Community Action Team for the Improvement of Sexual Health (CATFISH) 
Recommendations for a Comprehensive Campus-Based Primary Prevention Plan 
Florida State University - May 2014

“While we certainly agree that this work should begin early, the college years, too, are formative. During this transition to adulthood, attitudes and behaviors are created or reinforced by peer groups. And students look to coaches, professors, administrators, and other campus leaders to set the tone. If we get this right, today’s students will leave college knowing that sexual assault is simply unacceptable. And that, in itself, can create a sea of change.”

Not Alone. The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. April 2014

VISION: To inspire every member of the FSU community to be a champion of nonviolence, social justice, and advocacy

MISSION: Provide students, staff, and faculty the tools, support, and opportunities to shape a violence-free campus through the design and delivery of innovative and inclusive programming and services

VALUES: Innovation - Passion - Inclusive Community - Authenticity - Activism - Connection to Social Justice

Effective prevention strategies

Effective prevention strategies address multiple levels and are based on the best available evidence, with emphasis on rigorous evaluation that measure changes in behavior.

Prevention strategies that are consistent with best practices; are theory-based and include multiple skill-based sessions have the greatest potential to reduce rates of sexual violence. Brief, one-session educational programs focused on increasing awareness or changing beliefs and attitudes are not effective at changing behavior in the long-term. These approaches may be useful as one component of a comprehensive strategy. However, they are not likely to have any impact on rates of violence if implemented as a stand-alone strategy or as a primary component of a prevention plan.

Figure 1 below describes the primary components of a comprehensive campus-based primary prevention strategy. This strategy includes components addressing risk and protective factors at multiple levels of influence and how to build a coordinated strategy that addresses multiple influencers.
Based on this framework, we have developed evidenced-based prevention recommendations at the community, organization, peer/partner, and individual level. Listed below are recommendations for an effective primary prevention program for sexual violence at FSU.

**Community Level Prevention**

1. **Improve the Campus-Community Partnership**

   Comprehensive college-community interventions are multicomponent programs that colleges and communities conduct collaboratively. Research has supported the use of community-level interventions in reducing community level problems such as high risk drinking and can be effective in reducing the prevalence of sexual violence. This approach reframes the issue as a community problem, not simply a college problem.

   The Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls was established by the Leon County Board of County Commissioners in April of 2011 and was joined by the City of Tallahassee in March, 2013 (CSWG). The primary purposes of the CSWG are: to promote
awareness of issues pertaining to women and girls; and to serve in an advisory role to the City and County. A goal of CSWG is to enhance collaboration and develop a community plan to reduce the incidence and impact of violence against women and girls. Florida State University can enhance their partnership with CSWG and mobilize for change to reduce the incidence of sexual violence both at the campus and community levels.

2. Bystander Intervention in Local Drinking Establishments

A recent prevention initiative that many communities are adopting consists of training and empowering bar staff to safely intervene to prevent sexual harassment and assault. In a recent study, investigators at the University of Toronto and the University of Washington determined that a man's level of aggressiveness did not coincide with his level of intoxication (sexually aggressive men were not drunk), they were targeting women who were intoxicated. By focusing on bystander intervention and creating trainings for the bar staff and management such as the BarTAB initiative in Tampa, employees can feel empowered to intervene and prevent sexual violence where it is most prevalent.

3. Conduct Annual Assessment on Interpersonal Violence and Evaluate Current Programs

It is important to know the current climate of the community to know how to proceed with prevention efforts. Data collection efforts need to be enhanced in order to gain a complete understanding of the needs of victims and to craft appropriate strategies for reducing the incidence of violence. Additionally, recommendations from the 2013 Tallahassee/Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (CSWG) report specify that the “CSWG should work collaboratively with those individuals at local institutions of higher learning who are conducting research regarding violence against women and girls to obtain additional data that may be useful in shaping public policy and improving services.”

FSU will collect annual qualitative and quantitative data assessing the issue of interpersonal violence. An annual climate survey will help provide a comprehensive picture of the problem and guide interventions and prevention practices. It will examine both the prevalence and incidence of sexual assault and perceptions of the campus climate. In addition, focus groups or interviews with key stakeholders will offer in-depth and varied perspectives on specific challenges that may exist.

Furthermore, a strong evaluation component will help to determine the effectiveness of current programs. Surveys will measure sexual violence risk and protective factors, and more importantly, will include measures of sexual violence behavior. These behavior measures will provide direct evidence about whether implemented strategies have the intended effects on
sexual violence.

