

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
Pre-filed Resolution

RS.19.07 Resolution on the Need for Additional Resources for Advocacy and Support for Those Harmed by Sexual Assault and Harassment

WHEREAS, The University of Illinois President Tim Killeen has created a system-wide task force to examine issues of, and practices related to, sexual misconduct on the three University of Illinois campuses, and make recommendations for improvements;

WHEREAS, The Senate Executive Committee has recommended to the Provost and Chancellor that a task force be created to examine the policies and practices used to respond to sexual misconduct by faculty and recommend changes to improve the campus's methods of response;

WHEREAS, The Provost has formed such a Committee and asked for a preliminary report and recommendations from the Committee by May 15, 2019;

WHEREAS, The Provost is in conversation with Student Affairs, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and other stakeholders regarding the need for additional Committees with some jurisdictional overlap, to explore various considerations related to issues of sexual misconduct prevention, intervention, and response, and the need for the chairs of these committees to meet regularly to achieve a holistic and coordinated set of recommendations;

WHEREAS, The University's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan asserts that we will be leaders in advancing diversity and equity that will contribute to creating an institution committed to excellence in discovery, teaching, and research, and a climate where all can achieve their highest aspirations in a safe and welcoming environment;

WHEREAS, The University of Illinois System formed a working group that drafted comments in response to the proposed Title IX Regulations from the Department of Education, many of which were aimed at maximizing the ability to utilize community-specific approaches in the University of Illinois' response to problems of sexual misconduct, consistent with its core values;

WHEREAS, Campus programming and committee recommendations have become increasingly successful in raising the awareness of greater numbers of students, faculty, and staff about Confidential Advising services, thus increasing the need for additional staff;

WHEREAS, The Provost has recently allocated forthcoming resources to staff the Women's Resources Center with two full-time Confidential Advisors for student, faculty, or staff victims of sexual misconduct (the first full-time staff members dedicated to this service in campus history) on a campus of nearly 50,000;

WHEREAS, The combined effects of gender identification, gender expression, race, sexuality, disability, and citizenship status can significantly shape experiences of sexual misconduct, with the result that some classes of victims—e.g., transgender persons, gender-non-conforming persons, people of color, indigenous people, persons with non-citizen status, students with disabilities, and international students— may be disproportionately vulnerable to being the targets of sexual misconduct;

WHEREAS, The Women's Resources Center, which celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year and provides the state mandated emergency and ongoing support to survivors of sexual violence,¹ is specifically trained in the cross-discipline,

¹ Preventing Sexual Violence in Higher Education Act (110 ILCS 155/)

state mandated competency to provide crisis management, reporting options, survivor rights, and referral services in a survivor-centered manner;

WHEREAS, Confidential Advisors provide support to student, faculty, and staff victims from all social identities, such as those who identify across the gender spectrum (including men), persons who use a variety of languages, and the above listed vulnerable populations, but meeting the needs of the varied populations of victims requires differing, and intensive specialization to truly provide timely, comprehensive support, with the result that existing access to confidential advising services for some vulnerable populations is extremely limited, delaying campus disciplinary processes, initial survivor intakes, access to accommodations and safe housing, suicide intervention, legal proceedings, and follow-up care, among other interventions and support services;

WHEREAS, Actual and perceived noncompliance with state and federal regulations can result in increased lawsuits, legal liability, Office for Civil Rights investigations, and costly fines or settlements;

WHEREAS, Several cases in recent years at UIUC have involved the harassment and assault of graduate students and untenured faculty;

AND WHEREAS, Funding for support services will address a widening gap in our ability to combat the detrimental academic, workplace, and health outcomes faced by victims;

BE IT RESOLVED, That any committees charged by the Provost, Academic Senate, or other educational or administrative body with addressing issues of sexual misconduct on campus include individuals with demonstrated experience, and demonstrated interest in addressing the concerns of the populations mentioned above, ensuring that all committees include faculty, staff, and/or students with expertise in intersectional approaches to harassment and assault;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in addition to any further recommendations from the Committees mentioned above, the University will address a corresponding need to provide clear lines of advocacy and additional support for potential victims of sexual misconduct, including the following resources:

- The Senate supports the immediate allocation of ongoing funds to hire additional, full-time Confidential Advisors within the Women's Resources Center (to ensure alignment with legislative requirements) with the expertise and experience to support the mentioned vulnerable populations, and establish mechanisms to offer embedded Confidential Advisor resources at spaces that serve the above mentioned populations (including Native American, African American, Latinx, Asian American, undocumented, international, and LGBTQ+ persons, and persons living with disabilities);
- The Senate supports the immediate allocation of additional resources for the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program;
- The Senate supports the immediate allocation of additional resources to support the specific needs of graduate students, non-tenure-track faculty, and pre-tenure faculty who face sexual misconduct, including accommodations for emotional and physical distress; and
- The Senate supports the appointment of a University-wide Ombudsperson as an additional resource for cases of harassment and assault.

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