Sexual misconduct will not be tolerated within the college community as it is harmful to both the learning environment and the sense of community the college fosters among students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

From the Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Sexual Misconduct
Myths

Myth: Rape is a rare occurrence.
Fact: Between one in four and one in five college women will experience rape or attempted rape over the course of a five-year college career (Fisher, Cullen, and Turner, December 2000).
Fact: 80–90 percent of assaults and attempted assaults are never reported.

Myth: If women were more cautious in avoiding strangers, they would not be raped.
Fact: Almost four out of five rapes were committed by someone known to the victim, such as a friend or acquaintance. (*Rape in America: A Report to the Nation.* National Center for Victims of Crime and Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center: Arlington, VA, 1992.)

Myth: A person cannot be sexually assaulted by his/her partner.
Fact: Sexual assault is a crime regardless of the relationship between the victim and offender. Victims of intimate partner assault are less likely to report the assault for fear that they will not be believed or because of their emotional investment in the relationship.

Myth: Victims of sexual assault are always bruised and visibly shaken. Otherwise it is not a real assault/rape.
Fact: There are many responses to the trauma of sexual assault. The threat of physical harm and the surprise of the attack can immobilize a person with fear. Sexual assault is sexual contact that is perpetrated against the victim’s will—most of the damage is nonphysical.

Myth: Men are not at risk for being sexually assaulted.
Fact: Men can be assaulted, too. Men are most likely to be assaulted by another man or group of men. Often weapons or alcohol are involved. Being raped has nothing to do with the victim’s sexuality or homophobic social attitudes.
Nobody has the right to touch you without your permission.

You have the ability to communicate your sexual interests and limits.

When you are unsure, you have the right to STOP and TALK ABOUT IT.

You may choose to be sexually intimate when both you and your partner are comfortable with that decision.

You may choose sexual abstinence.

You always have the right to refrain from sexual activity.

You may choose to walk away from a situation at any time.

You don’t have to “hook up” because the night is still young.

You don’t have to go along with something that you’re not ready to do.

You do not need to respond to pressure to “be alone” until you are ready.

You can think for yourself.

You must be fully conscious and awake in order to give consent.

Consent cannot be given if your partner is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
Act Responsibly: Prevent and Reduce the Risk of an Assault

BE PROACTIVE
• Talk about sexual assault.
• Educate and inform yourself about sexual assault and harassment.
• Look for teaching moments to educate your peers that sexual assault is NEVER okay.
• Develop educational programs in your residence hall, Greek chapter, campus club, or organization.

SUPPORT survivors of violent crimes. No matter what they were wearing, whom they were with, where they were going—they did not ask to be harassed, raped, or assaulted.
• Do not downplay assault or harassment.
• Do not share or laugh at inappropriate jokes, comments, or stories about assault or harassment.
• Attend or participate in a campus or community program about sexual assault.

REJECT behavior or attitudes that excuse harassment or rape, or that glorify violence.
• Interrupt a situation that appears to be headed in the wrong direction, even if you risk angering a friend.
• Send a clear message that assault will not be tolerated.

VOLUNTEER at an organization dedicated to ending interpersonal violence, such as a sexual assault center or a YWCA Battered Women’s Shelter.

EXPLORE, ACKNOWLEDGE, and WORK to change the violent impulses we all sometimes feel.
• Don’t try to read alternate meanings into an answer about sexual involvement.
• Be assertive and confident in your communication. Passivity may be falsely interpreted as permission.
• Before acting be certain permission is clear both verbally and nonverbally. Sometimes people “freeze” in stressful situations so they cannot communicate effectively. Do not accept passivity as permission.

Prevention focuses on the potential perpetrator. Risk reduction focuses on the potential victim.
How to Help a Friend Who Has Been Assaulted

It is common for survivors to feel confused, ashamed, guilty, dirty, frightened, helpless, damaged, distrustful, etc. Remember whatever a survivor feels is understandable, given his or her experience. Everyone has a unique response to being assaulted.

OFFER SHELTER. See that the victim has a safe place to stay and does not have to be alone until ready.

BE SUPPORTIVE. Offer the victim emotional comfort and support. Encourage the expression of feelings. Don’t ask for details, but be willing to listen if the victim wants to talk. If you are not comfortable listening empathetically, help the victim find someone who is.

ENCOURAGE ACTION. Gently encourage these four things: stay in a safe place, get medical attention, seek counseling, and report the rape, even if the assault occurred some time ago.

BE REASSURING. Rape is never the victim’s fault. Here are some things you can say to someone who has been sexually assaulted:

“I believe you.”

“You survived; you did the best you could under the circumstances.”

“It is not your fault. Nothing you did could possibly justify what happened.”

“I’m sorry it happened to you.”

“This does not change how I feel about you.”

“What can I do to help you?”

ENCOURAGE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT. Refer your friend for professional assistance and get support for yourself!
Definitions

Sexual Assault
The act or attempt of sexual activity ranging from inappropriate and unwanted touching to intercourse that generates fear, shame, or mental or physical suffering.

Rape/Acquaintance Rape
The act of sexual contact, specifically sexual intercourse, by force or without consent between partners.

Sexual Harassment
The act of making inappropriate, unwanted, and offensive verbal or physical sexual remarks and/or advances.

Consent
Sexual contact that occurs without the explicit consent of each partner involved may be considered sexual assault. Consent must be clearly communicated, mutual, and unforced.

Anyone impaired by drugs or alcohol is not capable of giving consent. A student must be fully conscious and awake in order to give consent.

Campus Safety Tips

• Don’t prop open outside doors. Always lock your room door.
• Use the campus escort service offered 24/7 by Security Services. (253.879.3311)
• Use the buddy system; make sure a friend knows where you are.
• Watch out for others’ safety.
Resources

Counseling, Health, and Wellness Services ............................................ 253.879.1555
Security Services ............................................................................. 253.879.3311
Dean of Students ............................................................................. 253.879.3360
University Chaplain ......................................................................... 253.879.3374
Rebuilding Hope: The Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County ............... 253.474.RAPE
S.I.R.G.E. ...................................................................................... 253.879.3373
Tacoma Police Department ............................................................. 253.593.4721 (or 911)
Tacoma General Hospital ................................................................. 253.403.7537

For more complete details, see the university Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Sexual Misconduct online: www.pugetsound.edu/harassment-sexualmisconduct

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No campus is safe from sexual harassment or assault.