

## Respecting Boundaries

**BOUNDARY:**     **Definition:** “anything marking a limit”

- Synonyms: border, beginning/ending, margin, confines, parameter, fence
- Personal Boundaries include deciding how you want to be treated, with whom you want to spend time, whether to share your personal space, whether to be in a relationship, and being in control of your personal life.
- Violating someone’s personal boundaries includes following, staring, standing too close, using sexual innuendo, excessive texting, repeated social networking invitations, asking personal questions, sharing private information without permission, expressing unwanted or inappropriate affection, touching, showing up uninvited, not stopping a behavior when asked, pressuring for particular act, borrowing personal property without permission, and more. Sexual assault is the ultimate boundary violation.
- Consequences to violating boundaries: loss of trust, damaged relationships, bad reputation, disciplinary action at school, disciplinary action at work, getting fired, criminal charges, and more.

### **STUDENT ~ FACULTY / STAFF**

You are a student who is here to learn; Instructors are here to teach you and to help you learn class material. Allegany College of Maryland encourages students to have meaningful *educational* relationships with their instructors; we want you to feel comfortable speaking up in class during discussions, asking questions if you need help, and finding opportunities to master subjects. . . . .

. . . . . However, *no one* can do their jobs effectively if students engage in inappropriate behavior and/or try to develop personal relationships with faculty/staff. Someone in a *professional* role cannot be your *personal* friend. If the basis for a friendship exists, it will happily wait until you have graduated or transferred, and it must be mutual. Obviously, ALL flirting & sexual acts, intimate relationships, conversations, innuendo, etc. are absolutely inappropriate and could create Title IX violations.

### **STUDENT ~ STUDENT**

All students are here to learn – some with more drive and determination than others. Most students value having a social life and are excited to make new friends and to explore romantic interests in college. That’s healthy. . . . .

. . . . . However, *no one* has the right to force his/her companionship on another student. Everyone experiences personal rejection from time-to-time, and it is important to respond appropriately – namely by leaving the other person totally alone and finding someone else to be your friend or significant other. Do not make assumptions. If someone says “no”, s/he means “no”. Respect his/her decision. Unwelcome flirting & sexual acts, conversations, innuendo, etc. are absolutely inappropriate and could create Title IX violations. Lastly, no student should be aggressive or confrontational with any other person; never, ever put your hands on anyone in anger or frustration!

**IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH BOUNDARIES, COUNSELING IS AVAILABLE – FOR FREE. IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF SEXUAL ABUSE OR HARASSMENT, ACM WANTS TO HELP, SO PLEASE REPORT!** (See [www.allegany.edu/titleIX](http://www.allegany.edu/titleIX) for information about the College’s Title IX policy and more.)

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED ASSISTANCE.

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