



SENSITIVE CLASSROOM CONTENT: SEXUAL VIOLENCE & ABUSE

A Handout for Emory University Faculty

Developed by the *Office of Health Promotion's Respect Program*

National statistics report 1 in 4 women and 1 in 33 men will experience sexual violation during their lifetimes. In the 2011 National College Health Assessment, 7.5% of women reported being sexually touched without their consent and 8% reported being in abusive relationships in just one twelve month period. With this information in mind, steps can be taken to assure that students are prepared for sensitive classroom materials and content.

RESPECTING YOUR STUDENTS

As faculty, it is important to consider sensitive topics that may likely emerge within classroom settings. Sexually violent or explicit content may include, but is not limited to, *required textbooks or films, assigned readings, class discussions, and assignments or research topics.*

- REMEMBER that, statistically, some of your students are likely survivors of sexual violence or abuse. Additionally, your students will likely have friends or family members who are survivors. It is important to remember that many survivors may not disclose their experience(s) with anyone and may be reluctant to ask for special consideration in classroom settings.
- ALWAYS provide your students with an advanced warning or disclaimer if the assigned readings, required videos, or classroom discussions may include topics such as sexual violence and abuse. These cautioning disclaimers are imperative for students as sexually explicit content has the potential of re-traumatizing a survivor.
- BE CAREFUL with what language is used when discussing sexual violence. For example, use language such as "survivor" instead of "victim" as victimization may trigger uncomfortable feelings for students. Be mindful of your students' language as well.
- COMMUNICATE with your students that resources are available for anyone struggling with issues regarding sexual violence and abuse as well as sexuality in general. It may also be appropriate to offer alternative educational experiences if the assigned material is too sensitive.

INCLUDE CAMPUS RESOURCE FOR STUDENTS:

The Respect Program, Office of Health Promotion

Engaging the Emory community to prevent and respond to sexual assault and relationship violence

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Confidential consultations. Advocacy. Prevention education. Student engagement.

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