Healthy Relationships and Dating in the United States

What You Should Know & What You Can Do as New International Undergraduate Students

2019 International Orientation
Presenters

Yuval Katz

Yuxin (Mia) Li
For Your Information...

This presentation contains some information or examples about sexual assault and/or violence which may be difficult to hear especially if this has ever happened to you. If you need to talk to someone, we would encourage you to reach out to the Sexual Assault Prevention & Awareness Center (SAPAC).

Contact Information:
Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Cambridge House
1551 West Quad
Telephone: 734-764-7771
https://sapac.umich.edu/

24-Hour Crisis Line: (734) 936-3333

https://caps.umich.edu/
Agenda

- Dating Norms in the U.S.
- Sexual Misconduct - why should we care?
- What is Sexual Harassment
- What is Sexual Assault
- What is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- Supporting a Survivor of Sexual Assault
- Seeking Help
Dating Norms in the United States
Spoiler Alert!

- Diversity in the United States
  - There are no defined “norms” that apply to all people!

- Expectation Shift
  - No longer gender-based
  - Either individual can initiate a date
  - Either individual can pay for a date
Many people in the U.S. regularly meet people and start dating using dating apps.

Apps are used for a wide range of relationships ranging from one-time encounters to long-term relationships - and even just friendships!

As with any sort of online community, consider your safety when meeting people you meet online.
Party Culture in the U.S.

**Hookup culture**: A culture that accepts and encourages casual sexual encounters.

**College Binge Drinking**: Drinking to the point of intoxication, a legal threshold set at a 0.08 blood alcohol level.

**Recreational Drugs**: Recreational drugs are chemical substances taken for enjoyment, or leisure purposes, rather than for medical reasons.

**Greek Life**: Social organizations for mostly undergraduate students. Typically, Greek letter organizations are gender-based initiatory organizations. *Fraternity* refers to a male membership, whereas *sorority* refers to a female membership.
Peer Pressure: positive and/or negative influence from members of one's peer group. There are two types of peer pressure: Spoken (direct) and Unspoken (indirect).

Why can it be difficult to resist peer pressure?

- are afraid of being rejected by friends
- want to be accepted and don't want to lose a friend
- don't want to be teased
- unfamiliar with new culture
- don't know how to get out of the particular situation.

Just remember - you’re responsible for your decisions. Don’t do anything that you aren’t comfortable with!
Introduction to Sexual Misconduct

Three types of sexual misconduct as defined in the U.S. context

- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Assault
- Intimate Partner Violence

Statistics from RAINN.org and graphic from presentation by RAINN and International Student Insurance
Ending Sexual Misconduct: Why Should We Care?

- Difference in Culture, Misunderstanding, and Lack of Social Support Network
- To protect yourself from being pressured by others / to stand your ground and stand up for your beliefs
- Unfamiliarity with legal system in the U.S.
- To avoid jeopardizing your immigration status and future career
Sexual Harassment
Sexual Harassment

“Unwanted sexual statements” – sexual or “dirty” jokes, comments on physical attributes, spreading rumors about or rating others as to sexual activity or performance, talking about one’s sexual activity in front of others, and displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures and/or written material. Unwanted sexual statements can be made in person, in writing, electronically (email, instant messaging, blogs, web pages, etc.), and otherwise.

Unwanted personal attention – letters, telephone calls, visits, pressure for sexual favors, pressure for unnecessary personal interaction, pressure for dates where a sexual/romantic intent appears evident but remains unwanted, and stalking.

Unwanted physical or sexual advances – touching, hugging, kissing, fondling, touching oneself sexually for others to view, sexual assault, intercourse, or other sexual activity.”

What Do You Think?

1. Giving a massage around the neck or shoulders.
2. Commenting on a person's body, dress, or appearance.
3. Giving unwelcome personal gifts, such as flowers.
4. Repeatedly asking someone for a date after the person has expressed disinterest.
Key Takeaways

- Any *unwanted* or *unwelcome* sexual advances, either physical or verbal.

