



FINAL REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE FOR THE PREVENTION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

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Charge:

- To identify ways to enhance the effectiveness of Miami's educational efforts and responses regarding sexual assault prevention and reporting;
- To recommend ways to increase awareness and response to address the connections between drugs and alcohol and sexual violence;
- To examine the connection to the larger patterns of aggression in our society; and
- To recommend ways for members of the community to take responsibility for building a culture of inclusion and safety.

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History

All colleges and universities receiving federal financial assistance are subject to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. Sexual harassment of students, which includes acts of sexual violence, is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

Miami University (“Miami”) has long recognized the need to closely examine the issue of sexual violence on campus (See Appendix A). Most recently, in 2006, Dr. Michael Stevenson, former Associate Provost and Assistant to the President for Institutional Diversity, convened a short-term task group “to develop a vision and strategic plan for implementing a comprehensive coordinated strategy for addressing sexual assault at Miami that would build on current efforts and to be guided by best practices in collegiate sexual assault prevention, intervention and support.” (Goettsch and Ward, 2006).

The Report of the Sexual Assault Task Group of 2006 outlined a list of recommendations to address gaps and weaknesses in efforts to address sexual assault (See Appendix B). Below is a reproduction of those recommendations, with an assessment of progress:

Immediate Actions:

1. Form a coordinating team of the leadership of Miami’s sexual assault programs and services. We recommend that the team be convened by a Student Affairs representative and meet monthly. **Achieved.**
2. Consolidate existing sexual assault resources, to include developing an “overview” publication, consolidating the numerous other resources and developing a new University sexual assault Web site, easily accessible from the Miami homepage that provides a one-stop electronic source of information on sexual assault. **Achieved.**
3. Assist offices to develop sexual assault response protocols. **Achieved.**
4. Develop a cadre of certified sexual assault trainers and a list of recommended outside speakers. **Ongoing.**
5. Enhance existing peer education programs (HAWKS and MARS). **Ongoing with room for enhancements.**
6. Incorporate a program on sexual assault into First-Year Institute. **Still to be done.**
7. Institute individual office review of sexual assault program/service quality. **Achieved, process is ongoing.**
8. Institute a review of alcohol prevention efforts for infusion of core messages identified in the training workshop. **Achieved.**
9. Enhance collaboration and information sharing with the Butler County Rape Crisis Program. **Achieved, see recommendation 18.**

10. Initiate collaboration between Associated Student Government and Parking Services regarding review of and enhancements to the Nighttime Door to Door service. **Achieved.**
11. Continue current sexual assault programs and services. **Programs and services have been revamped and updated. Primary emphasis is on response to victims, preventing perpetration and disciplinary action for perpetrators.**
12. Establish an institutional funding stream to support the above initiatives. **See recommendation 19.**

Long Term Actions:

13. Create a position, (we recommend fulltime), to coordinate Miami's sexual assault efforts. **A half time position was created in 2007; this has been changed to a full time position starting 2013.**
14. Establish a developmental model of sexual assault prevention programming for all students that will match educational programming with the specific needs of select student populations. Partially achieved; our approach recommends full completion of this step. **Achieved with the formation of WAVES.**
15. Implement a mandatory sexual assault prevention program (e.g., "Sex Signals") for first-year students. **Piloted but not sustained.**
16. Work with the Office of Health Education to strengthen the connection between alcohol and sexual assault prevention efforts. **Ongoing.**
17. Institute a process for regularly assessing sexual assault programs, policies and services for outcomes and impact. **Not achieved.**
18. Explore a partnership with the Rape Crisis Program for increased services for Miami students. **Started; current Task Force recommends continuing and strengthening this partnership with the new agency, Women Helping Women.**
19. Institute an institutional funding stream to support the above initiatives. **Funds for the coordinator and the expansion of WAVES have been granted; several long-term recommendations languished due to a lack of funding and allocation of staff time.**

Background

A majority of the sexual assaults experienced by college students occur in situations involving alcohol consumption—by the victim, the assailant, or both. The definitions of rape and sexual assault include having sex with someone who is unable to consent because he or she is intoxicated, drugged, or unconscious (Abbey, et.al, 1998).

National statistics continue to point to the widespread prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses. The prevalence of rape among college women is 20% (Karjane et. al., 2002). Extrapolating national statistics to Miami, it can be predicted that as many as eight to nine women per week may be victims of sexual assault. However, Miami's reported forcible sexual offense statistics have fluctuated over the past three years from seven to twelve. The discrepancy is explained by the under reporting of this crime. Half of victims do not label their experience as rape, particularly when alcohol was involved, no injuries were inflicted, and no weapons were used (all hallmarks of campus acquaintance rape) (Karjane et. al., 2003). Consequently, sexual assault and rape continue to be an under-reported crime on college campuses.

