



U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION
REGION 1

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TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Office of the President

May 3, 2001

Thomas J. Hibino, Director
US Dept of Education, Office of Civil Rights
Region 1
John W McCormack Post Office and Courthouse, Rm 222
Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109
(Compliance Review No. 01-00-6002)

Dear Mr. Hibino,

The U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights ("OCR") has, during the past several months, conducted a proactive review of sexual harassment issues. In a letter dated August 4, 2000, addressed to me, OCR noted that one of its goals was to work collaboratively with the University to improve procedures and the climate on the campus. This letter is in response to that goal.

A. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures should be designed to result in the prompt and equitable resolution of all complaints of sexual harassment. In this regard, the Judicial Affairs Section in the Dean of Students Office for Arts & Sciences maintains files concerning complaints made about student behavior. The OCR visit provided an opportunity to take a broad look at the timeliness of responses to complaints. We believe that the system works well, treats seriously complaints of sexual harassment and assault, and provides consistent, satisfactory outcomes. We recognize that there are occasional delays in the process caused by students taking time to decide their next step or to consult with family, friends, and/or counsel. Delays may also occur because of the academic calendar constraining University community members during exam periods, holidays, and summer recess. This is visible in the absence of documents from some files that do not appear to meet time frames that might be expected based on the booklet Tufts University Student Disciplinary System for Arts & Sciences. Conversations with the OCR team were helpful in pointing out the importance to both parties of communications about complaint status

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and next steps, even when the communication is that something will not happen according to schedule for legitimate reasons. In addition, we are currently reviewing our Sexual Harassment Policy Brochure to insure that time line expectations are reasonable. A draft revision of the policy will then be submitted to OCR for review in July, 2001, with a goal of implementation in September, 2001. Additionally, the Dean of Students Office will adopt a system of "next step" communications, such as letters that indicate reasons for delay. This system will be submitted to OCR in July, 2001 and put into place by September of 2001.

B. PREVENTION

OCR has informed us that focus groups assembled during the review indicated a lack of student knowledge, especially among international students, about the definition of sexual harassment, our Title IX Coordinator, and about sexual harassment procedures. Training and education are extremely important to reducing the incidence of sexual harassment and to insuring it is effectively addressed when it does occur. The residential staff are trained to deal with sexual harassment. These students often are the first to learn of potential problem situations. We believe, however, that staff would benefit from more extensive training in this area at the beginning of each year. We plan to build oversight of this educational process into the position description of the new Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity by September of 2001.

Orientation for all first year students includes a program called, "Why No Means No" which is specifically designed to increase these students' awareness, early in their college career, of possible sexual harassment issues. Additionally, during orientation for incoming students, the Department of Public Safety offers training on topics regarding personal safety, including protecting oneself from becoming a victim. In the future, orientation will include added programming on "quid pro quo", "hostile environment", and the more subtle aspects of sexual harassment. This will begin in the fall of 2001.

In addition, we will make special efforts to have the Directors of Cultural Centers in general, and the International Student Center in particular, train their target populations about recognizing, preventing, and addressing sexual harassment issues.

C. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Colleges and universities nationally recognize that fraternities have been and continue to be the source of so-called "environmental" concerns for women on campus. The combination of alcohol consumption, parties, and male-dominated settings can create an environment where unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature can occur. Tufts University realizes that it is not immune from this and the University has been proactive in addressing such problems. Fraternity officers receive training on these issues every year and new pledges are required to participate in a seminar/workshop series including sessions on sexual harassment and rape. We will continue to pursue vigorously all complaints filed against members of fraternities, either individually or as members of the organizations.

D. TITLE IX COORDINATOR

Our Title IX program is housed in the Office of Equal Opportunity. However, the specific term, "Title IX" carries little meaning in our community except among those involved with equal opportunity for the genders in athletic programs. We are actively involved in discussing how best to describe and publicize the Title IX function and will expand discussion about the role of the Coordinator in orientation and in publications to students, parents and the entire campus community.

