

## Harvard College Munch Constitution

### **Article I: Purpose**

Harvard College Munch is a group for students interested in kinky sexuality to meet, and organize relevant events—speakers, discussions, screenings and demos. It exists to promote a positive and accurate understanding of kinky sexuality on campus, as well as to create a space where students may feel accepted in their own sexuality. Furthermore, it creates a space where students may discuss problems in their own relationships, up to and including abuse and assault, which they might not feel comfortable discussing in other spaces.

HCM recognizes that tensions exist between these purposes. In order to meet these distinct goals, HCM will have a range of events, with several different privacy standards (detailed in **Article VI**), as well as different officer positions (detailed in **Article V**) targeted to these different purposes.

HCM therefore meets several otherwise unaddressed needs on campus. Though there are campus groups dedicated to queer sexualities and orientations, as well as groups dedicated to abstinence and other sexual perspectives, no other group exists as a forum for students with kinky sexualities and their interests.

### **Article II: Kink**

Harvard College Munch does not seek to define kink for its members. It recognizes that in the popular imagination, “kink” is synonymous with BDSM, but it rejects that notion. While respecting the BDSM interests of many of its members, it seeks to provide a space that is open, accepting, and useful for students with any kinky interest, regardless of what it may be.

### **Article III: Statement of Principles**

Harvard College Munch is a respectful community. We respect people's race, gender, sexuality, religion, even height, weight, and appearance. We respect people's preferred pronouns and names, and we use only those pronouns and names. We respect people's privacy, so we don't out people, not at all, neither explicitly, nor indirectly. We respect people's comfort, and we respect consent, both in theory and in practice.

These principles apply both to HCM events, and to HCM members throughout their lives. At events, strive to be always respectful in our language, we keep the discussion to content that preserves the comfort of members, and we do not make light of the idea of consent. Outside of events, HCM members do not do things to or with others without their permission. Throughout their lives, HCM members check to make sure others are comfortable, and they change their behavior if someone is not.

Most relevantly, we respect other people's sexual identities. We respect their choice to describe their sexual interests as a lifestyle or just a curiosity, or anything they

like. That means we don't tell someone that they're obviously kinky, or that they're not serious enough. We respect people's sexual identities, whatever they may be. We do not tell people that their identities or interests are weird or gross, and we don't tell people that to be a "real this" they have to behave some particular way. We don't tell people what their "natural" identity should be, even if that's what they actually identify as. And furthermore, we respect people regardless of their identities. We don't tell them that their sexual identities must determine who they are, or how they act throughout their life. We know that there are many stereotypes and assumptions connected to people's different sexualities, but we repudiate them. Instead, we believe that people have the full freedom to identify as they wish, and that this freedom is valuable to our ability to come to grow, understand, and express ourselves.

With all of these commitments, we work to ensure that HCM is a comfortable space for all people, regardless of their identity.

We have the utmost confidence that everyone who participates in HCM will abide by these principles. We believe that the structure of HCM, as expressed in this constitution, works to uphold and enforce these principles, and that the structure should be changed to serve these principles when necessary.

#### **Article IV: Membership**

1. Membership in this organization shall be open to all students in good standing currently enrolled in Harvard College, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or physical disability.
2. Members must be students of Harvard University. Members may be students of the Extension School.
3. Membership shall be retained until the student severs relations with the University whether by graduation or otherwise. Membership will be retained during the vacation and recesses of the university.
4. The question of dues may be decided by the board. However, any dues decision made must be structured to allow any interested student, regardless of financial means, to participate in HCM.
5. A member may formally resign by communicating with any officer of the club, using any medium that produces a record—email, mail, and so on.

#### **Article V: Officers**

##### Section 1: Candidacies

Two weeks before the elections, the President will announce the forthcoming elections, provide descriptions of the available positions (either personally, or by soliciting descriptions from current board members) and solicit candidate statements for one week. Any person wishing to serve on the board shall provide a statement of intent in writing to the President, who shall publish all such statements together at the end of that week. Current members of the board, and other voting

members, are encouraged but not required to meet personally with candidates to assess their plans for HCM.