- The intention from the perpetrator does not determine whether the behaviour counts as sexual harassment or not. **It’s the target’s perspective that is the key.**

- Insults related to a person's sexuality are a form of sexual harassment. Using those words to *insult* others is what makes it harassment.
Sexual Assault
Sexual Assault

From the University of Michigan Policy on Sexual Misconduct by Students:

“Sexual assault: touching of a sexual nature that occurs without consent. Oral-genital contact; anal intercourse; vaginal intercourse; anal, oral, or vaginal penetration with an object. Intentional touching of the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals; intentionally touching another with any of the above; making another touch you or themselves with or on any of the above.”
Consent is when each individual says “yes” every step of the way. Here are some examples of ways you can give and get consent:

- **Verbal**: “Yes, I’m open to trying!” or other verbal agreement
- **Physical Cues**: Initiating physical contact or kissing back

**Not sure?** When in doubt, always ask your partner

- “Do you want to do ___?”

*Source: RAINN.org & International Student Insurance*
What is NOT Consent?

The duty for establishing consent falls on the **initiator** of sexual contact. Consent cannot be assumed by the following:

- Being in a relationship
- A person’s clothing
- Flirting, kissing, touching ≠ Going to bed with you
- Being intoxicated (alcohol/drugs) or passed out
- Previous consent - Consent can be **withdrawn** at any time.

**Source:** RAINN.org & International Student Insurance
Sexual Assault on Campus: Myth vs Reality

The Myth
- Unpredictable and rare
- By strangers
- In lonely dangerous places
- By force

The Reality
- Frequent and patterned
- By acquaintances (on most occasions)
- In the survivor’s living quarters
- By incapacitation (esp. intoxication)
“Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is the use of physical, sexual, economic, and/or emotional abuse by one person in an intimate relationship in order to establish and maintain power and control over the other person. A survivor of IPV is an individual who is or has been subjected to a pattern of abusive and coercive behaviors by an intimate or former intimate partner.”

For more information, refer to the National Institute of Justice
Severity and Pervasiveness of IPV

- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men aged 18 and older experience severe physical IPV
- IPV occurs across ALL GROUPS

Types of IPV

- Not limited to physical violence
• International students are in a unique, sometimes vulnerable, situation due to cultural, language, and financial barriers.
• We may be confused and uncertain about what is appropriate, what rights we have, what resources we can access.

However, we are never alone.
Role of University, State, and Society

No longer a “private” problem

“As a university president, a physician-scientist, an educator and a father, the issue of sexual misconduct keeps me awake at night. I feel personally responsible for the safety and well-being of all students at the University of Michigan.”

- President Mark Schlissel
Role of University: Title IX

- The University of Michigan is legally required to investigate reports of sexual misconduct and have procedures in place to protect the survivor.

- This applies to all University of Michigan students - regardless of immigration status.

- Reporting sexual assault will not impact your immigration status.

Read the University of Michigan’s Full Statement on Sexual Misconduct here: https://studentsexualmisconductpolicy.umich.edu/content/policy-statement
How to Support a Survivor

- **Listen** to what the survivor tells you without asking questions. Let the survivor share as much or as little as they choose.

- **Believe** what the survivor is telling you. No matter what, the survivor is not to be blamed.

- **Support** the survivor in whatever way is requested, to the degree that you are able. Do not take it personally if a survivor does not want your help.

- **Refer and Connect** the survivor to trained professionals for comprehensive crisis intervention, advocacy, and support.
Additional Resources

SAPAC Resources for Survivors and Supporters

- **24-Hour Crisis Line** (734-936-3333): *confidential*
- **Advocate Chat**: anonymous online messaging
- **Advocacy**: academic, legal, medical, and housing advocacy for survivors for survivors of sexual assault, harassment, and IPV
- **Crisis Intervention**: in-person in residence halls, campus offices, etc.
- **Peer-led Support Group**: peer-led weekly drop-in support group
Additional Resources, *continued*

- “911” is not just for extreme emergencies
  - You can call this number if you feel unsafe at any time!

- **RAINN** - National Resources for Sexual Assault Survivors & their Loved Ones
  - Website includes many useful articles and resources
You will be sent a short survey about this presentation.

Your feedback is valuable to us and will help us improve the experience of future participants. Thank you!