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Resident Advisers' Perceptions of Their Mandatory Reporting Status Under Title IX: How They
Can Help Survivors

by

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Thesis

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in

Communication

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Abstract

This study investigates resident advisers' (RAs) perceptions of their mandatory reporter status required under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). As a mandatory reporter, RAs must report any known-to-them sexual misconduct. This requirement to report can be very complicated for RAs, as they often create close relationships with the residents they serve. The present study used a 60-item survey to assess 130 RAs' perceptions of Title IX. The results showed the belief that relationships between the RAs and residents complicates reporting in the following ways: comfort level associated with reporting, willingness to give support, and willingness to follow up. It was also found that RAs' understanding of the Title IX process was positively correlated with feelings of comfort when reporting. Practical implications for future RA training are discussed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On January 18, 2015, Stanford University student Brock Turner sexually assaulted an unconscious female (Sanchez, 2016). This story spread across the country like wildfire, and many students were angered by this situation as their hearts broke for the survivor. Brock Turner's crime served as a relevant reminder for all students that sexual assault crimes are extremely prevalent on college campuses.

Sexual assault is a global growing concern (World Health Organization, 2002), and in the United States, much of the attention has been on colleges and universities. The prevalence of sexual assault on college and university campuses is considerably high: approximately one in five women and one in 16 men have experienced sexual assault while in college, and by the time of graduation, just over one in four college women experienced completed or attempted sexual assault (Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007). Although these numbers are shockingly high, it is possible that these numbers are actually higher than suggested, as it is estimated that more than 90% of sexual assault survivors do not report the crime (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000).

This lack of reporting is very concerning for two reasons: (a) it leaves perpetrators unprosecuted, and (b) it makes it difficult for college officials to offer help to survivors (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). This thesis starts with a literature review that examines the legality of Title IX, the negative impacts of sexual assault, the impact that support systems' responses can have on the healing process, barriers survivors face when reporting, and the role resident advisers (RAs) play in the Title IX process. Discussion of these topics will result in six hypotheses. Next, the thesis will describe the method used to assess resident advisers' perceptions of their role in

Title IX. Third, the results of the statistical analysis will be presented and discussed. The thesis will conclude with practical implications, limitations, and future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In an effort to reduce the prevalence of sexual assault among the most at-risk population (children and college students; Krebs et al., 2007), the United States Federal Government mandated public K-12 schools, colleges, and universities to report sexual assault crimes. This law was designed to protect survivors of gender-based harassment and enact sexual assault prevention programs across campuses (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). I use the terms campus, college, university, and school interchangeably to mean colleges and universities.

The following literature review describes the reporting process on college campuses, the barriers that survivors experience that deter them from reporting, and the role mandatory reporters have when reporting sexual assault. In addition to reviewing the aforementioned topics, the ways in which sexual assault affects survivors and the impacts that disclosing about the crime can have on the survivor's well-being are also discussed.

Through an extensive survey, this study hopes to better understand resident advisers' (RAs) perceptions of mandatory reporting and the perceived complications that arise as mandatory reporters. With this information, we will be able to see how requiring RAs to be mandatory reporters affects their interactions with survivors. Additionally, we will be able to better understand RAs' confidence in their abilities to offer support through the reporting process.

Title IX

The current form of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) is the legislation that protects students from discrimination, which includes sexual violence. All public institutions must follow Title IX protocol in order to receive federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). This broad definition of the legislation may leave students confused and

unequipped with the information they need to report sexual assault or obtain access to helpful resources. The following subsections will address various aspects of Title IX.

Defining sexual assault. Under Title IX, sexual assault is defined as “physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim’s use of drugs or alcohol” (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, p. 1). For most, this definition remains ambiguous, and the details of what Title IX covers are even more unequivocal. This causes some survivors to second-guess the severity of the crime that was perpetrated against them (Allen, Ridgeway, & Swan, 2014; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). This study uses the definition of sexual assault covered under Title IX as its reference because most colleges and universities use Title IX as a standard for supporting survivors of sexual assault.

Administrative obligations under Title IX. Title IX is broken down into five overarching obligations: your school must respond promptly and effectively to sexual violence; your school must provide interim measures as necessary; your school should make known where you can find confidential support services; your school must conduct an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation; and your school must provide remedies as necessary (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). The five parts of Title IX provide schools with standards to which they must comply with in order to receive federal funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a).

Your school must respond promptly and effectively to sexual violence. Schools are required to give students the option to report sexual assault to the university (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). The reporting process can be done either anonymously or a student may choose to identify themselves. Because schools must allow students to report, schools must also promptly respond to that information. A response may take the form of accommodations and/or

an investigation. An investigation can result in universities giving sanctions to the perpetrators which would ideally prevent future sexual assaults by that perpetrator from occurring.

Your school must provide interim measures as necessary. As previously mentioned, some students choose to reveal their identity when reporting their sexual assault, and this can be difficult for the survivor. For example, unwarranted behavior (e.g, taunting) from the alleged perpetrator's friends may ensue (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Because of this, it is imperative that schools take action to protect the survivor. Protection efforts can include, but are not limited to, changing classes, moving dorms, or providing the survivor with transportation (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). Protection efforts ensures that the survivor is physically, mentally, and emotionally safe. Since the survivor and perpetrator are separated through various protection measures, future retaliations from the perpetrator to the survivor are eliminated.

Your school should make known where you can find confidential support services. Under Title IX, most school officials (e.g, professors, housing staff, student affairs staff) are required to report any known-to-them sexual assault (White House, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2001b). This puts non-disclosed survivors in a predicament: disclosing is helpful to the healing process (Ahrens, Campbell, Ternier-Thames, Wasco, & Sefl, 2007); however, unknowingly disclosing to a mandated reporter may unintentionally take control away from the survivor (Ullman, 1996b). Because of this predicament, schools must offer confidential support services (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). Confidential support service providers include personnel who have received professional counseling training (White House, 2017; White House, 2014). This includes counselors/psychologists, medical doctors or nurses, and/or chaplains. Having confidential services gives survivors the freedom to tell their story without facing the pressures associated with mandated reporting.

Your school must conduct an adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation. When a report is made under Title IX, a school may conduct an investigation at the survivor's request. In addition to conducting an investigation, the school must also keep the survivor updated with the investigation's progress. Survivors have the right to be notified about all major stages of their investigation, they have the right to present witnesses or evidence, and they have a right to a lawyer (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). In some cases, a criminal report may be filed by the survivor. In these situations, schools are still required to proceed with their own investigation even though the police are also investigating the crime (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). The school's job is to protect the survivor in an educational setting; therefore, the school's own investigation is necessary.

Your school must provide remedies as necessary. The investigation process can take up to 60 days to complete (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Since this is an extensive process, Title IX requires that schools offer immediate remedies to the survivor and other students affected by the sexual assault (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). Remedies include disciplinary action against the perpetrator (e.g, issuing a no contact order), offering educational support for the survivor (e.g, tutoring or retaking a class without penalty), and access to counseling (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a). In addition to protecting the survivor and remedying the effects of the assault, the school is also encouraged to provide remedies to the entire student population. These remedies can include trainings and programs about bystander intervention, sexual assault, information about the reporting process, and seeking help after sexual assault (U.S. Department of Education, 2011; U.S. Department of Education, 2014a).

