
“A LONG JOURNEY HOME”

SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN THE FIELD SEMINAR

Faculty and Mentor Guide

If a student comes to you and discloses a sexual assault, it can be a frightening experience for both the survivor and the mentor. It also immediately brings up a host of questions. What do I do now? What do I tell my student? If I am required to report this, how do I take action? Can I still protect my student’s interests and identity? I’m not a counselor, what is my role here?

The main goal of this handbook is two-fold. 1) To give faculty, mentors, and advisors the tools to respond to sexual assault disclosures in the event that a student turns to them for help and 2) To provide supplementary information that faculty and mentors should consider before teaching or attending the Long Journey Home seminar.

A Statement of Authorship

#metooanthro’s work is a collective enterprise that many have contributed to, with primary authors leading the research and collation of content for each piece of work. The ‘A Long Journey Home: Supporting Students in the Field’ seminar packet is authored by Amy Hanes (Brandeis University) with additional content provided by Holly Walters (Brandeis University) and developed with the support of the Rape Crisis Centre at Brandeis University.

The ‘A Long Journey Home: Faculty Guide’ is authored by Holly Walters and Kersten Bergstrom (Texas A&M University), with contributions and editorial input from Amy Hanes (Brandeis University), Esther Anderson (University of South Queensland), Hannah Gould (University of Melbourne), Kathleen Openshaw (Western Sydney University), Mythily Meher (University of Melbourne), Melissa Mueller, and Katy Putsavage.

Sexual Assault Protections and Procedures at [University Name]

[Use this space to enter your university's rape crisis procedures, legal information, federal or national policies and compliance, and resources. This section should primarily focus on procedures and resources available to students working abroad or who are typically away from traditional campus settings. You may also include departmental information, point-person contacts, and/or Study Abroad Office information. A space is provided below to enter your university's on-campus protocols and contacts.

Additionally, it is not the purpose of this guide to debate, culturally and/or morally, the definition of sexual assault relative to specific legal entities, field sites, or societies. As such, while we acknowledge that the legal definitions vary across contexts, this guide and related seminar are designed to help you support a student. For this reason, we encourage you to work off of their definition. If they interpret their experience as sexual assault or violence, then it is treated as such.]

(NOTE: For universities in the United States, this section should contain your Title IX protections and any resources or contact information for Title IX officers available at your university.)

Fundamental Counseling Assumptions

In the event that a student discloses a sexual assault to you, there are a set of basic assumptions and perspectives that you must keep in mind. Initial support is most effective when the mentor or advisor has, at the very least, a basic understanding of the sociological and psychological implications of sexual assault and can share these insights with the survivor during the conversation:

1. The perpetrator, not the survivor, is responsible for the assault – always.
2. Survivors have made the best choices and decisions possible – given the constraints, circumstances, feelings, and opportunities at the time. (This includes decisions made before, during, and after the assault.) Whatever the survivor did to stay alive was the right thing to do at the time.
3. No one “deserves” to be assaulted or raped. Sexual assault is not about something that was “wrong” with the survivor – or anything that she or he did, said, wore, or thought.
4. Issues of culture, race, and socioeconomic background may be involved in the healing process. Mentors should consider potential issues regarding the culture of the survivor (and possibly of the perpetrator) that may affect how the survivor responds.
5. Survivors have strength and the capacity to heal. Although it may take time and be difficult, every survivor can be encouraged to find their individual process for healing.

Students in the Field

Students who have experienced a sexual trauma while conducting fieldwork will have additional concerns relating to the status of their work, their studies, and possibly even their standing in the university. Some questions to consider are:

1. How might the incident affect grant, employment, degree, or student status? Are there procedures in place if a student needs time off, requires medical services, or cannot travel or return to the site in question?
2. Is it still possible for the student’s project or work to continue, and if not, what are the next steps?
3. Is the perpetrator still present at the field-site? Will there be consequences for the perpetrator? Does the survivor want there to be consequences for the perpetrator? How does that process work?
4. What effects will the incident have on the student’s ability to finish their degree or keep to a set timeline?
5. Many solo fieldworkers have a deep sense that they are solely responsible for the success of their work and that anything that might happen to them in the field is simply another potential problem they will have to face alone. Reiterate that they are not alone and that there are support networks in place for them to turn to; be they personal, institutional, academic, or medical.