Organization Level Prevention

1. Create a Campus Climate that Supports Safety, Respect, and Trust.

Research suggests that students who trust their college system and administrators will be more likely to report and seek help with violence-related concerns. At FSU, we encourage “welcoming, supportive and challenging environments;” we inspire respect, responsibility and acceptance,” and encourage our graduates to make “ethical decisions.” The Florida State seal represents our Seminole Creed of Strength (Vires), Skill (Artes) and Character (Mores) and we must promote these values to students throughout all of our programs and departments to ensure that these common principles and messages are communicated to specific audiences and to our campus as a whole. FSU may consider an identifiable and unique brand similar to The University of Florida’s ‘U Matter, We Care’ that will address two important points:
   a. FSU does not tolerate violence
   b. The FSU community looks out for each other, and offers resources, trainings, and help for all members of the university community.

2. Social Marketing Campaigns and Health Promoting Messages

Cohesive strategies that include consistent messaging and reinforce consistent standards and norms across multiple levels are necessary for effective prevention. Our message will begin at Freshman Orientation and continue throughout a student’s years at FSU. All campus partners and key leaders will be engaged and involved in providing a consistent message to prevent sexual violence. Vital FSU staff will address attitudes, and help promote social norms and healthy relationship skills and will include Athletics Department coaches, trainers and administrative staff; Student Affairs student and full time staff; FSU Police Department staff; Faculty and Advisors.

Recommendations from the 2013 Tallahassee/Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (CSWG) report also specify that “Local institutions of higher learning should collaborate on a public awareness campaign regarding the incidence and prevalence of rape on campus with a focus on developing responses and a climate that promotes respectful relationships, and supports help for victims.” Consistent messages will be displayed on poster campaigns to increase the awareness of dating violence and promote healthy relationships. Multiple media will be employed, as opposed to
employing a single medium, such as posters, to best reach the key target audience. Adequate infrastructure and resources for prevention messages are necessary to ensure the success of an on-going sexual violence prevention campaign. A dedicated budget is required for the development and dissemination of an effective campaign.

3. **Linking Sexual Violence Prevention with Other Prevention Initiatives**

Strategically linking sexual violence prevention efforts on college campuses to other prevention efforts, such as alcohol risk reduction, may improve effectiveness and efficiency while also moving the field more quickly toward the protection of students from sexual violence. According to research, there appears to be a strong link between alcohol consumption and the risk for sexual victimization.\(^8,9\)

One example where this is currently being examined is in the Smart Choices sessions, the alcohol/drug harm-reduction program for students who violate the University’s alcohol and drug policy. The program addresses the potential risks and harms associated with individual drinking behavior which could result in sexual assault and the vulnerability of sexual assault is highlighted. The curriculum could be expanded to include clarity on consent, and further discussion on the connection between sexual assault and high risk drinking. Administering established supplemental material on sexual assault within the Smart Choices curriculum can focus on a problematic population of interest.

In addition, the link with sexual violence can be addressed in other outreach and prevention initiatives such as promotion of the Medical Amnesty campaign. Presentations and discussions on behaviors around alcohol can include the topic of sexual violence as an unwanted consequence of high risk drinking. Conversations that promote safe and healthy sex can also include a clarifying conversation about consent. Sexual violence is a serious public health problem with notably high rates among college students\(^10\) and primary prevention efforts should complement and work in tandem with other important work focused on high risk drinking, drug prevention, safe sexual practices and healthy relationships.

4. **Include Faculty and Staff in the Prevention Initiative**

A Title IX Coordinator at FSU could be responsible for coordinating our Title IX compliance efforts and overseeing the monitoring of University policy in relation to Title IX law developments. The Coordinator could also ensure that all faculty, staff and students participate in regular Title IX training and understand what, when and where to report concerns.
5. Resources

Effective prevention efforts need critical infrastructure—staff resources, administrative leadership, and a dedicated budget to ensure efforts are institutionalized and enduring. A full time Prevention Coordinator will mobilize and organize the campus and community and be a catalyst for change. The primary role of a Prevention Coordinator will include, but not be limited to: engaging partners in solutions, understanding the problem, becoming aware of best practices in prevention, building a strategic plan, and connecting with other across the campus and local community.

The Prevention Coordinator will be a key member of CATFISH as well as an active member in the local community coalition to address the root causes of the problems in the surrounding community. Education activities aimed at changing individual student behavior and awareness have not proven to be effective when used in isolation; therefore it will be vital that the Prevention Coordinator take a proactive role in environmental management and other public health approaches to violence prevention.