The sexual harassment brochure, currently being revised in Spring 2001, will indicate that the Title IX Coordinator function is based in the Tufts Office of Equal Opportunity ("OEO"). The revised brochure will be disseminated annually (as our current brochure is) to all students, faculty, and staff through campus mail and email. This brochure will inform the Tufts community that sexual harassment complaints may be filed directly with the US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights as well as with Tufts Office of Equal Opportunity. Appropriate addresses and telephone numbers will be included. Links to the brochure are also available through the Tufts home page. OEO is working on establishing a link from its web site to OCR's web site, thus providing easy access to OCR's regulations by June 1, 2001.

We have responded to concerns raised by OCR that all aspects of the Title IX regulations are coordinated centrally. To this end, OEO receives and will continue to receive summaries of all reports of alleged sexual harassment incidents that are reported to the Department of Public Safety and all other mandatory reporting offices such as the Dean of Students Office. The Title IX Coordinator also convenes the University Sexual Harassment Resource Persons along with the Academic Deans bi-annually for the purposes of instruction and coordination. Discussions will continue to include descriptions of typical sexual harassment scenarios and to provide opportunities for consultation designed to insure consistency of sanctions University wide. To further assure that the Title IX Coordinator oversees all aspects of Title IX regulations throughout the University, the Coordinator will maintain communication with various student and university groups including but not limited to: Tufts Men Against Violence (TMAV), Student Sexual Response Assistance Advocates (SSRAA), and The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC).

E. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Tufts practices Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and periodically evaluates environmental factors which could add to or detract from the security of the campus. Additionally, periodic security inspections occur with members of the Tufts Police and representatives of the Student Senate. The most recent inspection occurred on March 16, 2001, and included the areas around the Science and Technology Center.

With the exception of two lights which were found to be non-functional, we are satisfied that the conditions around the Science and Technology Center reflect similar conditions around

the university and therefore felt no further enhancements were needed. Repair orders were submitted for the non-functional lights.

Approximately 60 "Blue Light" telephones exist on this campus. These phones require only that the caller push a red button for the call to be answered directly by Public Safety Officers. The Department of Public Safety periodically conducts inspections to determine whether additional phones are needed.

In March of 2001, the Department of Public Safety implemented a walking escort service, which is a new, free service provided by trained Tufts students whose sole responsibility is to respond to requests for escorts*. The service will run from March 2001 until May 3, 2001 and will resume in the fall of 2001. The service runs on weekdays from 9pm-1am and on weekends from 10pm-2am. In addition, the Tufts University Police Department will continue to be available to provide escorts twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The Department of Public Safety will continue to seek periodic input from members of the Tufts community as to the effectiveness of this program. The Department of Public Safety will also continue to maintain the existing shuttle service between Davis Square and the campus. This service runs three to four times per hour from 7:20 am to 2:00 am on weekdays and from 10:00 am to 2:00 am on weekends.

* See appended Tufts Daily article dated April 17, 2001, entitled "Student escorts available late-night"

F. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REPORTING MECHANISMS

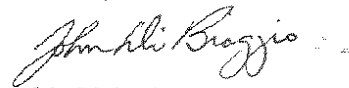
Students on a relatively small campus such as Tufts Medford/Somerville campus will always have some concerns about maintaining their confidentiality when reporting instances of sexual harassment by their peers. The University recognizes the need to work to reach an appropriate balance between assuring complainants' confidentiality so that filing of complaints will not be discouraged, and permitting the Title IX Coordinator to investigate complaints effectively.

As part of a collaborative effort between Tufts and the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, we plan to institute a confidential sexual harassment helpline in the fall of 2001. Certified rape crisis counselors, currently being trained in a credit-bearing course, will staff the helpline*. As part of advertising the helpline, we will regularly publish flyers, newspaper articles, and other information relevant to sexual harassment in addition to making the information available during orientations and RA meetings. These activities will be aided by a federal grant awarded to the Tufts Women's Center. We expect these activities to increase significantly the awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment and mechanisms available to one experiencing it.