6. Some students feel pressure to make every experience in the field count as “data.” Make clear that the student should, in no way, feel obligated to write about or even consider an assault as “data.”

Common Reactions of Sexual Assault Survivors

A wide range of reactions is common to those who have been assaulted. None of these means that there is necessarily anything wrong with the survivor; rather, they are likely coping with a difficult situation and attempting to navigate the challenges that come with the aftermath of assault. As the survivor moves through a healing process, different reactions may intensify or may diminish. It is important that the faculty mentor be able to recognize these common reactions so that they can continue to reassure, and work on ways to empower the survivor so that they can look forward to positive outcomes.

• Self-Blame, Shame

“I feel as though it was all my fault; I never should have gone out so late at night.”

Feelings of shame and self-blame (responsibility for what happened) can make it difficult for the survivor to talk about the sexual assault for fear of being disbelieved, criticized, or rejected. She or he may think that their actions were either wrong or inadequate and led to the assault. They may feel shame or embarrassment over what they were forced or coerced to do, or by any defensive or survival behavior undertaken in the face of the assault.

• Anger, Rage

“I’m angry all the time, even toward people who had nothing to do with it, like my colleagues and my family.”

It is natural for someone who has been assaulted to feel angry. This emotion can become difficult to handle for survivors – especially for women who have been socialized to be “nice” or not to feel anger. Since directing anger toward the perpetrator may feel too threatening or unrealistic, survivors may direct rage toward others in their lives. While this can be confusing for loved ones, it is a normal reaction. Anger can occur in a generalized way, where everything seems to provoke the survivor; or it may be that irritations that would not have angered the survivor before now cause an intense reaction.

• Isolation

“I don’t have anyone to talk to; I just want to be by myself, but I’m lonely.”

Survivors may feel that no one can possibly understand how they feel, or be embarrassed that their healing process is taking so long. Family members may be encouraging them to “just put it in the past” or “get on with life,” while the survivor’s feelings are still very troubling. Survivors may choose to not discuss the assault because they are being told to “get over it,” or because the event is so humiliating or horrible to think or talk about. Survivors may also have a

hard time relating to peers or colleagues they once worked well with, if no one in their circle has experienced anything similar.

- **Fear, Terror, Feeling Unsafe**

“I’m afraid someone will break into my house.” “I can’t go out, I’m terrified I’ll be attacked.”

Intense fear, another common and normal reaction, may enter many aspects of a survivor’s life. They may be afraid that the perpetrator will return to attack again or retaliate against them for disclosing the assault. They may worry that a new perpetrator will appear. Fear and terror may become generalized to other areas (such as a distrust of all men), or to situations that are reminiscent of the assault.

- **Loss, Grief**

“I feel like a part of me died – like my life will never be the same.” “I’ve always wanted to be in this field and now I don’t think I can anymore.”

Survivors experience loss in many ways. Rape or abuse may have contradicted their idea of whom they can trust, or where they are secure. Survivors may sense grief over parts of their lives that they feel are missing or they might feel that their work and their identity are being taken away.

- **Sadness, Anger Turned Inward**

“I barely manage to function; I feel there is a dark cloud following me around, and I can’t remember what it’s like to be happy.” “I keep trying to write, but nothing happens. I have so much to do and I can’t do any of it.”

Sadness is often related to grief and anger. When anger is not expressed, and therefore turned inward, survivors may feel intense sadness that could lead to depression. They may find it difficult to function in daily activities, such as going to work, doing classwork, or interacting with friends and family. Medical help should be sought when signs of depression are long-lasting and do not seem to be alleviated with counseling. If, at any point, suicidal thoughts exist or acts are attempted, access medical resources immediately.