Heavy alcohol consumption has frequently been linked to sexual assault perpetration; men who reported that they drank heavily, were more likely than other men to report having committed sexual assault (Abbey, et.al, 1998). General alcohol consumption could be related to sexual assault through multiple pathways. First, men who often drink heavily also likely do so in social situations that frequently lead to sexual assault (e.g., on a casual or spontaneous date at a party or bar). Second, heavy drinkers may routinely use intoxication as an excuse for engaging in socially unacceptable behavior, including sexual assault (Koss and Dinero, 1989). In a study by Kanin (1984), 62% of the college date rapists interviewed felt that they had committed rape because of their alcohol consumption. These rapists did not see themselves as "real criminals," because real criminals used weapons to assault strangers. In fact, some men may purposely get drunk when they want to act sexually aggressive, knowing that intoxication will provide them with an excuse for their socially inappropriate behavior. Third, certain personality characteristics (e.g., impulsivity and antisocial behavior) may increase men's propensity both to drink heavily and to commit sexual assault (Kanin, 1984).

Among the findings of a study of 119 schools nationwide was the relationship between rates of binge drinking on campuses and sexual assaults (Mohler et. al., 2004). Most significantly, women from colleges with medium and high binge-drinking rates had more than a 1.5-fold increased chance of being raped while intoxicated than those from schools with low binge-drinking rates. Other significant risk factors for rape were being under 21 years old, white, residing in sorority houses, using illicit drugs and binge drinking in high school (Seto and Barbaree, 1997).

Dear Colleague Letter, 2011

Nationwide concern about the prevalence of sexual assault in high schools and on college campuses, prompted the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights to issue a Dear Colleague Letter (“DCL”) on April 4, 2011 to provide guidance to schools in complying with Title IX (See Appendix C). The DCL gave recommendations to ensure schools are taking “immediate and effective steps to end sexual harassment and sexual violence.”

Over the course of several months, during the 2011-2012 academic year, Miami conducted a comprehensive review of and made revisions to its policies and procedures relative to sexual harassment and sexual assault to ensure compliance with Title IX and the enhanced guidelines of the DCL.

Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Assault, 2012

In response to a flier with rape supportive messaging found in a residence hall bathroom on October 8, 2012, the Miami University community conducted a series of Town Hall meetings. The general feedback from the Town Hall meetings included frustration from faculty, staff and students of a perceived climate of entitlement and sexual aggression on campus.

In an ongoing effort to strengthen the campus culture, President David C. Hodge convened a Task Force for the Prevention of Sexual Assault (“Task Force”) on November 9, 2012. President Hodge charged the Task Force to:

- Identify ways to enhance the effectiveness of Miami’s educational efforts and responses regarding sexual assault prevention and reporting;
- Recommend ways to increase awareness and response to address the connections between drugs and alcohol and sexual violence;
- Examine the connection to the larger patterns of aggression in our society; and
- Recommend ways for members of the community to take responsibility for building a culture of inclusion and safety.

Process:

The members of the Task Force met eight times between November 15, 2012 and December 13, 2012. Discussions about current campus efforts for the prevention of sexual assault, support services for victim-survivors, and the overall campus culture led the Task Force to conduct a review of fourteen other universities across the country. The Task Force further evaluated four of these programs for their potential usefulness at Miami. Links to these four programs are provided under “Additional Resources” on page 12 of this report.

Consistent with the recommendations from the 2006 report, the Task Force proposes that a multi-level model be used to assist Miami in achieving the goal of "developing and implementing

a comprehensive sexual violence prevention, intervention and response initiative that emphasizes primary prevention (i.e., preventing perpetration) and is sustained through strong leadership, sufficient institutional support and strong campus and community partnerships” (Goettsch & Ward, 2006). The broadest level is designed to build sustainable programming to **foster a culture of inclusion and respect** across all campuses. The next level is directed toward **targeted education, skill building and intervention** for particular groups and high-risk behaviors (e.g. bystanders, fraternities and sororities, high risk alcohol use). The final level is the most focuses, and involves **intensive intervention directed toward the support and recovery of victim-survivors, and adjudication of perpetrators.**

Task Force Recommendations

The following recommendations provide a framework for enhancing and improving awareness, prevention, risk reduction and response to sexual assault at Miami University. Our recommendations are based both on our self-assessment and strategic benchmarking with other universities. They were designed to acknowledge strengths: for example, we do a good job of educating students upon their arrival to campus, our response to victims is strong and highly supportive, and we have excellent peer education programs in place. Simultaneously, we sought to address several key weaknesses: a need to expand prevention efforts; a need to create seamless connections between units that have responsibility for different aspects of preventing and responding to sexual assault; and a need for a stronger emphasis on the larger issues of harassment based on differences, building healthy and respectful relationships, encouraging discussion of privilege and entitlement, and building a culture where bystanders are empowered to intervene in appropriate ways to stand together against violence.

