Sex & Gender

LGBTQ

Yale University is a welcoming community that holistically supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) people. The Office of LGBTQ Resources [1] at Yale provides campus-wide support, and the OISS is available to provide guidance and answer questions on visas and other matters of concern. As of July 2013, U.S. immigration recognizes same sex marriage. Read more about the decision. [2]

There is an official and enforced non-discrimination policy at Yale, and same-sex married partners have full access to the same benefits and privileges as different-sex married partners. Although there are still many aspects in which LGBTQ people have not achieved full equality in the U.S., they have achieved full equality at Yale.

Women's Roles

Since the 70’s, there has been an active feminist movement, or women's liberation movement, in the United States, which aims to ensure that women have equal responsibilities and opportunities to those of men. Although there are still aspects of society in which women have not yet achieved equality, women play a public and visible role in the political, economic, cultural, and social affairs of this country. Nonetheless, some people may find that American society is more sexist than their own in certain respects.

Men and women in the U.S. may associate more freely with members of the opposite sex at work and in social situations than in many other countries. You may also find that the dress and behavior of women in social situations here are quite different from those of your country. While in your country it may be the man's responsibility to ask a woman out for a date, here it is acceptable for a woman to ask a man out for a date as well. Whether the man or the woman offers the invitation, often both share the expenses.

Some international students and scholars have difficulty adjusting to situations in which a woman is in a position of authority because of their experiences in their own countries. American women may appear too assertive or aggressive if judged in another cultural context. Approach situations involving a female authority figure with an open mind.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a violation of federal and state laws, as well as Yale University Policy [3]. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission defines sexual harassment as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature… when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work


Yale's policy on sexual harassment includes a ban on sexual relations of any sort between faculty and students. Yale's Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources & Education Center [4] (SHARE) has counselors available to talk to students or meet with them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call any time: (203) 432-6653.

- More information on sexual harassment [5], sexual assault [6], and sexual misconduct response [7].
- "I think I am being sexually harassed. Who can I talk to?" [8]
- Supporting a friend through the University Wide Committee Process [9] (filing a complaint)

Sexual Consent

Sexual activity requires consent, which is defined as positive, unambiguous, and voluntary agreement to engage in specific sexual activity throughout a sexual encounter. Consent cannot be inferred from the absence of a "no." A clear "yes," verbal or otherwise, is necessary. Consent to some sexual acts does not constitute consent to others, nor does past consent to a given act constitute present or future consent. Consent must be ongoing throughout a sexual encounter and can be revoked at any time. Additionally, consent cannot be obtained by threat, coercion, or force. Agreement under such circumstances does not constitute consent. Consent cannot be obtained from someone who is asleep or otherwise mentally or physically incapacitated, whether due to alcohol, drugs, or some other condition. A person is mentally or physically incapacitated when that person lacks the ability to make or act on considered decisions to engage in sexual activity. Engaging in sexual activity with a person whom you know – or reasonably should know – to be incapacitated constitutes sexual misconduct. (From Yale's Definition of Sexual Consent [10].)

- Sexual Misconduct Scenarios [12]
- More information on Title IX [13]
- More on sexual consent (RAINN) [14]
- How to respond if someone is pressuring you (RAINN) [15]
- Consent- It's Simple as Tea [16] (video)

Source URL: https://oiss.yale.edu/life-at-yale/cultural-adjustment-transition/sex-gender

Links:
[4] https://sharecenter.yale.edu/
[14] https://www.rainn.org/articles/what-is-consent
[16] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQbei5JGiT8