* See appended Tufts Observer article dated April 6, 2001, entitled "Tufts Launches Sexual Assault Help Line"

On behalf of the Tufts University community, I want to thank you and the other representatives of OCR for the time you have spent with us during this review. Tufts has always aggressively dealt with sexual harassment and will, of course, continue to do so in the future. Again, thank you for your input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John DiBiaggio".

John DiBiaggio
President
Tufts University

Appendix A

Checklist

- 1) Audit of lighting at the Science and Technology Center by Department of Public Safety completed March 16, 2001. (Section E)
- 2) Link Tufts web site on sexual harassment to OCR web site by June 1, 2001. (Section D)
- 3) Draft plan of "next step" procedures by the Dean of Students Office for OCR review by July 2001. The goal for implementation is September, 2001. (Section A)
- 4) Complete revised draft of the Sexual Harassment Policy Brochure by August, 2001. (Sections B, D & F)
- 5) Design and implement training for first year students on "quid pro quo", "hostile environment", and the more subtle aspects of sexual harassment by fall 2001. (Section B)
- 6) Revise position description for Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity to include responsibilities of the Title IX Coordinator by September, 2001. (Sections B & D)
- 7) Disseminate information about Title IX function to students, parents and the campus community through expanded orientation and published information by September 2002. (Sections B & D)

Student escorts available late-night

by CHRIS GOODCHILD

Contributing Writer

Police officers are no longer the only option for students seeking to be escorted across campus in the wee hours of the morning. Two weeks ago, the Department of Public Safety started offering student escorts in addition to the regular police escorts for anyone journeying through campus late at night.

The service resulted from the work of Senator Margery Yeager, co-chair of the Tufts Community Union Senate's Culture, Ethnicity, and Community Affairs committee. Yeager felt that, in the wake of a rash of late crimes early last semester, there was need for extra measures to be taken in order to ensure student safety.

The new student service -- which provides walking escorts only -- is available from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. during weeknights and 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. on weekends.

Though Tufts University Police Department (TUPD) officers escort students 24 hours a day, wait times during the weekends can be lengthy. The student escort services will hopefully alleviate this problem and increase student safety.

"We thought that supplementing [the existing police escorts] during peak hours with student escorts could decrease waiting times when the police are busy, and also make students more likely to use the service," Yeager said.

Seniors Eddie Galbavy and Brian Walsh were selected to be the first escorts by TUPD Sergeant Sonya Rodrigues from only a handful of applicants. Rodrigues interviewed the candidates in the way security guards would be interviewed, and then chose Galbavy and Walsh because of their experience and familiarity with the campus.

"We're very pleased with them," Rodrigues said.

see: ESCORT, page 13

MAR 19, 2001 THE TUFTS DAILY page 1

Two seniors selected as first student escorts

ESCORT
continued from page 1

"They're both dependable, and we put our trust in them."

Once selected, the escorts went through a basic security officer training program, which consisted of watching a series of videos and using Internet-based learning tools. In addition, they were both taught standard police procedure regarding reports and radio protocol.

Galbavy became interested in

the program after reading about the idea in the Daily. He said that the escort's hours were what drew him, but also felt that the job was a good way to "convey my trust in the school, and my confidence that this is a good place."

To request a walking escort, students can call the police department at x7-3030 and leave their name, identification number, and say where they are and where they want to go. When the escort arrives, he will introduce himself,

ask to see the student's ID card, and take them to their destination. Escorts will be easily identifiable by their uniform orange student escort vests.

This is not the first time Tufts has offered late-night safety services. Five years ago, the University piloted a free emergency taxi service, but was forced to suspend the service three weeks later due to widespread abuse of the program.

Tufts Launches Sexual Assault Help Line

by MEAGHEN AKMAN
Observer Editorial Board

Next fall, Tufts University will launch its first-ever student-run advocacy program in an effort to combat sexual assault. This endeavor is largely funded through a grant awarded to Tufts University by the Violence Against Women Office of the U.S. Department of Justice two years ago.

