

# TAKING ACTION ON SEXUAL ASSAULT

## *A Student Perspective*

Students sit at the center of the sexual assault storm. It is a problem among us, and a problem we must fix at personal and cultural levels. In the last weeks, we have come together with that in mind to prepare the following—a student’s point of view on how the many dedicated stakeholders can come together.



### WHAT THE BOARD CAN DO

#### 1 Legal Counsel for Survivors

Students filing reports have much to gain from experienced legal counsel, but many never get it. The Sexual Assault Advocacy Fund aims to fund resources toward this end at the Legal Aid Justice Center.

*The BOV can: budget donations to SAAF or LAJC (assuring independence of counsel)*

#### 2 Closed Criminal Trials

One hurdle to pursuing criminal resolution may be the painstaking public nature of trials. Introducing privacy could make that path more attractive.

*The BOV can: advocate publicly to Richmond*

#### 3 Trauma Training for Police

In both investigation and prosecution, sensitively handling trauma victims is a skill that must be trained to—and one that can improve survivor experience and reporting.

*The BOV can: budget for trainings, change University PD policy, encourage Charlottesville/ Albemarle PD policy change*

#### 4 Gender Violence Institute

Much academic work and many faculty members across disciplines engage the issues of gender violence. Bringing them together and focusing on applying the research will position UVa lead all colleges on this issue.

*The BOV can: create the Institute*

#### 5 Require Women & Gender Studies

There is much to learn about our culture’s impact on and interaction with women. Assuring that each student engages with these ideas is an enabler of cultural change.

*The BOV can: budget increased support for the program, direct schools to create requirement*

#### 6 Alternative Saturday Night

Particularly for the University’s youngest students, social options are limited. Developing more robust dry venues could encourage safer behavior.

*The BOV can: budget for program support*

#### 7 Long-Term Counseling

Student mental health is underemphasized but has outsized importance. Providing for faster service and free treatment beyond 6 visits is critical for a robust student body.

*The BOV can: budget and plan for expansion*

#### 8 Distract from Block Party

Bringing a high-profile act to Grounds the weekend before the fall semester begins may be the only way to combat one of the most dangerous nights of the year.

*The BOV can: budget for act*

#### 9 Institutionalize Prevention

Hiring Nicole Thomas to coordinate prevention was a much-needed first step. Consistently funding her office is the next.

*The BOV can: budget for prevention activities*

## WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION CAN DO

- 1 Quickly Launch a Safety App**

Launching a full-featured, third-party safety app that is tested with student users is a doable immediate step.
- 2 Identify Repeat Offenders**

Apps and examples of school-police agreements exist that allow sealed, no-action reporting that could help notify survivors and the administration when multiple reporters name one perpetrator. This could encourage reporting and expulsion.
- 3 Public Alerts**

School-wide emails or a public website/app could notify students of the (non-identifiable) circumstances and locations of reports, as well as SMB outcomes.
- 4 All-Night Women's Center**

Keeping the center open and staffed with a crisis counselor (or counseling student) all-night would provide a timely refuge for those most in need.
- 5 Faculty Training**

The upcoming mandatory training module is a good first step. Additional in-person trainings for faculty on their responsibilities and how to sensitively interact with survivors should be pursued.
- 6 First Year Training**

Every first year should get exposure to an in-depth, small-group presentation about the issue of sexual assault and what they can do about it in their first two weeks on Grounds.
- 7 Resources on Syllabi**

Many faculty include information about Honor resources on their syllabi; Sexual Assault information and resources would be a positive similar addition.

## WHAT STUDENTS WILL DO

- 1 SVPC General Body**

The Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition will provide a place for students to get involved without the in-depth trainings of One in Four and One Less.  
*Owner: Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition*
- 2 Modify Fraternity Agreement**

New provisions focused on social function safety will be drafted and proposed to President Sullivan. Alcohol, active bystanders, and enforcement will be foci.  
*Owner: Interfraternity Council (IFC)*
- 3 Modify CIO Agreement**

New provisions will be written into the formal student organization recognition agreement requiring bystander coordination and training.  
*Owner: Student Council*
- 4 Day of Training**

On one day early in the spring semester, more than 2,000 spots will be opened for in-depth bystander training through Green Dot.  
*Owner: (collaboration)*
- 5 Alternative Saturday Night**

Additional dry, varied social outlets will be planned, with particular emphasis on providing for first years.  
*Owner: Class Councils*
- 6 Buddies on Call & Student Watch**

Student-created, student-run, and police-supported safety organizations will offer walks home and extra sets of vigilant eyes.  
*Owner: Student Council (oversight)*
- 7 Survivor Support Network**

Peer mentors will be available to support survivors and coach them through process.  
*Owner: Sexual Violence Prevention Coalition*