

# Sexual harassment

## Problem plagues both women, men

By LORI PUTNAM  
Of the Emerald

In one women's bathroom on campus is a short list of professors who allegedly sexually harass female students.

But because sexual harassment is such a touchy issue, the transition from bathroom-wall scribble to an affirmative action complaint often is shunned.

Under the Civil Rights Act, sexual harassment is considered sexual discrimination. Although many admit it's a problem on campus, no one knows its scope.

Affirmative Action Director Bean McFadden says she can't tell if harassment problems at the University are increasing or decreasing.

National studies indicate women are embarrassed to report sexual harassment incidents. Several myths keep women from reporting harassment, the reports show, including the idea that harassment is a personal matter between a man and a woman.

Another myth is that the woman must have done something provocative to bring on the harassment. But McFadden says sexual harassment has nothing to do with sex or romance.

"Sexual harassment is a power play and an abuse of one's position of authority," she says.

Another problem with reporting sexual harassment is its broad definition.

Defined by the University as any "unwanted and repeated sexual remarks and behavior," harassment can be anything from crude joking to

rape.

McFadden says "repeated" in the definition is important because a comment may be harassment to one person and a compliment to another. "All of us are socially inept some of the time."

Women should tell men when they're offended or made uncomfortable by a comment, McFadden advises.

But this solution isn't perfect.

According to one report, men and women are socialized to believe women are coy and like to play "hard to get."

Secondly, women who face harassment from men in authority positions may not have the option of quitting a job because of harassment.

And harassment is not limited to women. University GTF Dan Henry says he has been harassed by women, once by a student.

"One woman told me I would be damned to hell if I didn't have intimate relations with her," he says.

Despite the difficulties in defining and reporting sexual harassment, the University has what is considered a good weapon to stop harassment — a formal and informal internal grievance system.

Complaints usually are resolved through an informal procedure. A staff member talks to the accused offender without identifying the student who made the complaint. No one at the University has filed a formal sexual harassment grievance in two years, McFadden says.

# Affirmative Action

## handles grievances

One way to guard against discrimination on campus is to bring problems to the Affirmative Action offices in Room 472 at Oregon Hall.

Affirmative Action's responsibilities extend beyond coordinating the University's Affirmative Action program, which stresses positive ways to ensure equal educational and employment opportunities, according to Colleen Fong, the equal education specialist.

The Affirmative Action offices also handle grievances from minorities and sexual harassment cases, Fong says.

And last winter, when handicapped students complained to Affirmative Action about the lack of wheelchair accessibility in part of the newly remodeled Fishbowl, the oversight was corrected before the end of the school year, she says.

Sexual harassment cases, usually handled by director Bean McFadden, are "usually very clear. The women often feel violated," Fong says. However, a large number of the problems aren't actual harassments, but "misunder-


standings," she says.

Minorities also have a powerful friend in Affirmative Action, Fong says, adding that "culture is definitely lacking (in this area). Minority students from large urban areas can't possibly be as comfortable here in Eugene as in their home towns."

Fong says she believes one way to combat that problem is to bring keynote speakers to the campus, which Affirmative Action will do this November when it sponsors the Willamette Valley Racial Minorities Consortium.

The consortium's four speakers are: Lucie Cheng Hirata, director of Asian-American studies at UCLA; Eugene Newport, mayor of Berkeley; Jose Angel Gutierrez, associate professor of Political Science at Western Oregon State College; and Felicia Hodge, executive director of the Northwest Indian Health Board.

The Affirmative Action staff welcomes everyone to their office, which is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.



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# Veterans

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"We don't want students to study for four years and not get a degree."

Even under the new requirement, full-time students who take 12 hours of courses that apply toward their major may elect to take additional non-major courses, she says.

Young says she doesn't think many veterans will object to the new requirement.

"It won't be a problem for vets

who are serious about their degree," she says.

However, "for persons just taking courses to get the benefits, it will be a problem."

The Veteran's Affairs Office currently is working on a procedure that would require veterans to see their advisors only once a year, with a list of acceptable courses for an entire year kept on file, Young says.

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