



Bowling Green State University  
Task Force on Sexual Assault

FINAL REPORT

August 22, 2017

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## Letter from the Co-Chairs

August 22, 2017

Mary Ellen Mazey, Ph.D.  
President  
Bowling Green State University  
220 McFall Center  
Bowling Green, OH 43403

Dear President Mazey,

On behalf of the Task Force on Sexual Assault, thank you for the opportunity to work on addressing this important issue that faces colleges and universities across the nation, including Bowling Green State University. Ensuring a safe environment for all students, faculty and staff is a top priority for BGSU. This report reflects that commitment and outlines the path forward to preventing sexual assault and providing appropriate care for all survivors.

Since May, the Task Force has been diligently working to fulfill our charge. Enclosed is an assessment that highlights our current efforts to address sexual assault and recommendations for improvement. The members of our Task Force represent every major constituency at BGSU, and we recognize it's on all of us to combat sexual assault. Throughout this process, the group especially recognizes our student members — Jauntez Bates, Meg Burrell, Ivi Casagrande, Elle Fullenkamp, Austin Gilbert and Hanna Modene — as they were outstanding representatives of an undergraduate and graduate population that cares so deeply about this issue.

It is our hope that you accept these recommendations in full and immediately begin implementation. We appreciate your continued support on this initiative. This report is the first step toward renewing our commitment to preventing sexual assault at Bowling Green State University.

Regards,

Meg Burrell  
Co-Chair, Task Force on Sexual Assault

Alex Solis  
Co-Chair, Task Force on Sexual Assault

Maureen Wilson  
Co-Chair, Task Force on Sexual Assault

## Charge and Membership

The Task Force on Sexual Assault was created in May 2017. It was charged with:

- Reviewing current BGSU policies and procedures for Title IX and sexual assault
- Benchmarking BGSU’s efforts with other institutions that are national leaders on sexual assault prevention and response to determine best practices
- Examining services for supporting sexual assault survivors and evaluating awareness and prevention efforts
- Providing recommendations to improve the campus culture, policies and practices relating to sexual assault

### Co-Chairs

Meg Burrell

Alex Solis

Maureen Wilson

### Area

Student

Office of the President

Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs

### Members

Lauren Ashman

Jauntez Bates

Julie Broadwell

Michael Campbell

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Faith DeNardo

Elle Fullenkamp

Austin Gilbert

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Sarah Rainey

Katie Stygles

Jodi Webb

### Area

Intercollegiate Athletics

Student

The Cocoon

Department of Public Safety

Student

Department of Recreation and Wellness/Title IX

Student

Student

Counseling Center

Department of Higher Education and Student Affairs

Student

School of Cultural and Critical Studies

Office of Multicultural Affairs/LGBTQ+ Programs

Division of Student Affairs

## **Executive Summary**

Colleges and universities across the nation are working to address sexual assault and misconduct on their campuses. Prior to the creation of the Task Force on Sexual Assault, Bowling Green State University had implemented a series of policies, procedures and services based on best practices. These intentional efforts focused on preventing sexual assault on BGSU's two campuses. This summer, Bowling Green State University ranked 27th on the 2017 list of Safest Colleges in America. This recognition highlights the institutional success for ensuring all students, faculty and staff are safe at BGSU.

BGSU, like every higher education institution, has a responsibility for keeping students, faculty and staff safe. This commitment includes our role in sexual assault prevention and the care we provide survivors. In May 2017, President Mary Ellen Mazey charged the Task Force on Sexual Assault with assessing the University's current efforts and providing recommendations for improvement. Comprised of 18 members representing all constituencies, the Task Force identify several focus areas in relating to sexual assault – improving BGSU's prevention, response, communication, care and processes.

Enclosed in this report are recommendations that fully address the Task Force charge and outline the proposed next steps forward in preventing sexual assault at Bowling Green State University. Below are highlights to provide a broad understanding of the recommendations:

- Create a center focusing on sexual violence prevention, advocacy and wellness that is responsible for coordinating the University's efforts to train, educate, and prevent sexual assault and misconduct.
- Establish a clear separation from staff responsible for student care and those involved in Title IX investigation and adjudication. Hire a case manager to coordinate and provide ongoing support for all parties throughout and beyond the Title IX process. With a focus on a student's well-being and overall success, the case manager should be the primary support for students and assist them with completing their degrees at BGSU.
- Increase trainings specifically focused on bystander intervention so students will learn how to effectively and safely intervene in situations that can lead to sexual assault and misconduct.
- Create a separate new sexual assault and misconduct policy that is user friendly and reflects best practices and the additional recommendations advanced in this report.
- Promote an environment that supports reporting sexual assault and misconduct. Increase BGSU's efforts to inform the campus community of the See It. Hear It. Report It. campaign. Leverage social media, the BGSU website, emails and print materials to notify students, faculty and staff of the reporting campaign that was launched in spring 2017.

