

CORNELL UNIVERSITY COALITION ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION

June 2017

I. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Cornell University recognizes sexual violence and related forms of misconduct (dating violence, domestic violence, sexual harassment, stalking) as serious campus and public health issues that affect every member of our community. Broadly understood, sexual violence encompasses multiple forms of misconduct from harassment to physical assaults (including rape by strangers and non-strangers). Sexual violence causes significant harm to those who are victimized, indirect harm to others, and contributes to a climate of hostility and fear that is antithetical to the learning mission of the university.

II. RATIONALE

Sexual violence is a cultural phenomenon shaped by factors at multiple levels. Therefore, effective prevention requires a comprehensive approach that addresses individuals, groups, the institution, local community, and broader society. Provision of educational strategies and support services that adequately address the unique needs of students, staff, and faculty must involve coordination among multiple university departments, student organizations, and individuals. Given that effective prevention and response to sexual violence is a shared responsibility of the Cornell community, a collaborative structure involving students, staff and faculty is necessary.

In response to a series of sexual assaults and bias-related incidents in the fall of 2012, the university administration created a campus-wide council on sexual violence. This kind of campus-wide structure is recommended in the American College Health Association document *Shifting the Paradigm: Primary Prevention of Sexual Violence*.

For five years, the Council on Sexual Violence Prevention was responsible for a campus and community-wide approach to preventing and effectively responding to sexual violence. The Vice President for Student and Campus life and Vice President for Human Resources and Safety Services served as co-chairs of the Council. The Executive Committee on Campus Climate, Health, and Safety provided administrative oversight.

In Spring, 2017, the Vice President for Student & Campus life requested a restructuring of several University Councils, including the Council on Sexual Violence Prevention. As a result, in the Fall 2017 a new *Coalition* on Sexual Violence Prevention will replace the Council but will continue to pursue the established priorities for our campus community.

Like the Council, the Coalition will support institutional compliance with requirements imposed by local, state, and federal laws and regulations including but not limited to:

- The Clery Act, as recently amended by §304 of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (including the guidance included in the April 2011 “Dear Colleague” letter).
- §6431 of Article 129-A of NYS Education Law.

The framework for the Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention activities is as follows:

A. GOALS

The university aims to achieve a campus environment that is safe, respectful, and free of all forms of sexual violence and discrimination based on sex or gender. To that end, the Coalition will promote change in the cultural factors that contribute to sexual violence and related forms of misconduct. The university seeks change as reflected in the following goals:

- Reduce all forms of sexual misconduct, including harassment, sexual assault (including all experiences of unwanted sexual touching), domestic/intimate partner violence, dating violence and stalking
- Increase reports of sexual misconduct and other forms of gender discrimination
- Increase student understanding of and willingness to intervene in situations that pose risk to individuals in order to prevent all forms of sexual misconduct before they occur

B. CORNELL'S COMPREHENSIVE PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE

As shown in the figure below, the university's strategic framework reflects a comprehensive, public health approach to the prevention of and response to sexual violence. The Coalition work will reflect the interconnected concepts within the framework below.



C. COALITION STRUCTURE

The Coalition will facilitate the development of strategies to advance the university's strategic framework for the prevention of sexual violence. The Coalition will meet three times per

academic year and will convene sub-committees and workgroups as needed to address on-going or emergent concerns. The Behavioral Health Committee and its Sexual Violence Education and Strategic Initiatives Committee will establish agendas for the Coalition and make recommendations for review and attention by the membership. The Coalition will work closely and in collaboration with the Title IX Coordinator, Cornell University Police Department, and Office of the University Counsel so that the communication and educational strategies align with our legal obligations.

D. MEMBERSHIP

The Coalition will comprise staff and faculty members, students, and representatives from the local community. Membership of the Coalition will include the members of PSAC*. Efforts will be made to create as diverse a membership as possible.

Coalition representation may include:

- Students leaders from organizations such as:
 - Student Assembly
 - Graduate and Professional Student Assembly
 - Women's Resource Center
 - Graduate and Professional Women's Network
 - Lesbian, Gay, and Transgender Resource Center
 - Residential Programs
 - Orientation Steering Committee
 - Student-Athlete Advisory Committee
 - Fraternity and Sorority Tri-Councils
 - Center for Intercultural Dialogue
 - ROTC

- Staff members from departments or groups such as:
 - Employee Assembly
 - Student and Campus Life
 - Human Resources and Safety Services
 - University Communications
 - Office of the Judicial Administrator
 - Office of Institutional Research and Planning
 - Cornell University Police
 - Title IX Coordinator
 - Office of Graduate Student Life
 - University Diversity Council
 - Office of Postdoctoral Studies
 - University Diversity Community
 - Cornell Health

- Faculty members from departments or groups such as:
 - Faculty Diversity Institute
 - Ethnic Studies
 - Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
 - Athletic Team Faculty Advisors
 - West Campus Faculty Fellows

- Members from community agencies such as:

- The Advocacy Center.
- Cayuga Medical Center
- Ithaca Police Department

***Public Safety Advisory Committee**

Pursuant to §6431 of Article 129-A of NYS Education Law, the Public Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) at Cornell is charged to review and make recommendations for the improvement of current campus security policies, plans and procedures including educating the campus community about personal safety and crime prevention. Because of the close connection to the Coalition work, the PSAC's review and recommendations shall, in part, be informed by communication with and participation in the Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention.