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## Climbing into the Ivory Tower: A Look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus

Tasha Nichole Turner

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CLIMBING INTO THE IVORY TOWER: A Look at Administrative  
Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus

by

Tasha N. Turner

A Thesis submitted to the Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
Department of Sociology  
Western Michigan University  
April 2013

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# CLIMBING INTO THE IVORY TOWER: A Look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus

Tasha N. Turner, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 2013

This study examines the attitudes of administrators about sexual violence on campus, as well as their knowledge of disciplinary policies and procedures to prevent and redress rape and sexual assault on campuses. This study begins the discussion about how administrators understand their current policies as well as the attitudes that may affect their understandings. I use Thematic Analysis to analyze responses to a series of open-ended questions surveying participants on their attitudes towards their universities policy and procedures for handling sexual assault. Findings suggest that the participants have overwhelming confidence in the established policies, the extent of their knowledge of the policy is minimal and the education they receive from the university is lesser still.

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### Acknowledgements- continued

need to hide in the shadows. Your experiences are real and therefore so should be the pursuit of justice on your behalf.

Tasha N. Turner

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## INTRODUCTION

College campuses often see their students probed for their opinions, beliefs and experiences in all areas of rape research. Much of the literature has been focused on how students define rape, how they attribute responsibility, and why students, in particular males, victimize their fellow students. Through countless surveys and interviews there has been an attempt to determine the factors associated with the commission of rape and more specifically date rape. The famous study by Warshaw (1984) revealed a staggering number of college women who were survivors of rape (about 1 in 4) and also that a large number of those attacks were perpetrated by people they know. Warshaw found rape myth acceptance by not only those involved in the rape but also by officials representing the judicial bodies at colleges and universities. Rape myths have been defined as “attitudes and beliefs that are generally false, but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women” (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994 as cited in Edwards et. al 2011 p. 762). Acceptance of these myths impacts how a person perceives victims and perpetrators and results in negative consequences such as refuting the occurrence of the assault or belittling the victims experience (Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010). There have been numerous follow-up studies on students and others who may be vulnerable to rape victimization or who may be likely to offend. In more recent studies, such as that conducted by Fisher et. al (2000), researchers have continued to find similar rates of victimization to those of the Warshaw study. Literature and theories concerning rape culture on college campuses continue to

grow however; this expansion is toward one direction: the student perspective. This is the same direction it has consistently grown over the past 20 plus years. There are areas that research has yet to fully explore making for an incomplete picture of not only the problem of sexual assault on campus, but also practical solutions.

University administrators are faced with growing concern about the safety of their campuses and the federal government has handed down mandates to force colleges and universities to be more transparent about the amount of crime that takes place on their campuses. Colleges and university administrators must be more forthcoming about their practices for handling crimes on campus as a great deal of attention is focused on practices addressing sexual assault prevention and reporting. The research has focused on student reactions to university policies with little attention being given to university officials responsible for enforcing them. For example, research has suggested that continuous education is essential to both prevention and understanding of services by students. There has been little discussion about the need for continuing education among campus administrators.

This study examines the attitudes of administrators about sexual violence on campus, as well as their knowledge of disciplinary policies and procedures to prevent and redress rape and sexual assault on campuses. This study begins the discussion about how administrators understand their current policies as well as the attitudes that may affect their understandings. Existent literature suggests that there is a lack of education at the administrative level which could lead to two problems: high levels of rape myth

acceptance (RMA) and a lack of understanding of university policy on sexual assault. RMA and lack of knowledge about policy requirements may therefore lead to administrators and staff who are ill-informed and ill-equipped in how to help prevent rape or help survivors of sexual assault. If this is the case, changes made on paper would have little to no effect on the actual handling of sexual assault reports on campus and thus be ineffective in creating safer learning and living communities.

I explore administrative and staff perceptions and practices regarding rape policies at a large public university. Participants were asked a series of questions aimed at gauging their level of understanding of their university's policy and procedures relating to sexual assault, their comfort in utilizing said procedures as well as a small assessment of some of the most commonly accepted rape myths. I discuss if the answers were simply employees giving the party line or could there be an actual absence of RMA. The results revealed little in the way of RMA but find that there may be a general lack of knowledge at the administrative level about the policy they are charged with enforcing.

I begin this study by providing an overview of the current literature. I focus on the prevalence of rape on the college campus and the reactions by government and college officials to the problem.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In recent studies, researchers have sought to determine the prevalence of sexual victimization experiences during a woman's collegiate career. Fisher, Cullen & Turner (2000) found that 1 in 36 college women would be the victim of an attempted or

completed rape over the course of an academic year. When expanded to cover an academic career, approximately 5 years, this translates to 1 in 5 women experiencing rape while a student (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005). Victims and perpetrators of sexual assault are likely to know one another prior to the assault. Baum and Klaus found that “rape/sexual assault was the only violent crime against students more likely to be committed by a person the victim knew (as cited in Carr, 2007, p. 307)”. In cases of attempted and completed rapes 9 of 10 offenders were known to their victim (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000) and “the more intimate the relationship [between victim and assailant] the more likely it is for a rape to be completed rather than attempted” (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005, p. 2). Approximately 60% of sexual victimizations that occurred on campus took place in the victims’ residence and 31% occurs in some other residence on campus. Sexual assaults that occurred off-campus were also more likely to have happened at a residence (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). The majority of rapes take place after 6 p.m.: 51.8% completed rapes occurred after midnight, and 36.5% occurred between 6 p.m. and midnight. In contrast, only 11.8% occurred between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). It should be noted that less than half of the almost 2,500 schools in the study by Karjane et al. provide services after hours when rapes are most likely to occur (2005).

As a result of research about campus rape, the federal government has introduced several key policies to address crime and violence on college campuses. The most well-known of these actions is the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and

Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 (Clery Act) as well as Title IX of the Educational Amendments to the Civil Rights Act of 2004 (Title IX).

The Clery Act details the responsibility of college and university officials to keep public record of crime statistics. These records should include any form of misconduct that occurs on or in the immediate area of their campuses and make this information available to their student body, prospective students and employees. University policies regarding the reporting of crimes and the resources available for victims are to be made clear and accessible. In the case of sexual offenses, administrators are required to develop a statement that describes (1) the policy regarding sexual offenses; (2) procedures followed when an offense is reported that includes the possible disciplinary actions and sanctions ; (3) the rights of the accuser and accused throughout the process; and (4) resources available on and off campus for the victim. Failure to comply with the Clery Act can result in an institution facing loss of federal financial aid funding as well as hefty fines (Clery Act; Reardon, 2005).

Title IX, which prohibits discrimination based on sex, is most often discussed in terms of sexual harassment. However Reardon (2005) points out that an act of sexual assault is actually a severe instance of sexual harassment.

Though this may not be an intuitive correlation for some, sexual assault must be understood as a severe act of sexual harassment. The aftermath of an assault, including ongoing threats, and the effects that the assault has on social and academic life, constitutes a hostile environment type of sexual harassment. Furthermore, in the Department of Education's regulations, it has recognizes that

sexual assault is a single act of sexual harassment so severe as to fit into the legal definition of sexual harassment at educational institutions (p. 401).

A lack of response by an educational institution to an incident of sexual assault constitutes a failure to correct a hostile environment and promotes the discrimination against the victim, direct violations of Title IX.

Increased attention to sexual violence on campus as indicated in the scholarly literature and by government policy has not produced significant change for addressing sexual violence. Underreporting and a general lack of reliable data surrounding sexual assault still remain the largest challenges facing those trying to find viable solutions to the problem. Sexual assault continues to be the most underreported violent crime against students with most rapists never being apprehended or disciplined (Carr, 2007). Fisher et al. (2000) note that fewer than 5% of sexual assaults, attempted and completed, are reported to law enforcement. Students are exposed to increased long term danger as many perpetrators are repeat offenders who continue to go undetected. Therefore “schools that choose to overlook reports or fail to provide meaningful remedies and sanctions are susceptible to a hefty risk that these same offenders will victimize other students” (Reardon, 2005, p. 398).