## **Current Assessment**

When analyzing the current efforts of Bowling Green State University, it was clear that the institution was committed to sexual assault prevention and care for survivors. Below are highlights to provide a broad understanding of the assessment of current practices.

- BGSU offers primary prevention and awareness programs for students throughout the academic year (e.g., Think About It, Can I Kiss You?, Take Back the Night, Clothesline Project, peer education presentations).
- BGSU offers primary prevention and awareness programs for faculty and staff (e.g., Eliminate Sexual Violence online training, Stop Harassment and Discrimination online training).
- BGSU champions “It’s On Us,” with past local and national success including a student representative on the White House committee.
- The Community of Care Coalition promotes the values of a culture of care at BGSU. The coalition identifies collaborative opportunities to improve the culture around preventing sexual violence and caring for students.
- The Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE) Team serves to promote, through early intervention and information sharing, the health and safety of the campus community by identifying students, as well as situations, that pose risk to members of the campus community, and to develop, coordinate and track the response plans.
- Established offices to serve as resources for students, faculty and staff, including the Counseling Center, the Office of the Dean of Students, Falcon Health Center, LGBTQ+ Resource Center, the Wellness Connection, the Women’s Center, International Programs and Partnerships, Student Legal Services, University Police Department and Residence Life.
- Established off-campus resources including the Behavioral Connections of Wood County and The Link, the city of Bowling Green Police Division, NAMI Wood County, Wood County Hospital and The Cocoon.

## **Recommendations**

To address sexual assault and misconduct at BGSU, the Task Force has identified a series of recommendations, based on benchmarking and best practices, to improve the University’s policies, procedures and services that focus on three main priorities: prevention, care and process.

### PREVENTION

- Create a center focusing on sexual violence prevention, advocacy and wellness that is responsible for coordinating the University’s efforts to train, educate and prevent sexual assault and misconduct.
  - Showcase the University’s commitment to accessing The Cocoon’s services by designating space on campus in partnership with the newly developed center.
  - Increase outreach, educational sessions, programs and training provided by peer educators.
- Develop a year-long programmatic calendar that engages all students and includes events and educational sessions during student orientation, opening weekend, welcome week and into the fall and spring semesters. Identify opportunities for mandatory programming for residence halls each semester including opportunities to enhance the Informed-U pilot.
- Implement strategic programming for developing leaders to prevent sexual assault and misconduct. Sessions should be facilitated by peer educators or staff in the newly developed

center focusing on sexual violence prevention, advocacy and wellness. Target high-risk groups and student leaders (e.g., athletics, fraternity and sorority life, residence life, student government and ex-officio).

- Create a robust programming schedule for National Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April including:
  - A University-wide lecture series that attracts national experts and advocates who can engage the campus community on sexual assault awareness
  - Educational events and trainings focused on consent and engaging men
- Increase trainings specifically focused on bystander intervention so students will learn how to effectively and safely intervene in situations that can lead to sexual assault and misconduct.
- Expand trauma-informed training opportunities for hall directors, graduate hall directors and resident advisors. Continuing education, in partnership with The Cocoon, will promote best practices for addressing sexual assault in residence halls.
- Continue the online summer training program for first-year and transfer students that includes content on sexual assault prevention and response. Require all incoming students to complete the training by the end of their first semester. Failure to finish the training will result in a conduct letter placed in each student's file that is removable upon completion. Incorporate an evaluation that needs a specific pass rate for successful completion. Provide the appropriate communication and reminder to ensure students finish the online training.
- Explore an expansion of online trainings on sexual assault prevention for current students.
- Continue to mandate online trainings for faculty and staff on sexual assault prevention coordinated by the Office of Human Resources. Explore options for in-person trainings to help faculty and staff better understand reporting obligations and resources. Utilize the Train the Trainer model championed by the Ohio Men's Action Network on college and university campuses across the state.
- Continue trainings for student-athletes, coaches and athletics staff and identify additional opportunities to train specific groups including the Board of Trustees, education abroad students, campus volunteers, student teachers, graduate assistants and others as needed.
- Restructure "It's On Us," a national bystander intervention campaign adopted by BGSU, to support positive social norms on campus.
  - Appoint an advisory committee to include University-wide representation with an emphasis on engaging men as allies.
  - Support the student subcommittee's endeavors to further the "It's On Us" initiative by assigning the coordinator for engaging men to advise.
  - Increase funding for "It's On Us" to enhance effective engagement and outreach efforts for students, faculty and staff. New efforts for the upcoming academic year will include participation in national weeks of action, marketing tools, new videos and pledge presentations to key student groups (e.g., resident advisors, orientation leaders, student employees, graduate assistants, student organizations, student athletes).
  - Charge "It's On Us" to create a five-year sexual assault prevention and education strategic plan to develop and sustain the engagement of men who are student leaders.
  - Link the President's Leadership Academy and learning communities to "It's On Us" to promote cross-campus involvement.