1. Implement a campus-wide campaign to enhance a culture of safety, respect and inclusion.

We recommend that Miami develop a strategic campaign and marketing plan focused on enhancing a culture of respect and inclusion across all campuses. This campaign would include taking a stance against sexual assault, but would also extend to respect and inclusion for all members of the community, irrespective of an individual’s sex, gender, race, ethnicity, color, socio-economic status, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, veteran status, appearance, among others.

Rationale: Fostering a culture of inclusion and respect across our campuses is a vital component in the prevention of harassment, violence, and sexual assault, as it helps to create an environment where differences are celebrated, intolerance is unacceptable, and bystanders are willing to act. A culture of inclusion and respect reflects the personal, social, professional and institutional commitments to creating an environment of safety for all members of the community, and is the foundation of the Miami University Values Statement.

Accountability: We recommend that this campaign be spearheaded by Student Affairs, and the Associate VP for Institutional Diversity, with accountability to the President. We recommend that student leaders from across the university be involved in the development and roll out of this campaign, since student insights will be fundamental to a successful campaign. If a campaign committee is appointed, some members could be liaisons with the Council on Diversity and Inclusion. The group could also be charged with assessing progress in the implementation of the campaign and developing metrics for success.

Ideas: The Task Force had many ideas for this campaign. Ensure the campaign involves student leaders in development and implementation. Capitalize on the lessons learned in similar campaigns created at other universities (e.g., Expect Respect at University of Michigan; Green Dot at University of Kentucky – see page 12 for links). Center the campaign on themes of working together to welcome all people to the Miami community; creating a climate of respect, safety and inclusion; and taking a stand against harassment and violence. The campaign should be for students, staff and faculty; and may include, but should not be limited to, the following:

- Developing a strategic campaign marketing plan focused on enhancing a culture of respect and inclusion across campus;
- Creating a video that features student leaders talking about how they create respect and stand against violence;
- Creating a campaign website, featuring video testimonials, blogs, twitter feeds, and action steps that each member of the community can take;
- Issuing institutional messages from the President, VPs, & faculty and staff leaders
- Implementing an event each semester spearheaded by students that highlights some aspect of the campaign;
- Creating a visible sign of one's affiliation with the campaign (the idea behind the "Green Dot" - Miami could create its own signifier); and,
- Hosting and designing workshops and trainings – e.g. Southern Poverty Law Center's *10 Ways to Fight Hate on Campus*.

2. Expand campus-wide educational programs on sexual assault prevention and risk-reduction.

We recommend that Miami expand sexual assault programming significantly, to include prevention, risk-reduction, healthy relationships/sexuality, and bystander intervention. We also recommend that Miami create a standing Committee on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Assault.

Rationale: Campus-wide programming in prevention helps create environments that promote respect, equality, civility, healthy relationships, and healthy sexuality — and ultimately, a campus environment where students are safe and learning successfully. Research suggests that young people are more likely to hear and personalize messages,

and thus to change their attitudes and behaviors, if they believe the messenger is similar to them and faces the same concerns and pressures (Milburn, 1995). Peer education can support young people in developing positive group norms and in making healthy decisions about sex. Peer education is also effective in developing bystander intervention skills, as it teaches students how to interrupt a potential sexual assault, and how to support victims.

Accountability: These action steps could be spearheaded by the *Sexual Assault Risk Reduction and Response Coordinator* (“Coordinator”) with the advisement of a new standing *Committee on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Assault* (“PRSA Committee”). Currently, the search for a full-time Coordinator is nearing completion (on-campus interviews will occur in the next month). The Coordinator will be accountable to the VP for Student Affairs. The new standing PRSA Committee could be appointed by and accountable to the President. Ideally, one or two members of this PRSA Committee could be liaisons with the group working on the campus campaign. The Coordinator and PRSA Committee should also be charged with creating metrics and benchmarks for success, and assessing progress in the implementation of the new campus-wide sexual assault education programming as well as current sexual assault programming. A standing PRSA Committee allows for continued dialog on Miami’s campus about sexual assault issues, prevention and collaboration. This committee will also serve as an advisory group for the implementation of the recommendations that follow.

