

University of Missouri
Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Task Force Report

May 3, 2017

Introduction

Sexual and intimate partner violence cross all age and socioeconomic groups, but women are particularly at risk, and young women (age 18-24) are in the highest risk age group for experiencing such violence.¹ This violence has significant consequences and well-documented negative outcomes, increasing risk for adverse physical, mental, and behavioral health outcomes and academic failure – representing a serious threat to the well-being and success of college students who experience violence.

In the Fall of 2015, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Garnett Stokes established the University of Missouri’s Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Task Force. The Task Force was charged with reviewing the results of the 2015 Association of American Universities (AAU) Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct (hereafter referred to as the AAU survey) and making recommendations for enhanced interventions, services and prevention efforts. In addition to Provost Stokes, Vice Chancellor for Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Kevin McDonald and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Cathy Scroggs have been the Executive Sponsors of the Task Force.

Co-chairs Ellen Eardley, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Civil Rights & Title IX, and Danica Wolf, Managing Coordinator of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center, built an interdisciplinary group comprised of faculty experts, practitioners, and undergraduate and graduate student representatives. A list of committee members appears in Appendix A. The Task Force began meeting in earnest during Spring Semester 2016.

AAU Survey. Twenty-seven institutions of higher education participated in the 2015 AAU survey, which employed evidence-based, behaviorally-specific questions in an anonymous survey of students about their attitudes and experiences regarding sexual misconduct and sexual assault on campus. The purpose of the AAU survey was to help participating universities better understand students’ perspectives and experiences and formulate evidence-based effective campus policies and practices to address sexual assault and sexual misconduct. In 2015, 4,750 Mizzou students participated in the AAU survey, including 3,464 undergraduate students and 1,286 graduate and professional students. This population sample was weighted to create equivalency for underrepresented populations.

Selected findings of the MU survey are below.²

- Overall, 28.7% of students surveyed perceived sexual assault or misconduct as “very much” or “extremely” a problem at MU.
- Overall, 52.0% of students had experienced sexual harassment (i.e., inappropriate and unwanted remarks, comments, or messages of a sexual nature/about a person’s appearance, body, or sexual activities; or ongoing

¹ National Intimate and Sexual Violence Survey; <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/nisvs/>

² Full text of the AAU survey questions, methodology and all results are available at <http://titleix.missouri.edu/data/2015-aaU-survey.php>.

pressure to date, get dinner, have drinks or have sex after they had already said no). Offenders were most commonly students; however, substantial percentages of graduate students reported sexual harassment by an MU faculty member (23.7% and 21.9% of male and female graduate students, respectively)³ or other MU staff/administration (15.9% and 13.7% of male and female graduate students, respectively).

- More than one in 4 (27.2%) of female MU undergraduates and 12.5% of female graduate students reported that someone had sexually assaulted (i.e., sexually touched or penetrated an orifice without their consent) since entering college.
- 4.6% of undergraduates reported experiencing nonconsensual penetration more than once.
- Students who were trans+, Latinx, American Indian, or living with a disability reported higher rates of sexual assault than their peers.
- Although sexual assault rates were approximately 4 times higher for female MU students than male students, males were also victimized; 5.9% of male undergraduates and 3.1% of male graduate students reported they had been sexually assaulted since entering college.
- Significant percentages of MU students who were sexually assaulted reported the assault resulted in physical injuries; trouble concentrating on academics; feeling helpless, hopeless, numb, detached, and/or fearful for their safety; having nightmares/trouble sleeping; having headaches, stomachaches, and/or eating problems/disordered eating; and using drugs and/or alcohol to cope.
- Controlling behavior, threats of physical harm and/or physical abuse by their partner was reported by 11.9% of MU students overall who had been in a relationship, with the highest rates reported by undergraduate females (14.8%). Among students who were sexually assaulted by force, 38% reported that an intimate partner/ex-partner was the perpetrator of the assault.
- Students' awareness of specific student services on MU's campus available for students experiencing violence or harassment ranged from 54.6% (RSVP, Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center) to 92.2% (Student Health). Undergraduates are more aware of available services on campus than graduate students.
- A majority of MU students who were sexually harassed, assaulted, and/or experienced abuse from an intimate partner told a friend about the assault; however, a significant percentage of students told no one at all. Relatively few students disclosed their experiences of victimization to MU faculty/staff or formal student services. For example, only 21.2% of students who experienced penetration by force disclosed the violence to formal service providers or MU faculty/staff.

³ The AAU survey reported binary male/female data in most analyses even though students were asked to identify as male, female, transgender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, questioning or not listed. The Task Force recommends that future AAU analyses of survey data better assess prevalence rates and other data points across gender identities.