Communication Privacy Management Theory

Disclosing personal information like sexual assault can be very difficult for survivors because there are many factors to consider before doing so. For example, survivors must weigh the potential consequences of staying silent, such as a decline in mental health (Hakimi, Bryant-Davis, Ullman, & Gobin, 2016; Orchowski & Gidycz, 2015; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014; Ahrens, Stansell, & Jennings, 2010), against the potential consequences of disclosing, such as victim-blaming (Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010; Orchowski, Meyer, & Gidycz, 2009). Using communication privacy management theory (CPM) as a guide, this literature review examines the internal struggles associated with disclosing.

According to CPM, the process of disclosing can cause the survivor to experience cognitive dissonance as they battle between revealing and concealing private information (Petronio & Durham, 2015). That is, individuals who disclose intimate information may feel a need to conceal certain elements of that information in order to avert any feelings of discomfort, humiliation, or shame. Within CPM, individuals disclose personal information to others when they have a strong and trusting relationship with the other person (Petronio, Reeder, Hecht, & Ros-Mendoza, 1996). They may also disclose personal information when they find it is appropriate to reciprocate personal experiences. Disclosing experiences about sexual assault may be extremely difficult for survivors because many fear the reactions and responses that others may have to the sensitive information (Ullman, 1999). Because of this, it is possible that survivors feel conflicted with whether or not to disclose to someone about their sexual assault.

Within CPM, once a survivor discloses to someone, the other person becomes a co-owner of the information (Petronio & Venetis, 2017), and this puts survivors in a vulnerable position. According to Petronio et al. (1996), abused children exercise control over the situation by

protecting their privacy. I assert that this is similar for survivors of sexual assault. Because of this, the decision for privacy becomes extremely important to the survivor.

The Impacts of Sexual Assault on Survivors

Sexual assault is a crime that can have lasting physical and mental effects on survivors (Ahrens et al., 2010). Sexual assault survivors are 1.56 times more likely to experience negative health outcomes, such as headaches, ulcers, and backaches, than non-survivors (Jozkowski & Sanders, 2012). In addition to negative health outcomes, sexual assault can also have a devastating impact on how survivors perceive themselves. After their sexual assault, survivors reported feeling unattractive, having worse sex lives in subsequent years, and experiencing unpleasant feelings (e.g, anxiety) during sexual activities (Jozkowski & Sanders, 2012).

In addition to these devastating impacts, experiencing sexual assault can affect the survivor's academics. Women who were sexually assaulted during their first semester had lower grade point averages than women who were not sexually assaulted (Jordan, Combs, & Smith, 2014). While the actual assault can have lasting effects on the survivor, it is necessary to understand that the reactions from the individuals that survivors disclose to can also have lasting effects on the survivor.

The Impacts of Support Providers' Initial Reactions to the Disclosure

A support provider's initial reaction to a survivor's disclosure can cause positive and/or negative repercussions to the survivor's physical and mental health (Hakimi et al., 2016; Orchowski & Gidycz, 2015; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014; Ahrens et al., 2010). For example, survivors who had a history of experiencing negative reactions from formal sources (e.g, the police) did not want to continue that pattern, and therefore, ceased disclosing to formal sources

(Ullman, 1999). However, positive reactions are associated with less self-blame and less distress among survivors (Ullman, 1996a).

Positive responses. The most helpful forms of support are emotional support, validation and belief, and attentive listening (Ullman, 1996b). In addition to the type of support, where the support comes from is important to the coping and healing process. Ullman (1996b) found that emotional support from a friend was significantly related to a better recovery. This shows the importance of friends in the survivor's healing process. As it will be discussed later, friends are a very useful resource for survivors during the healing process. Overall, most survivors feel better after disclosing about their sexual assault for the first time; however, this is not always the case (Ahrens et al. 2007).

Negative responses. While positive responses can have a positive impact on survivors' well-being, not all types of support are as helpful. It is important to acknowledge that one-third of those participants in the aforementioned study reported feeling worse after the disclosure (Ahrens et al., 2007). The survivors who reported feeling worse told researchers that their supporter's negative reaction was detrimental to their well-being. Negative reactions from supporters to survivors were associated with increased posttraumatic stress, depression, and physical health symptoms (Hakimi et al., 2016; Ahrens et al., 2010). Therefore, a person's initial response to when someone discloses to them is crucial to the survivor's well-being.

Not only can negative reactions lead to negative psychological consequences, but they can also influence the survivor's beliefs about why the sexual assault was perpetrated. Orchowski and Gidycz (2015) suggest that negative reactions from friends have the potential to increase the likelihood of self-blame among survivors. That is, when survivors receive negative reactions from friends, they are likely to believe that the incident was their fault (Orchowski &

Gidycz, 2015). When survivors perceive the incident as their fault, they are less likely to report it (Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009); therefore, they are less likely to get the help they need.

The impact of a person's response to a disclosure needs to be understood by all potential support systems (RAs, professors, coaches, friends, etc.; Ullman, 2011). Ullman (1996b) found that negative social reactions from all types of supporters (friends, family, rape crisis centers, police, and physicians) negatively affected the survivor. Although social connection has a large impact on the perceived helpfulness (i.e, friends are more likely to be utilized as support because of their close connection with the survivor; Sabina & Ho, 2014; Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007; Ullman, 1996b; Ullman, 1996a), there are a multitude of reasons why survivors choose not to report their experience. The next section will further explore the barriers associated with reporting.

Barriers to Reporting

Although Title IX works towards offering students the opportunity to report sexual assault, it is rarely reported to officials (Sabina & Ho, 2014; Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007; Ullman, 1996a). The negative reactions that survivors may face from school officials and peers turn them away from campus reporting (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). It was found that only 2% of college students reported their sexual assault (Fisher, Daigle, Cullen, & Turner, 2003). Such low reporting rates make it difficult for college officials to offer services to help those who are sexually assaulted, and it makes it impossible for justice to be served to the perpetrators (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). In order to help students who were sexually assaulted, and to punish perpetrators, it is essential to understand the barriers that may

hinder a student's ability to report the crime. It is additionally important to understand to whom survivors disclose.

General reasons for not reporting. While some sexual assault survivors report the crime to the police, college officials, or campus resources, most do not. Instead, the majority of survivors find solace in confiding in an informal source such as a friend or family member (Sabina & Ho, 2014; Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007; Ullman, 1996a). In one study, an overwhelming 74.6% of survivors disclosed to an informal source, 14.7% reported to a formal source, and 7.8% chose not to report (Ahrens et al., 2007).

More specifically, it is recorded that 38.2% of women reported their sexual assault to a friend, and 22.5% report it to a family member (Ahrens et al., 2007). Disclosing to a friend is useful; however, researchers wonder if this informal support can give the survivor the additional support they may need, such as access to the campus reporting process, legal resources, and documentation of the incident (Orchowski et al., 2009). Survivors are more likely to disclose to a friend or family member because they know them on a deeper and more personal level (Orchowski et al., 2009). This is the same pattern we see in CPM: disclosure occurs when there is a foundation of trust (Petronio et al., 1996). The lack of close relationships among college officials may be one reason why sexual assault survivors do not disclose to those persons (Ullman, 1996b).

A second reason why survivors may choose to not report to formal sources is because of the stigma associated with sexual assault. Survivors fear that people will react and behave negatively towards them because of their history with sexual assault (Ullman, 1999; Orchowski et al., 2009). This fear is not unwarranted, as there are some survivors who have experienced negative reactions from formal support networks (Ullman, 1999).

