NOTES

Guests: Jessica Kennedy, Title IX Director
Kim Webb, Dir. of the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention Center

Improving Title IX
Jessica Kennedy, Kim Webb, Lori White

The Executive Summary, “Improving Washington University’s Response to Sexual Assault & Misconduct: A Call to Action”, as well as the complete report can be here.

Summary of what lead to the report and what facilitated the report:

Student Title IX Concerns
• April 16: Op-ed appears in Student Life containing allegations about repeat sexual assaults and concerns about Title IX process
• April 26: Title Mine rally organized by students occurs. Students issue list of demands
• May 3: Kim Webb and Lori White meet with Title Mine representatives to review demands
• Summer 2018: Title IX Strategic Working Group meets
• September 4: Title IX Report Issued to Campus Community

Student Demands
• Staffing
• Survivor Support
• Training and Education
• Transparency
• Accountability
  • More opportunities for students to give feedback about the process and more opportunities for students to weigh in on ways in which the process can be improved without having to organize a rally.

Highlights of University’s Response
• Staffing: 6.5 new positions in total for RSVP Center, Title IX Office and Habif focused on enhancing survivor support and on improving the Title IX process.
• Student Support: Development of a Peer Consultant Program.
  • Peers to work with students who are going through the process - both complainants and respondents – acting as a sounding board, helping to explain the process to the students and to give administrators feedback about how the process is working
• Training and Education: Commitment for increased training for various groups and greater focus on trauma and culturally informed training.
• The university has done a good job training students in the first year, but after the first year there has been less opportunity. With the addition of new education and training specialists in the Title IX Office and RSVP center we can increase our emphasis on training students throughout all four years, and also focus on particular groups of students; student leaders, student athletes, as well as training for faculty and staff.
• The provost sent an email encouraging all faculty and staff to be trained to recognize students that are in distress using the online conversation simulator, “Kognito At-Risk for Faculty & Staff”.
  • **Accountability:** Creation of a Title IX Advisory Board of students, staff and faculty and an administrative Concern for Students team.
  • **Transparency:** Enhanced Title IX website.
    • Students have asked that the site contain more detail about the process and more details about cases not identified by the students who have gone through the process.

**Next Steps**

*Immediately*
  • Post and begin the recruitment process for new positions.

*September 12*
  • Listening Session for Students to respond to the report, ask questions, provide feedback

*By September 15*
  • Collaborate with students to identify those recommendations where student input is critical for implementation and establish implementation groups.
  • Begin process of website user testing with students to inform process of redesign and rearchitecting of Title IX-related content.

*By October 1*
  • Articulate the responsibilities and training requirements of student Title IX Peer Consultants
  • Articulate the focus of the Advisory Committee on Title IX, criteria for committee member selection and selection process.

*By October 31*
  • Members of the Title IX advisory committee appointed and meeting schedule for academic year established.
  • Begin the recruitment process for students interested in serving as peer consultants

*Throughout Fall Semester and Ongoing*
  • Regular meetings of implementation teams responsible for successful execution of the approved recommendations.
  • Regular meetings of the Concern for Students Team.

*By March 1*
  • Launch enhanced web resources.
  • Complete Peer Consultant Training.

**DISCUSSION**

Provost Thorp asked for the students’ reaction to the Title IX email that they received the morning of the UGC meeting.

Many of the planned actions are addressing post-event matters. Are there plans to address cultural shifts?
This is an important question in a place where we need good partnerships with our students to be able to shift the culture. Our goal would be that no sexual assaults ever happen on our campus or to reduce the number of sexual assaults that do occur. And certainly when they do occur we want to provide our students with good support. Our emphasis should be on how we shift the culture so that sexual assault is not happening.

The report includes a lot of information on increased education and training. The university has also hired two trainers. One will work in the Title IX office and one will work in the RSVP Center. We also have a trainer that works in the Center for Diversity and Inclusion and we envision that these three trainers will be working together to identify broad training for members of the community and then specific training for specific student populations around issues that we know are germane to those groups. Discussions about shifting cultures are a great place for students such as members of the Undergraduate Council to get involved.

How will this process work with the marginalized student counselors, how would that work with so many different student identities?

We need to diversify our staff and to be better listeners of the students’ needs.

What about creating safety zones to stay safe from people that have been accused anonymously?

That is a difficult place to be. When a student makes a formal report we are able to take action. When students make informal reports we have information but it is difficult to sanction or to segregate that person from the community while the allegations are addressed. We always work with students about safety planning and resources that are available to them. There is a point when we hear the same name a number of times. We have to move forward to initiate an investigation for the safety of the larger community, even if the victim doesn’t request it. There are 12 or 13 factors that are considered before moving forward and overstepping the victim’s wishes.