- Collaborate with The Cocoon to acquire grant funding to focus on prevention efforts within the campus community.
- Create a coordinator position for engaging men to be responsible for educational programs, mentoring, community building and leadership development with an emphasis on how gender identity and expression are related to preventing sexual assault and misconduct.
- Direct relevant graduate assistantships to focus on sexual violence prevention efforts.
- Develop and/or renew memorandums of understanding with local and regional partners to create a streamlined process to ensure open communication and accuracy in reporting and response to sexual assault and misconduct (e.g., law enforcement, off-campus survivor and support agencies).
- Identify appropriate options to assist sexual assault survivors by offering transportation to the Wood County Hospital for sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) services. It is important that multiple options be available to allow survivors of sexual assault the ability to choose the option most comfortable for them. Factors such as financial resources, confidentiality and safety should be considered when developing these options. Evaluate the system for accessing SANE services annually to ensure that we always have the best processes in place for survivors.
- Develop communications to parents and guardians addressing the University's sexual assault prevention and education efforts to be sent at the start of the fall semester.
- Provide a toolkit for BGSU faculty and staff to foster an environment of reporting. The toolkit should include templates for syllabus statements regarding sexual assault and resources to share with students.
- Create a BGSU Foundation Inc. account to serve as a fundraising vehicle for all items involving sexual assault prevention, awareness and response. Implement an annual solicitation to fundraise for these initiatives.

#### CARE

- Develop a communications plan notifying constituencies of their responsibilities for reporting and the campus resources available for support. A responsible employee, as defined by the Office of Civil Right's *2014 Guidance*, includes any employee: who has the authority to take action to redress sexual violence; who has been given the duty of reporting incidents of sexual violence or any other misconduct by students to the Title IX coordinator or other appropriate school designee; or whom a student could reasonably believe has this authority or duty. Therefore, the BGSU Board of Trustees, faculty and full-time staff are responsible employees and have a mandate to report sexual misconduct, with the exception of several confidential options – staff members in Falcon Health Center, Counseling Center and The Cocoon. Outreach should include:
  - Presentations (e.g., cabinet, University Council, Deans Council, college and division faculty and staff meetings, chairs and directors meetings, new faculty and staff orientations).
  - Communications (e.g., BGSU website, campus emails, MyBGSU, social media)
- Promote an environment that supports reporting sexual assault and misconduct. Increase BGSU's efforts to inform the campus community of the See It. Hear It. Report It. campaign. Leverage social media, the BGSU website, emails and print materials to notify students, faculty and staff of the reporting campaign that was launched in spring 2017.



- Hire a Title IX coordinator to lead and manage all assigned areas of responsibility effectively. The Title IX coordinator should evaluate deputy Title IX coordinators to improve accountability. This position will be critical to providing a fair and equitable investigation and adjudication process. Charge the Title IX coordinator with leading information-and-data gathering for BGSU in regard to the Clery Act.
- Establish a clear separation from staff responsible for student care and those involved in Title IX investigation and adjudication. Hire a case manager to coordinate and provide ongoing support for all parties throughout and beyond the Title IX process. With a focus on a student's well-being and overall success, the case manager should be the primary support for students and assist them with completing their degrees at BGSU.
- Hire a director of the Women's Center who can serve as a resource and advocate for survivors of sexual violence. Encourage this position to collaborate with the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program.
- Develop a user-friendly "complainant and respondent guide" for all parties who file a Title IX report. This resource guide can be readily available online and at various offices that would normally field these inquiries. Content should include contact information for Title IX staff, an overview of the process, helpful information in understanding reporting, suggestions on how to help peers who have been sexually assaulted, and campus and community resources available to care for students.
- Send communications from senior leadership when a significant bias incident, hate crime, alleged sexual assault or other type of crisis is known to campus. Convene a response group, who have received trauma-informed training, to guide messaging to the University community. Continue to utilize social media when proactively communicating with students acknowledging concerns.
- Institute the option for the complainant party to work with a woman investigator for the Title IX process, ensuring a safe and welcoming reporting environment.
- Continue to emphasize the scope of privacy, keeping sensitive information of complainants and respondents as confidential as possible throughout the reporting and support processes.
- Restructure the current Title IX model (e.g., deputy Title IX coordinators, Title IX Board members) to separate investigation from adjudication to ensure an equitable process.
  - Increase the number of deputy Title IX coordinators to properly support BGSU's two campuses. Appointments are to be effective fall semester 2017 and trauma-informed trainings are to begin immediately. The deputy Title IX coordinators are "responsible employees" and point persons for the University who may receive, investigate, and/or assist with resolution of Title IX complaints, and who may assist with educational training programs.
  - Continue to designate deputy Title IX coordinators within the Office of Human Resources to handle Title IX cases involving faculty and staff members. Student-on-student Title IX cases are to be handled by other deputy Title IX coordinators in the Division of Student Affairs.
  - Remove deputy Title IX coordinators from hearing cases on the Title IX Board.
- Recruit a separate qualified pool of faculty and staff to serve on the Title IX Board. Appoint a vetting committee to oversee the selection to ensure trauma-informed practices are a priority.
  - Ensure that Title IX Board members will receive the appropriate external and internal reoccurring trainings.

