

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ON CAMPUS GRANT

TASK FORCE, MEETING ONE

APRIL 18, 2002

8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

**FIU University Park Campus
Graham Center 243 West**

Report of Proceedings

WELCOME, HISTORY

Sharon M. Aaron, Director, Victim Advocacy Center (VAC), called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for coming. She introduced her supervisor, Dr. Helen Ellison, Associate Vice President, Division of Student Affairs; Alexandra M. Rodriguez, Assistant Director of the VAC and co-director of the grant; and Amanda L. Niguidula, Grants Manager, VAC, and policy advisor for the grant; all of whom she thanked for their assistance in making this effort a reality.

Ms. Aaron gave a brief history of the Violence Against Women on Campus Grant. (Exhibit A) She noted that Florida International University is one of eleven sites nationally that were chosen to receive these grant funds. She introduced Ms. Rodriguez who reviewed the key policy issues on which the Task Force would be making recommendations and findings. They are: sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, and cyber stalking. Ms. Aaron explained that these issues are of great importance because statistics have shown that institutions of higher education with 10,000 women students can anticipate that more than 350 rapes or attempted rapes will occur per academic year.

Ms. Aaron went on to give these additional statistics:

- Over the average college career (of 5 years) 20-25% of the female student population has been sexually assaulted.
- Most sexual assaults occur between students who know one another. Furthermore, victims are primarily full-time students and approximately 1/3 are first year students between 17-19 years old.
- Over 80% of sexual assaults are not reported to police.
- Several studies have shown that among college students, the average rate of non sexual dating violence is 32%.

Ms. Aaron then turned the meeting over to the meeting facilitator, Janice M. Fleischer, Program Manager of the South Florida Regional Planning Council's Institute for Community Collaboration. Ms. Fleischer reviewed the day's objectives:

- To learn about the genesis and history of this grant
- To begin to know more about each other
- To identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of and to the Task Force
- To identify core values
- To begin drafting a Mission Statement

She reviewed the day's agenda (Exhibit B) and explained that, although the participants in the deliberations would be the members of the Task Force, observers were welcome and their input would be solicited in a variety of ways. For this meeting, observers were provided with comment cards. Ms. Fleischer explained that all observer comments received would be included in the Report of Proceedings of this meeting.

PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS

Before continuing with the day's activities, Task Force members (members) were led through a "getting acquainted" exercise. Each participant was given a worksheet (Exhibit C) in the shape of a "shield" which contained the following questions:

1. What three people do you most admire?
2. What do you most enjoy doing on your day off?
3. What three words would you want said about you?
4. If you were independently wealthy what would you do?

Members were instructed to partner with another Task Force member whom they did not previously know and tell their partner their answers to the questions. They were given time to speak to one another. At the end of their "private" time together, each partner was asked to tell the whole group about what he/she learned about his/her partner. The conversation was lively and members contributed many interesting observations.

AGENDA REVIEW

As the agenda had been reviewed earlier, the Facilitator went directly into an explanation of the group's discussion guidelines (Exhibit D) and her responsibilities as their facilitator (Exhibit E). She explained the advantages of a group using a collaborative process rather than a "majority rules" decision making process and presented them with consensus rules (Exhibits F and G). She talked briefly about the need for consistency in their participation and mentioned the possibility of them adopting a logo to aid with the identification of the group.

SWOT EXERCISE

In order to begin the work of this group, the Facilitator explained the need for the members to begin to consider their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Each member was given several sheets of post it notes and asked to list the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the group on those note sheets, one idea per note. Members were given time to brainstorm and the facilitator gathered their notes and placed them on labeled flipcharts. The results of this exercise were as follows:

Strengths Identified:

Diversity in culture and work
Diversity in representation
Wide range of knowledge
Broad representation from University and community
Experts from different areas of FIU and the community collaborating-covering all bases
Different agencies and departments with shared goals for this program
Lots of people in the Task Force are familiar with the university culture
Excitement about making a difference
People from diverse backgrounds will provide well-rounded viewpoints
Varied backgrounds of participants
Expertise

Knowledge
Direct experience
Facilitator
Collaborative
Everyone at the table is a committed caring individual
Investment of Public Safety
Work together toward a common goal, utilizing our areas of experience and expertise
Great body of knowledge from practitioners working with target populations
Community-FIU and Sweetwater
Common goal
Increase awareness about issues of violence
Commitment to project

Weaknesses Identified:

Group size
No student representation
Resources
Not enough voices from outside/independent agencies
Focusing a large diverse group on the real issue
Need Female student representation
No medical people (doctors, nurses)
Sustainability of the group
Hidden biases
Distrust
Ability for group of this many people to reach consensus
Lack of knowledge concerning the problem
Minority/black/international student representatives
No Broward Community College representation
Competing demands
Differing levels of experience and different perspectives
Time-so many of us are over-committed already we need to be realistic
Knowledge of diverse cultures
Need a community police officer
Need to consider the rights of the perpetrator
Ability of the group to be consistent in attendance of meetings
Not everyone at the table is in a FIU policymaking powerful position (very few of these folks)
Need a community healthcare provider

Opportunities identified:

Create policies that will actually have positive effects on campus
Opportunity to collaborate
Set policy for school
Set standards for all schools
Make connections between University and community
Model
To be creative
To get input from a large diverse group
To have an impact on the college experience of men and women
To build bridges
To effect change nationally

To provide a more safe environment for our students and educating them on how to avoid dangerous situations
Increase awareness about issues of violence
Chance to integrate with the community at large
Greater community awareness
Professional developmental opportunity
Increase student retention
To discuss the problem/needs of the campus community with a variety of perspectives
To impact institutional climate
Impact University as number of students on campus
Address head on victimization in the campus environment
Create a program or series of programs that significantly reduce the problems of violence against women
To realize the community partnership we can create
Understand one another's roles, including constraints and also areas of flexibility
Be able to develop model program
To lower the number of violent incidents against women
Create new relationships that enhance our efforts

Threats identified:

Time commitments interfere with participation
Turf protection
People not committing to attending Task Force Meetings
Continuity of members or lack thereof
Hidden agendas
Acceptance by community
Unrealistic
Possible narrow/personal viewpoints regarding issues because of experiences working in the areas of women's issues
Difficulty in communicating the problem
Fear of the subject
Cultural differences
Diverse populations
Unfocused
Legal issues
People at FIU who might not want the statistics published
Community
Lack of commitment
Implementation support from the University
Making the University Executive Committee understand the importance of violence/sexual assault on campus issues-when few are reported
Politics
Funding issues
Lack of human resources to accomplish goals
Inability to address the real issues or identify them

At this point in the meeting, everyone took a short break. During the break, members and observers had an opportunity to review the results of the SWOT exercise.

VALUE IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION

Ms. Fleischer initiated this exercise by showing the members a definition of “value”: “A principle, standard or quality considered worthwhile or desirable.” Members were asked to consider what values they would adopt in accomplishing their task. The chart below shows all the values that were mentioned. Members were then each given 5 color dots and asked to place one dot next to each of the five values they felt were most important. The five values that gained the highest number of dots would become the group’s “core” values. These would be used in the next exercise as the group was drafting its Mission Statement.

The results of the values exercise were:

VALUES

VALUE	DOTS
Open minded	9
Honesty	7
Fairness	3
Inclusive	4
Respect	12
Trust	5
Educational	5
Participation	6
Commitment	11
Candor	4
Efficiency	8
Focus	6
Social change	5

CORE VALUES

1. Respect
2. Commitment
3. Open minded
4. Efficiency
5. Honesty

SMALL GROUP MISSION STATEMENT WORK

The Facilitator explained to the group that they would now work in three small groups to begin to generate a Mission Statement for the Task Force. Each member was given a worksheet (Exhibit H) and asked to consider their answers to the questions on the worksheet individually prior to working with the other members of their group. The three small groups worked together and each group generated its own draft mission statement for the Task Force.

Group One:

The VAWA Task Force is comprised of university administrators and community leaders committed to addressing issues of violence, victimization and stalking of women on campus. We will collaboratively identify and develop policies and programs to address awareness to prevent or reduce.

Group Two:

The Mission of the VAWA Task Force at FIU, composed of individuals from FIU and the community, is to review and address the problems of stalking, dating/domestic violence, sexual assault and cyber stalking. We will develop a coordinated community response to campus victimization and improve victim assistance services to all students and produce culturally appropriate educational materials. We are committed to developing policies that can be implemented on any college campus.

Group Three:

As a collection of professionals representing key facets of the university and surrounding communities, we are committed to ensuring student safety and to ending violence against women on campuses everywhere. We are dedicated to raising awareness and ameliorating the impact of contributing factors.

There was some discussion about how to combine these three statements into one final Mission Statement, but time did not allow this to be finished. The Facilitator said she would review the three statements and incorporate the comments made and draft a single statement for the group to consider at their next meeting.

WRAP UP AND AJOURN

Ms. Aaron thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She encouraged all representatives to submit their Designee/Alternate forms to Ms. Rodriguez. It was announced that the next meeting would take place during the summer months.

The meeting was then adjourned.