- The most common reasons MU students did not disclose sexual assault to MU faculty/staff or a formal service provider were that they did not think the assault was serious enough to tell anyone (including 61% of those penetrated by force); feeling embarrassed/ashamed; concerns about repercussions for the perpetrator or themselves; and not believing they would be taken seriously.
- Of MU students who experienced sexual harassment, assault, partner violence, or stalking and did access services on campus, the most positively assessed services were those provided through RSVP (Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center). Students who accessed services through RSVP consistently described the services they received as useful, conveying respect to victims, and helpful to understand their options.
- Overall, only 34.0% of MU students described themselves as very or extremely knowledgeable about how the university defines sexual assault and sexual misconduct. Less than half (41.4%) knows where to find help at MU if they or a friend are victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct, and 36.8% know where to make a report of sexual assault or sexual misconduct. Only 1 in 5 (20.8%) knows what happens when a student makes such a report.
- 21.9% of MU students reported that they had suspected a friend of theirs may have been sexually assaulted. Of these, 68.5% had taken some type of action, with most speaking to a friend or someone else to seek help (57.0%). 23.1% of students had witnessed someone behaving in a sexually harassing or violent manner; approximately half (49%) did nothing to intervene.

Framework: Educate, Prevent, Respond

The Task Force identified three primary areas for focus: (1) **Education** (students, faculty, staff and the community must learn about this problem); (2) **Prevention** (everyone must know the steps they can take to prevent acts of sexual and intimate partner violence); and (3) **Response** (the University must be prepared to respond when sexual and intimate partner violence does occur). These three areas also form the mission of the MU Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center.

Education, Prevention and Response subcommittees reviewed the AAU Survey results, discussed current campus efforts, and drew from the experience and expertise of the members. The Task Force members considered current efforts at MU to identify strengths, needs, and key areas for additional work.

The AAU survey data show numerous opportunities for improvement or growth at MU. First, the prevalence rate of sexual assault and misconduct is too high for all populations at MU and particularly high for undergraduate women (27.2%), higher than the average of all institutions that participated in the AAU study (23.1%). More than one in ten students overall (and 1 in 7 undergraduate females) who had been in a relationship with a partner since

entering college described experiencing controlling behaviors, threats of harm, or physical abuse from their partner. The Task Force notes even this high prevalence of intimate partner abuse likely represents an underestimate, given that sexual violence from a partner (a common tactic of abusers) was excluded from the definition used in the AAU survey and 38% of the perpetrators of nonconsensual sexual touching/penetration were partners/ex-partners of the student.

In addition, as previously noted, certain subpopulations of students were particularly vulnerable to victimization, suggesting a need for specific outreach and programming to vulnerable subgroups. Trans+ students experienced nonconsensual sexual contact at higher rates than heterosexual and cisgender students. Students with disabilities also experienced higher rates of nonconsensual sexual contact. Rates were generally similar across most race and ethnic identities, but higher for American Indian and Hispanic students.⁴ Additionally, graduate students were more likely than undergraduate students to experience sexual harassment by an MU faculty member, staff or administrator.

Second, the task force noted that although the AAU survey did not assess outcomes related to all types of sexual misconduct or violence measured in the survey, the data (and the larger body of extant literature) support that these experiences have substantial negative impacts on MU students who are victimized. For example, the MU student respondents who reported sexual assault were asked about the impacts of their experiences. Participants reported the assault resulted in physical injuries; trouble concentrating on academics; feeling helpless, hopeless, numb, detached, and/or fearful for their safety; having nightmares/trouble sleeping; having headaches, stomachaches, and/or eating problems/disordered eating; and using drugs and/or alcohol to cope. While effectively addressing harassment and violence against students at MU is a worthy goal in and of itself, these data suggest that such efforts play a key role in promoting students' well-being and academic success – both outcomes of relevance to the University and to the larger community.⁵

Third, while a high percentage of MU students reported they were aware of specific services on campus available to them, many were not aware, particularly graduate students, and very few knew how the university defines sexual misconduct or assault or what happens if a student reports such experiences. It is noteworthy (and consistent with data from other institutions of higher education) that the vast majority of MU students who were sexually harassed, assaulted, and/or experienced intimate partner abuse did not access services from any service on campus or disclose their experiences to faculty or staff. The most common reasons were that they did not think the assault was serious enough to tell anyone (including 61% of those penetrated by force); feeling embarrassed/ashamed; concerns about

⁴ Future AAU surveys should collect data regarding international students to better assess how the university could better serve this population.

⁵ Future AAU surveys should consider the number of students who have experienced power-based personal violence before coming to the University of Missouri.

repercussions for the perpetrator or themselves; and not believing they would be taken seriously.

Among the small percentage of students who were victimized and accessed campus services, they most commonly sought help from Student Health or the Counseling Center, but in some cases reported their services were unhelpful. Given that violence advocacy services are survivor-centered and trauma informed, and research demonstrates they are the most effective type of violence intervention, it is unsurprising that the most highly-rated, useful, respectful, and helpful campus service accessed by students who experienced violence was consistently MU's on-campus violence center (i.e., RSVP). *In fact, no student respondents who accessed the RSVP Center described their services negatively.* However, only of 54.6% of students overall were aware of RSVP's services and relatively few accessed their services, suggesting another potential opportunity for improvement.

