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Final Report of the Acquaintance/Date Rape Task Force

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**FINAL REPORT
OF THE
ACQUAINTANCE/DATE RAPE TASK FORCE**

Prepared for
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October 23, 1990

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INTRODUCTION

In February of 1989 a video-teleconference on Acquaintance/Date Rape was televised in Buzzard Auditorium. Sponsored by the Office of Student Housing, the Percy Julian Fund, the Affirmative Action Office, and the Women's Studies Council, the teleconference examined the issues of acquaintance/date rape on our nation's campuses. The Acquaintance/Date Rape Task Force was established in March of 1989 to examine institutional and individual responses to the issue of sexual assault/abuse at Eastern Illinois University.

The problems and issues surrounding acquaintance/date rape concerns students, faculty, administrators, and staff at Eastern Illinois University. The emotional trauma experienced by victims following sexual assault is often so intense it affects their emotional well-being which, in turn, may affect academic performance and retention. Civil lawsuits filed by victims of sexual assaults occurring on campus often claim the university failed to make students aware of the possibility of acquaintance/date rape. Eastern Illinois University needs to be prepared to deal with such possibilities. Implementing proactive programs and policies such as the ones suggested within the following set of recommendations would be a positive first step in the University's attempt to address acquaintance/rape.

Even though the Task Force has developed a set of innovative recommendations for the administration to consider, it is important to recognize the improvements

which have taken place at EIU over the recent past. Security and safety improvements on campus since March of 1989 have included additional outside lighting and the installation of emergency phones through funds provided by the Office of Student Housing. The external setting of the University, as it relates to security, underwent a significant face-lift with these additions. Eastern has long maintained an internal structure developed to deal with issues of safety in University owned housing as well as with matters involving student conduct. This structure has been preserved by a strong commitment to safety and security issues by the Director of Housing, Louis V. Henken, and his staff. Representative of this commitment to security and safety, Housing has provided the funds needed to operate the Judicial Affairs Office and the Office of AIDS, Alcohol, and Drug Information. The Housing Office also publishes and disseminates a safety booklet which includes information on date/acquaintance rape to all residence hall students.

EIU's Counseling Center continues to provide confidential services, at no charge to students, to victims of sexual assault/abuse as well as offenders. The Counseling Center has developed support groups and presented programs which deal with the issues of sexual assault/abuse. The Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Service, has presented programs during New Student Orientation, to Health 1200 and other classes, and has conducted various in-service trainings for Housing staff and support personnel. The Women's Studies Council has sponsored a variety of

programming on campus which relates to violence against women.

The University Judicial Affairs Office is prepared to deal with the sexual assault/abuse incidents which may occur. The University Judicial Board has been trained in the issues of sexual assault/abuse. The Student Conduct Code supplies the procedures necessary to provide disciplinary hearings which respect the rights and privileges of the victim as well as the accused. The Board consists of approximately 30 staff and students assuring a fair mix of male and female Board members hearing such cases. Victims are encouraged to use the advocacy/counseling services provided by SACIS and the counseling services provided by the Counseling Center during the initial investigation of the complaint and hearing itself. In addition, victims are made aware of their options in the criminal and civil court systems.

The Acquaintance/Date Rape Task Force realizes although there have been many positive improvements regarding sexual assault/abuse, more still needs to be done. With such in mind, **it is recommended that the President's Council appoint a committee charged to monitor the implementation of the following set of recommendations.**

The following recommendations are based upon the collective professional and personal expertise of the Task Force members and the results of the Sexual Experiences Survey. Recommendations are not listed in priority order. Each is considered an important element in creating and

maintaining a safe, secure campus promoting healthy personal development and relationships for all members of the EIU community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Preventive Education

1. Because so few aggressors or victims of sexual abuse/assault surveyed at EIU identified their experience accurately, it is recommended that a brochure describing all aspects of sexual misconduct and assaults, emphasizing personal sexual rights, appropriate behavior, and preventative measures be distributed to all students.
2. Because five percent of freshmen women and 10.2% of freshmen men surveyed at EIU reported acts of sexual coercion or assault within the initial weeks of their college experience, it is recommended that mandatory acquaintance rape programming be undertaken with all incoming students.
3. Because so many men in this study misperceived their own level of threat and did not recognize women's resistance, it is recommended that mandatory educational programming on coercive sexual behavior be undertaken particularly with male student groups, such as athletic groups, social and professional fraternal organizations, and all-male residence halls.
4. Because alcohol was a factor in at least two-thirds of reported incidents of sexual assault, it is recommended that on-going education regarding the negative consequences of alcohol use on judgment and behavior in sexual situations be emphasized in the University alcohol education programming for both male and female students.
5. Many respondents in this survey also indicated that unwanted sexual contact occurred because a man misused his position of authority. As sexual assault can be an extreme form of sexual harassment which is clearly prohibited by University policy, it is recommended that the dissemination of information to faculty, staff, and administrators describing behaviors which fall under the Sexual Harassment Policy be increased and strengthened in order to promote a campus environment free from sexual aggression.
6. It is further recommended that educational programming for students be increased in order to enable them to

recognize sexual harassment, to understand how to react to incidents of sexual harassment, and to know how they are protected by University policy.

