



# Campus Culture Task Force

RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Executive Summary**

On September 10, 2020, President Bateman sent a letter to all College constituents outlining the charge of the Campus Culture Task Force:

Examine Randolph College's current programming and recommend additional work that can be done to improve the campus culture on consent and respect on campus.

President Bateman continued, stating that the Task Force should “recommend to me training and practices that can improve our campus culture.” View Press Release [here](#).

In this document the Task Force provides seven recommendations to include: Creating a Campus Culture Advisory Board; Rebuilding Trust; Rethinking Education and Training; Creating Campus-wide Messaging & Providing Clarification; Restructuring the Campus Advocates program; Administering a Campus Climate Survey; and Emphasizing an Honorable Culture of Respect. Further details about each recommendation can be found in this report.

For each of the recommendations offered within this report, the Task Force emphasizes that student involvement should be prioritized. Input from current students and alumni needs to be solicited actively through communication with student leaders, open forums, and membership on the Advisory Board. Transparency, as much as is possible, is key.

## **Recommendations**

### **Creating a Campus Culture Advisory Board**

The Task Force recommends the creation of a standing Campus Culture Advisory Board that will implement the recommendations in this document and be responsible for ongoing oversight of programs related to the concerns of Campus Culture. The Task Force proposes that this Board be composed of faculty, staff, students and alumni. It is preferable that faculty and alumni members of the Board have knowledge about or experience with Title IX. The addition of a parent to this Board would be an asset.

The Title IX Coordinator and/or the Deputy Title IX Coordinators should sit on this Board but they should not chair it. This Board is — and should remain — related to but separate from the Title IX Team.

The Board should be given a budget and should report directly to President Bateman.

### **Rebuilding Trust**

While much of the work that accompanies compliance with Title IX requires confidentiality, the College must find ways to achieve transparency and openness whenever possible. Our community — students, staff, faculty, and alumni — need to feel they can trust that the College is acting in their best interests. Open lines of communication are vital. The College should make clear what it has done in the last year — the hiring of the law firm Troutman Pepper to examine our Title IX program, the hiring of PerryUndem to design a Campus Climate survey, the decision to hire a Title IX Coordinator whose sole focus is on Title IX concerns, among other acts — and how it seeks to move forward. Making public whatever parts of the Troutman Pepper report that the College can, without breaching confidentiality, is vital. Full results of the Campus Climate Survey should be published and made available to the College community and should be put in a prominent place on the College website.

### **Athletics**

There is a sense on campus that male student-athletes are more likely to both be assailants and receive different, special treatment if accused and if found responsible. It is imperative that both aspects of these assumptions are addressed (while, as always, maintaining confidentiality). As a start, whenever possible, all College constituents should be encouraged to emphasize that these students are students first and athletes second; it is important that a specific group of students not be considered extraordinary, either in a positive or negative light. All student-athletes should have training sessions devoted to issues of consent, definitions of sexual violence, and bystander issues (see more in Specific Programming for student-athletes, below).

### **Platform: Feedback and Questions**

The Task Force recommends the creation of a platform where College constituents can voice their concerns, receive feedback such that they feel that they are heard, ask questions, and receive regular updates. Consistently publicizing the existence of this platform is important.

The Task recommends the creation of an online feedback survey so that those who have experiences with Campus Security, members of the Residence Life staff, or members of the Title IX Team can voice their opinions about the interactions. Measures must be made to build trust between community members. Results from this survey need to be taken seriously.

### **Counseling**

The Task Force recommends that there be at least one member of the counseling staff with deep knowledge of the issues surrounding sexual assault and trauma. In addition, the Task Force recommends that stronger connections with community counseling services be forged and students be made aware of off-campus counseling opportunities and options.

### **On-Call Staff**

The Task Force recommends the evaluation and assessment of response times for calls by Campus Security, Resident Assistants and Head Residents according to best practices for how long response times should be. In addition, the Task Force recommends that there be more security on-call during the times that see more activity (i.e., nights and weekends).

The Task Force recommends that there are both male and female security personnel available to take reports. Training should be targeted so that there is consistency in the way that reports are taken. Consideration should be made as to whether there should be an outside party present (potentially a trained campus advocate, a trained local alum, or a member of SARP) when reports are taken.

The Task Force recommends that security personnel be required to be trained in issues of sexual assault and trauma, if they are not already. They need to receive specific, in-person training (not just via an on-line module), and evidence of this training should be made public so as to help establish trust between students and security personnel.

