

Sexual assault investigation spurs policy and social change

BY LILY LOU
STAFF WRITER

On May 1, under Title IX's gender equality provision, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights released a list of 55 universities—which has now expanded to 76 universities including Guilford College — under investigation for their handling of sexual assault cases. Since then, Guilford has made several changes to its sexual assault policy.

"Guilford has always taken sexual misconduct very seriously and has investigated promptly and thoroughly any case we became aware of, except in instances where the student requested that no further action be taken," said Jen Agor, interim vice president for student affairs and dean of students.

Guilford has run many programs aimed at reducing sexual assault, including the "Keep it Consensual" campaign during the 2013-14 school year, which aimed at increasing awareness of the meaning and importance of consent.

"They promoted it in a lot of different venues all around campus in different events but also at parties," said junior Ben Evans. "Actually, just this past weekend, we had a

consent party which was promoting very direct and very forward conversations about anything sort of sexual in that manner."

Previously, Guilford faced a problem involving under-reporting sexual assault statistics.

Taking that into account, Guilford has fixed problems associated with its online anonymous reporting form. Before, complaints rose over its being hard to find and having technical difficulties. The form can now be found on the Buzz, the school's

& Sexual Violence."

"It wasn't perfect, but it was a very good effort and it gave staff a lot of information," said Assistant Professor of Mathematics Dani Moran.

In its new policies, Guilford has also given clearer definitions of sexual misconduct, domestic violence and stalking, as well as clarified and improved their consent policy. In addition, statistics of domestic violence and stalking have been added to its Annual Security Report.

Students and staff have had varying views on Guilford's sexual assault policies in the past.

"I believe that they discouraged me from seeking justice and did not provide any care for me or the other person that was a victim in my particular instance," said junior Cara Messina about her experience of reporting sexual assault at Guilford. "I have had others tell me about their particular experiences, and they too felt that the process was lacking."

"To me and other victims I have talked to, Guilford seems to be more interested in protecting its own reputation. I have met with people in Campus Life, and I do believe they care about helping victims and seeking justice, but they are understaffed and ill equipped to handle these situations."

At the beginning of each year, Guilford conducts sexual misconduct training during first-year orientation, with the athletics teams, in FYE labs, in Res Life programming and in other areas.

"Students need comprehensive training throughout all their years at Guilford," said Julie Winterich, chair and associate professor of sociology & anthropology. "It's not enough to introduce the concept in FYE orientation or lab and stop the conversation. The conversation needs to be ongoing."

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Ben Evans, junior

website and in the student handbook.

That, however, is not the only change Guilford has made.

Recently, Guilford College created a category of position titled "Campus Security Authority" that includes 120 people. Their job is to report criminal offenses including sexual violence, hate crimes and arrests. Guilford has also created a mandatory online course for staff members titled "Faculty and Staff Training on Preventing Discrimination

A flyer containing information on reporting sexual assault, accessing medical help, gathering evidence and the next steps in the judicial process has been created and widely circulated.

Guilford has also added wellness programming to Community Director Kristie Wyatt's position, which allows her to focus on training and education about consent, bystander intervention, safe sex and other important wellness topics.

Twelve new faculty arrive for 2014-15

BY EMMA RUMPL
STAFF WRITER

Freshly mowed green grass, soaring lush trees and bustling adorable squirrels. This is the scene that welcomed Guilford's 12 new full-time faculty members in August.

"I liked the feel of the college," said Professor of Business Management Michael Dutch when asked why he chose Guilford. "I think the sense of community the college touts is real, and you can feel that when you walk on the campus. I find that very attractive."

Betsy Mesard, visiting assistant professor of religious studies, said she felt at home at Guilford.

"I've had a wonderful time here so far," said Mesard. "It has been great getting to know other faculty."

"All summer I heard wonderful things about the students, and I'm glad that I'm finally having the chance to know students as well."

Visiting Instructor of Sport Studies Michelle Wells shares a similar view.

"I've been impressed with how responsible the students are and how much they take ownership of their learning," said Wells in an email interview. "The faculty and staff have been incredibly nice, and I'm pleased to see how inclusive everyone is."

