

Review Committee

Framework

Division of Student Life

Overview:

The Division of Student Life consists of 8 departmental areas: the Career Center, Erb Memorial Union, Dean of Students Office, Holden Center for Leadership and Community Engagement, Physical Education and Recreation, University Counseling and Testing Center, University Health Center and University Housing. There are also 7 functional areas in the division: Assessment and Research, Student Life Fundraising, Information Technology, Healthy Oregon Initiative, Strategic Communications, Marketing, and Financial Services. Student Life also serves as the liaison and department of record for the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO).

The Division of Student Life has over 700 employees and has a budget of over 100 million dollars. For reference, we serve 24,500 students, with approximately 20,000 undergraduates most between the ages of 18-24. Of course the age of our population is particularly salient to incidents of sexual assault since research shows that the highest rate of victimization occurs between the ages of 17 and 24.

Our primary purpose is to ensure that the student experience at the University of Oregon enhances our student's ability to reach their academic and personal goals. We do that by creating a vibrant university community that allows each and every student to feel a part of something special and eliminating barriers that may interfere with a student's academic progress.

We undergird our approach with a developmental model—realizing that each student is different and comes from different life circumstances, but acknowledging that traditionally aged students tend to traverse through their college experiences in a relatively predictable manner. Therefore we tailor our programs and services to allow for a staged independence of opportunities slowly or more quickly depending on the student helping them to move toward independence, a healthy sense of self and a commitment to being in service to others.

In the Division of Student Life we are also committed to a high-touch, highly involved relationship with our students and their families as evidenced through the myriad of programs, services and relational opportunities that we provide to our students.

Like many Divisions of Student Affairs, our Division of Student Life has primary responsibility for a broad array of programs and services:

- All Health related needs for students
- Psychological Services
- Prevention—including the prevention and education regarding substance abuse, sexual assault, and suicide prevention

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- Recreation and fitness
- Residence Life
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Intramurals and Club Sports
- Career Exploration and Development
- Leadership and Civic Engagement
- Student Activities, clubs and organizations
- Student Government
- Childcare
- Student Employment Opportunities
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Conduct and Community Standards
- Honors and Awards
- Special events (commencement, Homecoming, Spirit and Traditions)
- Parent's programs

Our role in the prevention of sexual assault

Like most campuses, health and safety emergencies and concerns occur with regular frequency. One must understand the complexities of a college campus and the myriad of developmental tasks, opportunities and issues on a campus. Often times, students are experimenting and or/participating in risky behaviors that put them in harm's way, and are then reluctant to seek help, curb that risky behavior in the future, or report to authorities when something goes terribly wrong. When such an event does occur, and we are made aware of it, we take a comprehensive and collaborative approach to response. As best practices would dictate in the prevention and response of sexual misconduct, we approach our work based on the public health model and evidenced based strategies through two best practice frameworks—The Ecological model—which considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors and allows us to address those factors that put people at risk for experiencing or perpetrating violence. Our second framework, the spectrum of prevention approach, takes into consideration that one approach to mitigate sexual assault or relationship violence will not eliminate the problem, and complements the ecological model.

Based on those foundational frameworks, we began to build, re-tool and innovate ways to prevent, intervene and respond to sexual misconduct.

A timeline of actions

In 2002, The Office of Student Life (now the Office Dean of Students) secured close to \$200,000 and in 2004 an additional \$300,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office

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on Violence Against Women, to create a comprehensive and innovative response to sexual assault on our college campus. This allowed us to develop new, population-based approaches as well as to explore innovative, promising practices. During that time period, we founded the Sexual Wellness Advocacy Team (SWAT)—and you may have an opportunity to see one of their live performances—an approach that is targeted at the entire student population that integrates best practices such as by-stander intervention, peer-to-peer learning, and educational information about consent and healthy, sex-positive behaviors. The grants also allowed us to train and staff a sexual assault nurse examiner and become more active at the statewide policy level regarding sexual assault. It was a good start.

The grant money ran out and the stability of our actions were not maintained due to lack of resources—mainly money to hire and retain staff. As a result, much of our efforts until about 2010 were reactive in nature, spotty and fragmented.

In 2010, the Office of the Dean of Students led by Dr. Paul Shang and specifically the work of Associate Dean Sheryl Eyster, submitted a plan of action to move us toward a more comprehensive, sustainable practice in the prevention and response to sexual assault on our campus. When we started, we challenged ourselves to respond to the gaps in our processes such as:

- Low reporting numbers of assaults that unfortunately mimicked the national averages
- Limitations with the federal mandatory campus crime reporting law (such as Clery)
- The lack of accurate reporting numbers meant the campus community was unaware of the true nature of the problem
- Loosely associated collaborations between units who provide services and response to sexual assault as opposed to a comprehensive, strategic effort
- Lack of sustained visibility of our efforts
- Lack of outcome based study or assessment of effectiveness
- A wide variety of response that a student might receive either on or off campus depending on the agency or the person that the student interacted with following a sexual assault
- Lack of a 24 hour a day, 365 days of the year response to sexual assault on the campus
- No clear delineation and publicity of confidential reporters for students
- A need to change our student conduct code toward more victim-rights approaches and bring it in line with federal guidance regarding evidentiary standards and best practices

The Plan for Action document entitled: “Creating a Comprehensive and Coordinated Prevention, Intervention and Response Program for Sexual Assault and Relationship

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Violence at the University of Oregon” was the beginning of our efforts to create a more sustained, effective overall program and approach to sexual assault. This blueprint was presented and accepted in 2010.