### *Theory*

The theoretical framework for this project is steeped in the classic work of Susan Brownmiller. Her book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (1975) has been the basis for much of the existing rape theory. Brownmiller (1975) presents rape as an act of

power rather than sex that serves to control women through fear. She states, “It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear” (1975, p. 15). The fear generated by the threat of rape serves to keep women in a place of subordination to men so that while not all men rape “all men benefit from the socially prescribed roles and limitations that women experience as a result of their fear” (Ottens & Hotelling, 2001, p. 83).

Also central to this study is the role of the patriarchal system. Within the patriarchal system both the male and female participants accept and act according to the established male view that women are to remain subordinate to men. In an effort to keep women in their place they are threatened with violence. To avoid violence women must restrict their movements and remain within the confines of the prescribed gender role (Ottens & Hotelling, 2001). A Cahill (2000) discusses this further in her discussions of the paradox of the feminine body produced by patriarchy. “It appears that the feminine body is not only essentially weak, but it somehow creates its own vulnerability...If, then, that body is hurt or violated, then the blame must rest on the woman’s failure to sufficiently limit its movements” (pg. 52-3). Due to the necessity of self-regularity in order to protect themselves, women are often faced with not only limits on the types of bodily movements they can make (for fear of attracting danger) but also with temporal and geographical limits their male counterparts are not burdened with. Should a woman choose to step outside of her safe-zone, she is opening up her femininity to attack and it is she, rather than the male attacker, who is blameworthy.



In the context of sexual assault, women who are raped have failed to restrict their bodies sufficiently enough to prevent harm and danger. Mardorossian (2002) gives the example that while “forgetting to set the antiburglary alarm or getting robbed...does not exculpate the thieves, getting raped always elicits an investigation into ways in which a victim might ultimately have been responsible for what happened” (p. 756). The female’s sexuality, which by simply existing, incites the males who are unable to resist and are therefore driven to violence (Cahill, 2000, p. 56). This construction of femininity and female sexuality “supports a status quo which assumes that the victim is morally responsible for the behavior of the assailant, at least until she can be proven sexually prudent or innocent” (ibid).

#### *Trivialization of Rape on Campus*

The reasons for victims silence remain varied. Studies cite shame, lack of *provable* injury, fear of retaliation from perpetrator, anticipation of not being believed, fear of discipline from university (usually as it relates to alcohol and/or substance use by the victim) and simply not recognizing the event as rape (attempted or completed) as being some of the main reasons for individuals choosing not to report these crimes (Carr, 2007; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005; Reardon, 2004). While the reasons cited, and others like them, vary across studies it could be argued that they are all rooted in fears spawned by the one-sided nature of polices, educational resources and procedures set forth by colleges and universities. Much of said polices, procedures etc. focus on individuals preventing their own victimization. Programming

efforts that focus solely on women and how they should avoid being assaulted send a distinct message that women are responsible for preventing assault on themselves (Ottens & Hotelling, 2001).

Many of the policies regarding sexual harassment in any institution echo that of sexual assault and the idea of the victim needing to properly prevent their own victimization. Individuals are urged to “say no”, go through the proper channels to seek assistance and otherwise seek a remedy following the event (Grauerholz et al, 1999). This process continues the notion that sexual violence of any kind is preventable and presents the victim with a feeling of being at fault for an attack and therefore make it less likely they will report the crime. Bogal-Allbritten and Allbritten discuss their previous findings that campus officials are aware of the sexual violence on their campuses however they “grossly underestimate the number of such incidents” (1992, p. 20). DeKeseredy and Schwartz contend that many campus administrators trivialize cases of woman abuse (2000). It is crucial that research begins to gauge the levels of rape myth acceptance and the ideologies that occur among administrators to determine if the education on sexual assault needs to go beyond its typical focus on students and permeate to a much high level.

### *Rape Myth Acceptance*

The act of or willingness to participate in victim blaming (where the person who has been sexually assaulted is held responsible for this trespass against their person) is a

commonly researched rape myth. This myth is often discussed in terms of patriarchal establishments discussed in the theory section above.

In the context of sexual assault on campus the idea becomes that the administration is not responsible for women who “ask for it”, are promiscuous, or engage in other “risky” behavior, because rape myths tell them that these women are to blame for being assaulted due to not preventing their own victimization (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycz, 2011). The educational efforts at colleges and universities reflect this idea that women should be more vigilant in their efforts to avoid being raped. The problematic nature of this approach to rape reform is addressed by Mardorossian (2002):

Grounding rape prevention in the reinvention of the female self implies that the fight against sexual violence depends on and has to be preceded by the individualized questioning of normalized female subjectivity. Such critical hermeneutics of the self will not only fail to diffuse male violence, but it will also corroborate the metaleptic cultural narrative of victims as the source of their own problems. (Mardorossian, 2002, p. 758).

Essentially, according to Mardorossian, current efforts to end sexual violence require females to recognize their role in the assault. Taking such an approach does not diffuse or deter men from assaulting but rather maintains the existing concept that a woman’s body can be invaded at any time should she fail to sufficiently protect it and that such an invasion is no one’s fault but her own.

In way of the prevalence of RMA, research has suggested that males typically demonstrate higher levels of rape myth acceptance (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds,

& Gidycz, 2011) and use these misguided beliefs to justify their (men's) assaultive behavior (Ottens & Hotelling, 2001). A majority of RMA research has been conducted using student populations; however, studies have found similar levels of RMA (about 25-35% agreeing with a majority of myths and 66% agreeing with some combination of myths) in non-student populations (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycz, 2011). Across universities in the United States, men are more likely to be in the positions of power, from the president to the supervisor of the health clinic. Policies and procedures are heavily affected by a population that already may be non-conducive to creating effective educational policy addressing sexual violence as well as services for victims of rape. Consequently policies regarding the handling of sexual assault may be more lax and less swift in dealing with these serious violent offenses.

#### *Confusion and Lack of Clarity*

Researchers have found that another contributing factor to the lack of credible data regarding campus sexual assault is that not all campuses are compliant with the legal regulations set forth in statutes such as the Clery Act. Karjane et al. found that while most schools submit the annual crime report as required "schools find it difficult to consistently interpret and apply the Federal reporting requirements (p.3)" as it relates to definitions and ultimately what they should report. As a result only 37% of schools in the study reported statistics as required by the Clery Act (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005).

There is also a large amount of variance in the transparency of written policies, procedures and sanctions at any given campus. Many schools do not have a clear sexual

assault response policy and those that do (usually larger 4-year institutions and historically black colleges and universities) vary in their “clarity and thoroughness” (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005, p. 11). Those more likely to use policies, such as first responders, law enforcement/security, residence hall staff or faculty should have extensive training on the current university policy. Only about 50% of schools train employees (faculty and staff) on the university policies and procedures, and less than 40% train campus security even though they are the most likely to receive these complaints (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005).

### *The Resulting Problem*

Universities effectively replicate and create their own versions of due process by primarily handling student cases of sexual assault on campus. University offices responsible for fielding complaints, directing students and effectively enforcing the regulations must be intimately familiar with the university policy. Administrators must have knowledge of procedures, acknowledge that rape happens on their campuses, and that sexual violence is a problem. Acknowledgement of the issue must then be followed by an understanding of the significance of these incidents. Definitions and repercussions for such actions should be made clear and services for victims readily available (Bohmer & Parrot, 1993). “The response to this issue will be based on university personnel’s perceptions of its significance” (Bogal-Allbritten & Allbritten, 1992). Logically the most significant events should receive the most attention and resources. While the issue of sexual violence has received a great deal of attention and recognized as a significant

problem, the amount of resources available to address rape at institutions still vary widely (Bogal-Allbritten & Allbritten, 1992). Colleges and university officials struggle with the need to admit that their campus has high levels of sexual assault and the ultimate goal of recruiting new students and families to their institutions (Carr, 2007). Parrot and Bohmer write “As long as sexual assault and other criminal activity are handled entirely on campus, they are less likely to become public knowledge and to put off prospective students and their parents” (1993, p. 120). Parents of prospective students are not likely to send their student to a school they perceive to be unsafe. Therefore it remains in the best interest of schools and universities leaders to report lower numbers of sexual assaults and crimes in general.

