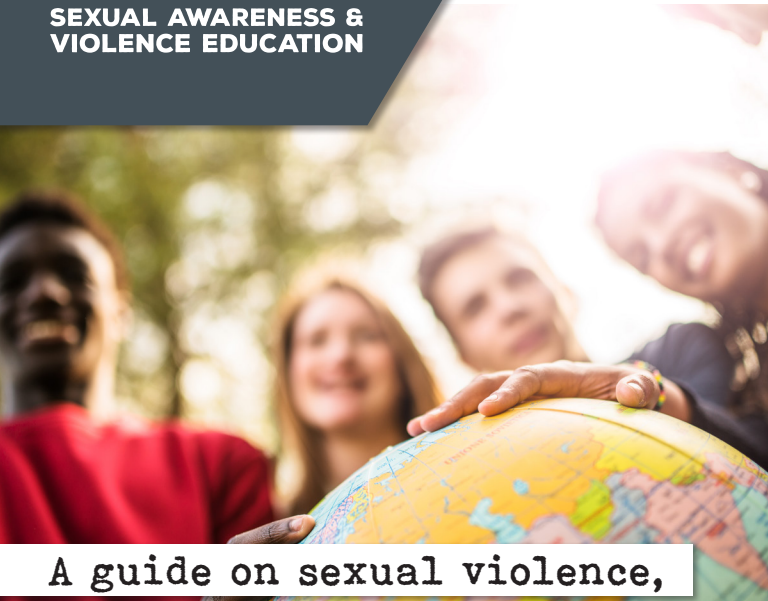


UC  **SAVE**

**SEXUAL AWARENESS &
VIOLENCE EDUCATION**

UC  UNIVERSITY OF
CHARLESTON



A guide on sexual violence,
relationship violence,
& stalking
for international students

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consent

Consent is when both people agree, both verbally, physically, and emotionally to sexual activity. It involves checking in with your partner, allowing your partner to stop at any time, being open to your partner changing their mind, and going at a pace that is right for everyone. In the US, consent can be given and taken away at any time, regardless of your relationship with that person. No one has the right to touch you without your agreement.

Consent cannot be assumed from any of the following:

- A person's clothing - while someone may dress to impress, that doesn't mean that they are interested in a sexual relationship.
- Flirting, kissing, or touching - doesn't mean that they want to have sex.
- Being intoxicated, incapacitated, or passed out - If you find yourself at a party and you are with a friend who is clearly incapacitated (due to drugs, alcohol, or anything else), or passed out, that person cannot give consent. They do not have the state of mind to do so.
- Previous consent - saying "yes" before any sexual activity does not mean that consent will be there in the future. You or your partner can change your mind at any time, regardless of anything you or your partner have said or done before.
- Marriage or being in a relationship - Even if you are married, no one - not even your spouse - has the right to have sex with you without consent.

sexual violence

It's important that international students are aware of their rights and know what to do if a sexual assault or relationship violence occurs. Since laws and ethical standards vary by country, become familiar with US laws, and know your rights while living in the US.

There are several reasons that international students may be at risk of sexual assault. These include:

Language – if there is a language barrier between people, it can be difficult for them to have a clear conversation about what they want and do not want, and what they are or are not comfortable with. This ambiguity can create confusion around consent from both parties.

Cultural barriers – every culture has its own customs and norms about what is acceptable when it comes to sex. In the US, consent is key and is important in any relationship.

Different laws – laws and ethical standards vary around the world, so it is important to find out what the laws are in the United States as they may not be the same in your home country.

Lack of support networks – International students are far away from their friends and family, often for the first time. This can put them at greater risk of being sexually assaulted, as offenders may assume that international students are less likely to talk about being assaulted.



Sexual assault is any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without the explicit consent of the recipient. Sexual assault is an umbrella term that refers to sexual activity that you don't want or are forced to do. Often, people think that only forced intercourse, or rape, is sexual assault, but any sexual activity performed without permission constitutes sexual assault. This can include kissing, exhibitionism (showing someone your genitals without permission), groping, and rape. Victims of sexual assault might be convinced to do sexual acts through verbal or physical threats or by taking or being given alcohol or drugs.



