone who has experienced or may experience sexual harassment:

- Set your own boundaries. Say “NO!” emphatically and clearly when you are asked to go places, do things, respond to questions, or engage in situations that make you uncomfortable. Do not worry about offending the other person or hurting his or her feelings.
- Take care of yourself first.
- Be aware of people who may harm you. Don’t ignore others’ warnings about particular people or social settings.
- Acknowledge their concern for you and for themselves. Trust your instincts about possible danger.
- If it is important to you, do not remove yourself from the situation. Regardless of your previous behavior or signals you may have given earlier, you have the absolute right to halt any sexual exchange at any time.
- Accept this right and act on it. If someone tells you to stop an encounter, listen to her or him and respect that request. Anything else is harassment.
- Remember, the University’s goal is to prevent or, at the University’s goal is to prevent or, self or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. The faculty or staff member must remove himself or herself from any decisions affecting the other person. 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