



Recommendations from the  
Otterbein Task Force  
on Sexual Violence

*FROM DEAN ROBERT GATTI  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS*

*August 20, 2014*

President Barack Obama is launching an initiative to combat sexual assault, particularly on college campuses, turning the spotlight on the problem that has devastated millions of Americans yet rarely receives such White House attention. He pledged to work hand-in-hand with higher education and government leaders to help institutions better prevent and respond to incidents of campus-based sexual violence. This report, Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call for Action, says that 1 in 5 women have been sexually assaulted in colleges and that only 12% of the student victims report the assault ([www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/01/22/renewed-call-action-end-rape-and-sexual-assault](http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/01/22/renewed-call-action-end-rape-and-sexual-assault)). The problem, it says, is exasperated by students' "alcohol and drug use."

In concert with the April 4, 2011 Dear Colleague Letter and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which includes the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (CampuSaVE), this renewed Call to Action has elevated the issue of campus sexual assault to an unprecedented position of prominence. One that we hope will create the kind of change that impacts not just institutional response policies, but, more importantly, prevention education efforts.

With President Obama's initiative, it is time for Otterbein to systematically evaluate the campus culture surrounding sexual violence and ways to deter and address sexual violence of any kind – harassment, intimidation, bullying, incivility, and the stigmatization of individuals or groups of students for any reason. For that reason, I have asked Dr. Judy Guion-Utsler to chair a task force to examine this culture and to make recommendations to me by May 21, 2014. I am asking the task force to:

- research the current culture as it exists on campus address a campus culture that underreports and minimizes the effects of sexual violence
- look at best practices for preventing and responding to rape and sexual assault
- build on the federal government's enforcement effort to ensure that Otterbein complies fully with our legal obligations
- review policies and practices to prevent these crimes and to more effectively respond when they occur, by holding the offenders accountable and giving victims the help they need to physically and emotionally recover
- develop comprehensive plans for educating students and employees about sexual assault

- provide adequate training for school officials charged with responding to complaints

In addition, the recommendations must be designed to promote problem-solving, positive decision-making, and understanding among Otterbein student population and partnership with faculty and staff.

I appreciate your willingness to work on this task force. It is important work. I've laid a tall order for you to complete, but I have every bit of confidence that you'll be able to complete the task.

Members of the task force are as follows:

Dr. Suzanne Ashworth, Larry Banaszak, Dr. Tammy Birk, Conner Dunn, Dr. Judy Guion-Utsler, Madeleine Holmes, Sarah James, Dr. Peggy Lobb, Connie Richardson, Julie Saker

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OTTERBEIN TASK FORCE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

In response to the charge given to the Task Force, we submitted the following recommendations, which were reviewed, amended, edited and were accepted on August 20, 2014. The members of the task force are grateful for the opportunity to engage in real, systemic change and look forward to turning these recommendations into vital programming and transformative policy.

1. **Our first and strongest recommendation is that this task force continue its work.** The task of systematically assessing the campus sexual culture is a daunting one—and one that can never be fully completed. The complex nature of the problem of sexual assault on college campuses and of creating a sexually healthy campus culture is more work than can be meaningfully accomplished in the short term. **We further recommend that expansion of the membership of the task force to include additional Greek Life representatives, student representation from athletics, and a representative from the Men's Experience Committee.** In addition, we recognize that the breadth of the work of this Task Force would be better accomplished with the addition of working groups, or sub committees, which would take responsibility for particular aspects of the Task Force recommendations. We will incorporate the following working groups, with additional membership as needed, to work in the following areas:
  - a. Climate Survey and other campus culture assessment.