Responding to Victims

7. Because less than five percent of women on campus who were victims of sexual abuse/assault indicated that they consulted a professional helper, it is highly recommended that outreach efforts and publicity describing the available confidential services be strengthened and expanded.
8. Because so many students have experienced some level of sexual aggression, it is recommended that a brochure urging victims to contact a helping person be developed and provided to all students.
9. Many students entering EIU have already experienced assault and have not had professional help. Because such students are vulnerable to further victimization, it is recommended that outreach programming and counseling services for past abuse and assaults be improved. Such programming should specifically target new students.
10. It is recommended that a brochure on child and adolescent sexual abuse be developed and disseminated to the campus community.
11. Because most students fail to consult a helper about their sexual abuse or assault and because we believe a general misunderstanding may exist which links counseling services to law enforcement, it is recommended that students on campus be clearly assured that consulting a helping service does NOT require that they report to a law enforcement agency.

Addressing Aggressors

12. It is recommended that all campus student services and law enforcement personnel who may encounter offenders among EIU students be well trained in appropriate interventions.
13. It is recommended that campus personnel working with all male groups, such as coaches and faculty advisors, have in-service workshops to educate them in appropriate strategies to combat the acceptance ("boys will be boys") of rape supportive attitudes.
14. The University Police response to reported abuse and assault needs to be more publicly clarified for both male and female students.

15. **The Judicial Affairs Office response to incidents of sexual assault needs to be publicized so that the process and firmness of disciplinary action is clear to all students.**

Campus Environment

16. **Because alcohol is a significant factor in approximately 70% of the occurrences of sexual abuse and assault, it is recommended the University strengthen it's position in order to eliminate the possession and use of alcohol by students under 21 in residence halls and at any University sanctioned activity on University property in which students under 21 would be participating.**
17. **Because drinking parties are a significant locale for initiating sexually abusive behaviors, the University needs to encourage local law enforcement agencies to enforce existing ordinances governing alcohol use by minors.**
18. **It is recommended that the University explore the inclusion of a clear statement of ethical expectations in all employee contracts. Such a statement would indicate that sexual harassment is contrary to the most fundamental ethical canons of the academic community and violates the special bond of intellectual dependence and trust between students and faculty. The professional relationship of faculty and their students should take precedence over any other relationship.**
19. **It is recommended that the Vice President for Academic Affairs annually disseminate information to faculty regarding the programs and services available to the University by the Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Service thus encouraging their use in relevant class settings.**
20. **Because the Sexual Assault Counseling and Information Service provides public education, professional training programs, counseling, advocacy services to EIU students and employees, and as it is not a University department receiving University support, it is recommended that EIU allocate annual funding to assist SACIS in defraying expenses incurred at EIU.**
21. **Because the vast majority of criminal sexual assault incidents occur between students in their rooms, it is recommended that the University require adult live-in advisors for all off-campus fraternity-sorority houses. Such advisors should be well screened and should participate in appropriate training which includes effective responses to incidents of assault/abuse.**

22. **The Office of Student Housing should continue residence hall living options so that visitation by members of the opposite sex is limited to specific times/halls. A uniform closing time should be maintained for all residence halls.**

23. **It is recommended that all resident assistants should participate in training which provides them with effective responses to sexual abuse and sexual assault. In addition they should be trained in the appropriate response to incidents which may involve security, law enforcement, and the media. The Office of Student Housing should develop a protocol which clarifies the role of all Residence Hall personnel in responding to incidents of sexual assault.**

24. **It is recommended that the University develop a written protocol which clarifies the role of all University personnel in responding to sexual abuse/assault.**

25. **In order to promote a climate which is safe, equitable, and sexually respectful for both men and women and to promote sex-role attitudes which affirm that every individual is of equal importance and worth, it is recommended that a University board of review be appointed to evaluate all University supported activities, policies, and publications to insure freedom from gender bias and sexual exploitation.**

26. **It is recommended that the President's Council develop a written University policy to be disseminated to all parents and students by letter and to be included in the University Student Code. This policy should condemn sexual misconduct by University students, reinforce the helping services available for victims, and reassert the firm judicial response the University will take against offenders.**