Other areas for improvement included students' (dis)belief that sexual misconduct might impact them personally, their engagement in bystander intervention, and their reported experiences with what was the Title IX Office (at the time of the survey). About 28% of students reported that sexual assault or misconduct is very much or extremely problematic at the University of Missouri, but only 7% said that they believe they are very or extremely likely to experience sexual assault or misconduct on campus (suggesting they may underestimate their own potential for experiencing sexual misconduct or assault). Regarding bystander intervention, of those who had witnessed someone acting in a sexually harassing or violent manner, about 49% of the bystanders did nothing.

With these data in mind, the Task Force members identified: (a) strengths; (b) opportunities for development and growth; and (c) strategic recommendations in each of the three areas of focus (education, prevention and response). The remainder of this report presents these findings in turn.

Education

EDUCATION STRENGTHS

RSVP Center Programming and Peer Educators

The University of Missouri campus benefits from a strong Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center that has advocated for resources to prevent and respond to sexual violence for over 30 years. With the support of federal, state and local grants, the RSVP Center engages in education and prevention programming and also provides advocacy to individuals.

The RSVP Center offers a variety of programming about SIPV. Presentations include:

- Introduction to the Dynamics of Sexual Violence;

- Introduction to the Dynamics of Relationship Violence;
- “Not Anymore”⁶ Follow-up Discussion;
- Introduction to the Dynamics of Stalking;
- How to Help a Survivor; You Have Options; and others.

The Center also houses RSVP Educators, a peer education program composed of students who are dedicated to ending relationship and sexual violence on our campus and in our community. RSVP Educators receive extensive training on sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence and stalking. They use these skills to increase awareness about the prevalence of and factors contributing to relationship and sexual violence through education. RSVP Educators conduct presentations, assist with events and volunteer their time and efforts in the RSVP Center.

The RSVP Center has also assisted the MU Interfraternity Council (IFC) in developing an IFC-only peer education program called IFC Peer Educators. The purpose of the program is to end gender-based violence and sexual assault on our campus through education and preventative measures. IFC members receive extensive education to better understand masculinities as well as sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence, and stalking. After completing a course, the IFC Peer Educators provide programming and presentations to their fraternities.

Commitment to Broad-Based Education

MU requires all incoming students to complete “Not Anymore,” an online program that provides basic information about sexual violence, campus resources, and bystander intervention. The RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX offer in-person, follow-up workshops where students can discuss these concepts.

In 2016-2017, UM System required all employees to complete an online program regarding the University’s non-discrimination policies, which included information regarding the prohibition on sex-based violence and information about reporting concerns to the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX.

These online modules are not the ideal, complete solution, but they represent a significant step in the right direction and ensure that thousands of students, faculty and staff receive consistent baseline education on these topics.

⁶ See “Commitment to Broad-Based Education” section for information about “Not Anymore.”

Programming Offered Throughout Campus

Several units across campus consistently provide high-quality education regarding SIPV, fulfilling an important need. They include, but are not limited to, Residential Life, academic units such as the Women's and Gender Studies Department, units within the Division of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity, and the Missouri Student Association It's On Us online campaign. The newly created Education and Prevention Coordinator position in the Office for Civil Rights has the potential to have significant impact educating the community on SIPV, but that office is also responsible for education related to other forms of discrimination.

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Because SIPV educational programming for students is relatively strong, the University might consider focusing future educational efforts on staff and faculty. Issues to address include: (a) challenging those who assume they already have all the information they need to know about SIPV and Title IX; (b) providing tailored support for international students, graduate students, LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, and students of color; (c) supporting and training instructors (e.g., faculty, GTAs) to engage in culturally appropriate teaching and mentoring to build trust among faculty and students; (d) building trust among faculty, the RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX, so that faculty better understand required referral (sometimes called "mandatory reporting"). The University should fund a faculty fellow to enhance faculty education on these issues. Another option might be to fund a multi-year graduate assistantship focused on staff and faculty education. These opportunities form the basis for our educational recommendations.

EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Share Regular, High-Profile Statements from the Chancellor, President and Others

The community needs to know that campus leaders, including the Chancellor, the System President, and others support SIPV survivors and will protect resources dedicated to preventing and responding to SIPV. The Chancellor should regularly make high-profile statements and send messages demonstrating that supporting survivors is part of upholding the University's key values of respect, responsibility, discovery and excellence.

B. Continue to Support and Maintain Broad-Based Educational Initiatives

Support for the Not Anymore online program for students, as well as online training modules for faculty/staff should continue in order to provide consistent messaging and accountability mechanisms for SIPV. Campus experts should continue to be responsible for vetting and selecting the appropriate programs as they respond to the research and promising practices in the field.

C. Fund a Faculty Fellow for Sexual Violence Education

The University should invest in funding for a faculty fellow in the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center and/or the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. The faculty fellow would strengthen the responsive services provided by these spaces by bringing expertise of relevant scholarship and scientific evidence to the offices' practices. A fellow could also partner with these offices to better measure their impact; assist with outreach to students, alumni, faculty, academic units, and the larger community; systematically assess the needs of vulnerable and underserved student groups e.g., international students, LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, and racially diverse students; and assist with measurement and benchmarking of service access, and help develop tailored resources for faculty, students, and staff. Ideally a synergistic fellowship would result in joint faculty and practitioner scholarship, greater faculty engagement across campus in violence prevention, and improved services to the community. Individuals selected for these positions need to be able to build trust with marginalized populations who may not regularly seek services.