A dearth of attention has been paid to the attitudes of administrators who are in positions of power over education, policy making and discipline on college campuses. Their views on the effectiveness of policies regarding the handling of reported as well as unreported rape on campus have been mentioned merely as an aside to many studies. Studies of education efforts that have been implemented at virtually all institutions of higher learning show these efforts span across the spectrum from minimal to intensive. However there are still many differences in how administrators choose to address the myriad of issues surrounding occurrences of sexual assault on their campus in spite of education and prevention programming.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The survey developed for this study incorporated a number of open and close-ended questions in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- i. Do administrators in the offices listed as resources for students seeking education or assistance with a sexual assault exhibit high level of RMA?
- ii. How comfortable are these individuals with speaking to students who may come to them with complaints of sexual assault?
- iii. How well do administrators know the university policy in relation to sexual assault?
- iv. Based on their understanding of the policy, what is the overall opinion of the current policy held by university officials?

The close-ended questions probed for quantifiable data regarding basic demographics, agreement with statements about sexual assault and common rape myths (for an excerpt, see table 1) and comfort measures related to the handling of student reports of sexual assault.

The open-ended questions featured in the survey sought to gauge the extent of knowledge employees in these offices had of the current university policy. I used the definition of sexual misconduct given by the university:

Any form of sexual activity or sexual contact, including sexual harassment which is unwanted, that occurs as a result of intimidation, threat of force, use of force, or other coercive behavior or occurs without consent. Examples include but are not limited to circumstances where consent is expressed but ruled invalid due to coercion; and/or, circumstances where consent is expressed but ruled invalid due to incapacitation and/or physical helplessness (Definitions of Conduct Violation).

For the full list of questions and survey instrument as a whole refer to Appendix A.

Table 1

*Measured Perceptions of Sexual Assault and Rape Myths*

- 
- a. Most instances of sexual assault can be avoided
  - b. A woman who changes her mind after initial consensual sexual contact cannot be raped
  - c. Women on college campuses fear being sexually assaulted
  - d. Sexual assault almost always happens between strangers
  - e. If an individual does not try to physically fight back s/he was no sexually assaulted
  - f. Men are unable to control their sexual urges once aroused
  - g. If an individual becomes intoxicated they are at fault if s/he has unwanted sex
  - h. Most women come around to enjoying forced sex
  - i. To avoid being raped on a college campus women should not travel alone at night
  - j. If a woman dresses in a sexy way she should not complain about unwanted sexual attention
  - k. Most women secretly enjoy forced sex
  - l. Rape is about sexual gratification
  - m. Men cannot be raped
  - n. Real rape victims show signs of physical trauma/injury
  - o. Students think it is ok for males to physically pressure females into sex
  - p. The college culture excuses male students for sexually assaulting female students
  - q. Rapists are usually from lower working-classes
  - r. Women often make false reports of rape
- 

*The Sample*

In the university setting the handling of student issues is often compartmentalized in a way that allows specific offices and departments to focus on particular issues and provide relevant resources for students. In this study I examined employees in offices of campus public safety, the campus health center, student affairs, office of student conduct and residence life. Each of these offices is identified by the university website to be



resources for students who have either been sexually assaulted or are looking for educational information.

The university also provided a list of off-campus resources students could use however this study chose to keep the focus on campus. While these resources should, at some point, continue to be evaluated doing so at this time would be outside the scope of this study.

The target participants for the current project were individuals who worked full-time in one of the above offices. The purpose of requiring full-time employment was to eliminate the possibility of any student workers (undergraduate and graduate level) from participating as the student perspective was not being measured. Also, by targeting full-time employees the study was more likely to gain responses from individuals with more intimate knowledge of the university than a part-time employee who may not have as extensive knowledge about the university and its students.

Using the university directory a list of possible participants who met the discussed criteria was created. The population identified only contained 71 eligible university employees and it was decided to invite each of these individuals to participate in the study rather than to take a random sample.

A package was addressed to each eligible participant that contained one paper survey, one anonymous consent document, and one self-addressed campus envelope to return the completed survey. I decided to provide participants with a paper survey rather than an online survey for security purposes. Due to the sensitive topic matter employees may not feel comfortable completing such a survey on their computer for fear that their

responses could be traced back to their machine. Also, some of the most popular online survey tools have experienced security breaches and I would not be able to guarantee total security of submitted responses. I decided that a paper survey that could be returned and in no way be traced back to the sender presented the smallest security concerns and would encourage the greater number of responses. The consent document contained a detailed description of the study including the purpose and how the data would be handled and how to return their completed survey (Appendix B). By returning the survey participants understood they were giving their consent for their data to be used.

Participants were not asked to return the consent document, eliminating the chances for their consent to be connected to their returned survey. The envelope provided to return their completed form was brand new with only the return campus address of the researcher indicated on the face. This precaution was taken so that participants could not be identified using an envelope that was previously addressed to them and subsequently returned to the researcher. After the initial mailing, a reminder email directing them to the material in the package was sent to all potential participants. Participants were given ten business days to complete and return the survey to the indicated campus mailbox.

### *Data Analysis*

My original design aimed to utilize mixed-methodology and therefore incorporate a balanced qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data. Of the 71 mailed surveys, only 17 were returned completed with useable data. I suspect that the timing of the survey distribution may have played a part in the number of completed surveys: the packages were mailed to potential participants near the end of the spring semester and during this

time the administrators may have been occupied with end of semester business that was given higher priority.

Advanced statistical methods were not used due to the small number of participants and homogeneity of responses to the multiple choice questions. My quantitative analysis was limited to basic frequency distributions and measures of central tendency for ordinal and interval data. Conducting more extensive tests would provide both invalid and unreliable results. The bulk of the data analysis was conducted using qualitative techniques.

I utilized thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thematic analysis was chosen specifically due to the exploratory nature of this study and the necessity to utilize a technique that did not force the data to fit into predetermined theory that may not be applicable to this new arena of sexual assault research. Themes and patterns are discerned from the data rather than predetermined prior to looking at the data which is often the case in other forms of content analysis. For the purposes of this project this was necessary to avoid for a two key reasons. The first is purely based on the newness of this specific research area. As previously discussed, there is little research published specifically measuring administrative perspectives towards sexual assault or how attitudes towards sexual assault may be shaping policy. Secondly, the small number of participants in this project calls for an analysis that does not attempt to over generalize and develop theory without more extensive research utilizing a larger sample size.

To conduct the analysis I examined the data in 6 phases adopted from Braun and Clarke (2006). To familiarize myself with the data I began with an initial reading of all

surveys. After this point, I transcribed all of the responses into two data sets. The first set contained all of the responses to close-ended questions and the second contained all of the responses to the open-ended questions. To generate the initial codes I used my research questions to break the survey into four parts. I then re-read each subsection to search for initial themes. After developing the initial themes I named them and merged any themes that were related. I continued this process until I refined the themes and all responses were accounted for. From this point a report of the responses was created and used to write the results.

Table 2

*Phases of Analysis*

- 
1. Become familiar with data
  2. Generate initial codes
  3. Search for themes
  4. Review themes
  5. Define and name themes
  6. Produce report
- 

## RESULTS

Initially basic statistical testing, including chi-square tests for independence, was to be used to assess the responses to the quantitative questions. As previously noted this was not done due to the very small sample size as well as the homogeneity of the responses.

