Sexual Assault Response Guide

For Oxford College Faculty and Staff

Oxford College of Emory University
Dear Community Member,

Attached you will find resources to assist you in responding to students’ reports of sexual assault. In addition to utilizing the guidelines outlined in this document, we also make available to you copies of the Student Resource Guide. In the event that a student discloses to you his/her experience of sexual assault, we ask that you respond to the student attentively and supportively, utilizing the suggestions highlighted in this document. We also ask that you give to each student a copy of the Student Resource Guide for Sexual Assault, which clearly delineates for students the resources and options available on campus and outside of campus to help students feel safe, heal, and recover from their traumatic experience.

Please know that as a faculty or staff member of Oxford College, under Title IX, you are required to report the disclosed incidence of sexual assault to the Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Oxford, Michele Hempfling (770.784.8387). The information you provide is private, but it is not anonymous; when filing a report you must disclose the name of the victim and where the assault occurred. You can assure the student victim, however, that privacy of the parties involved will be protected to the fullest extent permitted by law.

For more information regarding reporting, please refer to the Emory University sexual reporting policy link: http://sexualmisconductresources.emory.edu/reporting/index.html

This packet includes:

• Conversational tools for talking with someone who has been sexually assaulted

• A guide to help you in the response and referral process

• A guide to the student’s rights and options in getting medical care, academic advocacy, ongoing emotional support, and ensuring on-campus safety

• A list of contact information for relevant Campus Life departments

• A report form, which may be submitted anonymously

As an Oxford College community member, you have the support and resources of Counseling and Career Services to assist you with any student concerns. If you need help at any time during the Sexual Assault Response process, do not hesitate to contact Sandi Schein at 770-784-8394 or at sschein@emory.edu.

Sincerely,
Sandi Schein, Ph.D.
Director, Counseling and Career Services
Sexual Assault Response Guidelines

If you are in the position of learning about a sexual assault (or sexual harassment), please consider the following:

1. When you are first approached, patiently listen, giving the student ample time to tell her/his story.

2. You are not expected to be a professional counselor or therapist, but by using skills of attentive listening, you can express to the student genuine empathy and caring. Pages 6-9 of this document offers you information and suggestions to help you offer traumatized students a supportive and empathic response.

3. Those who present themselves to you as victims in these situations need to know that they have options and that, at Oxford, they have the right and power to decide how the incident of their assault is handled.

4. Although it is important to familiarize yourself with students’ options, you can be most helpful in these difficult situations by referring students to the resources on campus best suited to confidentially and comprehensively address their needs and questions. It is always advisable to refer students who have been assaulted to the Counseling and Career Services. Other resources available to students include Student Health Services, and the Offices of the Chaplain, the Dean for Campus Life, and the Director of RES.

I. Information Gathering

• Review issues of privacy protection and anonymous reporting obligation- assure the student that you will keep her identifying information confidential, yet according to the Clery Act, you will need to report to campus police the very nonspecific information that an assault occurred. Only those assaults occurring on the Oxford campus within two calendar years need to be reported.

• When and where did the assault occur?

• Was the assailant an acquaintance or unknown? If acquaintance, was it a fellow Oxford student or another member of the Oxford community?

• Does the student feel safe? Is s/he fearful s/he might see this person again? Are there any concerns about possible repercussions of disclosure?

• Who else has the student told?
II. Observation of Student’s Emotional State

• Observe the student’s behavior, noting crying, fear, activity level

• Identify student’s primary areas of concern (e.g., confidentiality, others’ disbelief, health risks)

III. Responding to the Student

• Affirm the student for making the decision to reach out to someone

• Reassure the student that there are many resources available

• Provide the student with the “Student Resource Guide for Sexual Assault” and review it together

IV. Enlist an Ally/Support Person

• Is there anyone with whom the student would like to be right now?

• Encourage the student to identify a supportive friend to accompany her/him to any subsequent appointments

• Educate the resistant student about the importance of seeking support from others

• Educate the student about common feelings of self-blame, fear of being disbelieved, feelings of shame—the validation/support of a friend can be helpful in countering these feelings

V. Determine Appropriate Medical Referral

• Was the assault within the past 72 hours? If so, the student has the option to obtain a medical exam for the purpose of evidence collection. The student does not have to decide about legal action at this time. But if there is even a remote possibility that the student would want to take legal action against his/her assailant, a medical exam is needed in order to pursue legal action.