A third reason why survivors do not typically disclose to formal sources is because survivors project their self-blame onto others; they fear that others will respond to the assault in a similar blaming fashion (Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009). As previously discussed, disclosing about one's experience with sexual assault could potentially have positive effects on the survivor (Hakimi et al., 2016; Orchowski & Gidycz, 2015; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014; Ahrens et al., 2010). While disclosing the assault is important for the healing process, it is not necessarily easy for survivors as there are many barriers they must face.

Barriers to reporting on campus. Under Title IX, colleges and universities are required to offer sexual assault resources (U.S. Department of Education, 2014a; U.S. Department of Education, 2011); however, previous literature acknowledges that these resources typically go unused. In one study, 60% of the participants said they would go to the campus police if they had been sexually assaulted; 80% said they would go to counseling if they had been sexually assaulted, and 33% said they would contact a member from the residential life staff if they had been sexually assaulted (Tamborra & Narchet, 2011). These numbers may suggest that resources are frequently used; however, the study further indicated that of the participants who were sexually assaulted (approximately 28% of the sample), none of them reported it to any campus resources (Tamborra & Narchet, 2011). Although few campus resources are utilized, it is critical to identify which ones are used most often. This will provide sexual assault survivors with effective resources (Sabina & Ho, 2014; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007).

Many schools offer several types of on-campus resources to survivors, such as the Title IX office, the women's center, the counseling and wellness center, and campus police. It was found that survivors were more likely to report sexual assault to the police than to other campus resources (e.g, counseling and RAs; Orchowski et al., 2009). Resident advisers were found to be

the least utilized sexual assault support network on campus (Orchowski et al., 2009; Tamborra & Narchet, 2011). Since RAs may manage a floor that contains a survivor, it is important to understand why a first responder (i.e., the RA) might not be utilized as a support.

The Role of the RAs

The percentage of students that live on-campus varies by institution. For example, at Harvard University, 99% of students live on campus (Friedman, 2016), but very few community colleges even offer on-campus housing (Pannoni, 2015). While the residential experience varies between institutions, a survey by U.S. News concluded that among 276 colleges surveyed, 39% of students lived on campus during the fall semester of 2015 (Friedman, 2016). With an average of over a third of the campus population living in on-campus residences, it is important to evaluate the roles of those who lead those residences: resident advisers.

The job of an RA is multifaceted and includes a myriad of responsibilities such as a resource referral, completion of administrative tasks, community development, and policy implementation (University of North Alabama [U of N Alabama], 2017; Eastern Michigan University [EMU], n.d.). Part of an RA's role is to advise students throughout their college experience (Blimling, 1995), and this advisement can come in the form of advice giving or resource referral. Since RAs go under extensive training, they tend to be more knowledgeable of campus resources than other students. Because of this, they can easily direct students to campus resources when students have specific concerns. A second part of the RA position is the completion of administrative tasks (U of N Alabama, 2017; EMU, n.d.). This includes filing paperwork and documenting incidents.

Two of the larger components of the job are community development and policy implementation. Within community development, RAs must create and maintain relationships

with their residents. An RA's relationship with residents can affect residents' college experience. One study indicated that residents who did not have a good relationship with their RAs were less likely to feel like they belonged and had less satisfaction with university services (Skyfactor Analytics & Research Team, 2013). Conversely, the same study found that students who had a good relationship with their RA were more satisfied with their academic experience and the institution as a whole. Clearly, the relationship between RAs and their residents is important. In fact, the same study suggests that there is a positive correlation between relationships with an RA and residents' perceived safety.

Within the policy implementation expectation of the job, RAs are expected to uphold the university's code of conduct and report any violations of the code of conduct (U of N Alabama, 2017; EMU, n.d.). This job responsibility holds students accountable for their actions and protects other students from dangerous situations. In addition to reporting violations of the university's code of conduct, RAs must also report legal violations. Under the Clery Act, RAs are required to report crimes that occur on-campus and violate federal, state, and local laws. Examples of these crimes include homicide, aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft, sexual assault, robbery, and arson (White House, 2014). Under Title IX, RAs are required to report accounts of rape, sexual assault, dating violence, sexual harassment, etc. (U.S. Department of Education, 2014b; White House, 2014).

Since they are required to build community and cultivate relationships with residents and are required to implement policies, RAs fall into two conflicting positions: peer and college official. Finding a balance between the positions can be difficult for RAs because their supervisors expect them to build relationships with residents while simultaneously enforcing

policies (Wilson & Hirschy, 2003). Finding this balance between the two positions can be even more difficult when addressing intimate issues such as sexual assault.

Mandatory reporting. Due to Title IX requirements, colleges and universities require RAs to report any sexual assault they learn about (U.S. Department of Education, 2014b) even when it goes against the survivor's wishes (Holland & Cortina, 2017a). Because they are mandated reporters, RAs cannot be considered confidential, and this may deter some survivors (Holland & Cortina, 2017a; U.S. Department of Education, 2014b). Many of the participants in Holland and Cortina's (2017a) study expressed that they explicitly did not report their sexual assault to a RA because they knew the RA would could not be confidential and would be required to report it (Holland & Cortina, 2017a).

The few survivors who do choose to disclose their sexual assault to an RA may not always receive the help and information they were searching for or needed. It was found that even though RAs received specific training on Title IX's reporting procedures services offered by the campus, RAs' knowledge about the procedure and campus resources were significantly less than what was expected (Holland & Cortina, 2017b). Without understanding the reporting procedure and campus resources, RAs cannot adequately guide survivors through this difficult time. In fact, the less RAs understand the university's sexual assault reporting procedure, the less likely they are to report the disclosure and get the survivor the resources they may need (Holland & Cortina, 2017b).

Perception of mandated reporting. Mandated reporting is constantly contested by college officials, researchers, survivors, and students. Advocates for mandated reporting claim that mandated reporting protects members of the campus community from "criminal and discriminatory behavior" (Association of Title IX Administrators, 2015, p. 1) and ensures that

colleges and universities are held accountable for the crimes committed on their campus (Mancini, Pickett, Call, & Roche, 2016). However, critics of mandated reporting argue that it can diminish survivors' autonomy and exacerbate feelings of loss of control (Ullman, 1996b). Orchowski and Gidycz (2015) speculate that this loss of autonomy may foster paranoia among survivors. Additionally, some argue that it puts more of an emphasis on protecting the college's image rather than increasing criminal sanctions (Mancini et al., 2016).

One study by Mancini et al. (2016) assessed the perceived effectiveness of mandatory reporting on students. Sixty-six percent of the students surveyed reported that they either supported or strongly supported mandated reporting policies (Mancini et al., 2016). Additionally, the majority of students (56%) claimed that mandated reporting policies would increase the likelihood of reporting their own sexual assault (Mancini et al., 2016). This overwhelming support for mandated reporting reinforces one of the main goals of the policy: to increase the number of sexual assault reports on campus (Mancini et al., 2016).

Although perceptions of mandatory reporting seem favorable by the student population, this is not always the case for survivors. Like sexual assault, intimate partner violence (IPV; formerly known as domestic violence) is required to be reported. Although there are distinct difference between IPV and sexual assault, there are comparable similarities. For example, survivors of IPV and/or sexual assault both experience devastating acts of violence that have the potential to result in negative physical and/or mental health consequences (Ahrens et al., 2010; Sullivan & Hagen, 2005).