D. Tailor Resources to Populations with Higher Prevalence Rates or Other Needs

The RSVP Center and Office for Civil Rights & Title IX should develop resources for and outreach to populations who have specific needs, that may have higher prevalence rates of victimization, and that may not feel comfortable seeking services, such as international students, students of color, students with diverse religious and cultural views regarding gender and sexuality, students with disabilities, and LGBTQ students.⁷ Relatedly, the University should collect better demographic data regarding these populations' engagement with services and set benchmarks for increasing engagement.

One example of meaningful outreach to international students about responsive resources is "Let's talk! Safety and Support for All in the MU Community: International Student Edition," held in Fall 2016. This event promoted dialogue among international students, faculty, and staff about partner/dating violence/sexual assault, and helped make international students aware of violence resources on and off campus. There were more than four times as many registrants as available seats, demonstrating tremendous interest. There were highly engaged discussions regarding the issues and challenges specific

⁷ For example, Bloom, Gielen & Glass (2015) conducted qualitative interviews with a sample of a) college women survivors of same-sex intimate partner violence; b) friends/peers of college women survivors of same-sex intimate partner violence; and c) university/college staff who work with such survivors. The analysis identified themes that focused broadly on students' barriers to recognizing abuse in same-sex relationships and to accessing help from more traditional sources, including informal (e.g. friends and social network) and formal (e.g., campus based or community based counseling) information, resources and services. These included increased isolation related to not only the inherent isolation of abusive relationships but also sexual minority, questioning, or "closeted" status; fear of or actual experiences of discrimination from peers, family, and others; difficulty recognizing abusive behavior (particularly when in first same-sex relationship); and little knowledge of resources for support or concerns regarding privacy when accessing resources (this was particularly of concern for students whose friends or families were not aware of their sexual minority status). Bloom, T., Gielen, A., & Glass, N. (2015).

to understanding and navigating these issues (and related issues, e.g., mental health needs) and barriers to accessing formal help resources for international students. We began an important dialogue on how services can be made more accessible and welcoming for international students, but this is something that appears to need additional attention.

The Office for Civil Rights & Title IX and the RSVP Center should also develop resources for and outreach to graduate students focused on their unique experiences, including (1) the higher prevalence rate of sexual harassment or misconduct perpetrated by a faculty member as compared to undergraduate students; and (2) the opportunity that graduate TAs have to respond to undergraduate students who disclose potential sexual violence to them.

E. Utilize Syllabus Statements about SIPV

Students want to know that their faculty members are knowledgeable about SIPV and that they are prepared to connect them with resources if needed. The task force recommends that the faculty approve or adopt the sample syllabus statements prepared by the RSVP Center and the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. The full statements appear in Appendix B to this report and are currently available at civilrights.missouri.edu/education/syllabus.php. These statements should be available on the Provost's website where other example syllabus statements appear.

F. Disseminate One Tool Describing All SIPV Educational Offerings

Because there are several different types of educational SIPV programming, the task force suggests that the University create a graphic or toolkit describing the differences between the various options and encouraging individuals to engage in multiple forms of education and prevention learning. To address the gap between the prevalence rates and students' perceptions of invulnerability, it is important that students participate in programming that share the realities of SIPV at Mizzou, such as RSVP Peer Educator programming. This tool can also highlight programming such as IFC Peer Educators, which features fraternity members educating other fraternity members, as well as programming offered through the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX.

G. Develop a White Paper Describing the Business Case for SIPV Resources and Policies

At least annually, the RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX, with advice from the USART and SIPV Task force, should develop a clear, concise document setting forth the benefits of providing SIPV education, prevention, and responsive services and policies – and the risks or costs of not providing these services. The document should enable University administrators to make well-informed, data-driven decisions about the necessary programs and policies. Additionally, administrators should use the SIPV Task Force as a resource for providing evidence-based feedback on campus policies and educational campaigns. For

example, if a campus unit is considering investing funds in educational programming about sexual violence, the Task Force is available to assess the proposed program.

Prevention

PREVENTION STRENGTHS

Sexual violence is preventable. According to the CDC, the most effective prevention strategies “focus on promoting social norms that protect against violence; teaching skills to prevent sexual violence; providing opportunities, both economic and social, to empower and support girls and women; creating protective environments; and supporting victims/survivors to lessen harms.”⁸

Since 2009, the RSVP Center has utilized an evidence-based national program called Green Dot as the campus’s primary prevention strategy. Green Dot is a bystander-based prevention program designed to reduce sexual and other forms of interpersonal violence. Green Dot is both collaborative and multidisciplinary. Faculty and staff undergo a four-day intensive training to be able to deliver the Green Dot program to others throughout campus. The Green Dot Mizzou program has several strengths. First, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes Green Dot as a promising program based on its comprehensive model and an initial study. Green Dot Mizzou is a mature program with brand recognition and buy-in from many MU students. MU has developed a strong relationship with Green Dot’s founder who provides technical assistance to MU as needed. Further, MU is recognized as having expertise in the Green Dot model and assists other universities.

