

Sexual Misconduct Policy Task Force
Meeting Minute Summary
4/25/18

Discussion of interviews:

Four interviews were conducted. Six students signed up, but one cancelled as they decided they were not ready to discuss their experience yet and one person ended up not showing. Idea to e-mail the person who didn't show to say we can follow up in the Fall if they are open to talking later on and if they are, then they can let Kirsten know to set a date up.

Most interviewees said there is a need for clarification on follow up procedures for Title IX office and other involved offices- such as who will follow up, staff or student.

Also, need for clarification in policies on what the meanings of sexual assault versus sexual harassment are to the University. Group feels these terms need to be better defined by the University and included should be examples to explain those meanings.

Two of the interviewees felt there was some unprofessionalism on the part of the staff who help in the cases- one student felt some inappropriate responses were used when discussing their case and another said there was discussion of their case outside of an office setting/ in public (felt this was inappropriate).

Takeaways interview sub-group found- training for RAs is lacking- example someone was told they could go to the room to get their stuff when their old roommate was out even though there was an active avoidance order in place (parties had previously shared a room prior to order). This violated the order and is not proper procedure. Group doesn't think it is necessary RAs know all the policies, but they should be familiar with them in a general sense and be told who they can ask if they are unsure on a policy. Most of the interviewees were fairly happy with Morgan Levy and her office's work, but did have criticisms.

Patterns seen from interviews- students talked more about the issues they had as a problem with staff as opposed to there being process/ procedure issues. Students also felt staff working on cases were not as sensitive as they could have been (exs. down played that incident was as bad as it was, felt rushed during process). Another view was that Kyle Orton's office/ Student Conflict Management was not responsive enough/ quick enough to respond and Morgan's office is handling many of these cases so it seems to come down to a lack of staff in her office that may cause some of the issues with the processes and how well they work/ are able to work.

Student met with Kate to talk about the survey- since we asked to interview people who decided to use sexual misconduct offices, person said she chose not to use services, but that she would have liked a chance to be interviewed to talk about her experience. Task Force can put out a call in the Fall to students who chose not to go through formal or informal services after an incidence if they want to be interviewed to share their thoughts, and can conduct more interviews.

Survey

Kate is trying to get sociodemographics of survey respondents to see how well represented various students were who took the survey.

Thought- Kyle Orton's office/ Student Conflict Management Office uses Box online through the University's network for students to access/ fill out/ read forms. Group thinks it is good to have this online so students don't always have to go to Kyle's office, but they wonder how secure the Box site is since very sensitive information is being stored there.

Initial/ informal recommendations group will share with new Student Association (SA) administration that they would like to see addressed moving forward by new task force members:

Things learned from interviews-

- Some students felt Morgan Levy's interactions outside of her office were inappropriate (ex. she talked about the person's case in public). Group wants to tell Morgan this so she knows moving forward that cases should only be discussed in private.
- Public Safety should receive better training on how to work with Trans individuals as one person said their interactions with the department felt uncomfortable.
- RAs need to have better understanding of policies (ex. about active avoidance orders) and told that if they are unsure about policies or what to tell students that they need to ask. Also, need to tell RAs who to ask when they are unsure.

Other suggestions-

- All involved parties need to be updated more frequently about the state of their report/case. Idea to send out a status update every 2 weeks (or set number of days). Also, inform all parties of the timeline and expectations.
- The option to obtain an advisor should be one of the first things both parties are told
- If a timely UCC (university counseling) appointment is unavailable, an alternative should be provided by the university right away

Moving forward into next academic year with Task Force:

Decide on a sustainability plan. President Feldman wants this group to continue. It could be good for Task Force to merge with Amy Lerner's group, Commission on Women and Gender Equity in Academia, because they only have two students on the committee currently. Amy is open to have more students from this task force join hers. Her group is looking at flow charts, processes, etc. from an administrative view.

Question- going forward into next academic year, should this group meet as student only as it has been or merge with another group to push ideas forward. Group isn't sure of what Amy's group has been specifically looking at/ working on so are not sure they can make a recommendation on whether or not next year's task force should merge with them; but they think it could be helpful if the group decides to join them as a way to help them further promote their ideas/ recommendations with the administration.

Students on Task Force who are not graduating this semester (much smaller group) will meet with Kate to go over survey data in the next couple weeks. She will go over the results and the underclassmen can decide how they would like to move forward with the data.

Group consensus is that process/ procedure recommendations should be made to President Feldman next semester after survey results and interviews can be looked into further and better analyzed.

Task Force recommends that this group continues next academic year, but that that decision should be made by the new students on the task force in the Fall and be based off of how they want to continue.

Jordan and Becca said new SA government president and vice president have been elected for next year. They will give the new leaders an overview of what the group did this semester and outline ways they could move forward with the Task Force. Whether or not this Task Force continues under Student Association government is up to the new leaders and if it is able to continue under their administration/ if they have interest in continuing it.