

# Campus Climate and Campus Rape, Part 2

By Katie Rose Guest Pryal

In October 2019, the Association of American Universities (AAU) released the results of its Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. The member schools who participated in the survey released their data as well, along with statements addressing the results.

These carefully crafted statements respond—or fail to respond—to the continued crisis of sexual assault on campus. When we look at these responses, we can see how school administrations are treating the survey results as a PR problem to be downplayed rather than as an opportunity to forge better trust with their students and other stakeholders.

## Yale: Hiding the Rise in Victimization

The 2019 AAU survey was a follow-up to the AAU's 2015 Campus Climate Survey. Many of the 2019 survey institutions took part in both, and they therefore have data to compare—data that shows either improvement or worsening conditions on campus. Where the conditions failed to improve over time, or where they worsened, some campuses tried to spin these negative outcomes, or sweep them under the rug.

Yale University CT released its survey results, along with an announcement by President Peter Salovey. Salovey's statement starts by highlighting the benefits of the survey: "[W]e now have more data to help us better understand the campus climate, measure the progress of our efforts to combat sexual misconduct, and pursue additional actions." The statement then points out all of the areas in which Yale's climate has improved since 2015, including increases in students' reporting and using university support resources. Salovey also notes "a reduction in sexually harassing behaviors ... in a group or public setting."

But he also acknowledges the "troublingly high rates of sexual misconduct on our campus" and being "deeply distressed by these findings."

Salovey's statement, however, sweeps under the rug one very important finding of the survey: Sexual assault rates at Yale *increased* since 2015.

Stephanie Spangler, Yale's vice provost for health affairs and academic integrity, provides an introduction on the survey's key findings. Like Salovey, she also highlights the lower rates in certain areas, but then she acknowledges a lack of "progress": "Notably, survey-estimated rates of sexual assault—a term that encompasses a broad range of experiences—were somewhat higher than in 2015." In the key findings, it's clear that sexual assault rates have risen: "18.1% of students have experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault ... since coming to Yale, an increase from the 2015 estimate of 16.1%."

Yale isn't unique in its presentation of the survey's results.

## UNC: Dodging Victimization Altogether

When the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill released its survey results, then-interim Chancellor Kevin M. Guskiewicz released a statement that ignored

victimization rates altogether. He spoke about the data only in general terms: "The data are very concerning and reinforce what we know to be true both on our campus and across the country: sexual assault and sexual harassment are serious problems that deeply affect our community." He couched UNC's sexual violence problem in the vaguest terms despite having statistical data to draw from. He also emphasized that UNC was not unique because harassment and assault were everywhere. His statement deemphasized the problem of sexual violence at UNC.

But what were the results of the UNC survey? According to *The Well*, the campus-managed news organization (another PR arm of the university), rates of sexual violence have risen: "20.7% of survey respondents at Carolina said they had experienced some sort of unwanted sexual contact, an increase from 16.2% in 2015." After

*But students who do not trust their institutions will not seek services.*

providing a summary of the results of the survey, the statement provides a section called "What's Changed," followed by a list of changes implemented at UNC to address sexual violence. The date that introduces the list, however, is eye-catching: "Since 2013,

Carolina has directed more resources towards sexual assault and misconduct response efforts." Why 2013? Why not 2015, after the results of the first survey? There's a good reason for that date.

In 2013, a group of UNC students filed a Title IX civil rights complaint against UNC, and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) opened an investigation into how UNC handled sexual assault. Due to that investigation, UNC implemented significant changes. In June 2018, after a five-year investigation, ED found UNC in violation of Title IX despite UNC's efforts in the meantime to improve its procedures.

Thus, to list "what's changed" since 2013 on the survey results page is disingenuous at best, because it implies that those changes were implemented because of the survey. But UNC was forced to make those changes because of a federal investigation. Putting that list on the AAU survey page implies that those changes are a list of voluntary responses to the AAU survey, which is a misleading statement about a very serious subject.

## Building Trust

These institutional responses matter, because students don't trust their institutions when it comes to sexual violence.

One of the most telling items on the AAU survey was that it revealed the lack of mistrust students felt toward their institutions. Only two-thirds of students trusted that their institution would take a report of sexual assault seriously, and that number dropped to one-half when the students were victims themselves.

Institutions say they want students to come forward to seek services, and I believe them. Institutions want to provide counseling and medical care. They want to retain students, and they know that they can't retain students who are depressed or suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. But students who do not trust their institutions

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## Women on the Move, continued from page 6

at Oregon State University to dean of the Honors College at the University of Alabama, beginning March 1.

- **Lauren Wilson, JD**, moves from interim director of the Office of Technology Transfer to assistant VP for research and technology agreements at the University of Alabama.

- **Dr. Adia Harvey Wingfield** becomes associate dean for faculty development in the College of Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis, in addition to her previous duties as professor of sociology at the school.

- **Dr. Janet Woodruff-Borden** moves from dean and vice provost of the Graduate School to executive vice provost for academic affairs at the University of Oregon.

- **Renell Wynn** becomes VP for communications at Wesleyan University CT.



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### CHANCELLOR

The University of Colorado Denver is conducting a national search for Chancellor. The Search Committee invites nominations, applications (a letter of interest, CV/resume, and the names and contact information of five or more references) or expressions of interest to be submitted to the search firm assisting the University. Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. It is preferred, however, that all nominations and applications be submitted to the search firm by February 6, 2020. For a complete position description, please visit the Current Opportunities page at [www.parkersearch.com](http://www.parkersearch.com).

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- **Dr. Stacy Young** moves from dean of the School of Business and School of Advanced Technology at Southwestern Michigan College to president of Montcalm Community College MI.

## Columbia Announces Universitywide Scholarship for Displaced Students

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empowerment and global imbalance.”

