UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS' COMMUNICATION
Item for Information

Subject: Faculty Governance Update – Reporting Crimes

Senate Assembly Resolution 122311-2
Resolution Regarding Criminal Activity on Campus (Penn State)
(Approved by SACUA on December 5, 2011)
(Revised and Approved Electronically by Senate Assembly on December 23, 2011 – 55 for, 0 against, 1 abstention)

SACUA expresses deep sympathy and support for the victims of the Penn State child sexual abuse scandal. Although we hope that similar incidents could not be possible at the University of Michigan, we are concerned about the conditions that apparently allowed these alleged crimes to be both perpetrated in the first place and hidden from public view for so long. The delay in action caused irreparable suffering for the victims and significant harm to the reputation of an outstanding University and its attendant programs.

We believe that among the cultural factors that aggravated the situation and hindered swift and appropriate action were: 1) significant inequities in power (these include inequities between victim/alleged perpetrator as well as between and among potential reporters of the activity---including students, staff, faculty, coaches and administrators---in the chain of command within the University); 2) a culture of silence and/or minimization in order to save public face or limit exposure of individuals and programs—particularly sports programs-- at the expense of the victims; 3) problematic linkages between and among University public safety officers, university administration, and external law enforcement agents and agencies; and 4) various procedural and administrative systems rife with conflicts of interests.

Furthermore, we believe the Penn State incident may highlight two separate, but related, issues: the under-reporting of a variety of criminal behavior on campus, in general, and the under-reporting and investigation of sexual assaults, in particular. For these reasons it is critical that students, staff, faculty and administrators take individual responsibility in matters of suspected or actual criminal activity. This is true both for witnesses who believe they have credible evidence of criminal activity and for victims who may be reluctant to take on seemingly daunting and powerful opponents, including those among alumni/ae groups and the media. It takes a team effort, and shared sense of responsibility, to keep our community safe for everyone.

For these reasons we propose that the University of Michigan enact its mantra

as *The Leaders and the Best* by taking a national leadership role in addressing criminal behavior on campus, including but not limited to sexual assault. Among other things we call for:

· Make sure that statements concerning both commission and reporting of crimes are clear and consistent throughout University policy and publicize these mandates annually;

· Implement procedures that rapidly attend to the special needs of victims of violent crimes, including sexual assaults, and in crimes involving vulnerable victims, including but not limited to, taking immediate protective action to ensure community safety;

· Review all programs involving minors and other vulnerable groups (including frail elderly, developmentally disabled adults, patients seeking medical treatment, etc) on campus to ensure sufficient protections are in place;

· Make sure that all university employees who are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect under state reporting laws are knowledgeable about their legal responsibilities;

· Develop training/education programs for faculty and staff dealing with vulnerable populations;

· Develop public service announcements which are targeted at supporting a crime-free and safe campus;

· Educate the community in ways to report suspected criminal behavior through the anonymous tip-line;

· Educate the community in the dual responsibility to notify both the Department of Public Safety and the Ann Arbor Police or other external law enforcement agents in cases of serious crimes such as felonies;

· Consult with SAPAC and other programs on campus for best practices and disseminate this information widely;

· Publicize important reporting outlets including: 911 (for crimes in progress); the Department of Public Safety [734-763 -1131], the Ann Arbor Police, the Child Abuse Hotline, the University Anonymous Tipline [1-800-863-1355] and the University Compliance unit (http://compliance.umich.edu/report.html

Submitted: February 2012

(On behalf of SACUA)