Information for contacting security needs to be made as clear and as easily accessible as possible. The Task Force recommends listing contact information for security personnel in both the black/grey strip of information at the bottom of the College's home page or in one of the tabs on the side of the website and again on the Student Life home page. If possible, the creation of an app for calling security would be helpful.

### **Rethinking Education and Training**

The Task Force understands that the Department of Education requires training of all members of the College community, but does not specify the parameters. The Task Force believes that the content offered through programs like EVERFI is not sufficient. All members of the Randolph community — faculty, staff, and students — should be required to engage in training at least once a year and these trainings should be varied (i.e., not all via an on-line module).

The Task Force recommends that the College apply for a “Grant to Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Violence and Stalking on Campus Program” from the Department of Justice’s Office of Violence Against Women. The College has applied in the past but the Task Force thinks that it may be time to apply again.

The Task Force recommends that the Title IX coordinators at our peer and aspirant schools are contacted and that, when it is time to undertake our own programming, the Advisory Board compare what they are doing with what the College has planned. The Task Force believes much can be learned from similar institutions.

### **Additional Education**

The Task Force recommends that additional educational opportunities be offered throughout the academic year and that they are not geared primarily (or solely) to first-year students (as tends to be the case with Orientation Week programming). While it makes sense to group programs in certain months (in October for sexual assault awareness month or April for domestic violence awareness month), doing so implies that these are issues that the Randolph community needs to think about only at specific times of the year.

### **Additional Programming Opportunities**

The Task Force recommends that the small size of Randolph be taken into account — and taken advantage of — and that more small-group opportunities and robust in-house programming are developed including those that speak more directly to our students’ lived experiences.

The newly established monthly Student Sexual Assault Support Group meetings, run by SARP-YMCA, are a wonderful example of this kind of programming. More of this type of programming is important.

[Culture of Respect](#) has a two-year program that brings together institutions of higher education who are dedicated to ending campus sexual violence and guides them through a rigorous process of self-assessment and targeted organizational change. The College should explore whether this would be a good fit for Randolph. Application for participation in the next cohort opens in Fall 2021.

Other programs that may be worth investigating include [“It’s On Us,”](#) [“End Rape on Campus,”](#) [Empathy Training,](#) [Sensitivity Training;](#) and various programs offered by Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (in particular those on prevention and advocacy).

### **Assessment of Current Programming**

The Task Force is pleased to see the lengthy list of programs that the Dean of Students’ Office currently schedules. It seems important, though, that there be some type of assessment to discover which of these programs are most successful (and to decide what “success” looks like). The Task Force recommends the creation of assessment protocols for these different training/education events separate from those undertaken for the College’s Institutional Effectiveness endeavours and SACS accreditation.

The Task Force recommends that a student committee is created to provide feedback regarding what types of education/training students are asking for/feel that they need, rather than rely on a top-down approach. In addition, creating a system whereby students can anonymously ask questions is helpful.

### **LMA Connection**

As part of the required first-year Life More Abundant course, the Task Force recommends that a “Culture of Respect” curriculum be woven into the fabric of this course. Ideas include expanding the current conversations on campus about honor to encompass concerns about bodily autonomy; to encourage students to speak their needs, desires, and opinions, and listen to the needs, desires, and opinions of others; to gain a better understanding of what it means to be a member of this community. Having faculty from multiple disciplines speak to these topics in a consistent manner may also be helpful and will do much to indicate that the College sees these issues as a College-wide concern, not one that is discipline- or program-specific or under the purview of a handful of faculty members.

### **Subjects to include in Trainings**

Specific aspects that should be featured in trainings include, but are not limited to:

#### **Consent**

Questions need to be asked about what students hear when “consent” is discussed. The College needs to talk about consent so that it is more than just “no means no”; similarly, there needs to be greater education surrounding ideas of affirmative consent, including why individuals might not be able to give affirmative consent and how trauma affects bodily response and memory.

The Task Force provides this article: [‘Yes Means Yes’: Can Teaching Good Sex Prevent Rape on Campus? A seminar at Colgate University teaches students that consent is a bare-](#)

[minimum requirement for sex](#) as a way to consider alternative methods to teaching issues that surround consent.

### **SARP**

The Task Force strongly recommends that the College take advantage of the trainings that SARP (Sexual Assault Reponse Program) is willing to offer. SARP is willing to train students annually (and at no cost) on issues of consent. They have provided a refresher course for Campus Advocates in January; they are facilitating a once-a-month group session for survivors on campus. These are the types of programs that the College needs.

