

APPENDIX E

Harassment Prevention

UNOLS institutions and vessel operators are committed to maintaining a positive working and learning environment, free of illegal discrimination and any forms of harassment. While recognizing operator institutions have their own internal policies, this appendix builds on these and reemphasizes the unique nature of being at sea.

What is harassment?

Harassment includes verbal or physical conduct, whether on or off the premises, which has the intent or effect of unreasonably interfering with any individual's or group's academic or work performance, which significantly affects an individual's ability to participate in the activities of the vessel or field expedition (whether on or off duty), or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational or work environment, when such conduct is based upon age, race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability or status as a veteran.

What types of behavior constitute harassment?

Harassment can take many forms. It can be blatant or subtle, verbal or physical, printed on paper or communicated electronically. Examples of conduct that can constitute harassment are:

- Outright propositions and improper suggestions or requests for sexual favors
- Threats or promises regarding compliance with sexual behavior
- Sexist, racial or ethnic jokes, slurs or cartoons; lewd or obscene remarks; disparaging remarks relating to gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
- Abuse, insults or jokes concerning sexual orientation, including insinuations or offensive comments about private life or lifestyle
- Sexual or racial innuendoes or offensive sexual or racial statements disguised or presented as humorous
- Unwanted physical contact, including touching, pats, hugs, or squeezes.
- Unwelcome advances such as repeatedly asking someone out on a date in spite of past refusals
- Actions or sounds – whistling, cat-calls, suggestive sounds, obscene gestures, display of offensive pictures or graffiti that would be found offensive by a reasonable colleague
- Stalking or following someone in an unacceptable unprofessional fashion
- Imbalance of attention, whether it be positive or negative, towards one employee or student based upon gender or race that has the intent or effect of providing an inequitable work or educational environment
- Any form of assault – sexual or otherwise

Special conditions at sea.

Social conditions in remote locations such as at sea or at an ice camp are very different from those typically faced at work. The close quarters demand utmost consideration of others at all times. Privacy is greatly reduced, and as a result, interactions can become more intense, intentionally or not. When in these situations, anyone may be subject to more excessive personal attention, welcomed or un-welcomed, than might be experienced in a more typical work situation. Sexual awareness and tensions may be heightened, especially if people feel lonely, overtired or homesick and the resulting behavior may be so disruptive as to constitute harassment.

What should you do if you witness or experience an inappropriate or uncomfortable incident or situation?

Speak up: If you believe you may have experienced or witnessed harassment, do not hesitate to speak with the offender. Many situations can be resolved very simply by directly and promptly telling the offending party that his/her behavior is making you feel uncomfortable and asking the person to stop. If you feel uncomfortable speaking with the person privately, approach the individual with a trusted friend or colleague.

Tell someone: It is your right and responsibility to inform your supervisor or other designated individual in the event that you witness or are a victim of any form of harassment. You are strongly encouraged to report the matter to the ship's Captain and/or the Chief Scientist. They are responsible for maintaining a safe working and learning environment, free of harassment and discrimination.

Keep records: Keep notes describing the incidents noting the date, place, time and any witnesses to the behavior.

Seek advice: While speaking directly to the offender or reporting your concerns to the Captain or Chief Scientist are the first options to consider, there may be instances when neither of those is appropriate. In that case, you should seek advice from someone else that is in a position to help, such as the Marine Superintendent who can often be reached by e-mail from the ship at sea.

Resources:

It cannot be emphasized enough that if you are the recipient of unwanted or unwelcome attention or harassment and have not resolved or cannot resolve the situation yourself, you need to speak with someone. For overall or general support, you may want to speak with a friend, colleague, peer or member of the clergy. To address your specific concern it is important that you speak with someone in a position to help. The following personnel are a resource available to you..

At Sea:

- Chief Scientist or immediate supervisor
- Captain
- Chief Mate
- Marine Superintendent