

## RESOURCE FOR ASSISTING STUDENT VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

### How to prepare before a student discloses an incident of sexual violence:

#### Understand why this is an issue on college campuses

Sexual assault, intimate partner violence and stalking are all too common in our society and college campuses, including Seton Hall, are no exception. While people of all genders survive and perpetrate this type of violence, women are being disproportionately victimized. This pervasive violence is interpreted as gender-based discrimination under Title IX, a federal law applicable to all colleges and universities who receive any federal funding.

#### How does this apply to my role?

Recent guidance from the federal government had directed that faculty and staff, with only few exceptions, are regarded as responsible employees and are mandated to report any information about sexual violence to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The exceptions are members of the priest community, staff in Counseling & Psychological Services, and staff in Health Services.

#### Who are the Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinators?

Toni Hindsman  
Title IX Coordinator  
973-275-2513

Karen Van Norman  
Associate Vice President and Dean of Students  
Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
973-761-9076

Tatum Colitz  
Sr Associate Athletics Director  
Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
973-761-9159

Anthony Turon  
Assistant Dean of Students  
Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
973-761-9076

#### Know the definition of sexual violence.

Sexual violence means physical sexual acts perpetrated against an individual without consent. Consent means fully conscious, voluntary acceptance and agreement. In other words, if threat, coercion, intoxication or violence is happening, consent does not exist.

#### Adopt a victim-centered approach.

When we provide survivors with information so that they can make informed choices about who they tell, and the support they receive, we increase the likelihood that survivors will come forward and report violence. With increased reporting, we have more opportunities for holding perpetrators responsible and for creating a safer campus community.

### Inform students of your role as a mandated reporter.

Do your best to ensure that the student knows that you are a mandated reporter before they disclose an incident that you must report.

*When necessary, interrupt* students to inform them of your role. You might say, "I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I want you to be informed about your choices regarding what you tell and to whom this information is reported. There are several issues where I am required to report what you tell me to the Dean of Students. I'm happy to talk with you and put you in touch with the Dean, but if you'd like to first explore options for support, accommodations and accountability with someone who can keep your information confidential, here's a list of numbers you can call" and provide contact information about CAPS, Health Services, or Campus Ministry to speak to a priest.

## What to do when a student discloses an incident of sexual violence

### Remember your role.

You are **not a counselor**, you are **not an investigator**, and you are **not called upon to name, analyze, or define** students' experiences.

**You are a bridge** to connect the student with the Dean of Students or Title IX Coordinator who will provide the survivor with options for reporting, support, accommodations and accountability. The Dean of Students can be reached after hours through Public Safety (973-761-9300); you do not have to disclose to Public Safety why you need to speak with the Dean. You may also provide the student with information about Essex County SAVE (Rape Care Center), available 24 hours at 877-733-2273.

### Keep the survivor's needs and feelings at the center of the process.

Do listen respectfully and believe the student. Very few people lie about sexual assault or rape. In fact, there is severe under-reporting of these crimes. Consider how difficult it is to recount, and by extension often re-live, trauma by talking about an experience of sexual violence. Your ability to listen and respond in nonjudgmental ways can help to change the culture of silence that exists around sexual violence. Victims may present in different ways and it is important to recognize that victims experience trauma in different ways and to be mindful of this when speaking to the student.

DO let the survivor know that you care, using a calm and compassionate tone.

DO say something like, "I'm so sorry that you have to go through this."

**Don't** overly express your own feelings about what happened to them.

**Don't** say, "It's outrageous that you've had to experience this!"

Remember: if we react with shock and outrage we may silence survivors. Survivors will often shift away from identifying and discussing their own needs to responding to our reaction. If met with an overly emotional response, survivors may feel like they have to take care of us.

DO acknowledge your non-verbal expressions, when appropriate: If a strong emotion flickers across your face as you listen, e.g., if you know that anger passed over your face, do acknowledge it.

DO say (in a calm voice) something like, "If you saw anger on my face, I just want you to know that I wasn't angry at you; I felt anger at the fact that someone would choose to harm you."

