

From: Nicholas Dirks Chancellor
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2014 6:08 PM
To: Faculty; Staff; Students

Subject: An Important Update from Chancellor Dirks

UC Berkeley Chancellor Nicholas Dirks today (19, May 2014) issued this statement via CALmessages:

Dear Campus Community,

As the spring term draws to an end, I want to provide the UC Berkeley community with an update on my administration's comprehensive efforts to meet head-on the challenges presented by issues related to sexual assault, harassment and discrimination on this campus. As stated in my [February report](#) on this subject, I am unequivocal in my commitment to do what is necessary to create and sustain a caring culture of prevention and reporting, and hold members of our community accountable for violating campus policies. We cannot and will not turn our backs on an issue that, despite perceptions to the contrary, touches the lives of all of our community members----students, staff and faculty---regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet with a group of sexual assault survivors who were willing to share their experiences, concerns and suggestions. I was deeply moved by their pain, their courage and their dedication to catalyzing positive change. I hope and believe they now know that my administration and the entire campus community stand together in their support. I am certain that the welcome rise in national awareness of this issue has, in large part, been driven by student activism, and for that we owe them our gratitude.

I also had an important and constructive meeting with Congresswomen Barbara Lee and Jackie Speier, where I had the opportunity to update them on Berkeley's efforts, and learn more about the potential for legislative action in Washington. Congresswoman Speier has been a leader on this issue for some time and will soon introduce a bill that would guide the work of college campuses on confronting this national problem.

Taken together, the national student movement, along with legislative efforts and the recent release of a report and recommendations from the White House Task Force on Sexual Assault, are hopeful signs that, together, we can and will bring about change for the better, supported by the development of best practices that campuses can share across the country. And, in that regard, I believe that we, as a community, must strive to be a model for the public we serve and the higher education sector we lead and represent.

[My February message](#) described the initial steps we had taken in support of a safe, compassionate and respectful environment for our students and the entire campus community. Since then our work has continued in a number of areas and we are implementing the commitments made in that letter.

People from every part of our community have come together to support our continuing efforts to raise awareness about all forms of harassment and sexual assault. In partnership with the ASUC leadership and the Gender Equity Resource Center (GenEq), a number of activities took place on

campus including lunchtime tabling at Sproul Plaza, flyers, pocket cards and other distributed resources. We also hosted “Take Back the Night” and “Denim Day” events, with workshops, speakers, bystander training and documentary screenings.

In early May, I met with the faculty, staff and student members of the Title IX Compliance Advisory committee I established last fall to engage in a careful, comprehensive review of campus policies and educational efforts regarding sexual assault, harassment and discrimination. I am pleased to report that the committee has made significant progress on several fronts including awareness, training, and policy review. They are progressing in a number of important areas, including enhancing and expanding access to the “EmpowerU” program that is designed to inform students about consent and encourage reporting, as well as exploring expanded educational efforts, including prevention and training programs for staff, faculty and students.

In addition, committee members will be completing a detailed FAQ focused on the new [UC Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy](#) and its application on this campus, while additional communications tools are being prepared for targeted audiences, including student advising staff, department chairs, staff supervisors, fraternities and sororities, student athletes, coaches and peer educators. In addition, we will launch a revised training program for incoming undergraduates this fall and provide specialized training for Title IX investigators and UCPD.

As we work to improve awareness and training, we will also examine best practices in providing survivor support and assistance through communications, partnerships, and coordination with external organizations including Berkeley’s city police department, health services providers, and Bay Area Women Against Rape. My expectation is that we will be ready to implement a revamped investigation and conduct process during the 2014-15 academic year.

I am greatly encouraged by the efforts and achievements of the many committed people on campus who are working on these issues, but our work is not done when it comes to sexual assault and harassment, as well as other areas deserving of attention in so far as gender equity is concerned. Among other things, compliance with Title IX also requires us to be responsive to concerns raised with regards to pregnancy discrimination for our students. In fact, research conducted here, at Berkeley, has shown that childbirth is a major reason our younger scholars (graduate students and postdocs) give up their academic research career ambitions. Therefore, I have asked my Title IX Compliance Advisory Committee to include a review of this matter in their work going forward.

I have great faith in our community and our collective capacity to rise up and meet complicated challenges. I am convinced that if we continue to openly communicate and work together in good faith, we can create a culture where prevention, reporting and accountability create a safe and respectful campus for all.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Dirks Chancellor

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