Additionally, survivors of both types of crime may view the significance of their crime as low. Since IPV can be considered a misdemeanor, perpetrators spend limited time in jail, and this does not offer lasting protection to the survivors (Sullivan & Hagen, 2005). When perpetrators

are sentenced to a limited time for such a devastating crime, or when the criminal justice system does not take any action against the perpetrator, it is possible that this short conviction enforces survivors' beliefs that their sexual assault lacks seriousness (Fisher et al., 2003). This possibility can be somewhat supported by the current literature on sexual assault. Many sexual assault survivors choose not to report because they do not see the seriousness of the crime committed to them (Allen et al., 2014; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011; Fisher et al., 2003).

An overwhelming number of IPV survivors insisted that "reporting should not be mandatory" (Sullivan & Hagen, 2005, p. 346). Participants reported being revictimized by medical professionals and the police (Sullivan & Hagen, 2005), just as sexual assault survivors reported feelings of revictimization (Mancini et al., 2016; Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Ullman, 1999). In addition to revictimization being a reason for eliminating mandatory reporting, survivors of IPV expressed concerns with disclosing. It was reported that survivors of IPV did not disclose to their friends and family members about their abuse because they were worried that it would "result in further feelings of isolation, blame, and shame" (Sullivan & Hagen, 2005, p. 356). These concerns are also consistent among sexual assault survivors (Allen et al., 2014; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011).

Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that there are similarities between the two types of survivors and the aftermath they experience after the violent crimes. The opinions of sexual assault survivors on mandatory reporting has not yet been studied, but based off of the similarities between IPV and sexual assault survivors, it is easy to assert that some sexual assault survivors will have strong oppositions towards mandatory reporting.

Study Rationale

Due to the high frequency of sexual assault crimes on campus (one in four women and one in 16 men; Krebs et al., 2007), this study aims to make college campuses safer. The first step in doing this is to assess Title IX policies, specifically mandatory reporting.

Given the recency of mandatory reporting of sexual assault on college campuses, this study looks at student employees' understandings of the reporting process. Since RAs have a unique role as peer and mandatory reporter, they are the main focus of the study. It has been found that survivors are more likely to disclose their sexual assault to a friend (Sabina & Ho, 2014; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007), and due to the close connections RAs build with their residents, it is possible for RAs to be that first resource (or friend) to a survivor.

For survivors who are interested in support from friends and/or support from resources on campus, RAs are a great resource; however, since RAs are mandatory reporters, it may deter survivors from disclosing. Survivor disclosure is important for the healing process (Ahrens et al., 2007; Ullman, 1999); therefore, in order to better understand the healing process, it is crucial to understand the perceptions of efficacy RAs have about sexual assault support.

Because RAs go through extensive training before starting their position, it is expected that they will know more about the resources on campus available for survivors. A previous study on RAs' knowledge and willingness to report found that RAs' knowledge about the reporting process and campus resources were significantly less than expected (Holland & Cortina, 2017b). This implies that RAs cannot/do not give the same level of support to survivors that is expected of them.

Based on the current literature, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: The more RAs believe that their relationship with residents will complicate their reporting process, the more likely they are to feel uncomfortable managing Title IX concerns.
- H2: The better understanding that RAs have about identifying Title IX concerns, the more likely they will feel comfortable reporting Title IX issues.
- H3: The more RAs believe that their relationship with residents will complicate their reporting process, the more likely the RA will see mandatory reporting as a betrayal of trust.
- H4: Individuals who have been RAs longer will feel more comfortable reporting Title IX issues.
- H5: The more RAs believe that their relationship with residents will complicate their reporting process, the more comfortable RAs will feel giving different types of support (e.g, listening, emotional support, validation).
- H6: The more RAs believe that their relationship with residents will complicate their reporting process, the more likely they will be to follow up with the survivors after reporting a Title IX incident.

Chapter 3: Methods

Participants

Given their status as a mandatory reporter and the relationship they share with residents, RAs were selected as the subjects of this study. Resident advisers (RAs) from 11 Mid-western universities were recruited by email with the assistance from their respective housing offices. Of the 11 schools surveyed, three universities were considered large with a student population over 15,000 students, three were considered medium size with an enrollment between 5,000 and 15,000 students, and four were considered small with an enrollment of 5,000 students or less. A total of 744 emails were sent out to the RAs of these schools. This recruitment method resulted in a response rate of 18% ($n = 136$). Of the 136 RAs surveyed, the results from six participants were discarded due to their response or lack of response on the exclusionary question. This resulted in a total of 130 analyzed surveys.

The majority of participants (58.3%) were women, 29.9% were men, 2.1% identified as another gender (e.g, genderfluid, non-binary, etc.), .7% preferred not to say, and 9% of participants skipped the question entirely. In regards to year in school, approximately 30% ($n = 35$) were second year students, 41% ($n = 48$) were third year students, and 21.3% ($n = 25$) were fourth year students, and 7.7% ($n = 9$) were fifth year students. Participants were also asked the number of semesters they had been an RA, and of the participants who answered this question, approximately 25% ($n = 30$) had been an RA for one semester, approximately 24% ($n = 28$) had been an RA for two semesters, 16.2% ($n = 19$) had been an RA for three semesters, 21.3% ($n = 25$) had been an RA for four semesters, 4.2% ($n = 5$) had been an RA for five semesters, approximately 6% ($n = 7$) had been an RA for six semesters, and 3.4% ($n = 4$) had been an RA for seven or more semesters. At the time of the survey, the mean number of semesters worked as

an RA was 2.76 semesters ($SD = 1.603$ semesters). These demographic items can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographics of Participants

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>	<i>n</i>
Gender Identity		
Female	58.3%	N/A
Male	29.9%	N/A
Other (e.g. genderfluid)	2.1%	N/A
Prefer not to say	.7%	N/A
Skipped	9%	N/A
Year in School		
2 nd Year	^30%	35
3 rd Year	41%	48
4 th Year	21.3%	25
5 th Year	7.7%	9
Semesters as an RA		
1 Semester	^25%	30
2 Semesters	^24%	28
3 Semesters	16.2%	19
4 Semesters	21.3%	25
5 Semesters	4.2%	5
6 Semesters	^6%	7
7+ Semesters	3.4%	4

Note. This table shows the demographic make up of the participants in this study.
^is an approximate value

Procedure

A recruitment email was sent out to 744 RAs at 11 various sized schools within the Midwest. The email included the purpose of the study, the time commitment required to complete the survey, and the link to the survey. The survey was administered through SurveyMonkey, and all but one school received a single forwarded email that included the survey link. The one exception was made for a large Midwestern university. At this school, RAs received two follow-up emails at weekly intervals for two weeks after the initial recruitment message. They also received two more follow-up emails several weeks after the initial recruitment email for a total of four recruitment emails throughout several weeks. This school was an exception because the researcher had direct access to the participants' email addresses. Informed consent was collected by all participants through the first page of the survey. Human subjects approval was obtained through the university's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). No financial or academic compensation was provided to participants.

Measures

A 60-item survey was developed with the assistance of a subject area expert and a data science analyst. The questionnaire was reviewed for face and content validity and was found to be sufficient by both a quantitative methods expert and a data science analyst. Two researchers completed the survey to assess the time commitment required by the survey, and it took approximately 15 minutes to complete it.

The survey included several different types of questions such as forced choice, Likert-type scale, rank order, and fill-in-the-blank. The survey was broken down into six categories: demographics, procedures, impacts, support, follow-up, and other. More specifically, there were six demographic items, 14 items related to reporting procedures, 19 items addressed the

perceived impacts of reporting, 13 items assessed the support given from RAs to survivors, 6 items related to follow up procedures, and 2 items were labeled as other. All items were assessed in a single survey. A copy of the survey is contained in Appendix B.