How to Minimize Your Risk

It is important to remember that sexual assault is never the fault of the victim. If you are sexually assaulted, know that it is not because of something that you did or didn't do. However, there are steps that you can take to minimize your risk of sexual victimization.

Trust your gut

If something about a person or location feels wrong, leave immediately, even if you are with someone you know. You might be subconsciously processing body language or other danger indicators without realizing it. Head in the direction of the nearest crowd, lighted area, or building. Talk loudly on your phone; many offenders don't want to pursue potential victims who seem loud or aggressive.

It's okay to lie

If something about a location or situation feels off to you and you want to leave immediately, don't feel bad about making up an excuse. Even if you are with a friend or someone you know. Trust your instincts. Your safety is your most important concern.

Know your alcohol limits

According to research, over half of sexual assaults committed against college students involve alcohol. Intoxication can make you significantly more vulnerable to assault by impairing your judgement.

Keep an eye on your drink

An increasing number of sexual assaults occur when the perpetrator slips drugs into their victims' drinks, causing them to feel sleepy or even pass out. To decrease the opportunity for someone to slip something into your drink, take it into the restroom with you. Additionally, never accept a drink that has been given to you by someone else or that was taken from a communal alcohol source, like a punch bowl.

Stay with your friends

Attend parties and other social gatherings with a group of people whom you trust. Look out for each other and make sure you all get home safely. If you do go out alone, always make sure at least one person knows where you're going and avoid walking in unlit or non-trafficked areas. Additionally, keep your cell phone always charged and with you.

Know your resources

Locate resources such as campus security, and a local sexual assault service provider, to talk to anonymously, so you know who to contact if you or your friends need help.

Be careful about posting your location

Many social media sites automatically post your location. Consider turning this function off.

Have a Plan B

If your phone dies, do you have a few numbers memorized? Do you have cash on you in case you can't use a credit or debit card? Do you have your address memorized?

Be secure

Remember to lock your doors and windows when you're sleeping. If you notice that the main door to your building is often propped open, notify security or a trusted authority figure.

Be careful about what you post on social media

You may want to adjust your privacy settings so only people you know personally can see what you post.¹

¹ International Student Insurance



relationship violence

Relationship violence or domestic violence can include emotional, physical, sexual, or psychological abuse. Emotional abuse can sometimes be harder to identify. It centers around control, manipulation, isolation, and demeaning or threatening behaviors. Psychological abuse can include gaslighting or intermittent reinforcement to create attachment.

Examples of emotional abuse:

- Monitoring and controlling a person's behavior, such as who they spend time with, what they wear, or how they spend their money.
- Threatening a person's safety, property, or loved ones.
- Isolating a person from family, friends, and acquaintances.
- Demeaning, shaming, or humiliating a person.
- Extreme jealousy, excessive texting, & constant monitoring.
- Demanding that your partner continuously share their location with you via cell phone or Snapchat.
- Throwing items near you or punching walls.

Examples of physical abuse:

- Scratching, punching, biting, strangling, choking, or kicking.
- Throwing items at you like a phone, book, shoe, or plate.
- Pulling your hair.
- Pushing or pulling you, or forcibly grabbing your clothing.
- Threatening to use or using a gun, knife, or other weapon against you.
- Touching any part of you without your permission or consent.
- Forcing you to have sex or perform a sexual act.
- Grabbing your face to make you look at them.
- Preventing you from leaving or forcing you to go somewhere.

Examples of sexual abuse:

- Unwanted kissing or touching.
- Unwanted rough or violent sexual activity.
- Refusing to use condoms or restricting someone's access to birth control.
- Preventing someone from using protection against sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- Sexual contact with someone intoxicated from drugs or alcohol, unconscious, asleep, or otherwise unable to give clear and informed consent.
- Threatening, pressuring, manipulating or otherwise forcing someone to have sex or perform sexual acts.



stalking

Stalking occurs when someone (usually a current or former partner) watches, follows, or harasses you repeatedly, making you feel afraid or unsafe.