**Don't** define their experience for them.

**Don't** say, "Well, it sounds to me like you were raped!"

DO use the words the survivor uses to describe their experience. If they say rape, don't interrogate them about what they mean. If they say, "taken advantage of" or "violated" use those words, or other general terms such as "harm."

DO validate that what happened to them was not ok. Do say something like, "I am so sorry that person harmed you."

Remember: none of us have the magic words that will support survivors in all contexts. Even from the best of intentions we might say something hurtful. If you see that what you said caused the survivor to become upset, acknowledge this. You might say something like, "I think what I said that just made this harder for you."

### **Establish clear boundaries and be a bridge to forms of support.**

Offer forms of support that are appropriate for your role: Let the survivor know what you can realistically offer to support them. For instance, if you are a faculty member you can, if you choose, offer extensions on deadlines for course work. Or you can refer them to the Dean of Students to explore options of late withdrawal from your class if the violence is impairing their ability to pass your class. If you are a supervisor of a student employee, let them know if there are options for taking time off and/or rearranging their work schedule.

For support that is needed beyond your role, serve as a bridge to campus and community support and resources.

**Don't** say: "I'll be there for you in whatever way you need."

DO say: "We have campus and community resources to help support you. Here's a resource sheet with numbers." (See below)

**Don't** say: "I'll show up at the court case."

DO say: "If you would like to have someone with you at the court case, the Dean of Students will be able to tell you the options for advocates who can go with you."

**Don't** say: "I'll make sure justice will be served."

DO say: "The Dean of Students will help to make sure you are connected with the people who can assist you throughout the process."

## How to Fulfill Your Responsibilities after a Student Discloses

### Contact the Dean of Students/Deputy Title IX Coordinator

If the student is willing, call the Dean while the student is present and help to coordinate a meeting. If the student is not willing to speak to the Dean, you are still required to contact the Dean and report what the student disclosed.

The Dean will contact the student to discuss options for support, accommodations, and accountability. The focus is on immediate safety and meeting the needs of the student.

### Keep the student's information private.

If the topic of a student survivor's performance as an employee or success in the major comes up in department meetings, provide the minimum information you can in order to support the student.

Don't say: Since they were raped they have been struggling in my class.

Do say: They are in the midst of a significant crisis.

If you need to talk about the impact on you of hearing about this student's trauma, please call the Dean of Students of CAPS for support, rather than speaking to colleagues.

### Following up with the student.

Allow the student to be a student – treat them as you would any other student. If they bring up the incident, listen with empathy and encourage them to use available resources. Continue to remember your role – you are not a counselor, not an investigator, but you are a valuable link to connect the student to support.

## Resources for Help

### On Campus

Public Safety and Security (973)761-9300  
Office of the Dean of Students (973) 761-9076  
Campus Ministry (973) 761-9545  
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (973) 761-9500  
Health Services (973) 761-9175

### Off Campus

South Orange Police Department (973) 763-3000  
Babyland Family Violence Program (973) 399-3400  
Essex County Rape Care Center 1-877-733-2273  
The Safe House (973) 759-2154  
Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network (RAINN) [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

### Local Hospital offering Sexual Assault Exams

Newark Beth Israel Medical Center  
201 Lyons Avenue Newark, NJ 1  
(800) 843-2384

## Reporting Options

### On-Campus Private

Toni Hindsman, Title IX Coordinator (973) 313-6132  
Karen Van Norman, Deputy Title IX Coordinator (973) 761-9076  
Anthony Turon, Deputy Title IX Coordinator (973) 761-9076  
Tatum Colitz, Deputy Title IX Coordinator (973) 761-9159  
Public Safety & Security (973)761-9300

### On-Campus Confidential

Campus Ministry (973) 761-9545  
  
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (973) 761-9500  
  
Health Services (973) 761-9175

## 24 Hour Resources

### On-Campus

Reach the Dean of Students Public Safety (973) 761-9300  
CAPS (973) 761-9500

### Off-Campus

South Orange Police Department - (973)763-3000  
Essex County Rape Care Center 1-877-733-2273