Analysis

To analyze the data, the hypotheses were broken down into their independent (IV) and dependent variables (DV). H1 examined RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process (IV) and the level of comfort they have when reporting Title IX incidents (DV). H2 suggests that RAs' understanding of the reporting process (IV) affects the level of comfort they have when reporting Title IX incidents (DV).

H3 suggests there is an effect between RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process (IV) and their perceptions of survivors' feelings of betrayal (DV). H4 suggests there is a relationship between experience as an RA (IV) and level comfort RAs have when reporting Title IX incidents (DV). H5 suggests that a relationship exists between RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process (IV) and their comfortability in giving support to residents who are survivors (DV). Finally, H6 predicts that RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process (IV) has an effect on their likelihood to follow up with the resident after reporting the situation (DV).

Once the hypotheses were scrutinized for the IV and DV, the researcher and a statistics expert examined the survey questions and isolated questions that addressed any of the IV and DV. Survey questions matched with the IV and DV topics can be seen in Table 2. Once it was determined which question went with which variable and hypothesis, a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was run between various IV and DV using SPSS 24.0 (IBM Corp, 2016).

Table 2

Survey Questions Related to Various IV and DV

<i>Question Categories</i>	<i>Questions</i>
Understanding	<p>I believe that I am able to correctly identify Title IX issues.</p> <p>I believe that I am able to correctly refer the survivor to the useful.</p> <p>I believe that I am able to effectively communicate with the survivor.</p>
Comfort Level^a	<p>I feel comfortable reporting Title IX incidents.</p> <p>I feel comfortable telling the survivor that I am a mandated reporter.</p> <p>I believe that having a relationship with my residents makes reporting less comfortable.</p>
Follow-Up	<p>I believe that my relationship with that resident will determine my methods of follow-up.</p>
RCR	<p>I believe that my relationship with my residents will make me less likely to report.</p> <p>I believe that reporting a Title IX incident will damage my relationship with that resident.</p> <p>I believe that my relationship with my residents will alter the resources I provide.</p> <p>I believe that my relationship with my residents will alter how I tell them I am a mandatory reporter.</p> <p>When I report a Title IX issue, I believe that it will affect the way I communicate with that resident.</p>
Betrayal of Trust	<p>In general, mandatory reporting feels like a betrayal of trust.</p> <p>In general, I believe that survivors will feel betrayed when I disclose I am a mandatory reporter.</p> <p>In general, mandatory reporting is harmful to the survivor.</p> <p>In general, I believe that mandatory reporting hurts the survivor.</p>

Table 2 *continued*

<i>Question Categories</i>	<i>Questions</i>
Giving Support	I feel comfortable distracting the survivor from the situation.
	I feel comfortable providing emotional support.
	I feel comfortable providing listening support.
	I feel comfortable providing physical presence support.
	I feel comfortable providing physical (touch) support.
	I feel comfortable providing resource support.
	I feel comfortable helping the survivor obtain the police.
	I feel comfortable validating the survivor's emotions.

Note. RCR = Relationships complicate reporting.

^a: Comfort level in regards to reporting

Chapter 4: Results

As previously stated, Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to explore any correlations between IV and DV. H1 was not supported; results indicated a positive correlation between resident advisers' (RAs) belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process and comfort level associated with reporting ($r = .566, p < .01$). In order for H1 to be supported, a negative correlation would have needed to occur. Results also indicated a positive relationship between understanding the Title IX process and reporting comfort levels which supports H2 ($r = .858, p < .01$). H3 was also supported. Hypothesis testing of H3 showed a positive correlation between RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process and their belief that mandatory reporting is a betrayal of trust ($r = .818, p < .01$).

Results for H4 indicated that experience as an RA did not have a significant affect on comfort level ($r = -.03, p < .75$). Therefore, H4 was not supported. RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process was positively correlated with the comfort level they experience when giving various types of support to survivors when they disclosed about their sexual misconduct ($r = .720, p < .01$). This result supports H5. Finally, H6 was also supported. A medium-sized, positive correlation was found between RAs' belief that their relationship with residents complicates the reporting process and their likelihood to follow up with residents who disclose about Title IX related issues ($r = .680, p < .01$). The results for H1, H2, H3, H5, and H6 can be seen in Table 3, and results for H4 are shown in Table 4.

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) Matrix of IV and DV

	Understanding	Comfort Level ^a	Follow Up	RCR	Betrayal of Trust	Giving Support
Understanding	1	.858**	0.041	.583**	.509**	.628**
Comfort Level ^a		1	-.373**	.566**	.493**	.697**
Follow Up			1	.680**	.244*	-0.067
RCR				1	.818**	.720**
Betrayal of Trust					1	.713**
Giving Support						1

Note. RCR = Relationships complicate reporting.

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 confidence level (one-tail)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 confidence level (one-tail)

^a: Comfort level in regards to reporting

Table 4

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) Between Experience as an RA and Comfort Level

Comfort Level	
Experience as RA	
Pearson Correlation	-0.028
Coefficient (r) Sig. (2-tail)	0.748

Note. No significant correlation was found between experience as an RA and comfort levels associated with reporting Title IX incidents.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This study examined how resident advisers (RAs) feel about different aspects of their job in regards to mandatory reporting covered under Title IX. Currently, RAs serve as a mandatory reporter under Title IX; however, since part of their job is to cultivate personal relationships with residents, reporting Title IX incidents may be complicated for RAs. Because of this, the current study examined at how various perceptions and feelings in regards to Title IX affects RAs and their perceived ability to report Title IX concerns. The following sections will examine those specific perceptions and feelings in relation to the hypotheses mentioned earlier.

Perceived Relational Complications and Level of Comfort

H1 predicted that RAs who believed that their relationship with residents complicates their reporting process will feel less comfortable reporting Title IX issues. The results indicated that these two items were positively correlated; thus, H1 was not supported. Instead, results suggest that the more RAs' believed that their relationship with residents complicate their reporting process, the more comfortable they felt about navigating the Title IX process.

Although not initially intuitive for the researcher, this result is not entirely surprising. Previous research has shown that people are more likely to help those who are similar to them (Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005). In this case, RAs and their residents have a shared identity: university students. They may also share other unknown identities, and these shared commonalities may make it more likely for RAs to intervene in emergency situations (i.e, Title IX situations or disclosures).

In addition to a higher likeliness to intervene, social penetration theory suggests that the closer we become to others, the more comfortable we feel sharing personal details with them (Altman & Taylor, 1973). The theory is based off of personal disclosure; however, it could be

extended to general comfort as general comfort is necessary for deep, personal disclosures. In summary, this means that as RAs become close to their residents, they simultaneously become more comfortable around them, and they also become more likely to help them in crisis situations due to their shared identities.

Understanding and Level of Comfort

H2 predicted that RAs with a better understanding of identifying Title IX concerns will be more likely to feel comfortable reporting Title IX issues. H2 was supported as there was a positive correlation between the two variables. This means that individual RAs who believed they had a better understanding of the Title IX reporting process were more likely to feel comfortable reporting such instances. This result suggests that job competency is important for job comfort.