6. Academics

“Students’ academic success and personal development depends not only on the quality of the curriculum and classroom instruction, but also on Student Affairs. When instructional faculty interface and collaborate with this key student-service division, combinatorial or synergistic effects are likely to be exerted on student learning and development, thereby maximizing the impact and quality of the college experience.”

Curriculum infusion is an educational approach that uses real-life issues as the context for teaching academic skills and knowledge. Sexual assault prevention can be integrated into the academic curriculum in many courses taught at FSU. In addition, a sexual assault resource guide and/or the policy can be included on all syllabi, and standard powerpoint slides identifying resources can be used as permanent placeholders in classrooms.

Syllabus example, adapted from the University of Hawaii, Hilo:

UH Hilo provides confidential assistance for victims of sexual assault. Counseling Services on campus and the YWCA Sexual Support Services offer guidance regarding medical and emotional help, and can discuss options for reporting sexual assaults to law enforcement. All conversations are private and confidential. The UH Hilo Sexual Assault Policy is available online.
For assistance during the day, contact UH Hilo Counseling Services at (808) 932-7465; or after hours and on weekends; contact the YWCA Sexual Assault Support Services at (808) 935-0677.

Peer/Partner Level Prevention

Trainings which use varied teaching methods will be required for all FSU Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) including, but not limited to, Greek organizations, student-athletes, CARE students, Student Government leaders, and all students employed by Florida State. Staff or peer leaders will conduct additional trainings each semester to interested students. Students at satellite campuses (Panama City, Panama, Sarasota) will also receive training.

Trainings will emphasize bystander intervention, local resources, Title IX, and what to do if they or someone they know has been a victim of a sexual violence crime. Interventions will be specific to the population of interest and focus on issues directly related to them (ex. the hyper-masculine norms within male athletics and fraternities).

Individual Level Prevention

The individual level of the social ecological model will focus on student engagement and those factors which relate to an individual’s knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors by focusing on education and increasing self-efficacy.

a. Mandatory Online Training

All incoming students will be required to complete an online sexual assault prevention program which covers defining sexual violence, consent, and bystander intervention. The program suggested for implementation is Campus Clarity’s Think About it. Students, faculty, and staff who completed sample programs of two different programs ranted Campus Clarity’s program higher, earning 114.6 out of 150 points versus the competitor earning 101 points. This program will also aid in data collection with its pre and post testing based on knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs.

b. Student Engagement

“[Students] who are engaged show sustained behavioral involvement in learning activities accompanied by a positive emotional tone. They select tasks at the border of their competencies, initiate action when given the opportunity, and exert intense effort and concentration in the implementation of learning tasks; they show generally positive emotions during ongoing action, including enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity, and interest.” By engaging
our students as individuals, their collective efforts will trickle into the other areas of the social ecological model and help foster community change toward a campus which does not tolerate violence.

Student engagement will be cultivated in two different student organizations, one geared toward men’s involvement and the other a co-ed group, both advised by Health Promotion:

Men Advocating Responsible Conduct (MARC), a peer advocacy group at FSU will endorse a culture of responsibility for preventing sexual violence and advocate that violence is not a “normal” part of dating relationships. MARC will address the attitudes and beliefs about gender stereotypes and challenge gender norms such as “those cultural norms that normalize intimate sexual violence as a ‘natural’ or ‘exaggerated’ expression of innate male sexuality. Violence prevention should focus on more than perpetrators and survivors, but should also involve everyone and engage men as allies in preventing sexual assault. Most men are not perpetrators, and according to social norms research, men often overestimate other men’s acceptance of abusive behavior towards women. We can encourage and engage men to speak out against sexual rape and sexual assault.

To assist in further developing a comprehensive and effective peer advocacy program, we suggest creating an academic course for the Healthy Noles peer advocacy program. This specialized training course will utilize an active learning approach, which will include information analysis and demonstration of skills through in class role-plays, motivational interviewing, discussions and presentations. Students will be trained in a variety of health promotion and prevention areas that include: sexual violence, high risk drinking, tobacco prevention, emotional health, healthy relationships, sexual health, eating disorders and body image, nutrition and fitness. More specifically, in relation to sexual assault prevention, the course will include a comprehensive sexual assault prevention and bystander intervention training.

“If everyone makes small changes we can measurably reduce violence.” Dorothy Edwards
References

1. Violence, Intervention and Prevention Center, University of Kentucky
   http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/VIPCenter/about_mission.php
7. DeGue, S. Preventing Sexual Violence on College Campuses: Lessons from Research and Practice. Prepared by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, April 2014.
   http://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/niaaacollegematerials/panel02/keyresearch_04.aspx
14. FACT SHEET: RENEWING THE CALL TO END RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT