

The Elements of Sexual Assault

For your information:

In Massachusetts, rape is defined as the penetration of any bodily orifice by any object without the consent of the individual, or which is accomplished by the use of force or the threat of force.

And especially for students:

At Brandeis "Sexual conduct that occurs without the explicit consent of each student involved may be considered sexual misconduct. Consent must be clearly communicated, mutual, non-coercive, and given free of force or the threat of force. A student who is physically or mentally incapacitated by drugs, alcohol, or other circumstances is not capable of giving consent." *

Brandeis University is strongly committed to providing an educational and employment environment which is free from discrimination, harassment and exploitation. In addition to the University's policies and federal and state laws, each of us has a responsibility to foster a community in which people are safe, are able to pursue their responsibilities free of inappropriate interpersonal behaviors, and are able to perform to the best of their abilities.

The Division of Student Affairs through the Dean's Office, the Department of Community Living, and the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards, develop programs for the undergraduate and graduate student communities to educate them about the issues of harassment and assault and the resources available to them on campus. The Department of Human Resources develops programs for staff and employees about these critical issues.

Please educate yourself and share what you learn with others in the community.

*Section 3 of *Rights and Responsibilities*, 2011-12

Brandeis Resources

- **Escort Service:** escort for individuals to locations both on and off campus:
781.736.4999 <http://www.brandeis.edu/publicsafety/safety/escort/index.html>
- **Public Safety (Campus Police):** available 24 hours:
Emergency 781.736.3333 Business 781.736.5000
<http://www.brandeis.edu/publicsafety/index.html>
- **Title IX Coordinator - Office of Human Resources:** confidential advice, arranging workshops, filing complaints against faculty, TAs, administrators or staff
781.736.4455 <http://www.brandeis.edu/humanresources>
- **Dean's Office, Division of Student Affairs**
781.736.3600 <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/index.html>
- **Department of Student Rights and Community Standards:**
confidential advice, filing complaints against students
781.736.5070 <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/index.html>
- **Psychological Counseling Center:** confidential, individual counseling
781.736.3730 <http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/index.html>
- **Brandeis Counseling & Rape Crisis Hotline:** counselors on call 10 pm – 2 am
781.736.TALK <http://my.brandeis.edu/clubs/brandeisrch>
- **Students Talking About Relationships (STAR)**
781.736.4745 <http://my.brandeis.edu/clubs/star>
- **Student Sexuality Information Service (SSIS)**
781.736.3695 <http://people.brandeis.edu/~ssis/Site/index.html>
- **Triskelion (GLBT/Queer Alliance)**
781.736.3749 <http://people.brandeis.edu/~trisk>

Community Resources

- **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** 617.492.7273
- **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)** 617.227.4313
- **Rape Abuse Incest National Network (RAINN)** 800.656.HOPE
- **REACH -Beyond Domestic Violence** 800.899.4000
- **MA Commission Against Discrimination** 617.727.3990
- **MA Office for Victim Assistance** 617.727.5200
- **Middlesex County Victim/Witness Assistance** 617.679.6500
- **Jane Doe Inc.** 617.248.0922
- **Beth Israel Hospital, Center for Violence, Prevention and Recovery**
617.667.8141

Brandeis University

Sexual Assault and Harassment Facts and Education

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Brandeis Policy on Sexual Harassment *

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual Harassment is one form of harassment. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature are behaviors that may be considered sexual harassment when:

- *submission to them is a condition of employment or an individual's status in a course;*
- *submission to them is used as a basis for making employment or academic decisions about an individual; or*
- *such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment for students or employees.*

For example:

- *subtle pressure for sexual activity*
- *unnecessary touches or contact*
- *offensive sexual graffiti, writing or images*
- *inappropriate sexual innuendoes*
- *verbal sexual abuse disguised as humor*
- *whistling, cat-calls, obscene gestures*

How does the recipient of such behavior feel?

She or he may feel frightened, confused, hurt and angry. She or he may wonder why others behave offensively toward him/her. The person often feels helpless and as if they've lost control of their immediate future. How can one stop the offensive behavior rather than provoke more of it? The abused person experiences frustration and a sense of being violated—the behavior is humiliating, degrading, and domineering—it's a no-win situation.

Why do people engage in sexual harassment?

Some people may feel that jokes or innuendoes are a good way to approach someone. Some people don't employ appropriate methods to address their social needs—others enjoy feeling powerful or domineering toward other people. Harassment may vent anger or hostility which should be dealt with in another way.

* The complete Brandeis University Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination and Harassment may be found in Section 7 of *Rights and Responsibilities*.
<http://www.brandeis.edu/studentaffairs/srcs/rri/index.html>

Sexual Harassment is a Reality...

- Nationally, 20% of female undergraduates will be victims of attempted or actual sexual assault, as will about 6% of undergraduate men. *
- Many college students do not report their experience. The chief reasons cited for not reporting are fear of reprisals or fear that it will 'make things worse'.
- Although many people are targets of peer harassment, some groups tend to be singled out more often than others. For example, minority women and gay and lesbian people may be harassed as a form of racism or because of stereotypes.

If you think you have been sexually harassed...

- Tell someone you trust.
- Consider letting the harasser know that the conduct is unwelcome.
- Keep a journal: write down what is happening to you and keep a record of times, dates and places of the events and your responses.
- Seek out Brandeis Resources—the Title IX Coordinator, personnel in the Division of Student Affairs, the Department of Student Rights and Community Standards—all may be helpful to you.

Confronting sexual harassment at Brandeis...

- Take the issue seriously; don't put up with it!
- Provide support to anyone you know who is experiencing sexual harassment or who has been assaulted.
- Don't tolerate sexual or sexist remarks and jokes about any person or group.
- Discuss the problem of sexual harassment; learn and educate others.

* <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-factsheet-201104.html#fn4>

What about Sexual Assault?

The terms *sexual assault*, *acquaintance rape*, and *date rape* are often used interchangeably. *Sexual assault* is a general term that describes all forms of unwanted sexual activity. It includes but is not limited to rape. Other forced sexual experiences, such as forced oral or anal intercourse, or unwelcome or forced sexual touching not involving intercourse, are included in the definition.

Sexual assault is a crime and should be reported to the appropriate authorities. Often victims of sexual assault blame themselves for the assault.

Remember: No one deserves to be the victim of a crime. Rape and sexual assault can happen to anyone; no one deserves to be hurt by another person.

Someone who has been sexually assaulted may experience: *disbelief, loss of control, anger, fear, depression, guilt, denial, mood swings, confusion and inability to concentrate, embarrassment, helplessness, difficulty with intimacy and relationships, and disturbances in eating and/or sleeping habits.*

The emotional impacts and effects of sexual assault can be immediate and short term, or delayed and long lasting. People who have been victimized are assisted in their recovery by:

- reporting the crime. Brandeis Police are available to staff, faculty and students to help them determine which reporting options will serve them best.
- seeking medical and psychological help. Screening for physical problems (injury, STIs, pregnancy) is important. Local emergency rooms can collect evidence to assist in prosecution.