

## Sexual Harassment in the Workplace



### A guide for UNT students with internships or outside placements

#### What is sexual harassment?

Per UNT policy 16.005, sexual harassment is unwelcome, sex-based verbal or physical conduct that:

1. In the employment context, unreasonably interferes with a person's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment;
- OR**
2. In the education context, is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that the conduct interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities at/ offered by the university

Workplaces have different policies, but in general, unwelcome or offensive sexual conduct is likely to raise a concern of sexual harassment. The behavior may be a violation of federal law if it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or the behavior results in an adverse employment decision (such as the victim being fired, demoted or moved to a less favorable shift).

#### What kind of behavior could constitute sexual harassment?

- A supervisor persistently asks you on dates, even if you have turned them down before
- A client of your employer makes suggestive comments to you about how your body looks in certain clothing
- Coworkers insinuate that giving sexual favors would help advance your career or that sexual behavior on your part is expected
- Other interns rate the "hotness" of your intern class or give awards for "sexiness"
- A supervisor asks you about your significant other and your sexual behavior with that person
- A client makes offensive remarks about you because you are a woman or because you are a man
- A coworker shows you pictures of themselves and they are naked or minimally clothed
- Another intern touches you inappropriately e.g. plays with your hair, rubs your back, or touches any private zones on your body



### **How do I avoid a concern that I am engaging in sexual harassment?**

- Remember that the workplace is a professional setting, no matter how collegial or jovial your colleagues seem. Also, apply work rules to any event related to work e.g. dinner with colleagues, car-rides with other interns, and recreational sports where you play on a team with other employees
- Do not introduce sexualized content into the workplace. Your intent does not matter to a determination of sexual harassment, so avoid jokes or playful behavior that is sexual
- Be mindful of your behavior on social media. Employers generally do not tolerate online activity that has a negative impact on their brand e.g. you write a post using sexist language and your bio identifies you as working for a specific company
- Be very cautious about engaging in workplace romance. Any such behavior should be clearly consensual and should not cross supervisory lines. However, keep in mind that an internship is a long interview and many employers consider workplace romances to be unprofessional. If you choose to engage in this behavior, ensure that there is never any sexual contact in the workplace.

### **What should I do if I think I am being sexually harassed?**

- If you feel comfortable doing so, inform the offending party that their actions are inappropriate and that they should stop
- Immediately tell your internship faculty supervisor or any UNT employee who is connected to your internship

- Contact the Title IX Coordinator if the offending party is connected to UNT e.g. an employee or student. You may also contact the Title IX Coordinator if you have questions, or if you would like some assistance addressing the issue
- Check the policy or procedures of your workplace that pertain to reporting misconduct. Report the incident according to the procedures given. If there are no written procedures, report to the Human Resources department and your supervisor

### **What about other forms of sexual misconduct?**

Sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic or dating violence, and stalking are all prohibited by UNT policy (12.005 [Prohibition of Sexual Assault and Retaliation] and 07.021 [Code of Student Conduct]), state laws, and will not be acceptable in the work environment.

If you are in a situation where these offenses have been perpetrated against you, please get assistance immediately by first contacting local law enforcement to ensure your safety, and informing your employer's Human Resources office and the UNT employee who supervises your internship. You may also contact UNT's Title IX Coordinator if you require assistance or are unsure of the best steps to take.



### **Contact information**

Inya Baiye, Title IX Coordinator

Location: Hurley Administration  
Building 175

Phone: (940) 565-2759

Email: [oeo@unt.edu](mailto:oeo@unt.edu)