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## Our Commitment to a Campus Culture of Safety and Respect

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# Our Commitment to a Campus Culture of Safety and Respect

Dear Colleagues,

Western Michigan University is committed to creating and fostering a working and learning environment where all members of our community can thrive. We strive to be a campus where tolerance and compassion guide our daily interactions with one another. To that end, we want to make sure you are aware of information and resources to help us build and maintain a community free from incivility, discrimination and violence.

We have all watched in distress and dismay over the past few months as the victims of sexual assault across the country have finally been heard. Their expressions of anguish and anger have been powerful. Perhaps you wondered as well what we can do to prevent such a tragedy from ever happening here.

We, as the leaders of the university and its designated shared governance entities are determined to work together to affirm our commitment to campus safety and continue to build a culture that embraces respect for all. We want to ensure an appropriate response is made whenever behavior is reported that falls outside the standards we have set for our campus.

## OUR RECENT HISTORY SETS THE STAGE

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Fortunately, hard work done by many on our campus in recent years has put us in the position to make additional adjustments and be even more proactive in our approach to keeping our students safe. Over the past three years, we have:

- Completed an initial student sexual misconduct climate survey and are now concluding a follow-up survey to measure awareness and progress.
- Familiarized all incoming first-year students with reporting procedures and campus resources.
- Received two major state grants to train more than 3,000 HEROES advocates in bystander intervention techniques.
- Developed and implemented a proactive new policy on sexual misconduct.
- Appointed and trained a coordinator dedicated to Title IX issues to work with individuals and departments to ensure students are informed and protected.
- Developed and widely distributed student and employee resource materials outlining campus resources.
- Provided both online training courses and in-person classes to ensure responsible employees are fully informed about campus reporting procedures.

It is vitally important that each of us knows and understands what state and federal law requires of us. It is just as important that each of us understands our own university's policies, procedures and processes in order to respond appropriately and consistently to the needs of our students and

each other. Our online training courses have just been updated and strengthened to reflect Western's policies, procedures and resources and to give you the tools you need to be an effective advocate should the need arise.

The interactive training courses are provided to remind employees of our obligation to prevent and address sexual harassment and bullying in the educational environment and workplace. We are unequivocally restating that Western Michigan University does not tolerate misconduct or behavior that violates the law or university policy.

Western Michigan University is committed to building and preserving a community in which all of its members can work together without fear of exploitation, intimidation or harassment of any kind. We believe that education and awareness are effective ways to ensure a respectful environment free from harassment and discrimination.

Tomorrow you will receive a communication from Human Resources with information about instructions for accessing and completing the new interactive training courses. We strongly encourage all employees who have not completed the training during the 2017-18 academic year to complete the following new courses developed for WMU by the educational technology company EverFi:

- Bullying in the workplace prevention
- Harassment and discrimination prevention for supervisors and non-supervisors
- Workplace violence prevention

Each of us, the signatories of this message, pledges to lead by example, and we will complete the EverFi online training courses. We strongly urge all faculty and staff members to complete training as well. Our goal of 100 percent participation has been set to communicate the emphasis we place on a safe campus community. We can achieve that goal if chairs, directors and supervisors complete the training then encourage and assist unit members to do the same.

Finally, please remember that you can report incidents of sexual misconduct and harassment to our Title IX Coordinator, Felicia Crawford, in the Office of Institutional Equity at [felicia.crawford@wmich.edu](mailto:felicia.crawford@wmich.edu) or (269) 387-6316. Any criminal activity should be reported to our Department of Public Safety at (269) 387-5555.

Anyone can make a report online at [wmich.edu/sexualmisconduct/report](http://wmich.edu/sexualmisconduct/report). The latter option allows anonymous reporting if desired. Thank you for your commitment and your willingness to keep our campus strong and safe. Thank you for investing the time to become informed about these important issues and for your shared commitment to making our community one in which everyone can thrive.

Best regards,

Edward Montgomery  
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Western Michigan University

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