### *Demographics of Respondents*

A total of 71 surveys were mailed to the target population and of that 20 surveys were returned: 17 contained usable data (3 were returned blank), 14 participants were female, 2 male and 1 self-identified transgender individual. The age of respondents

ranged from 30-59 years old with a mode of 50-59 years old. Marital status had responses in all categories with a mode of *married*. All of the respondents were full-time employees ranging in time of employment at the university from 1 year to more than 20 years. The mode of employment length was the 1-5 years. The employees had varied educational background with all participants having at least some college and four having obtained doctoral degrees. The employment type in respondents varied as well. There were three individuals in administrative upper management positions, three in administrative lower management positions, four clerical employees, one counselor, and four campus police employees. One participant chose not to identify their type of employment and one did not understand which category they fit in and therefore selected *other* and subsequently identified their position as a “program coordinator”.

Table 3  
*Demographic Breakdown of Survey Respondents*

<b>Demographic</b>		<b>n</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	2
	<i>Female</i>	14
	<i>Transgender</i>	1
<b>Marital Status</b>	<i>Single (never married)</i>	6
	<i>In a committed relationship</i>	0
	<i>Married</i>	7
	<i>Divorced</i>	3
	<i>Other</i>	1
<b>Age group</b>	<i>20-29</i>	0
	<i>30-39</i>	4
	<i>40-49</i>	5
	<i>50-59</i>	8
	<i>60+</i>	0

Table 3-Continued		
<b>Demographic</b>		<b>n</b>
<b>Length of employment</b>	<i>&lt;1 year</i>	0
	<i>1-5 years</i>	7
	<i>6-10 years</i>	1
	<i>11-15 years</i>	3
	<i>16-20 years</i>	2
	<i>&gt;20 years</i>	4
<b>Highest level of education</b>	<i>Less than high school diploma</i>	0
	<i>High school diploma</i>	0
	<i>Some college, less than bachelor's degree</i>	7
	<i>Bachelor's degree</i>	2
	<i>Some graduate level work</i>	1
	<i>Master's degree</i>	3
	<i>Doctoral degree</i>	4
<b>Position type</b>	<i>Administrative, upper management</i>	3
	<i>Administrative, lower management</i>	3
	<i>Clerical</i>	4
	<i>Medical</i>	0
	<i>Counseling</i>	1
	<i>Campus Police</i>	4
	<i>Other</i>	1
<b>Full or Part-time</b>	<i>Full time</i>	17
	<i>Part-time</i>	0

*Rape Myth Acceptance Among Employees*

Table 4  
*Frequency Table of Measured Perceptions of Sexual Assault and Common Rape Myths*

Perception	Level of Agreement					
	1 Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly Agree	e No response
Most instances of sexual assault can be avoided	0	5	9	2	0	1
A woman who changes her mind after initial consensual sexual contact cannot be raped	11	4	0	0	1	1
Women on college campuses fear being sexually assaulted	1	3	5	7	0	1
Sexual Assault almost always happens between strangers	10	7	0	0	0	0
If an individual does not try to physically fight back s/he was not sexually assaulted	16	1	0	0	0	0
Men are unable to control their sexual urges once aroused	14	3	0	0	0	0
If an individual becomes intoxicated they are at fault if s/he has unwanted sex	13	1	0	1	0	0
Most women come around to enjoying forced sex	16	0	0	0	0	1
To avoid being raped on a college campus women should not travel alone at night	4	3	2	6	1	1
If a woman dresses in a sexy way she should not complain about unwanted sexual attention	9	8	0	0	0	0
Most women secretly enjoy forced sex	17	0	0	0	0	0
Rape is about sexual gratification	14	0	2	0	0	1
Men cannot be raped	16	0	0	0	0	1
Real rape victims show signs of physical trauma/injury	11	2	2	2	0	0
Students think it is ok for males to physically pressure females into sex	9	2	5	0	0	1
The college culture excuses male students for sexually assaulting female students	8	5	3	0	0	1
Rapists are usually from lower working-classes	14	2	0	0	0	1
Women often make false reports of rape	5	8	3	0	0	1

Table 4 shows the breakdown of responses to questions assessing the participants' perceptions of sexual assault as they relate to common rape myths. What is demonstrated

is a consistency in the responses that rejects a majority of the commonly discussed rape myths as true. There is a break with this consistency seen in the two items relating to the idea of avoiding being raped. The first is the statement “Most instances of rape can be avoided”. Five of the 17 expressed disagreement with this statement while two agreed and nine chose to be in the middle of the scale indicating neither agreement nor disagreement. The second statement “To avoid being raped on a college campus women should not travel alone at night” received mixed responses with 7 participants showing high levels of agreement with this statement. The largely homogenous responses rejecting a majority of these myths could be an indication of either: a.) respondents giving the socially acceptable responses they have learned to give or b.) administrators at this institution have expressed their true beliefs and have low levels of RMA.

### *Comfort Measures*

Participants were asked a series of questions specifically addressing the reporting process of the university and their comfort level with assisting students at the university who may be seeking education or reporting a sexual assault. At the university where the study took place, it is required or strongly recommended that staff and faculty report incidents of sexual assault to their immediate supervisor such as a department chair or director.

As seen in table 5, 13 participants indicated they are required to inform a supervisor any reports of sexual assault. Eight participants were in a supervisory position where others would be reporting to them. It would appear that individuals in middle-



Table 5

*Reporting Sexual Assault*

<b>Required to report student reports of sexual assault to supervisor</b>		<b>n</b>
Yes, it is mandatory		13
No, it is optional to report student reports of sexual assault to a supervisor		1
No, I do NOT report student reports of sexual assault to a supervisor		1
No response		2
<b>Others are required to reports student reports of sexual assault to you</b>		
Yes, it is mandatory		8
No, it is optional to report student reports of sexual assault to me		4
No, I am not a supervisor		5
No response		0
<b>Your current position should be required to report student reports of sexual assault to an official body</b>		
Yes		11
No		3
Not applicable/I am the official body		3
No response		0

management would be responsible for receiving a report from a supervisee and reporting to an individual at a higher supervisory level. Four indicated it was optional for others to report to them. Again there may be the same overlap experienced by the middle-management personnel thus making for a total 12 of the 17 participants possibly receiving reports of sexual assault from their supervisees. Only one individual indicated that they are not required to notify a supervisor of student reports of sexual assault. Participants were also asked if they believed their position *should* be required to report to

a supervisor. Eleven said yes, three indicated no and three said the question did not apply to them since they are the official body these reports come to.

On the measurement asking the level of comfort participants felt in making these types of reports to a supervisor (see table 6), most expressed being very comfortable with having to do so with the “extremely comfortable” response representing the mode. Two reported low levels of comfort (below 3 on the 5point scale) with one person indicating being extremely uncomfortable having to make such reports to their supervisor.

Table 6

*Comfort in Making Reports*

	Level of Comfort				
	1	2	3	4	5
	Extremely Uncomfortable				Extremely Comfortable
Reporting instances of sexual assault that have been told to me by a student	1	1	1	5	9

The final measures of comfort asked participants how comfortable they were with speaking with a student who was reporting sexual assault, discussing the campus process and policy with victims as well as discussing the possible outcomes of a sexual assault case reported on campus. Responses here were more varied than in the previous comfort measurement however the majority of respondents still exhibited high levels of comfort in all areas (see table 7). Respondents exhibited the most variation and the lowest amounts of comfort in the third category referencing discussing possible outcomes with victims.

Table 7  
*Discussing Sexual Assault: Comfort Measures*

	Level of Comfort					e No Response
	1 Extremely Uncomfortable	2	3	4	5 Extremely Comfortable	
Discussing student report of sexual assault with reporting student	1	0	1	9	6	0
Discussing campus process for sexual assault victims with individuals	2	2	3	3	7	0
Discussing the outcomes sexual assault victims on campus may experience	1	4	2	3	7	0

The close-ended questions allowed me to determine two key elements: The first being that despite the demonstration of low agreement with a majority of rape myths there is some support for the notion that rape is avoidable. This is in line with the previously discussed literature that tells us that rape is trivialized on campus largely due to the common belief that women who are raped are somehow responsible for their victimization. Secondly, despite the personal beliefs of respondents, the majority of individuals were comfortable with assisting students with seeking information about the university policy on sexual assault as well as taking reports of sexual assault. The following section details the responses from the open-ended questions. Here respondents were asked questions that allowed them to outline their understanding of the university policy that they expressed being comfortable utilizing and to then give their opinions of the policy and its effectiveness in their own words.