PREVENTION OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

MU SIPV experts view the campus Green Dot Mizzou bystander intervention program as successful, but there are opportunities for growth. First, some students, staff and faculty are confused by the presence of other bystander intervention programs on campus, such as StepUp!, which at MU, is focused on alcohol use, not SIPV. The Green Dot Mizzou program will have to differentiate itself and enhance engagement to improve the rates of bystander intervention in situations involving sexual harassment or sexual misconduct. Relatedly, Green Dot Mizzou may wish to focus on improving students’ intervention skills and conducting assessments to demonstrate that these skills are being built.

⁸ The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control’s STOP SV: A Technical Package to Prevent Sexual Violence, 7 (2016). <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SV-Prevention-Technical-Package.pdf>.

Second, Green Dot Mizzou has the opportunity to improve its engagement with faculty and staff so that more MU employees recognize Green Dot Mizzou as an SIPV bystander intervention program. Third, with additional resources, the Green Dot Mizzou prevention program might offer follow-up events and booster sessions for facilitators and participants to strength the impact of the program.

Finally, the RSVP Center Prevention Coordinator oversees the Green Dot Mizzou prevention program at MU. This position is supported through grant funding, not operating funds from the campus budget. The University has an opportunity to support continued prevention work by financially supporting Green Dot Mizzou and supporting faculty and staff who serve on the Green Dot Mizzou Team.

PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Ensure that Green Dot Mizzou Prevention Programming is Sustainable by Making a Strong Financial Commitment

The University's primary SIPV prevention tool, Green Dot Mizzou, has traditionally been funded through grants. This includes the Prevention Coordinator position and funding to conduct programming. Grant funding is not certain and is likely to end. We encourage the University to support Green Dot Mizzou and other evidence-based bystander intervention programming with recurring funds so that prevention efforts continue to thrive and can grow.

B. Demonstrate Strong Administrative Support by Increasing Visibility of Top Leaders at Green Dot Events

Visibility, consistent branding and culture change are central to the success of the Green Dot Strategy of Bystander Intervention. A simple, yet impactful way to promote Green Dot Mizzou is by including formal and informal leadership from the University in advertising, programming and events.

C. Enable Staff Members to Serve as Green Dot Mizzou Facilitators by Allowing Non-Exempt Staff the Time Needed to Accomplish Their Green Dot Mizzou Service

The Green Dot Mizzou bystander intervention program relies on a cadre of highly-trained individuals to deliver programming content to others. Many of the facilitators are staff members, some of whom were recently reclassified as non-exempt from the FLSA. In many instances, these employees are no longer able to participate in Green Dot Mizzou professional development or events as part of their job without accruing expensive overtime hours. The Task Force recommends that supervisors allow these staff to participate in Green Dot Mizzou events by permitting them the equivalent time away from their regular duties so that the employees do not exceed 40 hours per work week.

D. Engage Alumni/ae/x to Better Support Bystander Intervention Prevention Programming

The RSVP Center should engage alumni, alumnae, and alumnae as potential Green Dot Mizzou facilitators. Graduates might also wish to fund Green Dot Mizzou or other prevention programming.

E. Improve Prevention Programming at the University of Missouri by Responding to the Research

Prevention programming should continue to develop in response to evidence-based research and the needs of the ever-changing student population. The University's participation in the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Multi-College Bystander Efficacy Evaluation study to assess Green Dot is encouraging. Additionally, the Task Force should monitor promising prevention programs in addition to Green Dot for potential use at MU.⁹

Response

The 2015 AAU survey showed several areas of promise with regard to the campus response to sexual violence. Among the students who responded to the survey, their awareness of the issue is relatively high, with 28.7% describing it as a significant problem. Some students reported they were relatively knowledgeable about resources on campus related to sexual assault or misconduct; about 41% said they knew where to find help if they or a friend experienced sexual assault. Students' awareness of specific student services on MU's campus available for students experiencing violence or harassment were fairly high, ranging from 54.6% (RSVP, Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center) to 92.2% (Student Health). Undergraduates are more aware of available services on campus than graduate students. The survey also revealed that among the overall sample more than three out of five student respondents (64.7%), believed that a report of sexual assault or misconduct would be taken seriously by campus officials. More than half, or 56.4%, said it was very or extremely likely that the safety of those reporting incidents of sexual assault and sexual misconduct would be protected by university officials.