If the student discloses to you that she/he has been raped, and the rape occurred within 72 hours, it is strongly advised that you recommend to the student that she/he seek medical attention immediately. If there is a remote chance that the student will press charges, a medical exam must occur within 72 hours of the rape. Even if the student is certain that she will not want to take any legal action against her/his assailant, medical attention is recommended to check for internal injuries and treat potential STDs and/or pregnancy. It is recommended that you refer the student to Hillandale Medical Center in Lithonia (2801 DeKalb Medical Parkway, Lithonia, GA 30058; 404-501-8000). For clarification regarding medical issues and protocol, or for immediate 24 hour access to a trained counselor, please contact the DeKalb Rape Crisis Center (phone number below). Counselors will provide immediate counsel to a victim of rape or assault, irrespective of the victim’s residency or location of the crime.
• If the student does not wish to have evidence collected, follow-up care can be pursued free-of-charge at Student Health Services *(Note: the student will incur costs for laboratory tests and medications)*

• Review options and determine student’s preferences for medical follow-up, contacting Emory Police Department at Oxford College, and/or change in residence, possible only if alternative on-campus housing is available (for more complete information regarding student options for medical treatment, changing residence, psychological care, academic advocacy, etc., please refer to the Student Resource Guide excerpted in the appendix of this document).

**VI. Consultation with Counseling and Career Services staff member.**

• Counselors can be reached during the day at (770) 784-8394. After hours, a counselor can be accessed by the RLC. To contact the RLC on duty, call Emory Police at Oxford (770-784-8377). Once you have made contact with the RLC, offer him/her the phone number where you can be reached and a counselor will return your call and provide you consultation as needed.

• With permission from the student, relay to the counselor the student’s report, emotional state, ability to enlist an ally, and medical information.

• Provide resources so that the student can schedule a follow-up appointment with Counseling and Career Services staff.

• Complete the Sexual Assault Report form, included in this packet
Supporting a Student Who Has Been Sexually Assaulted

• **The student may be worried about being disbelieved.** It is important to reassure the student that you do believe her/his disclosure of sexual assault. Women, in general, tend to respond with disbelief to the assault that has occurred in order to lessen their own feelings of vulnerability. Also, keep in mind that sexual assault can occur regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

• **The student may be worried that the assault was her/his fault and that s/he is to be blamed.** Try to help the student explain why s/he believes it is her/his fault; you may need to respond with understanding that s/he wishes there was something s/he could have done to prevent the assault. S/he may also be reassured to hear that no one ever deserves to be assaulted; however, this notion may provide the student little comfort, especially if s/he is using self-blame to regain feelings of control over personal safety.

• **The reported assailant may be someone you know.** Eighty to ninety percent of sexual assaults on a college campus are committed by acquaintances. If you know the person, you may struggle with your own feelings of disbelief that s/he could be capable of such behavior. However, false reports of sexual assault are very rare.

• **A friend may be immensely helpful in accompanying the student to her/his appointments.** Try to encourage the student to enlist the support of a trusted friend. You may want to suggest that the student ask this friend to accompany him/her to an Emergency Room visit or a next day appointment at Student Health Services. You may also suggest that the student, with the friend’s assistance, schedule an appointment at the Counseling and Career Center.

• **Individuals’ coping strategies can vary.** Some find talking about the assault helpful and others do not. You may want to let the student know that you are available to her/him should s/he want to talk more with you about the experience. If the student chooses not to further discuss the experience, please inform the student that you will be checking in with her/him within the next few days. Acknowledge to the student that this is undoubtedly a stressful time for her/him.
Responding to a Traumatized Student

Things to say:

• I am happy to just listen, or I can answer questions, or I can help you sort through some things. It’s up to you.

• “Take your time.”

• “Tell me about it.” or “What happened?”

• “You are safe here.”

• “When something painful happens, people shouldn’t have to carry it alone.”

• “You have a right to all of your feelings.”

• “Maybe you made some mistakes. That’s for you to decide. But you didn’t ask to be violated.”

• “Whatever you did to get through it was the right thing to do.”

• “You have already survived.”

• “What else is on your mind that you would like to say?”

• What does that mean to you?

• Let me see if I understand fully what the facts are and how you’re feeling (then paraphrase what s/he’s said).

• Let me summarize what you’ve said so far and you can tell me if I got it right.

• You’ve experienced something traumatic and you seem depressed. Have you discussed this with someone before? Do you ever think about talking to a counselor?

• It seems to me that you have several ideas about what would help.

• It sounds as though you’re having trouble deciding whether or not to report the incident. What are your thoughts?

• “Thanks for coming in (or telling me or calling).”
Things to do:

• Open your posture: uncross arms, put hands in lap, uncross knees, keep legs close together, make eye contact without staring. Avoid talking across a desk.

• Give options, not advice. Explain advantages and disadvantages of each option.

