The UW Colleges Encourage Healthy, Mutually Satisfying Relationships.

Men and women can take proactive steps to build strong relationships that are free of violence and disrespect. Key contributing factors include:

- Open and honest communication that involves asking questions, giving feedback, and establishing boundaries
- Actively listening to your partner and respecting his/her thoughts and feelings
- Speaking up when you feel uncomfortable
- Clarifying responses that are confusing
- Maintaining control over your mind and body by limiting alcohol consumption

Sexual assault is sexual contact without consent. **It is the responsibility of every initiator of sexual contact to get consent from his/her partner BEFORE proceeding.** When it comes to consent:

- Both partners must be in complete agreement with any and all contact
- The consent agreement can be changed or revoked at anytime
- Ask for clarification if you are not sure that your partner is completely willing
- Sexual assault is a violent act based on power and control, not sexual intimacy
- If you’re not willing, say so clearly and directly with words and actions
- People who are drunk or incapacitated cannot give consent

The vast majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by someone the victim knows. While sexual assault is never a victim’s fault, there are some things you can do to reduce your risk:

- Set sexual limits, being firm and forceful
- Trust your instincts when you feel uncomfortable and take action immediately
- Limit the amount of alcohol you consume to ensure your perception and judgment stay intact
- Stay in groups at parties and never leave alone (especially if you’ve been drinking)
- Avoid isolated areas and be alert to your surroundings
- Do not accept open or poured drinks or leave your drink unattended
- Lock doors, including your home and car

When it comes to preventing sexual assault, we all play a part. As a community, we need to:

- Report suspicious/dangerous behavior
- Speak up when we hear derogatory language that disrespects a person, gender, or sex-role
- Step in when we see inappropriate actions
- Ensure that our own interactions with others are respectful