Stalking behaviors can include:

- Showing up at your home or workplace unannounced or uninvited.
- Sending you unwanted texts, messages, letters, emails, or voicemails.
- Leaving you unwanted items, gifts, or flowers.
- Calling you and hanging up repeatedly or making unwanted phone calls to you, your employer, a professor, or a loved one.
- Using social media or technology to track your activities.
- Spreading rumors about you online or in person.
- Manipulating other people to investigate your life, including using someone else's social media account to look at your profile or befriending your friends to get information about you.
- Waiting around at places you spend time.
- Damaging your home, car, or other property.
- Damaging the property of your loved ones or new partner
- Hiring a private investigator to follow or find you as a way of knowing your location or movements.
- Using technology to track your car, phone, person, or online movement.³

³The National Domestic Violence Hotline



long distance relationships

Dating at a distance can be challenging for relationships. Even if your relationship is healthy, there may be times when conflict arises, or you feel disconnected from your partner. Here are ways you can be intentional about making your distance relationship a healthy one, based in consent and respect and free from control.

1. Respect that your partner may have interests and friendships outside of the digital space.

Even if you and your partner text or video call often, they may not always be available. In healthy relationships, partners are trusting of each other and value autonomy. If they are not able to connect when you hope or take time for other important people in their lives that interest them, offer understanding and support.

2. Sharing your location should always be a mutual choice, not a requirement.

There are many reasons someone would want to share their location with a partner. It could be for safety, accountability, or keeping up with busy schedules. It may also be temporary, or time/activity specific. No matter the reason, sharing locations should be a choice for everyone involved.

3. Keep intimate moments private & free from pressure.

When dating at a distance, partners may rely heavily on digital media to have intimate moments. This can include video chatting or sending pictures or texts. Just as you would IRL, always ask for consent before sending sexual images or videos and do not pressure the other person to send something to you. Don't make assumptions about expectations. Have a conversation about what is comfortable for each person. Lastly, always keep content that is shared with trust private.

4. Open communication is key when conflict arises.

If your relationship depends on technology to stay connected, having open and honest communication can help resolve conflict. Text messages don't always capture tone or intention. It may be helpful to have a conversation over video or voice note. If you need space, be honest with your partner and set a time to pick the conversation back up.

5. Be careful and intentional with social media.

For some, seeing couples who spend a lot of time together in-person can create pressure to have more face time with their partner. For others, social media is a way to bond and develop more security in their relationship. Regardless of how you use social media, keep in mind that everything is not always as it seems. If you are feeling insecure about social media or your relationship, have a conversation with your partner.⁴

⁴The National Network to End Domestic Violence



after an assault – immediate steps

- Get to a safe place. Get away from the person who assaulted you, to a location where you can call for help. Ideally, this should be a safe place where you aren't alone, like to campus security, or the home of a friend or family member.
- If you feel comfortable contacting law enforcement, call 911 to report the incident. Give the dispatcher the time, place of the assault, as well as description of your abuser. Wait for the police to arrive to collect your statement.
- Consider seeking medical attention at a doctor's office, urgent care clinic, or hospital as soon as possible. Doctors can help collect evidence and treat your injuries immediately after an assault. These are a few specialized care options you can ask for:
 - **Advocacy** - An emergency advocate is trained to help you through the medical examination, such as REACH 304-340-3676 for sexual violence or YWCA 304-340-3549 for relationship violence. Services are free and confidential.
 - **Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)** - These professionals conduct victim examinations, document injuries, and collect DNA evidence that can help identify an assailant.
 - **Emergency Contraception** - Pills such as Plan B can prevent the risk of pregnancy up to 120 hours after an attack.
 - **STI Testing** - Get screened for possible infections that can be transmitted by sexual contact; PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis) can prevent the contraction of HIV if taken within 72 hours.

It is also a good idea to write down the details of the assault and person who assaulted you as soon as possible. This will help doctors, police, and campus authorities help you in the hours and days following your assault. As much as you may want to, do not change your clothes, shower, brush your teeth, or clean the location of the assault until you have seen a medical professional. If you think you have been drugged, you can ask for a urinalysis during your examination.¹

You don't need to file a police report to receive an examination. If you choose to file a police report later, the results from your sexual assault exam will be available for 2 years. The West Virginia Crime Victims Compensation Fund may help with expenses incurred because of a sexual assault; however, the crime needs to be reported to law enforcement to be eligible for funds. You can contact the West Virginia Crime Victims Compensation Fund at (304)-347-4850.