We hope that students know that they can seek safety accommodations without having to make a formal report.

In regard to the peer consultant program – what do you envision the process? How will they function? What support will they offer?

The general request was for students going through the process who might want a peer to provide support to them, to explain the process, to work with them and perhaps go over the documents that they would need to submit and to answer questions. The student might also provide feedback to the peer consultant on how better to improve the process. The implementation group that will be working on this will have to think through all of those things.

It is good that the staffing concerns are being addressed but a lot of students have concerns about the length of the process itself.

We need to look at the current process and see if there are tradeoffs that we want make to shorten the process. Students have said that it is important for the cases to be heard by a board made up of faculty, staff and students and we agree with that. This process helps to lengthen the process. There are other campuses that have one person who hears the case instead of a board which would shorten the process. We also allow every witness to speak. If the number of allowable witnesses was less the process could be shortened. We have hired a fulltime investigator which should help shorten the process. We will continue to
have conversations with students to see if our process as a whole can be changed to shorten the process.

What is the meaning of transparency in this process? Transparency is outlined in detail at the end of the report. Some examples of transparency:
- How long does the process take?
- What are all the parts and pieces?
- How many people have they found responsible and what has been the outcome? (expelled, suspended, probation)
- What are the statistics?
- Where can feedback be directed?
- How are people appointed to the board and how are they trained?

What kind of advertising is being done to publicize the listening session on September 12? This is another area where students can help. We know that no matter how hard we try to advertise we don’t always do it right and well. If there are ways that you can help us, we would appreciate it. Student Union has offered to help publicize through their channels. There will be a notice in Student Life and an email went out to students today (Sept. 4). We would appreciate it if members of the Undergraduate Council publicized the listening session through their channels.

Lori will develop a way for UGC members to quickly be able to share the information. What are some other ways to advertise to students?
- Make a Facebook event that can be shared
- Social media channels, especially Instagram
- RA’s
- WUSA’s

Provost Thorp spoke with each of the deans about what this effort will cost their schools. All deans agreed that this is something that needs to be done. The entire university is coming together to support the initiative.

Is there a framework in place for accountability? What is being done to make sure that these policies are going to be implemented? The establishment of the advisory board will help make sure that we honor our commitments. There is a very specific timeline. When one of the dates has passed, the advisory board, any activist or member of the community can ask the provost or vice provost of student affairs if that task has been completed.

How will transparency information be communicated to the students? The re-architect of the Title IX website will help provide transparency.

Why are there so many committees? Numerous committees are being established because we think it is important for students to be involved in this process. There will be an opportunity at the open forum for students to indicate what committee memberships they are interested in.

What is being done in the interim until the Title IX website is set-up in March? There is a Title IX website. The current site is being updated based on beta testing by students.
It would be useful to work closely with Greek life on the Title IX initiatives. This is a great idea. If you as leaders set up these expectations, we are happy to support you.

Kudos to the students who have been working on these issues. Not only the Title IX, but the students who have been working in the trenches on these issues for a number of years. Most major changes that have happened in higher education over the years have happened because of student activism.

Update on Student Support Programs

Report on First Year Summer Academic Program (FSAP)  Jennifer Smith

The college has offered the First Year Summer Academic Program (FSAP) for decades. Beginning in 2017/18 the college began making changes and the program was overhauled this year.

The student population that came to FSAP was a combination of students that were required to attend - it was a condition of their admission to WashU. Some students were strongly encouraged to come and others thought it would be great to come to campus early to take a few classes before they matriculated in the fall semester of their first year. The program included a wide range of students with different reasons for participating. Very limited financial aid was available. There were people who needed to participate but did not have the resources to make that happen.

In the older version of FSAP students were required to take two courses which equaled six credits. One course was of their choosing. The second course, a writing course, was required. The writing course did not satisfy the Writing I requirement.

It was decided that FSAP was not optimal for a number of reasons; including helping the students who needed support in their transition the most.

Beginning in Fall 2018, FSAP participation was by invitation only. The university covered all of the costs. Students took seven credits worth of course work.

- One credit transitions course that engaged with both transitioning to college as well as time management and popular science studies skills.
- Two additional classes chosen by the students in consultation with their advisor. Most courses were similar to the courses previously offered.
- One new offering was a course in quantitative reasoning. This course was based on feedback from faculty stating that a lot of the challenges students were having with courses was not in conceptual knowledge, but in the translation of problem.

