PATRON SERVICE & PERSONAL SAFETY
GETTING THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

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UTAH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION 2018
#METOO

AT OUR LIBRARY:
• Community Patrons*
• Students*
• Faculty & Staff*
• Co-workers*
• Managers*

*May be perpetrator OR survivor

IN REAL LIFE, 2017:
• Harvey Weinstein
• Kevin Spacey
• Matt Lauer
• Michael Oreskes
• Bill Cosby
• Donald Trump

Every 98 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted.

RAINN
National Sexual Assault Hotline | 800.656.HOPE | online.rainn.org
Please visit rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence for full citation.1
BUT... BUT! ACCESS TO INFORMATION!!

QUESTIONS WE WRESTLE WITH WHEN DEALING WITH UNRULY PATRONS

- Do I have the right to cut off this person’s access to information?
- Will I ruin this student’s life/career/opportunities if I report this?
- Is there a campus policy about this?
- Was it really harassment, or am I being oversensitive?
- Will I be believed/get in trouble/face retaliation?
- Will this be a waste of the police’s time?
GETTING THE BALL ROLLING

9/13/17

Miranda Klisport <mirandaklisport@weber.edu>

To Barry

Good morning, Barry!

After an incident or so here at the library, I was thinking I might talk to our new Dean and request a training session for library faculty and staff about dealing with harassment.

Dealing with harassment and problem students in class is one thing, or suspected harassment issues, but when you are performing a service role - like doing a shift at the reference desk - and a patron makes you uncomfortable, makes unwelcome and persistent advances, or is being aggressive, it can be hard to know how to handle that or diffuse it. Particularly because libraries are supposed to be open, welcoming, nonjudgmental spaces, and we are proud of that. And of course working evenings or weekends is even more tricky.

So my question is, when I make this request to our Dean, who should I suggest they contact about this training? Who is the best person or group to address these issues for us? We've already all (or mostly all) attended 147-10, and I think some specific training specific to being harassed in a service role would be beneficial to many.

Also, I found this and thought you might enjoy it: http://programs.weber.edu/womenstudies/faculty/gomberg.htm

Have a great day!

Thanks,

Miranda

9/14/17

Barry Gomberg <bgomberg@weber.edu>

To: CHERRIE, Leslie, Miranda

Hi Miranda,

Thanks, for the frightening stroll down Memory Lane. Yikes!

I spoke with Cherrie Nelson, AVP of Human Resources, about your inquiry because HR is responsible for employee training, and has specific training modules for customer service. Leslie most frequently offers that training. I've included both Cherrie and Leslie on this options.

I would be happy to participate in such a training session. While customer service training prepares employees to respond appropriately to "difficult customers," unwelcome sexual conduct from library patrons or other discriminatory harassing conduct implicates particular rights and raises particular issues.

You're welcome to involve Dean Holiday at any point you think it best.

Barry
SOUNDS GOOD! DO IT!

WHAT WE DID FIRST:
• Explain our concerns to the new dean
• Ask for training

WHAT WE DID NEXT:
• Panic!
• Start planning…
THINGS WE WORKED TO ADDRESS

How to handle these situations in the moment:

• Who should I call & when?
• What is our institutional policy?
• How can I deescalate a situation?
• Where is the boundary between serving a patron and sacrificing personal safety?

How to handle these situations after the fact:

• Who should I call & when?
• Is reporting required?
• What resources are available for getting help?
• Do I have the right to “ruin” someone?
STRUCTURE OF THE [REQUIRED] TRAINING

Customer Service (Leslie) – Sexual Harassment Scenario (Barry) – Call the Cops (Tessie) – Q&A

Setting Boundaries (01:09:50 - 01:11:07)

Just Call (00:48:21 - 00:49:15)
FEEDBACK

• 41% response rate (34 attendees)
• 57% agreed or strongly agreed the training taught them something new and improved their confidence in uncomfortable situations
• 43% felt safer at work & agreed the training should be required
What was the biggest takeaway you got from the training?
8 responses

- That you can text 911 in a dangerous situation and that you can call campus police even if you aren't sure you need them.
- That the campus police are okay with us calling for any reason.
- Everybody has rights, whether they're students or staff. There are people we can contact if we need help.
- How to handle difficult situations. Current Campus policies, and who to contact.
- Always call campus security if you are unsure.
- Reinforced my belief that we should never be reluctant to call the police when patron behavior is disruptive and/or threatening.

I would love a handout with all the important numbers to call on campus.

What did you like about the training?
9 responses

- The presenters were friendly and engaging.
- Group discussion time where I could hear what my coworkers have dealt with.

Use examples more applicable to dealing with difficult customers. The example used was harassment based not rude customers. The de-escalation techniques mentioned would have been more helpful.

I did have some questions, but the nature of the class and the responses I received to other questions I had made it so I didn't feel comfortable asking them. I also can't properly word them here.
Our biggest takeaways

Planning

• Develop explicit Learning Outcomes so collaborators will all be on the same page
• Don’t be afraid to speak up to keep the planning on track for your needs
• Consider the needs of different departments in terms of typical patron interaction modes (e.g., at a public desk, in an office or suite, at times when staff are not around to help)

Training

• If you use a scenario, choose with care
• More on de-escalation techniques and/or role-playing
• Provide a handout with resources for help & contact information
• Solicit questions before training so they can be submitted anonymously
• A facilitator can use Q&A to revisit or introduce important points that weren’t thoroughly addressed
QUESTIONS BEFORE WE BEGIN OUR ACTIVITY?

DISCUSSION AND FINAL Q&A @ 3:10

• Rearrange/work with your neighbors
• Discuss, chat, commiserate!
• Download the handout at libguides.weber.edu/kispert/ula18 or raise your hand for a hard copy
• Search online for people at your institution
• Start your planning!

https://medium.com/womens-march-global/look-back-march-forward-timesup-metoo-34b053845756
PROGRESS, COMMENTS, & QUESTIONS

• What issues did you choose to address?
• How did the planning activity go?
• What questions do you have for us?

We have one:
Q: What’s up with Barry?!
A: Don’t worry! Barry is no longer scary.

THANK YOU!

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