- b. Primary Prevention, which will include Team Consent, Peer Advocates, Bystander Intervention Training, and collaboration with the Healthy Relationships Campaign (Student Wellness). In addition, we will partner where appropriate with Tri-lota and the Women's/Gender Resource Center for additional programming.
  - c. Evaluation and Assessment of Programs (Team Consent, Peer Advocates, Bystander Intervention Training, Trauma-Informed training for faculty and staff).
  - d. Training of Employees in Trauma and Survivor Support.
  - e. There may be additional working groups needed for particular tasks. We will recommend such teams when necessary.
2. **In line with the first report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, we recommend a formal study of the current sexual culture and climate on Otterbein's campus using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.** We recommend that this study begin in the fall of 2014 and be repeated annually, using an assessment instrument that can include questions that are specific to Otterbein's community. We recommend choosing an assessment instrument that will allow us to compare our data with similar institutions. This may be helpful in gauging the efficacy of our work. If however this tool is not the most appropriate, we recommend the development of our own climate survey based on the White House Task Force toolkit.
  3. **We recommend the expanded use of Team Consent,** and that it be presented to all incoming students through a combination of First Flight, FYE, FYS classes and co-curricular experiences and/or events, with a goal of 100% participation. Although we recognize that training faculty and staff for the curricular use of Team Consent and appropriate follow-up conversations may mean that full participation will be phased in, it is our hope that faculty will be strongly encouraged to require Team Consent events to their First Year Seminar classes. Formally, we suggest a goal of 2015-16 for use of Team Consent with First Flight and 2016-17 for full use of Team Consent through curricular or co-curricular components of FYS. Team Consent is also developing modules for use in Greek Life and Athletics, and we recommend appropriate use of these as they become available. We further recommend a review of current programming during First Flight ("Sex@7") with input and support from Team Consent and their advisors for revision of future programs. Additionally, we recommend that Team Consent presentations include information about Otterbein policies, available resources and other items mandated by Title IX, the Office of Civil Rights, and the Violence Against Women Act, via print literature and online resources, made available and accessible to all students.
  4. We recognize that single programs or campaigns are insufficient for students to fully comprehend the complex nature of these issues. **We recommend a collaboration with the Office of Student Conduct and Wellness to pursue making appropriate on-line courses about sexual culture required for all incoming students.** In addition to identifying these issues to incoming students as critical on our campus, an on-line course will provide a foundation that other programming can reinforce throughout each student's college career. We recommend that the Task Force, the Office of Student Conduct and students sample several available courses to select one that is most congruent with the goals of the Task Force.
  5. **We recommend the widespread use of high quality Bystander Intervention programming with a thorough review and assessment of efficacy.** We want to work collaboratively with Jill McCullough, who recently received a grant from the NCAA to provide alcohol education and bystander training. We recognize the value in such collaboration, but also recommend that, should the NCAA programming prove to be narrowly focused on the student athlete population, we identify additional programming that can be used more broadly.
  6. **We recommend the continued role of trained Peer Advocates for survivors of sexual assault.** We further recommend that we find better ways to make the presence of these Advocates known to the student population and made more accessible. We also strongly recommend a review of the Women's/Gender Resource Center (WGRC) to find ways to improve its mission, focus funding and access. Their strong presence on campus is critical for nearly all of the other recommendations of this Task Force.
  7. **We recommend that the Task Force work with OPD and the Office of Student Conduct and Wellness in developing reporting guidelines similar to those outlined in the White House recommendations.** We recognize the complexity of this issue, and the challenge of balancing student safety and survivor confidentiality. We ask for review and assistance from appropriate legal counsel when these guidelines have

- been developed to insure that we are in compliance with Ohio Reporting Laws.
8. The initial report from the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault identifies the benefits of Trauma Informed-Training for school officials. **We strongly recommend that training for initial trauma support and assistance be made widely available, that each department that regularly interacts with students strive to have at least one representative (faculty and/or staff) participate in this training.** We ask for support from Human Resources and Academic Affairs to find ways to make this training widely available and accessible and to encourage participation. The Task Force makes this recommendation recognizing that having at least one person in each department trained in how to connect survivors with resources and understanding an appropriate first response is essential first-line care. In addition, we recommend a written resource with these training materials and resources so that any person on campus will be able to easily find information in an emergency.
  9. We recommend that the Center for Student Involvement assess relationships and communication between the Greek Advisor, the Greek community and the United Greek Governing Board. There is perception among some members of the Greek community on campus that there is a need for greater engagement and more deliberate communication about the code of conduct, and more consistent consequences of serious infractions. A review will discover whether these are indeed issues that need to be addressed. Further, we request that the Assistant Director for Greek Life be appointed to the Task Force, and, in addition to relating relevant information and training to students, also communicate with appropriate alumnae about the work that we are doing on campus.

*As the Otterbein Task Force on Sexual Violence makes these recommendations, we acknowledge the need to be in continued dialogue with every stakeholder represented in this document. We will work diligently through the implementation process to attend carefully to logistics, feasibility, resource needs, wide participation, and community development. We know that movement from recommendation to implementation and policy comes with thoughtful, well-considered adjustments, and that the many voices who speak with integrity about this issue will help us to build a better, stronger infrastructure leading to a healthy sexual climate on Otterbein's campus.*