Student Sexual Assault Response Assistance, SSARA, which begins in October of 2001, will be available to students both on and off campus. SSARA's purpose is primarily to assist survivors of sexual assault. The network is a group of trained students who have volunteered to serve as assistants for survivors of sexual assault. Assistants will be accessible 24 hours a day by phone. The assistants are available to serve the victims/survivors in a variety of ways including: assistance with emergency rape crisis treatment and emergency medical services, including accompanying the survivor to the hospital, the police, etc., as requested. Also, assistants will provide advice and refer students to the

proper resources for obtaining either campus restraining orders or criminal restraining orders. SSARA will also offer assistance in contacting community resources such as the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, as well as

available to sexual assault survivors. The committee, comprised of the Dean of Students Office, Health Services, the Office of Residential Life, TUPD, the Women's Center, the LGBT Center, the Office of Alcohol and Health Education, the Counseling Center and the Africana Center, agreed that an effort should be made to consolidate resources. "It'll be interesting to see what happens," said Dean of Students Bruce Reitman.

Present statistics from the Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery show that one in four college women has been the victim of rape or attempted rape in her college years. This year, the Dean of Students Office has dealt with two cases of rape, two cases of domestic violence, one sexual assault and other issues such as annoying phone calls. They have dealt with these incidents, also recognizing that sexual assault often goes unreported on college campuses. Since 1987, Tufts University has seen 39 reported cases of

rape. Dean Reitman maintains that this statistic is typical when comparing Tufts to other institutions. "We have a higher rate of report-

Sexual Assault Statistics

1 in 4 women has been a victim of rape or attempted rape during her college years*

Cases seen, this academic year, by the Dean of Students Office*

- Rape: 2
- Domestic Abuse: 2
- Sexual Assault: 1

Boston College's Sexual Assault Hotline averages 15 calls a semester*

* Statistics taken from the Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery, Dean of Students Office and Boston College's Peer Education Network

give general support and assistance as requested by individuals.

The decision to create this student-run help-line originated in a coordinating committee formed to organize and revamp resources

Please see **HELP** page 3

Boston Crisis Center Trains Students To Become Rape Crisis Counselors

HELP

Continued from page 1

ing than most schools largely due to the effectiveness of ResLife staff and the work of Peggy Barrett," said Dean Reitman.

Last winter, the university offered Rape Crisis Counseling Certification as a course through the Department of Physical Education. More than 30 students enrolled, showing the administration that significant concern on the part of the students did exist. Members of the administration have also taken advantage of this opportunity by enrolling in the class to become state-certified rape crisis counselors. "This class has taught me so much, especially how isolated a survivor can feel, and if I can help just one person next year, it will be worth it," said freshman Ven Mendel.

The university employed the services of the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center to certify and properly train students to become rape crisis counselors. BARCC also facilitated training for Boston College's help-

line, the Sexual Assault Network, SANet. Since its inception, SANet has received, on average, 15 calls a semester. Boston College's advocacy service began approximately five years ago when students responded negatively to a campus-wide survey regarding their sense of safety. Those who staff SANet underwent three and one-half days of training to prepare for their work. The Women's Resource Center of Boston College characterized the help-line as successful. Volunteers for SSARA will complete numerous reading and homework assignments in addition to a research paper concomitantly obtaining more than 45 hours of training to be fully certified by BARCC.

Presently, each student will be state-certified in rape crisis counseling at the conclusion of the course following intense training. Applications were given to the students currently enrolled in the course as a first step in creating the foundation of certified counselors who will make up SSARA. "It's a fantastic idea and all in all, a positive addition to the campus," said TCU President David Moon.

The coordinating committee has proposed the SSARA consist of certified student counselors who are available 24 hours a day to provide support and help to members of the Tufts community, informing them of resources and options regarding medical attention, legal options and university judicial process. To contact an assistant, a phone number will be available. Callers will be patched through to a SSARA representative and may remain anonymous if they so choose.

Other members of the coordinating committee have committed themselves to combating violence against women. The Office of Residential Life will utilize BARCC in its Residential Staff training as well as continually updating its staff with available information and resources. Proctors and RAs will again be trained in intervention protocols and maintain the responsibility of being confidential sources on campus. TUPD will continue to offer rape aggression defense courses, RAD, through the Experimental College, in addition to shorter six-week courses.