Ideas: Strategies generated by the Task Force include the following:

- Use peer educators to develop educational/outreach programming that:
 - Addresses alcohol and other drugs issues and the connection with sexual violence;
 - Addresses consent;
 - Addresses non-stranger sexual violence and dispels traditional beliefs;
 - Engages men;
 - Provides concepts that encourage healthy, consensual sexual relationships; and,
 - Teaches bystander intervention techniques; this programming includes education for students about interrupting situations that could lead to assault before it happens or during an incident, speaking out against social norms that support sexual violence, and developing skills to become an effective and supportive ally to survivors;
- Offer high profile activities that are alcohol free;
- Population and behavior specific education programming (e.g., high risk alcohol consumption);
- Incorporate base-line education on sexual assault prevention during Welcome Week or through an online module before arriving on campus;

- In consultation with Human Resources and the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity, provide comprehensive training on all aspects of sexual assault for faculty and staff; and,
- Enhance the web presence that addresses the prevention of sexual assault. After reviewing the sexual assault websites at other universities, the Task Force concluded that Miami University's web presence on this topic would benefit from a comprehensive review and upgrade. This upgraded website could include a wealth of information, from healthy relationships, communicating about sex, engaging men in prevention, consent, definitions, etc. (see Ideas for Comprehensive Webpages on page 12).

3. Enhance current support for victims and adjudication of perpetrators; systematically assess the effectiveness of these services.

Rationale: The Task Force discussed Miami's current victim/survivor support services and processes, and found that many resources are made available to victims/survivors and adequate protocols are in place to meet these needs. Coordination of these resources is essential, as is the development of partnerships with community resources to expand the availability and breadth of assistance. Furthermore, ongoing assessment is an institutional priority and will assist in continuous improvement of services.

Accountability: These action steps could be spearheaded by the Sexual Assault Risk Reduction and Response Coordinator with the advisement of the standing Prevention and Response to Sexual Assault, General Council, the Dean of Students, and the Title IX Coordinators.

Ideas: Key action steps the committee discussed included:

- Assess current services, to determine where enhancements are needed;
- Continue or develop partnerships with the Oxford Police Department, Women Helping Women and McCullough Hyde Memorial Hospital;
- Develop a comprehensive assessment plan with outcomes and metrics; report outcomes to the VP of Student Affairs and the President on an annual basis;
- Develop a new, comprehensive sexual assault prevention and awareness website (or enhance existing webpages). The website should be easily accessible from other key Miami University websites (e.g. Miami University Police Department, Dean of Students, Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity, Counseling Center, etc.) This website could provide a one-stop site with information that ranges from prevention and risk reduction to services for survivors. (See Ideas for Comprehensive Webpages on page 12).

- 4. Identify sustained funding, including a permanent budget, for the implementation and ongoing maintenance of the Campaign on Respect and Inclusion, the expanded campus education programs, and the comprehensive webpages.** There are many dedicated professionals at Miami who are working tirelessly to prevent sexual assault, support victims and hold perpetrators accountable, and build a culture of inclusion and respect. Previous task forces and committees have generated many ideas designed to change the culture and prevent violence. Still, as noted in our assessment of the action steps recommended by the 2006 task force, some key long-term recommendations were not fully implemented due to a lack of funding and allocation of staff time. While we understand the limitations imposed by our current funding situation, we also believe that permanent funding will be essential to the ongoing achievement of enhanced services and an improved culture of respect and inclusion.

- 5. Coordinate these efforts across all campuses.** This would mean representation from the regional campuses on all committees, and connections with the regional campuses' Dean and Associate Deans, faculty, staff and students.

Ideas for Comprehensive Webpages

After viewing the comprehensive websites on sexual assault and violence prevention that are available at other universities, we concluded that Miami's web presence on this topic would benefit from a comprehensive upgrade.

First, we recommend an ongoing assessment of the existing web pages that contain information we are required to present to the public, including sexual assault policies, protocol, Title IX Coordinators' names and contact information, etc., to ensure easy accessibility.

Second, we recommend that webpages be developed to contain the wealth of additional information that we believe should be presented to the university community. This set of webpages would provide a one-stop site with information that ranges from sexual assault prevention to links to services for survivors. Content for this site should include (but not be limited to): definitions of sexual assault and rape, consent, and abusive relationships; reducing risk and protecting victims; links between alcohol and sexual assault; how to help a friend; bystander intervention; healthy relationships; prevention; what happens if I want to report; developing a safety plan (PDF for students); being an ally for survivors; how men can take a stand against sexual assault; links to programming, including MARS, WAVES, HAWKS peer health educators; and links to the campus-wide campaign for respect and inclusion. Throughout these pages, short videos could be embedded to capture student interest.

Finally, the Campaign for Respect and Inclusion should have a web presence, and their webpages should be linked to the prevention and services pages.

Additional Resources

Green Dot Campaign

http://www.livethegreendot.com/gd_overview.html

Adopted by the University of Kentucky

Red Flag Campaign

<http://www.theredflagcampaign.org/>

Adopted by the University of Virginia

University of Michigan's Expect Respect Campaign

<http://urespect.umich.edu/>

University of North Carolina's Safe@UNC Campaign

<http://safe.unc.edu/>

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