• Focus on choices that must be made first. It can be overwhelming to consider the implications all at once: police intervention, medical care, whom to tell, work and school arrangements, psychotherapy, effects on personal relationships, support groups, changing the locks, where the perpetrator is now, what he or she might do next, etc., etc. Some things can wait. Immediate threats to health and safety come first.

• Give written information and referrals. The person may be too dazed to remember the conversation.

• Take care of yourself: meditate, exercise, journal, talk to supervisor (maintain confidentiality).

Things not to do:

• Do not suggest that the student have any future contact with the perpetrator. If possible, strategize about how to minimize contact. Mediation is not an option, since the two parties are not peers.

• Do not insist that the student utilize any particular option, such as police notification, no matter how strongly you think it would be the right thing to do.

• Do not threaten violence or other retaliation against the perpetrator.

• Do not touch the student without her/his permission.

• Don’t let the conversation go on indefinitely. Work patiently toward determining the next steps.

• Do not offer shower, fresh clothes, or food (in case of oral assault or possible need for surgery) if the student is going to have a medical examination within the next few hours.

• Do not provide health care, even Advil or a Bandaid, unless you are a medical professional.

• Do not disclose your own history of being victimized. There is a time and place to speak out, but right now the focus is on the person you are assisting. When a person is in crisis, she or he often tries to take care of others, which deflects attention from the immediate problem.
Common immediate reactions to trauma:

These reactions may seem illogical to others, but they have their own logic in protecting the person’s body and psyche.

• Guilt, often presented as ethical self-criticism (“I should have left with everyone else; I shouldn’t have had that much to drink”); rather than as feeling (“I feel betrayed, embarrassed that I drank that much”).

• Dazed, shut-down look; staring at objects or body, lack of eye contact

• “Inward” posture (hold arms & legs close to body)

• Fluctuations in physical presentation such as posture, facial expression, eye contact

• Difficulty recalling events, changes in the story of the incident

• Displaced feelings (angry at friend, submissive toward health care provider)

• Protecting perpetrator (“I don’t want to get my friend in trouble.” “I was beating on his chest and saying ‘no,’ but I guess he didn’t hear me.”)

• Denial of impact of the event (“I’m fine”)

• Jumpy, easily startled

Adapted from Shirley M. Banks, Health Educator
Emory University Student Health Services
Spring 2003
Appendix  (Student Resource Guide for Sexual Assault)

Student Support Options

If you have experienced sexual assault (including unwanted sexual contact), you have options regarding

- Medical care
- Support services
- Reporting to legal authorities and/or Campus Life
- Housing relocation (provided availability of alternative housing)
- Academic advocacy

Medical care is the first decision you need to consider because it will influence the type of exam necessary and where you will receive your medical care.

Emergency Medical Care and/or Evidence Collection

- If you think there is even a remote possibility that you will pursue legal prosecution and the incident occurred within the past 72 hours, we recommend that you go to the Emergency Department at Hillandale Medical Center (2801 DeKalb Medical Parkway, Lithonia, GA 30058; 404-501-8000; see Support Resources, page 15, for directions) This facility, along with its sister facility, the DeKalb Medical Center, has the most technologically advanced evidence collection capabilities, staff that specialize in medical evaluation of sexual assault cases, and the option of meeting with an advocate from the DeKalb Rape Crisis Center. Do not shower, change clothes, or douche before going to the hospital. The advocate can meet you at the Emergency Department and support you through the exam process and provide any additional support you may need through the legal system. The evidence collected will remain in storage should you decide to pursue prosecution. **Choosing to have evidence collected does not obligate you to press charges, and, if the assault happened in Newton County, the Newton County Crime Victims Association will subsidize the cost of the exam (you will need to fill out a form to request the financial subsidy- to access form online, go to Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council webpage, [http://cjcc.ga.gov/forms.aspx?id=150](http://cjcc.ga.gov/forms.aspx?id=150)). If the assault happened on the Atlanta campus, the DeKalb County police will subsidize the cost of the exam.**

- If you have any physical discomfort, suspected injuries, pain, bleeding or soreness, unusual discharge, cuts, or sores, it is highly recommended that
you receive initial medical evaluation at Hillandale Medical Center. Even if you do not desire evidence collection, their expertise will help you to receive the optimal level of care for your condition. Please note, you will incur costs for medical care received at Hillandale Medical Center and you may or may not want to use your insurance to cover costs.

• If you want testing for evidence of “date rape” drugs, and the assault occurred within the past 12 hours, you should go to Hillandale Medical Center. Most drugs cannot be detected after 12 hours.