- Implement a three-year term limit and create staggered terms to avoid fatigue on the Title IX Board. Upon completion of service, allow for an option to be renewed.
- Institute an optional two-business-day window for board members to process the sensitive material before reconvening to submit adjudication recommendations.
- Increase the level of training for the Title IX coordinator, deputy Title IX coordinators, Title IX Board members, and University leaders involved with Title IX (e.g., Association of Title IX Administrators, Association for Student Conduct Administration). Identify a sustainable funding source to support trainings. Current funding for trainings comes from departments housing staff members with Title IX functions.

### PROCESS

- Create a separate new sexual assault and misconduct policy that is user friendly and reflects best practices and the additional recommendations advanced in this report.
  - Define the rights of complainants and respondents, the University's definition of consent, and information about the role of drugs and alcohol.
  - Establish sexual misconduct violation sanctions that are separate from the conduct violation sanctions. Eliminate the option of a warning from the sanction list, making the sanctions proportionate to the offense.
  - Define all prohibited conduct (e.g., cyberstalking, voyeurism, recording without consent).
- Appoint a committee led by the Title IX coordinator to conduct annual reviews of the policies, procedures and practices related to Title IX.
- Develop standardized questions to be used as a guide when managing intake, as well as for investigators to begin the process and discussion when interacting with complainants and respondents. Ensure that the context of questions for both parties is considered through a trauma-informed lens.
- Develop a user-friendly website to serve as a one-stop hub for all items relating to sexual assault prevention, education and Title IX (e.g., the Title IX policy, trainings and programs linking to the newly developed center and Title IX websites, resources available to care for and support students, confidential reporting options, investigation and adjudication processes, and Title IX contact information).
- Develop semester emails from the president that communicate support resources and update the community on progress in addressing sexual assault and misconduct at BGSU.
- Update the BGSU App, make the report icon more prominent and include resources for students, faculty and staff affected by sexual assault and misconduct.
- Coordinate search functions on the BGSU website to ensure that the newly created webpages and response content are prioritized.
- Utilize an external investigator and reviewer when needed. Decisions should be made on a case-by-case determination by the Title IX coordinator in consultation with the vice president for student affairs and vice provost, general counsel and the president.
- Conduct a regular Title IX audit through an external/third-party organization that specializes in Title IX review and evaluation to ensure that BGSU policies, procedures and practices are compliant with local, state and federal laws.

- Conduct an annual sexual violence climate assessment that addresses knowledge about the BGSU Title IX process, policies and procedures, reporting mechanisms, availability of resources, bystander behaviors, and prevalence of sexual violence at BGSU.
- Create an email outlet, stopsexualassault@bgsu.edu, and continue to utilize titleix@bgsu.edu for students, faculty and staff who wish to offer feedback outside the survey. An automated response mechanism will be incorporated so people know their message was received; however, these email addresses would not serve as official reporting mechanisms. Email addresses to be monitored by Title IX Coordinator or designee.
- Promote transparency by publishing an annual sexual assault and misconduct report to share aggregate data to inform the BGSU community. To ensure comprehensive scope, include information outside of the Campus Security and Fire Safety Report. Consistently review reporting data and track and analyze patterns to gain an understanding of the reporting trends on campus.
- Develop a comprehensive assessment plan to ensure achievement of program outcomes.

## **Implementation**

Sexual assault and violence on college and university campuses is a national issue. BGSU is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, faculty and staff. To execute the recommendations from the Task Force on Sexual Assault, a team will be appointed to oversee and monitor the implementation of this report. Comprised of student, faculty and staff representatives, this group will establish completion timelines for each recommendation and provide updates to the president. Once this report is released publicly, the implementation team will convene immediately to continue this important work.