

# **Code of Ethics regarding Sexual Misconduct in the Department of Sociology**<sup>1</sup>

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Members of the Sociology community should uphold the highest levels of professionalism in dealing with staff, students, and the public. An important part of this professionalism is to refrain from engaging in sexual misconduct—regardless of whether this misconduct is directed against an individual or a group, and regardless of its form or action: be it physical, verbal, written, or graphical, and in any medium.

## **DEFINING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

- 1) Sexual misconduct is a general term used to refer to a range of acts of a sexual nature committed against a person by force, intimidation, manipulation, coercion or without that person's consent (defined below), or at a point when that person is incapable of giving consent. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual grooming, sexual violence, outrage of modesty and sexual exploitation;
- 2) Acts of Sexual Misconduct:
  - i) may differ in gravity and
  - ii) can be perpetrated by or against anyone, irrespective of:
    - a) gender;
    - b) gender expression;
    - c) sexual orientation;
    - d) relationship between complainants and respondents (e.g. strangers or acquaintances, or people who know each other well);

## **DEFINING CONSENT**

- 3) The term "consent" refers to an affirmative, informed, voluntary and continuing agreement and choice by an individual with legal capacity and of legal age <sup>2</sup>.
- 4) For Consent to be present, the following elements must be present:
  - i) given by an individual with legal capacity and of legal age;
  - ii) conveyed by an affirmative statement or action which clearly indicates an individual's intentions understood by both parties;
  - iii) specific, informed and knowing;
  - iv) given freely and voluntarily; and
  - v) ongoing (i.e. not withdrawn) throughout the entire duration of sexual activity.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Appendix 4 of the National University of Singapore Code of Conduct (HR138/13).

<sup>2</sup> For legal capacity and legal age, please refer to Section 4 of the Mental Capacity Act, Chapter 177A, and Section 376 of the Penal Code, Chapter 224.

The Department of Sociology upholds the principles of ethical behaviour and proper conduct explicated in the NUS Code of Conduct (HR138/13) and encourages all members to consult that more thorough document.