



# Managing, Researching, and Enabling Respectful Sexual Conduct in Higher Education

**19- 20 February 2018**

KANTL – The Royal Academy of Dutch Language and Literature  
Ghent, Belgium

A two-day workshop organised by  
ANSER – *Academic Network for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy*  
INSEP – *International Network for Sexual Ethics and Politics*

***Deadline for Abstracts: 30 September 2017***

***Call for Papers and Participants***

Campus sexual violence and harassment is endemic. Research shows that 20% of women at one time during their academic career experience sexual assault and that 5% of men undergo unwanted sexual conduct through force or incapacitation.<sup>1</sup> Rape, sexual violence, harassment, stalking, having to endure unwelcomed sexual attentions - all pose a threat to the academic and personal development of students as well of staff. Although considered to be the 'gold-standard' in ethical sexual relations, we are still confronted with an ethical deficit in sexual conduct within institutions that often have the greatest rhetorical commitment to ethical values.

From the late seventies onwards, there has been a growing awareness of a widespread (date-)rape crisis and culture and of workplace sexual harassment. A growing number of Higher Education Institutions have developed strategies, policies and practices to respond to and prevent non-consensual sexual relations. They have focused on finding viable antidotes to: systemic sexual harassment; the staggering prevalence of (often unreported) rape and sexual violence; and problematic sexual behaviour within staff-staff, staff-student and student-student relations. Yet often these responses have been undermined by their relatively secretive and subdued promotion within institutions and the difficulties of policing social and sexual relationships.

How much has really changed? How much impact have these initiatives had on the prevalence of sexual violence and harassment? How far have policy and practice responses been subordinated to issues of institutional reputation and liability? How much have these contributed to enabling a culture of consensual, open and diverse campus sexuality?

It is time to take stock, learn from the past and plan for the future. In this two-day workshop, we'll be looking at the ways these often violent, non-consensual sexual relations have been managed, researched and at what has been and can be done to enable consensual sexual relations in the academy. The goal is to identify and evaluate best practices and strategies, to sketch out a future policy and research agenda and to contribute to the development of a respectful and healthy sexual culture in Higher Education. We seek to bring together researchers, policy makers, academics and students to

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<sup>1</sup> Matt J. Gray, Christina M. Hassija, and Sarah E. Steinmetz, *Sexual Assault Prevention on College Campuses* (New York: Psychology Press, 2016).

reflect on the sexual politics of higher education and build a collaborative agenda for more research and for the development of effective policy tools and practice guidance.

We invite proposals for papers addressing the management of, research into, and ways to enable consensual and respectful sexual conduct in the academy. The two days themselves have already been structured so as to direct discussion, with a half day each on:

- Theme 1: Managing sexual (mis)conduct
- Theme 2: Researching (non-)consensual sex
- Theme 3: Enabling consensual and respectful sex

Please indicate the theme(s) most suitable for your presentation. The final afternoon will be a feedback and agenda setting session.

We are particularly interested in submission or expressions of interest for participation where delegates commit to attending the full programme. Given the desire for the workshop to produce tangible outcomes, we seek to build a group of committed participants to take the project forward. In this respect, participants who do not wish to contribute a paper should write explaining their interest in attending and participating. The language of the workshop will be English.

Each theme has a particular focus as specified below:

### **Theme 1: Managing (non-)Consensual Sex in the Academy – Policies and Practices**

We invite contributions that make an empirical and/or programmatic contribution to one or more of the following topics:

- the identification of current policy and practice models that either provide lessons on (in)effective management or possibilities for best practices for comprehensive responses to sexual violence and harassment prevention. These should include policies and practices that reflect strategies for compliance, implementation, and evaluation
- more specific topics might include, but are not limited to policies and practices relating to:
  - The many faces of sexual violence: Sexual harassment, Campus rape, Gender-based sexual violence, Sexual orientation and identity based sexual violence, ...
  - Procedures and practices: responding strategies to sexual violence complaints, lifting barriers to reporting unwanted sex, attention and care for victims, fair process, bystander-focused strategies, ...
  - New technologies of dating & sexualised social media: sexting, bullying, privacy and unwanted exposure, ...
  - Student hook-up culture, friends with benefits & casual Sex
  - Political/Sexual/Gender correctness on campus
  - Student unions as sexualised and/or sexuality/identity-based organisations
  - Student sex work

