Tell Someone

Responding to sexual harassment and sexual violence in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS)

What is sexual harassment?
Harvard University has adopted the following definition of sexual harassment:

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of an individual’s employment or academic standing or is used as the basis for employment decisions or for academic evaluations, grades, or advancement and 2) such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it interferes with or limits a person’s ability to participate in or benefit from the University’s education or work programs or activities.

Sexual harassment can take many different forms. It can range from sexually explicit jokes that create a hostile learning environment to rape and sexual assault. Sexual harassment occurs when an instructor makes sexual favors a condition of success in a course and also can occur when he or she repeatedly makes unwelcome sexual remarks or engages in physical contact. Sexual harassment can include repeated, unwanted sex-based text messages or e-mails or obscene calls or messages. It also can include being continually followed, contacted, or watched in a manner that is unwelcome and based on sex.

Harvard seeks to maintain a learning environment free from sexual harassment, and is committed to creating a community free from discrimination. Sexual harassment is a barrier to the educational, scholarly, and research purposes of the University. Whether the harasser is a faculty member or other University employee, a peer, or a third party involved in University programs, such behavior is not tolerated. Harvard has both formal and informal procedures and resources in place to assist students who have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment.

What is sexual violence?
Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault, is a type of sexual harassment. These sexually violent acts may violate federal law, including Title IX; state criminal law; and Harvard policy. As a result, if you believe you have experienced sexual violence, you may file a complaint with the Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Dispute Resolution (ODR). You may also file a criminal complaint with the Harvard University Police Department (HUPD). Different standards are used to assess a complaint under Harvard policy and a criminal complaint. To discuss your options, speak with one of the resources listed below.

In their own words...
“*My dissertation advisor would frequently interrupt our conversations with comments on my appearance or clothing. It made me feel like there was more concern with my looks than with my scholarship.*”

“*My lab director approached me when we were alone in the lab. I made it clear that I wasn’t interested. I’m a guy who can be pretty blunt. However, he continues to bother me in the lab and I’m afraid to tell anyone because they might wonder about me.*”
“My advisor has repeatedly asked me out to dinner. I have told him that I am not interested, but he reminds me every so often that he hopes that I’ve changed my mind. It’s very discouraging and I’m concerned that it could jeopardize my graduate career.”

“Another student in my lab group keeps sending me e-mails and asking me out and refuses to take ‘no’ for an answer. I’ve said plainly and repeatedly that I’m not interested. Now he has started spreading rumors about my sex life around the lab.”

**Why does sexual harassment continue to occur?**

Those who engage in acts of sexual harassment are unlikely to stop unless they are challenged. It is therefore imperative that those who experience sexual harassment be supported and encouraged to come forward. Unfortunately, many people who experience sexual harassment do not come forward because they are afraid that no one will believe them. Others blame themselves. Sometimes those who have experienced sexual harassment fear they are making too much of the experience, and sadly, sometimes, they are told as much by those in whom they confide. They should not stop there. They should speak to someone else.

If you have experienced sexual harassment (or if you are not sure), you may find it difficult to come forward when you feel vulnerable or threatened. There are, however, a wide variety of resources available to you.

**Where can I get help?**

SEAS is committed to helping anyone who has experienced sexual harassment, including sexual violence, to access the wide variety of resources available at Harvard and elsewhere. Some of the resources listed below will be able to keep your information private, but they may have to share your information with those responsible for stopping or preventing sexual harassment on campus. Before speaking with someone, make sure that you understand whether they can assure you confidentiality, or how they will keep your information private.

**Private Resources**

These people will keep your information as private as possible, meaning that they will only share it with those who have a need to know. For example, they may need to disclose what you tell them to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator, that is, the person responsible for addressing sexual harassment within the Harvard community. The Title IX Coordinator also will handle your information carefully, maintaining as much privacy as possible.

- **Deans, Advisors, Faculty Members, Campus Administrators, Coaches, and Residential Life Staff**: Deans, advisors, faculty members, campus administrators, coaches, and residential life staff will keep the information that you provide as private as possible, meaning that they will only share it with those who have a need to know. For example, they may need to disclose what you tell them to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator.

- **Title IX Officer and Title IX Coordinators**: The University-wide Title IX Officer and the SEAS Title IX Coordinators can speak with you about your options, support services, and how to file a complaint. They, too, will handle your information carefully, maintaining as much privacy as possible, but may need to share it with those who have a need to know in order to respond to a possible hostile environment on campus.
Confidential Resources

These people are able to adhere to strict standards of confidentiality and can help you think through your situation and options, without sharing what you have told them other than in limited circumstances. There are a few exceptions to their ability to maintain confidentiality and you can ask about those exceptions before you speak to them.

Medical professionals, social workers, rape-crisis counselors, and clergy: Medical professionals at Harvard include licensed clinicians at Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), the Bureau of Study Counsel, and the University Mental Health Services. These professionals have certain standards of confidentiality. Similarly, rape crisis counselors, including counselors at the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR), have certain confidentiality standards. Rape crisis counselors also are available at the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC). BARCC also coordinates counseling and legal assistance resources. Harvard clergy also have certain standards of confidentiality.