Amrou hopes to see applicants who are civic- and community-minded with a desire to give back to their own communities as well as to Columbia. Leadership skills are also highly desirable. In response to the assistance she’s received, Sahtout has done her best to help other students who want to apply to Columbia, as well as those currently enrolled who are seeking scholarships or internships.

“It’s our hope that by empowering those that come through the program we can help change their lives in a positive way and give them the opportunities they deserve, [which] they would have had if their educations and studies had not been disrupted by disaster and war,” says Amrou.

## In Her Own Words: On Dying Grandparents, Old Tropes and Faculty Success

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ignorance about the realities of death can be traced back to an institutional culture that does not take faculty success seriously. Yes, some of it might be individual ignorance, or, perhaps, the result of people who’ve been yet untouched by death themselves, but I have to wonder if larger forces are at play. And really, they always are.

If we want faculty to express care to students, we must express care to faculty. If we want caring classrooms, we need caring offices and meeting spaces. If we want faculty to practice a pedagogy of care, we must create a caring campus culture. We’ve got to go beyond the old tropes around death and start to have the hard conversations.

For our time together won’t last forever.

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will not seek services.

In order to get students to participate in the survey, last year, all of the participant schools emailed all of their students notifying them about the survey. Schools prompted their students to participate, and the survey remained open for a month. The survey typically got great response rates, 20% or more—for those who do surveys for a living, you know how great a rate that is. The point is that students across participating campuses are aware of this survey. They know it happened, and they were waiting for the results. When the results came, and the results were covered in the student papers and the local news, students knew

what the results were. The results weren't secret.

So, when the most public voice of your institution handles the results the way the presidents and chancellors of institutions across the country have handled it—Yale and UNC are not outliers—by understating or misstating, by misdirection or worse, schools lose students' trust.

A university president needed to say in her statement: "Rates of violence rose. We're sorry. We're going to do something about that." If ever there were a time to acknowledge the reality of something, it would be now, when building student trust is of utmost importance. But they didn't. And now, my worry is this: In five years, what will the results say? 

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## **PROFILE: The Economics of Women and Their Bodies** *continued from page 8*

challenging and resisting those policies and practices. Behind every naked woman is a real, thinking being whose value rests on much more than her body."

### **Creativity and the Arts**

A self-professed "workaholic," Bateman is trying to better manage her work and life. But "economics is with me all the time, even when I'm at the theater or walking around an art gallery," she says.

"I find that some of my most creative moments have occurred when engaging with the arts," she continues, "Art goes beyond what the written word alone can offer" because it "digs deep into human emotion and explores the interplay between individual and society."

When she's not working, Bateman spends time reading, watching movies and visiting galleries and museums. "In fact, my economic views have been shaped as much by the arts—by novels such as *1984* and films like *The Lives of Others*—as they have been by reading economics books," she says. 

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## **Sacred Heart Establishes Programs to Reenvision Urban Education**

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areas," says Davidson. "Engaging with this program will help our education students become much more aware of the needs of the students who exist in the cities.

"It's an opportunity for everyone to mentor," she adds. "The support goes both ways." 

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## **Crafting Compelling Stories to Draw Students to Campus**

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- Is your story accessible on multiple platforms and in multiple browsers?
- How involved are the important stakeholders on campus? Baker suggested making sure student affairs, alumni and current students are all brought into the process of storytelling.
- When constructing your narrative, consider: Why do you do what you do?
- Does your audience know how to interpret your data points? Jankowski said that too often, we assume data

speaks for itself, but your audience may not know why an increase of a data point is a big deal.

- Why do you think that what you are doing for your students will lead to enhanced learning for those students at this particular time in history? In other words, why is the learning you're facilitating for your students important currently?

"We're not just telling a story to tell a story—we're trying to persuade a certain audience," Jankowski said. And if you need to reclaim the narrative rather than shape it yourself, you're giving up valuable ground and opportunity for your institution, she added. 

*Halley Sutton is a contributing editor to Dean & Provost. Her article first appeared in the July 2019 issue of Dean & Provost, also published by Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Brand. For more information about that publication, please go to <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/19437587>.*

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## **PROFILE: Finding Life After Retaliation** *continued from page 11*

or Title IX for similar reasons.

But schools risk little by reporting, says Landino. In fact, they will cultivate good faith and a highly productive academic environment.

The goal is not to have the lowest statistics possible; the goal is to have fair and equitable systems. "If we catch these sorts of problems early on, [students] stay in school" and we can mitigate the harm, she says.

### **Help Others to Navigate Hostile Work Environments**

Since leaving Yale, Landino has taught at schools as an adjunct in and around Connecticut. She's currently at the University of New Haven and Middlesex Community College; she's also teaching at the MacDougall-Walker and Osborn correctional institutions.

As part of her healing process, she has spoken to multiple chapters of the American Association of University Women. Landino has also presented at conferences on international victims and trauma abuse, and crimes against women.

Her current work involves helping other women navigate a hostile environment, and she formed A.R.E. to further her work. "It's very healing for me," she says.

"The loneliest time is when you think it's just you," she says. "My life changed when I recognized it's a national epidemic and that I wasn't alone."

Landino has relied on the research of Dr. Jennifer Freyd, a professor of psychology at the University of Oregon. Freyd, who studies institutional betrayal, is the director of the Project on Institutional Courage and founder of the Center for Institutional Courage.

Despite her life-altering experiences, Landino says she doesn't hate Yale. She simply wants it "to be the best it can be."

Would she do it again if she knew then what she knows now? Her answer is "Yes."

"I know how important it is to student development and the future of the country," she says. "The economic loss [when a student drops out because of harassment and/or assault] causes harm not only to the student and the one being retaliated against, [but] it causes harm to the country." 