

# Define consent: Administration continues dialogue on sexual assault in an exclusive meeting for men

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“Always get consent” was the message in Ingram Auditorium on Monday evening. Despite its hard hitting message, it appears many questions have been left unanswered.

Dean of Students Debbie D’Anna led a presentation in Ingram for the second time in a week. This time she met with the college’s male students to speak to them about the recent attempted sexual assault on campus.

Immediately, the tone of the evening was established, with the statistic claiming that males committed 95 percent of sexual assaults. From this point forward, the direction the meeting was heading in was clear, with a series of videos addressing some key points.

Audio for the first video, entitled “Men Let’s Talk,” failed when it was initially opened. Rare murmurs from around the auditorium could be heard as the disjointed opening to the meeting led to a lack of patience among some students.

The attention of the audience was immediately drawn again, however, as D’Anna said, “A person can only give consent if they are free of any kinds of drugs or alcohol,” before further saying, “even if they say yes, they cannot give consent whilst intoxicated.”

When sophomore Jesse Sheldon asked for clarification on what she had said, D’Anna twice responded with the unwavering answer, “It means they aren’t intoxicated.”

Confusion began to build, however, as she went on to suggest that, “It depends on the person. If their speech is slurred or they can’t walk in a straight line, then they are intoxicated.” This seemed to contradict her initial statement, which appeared to suggest that any alcohol consumption at all could be construed as “intoxication.”

There was further uncertainty on the meaning of intoxication after Dee Dasburg spoke later about a situation in which both parties might be intoxicated. One student went on to ask what the verdict would be in such a situation. Dasburg responded that such a situation would allow both

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—Debbie D’Anna, Dean of Students

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parties to put a side of the story forward.

This however, was later contradicted by Brevard police officer Steve Wilson, who said, “Intoxication is not an excuse.”

Throughout the evening, it appeared that many questions were left unanswered on that front, and many students may be left pondering what the true definition of intoxication is.

Wilson took the microphone after D’Anna and head of campus security Stan Jacobsen had spoken. After introducing himself, he posed the audience the question, “Do any of you have 5 to 10 years of your life to give me?” Stunned silence filled Ingram Auditorium and set the tone for much of the rest of his speech, which provoked the most audience push-back against any of the speakers that night.

Wilson became the first person of the evening to definitively use the term “rape,” and much of his segment of the evening appeared accusatory in its intent. He referred to “first and second degree rape” and proceeded to alert the audience on all the other ways in which they could be charged in an event of sexual misconduct, including situations such as intimidating witnesses.

Perhaps the most controversial moment of the meeting came when a student asked, “What can you do as a third party to defend a victim without receiving disciplinary actions?” Wilson responded by saying the witness should try to stop it. If one did not, Wilson said, “I’m going to ask you, ‘What’s your problem?’”

As a follow up to this question, freshman Thomas Ruple asked, “What would be too far?”

Could you stab the assailant?”

Wilson responded by jokingly responding, “As long as it’s an itty bitty short blade.” He soon went back on this comment however, clarifying that only in a case where “life or limb” was in danger would that be an appropriate course of action. Wilson however did say that, “You should do whatever you can to get him off of the victim.”

Toward the end of the meeting, which lasted about 45 minutes, an entire hour shorter than the women’s event, D’Anna held a section for students to voice final questions on the matter.

A question from the Clarion asked if it is now the school’s priority to prevent further sexual assaults, to which D’Anna responded, “That is always the school’s priority.”

When further questioned as to what the school intended to do in order to prevent such matters, D’Anna responded by saying that the male and female meetings were prevention techniques, and that additional lighting and increased security rounds would be implemented.

Students may also be interested to hear that D’Anna confirmed that there will be more educational sessions regarding recent events. “There will be more opportunities for people to come together and discuss, and to keep the dialogue going,” she said.

The meeting appeared to be well received by students, who for the most part held their concentration throughout. However, it must be said that at times full clarification, or thorough definitions were not given, and it appears that some people may still be left with more questions on the matter.