

Dear YU students,

As you may know, several months ago, the University asked me to serve as the Chair of a committee to evaluate the University's sexual harassment and assault policies and procedures. The University cares deeply that our community remains a safe and positive environment for all, and it continually seeks to make the processes more accessible and transparent for our student body. Today, I am writing to share our findings and recommendations.

Our committee, also comprised of Dean Sara Asher, Dean Joe Bednarsh, Rabbi Josh Blass, Dean Leslie Halpern, and Dean Danielle Wozniak, has spent the Fall semester reviewing the University's existing sexual harassment and assault policies and procedures. We met with several focus groups consisting of students, specialists and professionals in this field. Moreover, the committee, with the input of third-party experts, has evaluated a number of existing tools and resources that aid in keeping our campus safe. The committee's findings are as follows:

- The University follows all federal Title IX and NYS guidelines and procedures pertaining to sexual harassment and assault, and regularly updates its policies and procedures as those guidelines change from time to time.
- The University informs students of their right to seek assistance from law enforcement with the support of the University, and assures students that no one will be retaliated against for raising a concern or engaging in the complaint process.
- Sexual assault claims are outsourced by the University to top tier third-party firms who are experts in conducting such investigations and who fully investigate the allegations, including considering all available evidence provided to them by the parties and witnesses.
- Following the investigation, the parties are provided with an opportunity to review and comment on the full neutral investigative report and have the right to appeal the decision.
- The University has security protocols in place to protect the involved parties.
- As required by law, investigations are kept confidential by the University, although the parties themselves are never restricted from speaking about the incident or their experience.
- The University maintains specialized training for staff handling Title IX and related matters.

As a result of our evaluation, the committee has made the following recommendations to improve these processes.

1. A restructured Title IX Office should be established with a professional dedicated exclusively for sexual harassment and assault matters.
2. A concise flow chart with information describing our policies and procedures for dealing with allegations of sexual misconduct should be posted on the YU website. This flow chart would have appropriate links to the expanded and comprehensive policies and procedures documents already posted online.

3. SHARE Counselors (Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education) should be trained to be available to students to assist them in navigating our Title IX procedures.
4. The University's mandatory Title IX educational program for students should be enhanced with both in-person and online materials and training.

We care deeply about the safety and well-being of our students. Please feel free to reach out to me or any other committee member if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karen Bacon
The Mordecai D. Katz and Dr. Monique C. Katz Dean
Undergraduate Faculty of Arts and Sciences