

Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence

April 18, 2014

1:00pm – 2:30pm

Perkins Room, Massachusetts Hall

AGENDA

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Review of the charge
3. Context: legal and social landscape
4. Beginning to plan our work: data collection, reports from peers, hearing from stakeholders

The next meeting is May 6, 11:30am-1:00pm in the Perkins Room at Massachusetts Hall.

Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Violence

Minutes of the April 18, 2014 Meeting

The meeting began with an introduction by the Task Force Chair. Underscoring the importance of the task force's work, the Chair emphasized the profound consequences sexual violence has on individuals and the campus as a whole. The task force's charge is focused on issues of prevention, culture and community values. The work of bringing about positive change in these areas is challenging, and the checkered history of efforts across many domains of behavioral prevention demonstrates a need to (1) understand the nature of the problem across the different parts of the University; (2) understand what has worked, even partially, and what has not worked in preventing sexual assault here and elsewhere; and (3) combine creativity with a willingness to rigorously evaluate any new programs that are implemented.

The members of the task force then introduced themselves, sharing their affiliation with Harvard, their experience with issues of sexual violence and behavioral change, and other comments bearing on the task force's work.

The Vice President and General Counsel then gave a presentation on the legal and national environment in which the issues of sexual violence are being considered. Although the task force's work is not focused on the University's legal requirements under Title IX and other associated laws, the broad framework was seen as useful for the members to understand as the task force begins its work. The members also recognized that results of the task force's prevention and outreach work may lead to further definition and clarity to existing policies and procedures.

The task force then began to discuss how it might undertake its work:

- How can we most effectively hear and learn from all aspects of our community – students, faculty, staff and alumni?
- What sort of outreach is important for the task force to dimension the situation on campus and to ensure that interested members of the community have the opportunity to express their views?
- What data does the task force want to collect and how should it do so?
- Different Schools have different student bodies and culture; how can the committee be certain to understand these differences as it forms its recommendations?
- How do we make sure that we think expansively and creatively when forming recommendations?
- What work can the task force do productively over the summer?

The meeting ended with the recommendation that each member:

- Read the distributed material, including the Yale reports, and consider other research that might be usefully distributed to the task force.
- Come to the next meeting with specific suggestions about how best the task force might most effectively engage the community.
- Identify the data and other information that task force might usefully have as it begins its work.