Students also recognized that the RSVP Center was a helpful resource when they reported an incident. In fact, about 98% of students who utilized the RSVP Center found it very or extremely helpful. Another potential strength in responding to SIPV on the MU campus lies within the social networks of students themselves. Among those students who experienced sexual harassment, assault, stalking, or partner violence, the majority disclosed their experiences to a friend. Additionally, 21.9% of MU students were perceptive enough to

⁹ There is a growing body of research on how to best prevent sexual violence. See, the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control's STOP SV: A Technical Package to Prevent Sexual violence (2016). <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/SV-Prevention-Technical-Package.pdf>.

suspect a friend of theirs may have been sexually assaulted even if they had not disclosed this to them. Of these, 68.5% had taken some type of action to try to help, with most speaking to a friend or someone else to seek help (57.0%).

RESPONSE STRENGTHS

The RSVP Center

While many colleges and universities have women's centers where violence survivors can seek services and support, relatively few have specialized and dedicated violence centers on campus with advocates whose sole mission is dedicated to education, prevention, and response to sexual and intimate partner violence, let alone one with 30 years' history. The RSVP Center is a tremendous asset in ensuring MU has an effective response to violence victimization. The Center, a confidential resource, currently has one full-time advocate who provides confidential advocacy, crisis intervention, and case management, including medical, legal, and housing advocacy as well as assistance to survivors who make a report to the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. It is well-known from the violence research literature that working with trained violence advocates is the most empowering and effective intervention for survivors to reach greater safety and reduce the likelihood of experiencing more violence in the future, reduce adverse outcomes related to violence (e.g., depression, posttraumatic stress disorder), increase participation in accountability processes (encouraging survivors to report violence), and promote healing and safety. Therefore, it is not surprising that of all the resources that survivors reported accessing on campus after sexual assault, that those who accessed the RSVP Center rated it as more consistently useful, respectful of victims, and helpful to understand one's options than those that accessed any other services.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) at UMHC

Another key strength at MU is the SANE clinic in the University of Missouri Hospital emergency room, where violence survivors from the MU community (and surrounding communities) can receive empathetic, sensitive, trauma-informed healthcare and forensic examinations from highly-trained providers, and connect with violence advocates. This is critically important to reduce the health consequences of violence (e.g., injury, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infection, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder), reduce ongoing risk for violence exposure, and ensure evidence collection that protects survivors' legal rights and promotes community safety.

The SIPV Task Force and the University Sexual Assault Response Team

This task force, co-chaired by the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX and the RSVP Center, and the University Sexual Assault Response Team (USART), chaired by the RSVP Center, are also critical to MU's success in response to violence and represent significant strengths. They both reflect the institutional will for coordination of professionals, faculty, students, staff and administrators and for continuous self-improvement. The USART examines key cases and

experiences, engages in troubleshooting and debriefing, and identifies opportunities for improved services. The Task Force represents MU's strengths in interdisciplinary work and the breadth of subject-matter faculty and experts on this campus engaged in addressing sexual and intimate partner violence.

The MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX

This new office connects students, faculty, and staff to resources that can support them if they experience SIPV and/or any other form of discrimination, including discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, and protected veteran status. The office offers information about rights and options, including the right to file a complaint that will be investigated as well as the right to be free from retaliation. After an investigation, individuals who are found responsible for violating policies will be sanctioned. People who are accused of violating policies also receive information about their rights as well as the investigation and resolution process. The Office for Civil Rights & Title IX is available to provide assistance and resources regardless of whether a complaint is filed or an investigation is pursued, but it is not an advocacy office. Anonymous reports or complaints can be made online. Survivors are never required to speak with an investigator.

Willingness to Engage in Self-Assessment & Improvement in an Evidence-Based Way

The institution shows significant investment and engagement in addressing violence on campus, such as participation in the AAU survey, which uses well-designed, evidence-based, behaviorally-specific measures of sexual harassment and violence experiences. It is critically important that data be collected on baseline and ongoing violence exposures and outcomes related to these violence exposures, including survivors' resource utilization and their experience with such resources, be monitored over time. MU is clearly a leader in the willingness to engage in self-assessment and improvement. As another example, the 2014-2015 MU Title IX Annual Report offered transparent data about incidents reported to the University. The willingness of the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX to share these data and to continue to do so each year also demonstrates an interest in evidence-based improvement.

RESPONSE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The University's relatively new policy requiring employees to refer known incidents of sex discrimination, including SIPV, to the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX has increased faculty and staff interest in and awareness of SIPV on campus. This increased awareness gives the University an opportunity to help faculty and staff become better connectors or bridges to services for students who experience SIPV, including international students, trans+ students, students with disabilities, and racially diverse students. One important step, a guide for MU faculty about SIPV and Title IX, is already underway. There is also an opportunity to identify staff and faculty within each department who can become well-versed in reporting obligations as well as knowledgeable about resources such as the RSVP Center, the Office for Civil Rights &

Title IX, and the SANE Clinic. However, staff and particularly faculty are unlikely to know about and access the resources from these spaces without more outreach and education.

Given the prevalence of sexual violence at the University of Missouri, the Task Force is concerned that the University does not have adequate resources to respond to incidents. In particular, there is only one full-time advocate in the RSVP Center, whose caseload increases and becomes more demanding each semester since this survey was conducted. While there are a growing number of equity consultants/investigators in the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX, these individuals must respond to numerous other forms of discrimination and are not solely tasked with focusing on SIPV.