### *Responses Surrounding Policy and Procedures*

The first measure I will discuss is the amount of knowledge the participants have of the university's sexual assault policy (see Appendix B for the university policy).

Participants indicated a confidence in communicating with students about sexual assault and the university policy while simultaneously reporting a lack of understanding of the total university policy. Respondents indicated that they possessed fractional knowledge about a specific office that may handle student complaints of sexual assault. Responses centered around three themes:

- i. The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) holds some form of hearing to determine *guilt* and the possible university sanctions (note: the OSC does NOT determine guilt, only responsibility.)
- ii. The police, Public Safety receive the report and investigate the report to determine if a crime has occurred.
- iii. Respondent does not know the policy

The first theme involving the OSC was the most prevalent when participants were asked to detail the university policy on sexual assault. It is important to note that the typical responses that included OSC did not refer to any other on-campus offices that may be involved with the handling of these incidents. The length of responses varied from a few words to a few sentences detailing the offices involvement. The shortest answers were:

001: For students, the process is outlines in the [university] code.

004: Student conduct hearing to determine {illegible}.

015: Charges with violation of student code; hearing.

The more detailed responses gave more information about what the OSC may actually do. For example:

012: Office of student Conduct facilitates the case. Accused student has a conduct hearing- sometimes a panel. The accuser has a right to be present and state his/her case. Confidentiality is maintained for all!

This theme continued when participants were asked what the possible consequences for the accused were. Here many respondents gave answers that specifically mentioned the OSC or more commonly gave responses that, while they didn't mention the OSC directly, would be sanctions handed down by that office.

*Examples with relation to OSC:*

001: Sanctions via the code range from reprimand [through] expulsion. A combination of the sanctions listed in the code may be applied

015: Varies according to committee hearing (counseling, guidelines et, dismissal).

*Examples without relation to OSC but would come from said office:*

008: Could be kicked out of university

016: Expulsion

017: Suspension, expulsion. At very least removal from res hall if shared w/ accuser

The second theme that involves police involvement demonstrated that participants believed that the police would be involved in the investigation and most often in conjunction with other university offices. While these responses offered a more complete

explanation of the university policy, they also demonstrated a connection between university policy and off-campus criminal proceedings. The best example of this is seen in the response by 011:

011: Since I work in Public Safety, I know that all allegations of this type have to be investigated. After all investigations are done, if the victim decides he/she wants to prosecute, then it goes to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office for them to determine if the suspect will be charged. Thus begins the judicial process. I also knew that Office of Conduct would be contact, as well as the possibility of a suspect being moved from the dorm.

The simplest version of this is presented by 014:

014: On campus- hall staff, [university] police/ Off-campus- police (city, county).

There were, however, two exceptions to this. The first was 005 who expressed that they knew what the police department's role was but had "not a clue" about the rest of campus and second was 007 who gave a detailed explanation of criminal proceedings off campus with no reference to on-campus policy. This was later explained by 007 who revealed they had never actually read the university policy, which lead me to place this respondent in the third theme.

When discussing consequences, respondents who referenced the legal system previously also did so here.

*Legal consequences only:*

005: Nothing to prosecution with possible conviction and prison time

013: Jail-counseling-probation

*Legal consequences paired with possible university consequences:*

011: Depends on if there is any plea bargaining. However, will include costs, criminal record, and possible incarceration and possible student status may be in jeopardy

012: Probation, suspension, dismissal (univ. process)/ Criminal process is separate

014: If reported to city/county-accused is charged, then receives trial./ On campus- goes through conduct hearing

Lastly, the third theme was the least prevalent but necessary to discuss:

Respondents who do not know the policy. Three respondents openly disclosed they did not know the university policy on sexual assault. Two did not answer any of the open ended questions and instead provided explanations for not doing so:

002: I do not work in a position that has much student contact, nor am I familiar with the answers to these questions. I have, however, been at the university long enough that I feel I could assist someone, if needed, by locating the appropriate resources.

003: Unfortunately I can't find the [university] policy on sexual assault or what to do if a student reports it. I can't answer these questions without that knowledge. Sorry.

The third respondent, 007, (mentioned previously) who did answer questions regarding policy but when asked about the fairness about policy and procedure later states:

007: ? I have never read the policy.

Respondent 016 did not openly express not knowing the policy but throughout their responses to the survey they either did not respond to questions regarding policy or their response read "Don't know" or simply "?". The only exception being when asked about if the policy favored victim or accused in which they replied "neither". This lack of

provided information leads the researcher to conclude that this individual does not know the policy or has very limited knowledge to the point of not being able to assess policy and procedure.

*Impressions of University Policy and Fairness*

When asked to evaluate the fairness of the current policy as well as the quality of services provided there was resounding confidence in policies as well as the persons responsible for executing them. For example the most common response when asked if the policy favored the victim or the accused was “Neither” such as the responses listed below.

001: Neither. It is neutral to allow for both to present their perspectives.

004: Neither. Fair and impartial panel.

015: Policy provides for a hearing, [with] all sides presented.

An additional respondent also believed neither but not because the policy was impartial but instead stated:

017: [...] ultimately neither as there is no successful form of closure

Only respondent 013 directly indicated that “the victim” is favored more by the policy.

There were three themes equally represented that became apparent when analyzing responses centered on university policy and programs as a whole:

- i. The policy is fair and needs no changes
- ii. The policy is fair but the university could do more
- iii. No evaluation or unable to evaluate fairness however the university could do more

The first theme shows the most confidence in the established university policy. Here respondents gave no critiques of the policy and programs and instead offered only positive comments about what is already in place.



*In regards to available services*

015: Strong: Strong devoted employees dedicated to prevention and follow-up

*In comparison services offered by the city*

015: Better- prevention, prompt hearing, outcomes

*In regards to policy and procedures, any changes?*

015: No; however continued funding for prevention programs is mandatory

*Overall opinion of fairness policy and procedures*

015: Positive

The second theme presented a more critical point of view pointing out that the written policy is fair but there are necessary changes that could be made by the university to improve how issues of sexual assault are handled.

*In regards to available services*

001: I believe the services for physical and mental health, safety, support are above average: Those in place are solid. We need additional resources in people, time and \$ to reach more students esp. those off campus.

*In comparison services offered by the city*

001: Not as good. All are under 1 umbrella of [the university] and can be quickly and easily accessed. One aspect we don't readily have available after 5pm or on weekends is crisis response. We use community resources in these instances.

*In regards to policy and procedures, any changes?*

001: We are currently reviewing the policy

*Overall opinion of fairness policy and procedures*

001: I believe they are fair

It should be noted that respondent 005 (who fit into this theme as well) also noted the absence of services after 5 p.m.

*In regards to available services*

005: As long as its normal business hours you're golden. After normal business

hours you're S.O.L. Then its hospital and YWCA and cops.

The last theme came from the participants who were not sure about the fairness of the policy but had beliefs about improvements that could be made. Note: respondents in this category did not include those who had previously expressed no knowledge of the university policy and programming.

*In regards to available services*

008: More could be done but university has given this area limited resources: Services are adequate, but we could always utilize more services and financial resources.

*In comparison services offered by the city*

008: Just as good or the same. [University] PD is held to same standards as [city] PD since both are functional and official police depts.

*In regards to policy and procedures, any changes?*

008: Unsure, see comments about police and need for more campus wide education about it.

*Overall opinion of fairness policy and procedures*

008: Unsure how fair policies are; don't believe enough officials or students are aware of policies and procedures; more education could be done in this area.