The program is academically focused, but students also engage in service and social activities and community building.

A parallel program called Summer Start was created for those students who were not invited to participate in to FSAP. The main difference is that the majority of the summer school catalog is available to Summer Start students. There were about 15 students in the program this year.
In fall ’18 there were about 85 students in FSAP. About 70 of the FSAP students were from Arts & Sciences. Most FSAP students recruited are in the union of STEM interested, under resourced high school eligible, first generation.

We are hoping to grow both FSAP and Summer Start.

We don’t want this to just be a 5-6 week program in the summer. We want to be able to continue building communities, connecting the students to the campus and providing resources. How can we carry the program into the academic year without causing more meetings for the students who may already be involved in other programs such as Deneb Stars, TRiO or any other number of cohort programs? We don’t want to compete with those programs.

**Student Success Initiative/First Generation Students**

Anthony Tillman

The Deneb Stars participated in five Monday night transition dinners. The dinner themes included mindfulness, financial literacy, nutrition, classroom expectations and navigating identities. The first three dinners were sponsored by campus partners. The last two dinners were student initiated and student led.

Deneb STARS program launched in fall of 2016. STARS is an acronym for Sustaining Talented Academically Recognized Students. The 2018 school year begins the 3rd cohort. The Classes of 2020, 2021 and 2022 have a combined 360 students.

The Deneb STAR’s motto is “Prepare, Pursue, Persist”

Deneb was named for the farthest star that can be seen with the naked eye. We are changing the culture on this campus one student at a time. Deneb students are low income as defined by Pell Grant information.

The initiative for Deneb began with a New York Times article in 2012 stating that Washington University was near the bottom of the list for admitting Pell Grant students. WashU’s Pell Grant admissions were at 6% compared to our peers who admitted 14 – 20%. In 2015 the number of Pell Grant students increased to 190. In 2016 the number increased to 240 students.

Deneb STARS participation is by invitation only. The Office of Student Success works closely with the admissions office to identify and recruit high achieving, low income students. T

For the most part, the program is student lead. A very strong student leadership corps is part of the program, its members serve as program coordinators. Academic peer mentors, who are also part of the program, serve the first year students.

The program is designed to help the student’s transition over the course of their four years. The four pillars of the program include:

- **First year:** Scholarship
- **Second year:** Leadership
- **Third year:** Service
- **Fourth year:** Integration

The program is building partnerships with each of the schools. It is geared toward changing dialog and discourse on this campus as it relates to low income students. We want to encourage in every student a sense of place, a sense of dignity, and of confidence that they are being supported.
DISCUSSION
Could information about financial literacy be integrated into the freshmen year and beyond? i.e. budgeting and basic skills to manage your money in college and beyond college

Michael Runiewicz, Director of Student Financial Services, is chairing a committee that is developing financial literacy training to be offered to students. The program will be offered primarily to first-year students; later the scope will be broadened. Modules are being built to address different issues each year. The third and fourth year will offer guidance on how to negotiate contracts, salaries and things of that nature.

Will the financial program be offered electronically?
The committee is looking at vendors that have ready-made programs. The program may be vendor supported with classroom discussions.

Regarding FSAP, was there concern about infringing on other student cohorts and creating more meetings?
There was a little bit of both. There have been cases where a student was attached to multiple cohorts and ended up with multiple mentors. There were other students that weren’t engaged with any cohort. As we move forward we are concerned about leveraging existing relationships without overwhelming the students.

Mentorship and campus partnerships were mentioned in relationship to the FSAP program. Besides having mentors, are the FSAP students meeting with their academic advisors? Meeting with the academic advisors prior to the semester start could help ensure a good relationship with their advisors.
Meeting with advisors could be included in the program.

Can an alternative to chemistry be offered to students who are not pre-med or do not need the intensive chemistry course?
We are trying to diversify the options. Next year bio is piloting a course that would be an alternate entry point and chemistry is in the conversation.

The Office of Student Success looked at the history of the Deneb student’s high school sciences classes to learn how to better support them at WashU.

Chemistry and biology are led by med school requirements.

Offering a physical sciences or life sciences class as an alternative may create an excitement, rather than intimidation.

Purchasing books can pose a financial burden for some Deneb students. After purchasing the books, they sometimes find out that the book wasn’t even required. It would be helpful if students would be told beforehand if the books are optional.

Your financial aid package did not include funds for books? No.
Please let us know if you are facing this issue again.

