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Consultative minutes 03/27/2014

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Consultative Committee

Prairie Lounge
March 27, 2014
8:30-9:30 a.m.

Committee members present: Co-chair Ray Schultz, Jim Barbour, LeAnn Dean, Janet Ericksen, Nancy Helsper, Jean Rohloff, Heather Waye, Jim Hall, Chad Braegelmann
Substitute student representatives: Jayce Koester, Grace Geier

Guests: David Israels-Swenson, Sandy Olson-Loy, Jonas Newhouse, Jesse Carlson

There has been an increasing awareness on campus of the issue of sexual assault; our guests were invited today to review orientation activities related to this issue and to discuss possible improvements.

Sandy Olson-Loy – have been talking about this issue a lot this year. We have received a Dept of Justice grant and looked at building a program that will bridge campus and community. Incidents on college campuses nationwide are significant, updates on the Violence on Women Act have clarified expectations, Cleary Act reports and follow-up have generated \$387,000 in fines. Recent issues in the military have made more people more aware and increased recognition of the problem.

This fall, we have been working towards compliance with the campus SaVE act (Sexual Violence Elimination) and will provide additional education for all new students, faculty, and staff. The rules are still being made so there are no handbook updates yet, but we are demonstrating our best intent on being compliant.

There was a recent incident on Facebook chat where there was discussion about an apparent report of a sexual assault and concern about a lack of campus response. There was no report of sexual assault – it was looked into closely and simply didn't occur. If the perception out there is that there will be no response to a report, then those who are assaulted may not report. There has been at least one report (and typically more like 3 or 4) per year of assault, stalking, etc.

Dave Israels-Swenson - Starting Fall 2004 there has been a mandatory program as part of student orientation, and this has evolved over the years. We used to separate the students by gender but now work with them as a single group. The presentation has evolved to be more hands-on and more experience-related. "The Party" consists of staged scenes within a party environment, with discussion about what happened during the party. There is also additional panel discussion with campus police and student counseling, which was new this year. Next year, the Aurora Center will do their presentation and we are developing a new program, "Green Dot," which may replace The Party.

Sandy Olson-Loy – The Aurora Center training is similar to that seen (and recommended) by members of the Consultative panel, and has been recommended by the student behavior committee training group as well. First-year students are over-represented as victims/survivors and perpetrators, so it is necessary to include a training and awareness program in orientation.

(General questions and discussion)

Do students find the training helpful? Students have been asked for feedback in a survey approximately 4 weeks after orientation. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 the highest), The Party has scored around 3.4 to 3.7 over the last several years, and the panel was rated 3.69.

Why not helpful? This is not indicated on the survey, but informal discussion with students suggests that it has to do with the format. They are invited to participate in a party, and 15 to 20 minutes into it things happen. Students complain that this breaks up the party and are disappointed.

The panel allows discussion with smaller groups, while The Party involved everyone in a large group. The Aurora Center presentation will be a good way to integrate what we have done so far, and take it to the next level. We are fortunate to have access to trained experts at the Twin Cities, and we can loop in local people too, who are more familiar with this campus. The question is whether the Aurora Center people can come out here for our orientation.

MPIRG is bringing the Aurora Center presentation to campus on April 1st (6pm in the Science Auditorium). This presentation will be geared towards students as part of Consent Week. The student organizations will also have panels and tables on resources available. Students are committed to bringing this issue forward, and want more inclusive consent programming. They would also like to do a floor program in the dorms on consent, which would involve smaller groups, allow for direct questions and anonymous questions.

What is the data on sexual assault? What is the male/female ratio for victims or perpetrators? Sandy Olson-Loy will forward the information, but victims are 89% female and perpetrators are 89-90% male.

Is the training largely about how to avoid putting oneself in bad situations? It is important to point out that the number of men who will be perpetrators is small – 94% will not be perps. The training is to empower bystanders to step in, how to overcome social inertia. There are nice guys vs good guys – one can identify who may be likely to cause trouble. For example, the intended perp will drink less but encourage others to drink more to encourage consent. The training is also to help people understand what respectful relationships look like, to address the responsibility to keep oneself safe and responsibility of others to step in. The Party tries to point this out, but there's a fine line between telling people how to keep safe and policing behaviors (i.e. you shouldn't wear this type of clothing). The panel in the past has been successful in that students do ask questions, and the panel can inform students about their options (i.e. call even if have been drinking, there is some forgiveness).

What is the Green Dot program? This is a nation-wide bystander education initiative. It is based on the premise of a map where terrible incidents are marked with red dots, so the green dots show where people are taking steps to stop abusive behavior and to support potential victims. The training focuses on what you say and how to intervene. It is a 6 to 8 hour training session. The goal here is to train 1000 students on campus next year, and include faculty, staff, and community. Certified trainers can bring this program to UMM.

Chad Braegelmann received an email about a program for coaches to develop appropriate behaviors in young men. Preventing assault may also involve changes in perception – the perps

and the men around them don't think about their behavior as predatory, so the goal is to learn how to recognize it and address it.

These issues also go deeper, and involve relationships between friends and people dating. There is pressure within relationships. Green Dot also empowers people to take care of their friends in relationships. Many of the incidents within relationships are not reported, and sometimes people don't know that lack of respect of "no" within a relationship is a problem. Orientation should include how to create respectful relationships and what comprises violation of consent. Smaller-group floor planning would be a better way to address this, especially to talk about issues that are not as black and white. Green Dot will not just be aimed at incoming students and so will also address relationship issues among older, upper-level students.

What about curricular methods to reinforce training? In IC courses? This could be another checkpoint. The problem is that if we dump everything into the IC courses, there will be no room left for content. Perhaps a requirement outside of class, where the instructor ensures completion but does not include it in the course material. We could discuss this with Bart Finzel next visit. Green Dot will also act to reinforce training beyond the first year.

Next week will be a special panel meeting, so the regular meeting is cancelled. Note that we will meet in Welcome Center 122 in April.

Respectfully submitted by Heather Waye