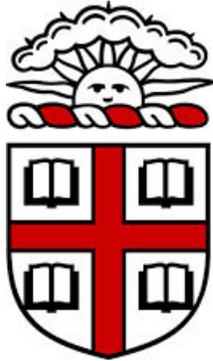


From: **President Christina Paxson, Office of** <president@brown.edu>
Date: Thursday, January 22, 2015
Subject: Task Force on Sexual Assault: Implementation of Recommendations
To: community.announce.all@lists.brown.edu



BROWN

Members of the Brown Community,

Last month I released the [Interim Report of The Task Force on Sexual Assault](#). The report, which I strongly encourage all members of the Brown community to read, made a number of near-term recommendations formulated to strengthen our policies and practices for preventing and responding to sexual assault at Brown. After receiving the report I formed a working group, chaired by Liza Cariaga-Lo, vice president for academic development, diversity and inclusion, to coordinate the implementation of the near-term recommendations. I am writing to update you on the progress that has been made over winter break.

The Task Force recommended that Brown clarify information available on websites regarding policies, support services, and interim measures. Given the short time-frame since receipt of the report, work in this area remains underway, but I am pleased to report that a new [Sexual Misconduct and Title IX](#) website has been created. This site, and the [Office of Student Life Sexual Misconduct](#) page, contain updated information and support resources for members of the community, including information about [interim measures](#) and [process flow-charts](#) recommended by the Task Force. This material will continue to be refined and extended over the course of the semester. I encourage all students, faculty and staff to review the sites, familiarize yourself with their contents, and offer feedback and suggestions regarding how they can be improved.

The Task Force also recommended that Brown take steps to reduce the time and the traumatic nature of the University hearing process. Effective immediately, for cases of alleged sexual misconduct between students, the University will use trained investigators who will gather information and produce a report which will then become part of the case materials. Professional investigative reports that present comprehensive and unbiased accounts of the facts will make hearings

better informed, less burdensome, and less traumatic to all students – complainants, respondents, and witnesses – involved. The Office of Student Life, working closely with the Offices of Institutional Diversity and General Counsel, will oversee the work of these individuals, who will be qualified to carry out investigations of alleged sexual misconduct and sensitive to the campus culture, including the issues of diversity.

To further reduce the strain of the process, both complainants and respondents in cases of sexual misconduct will be proactively assigned a student support dean from the Office of Student Life and an academic dean from the Dean of the College (or graduate or medical school, as appropriate.) This will ensure that students receive coordinated personal and academic support and advice throughout the process.

We have also accepted the recommendation of the Task Force that the entirety of the appeals process (from the point the appeal request is filed to the decision) will take place within thirty (30) days unless there is good cause for an extension; updated the [Rights and Responsibilities](#) statement for students filing a complaint or responding to a complaint; and made clear that students will be provided with a copy of the memorandum of findings produced by the Student Conduct Board along with their decision letters. A sample memorandum of findings can be seen attached to the sample Student Conduct Board [decision letters](#), available on the Office of Student Life website. We will also begin the practice of sharing appeals filed by one party with all other parties. These initiatives are intended to reduce the time it takes to resolve complaints and provide greater levels of information and transparency to involved students.

A number of recommendations were made in the area of sanctioning, separation, and appeals, and those have also been accepted and acted upon, including:

- Students who are found responsible for sexual misconduct and receive a sanction that includes separation will be immediately removed from campus residentially, and either severely restricted in their movements on campus or barred completely during the entire appeal filing period and appeal process;
- The period of separation from the University, when that is the sanction, has been clarified. For example, if a student is separated for two semesters, the semester in which the case is heard and resolved will not count as one of those two semesters;
- A [number of factors](#) to be considered by the Student Conduct Board in determining an appropriate sanction recommendation have been clearly articulated;
- Complainants will be given earlier information about the possible return of a respondent after a period of [suspension](#). The deadline for when a suspended student must petition to return to the University has been

- moved up, so we can more promptly notify a complainant about the respondent's intent to return if the petition is granted;
- We now make clear that a failure to abide by any [interim measure](#), such as a No Contact Order, will result in an immediate response, which could include removal from or restriction on campus, and other remedies.

The Task Force recommended strengthened training, education, and awareness programs, all of which are aimed at preventing assault and improving the campus climate. Many of these initiatives will unfold over the coming months and next academic year. Funds for these initiatives, including a discretionary fund to enable the vice president for campus life to respond to the personal and medical needs of complainants and respondents, will be made available. Training programs, once they have been modified to reflect changes in policies, will be delivered to all members of the community on an annual basis. Participation will be mandatory and enforced for all students, faculty, and staff.

The ongoing national search for a Title IX program officer is moving forward. The person appointed to that position will play a key leadership role in shaping policy and programs in this area. The Office of Health Promotion has been authorized to increase the number of staff members who provide counseling, advocacy and prevention education to students from one position to two. This additional staffing is more than justified by the caseload in this area, which has nearly tripled since 2011, as more students are coming forward to discuss their experiences with sexual assault.

The Alpert Medical School has designated Dr. Christine Montross, assistant professor of psychiatry and human behavior and director of counseling resources, as the deputy Title IX coordinator for medical students. Further, I have appointed three additional members to the Sexual Assault Task Force to provide greater depth and experience with regard to the perspectives of complainants, respondents, and students affected by trauma. Carolan Norris, associate director of athletics; Gail Cohee, director the Sarah Doyle Women's Center and assistant dean of the College; and Bitu Shooshani, former coordinator of sexual assault prevention and advocacy and current psychotherapist at Counseling and Psychological Services, will join the Task Force immediately and I am grateful for their willingness to do so.

The Sexual Assault Task Force recommended that Brown collect data on sexual assault and campus climate on a regular basis. Over the last six months, Brown University has been part of a planning group for a multicampus sexual assault survey that will be administered by the American Association of Universities (AAU) in April. The [AAU survey](#) will produce reliable baseline information that can be used to track our progress on sexual assault over time.

The work of the Task Force will continue this semester. I encourage all members of the community to take advantage of opportunities to engage in discussion of these important topics and to offer suggestions, feedback, and input. Our goal remains for Brown to be a national leader in addressing sexual violence and to ensure that our campus is a safe and welcoming place to learn, teach, conduct research, work, and live for all members of the community. That goal will only be attained if all students, faculty, and staff commit fully to doing so.

Sincerely,

Christina Paxson

Christina H. Paxson
President
Professor of Economics and Public Policy
Brown University