### **Theme 2: Researching (non-)consensual sex in the academy - empirical and programmatic**

We invite contributions that make an empirical and/or programmatic contribution (e.g., in the form of a research agenda or best practice criteria) to one or more of the following topics:

- Contribution to knowledge base
  - Establish the prevalence of nonconsensual sex in the academy, including all status groups and relationship constellations (i.e., among students, between students and faculty, between faculty and non-academic staff)
  - Clarify the definition and scale of different forms of nonconsensual sex (e.g., differentiation between sexual harassment and contact sexual victimization)

- Develop/outline a gender-inclusive approach to the study of sexual aggression that considers different orientations as well as male victimization and female perpetration.<sup>2</sup>
- Develop/outline an approach to the study of sexual aggression that considers diversity in relation to ethnicity, race, religion, disability and other intersectional differences
- Contribute to the theoretical understanding of risk factors of perpetration and vulnerability factors of victimization
- Design and evaluate evidence-based prevention programmes
- Methodological issues and good practice standards
  - Respective strengths and limitations of quantitative and qualitative approaches to studying nonconsensual sexual experiences in the academy
  - Evaluation designs for assessing interventions
  - Ethical boundary conditions that need to be observed (a) in the way questions are asked, (b) in the way participants are protected from/supported in case of negative consequences of thinking and reporting about nonconsensual sexual experiences

### **Theme 3: Enabling Consensual and Respectful Sex in the Academy: Policies and Practices**

We invite contributions that make an empirical and/or programmatic contribution (e.g., in the form of a best practice criteria) to one or more of the following topics:

- Identify concepts, models and best practices in comprehensive responses to sexual violence and harassment prevention, incorporating strategies for compliance, implementation, and evaluation
- Identify concepts models and best practices for creating a safe, emancipatory and healthy consent-based campus sexual culture and environment
- More specific topics might include, but are not limited to policies relating to:
  - Best practice exemplars for responding to sexual harassment and violence
  - Feminist approaches to sexual violence and harassment
  - Anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory strategies and practices
  - Enabling stakeholders and institutional change in procedures and structures
  - Sex and sexuality education - curriculum and community
  - Respecting sexual diversity and recognising sexual differences in attitudes, relationships and practices
  - Balancing protection and freedom

### **Submission & Timeline**

Abstracts for presentations (300 words) or for panels of up to three speakers (please submit a 500-600 overview and set of abstracts) should reach us by **30 September 2017** at the latest, as should expressions of interest from non-paper giving participants. Notifications of acceptance will be sent by 16 October 2017. A 4-page summary of your paper should be sent to us by **19 January 2018** for prior circulation, to maximise time for discussion, and paper givers should expect to present their papers in short and succinct time slots. Please send abstracts to: [Tom.Claes@UGent.be](mailto:Tom.Claes@UGent.be)

The fee for the two-day workshop is 50 Euro. Participation in the conference dinner is optional and details of this and suitable accommodation will be sent to all those who register. Registration will open at the end of October 2017 and close at the beginning of February 2018.

For more info on INSEP & ANSER please visit: ANSER – <https://www.ugent.be/anser/> & INSEP – <http://www.insep.ugent.be/>

More info on the workshop venue (in Dutch): <http://kantl.be/>

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<sup>2</sup> Jessica A. Turchik, Claire L. Hebenstreit, and Stephanie S. Judson, "An Examination of the Gender Inclusiveness of Current Theories of Sexual Violence in Adulthood: Recognizing Male Victims, Female Perpetrators, and Same-Sex Violence," *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 17, no. 2 (2016): 133–148.