Michael Runiewicz is working on creating a grant committee where all qualified students would receive either $1,000 or $2,000 at the beginning of the academic year to help defray some early start-up costs such as books or computers.
The Office of Student Success is launching a campus-wide environmental survey on the cost of attendance at Washington University. This “true cost” initiative would break down the cost in disciplines across the schools.

Sometimes publishers give free copies to faculty. If you cannot afford a book, please let your instructor know.

Publishers sometimes bundle materials. Occasionally, materials are included which are not needed which raise the cost. There is currently a faculty bookstore committee. In the past there was also a Student Bookstore Committee. It may be time to reconstitute such a committee.

A committee has been convened this semester to see if there is a reasonable way for all students to receive a computer in a more regularized process.

Students who have not previously taken chemistry and math classes taught in English might also be considered. Even the periodic table can cause challenges. Expanding the scope of help for these students would go a long way toward ensuring success.

Four-year advisors play an important part in bilingual student’s success. We should consider offering special cultural training to the advisors who would then be better able to support multi-lingual students.

Discussion on Communications with Students
Grace Egbo and Holden Thorp

The main purpose of the Undergraduate Council (UGC) is to create an environment where students are encouraged to share their thoughts. It is important to give the student members an opportunity to receive information, freely ask questions, and speak their mind. How can we create an environment at the meetings for the students to have the most impact?

How did the student members find out about the UGC?
- Word of mouth
- They were appointed to replace a previous student representing the same role

What was your personal understanding about your role on the UGC?
- Didn’t know what to expect

There are 11 students on the UGC and it seems we are outnumbered. How can we, as students make an impact?
- It is okay that the students are outnumbered. It makes us feel like we are being taken seriously.
  - If all of the administrators and faculty weren’t at the meetings the students may think they didn’t have access to them.
  - It is hard to know what the right membership balance is.
- Should the UGC be directed by students?
- Allow students to make a contribution to the agenda.
- Pair students with the administrative speakers to co-present. Have the student and administrator work outside the meeting to prepare.
  - Like a subcommittee? Possibly.
- Faculty and administrator members of the UGC should share meeting topics and findings with their community.
Maybe it is time to look at the membership composition.

How can meetings be less intimidating for students?
- Give the students an opportunity to speak first.
- Students should be assured that no one is being graded. There are no assessments of what happened at the end of the meetings.
- Many times, the administrators and faculty have already seen the presentations prior to the UGC meetings; sometimes more than once. They are already familiar with the language and the topics. The lingo and the topics are unfamiliar to the students and it can make it difficult for the students to engage.
- Is it possible to send UGC members copies of the presentation slides before each meeting so they can come to the meetings with specific questions and comments?
  Great idea.
- Open communication with the student members is important. If the administrators and faculty do not have an answer to a student’s question say so. Do not just change the subject.
  o Did we succeed doing that in today’s meeting?
    It went pretty well.
- Students sometimes feel more comfortable if they have already met committee members prior to meetings, maybe in a classroom or social gathering.

We need a plan for how to process this information and decide how to set up the next UGC meeting.
- Would the students like to have a process to send feedback off-line? Should it be anonymous? We can make it anonymous if that is what the student’s would prefer.
  This discussion will be continued at the next meeting to give students time to think about it.

**CAMPUS PULSE**

Future topic suggestions
- The housing situation.
  There is a lot of discomfort with the current housing situation with sophomores and juniors regarding the lofts and the South 40. How does the process work? How are people assigned? The entire process can be frustrating for students.
  o Why were sophomores moved off the South 40?
  o What about the juniors who want to be in the Village but are in the lofts?
  Should a sub-committee be formed to look into the housing issues?
- The new rules for Greek Life
  o Moving groups off campus could impact university oversite and safety issues.
- Construction on campus, not including the east end project
  o What projects are up and coming?
  o Is there a possibility of creating a multicultural center?
  o Does Student Affairs have construction plans?
- Inconsistency in the quality of advising
  o Not just across schools but within schools
  o Advisors giving curriculum advice on majors or tracks that they are not familiar with
Most students outside of the UGC do not know that the UGC exists. If they know it exists, they don’t know what the purpose of the UGC is. Student members of the UGC are encouraged to reach out to other students to share what we talk about and get input from other students, including future topic suggestions.

Please contact Grace Egbo (president@su.wustl.edu) if you have suggestions on how to change the meeting format.

Please send suggestions for future topics to one of the following people:

- president@su.wustl.edu (Grace Egbo)
- thorp@wustl.edu
- gerhildwilliams@wustl.edu
- jilledwards@wustl.edu