The College has trained peers through the student group called Response.

In all instances, it is always best to first have a conversation about keeping information private or confidential, and what both of those mean in regard to your conversation with the professional.

Your Title IX Coordinator or OSAPR can let you know if other resources are available when you meet.

Working with the Police

If you have experienced sexual violence or other sexual harassment that you believe may rise to the level of a violation of criminal law, you may make a report to HUPD. All HUPD officers, male and female, are qualified to handle crimes of a sensitive nature. In addition, HUPD offers the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) system, which is a free program dedicated to teaching hands-on defense training. For information, visit the HUPD Web site: www.hupd.harvard.edu/rape-aggression-defense-program.

It is never too late to TELL SOMEONE. You may contact any of the above resources at any time. If you have been sexually harassed, you deserve and will receive support.

If you or a friend have been raped or sexually assaulted:
1. Get to a safe place as soon as possible.
2. Ask a friend or someone else you trust to be with you.
3. Call one of these organizations for help and support:
   • Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (24 hours) | 617-495-9100
   • Harvard University Police Department | 617-495-1212
   (provides transportation to the Beth Israel Hospital or a hospital of your choice.)
   • Harvard University Health Services | 617-495-5711
   • Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Rape Crisis Intervention Center | 617-667-8141
   • Boston Area Rape Crisis Center | 617-492-8306 or 1-800-841-8371
   • Cambridge Police Department | 617-349-3300
What happens next?
If you are experiencing harassment and would like assistance in deciding a course of action, you can talk to the resources listed in this brochure. Designated Title IX Coordinators can talk to you about the University’s responsibility to respond and protect its students from sexual harassment, including sexual violence; can explain and, as appropriate, offer interim measures; answer questions about the complaint process; address concerns about potential retaliation; and when appropriate, offer an informal resolution. You may also contact the Office for Sexual Gender-Based Dispute Resolution (ODR). When you contact ODR, you may: request information or advice, including whether certain conduct may violate the Policy; seek informal resolution; or file a formal complaint. Copies of the procedures for students making a complaint are available: diversity.harvard.edu/files/diversity/files/harvard_sexual_harassment_procedures_student.pdf

The SEAS sexual harassment policy including contact information for our Title IX Coordinators can be found here: diversity.harvard.edu/policies/seas-sexual-harassment-policies-procedures.

In addition, in cases of sexual violence or potential criminal violations, the University strongly encourages students to consider reporting the assault to the police and filing charges with the Office of the District Attorney of Middlesex County. Advice on the legal options and process is available from the Victim/Witness Bureau listed in this brochure; OSAPR staff, the Title IX Coordinator or HUPD can assist you in contacting them.

Resources - Title IX Coordinators

For complaints against Staff:
Steve Marley, Director of Human Resources
steve_marley@harvard.edu
617-495-4586
20 University Road, 6th Floor, SEAS Suite, Cambridge, MA 02138

For complaints against Faculty:
Kwok Yu, Assistance Dean for Faculty Affairs
kwok_yu@harvard.edu
(617) 495-7483
University Hall, 111
Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA 02138

Johannah Park, Appointments Administrator and Sexual Harassment Officer
(617) 495-9892
jkpark@fas.harvard.edu
University Hall, 403
Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA 02138

For complaints against an Undergraduate Student:
Emily Miller, Case Manager for the Administrative Board
emilymiller@fas.harvard.edu
(617) 496-9578
University Hall, 117
Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA 02138
Will Cooper, Associate Dean of Student Life
cooper4@fas.harvard.edu
(617) 495-1942
University Hall, 31
Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA 02138

For complaints against a Graduate Student:
Garth McCavana, Dean for Student Affairs in the GSAS
mccavana@fas.harvard.edu
(617) 495-1814
Smith Campus Center, Room 350
1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

Jackie Yun, Director of Student Services
stuserv@fas.harvard.edu
(617) 495-5005
Lehman Hall - Dudley House B-2,
Harvard Yard, Cambridge, MA 02138

Alicia Oeser, Director
Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response
oeser@fas.harvard.edu
617-495-9100
Smith Campus Center, Room 731
1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

University Services
Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Dispute Resolution | 617-495-3786
Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response | 617-495-9100
University Mental Health Services | 617-495-2042
Bureau of Study Counsel | 617-495-2581
Harvard University Health Services | 617-495-5711
Harvard Chaplains | 617-495-5529
Harvard University Police Department | 617-495-1212
Response student group (nightly undergraduate student peer counseling) 9pm-8am | 617-495-9600

Community Resources
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center’s Rape Crisis Intervention Center | 617-667-8141
Boston Area Rape Crisis Center | 617-492-8306 or 1-800-841-8371
Cambridge Police Department Sexual Assault Unit | 617-349-9342
The Cambridge Hospital Victims of Violence Program | 617-591-6360
Middlesex District Attorney Victim/Witness Bureau | 781-897-8490
Victim Rights Law Center | 617-399-6720