

# UNIVERSITY *of* MISSOURI

## TITLE IX OFFICE

September 21, 2015

Dear MU Students, Staff, and Faculty:

Sexual assault happens at Mizzou.

It's on us to stop it.

To better understand the problem, last spring MU participated in the American Association of Universities (AAU) Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. Today the AAU will release a report describing the results for 27 colleges and universities across the country. A separate report describing MU's results is available [here](#).

Our survey participation and frank, transparent discussion of the results will allow MU to create a safer campus environment. Provost Garnett Stokes is creating a Sexual Violence Prevention and Campus Climate Task Force that will closely examine the report, hold focus groups, and make recommendations to improve ongoing education and prevention efforts. The task force will build upon the excellent work of the MU Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center.

Too many MU students have experienced nonconsensual sexual contact ranging from kissing to penetration. The report estimates that:

- 27.2% of female undergraduates, 12.4% of female graduate students, 5.9% of male undergraduates, and 3.1% of male graduate students have experienced completed or attempted nonconsensual sexual contact involving physical force or incapacitation since they entered MU.
- LGBTQ students experienced nonconsensual sexual contact at higher rates than heterosexual and cisgender students.
- Students with disabilities 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.

The report also indicates that far too many MU students experience stalking, intimate partner violence, and sexual harassment.

Enough is enough.

In the face of this violence, there is still reason to be hopeful. MU students want to change the culture. For example, a majority of Mizzou students took action when they believed a friend may have been sexually assaulted. We can build on this goodwill.

I challenge each of you to help transform campus culture to prevent sexual violence:

- Learn about active bystander intervention by participating in [Green Dot](#) events.
- Become a [peer educator](#) through the [Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention \(RSVP\) Center](#) or [SHAPE](#) (Sexual Health Advocate Peer Education).
- Get involved in [MSA's It's On Us](#) campaign.
- Host an event with the [Title IX Office](#) or the RSVP Center for your student group (check out the [menu](#) of programs offered by the RSVP Center).
- Complete the [Not Anymore](#) program and use the bystander intervention techniques that you learn in your everyday life.
- Remember that you have options for intervening: **Directly** stop the behavior. If you can't, it isn't safe, or you aren't comfortable, **delegate** the intervention to someone else—or create a **distraction** to diffuse the situation.

If you experience any kind of sex discrimination, you have rights, options, and [resources](#). The [Title IX Office](#) and the [RSVP Center](#) can assist you if you are struggling with classes, you want to change housing, or if you would like a no contact order. You are entitled to assistance even if you choose not to pursue a complaint against the accused. The RSVP Center is completely confidential. Both the Title IX Office and the RSVP Center will give **you** the choice of whether to contact the police.

For too long universities have remained silent about sexual assault. Not anymore. We recognize the problem, and we accept the challenge to work together to stop sexual violence at the University of Missouri.

Sincerely,  
Ellen Eardley  
Title IX Administrator and Assistant Vice Provost

**Learn More:** *MU's climate survey report and a link to the AAU report containing information about 27 colleges and universities will be posted on the [MU Title IX Office website](#).*