* Even if you are certain that you will not want to take any legal action against your assailant, medical attention is recommended to check for internal injuries and treat potential STDs and/or pregnancy. For clarification regarding medical issues and protocol, or for immediate 24 hours access to a trained counselor, please contact the DeKalb Rape Crisis Center (404) 377-1428).

Non-Emergency Medical Care & Follow-Up Treatment

• You also have the choice of receiving next-business- day care at the Oxford College Student Health Services. Even if you are certain that you do not want evidence collection, you still need preventive medical treatment. At Oxford College Student Health Services, you will not be seen for an examination that can be used as evidence, but you will receive medical treatment for physical consequences of the assault. Your medical care may include optional treatment for the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and/or pregnancy. Pregnancy prevention is most effective if the assault occurred within the past 72 hours. To make an appointment at SHS, you may:

  o Call 770-784-8376

  o Walk in during business hours. Although there might be a wait, you will be seen

• After your first visit at Hillandale Medical Center, the Oxford College SHS is available to provide you with follow-up care. We recommend this appointment occur within 1-2 weeks of your initial appointment. Also, some students experience sleep difficulties or anxiety that interferes with their schoolwork and/or daily functioning. Students often find it helpful to discuss these symptoms with the health provider during their visit. If you have privacy concerns, you may prefer not to use your health insurance. Medical care at Student Health Services may be paid for directly by the student. (Note: the payment plan option is the Bursar, which for most students is mailed to their parents. Students will incur charges for any necessary laboratory tests and/or medications.)
Long-Term and Non-Medical Support Options

Oxford College Counseling and Career Services is dedicated to providing you with all the necessary information, confidential guidance, and support during this difficult process. The Counseling and Career Services is located in the East Village Residential Complex, Beta Hall. To schedule a free and confidential consultation, please contact call 770-784-8394, or walk-in during office hours and schedule an appointment. Please notify the receptionist that your situation needs urgent attention.

Reporting to Legal Authorities

• You may want to report this assault to law enforcement authorities. Wherever the incident occurred, the Emory Police at Oxford College can assist you. The Emory Police at Oxford will contact the appropriate authorities if the assault occurred outside their jurisdiction. Your report will not obligate you to follow through with legal action.

Filing a Report with the Office of Student Conduct

• You have the option to report this incident to Campus Life, if the reported assailant is an Oxford student. If you do so, a professional in Campus Life will be assigned to investigate your case. As this investigation proceeds, you will be advised of your rights under the Oxford Code of Conduct and you will be kept informed about the case’s progress.

Receiving Emotional Support

• Many students attempt to minimize or deny their experience. This approach may make them unwilling to get necessary medical and emotional care. If you have been affected by sexual assault, please remember that Oxford College Counseling and Career Services has free and confidential services that are designed to help you process the event and work towards recovery.

• Sharing your experience with a trusted friend or fellow student can provide you with important emotional support. You may find that someone has had a similar experience and that you are not alone. However, if you do not receive the validation and support that you deserve, seek professional guidance.

• Counseling is an essential component of self-care after an unwanted sexual experience. You are encouraged to pursue help through any of the campus and/or community resources, such as Counseling and Career Services or the Student Health Service. At Student Health Services, you can see a health provider to discuss the option of medication to help you sleep or to manage anxiety or stress associated with the assault.
Preventing Future Contact with the Reported Offender

• If you live on campus, you may request a change in residence. Your request will be honored if alternative on-campus housing is available. Residential Education and Services is available to assist you in this process.

• If the reported offender is in any of your classes, you can receive help through the Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
Support Resources

On Campus Resources:

Emory Police at Oxford (770) 784-8377
Counseling and Career Services (770)-784-8394
Student Health Services (770) 784-8376
Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs (770)-784-8384
Office of the Chaplain (770) 784-8392
Office of the Dean for Campus Life (770)784-8391
Office of Residential Education and Services (770) 784-8383

Off Campus Resources:

The Respect Program of Emory University (404) 727-1514
Wanda Swan, Advocate, The Respect Program (404)-727-7388
Hillandale Medical Center* (404) 501-8000
DeKalb Rape Crisis Center
  24- hour confidential crisis line (404) 377-1428
  free counseling service (404) 377-1429
DeKalb Medical Center Emergency Department
  Ask to speak with a physician’s assistant (404) 501-5350
Help Line (confidential, student staffed, 9pm-1am) (404)727-HELP

*Driving Directions to Hillandale Medical Center located at 2801 DeKalb Medical Parkway, Lithonia, GA 30058: Take I-20W and Exit and Evans Mill Road, Exit #74. Turn right onto Evans Mill Rd. Turn left onto Covington Highway. Turn left onto DeKalb Medical Parkway.