Although the new professors have only been teaching courses at Guilford for a week, they already have expectations for students during and after their time in college.

Both Dutch and Ron Cardwell, assistant professor of accounting, suggested that they want their students to be able to approach and make decisions in an ethical basis.

"I don't define what that ethical basis is for them, but I point them to different ways to determine that," said Dutch.

Assistant Professor of Mathematics Danielle Moran has two different — but equally important — expectations.

"I hope (the students) continue to ask questions and learn new things that interest them, even if they don't have much to do with anything else," said Moran. "The other is more of an attitude — I hope they take with them the principle of equality, the idea that they themselves are not worth less than anyone else, nor are they worth more."

Students are not the only ones who are expected to live up to certain standards.

"I expect that a new professor would be excited to teach at Guilford," wrote a student who requested to remain anonymous in an email interview. "He or she should be prepared to teach a lot but also to learn a lot, since Guilford is so unique and rich in culture."

"Providing a setting and engagement for students to learn in, no matter which way or type of learning they excel in," is what a different student who requested to remain anonymous said in reply for the expectations of new faculty.

Assistant Professor of English Mylene Dressler also had advice to offer the new faculty.

"(Faculty members) have to stay light on our feet," said Dressler. "We are a very diverse and dynamic community, and our classrooms are full of surprises, and we have to be ready for that."

Who's new to our faculty?

Tenure-Track Faculty

Ron Cardwell, *Accounting*
Krista Craven, *Justice & Policy Studies*
Michael Dutch, *Business*
Landon Huffman, *Sport Studies*
Danielle Moran, *Mathematics*
Holly Peterson, *Geology*
Christine Stracey, *Biology*

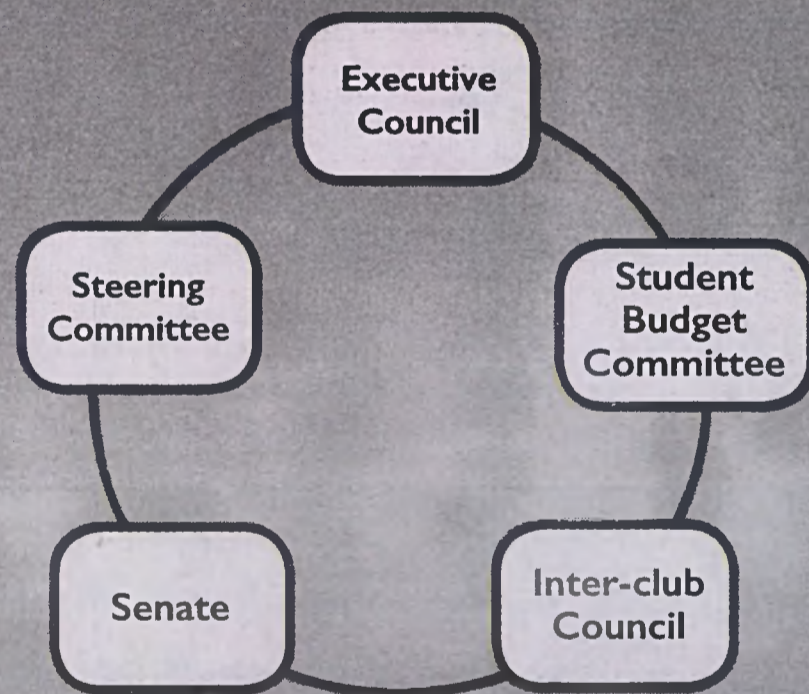
"Visiting" Positions

Will Mackin, *Biology*
Betsy Mesard, *Religious Studies*
Jeanette Acevedo Rivera, *Foreign Languages*
Michelle Wells, *Sport Management*
Kenneth Zogry, *History*

SENATE UPDATE

this week's developments

Community Senate hosted its first open meeting this past Monday in Founders Hall. The Executive Council shared the structure of the Community Senate, as well introduced the Senator Program that is coming back after many years.



next week's plans

President Jane Fernandes will visit Community Senate on Monday, Sept. 8, at 7:00 p.m. in Founders Hall.

contact us

Have an idea? Concern? Great recipe? It's important to us.

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