

Presidential Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault Annual Report (2019-2020 and 2020-2021)

The Presidential Advisory Committee on Sexual Assault (PACSA) is one of several Columbia University initiatives to address gender-based misconduct and is charged with advising the president on issues related to the prevention of and response to gender-based misconduct, including sexual assault. The Committee continually works with partners and experts across the University to evaluate policies and procedures and solicit feedback from the Columbia community with the goal of eliminating sexual assault and other forms of gender-based misconduct from our community.

Membership

The Committee comprises faculty, staff, and students from the Morningside and CUIMC campuses. President Bollinger appointed five new members to the Committee for the 2019-2020 academic year for a two-year term concluding in Spring 2021, and five new members in the 2020-2021 academic year for a one-year term concluding in Spring 2021. A full membership roster is attached.

2019-2020 and 2020-2021 Discussions

During the 2019-2020 and 2020-21 academic years, partners across the University briefed the Committee on updates to the Title IX Regulations, services and programs that support gender-based misconduct prevention, and the University's process for addressing incidents of gender-based misconduct.

Specifically, the Committee discussed the following topics in the **2019-2020 academic year**:

- **Title IX Regulations changes and implementation timeline:** reviewed proposed changes to the Title IX Regulations, which were posted for public comment in December 2018. Originally scheduled to be released in January 2019, its release was delayed until after this Committee's meeting, with an implementation requirement of August 14, 2020. Once the revised regulations are released, the University will review and update its policy to meet requirements, in addition to providing training to students.
- **Gender-Based Misconduct Office's services:** updates from the Gender-Based Misconduct Office within Student Conduct and Community Standards, including potential impact of anticipated changes to the Title IX Regulations and ongoing engagement with students around the office's services and processes.
- **Sexual Violence Response programs, services and metrics:** transition to remote environment did not impact students' use of services. Spring programming participation rates are traditionally higher than in the Fall; participation rates in Spring 2020 were higher than prior year's, most likely due to the increased convenience of accessing virtual programming.

In the **2020-2021 academic year**, the Committee reviewed and discussed:

- Current **Title IX Regulations**, including the University's response to the new regulations that were implemented in mid-August 2020, ongoing engagement with students and student groups around the current University policies; and possible future changes to the Title IX Regulations by the USDOE.
- Updates from **Sexual Violence Response** with regards to education and prevention programs, in addition to increased attention by SVR supports for online harassment and stalking. Participation in SVR programs continue to increase, possibly due to increased flexibility and accessibility with programs being held online.
- Data from the **2020 Columbia Student Well-Being Survey**, specifically related to students' experiences with sexual respect and gender-based misconduct at Columbia.

Recommendations

The Committee recommends that offices across the University continue to work to **increase student engagement and participation** in ongoing education and prevention efforts and **awareness and use** of available resources. This is especially important given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and when students start transitioning back to campus. Workshop and training feedback forms, along with University-wide surveys such as the Columbia Student Well-Being Survey, the ACHA-NCHA Survey, and others can guide offices to better ascertain the impact of and refine various programming and services.

The Committee also recommends that it **revisit this committee's goals**, along with an outline of the **committee's plans** for the new academic year. Additionally, future meetings that include updates to the Committee will have key partners from across the University, including students, staff, and faculty.