This modest, but pointed proposal called for 26 recommendations in order to create the comprehensive foundation needed (see pages 11-13 of the report). Some highlights of those recommendations:

- Hire a new staff person that will create a comprehensive, culturally-competent coordinated campus response;
- Create an office that includes support and referral services that connect students to campus and community advocacy and support resources
- Provide direct service and advocacy to students
- Develop and disseminate a sexual assault policy that is easy to interpret for students, clearly states the institution's position, lays out the resources, protocols and procedures for students, and aggressively promotes a climate on campus that is intolerant of sexual violence
- Provide annual training for Student Conduct Hearings Boards that follow the guidance from the U.S. Department of Justice and other federal agencies
- Develop appropriate tracking and reporting mechanisms
- Develop effective media campaigns to bring visibility to the issues of sexual assault and relationship violence
- Introduce the population level Sexual AssaultEdu or a similar program and mandate it for all incoming first year students

Our progress on these goals:

Since 2010, we have implemented multiple primary prevention, developmentally appropriate educational and prevention programs for our first year students such as:

- SWAT performances at IntroDUCKtion (mandatory) (It Can't be Rape)
- WOW events (aimed at community building, inclusion, and belonging)
- Multiple program opportunities in the residence halls
- Fraternity and Sorority Life programming

Community engagement projects such as:

- Sorority sexual violence prevention program
- Sex Ed Weekly discussion group

Awareness Campaigns such as:

- “Be that Guy” campaign and Bystander Intervention training
- Red Zone Campaign and Red Flag Display
- Let's Talk About Sex video
- Consent is Sexy campaign

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- Take Back the Night

Since 2011:

- Addition of a full time staff member to respond to sexual assault
- AlcoholEdu (mandatory)
- Haven (mandatory)
- Assessment of the Sexual Advocacy Team and impact
- Analysis of our drug and alcohol use on the campus
- Redesign of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education website
- Added he said/she said poster campaign
- Re-drafting of the sexual harassment protocols
- Submitted first OUS report on sexual misconduct and reported incidents and response

Summary of all reported incidents of sexual assaults—14

Since 2012:

- President vocal and visible on issues of sexual violence and communicated expectations of the UO to the campus including mandatory reporting
- Coordinated institutional response including adopting formal sexual harassment protocols to reports of sexual harassment
- Title IX officer
- Gained approval to begin the hiring of a sexual assault response specialist to offer around the clock support for victims of sexual violence
- Adopted a new UO Sexual Harassment/Assault Protocol Flowchart

Summary of all reported incidents of sexual assaults—78

Since 2013:

- Three new positions were identified and filled in key offices including:
 - A sexual violence response and support services coordinator in the Office of the Dean of Students
 - An equal opportunity specialist/title IX investigator in the OAAEO
 - A detective sergeant in the University of Oregon Police Department that has special expertise with sexual violence
- The University's protocol for responding to issues of sexual harassment and sexual assault was finalized
- We brought in an outside consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the University's policies, protocols and practices in responding to Title IX issues and our sexual misconduct policies (see the Groves report)

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- The University Counseling and Testing Center created a new Interpersonal Violence Response Team comprised of 5 senior clinical staff members who have extensive training or experience with trauma treatment
- Launched a new website developed by the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity that provides comprehensive information regarding the UO Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and gender-based stalking and bullying
- Launched a new and revamped anonymous report form of sexual violence
- President Gottfredson initiated and charged the UO Presidential Task Force on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
- Added an expert in Assessment and Research to the Division of Student Life

Summary of all reported incidents of sexual assaults—116

In 2014:

- A letter from President Gottfredson to the campus community reaffirming that sexual violence and harassment in any form will not be tolerated, that there needs to be a shared responsibility to foster and demand a culture in which prevention is paramount, reporting expectations are clear, and excellent support services are readily available
- Funding to create a new sexual violence prevention and education video for international students
- A new 24-hour sexual violence hotline for the campus (the SAFE line)
- A new student-friendly website directed at students in crisis
- A new comprehensive guide for the UO community to assist students (see guide)
- Identification of collaborative research projects between UO faculty and the Division of Student Life
- Launching of a collaborate peer-to-peer program with the ASUO (called OASA) that will augment the current prevention education efforts
- Creation of a victim's assistance fund
- A committee has been established to evaluate the existing mandatory online training module
- Created new central positions in Marketing and in Communications to better communicate and make our efforts regarding prevention, intervention and response more visible and student-friendly
- Changes to the student code of conduct lowering the evidentiary standard to preponderance of the evidence
- Extending the code of conduct to include off-campus jurisdiction (fall 2014)
- Gained approval for 3 additional staff in the areas of investigation, response and prevention—2 of which will be confidential reporters

For the future—Gaps and possibilities

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- More and better visibility of our efforts and services—probably our biggest issue
- Streamlined reporting procedures
- Additional peer-to-peer programming
- Continued vocal support and leadership from the very top regarding intolerance of sexual violence of any kind
- Ongoing campus climate surveys
- More collaborative opportunities to develop and benefit from research of the best practices in the prevention and response to sexual assault
- Increase our ability to conduct our own investigation of sexual assault
- Eliminate hearings panel regarding sexual assault to ensure more consistent handling of sexual assault cases
- More research and assessment of what is working and what is not
- More training of staff and faculty regarding signs, symptoms and response
- Better coordination of effort and training between the Division of Student Life and Athletics
- Implementation of a self-defense class for the majority of students
- A more productive working relationship with those who are critical of the work of the University in response to sexual harassment and assault—making it everyone's responsibility for the climate of the campus and everyone's responsibility for the solution
- Working collaboratively with the University senate to identify mandatory classes for which students can receive credit for educational efforts regarding the prevention of sexual harassment and assault
- Increase our bystander intervention training opportunities