Healthy Relationships & Dating in the United States:

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

2019 International Orientation
Presenters

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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
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
Ice Breaker

Let’s talk about …

▪ What would you do if you wanted to start dating someone in your culture?
▪ What would be the appropriate way to approach someone?
Dating Norms in the United States
● 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
Dating Apps

- 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.
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
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
Vocabulary

- **Survivor/Victim** – The individual who was sexually harassed or assaulted.

- **Perpetrator** – The individual who commits misconduct.

- **Ally** – The individual who consciously strives towards promoting justice and disrupting and ending misconduct.
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.
What Do You Think?

4. Repeatedly asking someone for a date after the person has expressed disinterest.

5. A female supervisor makes frequent comments about a male employee’s physique.
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
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.”
What is Consent?

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
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
Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igqM6irCWvM
Is it Consent?

- After having fun at a friend’s party, Emily agreed to go to Josh’s apartment “where they can have more privacy” and watch a movie together.
- Mia told Jerald that she has had a crush on him for years and said she was excited when he kissed her the last time they met.
- Briana wore a short skirt to work and sat next to Dan during the daily team meeting.
- Tim went to the gym and noticed that Gabe stopped his workout and took off his shirt the moment Tim passed by him.
- Sheila and Sarah have been making out throughout the entire party, but when they went to Sheila’s room, she noticed a strong smell of alcohol in Sarah’s breath.
In the United States, the age of consent varies by state.

- In Michigan, the age of consent is 16 years old, except in cases when the older party is an authority figure. In such cases, the age of consent is 18.

Sexual relations with a person under the age of 16 is illegal.
Requirements for Consent

- Explicit Agreement
- Without force/threat/intimidation/coercion
- With Feeling
- With Awareness
- Confirmed by the Initiator
- Not Subsequently Withdrawn
- Sober/Not Incapacitated
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
“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
Power and Control Wheel

- Different tactics that an abuser uses in order to maintain power and control over their intimate partner.
- No tactic is less important or impactful than any other.
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.
"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

No longer a “private” problem
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.
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 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!