- **Loss of Control, Powerlessness**

“My life is not my own anymore; what’s the use of making decisions when I have no power to change my life?” “There’s nothing I can do about anything now.”

Following an assault, survivors can feel robbed of their control and will. This physical and emotional violation is sometimes broadened to a feeling of powerlessness in general, and a lack of will to focus on the process of healing or on the work they want to do.

- **Flashbacks, Nightmares**

“I close my eyes to go to sleep, and all I can see is the perpetrator; I feel as though it’s happening to me over and over.”

Vivid memories of the assault are a common reaction for survivors. A *flashback* is a memory experienced with one or more of the physical senses. A *nightmare* is a dream that sometimes involves aspects of the assault, but it also can be combined with other events or aspects of the person’s life. Flashbacks and nightmares can be frightening and even overwhelming to a survivor.

- **Triggers: Seasons, Smells, Circumstances**

“I can’t even look at a tent anymore. As soon as I see one, I remember what happened. I’ll never be able to go into the field now.”

Survivors remember assaults with all of their senses. *Triggers* are circumstances that are the same as or similar to those occurring during the assault, which bring up memories and feelings related to the incident. Certain smells, sights, places, or times of the year or day may recall the assault. Triggers can make a survivor feel as though they are constantly reliving the assault and this can lead to a loss of faith about any healing that has taken place.

- **Changes in Sexuality, Intimacy**

“I want my partner’s support, but I can’t stand the idea of having sex, even though it has been almost a year now.”

Changes in the level of interest in sexual activity are common for survivors. Some women experience fear of and aversion to sex and intimacy. Others may react to the loss of control during the assault by engaging in sex with less concern and caution than before. Such reactions may change throughout the survivor’s healing process.

- **Physical Concerns: Pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections, Other Injuries**

“My body just isn’t the same. I have back pain, and I keep thinking that I might have caught something.”

There may be a variety of physical issues. Some survivors are concerned about pregnancy as a result of the rape. While prevention medication may be administered during a post-rape examination, not every survivor receives medical treatment in time for this to work effectively. Additionally, students working in the field may not have access to these kinds of resources depending on what country they were working in. Others might decline treatment because of potential side effects, or for ethical or religious reasons.

HIV and other sexually transmitted infections are a concern for many survivors. Again, some of these can be addressed at the hospital, but others, including HIV, require an incubation period before knowing whether infection has been transmitted and follow-up with medical care. In many of these cases, you may need to encourage or assist the survivor in securing adequate

medical care even some time after the fact.

A wide range of other physical problems can result from a sexual assault such as lacerations, bruises, broken bones, and sprains. Back and neck injuries are possible. Survivors may experience vaginal, oral, or anal soreness or bleeding. They may have difficulty sleeping, or want to sleep too much and have trouble getting up in the morning. Survivors may eat considerably more or less than before the assault.

• **Concerns about Confidentiality**

Some students may feel reticent about asking for help or locating the appropriate services. They may worry that you will disclose sensitive health-related information to others in the department or to their friends and family. You can reassure students that if they need support locating health resources you will not share that information with anyone else, unless it is related to suicide attempts, which you may be required to report.

• **Spiritual Crisis**

“God would never allow something like this to happen. I’ve lost my faith and sense of who I am.”

The stress of an assault often creates an intense spiritual crisis, especially for people who operate within a religious or spiritual framework. Some survivors may feel angry with a supreme being or lose their faith. Others may believe that the assault was a punishment for sins. In still other cases, survivors may find that they have difficulty relating to or seeking help within their religious communities depending on the circumstances of their assault. Survivors may also feel that in addition to suffering great physical and emotional pain, they have been spiritually assaulted.

How Can You Help?

