



What every student and faculty and staff member should know about sexual harassment

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is defined to include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other behavior of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in an educational program;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for personnel decisions or for academic evaluation or advancement;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment.

Sexually discriminatory conduct as described above will not be tolerated by the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC). Any faculty, staff or student member found in violation of University policy addressing sexual harassment/sexual misconduct shall be subject to appropriate discipline. The university shall investigate each situation alleging sexual harassment individually before reaching a conclusion on the merits of the claim.

Recognizing sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is not about intentions; it deals with impact. To avoid being misinterpreted, it is important to become conscious of conduct and behavior that may constitute a violation of the policies enforced by UTHSC under the authority of the law, Title IX and Title VII, to protect students, faculty and staff members from harassment and discrimination.

Behavior that may constitute sexual harassment includes intentional and undesired physical contact, sexually explicit language or writings, and lewd pictures or notes. The conduct may be initiated by individuals in positions of power or by fellow co-workers/ students. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

Verbal harassment

- sexually explicit jokes or stories
- sexually explicit, interactive software programs/computer games used at work
- sexual/obscene innuendos, comments, remarks or sounds
- repeatedly asking for a date after a person has expressed disinterest
- inquiring about a person's sexual fantasies or sexual activities
- sexual propositions/pressure for sex

Non-verbal harassment

- reviewing a person's body by staring them up and down
- making facial expressions such as winking or licking the lips or other sexual gestures with hands or through body movements
- following a person/hanging around before, during or after work hours
- offering unwanted gifts or letters
- displaying sexually explicit pictures or signs

Physical harassment

- patting, pinching or brushing up against someone in a sexual manner or other unwelcome forms of touching a person's body, hair or clothing
- attempted or actual kissing or fondling
- attempted or actual coerced sexual acts

What if I am not sure?

The Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) provides guidance and resources to the university community. If you are experiencing a problem, but are not sure if it is sexual harassment, we encourage you to make an appointment to discuss your concerns. Call (901) 448-2112.

Reporting sexual harassment

As a student, faculty or staff member at UTHSC, you have the right to function without being sexually harassed by fellow students, faculty or staff members. Should you experience inappropriate behavior, you are encouraged to follow the steps listed below as an attempt to resolve the matter.

1. Clearly or firmly tell the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome and deemed offensive. State directly that you want the behavior to stop immediately and that you are not interested.
2. Describe clearly to the harasser the behavior that you are referring to at the time it occurs so that the harasser has actual knowledge of the offensive behavior. Inform the harasser that you will take further action if the behavior persists.
3. Document the incident immediately.
4. Report the incident to a supervisor or the Office of Equity and Diversity immediately.

If you are not comfortable confronting your harasser, contact a supervisor or one of the offices listed in this brochure immediately.

Retaliation for sexual harassment

It is a violation of UTHSC's policy and the law to engage in any form of retaliation against individuals who:

- report and/or file complaints of discrimination or harassment;
- cooperate in the investigation of discrimination or harassment; or
- participate in hearings involving discrimination or harassment.

Violation of the retaliation policy will constitute grounds for appropriate discipline.

Campus resources for reporting sexual harassment

If you or someone you know are a victim of sexual harassment or discrimination, you are strongly encouraged to report such information immediately. The sources listed below are available to assist you in handling matters related to sexual harassment. Please note that the individual reporting the harassment need not be the target of harassment, but may simply be a witness to such action.

Office of Equity and Diversity: 901-448-2112

Title IX Coordinator: 901-448-2112

Student Conduct Administration: 901-448-2112

University Health Services: 901-448-5630

Student Assistance Program (SAP): 1-800-327-2255

Human Resources/Employee Relations: 901-448-5600

Employee Assistance Program (EAP): 1-855-437-3486

UTHSC Police Department: 901-448-4444

Remember, you do not have to face sexual harassment alone. Sexual harassment violates policies enforced by UTHSC and the law!

For additional information, contact the Office of Equity and Diversity at ext. 2112.

The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA/V institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services.

Applicable UT Policies:

Sexual Misconduct & Relationship Violence Policy
<http://www.uthsc.edu/oed/sexual-misconduct.php>

HR Policy 0580-Code of Conduct
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0580/

HR Policy 0280-Sexual Harassment
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0280/

HR Policy 0220-Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Diversity
http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0220/