One of the first steps towards increasing job understanding is through precise Title IX training. Research suggests that employees who have a clear understanding of their job role performed significantly better than those who did not (Punita, 2011). Research also suggests that the more knowledge (and thus understanding) of the university's Title IX reporting procedures RAs have, the more likely they are to report the disclosure (and thus perform their job; Holland & Cortina, 2017b). Previous research also suggests that there is a link between training and comfort. Research on HIV/AIDS training showed that participants who received HIV/AIDS prevention training felt more comfortable discussing HIV/AIDS related issues with students (Deutschlander, 2009). These results could be extended to RAs' comfort with identifying and handling Title IX concerns.

Perceived Relational Complications and Betrayal of Trust

Since mandatory reporting can sometimes come as a surprise to survivors, it was important to assess what feelings RAs perceived survivors to feel when they disclose to a survivor about their mandatory reporter status. In addition to this, it was important to compare the aforementioned perceptions with the perception that relationships with residents complicate the Title IX reporting process. It was found that RAs who believed that their relationships with residents complicated the reporting process were more likely to believe that mandatory reporting was a betrayal of trust to the survivor. Thus, H3 was supported.

This result is consistent with the research on relationships and betrayal. Joskowicz-Jablonek and Leiser (2013) found that individuals felt more feelings of hurt when they were betrayed by someone they had an interpersonal relationship with rather than a stranger. Perhaps the idea that RAs project their own perceptions of betrayal (i.e., they recognize that they feel more betrayed by those closer to them as opposed to strangers) when interacting with survivors of sexual assault explains the results of this hypothesis.

Experience as an RA and Level of Comfort

Previous research has indicated a positive relationship between job experience and performance level (Quinones, Ford, & Teachout, 1995); therefore, it is necessary to examine the relationship between RAs' job experience (measured in semesters) and their level of comfort with mandatory reporting. The results of the current study did not produce similar findings, and thus, H4 was not supported. Instead, results showed there was no significant relationship between experience as an RA and level of comfort.

Perhaps RAs' comfort levels with reporting Title IX are based on experience of reporting Title IX concerns rather than the overall experience as an RA. Of the 116 individuals who

answered the question addressing experience reporting Title IX incidents, almost 64% of individuals ($n = 74$) had never reported a Title IX incident. Since a significant number of RAs had not reported a Title IX incident, it is possible that this may explain why I did not get the results I expected to find.

Perceived Relational Complications and Giving Support

Studies have shown that giving support is necessary for survivors' well-being, physical health, and mental health (Hakimi et al., 2016; Orchowski & Gidycz, 2015; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014; Ahrens et al., 2010), and therefore, it was important to examine RAs' comfort giving support. H5 suggested that the more RAs believed that their relationships with residents complicated the reporting process, the more comfortable they felt when giving support. This hypothesis was supported.

RAs believed that their relationship with residents played a role how comfortable they felt giving support to residents after they disclosed about sexual misconduct. The reason for this is unclear; however, it is possible that several other factors influenced this result. For example, one explanation for this is that younger individuals are more likely to help in these types of situations (Beeble, Post, & Sullivan, 2008). Beeble et al. (2008) examined the ways in which individuals helped survivors of IPV. Help took many forms which included various types of support (e.g, listening and contacting the police). The results showed that younger individuals were more likely to help survivors of IPV than older individuals. Given the age range of this current study's sample and the similarities between IPV and sexual assault, this finding seems applicable. Therefore, regardless of the relationship between RAs and residents, RAs should be more willing to help and offer support because they are younger.

A second outside factor may also play a role in RAs' willingness to give support: education. Previous research has found that individuals who have more education are more likely to have survivor-defined attitudes (Kulkarni, Herman-Smith, Caldwell Ross, 2015). Survivor-defined attitudes include acting in helpful ways such as listening, crafting solutions (i.e, giving survivors support to contact the police or support through resource referral), providing validation, and much more. Given that all participants in the current study have at least one year of college education, it seems reasonable to assert that education may play a role in their conceptualization of survivors, which in turn, plays a role in giving support regardless of their relationship with residents.

A third outside factor could be the similarity between RAs and their residents. As stated earlier, individuals are more likely to help others who are similar to them (Levine et al., 2005). Since RAs and residents have a shared identity as university students, it may be possible that this plays a role for RAs when giving support.

Finally, although this research did not assess relational closeness, it is possible that relational closeness played a small role in this finding. If relational closeness played a role in this finding, then these results share similarities with Feng and Magen's (2015) research on relational closeness and advice giving. Feng and Magen (2015) found that individuals were more likely to give unsolicited advice (as a form of support) to individuals they were close with than individuals they were not close with. This is difficult to assert because the idea that relationships complicate the reporting process does not immediately equate to relational closeness; however, relational complications as a result of relational closeness could possibly account for a small explanation.

Perceived Relational Complications and Likelihood to Follow Up

Many of the mental health issues caused by sexual assault, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression, can last from weeks to years. According to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.), in order for an individual to have a valid PTSD diagnosis, the symptoms must be present for at least six months (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Social support is very important in mental health recovery (Dai et al., 2016; Hefner & Eisenberg, 2009), and because of the prolonged nature of these mental health diagnoses, follow-up support is necessary.

Because RAs were considered a common resource of disclosure for survivors in other studies (Orchowski et al., 2009; Tamborra & Narchet, 2011), it was important to assess whether or not RAs in this study would follow up with residents after they disclose about their sexual assault. Testing of H6 looked at the correlation between RAs belief that their relationships with residents complicate the reporting process and their likelihood to follow up after Title IX incidents or disclosures. This hypothesis was supported: The more RAs thought that their relationship with residents complicated the reporting process, the more likely they were to follow up with residents after a Title IX incident or disclosure.

If RAs have an opportunity to follow up with residents after Title IX disclosures, then that means that RAs must have reported the incident. Due to FERPA regulations, RAs would not know whether or not their residents were sexually assaulted unless the resident spoke directly to them about that information (U.S. Department of Education, 2001a). Disclosing about sexual assault is very personal, and previous research has shown that people usually disclose to friends (Sabina & Ho, 2014; Walsh et al., 2010; Orchowski et al., 2009; Ahrens et al., 2007; Ullman, 1996a). Therefore, it is easy to assert that if RAs follow up with residents after they disclose

about their sexual assault, then they most likely have a close relationship with that resident. Research about helping others like us also supports this assertion (Levine et al., 2005).

Practical Implications

Most RAs already experience some form of Title IX training; however, RAs should go through specific training that educates them on the appropriate response to a sexual assault disclosure. These training programs should also attempt to increase their knowledge of effective support-giving because negative reactions to the disclosure or lack of support may lead to the revictimization of the survivor (Ullman, 1999). Because a huge disconnect exists between professionals intentions and survivors' perceptions, educational programs are needed to enlighten RAs about their possible biases, negative attitudes, or behaviors.

In addition to training on the appropriate response to sexual assault disclosures, RAs need to experience training that provides details of the Title IX process. Almost 50% of the participants in the current study did not know what happens after an incident is reported to the Title IX office. Previous research has shown that RAs' likelihood to report Title IX incidents and refer survivors to the correct resources depended on RAs' knowledge of the reporting process (Holland & Cortina, 2017b). If professionals want RAs to succeed when handling Title IX issues, it is clear that complete understanding of the process is necessary; however, the results from the present research show that this knowledge may be lacking.

Finally, approximately 35% of the participants in the current study felt that either RAs should not be mandatory reporters, or they reported that they did not know how to feel about RAs being mandatory reporters. Given that this is over a third of the group, it is clear that a specific conversation about the importance of mandatory reporting needs to be had with RAs. This conversation would ideally help RAs understand their role in the process better.

