

A Guide to  
**PREVENTING  
& REPORTING  
SEXUAL  
HARASSMENT**  
The Office of Diversity and  
Affirmative Action



Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action

THE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action is to uphold and reaffirm the University's position and commitment to equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and the creation of an inclusive campus climate.

**The Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action:**

- Conducts training and education related to diversity, cultural competence, harassment and discrimination prevention, equal opportunity, affirmative action; provides supervisory and orientation programs; co-sponsors diversity-related activities, conferences, and programs (Diversity Fellows, Dialogues across Differences).
- Manages complaint resolution and ensures that Stony Brook offers a working, learning, and living environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.
- Provides leadership and aids in the University's goal to diversify the faculty and staff through proactive outreach efforts, collaborative recruitment and retention efforts, and compliance monitoring.
- Ensures compliance—provides tools, resources, support, and policy guidance to promote equity; develops the University's annual Affirmative Action Programs; generates statistics and management reports; advises on practices and responds to SUNY, RF, and external agencies.
- Coordinates diversity initiatives and strategic planning related to diversity; serves on diversity-related committees and advisory groups throughout the organization.

**What else does the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action do?**

**Develops Training Workshops**

- Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity
- Affirmative Action Program Development
- Diversity and Cultural Competence, Awareness, and Management
- Sexual Harassment Prevention

**Develops Tools and Resources**

- How to conduct a search from an Equal Employment Opportunity perspective
- Lawful and Unlawful Employment Inquiries
- Preventing and Reporting Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Orientation: A Guide to Non-discrimination

**Sponsors Diversity Programs and Activities**

- Co-sponsors VP area and departmental diversity activities
- Diversity Fellows
- Dialogues Across Differences
- Diversity Day

The complaint process at a glance



**Filing a complaint of discrimination**

The Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action (ODAA) ensures that Stony Brook University provides equal opportunity in education and employment. The ODAA has adopted a complaint procedure for the prompt and equitable investigation and resolution of allegations of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, age, gender, color, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, veteran or marital status, or allegations of sexual harassment.

For more information on how to file a complaint, call the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action at 632-6280 or visit [www.stonybrook.edu/diversity](http://www.stonybrook.edu/diversity)

Stony Brook University/SUNY is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educator and employer. 0808056

## What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment takes many forms, from inappropriate joking to physical assault. It may involve threats that you will lose your job, or that you will fail in class. Your co-workers or fellow students may make your work, study, or living environment uncomfortable through continued sexual comments, suggestions, or pressure.

*It may include:*

- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Subtle pressure for sexual activities
- Unnecessary touching, patting, pinching, or constant brushing against a person's body
- Demands for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats
- Physical assault
- Leering at a person's body
- Whistling, catcalls, or sexual remarks or jokes
- Pornography on walls or computers
- Sexual conversations or activities between others that a third party is forced to overhear or witness
- Inappropriate sexually explicit e-mails or jokes

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

- Submission to such conduct is made either an explicit or implicit term or condition of an individual's employment or admission to an academic program.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual's employment status or academic standing.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's performance on the job or in the classroom, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or study environment.

## Who Are the Targets?

The targets of sexual harassment most often find themselves bothered by people who exert power over them, either on the job or in their academic program. This includes the harassment of employees by supervisors, students by faculty, or teaching assistants or administrators. Sometimes, however, supervisors may be harassed by employees, faculty by students, staff by co-workers, or students by fellow students. These forms of sexual harassment are also unlawful and a violation of community standards.

Although the majority of incidents of sexual harassment involve a man harassing a woman, the law also covers women harassing men, women harassing women, and men harassing men.

### You Can Help Prevent Sexual Harassment

- Report any instances of sexual harassment of which you are aware to the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action.
- Offer support to those you know are having harassment problems.
- Encourage them to take action.
- Offer yourself as a witness if you observe an instance of sexual harassment.
- Share the information in this brochure with others.

### What Are the Penalties?

They may vary with the level of the offense but may range from letters of reprimand to loss of employment or expulsion. If the victim files a lawsuit, he or she may include punitive damages of up to \$300,000. The recent record for total penalties and damages assessed for one case is more than \$7 million. The University and the harasser's supervisors are legally liable, as is the actual harasser.

## If You Are Being Sexually Harassed...

- Say "NO" loudly, clearly, and firmly, without smiling. Tell the harasser to stop the behavior immediately.
- Don't assume the behavior will stop if you just ignore it; you must act quickly.
- Report inappropriate sexual conduct to the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action.
- Keep written records. Jot down dates, places, times, witnesses, and the nature of the harassment.
- Inform the harasser—in writing (hard copy or via e-mail)—that you object to the behavior. Describe the specific things that offend or upset you. Keep a copy of the letter or e-mail and have someone witness the delivery of the letter. If sending the letter via e-mail, select Delivery Options and check off Return Receipt and Prevent Copying.
- Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct. Sanctions will be enforced against individuals engaging in sexual harassment. Retaliation against a complainant is forbidden.
- If the situation is physically threatening or intimidating, contact University Police immediately at ext. 333.

### If You Are a Supervisor Dealing with a Complaint...

- Report potential cases of sexual harassment and seek guidance and consultation through the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action.
- Be aware of potential problems that may lead to sexual harassment.
- Attend periodic training for yourself and your staff regarding sexual harassment prevention.
- If you take a complaint, be neutral and supportive, but do not define the allegations. Take notes and then contact the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action immediately!

There are time limits for filing complaints. Explore your options and protect your rights.

**Call 632-6280 for more information.**

**T**he University is responsible for and fully committed to the prevention and elimination of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is considered a form of misconduct. Therefore, required sanctions will be enforced against individuals engaging in sexual harassment. Supervisors and department heads are responsible for promoting an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees by supervisors, or of students by faculty or administrators, which imposes sexual cooperation as a condition of employment or academic advancement, is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Conversely, sexual harassment of supervisors by employees, faculty by students, or individuals by co-workers is unlawful.



Shirley Strum Kenny, President