The results showed that the respondents did not have a full understanding of their university's policy relating to sexual assault. Their knowledge was limited often to their specific offices function or simple generalities about sexual assault in general but not necessarily in relation to the university. This was accompanied by great confidence in the established policy. They expressed being confident in the fairness of the policy and procedures as well as having high levels of confidence in their abilities to assist a student seeking information or making a report of sexual assault on their campus. This was

puzzling considering that they were expressing what appeared to be blind faith in a policy they did not know. There were no responses that suggested the respondents did not believe rape on university campuses to be a serious problem.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The aim of this research was to cover new ground in the study of rape on campus. As discussed previously, researchers have suggested that rape continues to be trivialized at institutions of higher education despite the advances in research and the subsequent legislation requiring universities to acknowledge and more thoroughly report sexual assaults that occur on their campuses. There have been suggestions of RMA being to blame for policies and prevention programs that are written in a way that reinforces harmful practices of victim-blaming rather than teaching individuals not to rape and presenting clear consequences for those who do. To accept these claims is to accept that administrators responsible for creating and executing such policies and programming are acting with at least some level of malice.

### *Rape Myth Acceptance*

This study sought to determine if administrators at this university demonstrated high levels of harmful RMA that could possibly affect their handling of sexual assault reports. Initial analysis suggests that RMA is not obviously high as respondents gave almost exclusive non-agreement answers to the assessed rape myths. In fact, the results showed an unmistakable homogeneity in responses that leads me to question the genuine

nature of the responses. At first glance the lack of myth supportive answers appears desirable. This may be explained by who actually took the survey. This sample group consisted of 14 female participants and according to the literature previously discussed, males tend to demonstrate higher levels of RMA than females. As possible as this may be the overall lack of variation makes me wonder if there may be additional variables at work here.

The instrument measured RMA utilizing scales that are most commonly used in research and sexual assault education. It is likely that the participants taking this survey were familiar not only with these measures but also with the socially acceptable answers to them. That is not to say that participants were purposefully trying to be misleading but it is possible that they were trying to “help” by demonstrating the expected responses. It is my suggestion that future research not only utilize a larger sample but also a more comprehensive RMA measurement scale that participants are less likely to know the expected answers to. I also suggest that qualitative interviews could be used to pick up on themes that suggest or refute RMA acceptance without using scale measures that so obviously point to what the researcher is measuring.

There was some variation, however, in regards to the rape myth questions that concerned the respondents’ opinion about the avoidable nature of rape. I cannot say that participants demonstrated abnormally high levels here however I do believe that this provides a basis for further exploration into this area. The previous discussion of this rape myth noted the particularly harmful nature this myth can have on educational

programming and survivor assistance. These results give rise to the concern that administrators at this institution may indeed be guided, at least in part, by the belief that rape is avoidable and victims are at fault for the sexual violence they experience.

### *Trivialization vs. Confusion*

Considering the results, malicious trivialization of rape on campus does not appear to be as prevalent as previous research suggested but rather that officials may simply lack the knowledge necessary to properly respond to and subsequently report sexual assaults brought to their attention. This supports the ideas previously discussed as presented by Kajarne et al. (2005) that the continued inconsistent numbers of sexual assault on campus may be a result of, at least in part, a lack of education for the university staff.

After reading my results I was not entirely surprised by the comments that participants didn't know or couldn't find the university policy on sexual assault. In my own attempts to find the university policy I ran into numerous broken links and misdirection before locating a copy of the 2012 university annual crime report which had a full outline of the university policy. Searches produced pages with fragmented information on which offices to contact and their general university phone number, community resources and encouragement for victims to utilize community resources because of the universities limited resources to investigate sexual assaults. In addition to giving the general university stance on sexual assault, the student code was mentioned as

a reference for students numerous times however I was unable to find the student code as all of the links I could find were broken and did not reroute to the appropriate page.

Future research needs to probe a larger population of not only what education is received but also determine the level of policy comprehension the university employees actually have. I am not suggesting that university officials do not trivialize rape on campus, especially given the difficulty in simply locating the university policy, but rather that there may be an additional factor in the way officials view sexual assault that has yet to be examined. It is possible that administrators view sexual assault as a problem on college campuses *except* when it comes to their own.

Past research has shown that the effectiveness of a rape-prevention program for students is most effective when education is continuous and some participants in this study acknowledged the need for this education to extend to university officials. DeKeseredy and Schwartz have called men to action in stopping violence against women: “Much more work needs to be done to recruit men to engage in profeminist efforts to end woman abuse on campuses and their immediate surroundings” (1998, p. 142). The spirit of this comment is aimed mostly at male students however I would go further to suggest that more efforts need to be made to seek out administrators who hold the male view (both males and females) and to encourage their engagement in profeminist efforts. DeKeseredy et al. go on to say that empathy needs to be built into the college curriculum to encourage students to take the role of the other (DeKeseredy, Schwartz, & Alvi, 2000). There must be purposeful education and training on university policies to better serve

students who may be inquiring about prevention, and most importantly, to assist those who have experienced a sexual assault. Without continued education the likelihood of fragmented policy comprehension and poor student service is increased.

#### *Limitations and Directions for Future Research*

The present study provided rich data but is not without its limitations. Due to the probatory nature of this study, the survey instrument used only examined opinions and beliefs as they relate to heterosexual sexual assault with male assailant and female victim scenarios. There is a need for future studies to examine sexual assault as it relates to the LGBT student population in order for the research to continue towards developing a comprehensive based of knowledge. It is also suggested that future studies to examining the same or similar issues should have larger sample sizes. This study's results are limited in their ability to create any new theory or generalizations due to the small size of the sample. Future studies with larger samples will benefit with not only more qualitative indicators but will also be able to utilize rigorous statistical testing.

While this study may not be able to provide sweeping generalizations and conclusions about the problem of sexual assault on campus as it relates to the administrative perspectives, it has revealed key pieces that have the potential to inspire and direct new research in this arena. Most importantly this study has confirmed the need for further research into an under-explored realm of sexual assault research.

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Appendix A  
Participant Survey

Climbing into the Ivory Tower:  
*A Look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus*  
 Participant Survey

Begin the survey by answering the following questions involving to your employment at the university and how it relates to your contact with students. Please select the best response to each question. Only select ONE (1) response.

How much contact do you have with students?	<u>Individual students</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Most days <input type="checkbox"/> Once or Twice a week <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a semester <input type="checkbox"/> Almost None <input type="checkbox"/> None	<u>Groups of Students</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Most days <input type="checkbox"/> Once or Twice a week <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a semester <input type="checkbox"/> Almost None <input type="checkbox"/> None
How often do you speak with students about their sexual health concerns?	<u>Individual students</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Most days <input type="checkbox"/> Once or Twice a week <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a semester <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Never <input type="checkbox"/> Never	<u>Groups of students</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Most days <input type="checkbox"/> Once or Twice a week <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a month <input type="checkbox"/> A few times a semester <input type="checkbox"/> Almost Never <input type="checkbox"/> Never
In your current position, are you expected to assist students who have been sexually assaulted?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
Does your position at the university require you to report student reports of sexual assault to a supervisor?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, it is mandatory <input type="checkbox"/> NO, it is OPTIONAL to report student reports of sexual assault to a supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> NO, I do NOT report students reports of sexual assault to a supervisor	
Does your position at the university require that others report student reports of sexual assault to you?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES, it is mandatory <input type="checkbox"/> NO, it is OPTIONAL for others to report student reports of sexual assault to me <input type="checkbox"/> NO, I am not a supervisor	
Do you believe your current position should be required to report student reports of sexual to an official body	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable/I am the official body	

The following statements relate to your level of comfort when discussing sexual health concerns with students. Selecting only ONE (1) number, please indicate your level of comfort using the following scale:

Extremely uncomfortable < 1    2    3    4    5 > Extremely Comfortable

Discussing student reports of sexual assault with reporting student	EU < 1	2	3	4	5 > EC
Discussing campus processes for sexual assault victims with individuals	EU < 1	2	3	4	5 > EC
Discussing the outcomes sexual assault victims on campus may experience	EU < 1	2	3	4	5 > EC
Reporting instances of sexual assault that have been told to me by a student	EU < 1	2	3	4	5 > EC

Below are 10 questions that ask for your opinion and understanding of the current university policy and procedures for students who feel they have been victimized. If more space is needed please attach your answers on a separate piece of paper and clearly indicate which question the attached response corresponds with.