There is an opportunity to conduct a systematic review of the University's response capacity for violence survivors, including regarding (a) coordination of services for support; (b) the extent to which services are trauma-informed;¹⁰ (c) utilization of best practices to support people of color and international students, faculty and staff; and (d) student satisfaction with various service providers.

Relatedly, there is opportunity to collect data about students' perceptions of what was then the Title IX Office (and is now the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX). The survey suggests that about 39% of students found the new Title IX Office extremely helpful and 35% found it somewhat helpful, and the Title IX Office had existed for less than a year when the survey was administered.

RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Maintain Existing Services, Including the RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX

Nationally and locally, financial resources and political will to address SIPV wax and wane. For example, the University community expects budget cuts in FY 2018 and likely in the years that follow. The University, however, cannot afford to cut services to respond to or prevent SIPV. The Task Force recommends that, at a bare minimum, the University maintain existing resources in the RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX.

B. Increase Personnel Devoted to Responding to SIPV with an Additional Advocate and an Administrative Professional in the RSVP Center

The University should invest in another full-time advocate in the RSVP Center who can assist with student advocacy as well as advocacy for faculty and staff. During the 2015-2016 academic year, advocacy and crisis intervention services increased from the 2014-2015 year by 20%, which was made possible by the hiring of a full-time advocate. For the Fall 2016

¹⁰ Trauma-informed services are grounded in and directed by a thorough understanding of the neurological, biological, psychological, and social effects of trauma.

semester, there was an increase of services provided by about 10%. The sole advocate on campus sustains a caseload on average of about 30 students at any given time, with new students, faculty or staff accessing services every week, providing, on average, about 10-15 hours of direct services every week. In the month of October 2016 alone, approximately 55 hours of case management was provided to 23 students. This does not count time providing consultation to campus colleagues, committee meetings, and professional development opportunities. It is also best practice for advocates to work on a team for the purpose of both case review and consultation as well as to give students a choice. Survivors should be able to choose someone who best meets their needs. An additional advocate would be an investment of approximately \$65,000 annually.

The RSVP Center, which is a confidential resource, also needs administrative professional for its front desk/reception area. Currently, the front line “workers” for individuals in crisis and/or those seeking confidential services at the RSVP Center are comprised of student volunteers. Ideally, the RSVP Center would be funded to hire a full- or near-full time staff available for this position to increase the professionalism of this position and help address student concerns about privacy and confidentiality, which were reported by a number of violence survivors as a reason for not accessing formal resources on campus for help.

C. Provide Adequate Resources to Better Staff the MU Social Justice Centers

It is clear that we must approach education, prevention and response efforts regarding SIPV from an intersectional lens. The survey data suggest that more attention should be placed on SIPV issues faced by students of color, particularly Hispanic and Native American/American Indian students, LGBTQ students, and students with disabilities. Thus, additional resources for the RSVP Center are not enough. Additional staff is needed for all the MU Social Justice Centers, such as the Multicultural Center, the LGBTQ Center, the Gaines Oldham Black Cultural Center, and the Women’s Center, to welcoming, supportive communities for all students that will provide a strong foundation when SIPV incidents occur. Currently, these centers only have one full-time employee each. With more staff these centers will be better able to offer assistance to students, engage in preventive outreach related to SIPV, and work with the RSVP Center and the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX as needed.

D. Continue to Rely on Campus Experts to Improve Responsive Services

The University should convert the Task Force to a Standing Chancellor’s Committee so it can continue to advise the RSVP Center and Office for Civil Rights & Title IX as well as key campus partners. One the next steps of the new committee will be to discuss this report with key stakeholders and develop concrete benchmarks for select recommendations to ensure progress toward their implementation. The new committee should also review the April 26, 2017, [AAU Campus Activities Report: Combating Sexual Assault and Misconduct](#), which was released last week, to ensure MU incorporates best practices implemented by other universities.

The Task Force also recommends that the University Sexual Assault Response Team [USART] continue as a separate entity that is available to discuss key cases and engage in troubleshooting and debriefing as necessary and appropriate. In particular, USART should evaluate how to better coordinate care among physicians and psychiatrists at Student Health, therapists and counselors at Behavioral Health Services and the Counseling Center, and the RSVP Center. Given student survivors' high rate of satisfaction with the RSVP Center, it may be helpful for the RSVP Center to be available as a supportive resource for Student Health, Behavioral Health and the Counseling Center when working with student survivors.

E. Assess the Services Offered by the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX

The newly created Office for Civil Rights & Title IX should assess the services it provides to students, staff and faculty—such as assistance for those who have experienced SIPV, investigations of reported SIPV, and accountability for those who perpetrate SIPV in our campus community—to identify areas for improvement. A Task Force subcommittee is creating an assessment instrument to help this new office better serve the community.