Faculty and mentors are often the first line of care and consultation when a student is in crisis. This does not mean that faculty need to undertake the role of a counselor or therapist when a student discloses an assault. However, there are a number of things mentors can do to help begin the healing process and to help the student navigate institutional and academic complexities afterwards.

• **Validate and believe.** A mentor should show respect for the individual and their situation. If the survivor feels guilty or ashamed, the mentor should reiterate that the assault was not their fault and that these emotions are normal.

• **Dispel untruths and misconceptions.** A mentor can empower a survivor by explaining society’s myths about rape and to reassure them that there will be support for their work going forward. This should be done with sensitivity to the survivor’s feelings and emotional state in the moment (e.g. it would not be an appropriate time if the survivor is crying intensely or is dealing with a specific concern).

- **Normalize.** Survivors often feel there is something wrong with them, and that their reactions are abnormal. A mentor should explain that these feelings are commonly experienced; this may help the survivor feel less alone and out of control.
- **Establish a working relationship.** Because survivors are in the process of regaining trust, little things become important. Faculty and mentors should take care to keep appointments and follow through with what they have agreed to do. Establish healthy boundaries for the relationship by discussing when and where you will meet or talk on the telephone, and how to communicate if either the mentor or survivor needs to cancel an appointment. During a session, keep track of the time and draw the meeting to a close sensitively. Finally, be clear about confidentiality and explain your institution's policies and procedures – including any situations that must be reported, such as suicide attempts or child abuse.
- **Create a safe environment.** It is the responsibility of the mentor to ensure that conversations are “safe.” This means many things. Be clear about physical touching; any touch or closeness must be appropriate and occur only with clear permission of the survivor. The space used for conversations should be private. Additionally, ask the survivor if they are comfortable with the door being open or closed or if they would prefer another space.
- **Offer options, not advice.** Survivors may be struggling with important and complex decisions, such as whether or not to continue a vital project or even continue within the academy. Where possible, help to identify all of the options available and help the survivor to decide which is best. This should be done in a nonjudgmental way, with the mentor acting as a sounding board and a resource for further action.
- **Be culturally sensitive.** A survivor and a mentor may have cultural, racial, religious, or socioeconomic differences. Mentors can be thinking about how such differences may have an impact on the healing process and on the survivor's options for the future. Additionally, don't assume that every survivor from a certain group will have the same set of reactions. If necessary, ask about the survivor's background to better understand ways in which their culture influences their life and how they think it might affect their choices going forward.
- **Support your mentee's decisions about if/how they engage with their assault in academic/professional work.** As a mentor, it is important to recognize and work against tropes of rape culture that might manifest in academic contexts so as to properly support survivors in their decisions to or not to disclose their assault in their professional work. Neither outright advising against engaging academically with sexual assault nor the expectation that scholars ought to process their assault through their work are useful. Your mentee's decisions and instincts should inform their choices around this. If necessary, become familiar with the diverse and critical range of works by scholars who have experienced assault in the field, and help foster faculty and department culture that is similarly informed.
- **Help build a long-term support network.** One area of concern for survivors is disclosing the assault to, and connecting with, their family, friends, and other potential advisors. A mentor can

help the survivor identify and develop a long-term strategy and support network. Talking through who is “safe to tell,” as well as how and when, may be important.

- **Advocate.** Advocacy by a mentor – ensuring that a survivor’s rights are upheld in a related system or institution – occurs most often within the medical, legal, school, and social service contexts. Help answer questions about grant statuses, timelines for completing assigned work or for fulfilling degree requirements, relationships with colleagues and other faculty, and other options that the survivor might not know to ask about. If you do not know how to help with these issues you can help connect the survivor to someone who can. Finding information and identifying who can answer questions can feel very overwhelming to survivors. Find ways to practically support survivors who have returned to university through research assistantships, supported medical leave, scholarship/stipend extensions and other possible allowances.