1. What do you understand the judicial process to be for handling reports of sexual assaults outlined by the university?
2. What are the possible consequences for the accused?
3. Does the current policy favor the accused, victim, or neither? Please explain
4. In your experience, what typically happens when a student reports sexual assault?
5. Does the typical response vary from the outlined university policy? If yes, how so?

6. Does anything about the current university policy and procedures needs to be changed? Please explain.

7. Does anything about the current university policy you defined NOT need to be changed? Please explain.

8. What is your opinion of the services available on campus to students regarding what they can do if they have been sexually assaulted?

9. Are campus services better, just as good, or not as good as those offered in the City of Kalamazoo? Please explain.

10. Under what circumstances, if any, would you recommend a student seek assistance from Kalamazoo Public Safety (the city police)?

**Please give your overall opinion on the following items:**

1. Current prevention, education and sexual awareness programs on the university campus.
2. The fairness of current policies and procedures that regulate how a student's report of sexual assault is handled



In general terms, select the single number that BEST represents your level of agreement to the given statements using the following scale:

Strongly Disagree < 1 2 3 4 5 > Strongly Agree

1. Most instances of sexual assault can be avoided	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
2. A woman who changes her mind after initial consensual sexual contact cannot be raped	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
3. Women on college campuses fear being sexually assaulted	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
4. Sexual assault almost always happens between strangers	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
5. If an individual does not try to physically fight back s/he was not sexually assaulted	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
6. Men are unable to control their sexual urges once aroused	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
7. If an individual becomes intoxicated they are at fault if s/he has unwanted sex	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
8. Most women come around to enjoying forced sex	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
9. To avoid being raped on a college campus women should not travel alone at night	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
10. If a woman dresses in a sexy way she should not complain about unwanted sexual attention	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
11. Most women secretly like forced sex	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
12. Rape is about sexual gratification	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
13. Men cannot be raped	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
14. Real rape victims show signs of physical trauma/injury	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
15. Students think it is ok for males to physically pressure females into sex	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
16. The college culture excuses male students for sexually assaulting female students	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
17. Rapists are usually from lower working-classes	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA
18. Women often make false reports of rape	SD < 1	2	3	4	5 > SA

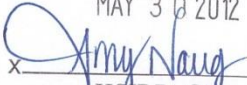
To complete the survey, please answer the following demographic questions

What is your sex/gender identity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Define your marital status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Single (never married) <input type="checkbox"/> In a committed relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Please identify your age group:	<input type="checkbox"/> 20-29 Years Old <input type="checkbox"/> 30-39 Years Old <input type="checkbox"/> 40-49 Years Old <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59 Years Old <input type="checkbox"/> 60+ Years Old
How long have you been an employee of the university?	<input type="checkbox"/> <1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 1-5 years <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15years <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 years <input type="checkbox"/> >20 years
Please indicate your highest level of completed education:	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than high school diploma <input type="checkbox"/> High School diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Some college, less than bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree <input type="checkbox"/> Some graduate level work <input type="checkbox"/> Master's Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral Degree
What type of position do you hold at the university?	<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Upper Management <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Lower Management <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical <input type="checkbox"/> Medical <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Police <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____
Please indicate if your current position is full or part-time	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time

Appendix B  
Consent Document



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
H. S. I. R. B.  
Approved for use for one year from this date:

MAY 30 2012  
x   
HSIRB Chair

**Western Michigan University**  
**Department of Sociology**

**Principal Investigator:** Zoann Snyder  
**Student Investigator:** Tasha Nichole Turner  
**Title of Study:** Climbing into the Ivory Tower: A look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus

You have been invited to participate in a research project titled *Climbing into the Ivory Tower: A look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus*. This project will serve as Tasha N. Turner's thesis for the requirements of the Masters of Sociology. This consent document will explain the purpose of this research project and will go over all of the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please read this consent form carefully and completely and please ask any questions if you need more clarification.

**What are we trying to find out in this study?**

We are trying to learn how current university employees view the institution's policies regarding how to respond to and educate students about sexual assault. This study is being conducted because currently there is no research in this area and it is important to learn not just how students perceive the problem of sexual assault, but how those responsible for these students do as well.

**Who can participate in this study?**

To participate in this study you must be a current university employee who works in one of the offices identified by university publications as being resources for students who have been sexually assaulted. Your position may be full or part-time.

Any person whose primary role at the university is being a student or trainee may not participate in this study. This includes work-study students, non-work study student workers, graduate assistants and departmental interns.

**Where will this study take place?**

You will complete this survey on your own time.

**What is the time commitment for participating in this study?**

You should expect to spend approximately 30 minutes to complete this survey.

**What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?**

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MAY 30 2012  
  
X \_\_\_\_\_  
HSIRB Chair

Should you choose to participate in this study you will be asked to complete the enclosed survey. The survey is 5 pages with a mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions.

**What information is being measured during the study?**

We are measuring the attitudes of current employees toward the current university policies and procedures with handling sexual assault. We are also measuring general attitudes of current employees towards sexual assault.

**What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?**

Risks include mild discomfort with the subject matter and potential discussion of sensitive personal information.

To reduce discomfort at the end of the survey there will be provided a list of available resources for those who have been affected by sexual assault. If you become too uncomfortable with the survey you are able to stop at any time without fear of negative consequences from the university, Department of Sociology or the researcher.

**What are the benefits of participating in this study?**

There are no known direct benefits for those who choose to participate in the study. However, there are long-term benefits to the overall university community in understanding how policies and procedures at a university are understood and executed. Higher education as a whole benefits from this type of research because it will begin to explore university perspectives rather than assume and criticize the unknown viewpoint

**Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?**

There is no cost associated with participating in this study.

**Is there any compensation for participating in this study?**

There is no compensation being offered for participating in this study.

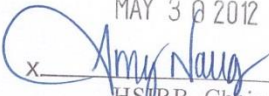
**Who will have access to the information collected during this study?**

Only the listed investigators will have access to the raw survey data. Your replies will be completely anonymous, so do not put your name anywhere on the form. You may choose to not answer any question and simply leave it blank.

The findings will be used for the completion of the thesis project of Tasha N. Turner. Additional publication of findings in a research journal is possible however at no time will identifying information be used including the name of the institution surveyed.



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MAY 30 2012  
X.   
HSIRB Chair

**What if you want to stop participating in this study?**

You can choose to stop participating in the study at any time for any reason. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decisions to stop your participation. You will experience NO consequences either academically, personally or professionally if you choose to withdraw from this study.

If you choose to not participate in this survey, you may either return the blank survey or you may discard it in the box provided. Returning the survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply

The investigator can also decide to stop your participation in the study without your consent.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you can contact the primary investigator, Zoann Snyder at (269) 387-5278, the student investigator Tasha Nichole Turner at (269)599-9625 or [tasha.n.turner@wmich.edu](mailto:tasha.n.turner@wmich.edu). You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if questions arise during the course of the study.

This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped date is older than one year.

Appendix C  
University Policy

## Sex Offender Registry

As part of the requirements of the Campus Security Act, the Department of Public Safety has created a web link to the Michigan State Police Registered Sex Offenders List. This list will provide you with the name and address and date of birth of the registered offender. You can do a search by zip code or by offender's name and estimated age. The state makes this information available on their website at <http://www.mipsor.state.mi.us/>

This information is being provided in accordance with the Sex Offenders Registration Act as amended in 1999. The State of Michigan requires sex offenders to register with the police agency in the jurisdiction in which they reside. The information contained in the Michigan public sex offender registry is obtained by local law enforcement agencies when sex offenders register with those local agencies. For questions or concerns regarding the PSOR, contact the Michigan State Police, Investigative Resources Section, Violent Crimes Unit, 2911 Eyde Parkway, Suite 130, East Lansing, MI. 48824, (517) 336-6292 or email [psors@state.mi.us](mailto:psors@state.mi.us).