F. Commit to Continued Assessment Regarding Campus Climate

The University should conduct an SIPV climate survey at least every 4 years for all undergraduate, graduate and professional students, such as the AAU climate survey. It also should conduct a SIPV climate survey for faculty and staff that uses valid and reliable measures and behaviorally specific questions.

CONCLUSION

Sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation are societal problems that burden every college campus in America, but they are also MU problems. There is much to do on our campus to alter the culture and climate so that such violence is unimaginable.

To reduce the prevalence rates of SIPV at MU, everyone must actively do their part. Improving institutional practices and investing resources are merely first steps. Faculty, staff, alumni and advisors to student organizations must proactively seek education on these issues so that they can reinforce the expected climate and knowledgeably challenge biased attitudes that perpetuate a harmful culture. MU students also must lead the way in building and sustaining change. Ultimately, this is their campus and their home. Examples of action steps for students, faculty, and staff are included in Appendix C.

Appendix A: Task Force Members

Faculty

Tina Bloom
Jeni Hart
Joan Hermsen

Staff

Ellen Eardley
Mardy Eimers
Brittani Fults
Laura Hacquard
Elizabeth Laucshstaedt
Tara Warne-Griggs
Chris Walters
Danica Wolf
Taylor Yeagle

Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows

Oona Fontanella-Nothom
Abigail Rolbiecki
Tipparat Udmuangpia

Undergraduate Students

Mavis Coffman
Sophia Faiella
Chloe Green
Tori Schafer
Katie Williams

Community

Matthew Huffman, Missouri Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

Appendix B: Syllabus Statements

The following statements are example statements for use on your syllabus.

Example 1

University of Missouri policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, genetic information, disability and protected veteran status. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. Learn more about your rights and options at civilrights.missouri.edu or call 573-882-3880. You also may make an anonymous report online.

Students may also contact the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center, a confidential resource, for advocacy and other support related to rape or power-based personal violence at rsvp@missouri.edu or 573-882-6638, or go to rsvp.missouri.edu. Both the [Office for Civil Rights & Title IX](#) and the [RSVP Center](#) can provide assistance to students who need help with academics, housing, or other issues.

Example 2

In the event that you choose to write or speak about having survived sexualized violence, including rape, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking Mizzou policies require that, as your instructor, I share this information with Ellen Eardley, MU Title IX Administrator. Ellen or her trusted colleague will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at MU as well as options for holding accountable the person who harmed you. **You are not required to speak with them.**

If you do not want the Title IX Administrator notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus and in the community. They can connect you with support services and help explore your options now, or in the future.

- MU Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center: rsvp.missouri.edu - (573)882-6638
- MU Counseling Center: counseling.missouri.edu - (573)882-6601
- MU Behavioral Health: studenthealth.missouri.edu/services/mental.html - (573)882-1483
- True North (24/7 crisis center and shelter): truenorthofcolumbia.org - (800)548-2480

If you are a survivor or someone concerned about a survivor and need immediate information on what to do, please go to RSVP.missouri.edu/get-help.

Appendix C: Action Steps

For Staff and Administrators

- Invite the MU Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center and/or the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX to give a presentation to your staff.
- Participate in and encourage others to participate in Green Dot bystander intervention workshops, trainings and sessions that are offered by the RSVP Center. Learn more [here](#).
- If you are a supervisor, give your staff paid professional development time to participate in Green Dot or other SIPV-related programming.
- Require your team to complete the online “Not Anymore” program so that you are aware of the programming that we provide to students. Learn more [here](#).
- Inquire about becoming a member of the SIPV Task Force.
- If someone confides in you that they experienced SIPV, listen to them, believe them, and support them.
- If you are a manager or administrator, send regular high-profile messages to your college, school or division about the importance of ending SIPV and about campus resources.

For Faculty

- Invite the MU Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center and/or the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX to give a presentation to your department or division.
- Participate in and encourage others to participate in Green Dot bystander intervention workshops, trainings and sessions that are offered by the RSVP Center. Learn more [here](#).
- Host a facilitated discussion in your class about the online “Not Anymore” program so that students have an opportunity to talk about what they learned. Invite the RSVP Center or the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX to facilitate. Learn more [here](#).
- If someone confides in you that they experienced SIPV, listen to them, believe them, and support them.
- [Learn more](#) about required referral or mandatory reporting so that you are comfortable providing support if a student shares their story with you.
- Inquire about becoming a member of the SIPV Task Force.
- Include a message about reporting sexual violence on your [syllabus](#).

For Students

- Become a peer educator at the RSVP Center. Learn more [here](#).
- If you are in an organization, including a fraternity or sorority, challenge your organization to select one member each year to become an RSVP peer educator.
- Endorse social media campaigns aimed at ending violence & promote inclusion, such as [MU It's On Us](#).
- Make your own [It's On Us video](#) message and challenge other student organizations to do the same.
- Get involved with Green Dot. Participate in and encourage others to participate in Green Dot bystander intervention workshops, trainings and sessions that are offered by the RSVP Center. Learn more [here](#).
- Inquire about becoming a member of the SIPV Task Force.
- If someone confides in you that they experienced SIPV, listen to them, believe them, and support them.