Any voting member of HCM is an eligible candidate for any position, subject to two further restrictions. First, they must be an undergraduate at the College. Second, they must have attended an abuse and assault training (**Article VII**), or make private arrangements to be trained by the time they assume their office.

### Section 2: Elections

Officers will be elected at the end of the fall semester, at least one week before reading week, and unless expelled from the group, serve a one-year term, beginning at the beginning of the spring semester. Officers will be elected by instant-runoff voting among as many voting members as wish to participate.

Voting members must:

- 1) Be current undergraduates at the College or Extension School
- 2) Be officially enrolled in the group, either through email list membership or specific request for group membership to an officer.
- 3) Have attended at least one event over the previous year.

Elections may be held at a special meeting, or by email or web form at the discretion of the board, so long as the results are properly verified. A two-thirds majority of the current board shall constitute a quorum for elections. If the election is to be held in person, the board shall develop a procedure to take proxies, publicize that procedure along with the candidate statements, and ensure that it is faithfully executed.

Once the results of the elections are known, the President shall provide them to the group at large.

If an officer resigns from their position during their term, they will immediately inform the board, which will organize a search for a replacement. The board is authorized to appoint acting officers until a special election is held, as soon as practicable.

### Section 3: Positions

Individuals may run for, and serve as, multiple offices, except where otherwise noted. However, the board is not to be less than three persons. Furthermore, HCM shall work to include all those who wish to contribute their time and talents on the board.

The **President** is responsible for overseeing the actions of HCM as a whole, communicating between the board and the general membership, and ensuring that the other officers are fulfilling their duties. The President shall:

- Maintain an official email address, and regularly inform group members about upcoming events or pending business.

- Be responsible for scheduling and chairing board meetings, though any board member may call for one.
- Shall publicize the business of the board to the group at large, in concise fashion.
- Maintain the email lists (**Article IX**) alone, in order to ensure maximum privacy for HCM members. The President shall *never* discuss HCM business with someone whose identity the President has learned from their position managing the email list, unless this person begins the conversation.
- Be responsible for informing the public and press about HCM policies.
- Be responsible for coordinating with the OSL, and ensuring that HCM remains official recognized.
- Be a member of the Safety Team, but may not chair Safety Team meetings and should, in general, take an observer role there.

The **Treasurer** is responsible for the finances of the group. The Treasurer shall:

- Draw up a new budget for every semester, adjust it as events require, inform maintain records of prior budgets.
- Not be the President, in order to comply with responsible fiscal practices.

The **Webmaster** is responsible for managing HCM's web presence. The webmaster shall:

- Manage the primary HCM site, ensuring that is usable, accessible, and contains up-to-date information. The site shall include a calendar of events, accurate contact and officer information (as much as is permitted by privacy concerns), and HCM policies and statements of principles.
- Maintain the web-based resource list, including safety information, relevant non-Harvard local groups, groups at peer institutions, and local kink-friendly professionals. At board meetings, the webmaster shall solicit new resources from board members.
- Maintain HCM's social networking accounts—that is, ensure that they exist on all relevant current platforms, are secure, and are in good working order. Other officers, especially the Social Team may and should use these accounts as well.

The **Liaison(s)** is responsible for coordinating between HCM and the campus at large. The Liaison(s) shall:

- Coordinate with other student groups, including but not limited to the QSA, the QRC, GLOW, the Women's Center, the Office of BGLTQ Student Life, cultural groups, and so on.
- Represent a public face of the group. Preferably, the liaison will be willing to have their name publicly associated with the group; if so, the liaison will be used to publish editorials, do tabling and other outreach, etc.

The **Social Team** is responsible for planning HCM events. The Social Team shall:

- Plan small events, such as general munches (a social meal meeting), specific-subject discussions, or support-group meetings.
- Plan large events, such as movie screenings, speakers, demos, or mixers with other student groups.
- Work to ensure that HCM has:
  - Regular and consistent programming
  - A variety of both small and large events, meeting HCM's different purposes
  - Always clarify the privacy standards of every planned event.
- Manage publicity for events
  - Publicize events to the larger campus with email, poster, and other means.
  - Use the social network tools set up by the webmaster to publicize events.
- Work with the board, general members, and especially new members to plan innovative events that address new interests.

