

Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention

October 5, 2023

2:00-3:30pm

Welcome to the membership from co-chairs Ryan Lombardi and Christine Lovely. Introductions of the 35 attendees present.

Announcements:

The Women's Resource Center has rebranded to the Gender Equity Resource Center, serving women and gender expansive students. Formerly the Diversity & Inclusion Portfolio under the Dean of Students, the Center for Equity, Empowerment, & Belonging has also undergone a name change. The Gender Equity Resource Center recently celebrated their 50th anniversary as a center and has a number of exciting programs planned this year. Update provided by Shura Gat, Director of the Gender Equity Resource Center and Associate Dean of Students.

Laura Weiss, Program Director of the SHARE Office, shared that the Cornell Social Consultant (CSC) Program has hired 9 students and their training will begin October 16th. The CSC Program has been on hiatus since Spring 2020 due to the pandemic, and we are thrilled to resume the culture change work CSCs take on. CSCs focus on shifting patterns within social environments that may contribute to the risk of sexual violence and proactively create a more positive sexual and social culture at Cornell. Training is expected to be completed by the end of the Fall 2023 semester with intervention implementation to start in Spring 2024.

Lauren Branchini, Title IX Coordinator, provided an update on the temporary redistribution of work in the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX due to her maternity leave which starts next week. Cooper Sirwatka will serve as the Interim Title IX Coordinator, with other staff in OIETIX taking on additional responsibilities.

Presentation:

Jason Hecht, Ph.D., Office of Institutional Research, provided an overview of the results from the Spring 2023 Sexual Assault and Related Misconduct Survey. The Executive Summary as well as the survey tool are available on the share.cornell.edu site (under the "learn more" tab), but key takeaways from the data include:

- **Reversion to pre-Covid levels on many prevalence measures.** Many findings are similar to results from 2015, 2017 and 2019, before in-person education was disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Cornell's 2023 responses are consistent with national data and surveys taken at peer institutions.
- **Medium-term trend looks essentially flat.** The 2023 survey results also are largely consistent with surveys taken in 2015, 2017 and 2019. (Cornell, like many institutions, noted a decrease in some forms of sexual misconduct during the 2021 survey, likely attributed to students studying remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic or, if on campus, held to social distancing restrictions that limited in-person interaction.)
- **Underrepresented groups on campus are overrepresented in the data.** Consistent with national data and previous Cornell survey results and trends, undergraduate women; gay, lesbian,

bisexual, asexual, pansexual, queer or questioning (LGBAQ) students; transgender, questioning and gender non-conforming or non-binary (TGQN) students; and students with disabilities continue to report experiencing harassment, stalking, domestic/dating violence and nonconsensual sexual contact at significantly higher rates than their peers. Of note, the TGQN student population continues to grow, which creates “noise” in TGQN numbers as the population levels are inconsistent in the years of the survey (meaning there is an inconsistent denominator in the data analysis, leading to more variable changes in prevalence measures for TGQN students.)

- **Increase in stalking behaviors.** The percentage of survey respondents who experienced stalking behavior increased from 5% in 2021 to 13% in 2023. Stalking includes receiving unwanted calls, messages, pictures or videos, having someone show up or wait for you unexpectedly, and being spied on, watched or followed. This increase is largely attributable to receiving unwanted calls, messages, or pictures/videos.
- **Victim/Survivors continue to talk to their friends, underscoring the importance of a well-informed campus community.** More than three-fourths of survey respondents who experience nonconsensual sexual contact turn to and speak with friends (84%) for support. However, only 11% of survey participants said they contacted a Cornell- or community-based resource. For most students who did not contact a program, the most common reason (58%) was because they "did not think it [the incident] was serious enough to contact a program."

Discussion facilitated by Ryan Lombardi:

Discussion started with a focus on the increase in stalking behaviors and included comments about how Covid disrupted socializing and social experiences and increased reliance on technology as a means of communication --Zoom, texts, social media-- so much communication is digital, written, making tone hard to interpret. In future surveys can we capture some of the platforms being used in stalking incidents? Can we ask in next survey if stalking behavior ever stopped?

Do we capture timing/ time of year of incidents in survey? In reporting current year incident, can we come up with some time-moments-inflection points throughout the year to understand more? (Orientation, pre-fall break, etc.)

Students have a genuine need for connection and belonging, yet individuals may not be equipped to pursue that connection in a way that doesn't cause harm to others. For those coming into a campus setting during/post-Covid—especially with loneliness exacerbated during Covid-- what opportunities are we offering to help them with the understanding/ tools/ resources to create connection in healthy ways?

Regarding data about students with disabilities-- the number of students disclosing a disability has tripled over the past 5 years. The survey asks students to choose to self-identify if they have a disability, but do we ask if the disability pre-dates the incident? Sometimes the occurrence of harm itself creates the disability (PTSD). Since we do ask about the impacts of the incident, can we ask something about disability identity in this section?

The more work we do with inclusiveness and belonging, it all seems connected. Intervene as bystanders- you won't feel you have the gumption to do that if you feel you don't belong. Norms around bystander intervention in survey remain high. Students want to help; they want to engage. Need tools to put that into action-- such as *Intervene* training through campus partnerships.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.