## Sexual Assault Victim Guarantee

Sexual assault, including date and acquaintance rape, is a crime of very serious concern to the ██████ Department of Public Safety. If you are the victim of a sexual assault that occurs on campus, the Department of Public Safety guarantees you the following:

1. We will meet with you privately, at a place of your choosing in this area, to receive the information on the assault.
2. Your name will not be released to the public or media.
3. You will not be pre-judged, nor be blamed for what occurred.
4. Your complaint will be handled with sensitivity, understanding and professionalism.
5. If you feel more comfortable talking with a female or male officer, we will do our best to accommodate your request.
6. We will assist you in arranging any medical care or treatment that you need.
7. We will assist you with contacting a counselor and make available other resources to help you through this process.
8. Your complaint will be thoroughly investigated to help you achieve the best outcome. This may involve the arrest and full prosecution of the suspect responsible. You will be kept informed on the progress of the investigation and/or prosecution.
9. We will continue to be available to you, to answer your questions, explain the systems and processes involved (prosecutor, courts, etc.) and to be a listening ear if you wish.
10. Your complaint will be taken seriously, regardless of your gender or the gender of the suspect.

If you have been sexually assaulted, call the ██████ PD at ██████-5555 and say you want to privately make a sexual assault complaint. You may call any time of day or night.

If we fail to achieve any part of the above guarantee, the Director of Public Safety, ██████ will meet with you personally to address any problems. ██████ PD wants to help make the ██████ campus safe for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

## Sexual Assault Policy, Procedures and Programs

University recognizes that sexual assault is a serious social problem that occurs among college students as well as within other segments of our society. The University makes a strong commitment to work toward preventing sexual assault within our community, to provide support and assistance to sexual assault victims, and to impose sanctions on those who have been found responsible for a sexual assault. Our goal is to foster and protect an environment of mutual respect and concern and a safe community in which learning and growth can occur.

For purposes of this statement, the term "sexual assault" includes rape, attempted rape, acquaintance rape and other sex offenses, both forcible and non-forcible. It is synonymous with the University's definition of "sexual misconduct," as stated in the Student Code, Article IV: Proscribed Conduct, B. Conduct Policies, item 15. Sexual Misconduct.

### Prevention Efforts

The University in a variety of ways addresses the topic of sexual assault with students. The subject is presented to first-year students during Fall Welcome at the "Risky Business" production and in educational programs offered on campus. Students who participate in the educational programs receive information on the University and community resources for sexual assault victims. This information is also available at the following website: <http://www. .htm>

The Department of Public Safety presents numerous crime prevention programs annually that include discussion of personal safety issues. Printed crime prevention materials are distributed during these presentations and at various locations on campus. Any student group or organization may request an educational program by a police officer on any crime or safety issue by calling -5555.

Educational programs that address the subject of sexual assault are also presented by the Office of Health Promotion and Education at Health Center. To request a program for your group or to obtain information about upcoming scheduled programs, call . This office also maintains a library of books, brochures, and other educational materials about sexual assault.

### Responding to a Sexual Assault

The University recognizes the right of a sexual assault victim to decide, without pressure or coercion, what action she or he will take following an assault. encourages students to report all crimes to the police and to pursue sanctions against accused offenders through the University conduct process as well, if the accused is a student. encourages victims of sexual assault to take the following steps:

1. If you are in danger or need immediate medical attention, call 911.
2. Preserve physical evidence.  
Physical evidence may be critical to successfully prosecuting a case. Immediately after an assault, the victim may not know whether she or he

wants to file a police report and attempt to prosecute. Because sometimes a victim changes her mind, it is prudent to preserve and document physical evidence before it is destroyed. Do not clean or straighten up the area where the assault occurred. Do not wash, brush teeth, comb hair, use the toilet, or douche. Put the clothing you were wearing in a paper (not plastic) bag; turn this over to police.

3. Seek medical attention immediately:
  - To assess and treat physical trauma;
  - To receive treatment to prevent sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy; and
  - To collect and officially document evidence that may later aid in criminal prosecution.

Call the YWCA Sexual Assault Program crisis line: [REDACTED].

Depending on your needs and preferences, you will be directed to either the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) service at the YWCA or to a hospital emergency department. If you use any of these providers, a YWCA Sexual Assault Program trained victim advocate will be called and will provide you with information and emotional support during your visit. If you do not seek care from any of these providers, you should consider seeking treatment (preferably, within 72 hours) to prevent certain sexually transmitted infections from developing and, if you choose, to prevent a possible pregnancy.

4. Report the assault to the police.

If you seek care from a hospital or the YWCA SANE program, they are required to notify the police, and an officer will come to take a report from you. You have the right to refuse to file an official report at this time. You also have the right to file a report at a later date. A police report is made with the police department that has jurisdiction in the location where the crime happened. Filing a police report is not the same as deciding to prosecute the assailant. There are a number of steps between these decisions, and the final decision whether to prosecute is based on a number of factors and is made by both the victim and the prosecuting attorney's office.

Making a police report maintains the victim's future option of criminal prosecution, and may help support a University conduct action or a civil law suit against the assailant. Except as otherwise required by law or court order, the Department of Public Safety will not release the victim's or the suspect's name or any identifying information to the media or the general public.

5. If the accused is a [REDACTED] student, report the assault to the University's Office of Student Conduct.

The [REDACTED] Student Code expressly prohibits "sexual misconduct" (see Article IV, Section B, Item 15). Anyone who is assaulted by a [REDACTED] student -- whether or not the victim is a [REDACTED] student, and whether or not



the alleged assault took place on [REDACTED] property -- may request that the University take conduct action against the accused student is not necessary for the victim to file a police report in order to pursue sanctions through the University conduct system; however, it is strongly recommended. Because the Office of Student Conduct has limited resources to investigate a violation such as sexual assault, it is generally to the victim's benefit to file a police report. Pursuing sanctions through the University does not preclude the victim from also pursuing criminal prosecution and/or a civil lawsuit.

The University conduct process is initiated by making a complaint with the Office of Student Conduct. A description of the process is included in the Student Code. Students are also welcome to discuss the process with the director of that office.

Sexual assault victims are assured the following rights within the University conduct process:

- a. The right to be present during the entire proceeding, except when the hearing panel is deliberating a decision. The right to have one counselor, victim advocate, other support person, or legal counsel present throughout the process to advise and provide support.
- b. The right to have one's sexual history not discussed during the proceedings, except as it relates to the specific incident in question.
- c. The right to relate their account of the incident.
- d. The right to be informed of the results of the student conduct proceeding.
- e. The right to have their name and any identifying information kept confidential, except as otherwise required by law, court order, or University policies or needs.
- f. The right to a hearing within a reasonable time period.

A student charged with committing sexual misconduct is assured of the same rights. A student found responsible by the Office of Student Conduct for committing sexual misconduct will be given a sanction appropriate to the offense. Possible sanctions range from a warning to expulsion from the University.

[REDACTED] will change a victim's academic and living situations after an alleged sex offense if these changes are requested by the victim and are reasonably available.



Appendix D  
HSIRB Approval Documents

## WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board



Date: June 19, 2012

To: Zoann Snyder, Principal Investigator  
Tasha Turner, Student Investigator for thesis

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Amy Naugle", written over the printed name.

Re: HSIRB Project Number 12-05-02

This letter will serve as confirmation that the change to your research project titled "Climbing into the Ivory Tower: A Look at Administrative Perspectives on Sexual Assault on the College Campus" requested in your memo received June 18, 2012 (to revise recruitment procedures, change data collection process, and revise consent document to reflect these changes) has been approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board.

The conditions and the duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: May 30, 2013