The **Safety Team** works to promote the importance of consent, ensure that events are safe spaces for all attendees, and respond to instances of abuse or assault involving HCM members, in full compliance with all College policies. The Safety team shall:

- Take and respond to allegations of abuse or assault, as described in **Articles VII and VIII**.
- Arrange and attend regular training from Response, OSAPR, or another qualified Harvard resource about how to best respond to instances of abuse or assault.
- Remain informed about other resources, both on and off campus, and provide access to those resources.
- Attend events, such that each official event has one designated safety team member (See **Article VI**).
- Ensure that HCM policies on consent are clear, concise, and available to all members, and provided to new members upon their entry.
- Work to ensure that its membership is gender-, sexuality-, and kink-diverse, in order to allow abuse or assault survivors to speak to someone who would make them most comfortable.
- Create and maintain resources to facilitate reporting of abuse and assault, including reporting forms available on the website and list email signatures.
- Provides support to any HCM member about any relevant incident or matter, regardless of whether it is HCM business.

## **Article VI: Events**

### Policies:

All events shall abide by HCM's principles regarding respect, privacy, and consent. At the beginning of each event, the safety team member officially present should

introduce themselves, and explain HCM's policies if any person is unfamiliar with them. In particular, they should make it clear that event attendees are required to

- 1) Treat everyone else at the event with respect, which includes being respectful of their preferred names, preferred pronouns, and sexual identities.
- 2) Not disclose the identities of anyone at the event, or personal information learned there.
- 3) Ask for and receive consent for any action involving another person.
- 4) Not engage in any sexual contact whatsoever.

If any of these policies are violated, the safety team member shall serve as a point of first contact to receive reports about it. Anyone violating any of these policies is subject to ejection from the event, and possible banning from HCM (see **Article VIII**). If anyone arrives late, the safety team member should introduce themselves to the new entrant and ensure that they are familiar with HCM policies before entering.

#### Types of Events:

As discussed above, HCM has several distinct purposes. In order to meet these purposes, HCM will hold a wide range of events: outreach, education, discussion/workshops, social, and support.

**Outreach** events are targeted at the campus community. They provide information about HCM and what it has to offer. Such events may include tabling and information sessions, particularly at the beginning of the semester. They may also include widely relevant events such as movie nights.

**Education** events are targeted at the campus or local community, and seek to explain kink and safe kink practices. Such events may include speakers, panels in coordination with other groups, or workshops on subjects such as consent.

**Discussion/workshop** events are targeted at HCM members, though members are welcome and encouraged to bring friends. They address specific topics of interest to members, and may provide particular skills or safety lessons.

**Social** events are primarily targeted at HCM members, though they may take place in conjunction with other allied student groups. They represent an opportunity for HCM members to develop community with each other, and may include meals, mixers, or parties.

**Support** events are for HCM members alone. They deal with serious and personal discussion about members' sexualities and the associated challenges.

#### Privacy and Color Code:

Harvard College Munch's functions include both public and private dimensions. Thus, Munch events may be open to very different populations. In order to protect the privacy and comfort of its members, it is necessary to make it very clear which

populations are welcome at which events. The following color-code describes the range of different events. Whenever an event is publicized in a Munch space, by email or by any other means, it must be clearly stated what category the event belongs to.

**Blue:** blue events are open to, and may be publicized to, the general public. Anyone save persons explicitly banned from HCM events (see expulsion and banning) may attend. Because such events may have many individuals unfamiliar with HCM's policies, the HCM members leading or facilitating such events must be especially careful to explain HCM's respect and confidentiality policies at the beginning of any event.

**Sample events:** public speakers, conventions, Sex Week events. Education events.

**Green:** green events are open to, and may be publicized to, the entire Harvard community, including undergraduates, graduate students, and alumni, as well as the personal guests of HCM members.

**Sample events:** information sessions and alumni mixers. Outreach events.

**Yellow:** yellow events are open to, and may be publicized to, current Harvard undergraduates, as well as the personal guests of HCM members if they are of undergraduate age.

**Sample events:** small speakers, discussions, and demos. "Welcome to Munch" events. Outreach and Discussion/Workshop events.

**Red:** red events are open only to current, undergraduate members of HCM, and their personal guests who are current undergraduates at Harvard College.

**Sample events:** private and personal discussions, board meetings. Social and Support events.

**Gray:** gray events are unofficial events publicized over an HCM email list. These events **are not endorsed** by HCM, and HCM policies regarding confidentiality may not be in effect. Since they are privately planned by individuals, the attendance is entirely up to the planners, and they should clarify who may and may not attend when publicizing these events. If any person expelled or banned from HCM events may be attending such an event, its organizer *must* make this clear.

**Sample events:** parties, friendly lunches, movie nights, and shopping trips.

These procedures describe normal operation of HCM. If the board believes that HCM is about to be harassed, it may develop and institute more stringent privacy standards for events, as well as for the email list and other HCM functions.

## **Article VII: Abuse and Assault Training, Process, and Reporting**

### Training:

The Safety Team will coordinate each semester with Response, OSAPR, or a comparable student organization to run an abuse-response training workshop. It

will also coordinate with a qualified outside organization, such as The Network/La Red, to organize training specifically about abuse and assault in the context of kink. The purposes of these workshops are to:

- 1) Train officers in the appropriate response to a report of assault, and how to speak with survivors about what has happened, both within and outside kinky frameworks.
- 2) Train officers in Harvard-specific resources and policies regarding abuse and assault.

These trainings will be mandatory for all officers.

#### Process:

When any person informs an officer of HCM that they have been subject to an instance of abuse or assault, officers shall respond immediately as per their training. They shall make themselves available to the survivor for discussion, inform the survivor of available resources, and indicate to the survivor that they, not the officer, shall have full control over what next occurs, subject to the two limitations expressed at the bottom of this section. If the report is second-hand, the officer should indicate a willingness to meet with the survivor, but shall not begin any action without the survivor approving it.

The officer will then connect the survivor with OSAPR, providing support as necessary throughout the survivor's process, whether that includes simply discussions with OSAPR, or the filing of a formal report with the Administrative Board or Police.

HCM is a reporting space. The wishes of survivors are tantamount, and when any survivor decides to report the incident to OSAPR, the Administrative Board, or the police, officers must assist and facilitate that reporting process however they can.

If the assaulter or abuser is a member of HCM, and the survivor agrees to it, the officer shall bring the matter before the board as grounds for expulsion of the member, as per **Article VIII**.

This process is difficult and demanding. Thus, throughout this process the officer will seek and receive support and supervision from their fellow officers, OSAPR, peer counseling groups, and, if necessary, MHS, while still respecting the confidentiality of the reporter. This is mandatory. In particular, officers will inform OSAPR that they have received a report of abuse or assault (in compliance with College policy), without providing any identifying details whatsoever.

The sole exception to this policy shall be if the officers are informed by multiple reporters of multiple instances of abuse and assault by the same person. In this case, the officers shall provide that information to OSAPR, and in consultation with that office, act on the matter of this person.

#### **Article VIII: Expulsion and Banning**



Harvard College Munch strives to be available to all. However, some conduct is incompatible with HCM remaining a safe and welcoming space. Thus, it is necessary that HCM have a clear policy regarding when and how a member or potential member may be expelled or banned.

Grounds for expulsion or banning:

A member or prospective member may be expelled or banned on the basis of:

- 1) Having committed abuse or assault, against an HCM member or anyone else.
- 2) Maliciously or deliberately revealing information covered by HCM's privacy policy.
- 3) Sexual contact of any kind at any HCM event.
- 4) Knowingly providing someone expelled with information about HCM events or members.
- 5) Ongoing disrespect of HCM privacy or consent policies, such as repeated careless disclosure of private information, repeated unwelcome physical contact, or repeated hostile remarks at meetings, despite warnings.

