

## Framework for College Campus Risk Factors for Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

The following list of College Campus Risk Factors for Sexual Misconduct was compiled from a preliminary review of available literature. These risk factors are at the individual, interpersonal, and university levels using a social ecological lens (e.g., Dahlberg & Krug, 2002; see also other sources at the end of this report).

Level	Risk Factors	Potential Actions
<b>Individual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal attitudes and beliefs that support sexist norms can contribute to excusing or condoning harassment and sexual aggression and/or decrease likelihood of bystander intervention.</li> <li>• Dismissive attitudes and beliefs toward others unlike oneself, such as hostility, objectification and depersonalization, correlate with harassment and sexually aggressive behaviors.</li> <li>• A variety of individual behaviors – on the part of both transgressor and target – can increase opportunities for problematic incidents to occur, e.g., drug and alcohol use.</li> <li>• Younger and underclass students are often targeted as victims, or lack resources and skills to ask for support.</li> <li>• Past victims of abuse and assault are often vulnerable to being the perpetrators and/or targets of abuse in new relationships.</li> </ul>	
<b>Interpersonal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership in homogeneous groups, departments, and organizations associated with traditional gender roles may increase risk to become a target and increase norms that support sexist treatment and sexually violent behavior (e.g., fraternities, male-dominated majors).</li> <li>• Association with groups that embrace and/or are defined by hyper-masculinity – if unchecked – can</li> </ul>	

	<p>increase sexist and abuse treatment (e.g., athletics)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatively, membership in groups where diverse voices are actively supported and diversity is promoted can be a protective factor.</li> <li>• Association with peers with high social status who express sexist attitudes can promote harassment and sexual aggression and decrease likelihood of bystander intervention.</li> <li>• Isolation of community members who are outside the norm on a wide range of dimensions can contribute to a climate that allows harassment and sexual aggression.</li> </ul>	
<b>University</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highly visible and concerted efforts by student and campus-wide leaders to reprove sexual harassment and sexually abusive behavior is critical to preventing harassment and sexual violence.</li> <li>• Also important is an active commitment to creating spaces and forums to show that the community values members who lack a voice and/or are impacted by harassment and sexual violence.</li> <li>• Lack of active support and lack of explicit expressions of intolerance for harassment and sexually aggressive behavior can not only inadvertently condone the behavior but can also reduce bystander intervention.</li> <li>• Weak sanctions against perpetrators and/or inconsistent/lackadaisical applications of policies designed to deal with harassment and sexual transgressions can be even more problematic than having no a policy at all.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Campus traditions which – even if just tacitly – support and/or celebrate subcultures that denigrate women and other minority groups, or allow sexual violence to occur unchecked, promote problematic norms (e.g., valorizing athletes who are not held accountable for their treatment of others, allowing hazing rituals that incorporate sexist components).</li><li>• Support for societal inequalities, and lack of attempts to ensure equity among members, within the campus community allows historical and societally-based behavioral and climate norms to prosper within the community.</li></ul>	
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References:

CDC, "Risk and Protective Factors," October 10, 2019, CDC.gov:

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html>

Dahlberg, L.L., Krug, E.G. (2002). A Global Public Health Problem. In Krug, E.G., Dahlberg, L.L., Mercy, J.A., Zwi, A.B., Lorenzo, R Eds. World Report on Violence and Health. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization

National Institute of Justice, "Factors That Increase Sexual Assault Risk," September 30, 2008, nij.ojp.gov:

<http://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/factors-increase-sexual-assault-risk>

Van Brunt, B., Murphy, A. & O’Toole, M. (2015). The Dirty dozen: Twelve Risk Factors for Sexual Violence on College Campuses. *Violence and Gender*, 2, 1-16.