- **Provide information, education, and referral.** Undoubtedly, faculty and mentors are very busy and cannot generally be expected to take on the full weight of advocating for specific students all the time. However, mentors should, at the very least, be familiar with the typical procedures, policies, and contacts their institution can provide to students affected by sexual assault and harassment.

Share as much information as you can – provided it is accurate, up-to-date, easily understood by the survivor, and sensitive to their emotions.

Archaeology: Field Schools and Dig Sites

The following details some of the issues faculty may face if harassment or assault occurs within their field school or site. Although every situation is different, the intent here is to consider the options, training, and resources available to faculty to create a field site and/or school that is a safe space for all participants. This guide is directed towards field schools/sites where state or national-level legal protections are present (such as Title IX); however, it is by no means exhaustive. Understand codes of conduct within your universities and institutions to best serve students and provide up to date resources.

In many cases, field sites and living spaces associated with them are often remote. As such, students have the potential to feel stuck with their harasser/abuser, which can foster a more immediate fear of bodily harm and mental anxiety; therefore, an emphasis on safety and safe spaces is extremely important. The following are preventative measures, resources, suggestions and a general guide if harassment or assault occurs within the field:

Suggestions for training:

1. Have at least one faculty member that is dedicated as a “point person” to deal with complaints of harassment/assault of any kind. Identify the individual early and have them actively participate in anti-harassment/anti-assault and preventative training with participants of the field project. It should be made abundantly clear that students are not *bound* to disclose to this person, but that this person is trained to handle disclosures.

2. Provide training on Title IX, Green Dot Training and/or anti-harassment/anti-assault training per your institution rules for all participants of the field school: i.e. students, mentors, paid (local/non-local) workers, volunteers, community leaders involved in excavation and government workers (who regularly interact with field school participants). Your university usually has one or more contacts for this training. For individuals located out of your country of residence, provide handouts and on the first day of the field school and/or excavation, review these procedures. This creates an environment of accountability and safety.
3. Provide field school participants with university contacts, departmental contacts, etc. This is to ensure that in the event that participants do not feel comfortable reporting to any person physically in the field with them they can get in touch with resources outside of the field school. This is especially vital if any mentor/faculty/supervisor (personally and professionally) is committing harassment or assault. We would also suggest that all participants have their own phone or means of communicating with their home institution in case of emergency; typically, there is a field phone present on site but confirm this and keep it readily available to field school participants.
4. Since field programs/schools are frequently made up of faculty, staff and students from a variety of institutions as well as paid workers who are not affiliated with an institution, ask your Title IX Office about resources for dealing with complaints that falls outside of the university's Title IX resources.
5. Provide an anti-harassment/anti-assault statement on field school documents that all participants sign. There are many examples of these statements within organizations and/or provided by universities. Examples of this include but are not limited to:
 - a. The American Association of Physical Anthropology Sexual and Other Harassment Statement (<http://physanth.org/about/position-statements/aapa-code-ethics-sexual-harrassment/sexual-and-other-harassment/>)
 - b. The American Anthropological Association Comprehensive Policy on Sexual Harassment and Assault (<http://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/NewsDetail.aspx?ItemNumber=22955>)
 - c. The Society of American Archaeology Statement on Sexual Harassment and Violence (<http://www.saa.org/AbouttheSociety/StatementonSexualHarassmentandViolence/tabid/1547/Default.aspx>).

Throughout training, refer to these statements or codes of conduct.

6. Provide information regarding the country and/or area in which the field school/field site is located regarding sexual assault/harassment laws; however, reiterate that the code of conduct and/or statement each participants signed is their expected behavior/conduct while at the field school/site.