Procedure:

- 1) Any process to expel or ban a member or potential member begins with a report to the board, either by a person who experienced or witnessed the violation, or a Safety Team member speaking on their behalf. The board may ask questions of the reporter, though it must keep the reporter's comfort levels in mind. The board may also try to speak to other informed parties before making a decision. (In particular, in the event of case 5 above, the board shall speak to the persons who issued the warnings.)
- 2) It is also possible for the process to begin when the board learns of an Administrative Board, civil, or criminal action against a member or potential member. In such a case, the Board shall investigate and receive, preferably in writing, a clear statement regarding the matter of the Administrative Board/civil/criminal process against the member. If the matter does pertain to HCM—if, that is, it has to do with abuse, assault, sexual misconduct, or disregard of privacy—then it will be considered a case for the HCM board to review as well.
- 3) The board votes on whether or not to expel/ban the person in question. The entire board must vote; the majority decision holds it. The standard of proof is credible, substantiated allegation. (Thus, in the case described in section 2, the fact of a criminal indictment may be grounds for expulsion even if the case resulted in an acquittal, for example.) The board remains aware that maintaining a safe space is its highest priority.
- 4) If the board votes to expel/ban, it selects one person to notify the expellee. This person delivers the notification as fully and forthrightly as possible.
- 5) The board then drafts a notification to the list at large, explaining who has been expelled, and why. This message will use the names and identifiers HCM members are familiar with; if the banned member has been using a pseudonym that will be respected. It indicates that HCM expulsion is *not* a finding of fact and the broad nature of the allegation; it does not include

- specifics of the allegation. The message emphasizes HCM policies on the matter in question, as well as clarifies the policies regarding expelled persons, which are:
- 6) The expellee is unwelcome at all events. If HCM holds an event where they cannot be excluded—say, a tabling session in the Yard—officers will notify others present that an expellee is present, as well as the circumstances of expulsion. **Gray** events—i.e., unofficial events publicized through HCM—*must* clarify whether any expellees may be in attendance. No extant member is permitted to give an expellee any information about membership, HCM business or discussions, etc.
  - 7) Banning is for life; bans will not be revoked on the basis of future good behavior. It may be revoked if the original reason for banning is found to be unfounded, though recanting alone on the part of the original party will not automatically suffice. It is important to clarify that HCM believes that accusations of abuse/assault/misconduct are overwhelmingly true; this clause simply to deal with extraordinary circumstances.
  - 8) The expulsion of the member does not revoke their privacy. HCM members may not discuss that the banned member was a member of HCM, or anything they learned about that person within HCM, including but not limited to information about the banned member's sexuality. The matter of the expulsion is purely internal: though a notification is provided to the email list, it goes no further under any circumstances. This balances the need to have all HCM members informed about those persons who have been expelled, and to protect the privacy of all members regardless of the circumstances.
  - 9) In order to respond to the event, the board will promptly schedule a **red** meeting to discuss the expulsion and the reasons for it. If the expulsion relates to an accusation of abuse or assault, the meeting will primarily serve as a venue for the reporter to share their story with the group, if they so desire. (This story will be subject to the same respect that all HCM discussions entail; it will not be presented to be argued with.)
  - 10) The President shall maintain a list of all banned persons, and share it with safety team members as necessary, to insure that they are aware of and able to identify all persons unwelcome at an event. However, as per Section 8, the privacy of banned members is still protected by HCM policy; this list *will not* be shared outside of HCM under any circumstances, or inside HCM except as is strictly necessary.

### **Article IX: Email Lists**

Email lists are an important component of HCM. The board shall have freedom to determine their form and operation, so long as they comply with the following principles.

- 1) There shall be one list exclusively for current undergraduates, verified each semester. This list shall be used to publicize **red** and **yellow** events.

- 2) The list shall be structured so as to preserve maximal privacy for its members. The list shall not make member's identities visible to one another unless necessary.
- 3) Harassing emails will not be allowed.
- 4) The list will have a trigger warning policy, developed by the Safety Team, which shall be enforced.

**Article X: Amendments**

- 1) The constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the board and voting members placing votes.
- 2) Any member may call for an amendment. If an amendment is proposed, the President shall inform the group of the proposal, and solicit votes or proxies on the matter.
- 3) If multiple amendments or major changes are called for, the President may call a special session with the power to, by two-thirds supermajority vote, draft and adopt a new constitution. This new constitution must be approved by a majority of general membership to go into effect.