Moving Forward

Your next step should be to ensure your future safety. If you live with an abusive partner, plan with your dorm, a safe home, or friends to find a new residence, and don't let your abuser know where you will be living. Next, consider seeking counseling. Contact your campus Counseling Department and inform them that you need a counselor who specializes in sexual assault or domestic violence. UC Counseling services are free and confidential. REACH also provides free counseling to survivors of sexual violence and can be contacted at (304)-340-3676. Ask to speak to a REACH advocate. YWCA Resolve provides free counseling to survivors of relationship violence, and they can be contacted at (304)-340-3549.

Finally, if you know your abuser, you can file a civil protection order (CPO). This is also known as a restraining order. This means that a court has ordered your abuser to stay away from you and not communicate with you. If your abuser violates this order, they can face criminal charges. You do not have to be a US citizen or legal permanent resident to get a protection order. You can also ask your Title IX Coordinator for a University based No-Contact Order.



¹ International Student Insurance



As an international student, you also have the option to seek out your international student advisor. You might find that you're most comfortable speaking to them first, since you have likely already developed a relationship with them. Your advisor will be able to help you figure out your next steps and give you advice on how to proceed. Your school also has responsibilities to protect you under Title IX. A documentation log can help a victim process what is happening to them and identify options to increase safety, especially in stalking cases. It can also be helpful if the victim decides to engage with the criminal or civil legal systems.

Most sexual assaults are never reported. Whether or not you report your assault is a personal decision, and you are not obligated to, but reporting an assault can help you regain a sense of personal power and control. It can also prevent it from happening to someone else.

If you want to anonymously report a crime to UC, you can visit this link: <https://arep.ucwv.edu/home.aspx>

If you are a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence and report that crime, you may be eligible to apply for a U Visa. The U nonimmigrant status, or U visa, is intended for victims of certain crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are helpful to law enforcement or government officials in the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity. You may be eligible for a U visa if:

- You are the victim of qualifying criminal activity.
- You have suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of having been a victim of criminal activity.
- You have information about the criminal activity.
- You were helpful, are helpful, or are likely to be helpful to law enforcement in the investigation or prosecution of the crime.
- The crime occurred in the United States or violated U.S. laws.
- You are admissible to the United States (or otherwise qualify for a waiver of any ground of inadmissibility).

It is important to know that there may be immigration options even if your current visa status (such as a J2 or F2) depends on your spouse to remain in the United States. For example, a J2 or F2 visa holder may be eligible to apply to change to a U visa and remain in the United States, regardless of the F1 or J1 visa holder's status.

Please note that immigration law is complicated, and each case is fact specific. Thus, it is important to consult with a competent immigration attorney to fully evaluate all of your possible immigration options.

Mountain State Justice, a West Virginia non-profit organization, may be able to provide confidential and free legal advice and representation to non-citizens, including those who have been victims of sexual or relationship violence. They can be reached at 304-841-0786 or 304-344-3144.

Information about U visas can be found here: <https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-criminal-activity-u-nonimmigrant-status>





sexual violence,

relationship violence,

stalking & school

Surviving a sexual assault or relationship violence may affect many different parts of your life, including your academics and your social life. Remember that UC is here to help you; in fact, UC has a duty to protect their students and ensure your safety. This may mean modifying your schedule or changing your living accommodations, if necessary.

Following a sexual assault or relationship violence, it is common for survivors to withdraw for a semester or two, or to drop below a normal course load. As an international student, you are required to maintain a full-time course load. For this reason, you must go through additional procedures to withdraw or reduce your course load.

If you need to drop below a full-time course load, you will need approval from your Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) before reducing classes. If you do not have this, you are in danger of falling out of status and will be terminated in Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). Remember that you are under no obligation to tell your PDSO about your sexual assault or relationship violence.

Your PDSO can permit you to reduce your course load for either academic or medical reasons. Academic reasons might include cultural adjustments to the American education system, including language adjustments. You can drop below a full course load only once per program for academic reasons if you resume full-time studies the following semester. If your offender is involved in your college community, it is recommended that you state that this is the direct cause of your academic difficulties.

Because sexual assault can have both physical and psychological repercussions, you can also cite medical reasons for reducing your course load. Medical reasons can only last for an aggregate of 12 months and require documentation from a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, or a licensed clinical psychologist. This will require that you reveal your assault to your PDSO. It is especially important that you document all medical treatment you receive to use as evidence to support the medical case for your PDSO.¹

¹ International Student Insurance

title IX

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Title IX means that your school is obligated to protect you if you or someone you know is a victim of sexual assault, relationship violence, domestic violence, or stalking.