### **Prevention**

Key to concerns of the community are that the College needs to find more and better ways to stop assault and empower the students to say no, help others say no, and listen more closely to one another. It is vital that students understand that their voices are powerful and that they need to speak up in order to be heard.

The Task Force recommends adding both self-defense courses outside of — and, in addition to — scheduled Physical Education credits as a means to encourage feelings of empowerment and a way to reclaim one’s voice and bystander training for different groups on campus (e.g., sports teams, secret societies, spirit groups, Davenport leaders, Resident Assistants, and assorted clubs).

The Task Force also recommends that there be more blue lights installed on campus and more emergency phones.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

Given that incidents of sexual assault are highly correlated with alcohol and drug use, conversations about these relationships need to be undertaken. Students need to be aware of the amnesty policies that surround reporting when alcohol or drugs are involved. It is not enough to have a single event during Orientation Week that deals with these issues. It is also naive to believe that talking with students about the dangers of drinking and drugs means that they will not partake in either activity. Programming needs to be pragmatic.

### **Specific programming for student-athletes**

[ONELOVE](#) is an organization that provides workshops to student-athletes to recognize the warning signs of abuse and teaches them to build healthier relationships. A program called [AlphaPoint](#) deals with a broader range of topics: bullying, hazing, relationship and harassment issues.



## **Creating Campus-wide Messaging & Providing Clarification: *‘What Title IX is and What it is Not’***

It is vital that information about Title IX and related issues of sexual assault be easily found on campus as well as on the College website, and that information about Title IX issues are conveyed clearly and consistently.

The Task Force acknowledges that the changes made to the Title IX sections of the website are a step in the right direction. However, information that deals directly with the ways to report an incident needs to be more obvious. It should be one of the first things a viewer sees. In addition, the Task Force believes that there should be messaging via other social media platforms where our students get most of their information: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook.

The recommendations about messaging focus on how the College conveys information to those at the College, how the College gets information transmitted between different groups at the College, and how the College presents this information to the world beyond the Red Brick Wall.

### **Flyers**

The Task Force recommends a return to posting Behind Closed Doors flyers in bathroom stalls with a rotation of topics determined by the Advisory Board. Relying on the Portal to disseminate information has proved insufficient.

### **Website**

The Task Force recommends that the College’s Title IX website conveys the kind of information students need to have in a more direct manner. It might be helpful to ask a group of students to brainstorm how they navigate the website so that the College will have a better understanding of how this platform works for those who need to use it.

### **Better Campus Communication**

The Task Force recommends that faculty are made more aware of what is going on in the Dean of Students’ Office vis-a-vis campus culture programming in case there is overlap in course work or faculty wish to integrate programming into their courses. In addition, the Task Force recommends that all faculty include a statement about their roles as mandated reporters on their syllabi. Such a statement has been crafted and disseminated by the Division Heads.

### **Clarity of Clery Reports**

The Task Force is aware that the Director of Campus Safety sends out yearly updates regarding the Clery Report but the Task Force believes that the College community should have a better understanding of what the Report says. A primer to reading the Report should be created that explains its significance and what it tells us about ourselves.

### Formal Title IX Report & Meetings

Within the bounds of confidentiality — and with consultation from Troutman Pepper — the Task Force recommends that there be a formal Title IX report from the College to the broader College community distributed once a year. In addition, the Task Force recommends holding regularly scheduled open meetings (twice a year) for faculty, staff and students regarding the College’s Title IX processes and procedures.

### Clarification regarding Title IX

While the Task Force understands it is not in its purview to examine how Title IX is followed and administered on campus, the Task Force does believe that confusion over **what** Title IX means (what actions/behaviors fall under its regulations, for example) cause a large problem for our community.

Because Title IX does not cover all types of behavior — the regulations added in August 2020 are more restrictive and while the Biden administration may make good changes, the Title IX Coordinator must follow what is currently required — there needs to be clarity about what options exist if something is not a Title IX violation but is still a violation of the College’s own code of conduct.

It is important for the College community to understand the role of the Title IX Coordinator. They are not a counselor or an advocate per se. The Task Force recommends that it is made clear that there are others on campus who play those roles. The Task Force, though, does hope that the committee tasked with hiring the new Title IX Coordinator consider candidates who display empathy and compassion and who bring with them experience of institutions other than Randolph College.

