

Coalition on Sexual Violence Prevention
March 9, 2018
10:00am-11:30am

Minutes

Vice Presidents Mary Opperman and Ryan Lombardi welcomed everyone to the Coalition meeting.

Annual update on Title IX Reports - Kareem Peat, Interim Title IX Coordinator

Kareem updated Coalition members on current OCR issues. He emphasized that the Title IX office work will continue even with the OCR withdrawal of previous guidance issued to universities. He gave an update on Cornell-related OCR complaints and pending investigations and said that the TIX office would continue to interact with the community and support meaningful and informed dialogue. Kareem disseminated a letter to the Coalition reemphasizing Cornell's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning, living and work environment for the campus community.

- For those interested, the most recent data about complaints and outcomes is on the Cornell Title IX website.
- VP Opperman announced that the Policy 6.4 review is finished. Procedures regarding student reporting are finished; faculty and staff procedures are now being reviewed and will continue throughout this academic year.
- VP Opperman provided an update on the Title IX Coordinator Search. Several candidates were invited to campus VP Opperman is expecting to make an offer and announcement soon. Sarah Affel will return from maternity leave soon and stay through June 2018 to help the new Title IX Coordinator with the transition.

Student engagement reports

Sexual Assault Awareness Week 2018 - Hannah Light Olsen

- Cornell's 4th annual Sexual assault awareness week –April 16-20
Hannah reported that the week has changed a lot in four years. The goal is to have a lot more diverse events and activities to engage more people such as the Mannequin exhibit (articles of clothing of victims and survivors). The schedule is online. They have worked with a diverse group of student organizations this year.

CORE RA activities - Allison Killea and Amdiel Clement

- Allison and Amdiel provided the mission statement of the CORE RA – to provide awareness and engagement of CU students about sexual violence prevention.
- They serve as a resource to new students for information on sexual assault and violence. CORE RAs implement at least one program a month on education and outreach and do both interactive and passive programming.

- CORE RAs helped with safer sex week in the fall, trying to get students comfortable about talking about intimacy and clarifying values.

Greek Life students– expanding our outreach – Tri-counsel EVP Luke Bianco

- Luke offered a plea for help from the Coalition members. He is becoming increasingly frustrated about what is happening on campus. He believes we do not currently have the infrastructure in place for sexual violence prevention in Greek Life as we do for hazing. He is upset that there are often various aspects of sexual violence where Greek Life students are simply not calling each other out. However, it's not only a Greek issue, it is prevalent across campus. Luke reported that he is trying his best, and getting pushback from his peers when he wants to discuss it and improve bystander interventions. He believes additional pressure needs to be put on the Greek Life system.
- VP Lombardi stated he really appreciates Luke making his comments and will work with him.
- VP Opperman added that he was very brave to speak up and present as he did.

Presentation & Discussion

Sexual Dimensions of Hazing - Tim Marchell, PhD, Director, Skorton Center for Health Initiatives.

The presentation highlighted the sexualized dimensions of hazing practices.

Comments & observations from Coalition members:

- Nausea...I know these things were happening when I was in college. As a student, I didn't think about the harm. I would like to hear what the students are thinking.
- Reflecting back to my time in college, did I remember it in the same way? We know that it happens but now it looks different.
- Thanks for presenting this. Part of what you are illustrating is what we need to get at, the environment. This is a Title IX issue.
- This is so pervasive, part of a larger system. When you see and hear about these types of things, it makes me realize we also need to look at the other dimensions that contribute to this hazing and how people think it is ok. It is systemic. We have to have a strategy that goes to the entire system, not just one issue (hazing).
- The need to look at it as not just a group of bad apples....we need to look at it more comprehensively.
- Those settings promote group grooming for future submissiveness or going along with other activities. It is dehumanizing.

- Cultures and behaviors start way before they come to college
- One of the things that strike me the most—how creative it is to do things to other humans. If we could refocus all that effort to other opportunities there could be important change.
- Are there groups that are doing really good things that we can highlight? Instead of just focusing on the bad things happening?
- We need to also focus on the alumni....they want to “relive” the good ol days and those often lead to problematic behaviors.
- My three sons went to Cornell; there have been some changes also made and there is still a lot of work to be done. But change can happen.
- Would this make an important presentation on Alumni weekend?
- I think the work that the CORE RAs are doing is important and an aspect of the future - I feel hopeful
- Language is so important. Many of the things we saw in the presentation are sexual misconduct. We couch them into hazing. Perhaps we should call it what it is. Starting to separate some of these things out and calling them what they are.
- Mistaken belief that it is just fun, there really is no harm. How do we challenge this belief?
- We need to look at this as a system in crisis. We need to come at it in a much more fundamental level. We need to look at how we operate. How/why are people enticed to join the groups that could harm them?
- We have had an opportunity to change the culture and willingness to do so on campus. Figuring out how to do it is what we are working on.