Since there are so many items to train RAs on besides Title IX, finding time for more Title IX-specific training could be difficult. One way housing departments can navigate this is through the use of in-service trainings throughout the year. Previous research on campus-wide programs showed that the more frequent Title IX related programs were, the more effective they were (Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011). If universities have more frequent Title IX training for their RAs, then we should expect to see similar outcomes.

Research Limitations

One methodological limitation of this study is that the survey was created before the hypotheses, so hypotheses were based off of survey questions instead of survey questions being based off of hypotheses. This resulted in a very long survey which could have caused participants to experience survey fatigue. Unfortunately, 35 participants had a completion rate of 50% or less. A shorter survey may have resulted in more completed surveys.

A second limitation of this study can be found in the procedure. One out of the 11 schools was sent follow-up reminders about the survey. This procedure was inconsistent, as it did not allow for participants from other schools to receive a reminder. In addition to this inconsistency, one study has shown that multiple requests for participation in a survey may actually cause participants to have a negative attitude towards surveys as a method of data collection (Goyder, 1986). This may have deterred RAs from participating.

Finally, a third limitation of this study was the nature of this topic. Since this topic evaluated individuals' job responsibilities, participants may have felt inclined to answer questions in a socially desirable way. This social desirability response bias may be motivated by RAs' job status. For example, when RAs learn about sexual misconduct and do not report it, it

can result in job termination. It is possible that RAs who completed the survey wanted to be seen as well-trained and competent employees in order to reduce their fear about job termination.

Future Research

The results from this study indicate a need for future research in regards to Title IX and RAs. Since little qualitative data currently exists on this topic, future research should assess RAs perceptions using interviews or focus groups. These methods could shed light on important themes that might not have appeared obvious to the current researcher. These results could be used later on in quantitative data. Future research should also examine how the specific relationships between RAs and residents affect the likeliness to report Title IX incidents. This data could help give gravity to the purpose of cultivating meaningful relationships with residents. Additionally, this data could help housing professional staff create more effective relationship building trainings. Finally, future research should examine survivors' thoughts of RAs' mandatory reporter status. This first-person research could indicate whether or not RAs' mandatory reporting status actually hurts or helps the survivor.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The results of this study show the importance of relationships between resident advisers (RAs) and their residents. In fact, the results of this study indicate that the relationships with residents can impact how comfortable RAs feel about reporting Title IX incidents, how comfortable they feel giving residents support, and whether or not they see mandatory reporting as a betrayal of trust. Additionally, the relationship between RAs and their residents can affect the likelihood that RAs will follow up after a Title IX incident.

The results also showed the importance of various factors on RAs' comfort with reporting Title IX incidents. For example, the more RAs understand about the Title IX process, the more likely they will be to feel comfortable when reporting these issues. Additionally, RAs' belief that their relationships with resident complicates the reporting process was shown to possibly influence their perceptions of survivors' perceptions of betrayal of trust

The results indicate a need for training that emphasizes the importance of rape/sexual assault attitudes and relationship building. The results also indicate a need for training that thoroughly describes the reporting process and what happens after reporting. Finally, these results indicate a need for more training on Title IX in order to make RAs feel more comfortable with the topic and reporting. An increase in training may look like follow-up trainings throughout the year. This study, along with future research, can shape how student staff employees interact with survivors of sexual assault.

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Appendices

Appendix A: UHSRC Approval Letters

Jan 11, 2018 4:29 PM EST

Jaclyn Shetterly

Comm Media and Theater Arts, Users loaded with unmatched Organization affiliation.

Re: Exempt - Initial - UHSRC-FY17-18-212 Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX

Dear Dr. Jaclyn Shetterly:

The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee has rendered the decision below for Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX. You may begin your research.

Decision: Exempt

Selected Category: Category 2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Renewals: Exempt studies do not need to be renewed. When the project is completed, please contact human.subjects@emich.edu.

Modifications: Any plan to alter the study design or any study documents must be reviewed to determine if the Exempt decision changes. You must submit a modification request application in [Cayuse IRB](#) and await a decision prior to implementation.

Problems: Any deviations from the study protocol, unanticipated problems, adverse events, subject complaints, or other problems that may affect the risk to human subjects must be reported to the UHSRC. Complete an incident report in [Cayuse IRB](#).

Follow-up: Please contact the [UHSRC](#) when your project is complete.

Please contact human.subjects@emich.edu with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee

Jan 15, 2018 2:12 PM EST

Jaclyn Shetterly

Comm Media and Theater Arts, Users loaded with unmatched Organization affiliation.

Re: Modification - UHSRC-FY17-18-212 Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX

Dear Dr. Jaclyn Shetterly:

The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Board has rendered the decision below for Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX.

Decision: Exempt

Findings:

Contact human.subjects@emich.edu with questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee

Jan 23, 2018 6:56 PM EST

Jaclyn Shetterly

Comm Media and Theater Arts, Users loaded with unmatched Organization affiliation.

Re: Modification - UHSRC-FY17-18-212 Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX

Dear Dr. Jaclyn Shetterly:

The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Board has rendered the decision below for Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX.

Decision: Minor Stipulations

Findings: Please respond to all comments in the application. Click "reply" to register and save your response. For changes in any of the supplemental documents, make changes in Track Changes mode or highlight all changes in the revised documents so that they can be easily seen. If you make any additional changes or do not address all of the comments, please include a letter explaining the changes and why you did not address specific comments. Please make any required revisions to the Cayuse IRB application and study documents, and upload the revised documents in the Cayuse IRB application.

Once your revisions are complete, the UHSRC will review your revisions and render a decision. You are not approved to conduct human subject research on this study. You may not begin your research until you receive an approval letter.

Please contact human.subjects@emich.edu with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee

Jan 24, 2018 11:50 AM EST

Jaclyn Shetterly

Comm Media and Theater Arts, Users loaded with unmatched Organization affiliation.

Re: Modification - UHSRC-FY17-18-212 Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX

Dear Dr. Jaclyn Shetterly:

The Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Board has rendered the decision below for Resident Advisers' Perceptions of their Mandatory Reporter Status under Title IX.

Decision: Exempt

Findings:

Contact human.subjects@emich.edu with questions and concerns.

Sincerely,

Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee

Appendix B: Survey

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Are you currently a mandated reporter?

Yes No I do not know

2. Are you currently a Resident Adviser/Assistant?

Yes No

3. Please indicate your gender identity?

Male Female Other _____ Prefer not to say

4. How many semesters have you been a Resident Adviser?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7+

5. What year in school are you?

1st year 2nd year 3rd year 4th year 5th year

6. In years, how old are you?

_____ (fill in the blank)

REPORTING

7. Have you ever reported a Title IX incident?

Yes No I do not know

8. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements compared to others?

I believe that I am able to correctly identify Title IX issues.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that I am able to correctly refer the survivor to the useful resources.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that I am able to effectively communicate with the survivor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. How do you feel about telling people that you are a mandatory reporter?

Very good	Good	Neutral	Bad	Very Bad
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10. Please rank the following items in order of importance. 1 = most important 4 = least important. You may only use each number once.

Who is mandated reporting most beneficial to?

