

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment has the potential of threatening an individual's academic performance, economic livelihood, career advancement, psychological and overall well-being and the very fabric of the community. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and Springfield College policy.

Sexual Harassment will not be tolerated at Springfield College.

Any type of harassment that hinders access to either employment or educational services, opportunities, or programs is covered by this policy. Positive steps will be taken to eliminate harassment when such practices or acts are discovered. Persons found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

According to Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission guidelines, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of the individual's employment or academic work.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individuals.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonable interference with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive working, academic, or living environment.

BEHAVIOR WHICH MAY CONSTITUTE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Verbal harassment may include sexual innuendo, humor, and jokes about sex or gender-specific traits, as well as implied or blatant verbal threats.

Physical harassment may include offensive contact (patting, pinching, brushing against the body, etc.), blocking movement, attempted or actual fondling or kissing, or any other form or coerced sexual contact.

Non-verbal harassment may include suggestive or insulting whistling, gestures, leering, or unwelcome* close physical proximity.

Unwelcome* sexual requests may include explicit sexual propositions which include or strongly imply promises or rewards for complying (e.g. higher grades, better recommendations) and/or threats of punishment for refusing (e.g. lower grades, poorer recommendations, loss of job).

*Unwelcome is defined as any other sexually oriented behavior, whether it is intended or not, that makes you feel uncomfortable, is unwelcome, and has the effect of creating a work or academic environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to males or females.

RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Say no to the harasser. Ignoring the situation will not make it go away. Be direct and firm. State, without smiling or apologizing, that you want the behavior to stop.

Send a letter if speaking up is uncomfortable or unsuccessful. Include a description of the offending behavior or an explanation of your feelings, and a request for the behavior to stop. Keep a copy.

Keep records of what happened and when. Document in writing or on tape, or tell a friend in confidence, the names, dates, places, times, witnesses, the nature of the harassment, and how it affected you. Save any letters, cards, or notes in a secure place.

If the harassment does not stop, discuss it with the Equal Opportunity Officer or one of the individuals listed in this brochure.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT CAN HAVE A WIDE RANGE OF EFFECTS

- Denial of promotion
 - Termination, forced resignation, quitting
 - Failing an exam, receiving poor grades or performance reviews
- Dropping a class, changing a major, dropping out of school
 - Low morale or a tense, unproductive working or learning environment
 - Confusion, self-doubt, anxiety, embarrassment, guilt, insomnia, stress

CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Consensual relationships which are of concern to the College are those amorous, romantic or sexual relationships in which both parties appear to have consented, but where there is a definite power differential (e.g. between an instructor and student or a supervisor and employee). Such relationships may produce a conflict of interest when one of the parties is responsible for assigning grades or making employment decisions for the other. Charges of sexual harassment may develop, even when both parties have consented to the relationship. Generally, problems do not arise until the relationship ends. Therefore, the College views such relationships as inappropriate and unwise.

Faculty members and staff are cautioned against entering into romantic sexual relationships with students; supervisors are also cautioned against entering into such relationships with employees.

Springfield College policy requires that intimate relationships be reported immediately to the department chair or supervisor so that suitable arrangements can be made for objective evaluation of the student or employee.

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual assault is a **CRIME OF VIOLENCE**. It includes any kind of covert, forced sexual contact by an individual or group with someone who does not consent to the act, who is physically helpless or who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Date or acquaintance rape is a sexual assault committed by someone who is known to the victim, such as a friend, classmate, professor, co-worker or relative.

Date or acquaintance rape is one of the most common types of sexual harassment and often the least understood. It is rape even if the attacker is someone you know; it happens to you on a date; you have had sex with that person before and this time you said no; you and your date have engaged in sexual touching and kissing but then you are forced to have intercourse against your will; your body froze and you were unable to yell or physically struggle with the attacker.

Victims of sexual violence often have feelings of shame, fear, and self-accusation. Remember...sexual harassment and sexual violence can happen to anyone. It is not your fault. You are not alone.

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, you should seek help immediately. The College has designated certain individuals to assist you. They will hear your account and offer support and counsel.

Date rape is a crime and should be reported to Campus Police. The Counseling Center located in the Towne Health Center is available to any student who has suffered through the experience of rape. Please do not go through the effects of that trauma alone.

Springfield College will cooperate fully in the investigation and prosecution of any criminal sexual activity. The College may pursue enforcement of its own rules whether or not legal proceedings are underway.

Brochures explaining ways to protect yourself against date rape are located in the reception area of Campus Police and through the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Human Resources.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

You have a right to pursue your education and/or perform your job in an environment free from harassment of any kind.

What to do if you think you are experiencing sexual harassment:

Any member of the College community who believes he or she has been a victim of harassment as defined in this policy is urged to bring the matter to the attention of the Equal Opportunity Officer, or other appropriate individuals (see below). Any member has a right to file a complaint with the College. This may be done orally or in writing.

The following steps are available to you

1. File a complaint with the Equal Opportunity Officer. When we receive the complaint, we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offensive conduct, and where it is appropriate, we will also impose disciplinary action. Such action may range from counseling to termination of employment.
2. Pursue an informal resolution. If an informal settlement cannot be reached, you may put a formal statement/complaint in writing. At that point, the Equal Opportunity Officer or designee serves as a mediator between the parties.
3. If the grievance remains unsolved, your complaint may go to the College's Equal Opportunity Committee.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

If you think you are experiencing sexual harassment, you are urged to contact one of the individuals listed below. If you received a report of sexual harassment or believe you have witnessed an incident(s) of sexual harassment, please do not ignore it. If you have been accused of sexual harassment, you should seek the advice of one these individuals as well.

Allen Noble, Equal Opportunity Officer, ext. 3118

Judy Jackson, Chief of Campus Police, ext. 5555

Richard Whiting, Director of Counseling Center, ext. 3345

Linda Gourlay, Director of Health Center, ext. 3175

David Braverman, VP for Student Affairs/Dean of Students, ext. 3100

Francine Vecchiolla, Dean, School of Social Work, ext. 3057

Robert Willey, Dean, School of Human Services, ext. 3982

Jean Wyld, VP for Academic Affairs, ext. 3196