There needs to be clear messaging about how the Title IX process works. Pages and pages in the Student Handbook are not helpful. The Task Force recommends the creation of a variety of flowcharts or decision trees that explain the Title IX process in a more easily understandable fashion. All policies and procedures must be clear, readable, and accurate; anything that lessens the ambiguity that now exists is necessary.

The College, through Title IX, cannot provide “justice.” Students need to understand how recourse to the legal system works and what options are available to them via that particular route. All options and resources should be made as easily available as possible.

It is important that students understand who on campus maintains confidentiality and who does not, who is a mandated reporter and what that means. In addition to the material that is on the College website, the Task Force recommends the creation of flyers with names (and pictures) of those who maintain confidentiality and those who accept reports that are to be made official. There needs to be greater clarity regarding what it means to be a mandated reporter; faculty and

staff who are mandated reporters need to have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

### **Reporting**

The College needs to have a better understanding of why students do not make official reports. Right now, this is primarily anecdotal but, in order to bridge the divide between the safe space that students need — in talking in confidence — and the “public” space where the charge becomes an official report, the College needs to find out why students do not report. The small size of the College, the relationship between complainant and respondent, the fear of ostracism from friends and peers, the sense that reporting can damage the lives of both of the individuals involved all may play a factor. Examining this issue in greater depth may be part of the Campus Climate survey; if it is not, a smaller student survey may be helpful. Finding more ways that students can report — and understanding more fully why they don’t — is important.

### **Restructuring the Campus Advocates program**

While the Task Force believes that the idea of the Campus Advocates is a good one, the Task Force is unconvinced that the program, as it is presently configured, achieves its goals. Very few of the current Advocates have ever been contacted by a student and it is unclear if the faculty and staff who have graciously volunteered for this role are those that students would naturally seek out. It is unclear, at this point, what the Campus Advocates provide that others on (in the counseling center, for instance) or off campus (at SARP, for example) cannot. Until the special role that the Advocates play can be fully enunciated, the Task Force is not sure why the Advocates, in the particular form that they are now in, should exist.

As such, the Task Force recommended that the Campus Advocates program be revamped. Yearly training of Advocates should be conducted by an outside organization such as SARP. The program should be more widely and clearly advertised. The number of Advocates should be re-examined, as it is not clear, at this point, that there is a need for a dozen Campus Advocates. Given that Campus Advocates cannot serve in other capacities (i.e., as members of hearing panels, etc.), it should be considered whether their skills are best used in their role as Advocate. Anecdotal information shows that it is not clear that students are a) aware of the program, b) understand the role that an Advocate plays, and c) feel comfortable speaking to those who are Advocates.

Since Campus Advocates are not available 24/7, it might be beneficial to highlight on the Campus Advocate page the SARP 24-Hour Confidential Crisis Hotline: 888-947-7273 or Office: 434-947-7422, but also the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance Hotline and [CONFIDENTIAL CHAT](#) (which might be more attractive than a phone call for our current generation of students).

While this might not be a job for the Advocates, the Task Force recommends that there be follow-up with both Complainant and Respondent throughout and after the closure of a case. The end of a Title IX investigation and hearing is not necessarily the end for those involved and affected by it.

### **Administering a Campus Climate Survey**

The Task Force appreciates that the firm PerryUndem has begun their work on a Campus Climate survey. The survey should be undertaken on a regular basis; the Task Force recommends every three years. Benchmarks for improvement must be created as well as a means to disseminate the results.

In between those three-year periods, the Task Force recommends undertaking smaller anonymous surveys to garner information on the College's culture: what students are actually experiencing and what they hear is going on.

### **Emphasizing an Honorable Culture of Respect**

The Task Force recommends that the Judiciary Board find ways to emphasize the fact that respect – of ourselves and of one another — is already part of the College's Honor Code. Prioritizing the issue of respect outside of the classroom should be as important as the issues of academic integrity that are already part of our culture. Randolph's Honor Code can be used as a blueprint for establishing a "Respect Code" that prioritizes the issue of respect (to others as well as to ourselves) in the same way that Randolph handles issues of academic integrity. Living honorably means acting honorably both inside and outside of the classroom. A mechanism for reporting violations of the Code will need to be established.

### **Conclusion**

The Task Force understands that the recommendations included in this document are extensive; some require additional funding sources and long-term planning while others can be accomplished with the resources that are currently available and in relatively little time. The Task Force understands that there is a nationwide search being conducted for a new Title IX Coordinator and believes that this document should be shared with that individual so that they can better understand the issues they may face.

Submitted, respectfully, by the Campus Climate Task Force on April 9, 2021

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