- _____ The University
- _____ Victim/Survivor (the person involved in the incident)
- _____ You (the reporter)/Job Security
- _____ Other (include fill in the blank)

11. What motivates you to report? Please choose one.

- _____ Helping the survivor
- _____ Keeping my Job
- _____ Protecting the University
- _____ Other

12. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

In general, I believe mandatory reporting helps the survivor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, I believe that mandatory reporting hurts the survivor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

13. To what degree to you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I feel comfortable reporting Title IX incidents.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable telling the survivor that I am a mandated reporter.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. Please rank the following. 1 = the first thing I would do. 8 = the last thing I would do. 0 = would never do or not applicable. You may only use each number once.

When someone tells me about a Title IX reportable incident, my first reaction is:

- Call my supervisor
- Call the police
- Disclose that you are a mandated reporter
- Disclose about your personal experience with Title IX reporting, if applicable
- Disclose about your personal experience with another incident covered under Title IX, if applicable
- Offer them verbal condolences
- Physically comfort them/hug them
- Write the report

15. Please select the one best option.

When do you typically tell survivors that you are a mandatory reporter?

- After they disclose
- Before they disclose
- While they disclose
- I do not tell them

16. Please rank the following by using each option only once. 1=the most concerned. 2=the second most concerned. 3=the third most concerned. 4=the least concerned.

When reporting, whose well-being are you concerned about the most?

- _____ The University's
- _____ The Victim/Survivor's
- _____ You own/job security
- _____ Other (space for explanation)

IMPACTS OF REPORTING

17. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I believe that my relationship with my residents will make me less likely to report.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that reporting a Title IX incident will damage my relationship with that resident.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that my relationship with my residents will alter the resources I provide.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that my relationship with my residents will alter how I tell them I am a mandatory reporter.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
When I report a Title IX issue, I believe that it will affect the way I communicate with that resident.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that my relationship with that resident will determine my methods of follow-up.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

In general, mandatory reporting feels like a betrayal of trust.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, I believe that survivors will feel betrayed when I disclose I am a mandatory reporter.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

In general, mandatory reporting makes me feel bad.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, mandatory reporting has negative consequences to my position.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, mandatory reporting causes negative consequences to the University.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, mandatory reporting is harmful to the survivor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, mandatory reporting is harmful to my relationship with the survivor.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

20. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I believe that my relationships with my residents will hinder my abilities to report.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that reporting helps survivors.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that survivors will perceive mandatory reporting as good.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
In general, I believe mandatory reporting hurts survivors.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that my relationship with residents will make reporting complicated.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that having a relationship with my residents makes reporting less comfortable.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

SUPPORT GIVEN

21. Circle all that apply:

What types of support do you give survivors?

- Distraction
- Emotional support
- Listening support
- Physical presence support
- Physical touch support
- Resource support
- Support obtaining the police
- Validation/belief support

22. Please rank the following types of support to the survivor in order of importance.

1 = most important. 8 = least important. N/A = would not give that type of support.

- _____ Distraction
- _____ Emotional support
- _____ Listening support
- _____ Physical presence support
- _____ Physical touch support
- _____ Resource support
- _____ Support obtaining the police
- _____ Validation/belief

23. To what degree do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I feel comfortable distracting the survivor from the situation.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable providing emotional support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable providing listening support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable providing physical presence support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable providing physical (touch) support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable providing resource support.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable helping the survivor obtain the police.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel comfortable validating the survivor's emotions.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

24. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you believe the following:

Housing/Residence Life would want me to give support to a survivor.	Very Likely	Likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral	Somewhat Unlikely	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
The University would want me to give support to a survivor.	Very Likely	Likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral	Somewhat Unlikely	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
Support to a survivor could be harmful.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

ACTION ITEMS

25. Would you follow up with the resident after they disclosed to you?

Yes No I do not know

26. Please select one

When would you initially follow up with the resident after they disclosed to you?

Never; I would not follow up

Within 24 hours

Between 2 days and 1 week

Between more than 1 week, but less than 2 weeks

Between more than 2 weeks, but less than a month

Longer than 1 month

27. If someone were to disclose to you about a sexual assault situation, what would you do first? Second? Third? Please rank the following options in the order that you would do them.

- _____ Report the incident
- _____ Offer support to the survivor
- _____ Tell the survivor about resources

28. Using each number only once, please rank these in order of which item most benefits each individual. 1=most beneficial. 2=somewhat beneficial. 3=least beneficial.

Which item is most beneficial to the survivor?

- _____ Reporting the incident
- _____ Offering support to the survivor
- _____ Telling the survivor about resources

29. Using each number only once, please rank these in order of which item most benefits each individual. 1=most beneficial. 2=somewhat beneficial. 3=least beneficial.

Which item is most beneficial to you?

- _____ Reporting the incident
- _____ Offering support to the survivor
- _____ Telling the survivor about resources

30. Using each number only once, please rank these in order of which item most benefits each group. 1=most beneficial. 2=somewhat beneficial. 3=least beneficial.

Which item is most beneficial to the University?

- _____ Reporting the incident
- _____ Offering support to the survivor
- _____ Telling the survivor about resources

OTHER

31. After you submit a report, do you know what happens?

Yes No

32. In your own personal opinion, do you believe that RAs should be mandated reporters?

Yes No I do not know

Appendix C: Master's Thesis Approval Forms

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Graduate School

MASTER'S THESIS

Document Approval Form

Student Name Jaclyn Shetterly

Program of Study Communication ID# E 01573114

Academic Department/School Communication and Theatre Arts

College Arts and Sciences

TITLE OF THESIS

Resident Advisers' perceptions of their mandatory reporting status
under Title IX: How they can help survivors

DOCUMENT APPROVAL

COMMITTEE SIGNATURES

Chair Dennis O'Grady Date 3-7-2018
Members Jessica Elton Date 3/7/2018
John, Ziegler Date 3-7-2018
Date _____
Date _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COMPLETED THESIS

Date 3/7/18 Administrator John A. Cooper
(Department Head/School Director)

GRADUATE SCHOOL

DOCUMENT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND EDITED – DEGREE MAY BE CONFERRED

Date _____ Graduate School _____

Signed original goes to Record's student file. Copies/pdf to: Graduate School, chair, and department/college file

Figure 11. Thesis document approval form.

Note: some departments use a slightly different form changing the titles for the persons who will sign the document (e.g., English).

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Master's Thesis PROPOSAL

Approval Form

Student Name Jaclyn Shetterly Date of Meeting 12/19/2018

Program of Study Communication ID# E 01573114

TENTATIVE TITLE OF PROPOSED THESIS

Resident Advisers' perceptions of their mandatory reporting status under Title IX: How they can help survivors

COMMITTEE REPORT ON THESIS PROPOSAL

After review of the thesis proposal, the Thesis Committee certifies that:

The proposal is satisfactory and the candidate may proceed.

The proposed research does NOT involve the use of human or animal subjects

The proposed research involves human subjects and will be sent to the College Human Subjects Review Committee prior to data collection.

The proposal is not satisfactory and the following deficiencies must be corrected:²

Description of deficiencies _____

COMMITTEE SIGNATURES

Chair Name DENNIS O'GRADY Signature Dennis O'Grady

Member Name Jessia Elton Signature Jessica Elton

Member Name Tsai-Shan Shen Signature Tsai-Shan Shen

Member Name _____ Signature _____

Member Name _____ Signature _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PROPOSAL APPROVAL

Date 3/7/18 Program Coordinator/Dept Head John S. Cooper

Signed original form remains in the student's departmental/program file.

Figure 1. Thesis proposal approval form.

Note: some departments use a slightly different form, changing the titles for the persons who will sign the document (e.g., English, Psychology).