When harassment/assault or complaint of harassment/assault occurs:

1. Physically separate the parties - in many cases, you will be camping so move tents if necessary and/or offer the accuser/survivor a hotel or secured room to stay in by themselves (or with a friend of their choosing). Safety is your first concern.
2. *Listen* with empathy and without judgement.
3. Please remember that if abuse is reported to you, it is your responsibility to report it as a Title IX reporter within university settings. Please remind the accuser/survivor of this before proceeding. Inform them that the rest of the complaint will be handled by the Principal Investigator (P.I.). The P.I. should also be the individual contacting the school, Title IX representatives, law enforcement and/or Study Abroad.
4. Ask the accuser/survivor if they have chosen to report the assault to local authorities. If they respond yes, call the legal official, keep parties separate and wait for law enforcement to arrive. Again, know the laws of the host country you are in and all law enforcement numbers needed.
5. If they will not be filing charges, ask the accuser/survivor to describe the events that took place (if they are comfortable doing so). Reassure them of their physical safety and provide them with all university contacts as needed.
6. Regardless of charges or any further reporting, request that the accuser/survivor write out or type out the events that took place. Make sure they maintain a digital copy of this. This is very important in Title IX cases or any legal proceedings.
 - a. Contact your university/institution or Study Abroad Office regarding the assault and/or harassment. At this point, the university will inform you how to remove the perpetrator from the field situation and the best way to proceed. In many cases, an investigation will be initiated - comply with any information needed and encourage others to do so as well.

What happens to the accused/perpetrator?

1. In the field, everyone is living in close quarters so in the case of a reported assault/harassment, physical safety is the most important aspect of follow-up actions. Again, separate the individuals.
2. Offer the accused/perpetrator the opportunity to sequester themselves as well. Retaliation is something to keep in mind. Although this document is a template to ensure the safety of survivors, as faculty in the field we must make sure that all participants are physically safe while under our care.

3. Explain to the accused/perpetrator that a complaint has been made against them while also ensuring the privacy of the accuser/survivor (i.e. charges are being filed, a complaint has been made, etc.). If the accuser offers any information, request they write it out; however, you are not to identify the accuser/survivor.
4. What happens if the P.I. is the perpetrator? This is why we suggest two or more individuals be trained in taking and following up on complaints.
 - a. If a student, volunteer, worker, etc. is uncomfortable reporting abuse to supervisors, they should have contact information for law enforcement, their home institution to aid in removal, safety, Title IX, etc. (these home institution contacts/resources should be provided at the beginning of the field school or field project).

The aftermath:

Many students and participants will struggle with what has occurred and it is important to discuss these issues; however, if there is a pending legal/Title IX investigation, you may need to be careful with your language so you do not impede or influence any investigation afterwards. Because field schools and excavations are relatively small and occur within close quarters, there is a significant chance most if not all individuals present will have heard about the complaint of harassment/assault and have an opinion on it.

1. The most important message in the aftermath of harassment or abuse is safety. Make sure that the students and other participants feel safe and provide a space for them to voice these concerns to you. Provide the participants with options of counseling within the university or institution.
2. The accuser/survivor has the potential to feel isolated, singled out, and will have concerns of privacy. As such, speak with university officials and ask for options for this individual throughout the rest of the field school. For example, housing options, leaving early, or leaving for a short time and returning. Discuss options with the accuser/survivor regarding their personal safety and overall well-being.
3. Be aware of counseling options your university or institution offers, so each participant affected by the assault/harassment is aware of their post-assault/harassment options.
4. Depending on the outcome of investigations, there is a very real chance that all student participants will interact with one another once returning to their home institutions. It is important as a faculty/mentor in the field to understand that the aftermath can and will follow most individuals home. For this reason, it is important to keep in contact with these students, to check in on them and to again provide a safe space within your lab, office or departmental space.

In a situation of assault or harassment, the survivor may feel as though they have no control. Our job as mentors and faculty are to provide them with options to take some of that power back. It is also our job to provide them with available resources for feeling safe, follow up counseling and support. By facilitating and creating a field project where accountability and safety are priorities, we have the ability to make the field more welcoming as a whole.

Assault and Harassment in the Academy

[Use this space to enter your university's on-campus assault procedures, contacts, and resources]

Materials consulted:

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