This means that UC is federally obligated to make immediate and effective efforts to end sexual harassment, sexual violence, relationship violence, and stalking. If your school fails to fulfill its responsibilities under Title IX, the Department of Education can impose a fine and potentially deny further institutional access to federal funds. Title IX applies to sex-based discrimination of anyone, regardless of their gender identity or perception. This means that you are protected under Title IX whether you are male, female, or gender non-conforming.

Sexual assault is an extremely traumatizing experience, and everyone has different methods of coping. The most important thing to remember is that it is not your fault. If you have been assaulted and need help, there are several resources available to you, both on and off your campus. The healing process is difficult, and may take a long time, but you have a variety of options to help you along the way.¹

UC's Title IX information can be found here:
<https://www.ucwv.edu/uc-life/student-resources/title-ix/>

¹ *International Student Insurance*



know your rights

It's important to be aware of the rights that Title IX provides you. These rights include:

- Your school is required to protect you. If your school knows or reasonably should know of any discrimination, violence, or harassment that creates a hostile environment for any student, it must act to eliminate it, remedy the harm caused, and prevent its recurrence.
- Your school may not discourage survivors from continuing their education. This means that they are not allowed to suggest that you "take time off" or force you to quit a team, club, or class if you are sexually assaulted. You have the right to remain on campus and have every educational program and opportunity available to you.
- Your school is required to have an established procedure for handling complaints of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual violence. This includes a Title IX Coordinator who manages complaints. This Coordinator's contact information must be publicly accessible on the school's website. If you decide to file a complaint, regardless of whether or not you report to the police, your school must promptly investigate your complaint. The investigation should be complete within a semester's time. Discipline should result if it is more likely than not that discrimination, harassment, and/or violence occurred.
- Your school must take immediate action to ensure that you can continue your education free from ongoing sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual violence.

This means, if necessary, reasonable changes to your housing, class or sport schedule, campus job, or extracurricular activities. This can occur before a formal complaint and can continue after a final decision is made regarding your complaint. These accommodations should not overburden you as the complainant/victim; instead, your school can require the accused to change some school activities or classes.

- Your school may not retaliate against someone filing a complaint and must keep you safe from other retaliatory harassment or behavior. If they do not, you can report this to the US Department of Education.
- No contact directive. Your school can issue a no contact directive to prevent the accused student from approaching or interacting with you. This will be enforced by campus security or police.
- You have a right to a formal hearing. In cases of sexual violence, your school is prohibited from encouraging or allowing mediation rather than a formal hearing of the complaint. They may still offer such an alternative process for other types of complaints, such as sexual harassment. Remember that it is your choice, and you can and should seek a disciplinary hearing if you desire a more formal process.
- Your school cannot charge you for accommodations. Your college cannot make you pay the costs of certain accommodations that you require to continue your education after experiencing violence. If you need counseling, tutoring, changes to your campus housing, or other remedies to continue your education, your school should provide these at no cost to you.

resources

on-campus

**Charleston Campus
Safety & Security**
304-357-4857

**Beckley Campus
Safety & Security**
304-929-1653

Title IX Coordinator
304-357-4987
titleIX@ucwv.edu

**Sexual Awareness & Violence
Education Project Director**
304-357-4873
save@ucwv.edu

**UC Counseling
& Outreach Services**
304-357-4862
uc-counselor@ucwv.edu

off-campus

Charleston Police Department
304-348-6400

REACH Rape Crisis Program*
304-340-3676

AWAY Resource Center Beckley*
1-888-825-7836

**YWCA Resolve Family
Abuse Program***
304-340-3549

Mountain State Justice
304-344-3144
www.mountainstatejustice.org

Tahirih Justice Center
571-282-6161
www.tahirih.org/about-us/

**U.S. Citizenship
& Immigration Services**
<https://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/victims-of-criminal-activity-u-nonimmigrant-status>

notes

*available for free, anonymously or confidentially 24/7



UC SAVE

SEXUAL AWARENESS & VIOLENCE EDUCATION

For more information: www.ucwv.edu/save

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