



## University Senate PROPOSAL FORM

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<b>Date:</b>	December 3, 2011
<b>Title of Proposal:</b>	Proposal to Implement SARPP Presentation at New Faculty/Staff Orientation
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<b>Unit/Department/College:</b>	University Health Center
<b>Constituency (faculty, staff, undergraduate, graduate):</b>	Undergraduate Students, Staff
<b>Description of issue/concern/policy in question:</b>	In the current New Faculty/Staff Orientation, the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program (SARPP) has no representation. This program is extremely important to our campus, and helps students and staff cope with and prevent instances of sexual abuse and relationship violence. Since the program is not introduced to the faculty and staff at the university, they are unable to refer students in need to SARPP, and don't know they can access it for themselves.
<b>Description of action/changes you would like to see implemented and why:</b>	We propose that the New Faculty/Staff Orientation include a fifteen-minute time slot for SARPP to give a presentation that would explain the services it provides. This is important for several reasons. Firstly, an overall lack of faculty and staff awareness of the program prevents SARPP from reaching potential clientele. If these victims go untreated, there can be devastating psychological and physical consequences. Additionally, it results in fewer requests for educational presentations from faculty, leading to fewer students receiving the information. Lastly, failure by the university to respond to instances of interpersonal violence in an effective manner can have drastic legal penalties. The school could receive major fines or even lose federal funding. If the faculty and staff are well informed, this outcome is much less likely. For additional information, please see the attached document.

<p><b>Suggestions for how your proposal could be put into practice:</b></p>	<p>We hope that the Department of Human Resources will make a SARPP presentation mandatory for every New Faculty/Staff Orientation. The responsibility of presenting the information will be entirely on the staff of SARPP; all that the Human Resources office needs to do is set aside fifteen minutes in the schedule.</p>
<p><b>Additional Information:</b></p>	<p>The presentation for new faculty and staff will include an explanation of SARPP's services. SARPP provides victims of interpersonal violence with services including but not limited to academic and financial support, referrals to legal aid and mental health services, and liaison services between victims and other campus offices, such as Resident Life and the University Police, all free of charge. Additionally, SARPP conducts a peer education program that provides prevention education to various campus organizations.</p> <p>The presentation will then close with an explanation of what can happen if the university does not respond in an effective manner to an instance of sexual abuse. For more information, see the attached document for a detailed outline for the proposed presentation.</p>

***Please send your completed form and any supporting documents to [senate-admin@umd.edu](mailto:senate-admin@umd.edu) or University of Maryland Senate Office, 1100 Marie Mount Hall, College Park, MD 20742-7541. Thank you!***

## Proposed Outline for the Orientation Information Session

- Overview of SARPP
  - Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program
    - 2 branches:
      - Advocacy/Victim assistance
      - Education
    - Available to anyone connected to the University
      - Students (and their family/friends)
      - Faculty/staff (and their family/friends)
      - Primary victims (of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking)
      - Secondary victims
  - Advocacy Office
    - Resources and support for both primary and secondary victims
    - Services include:
      - Referrals for mental health services, medical care, faith-based services, legal aid
      - Alternative housing and transportation arrangements
      - Academic support
      - Liaison services between victims and other campus offices, such Resident Life, University Police, academic departments, etc.
      - Support and advocacy throughout the criminal process, should a victim decide to report
      - Financial assistance for any expenses related to the victimization
  - Education Program
    - Presentations giving by trained undergraduates
    - Four different presentations offered
      - Sexual violence
      - Relationship violence

- Stalking
  - Bystander intervention
  - Each around 50 minutes
  - Available for any size class or student group affiliated with the University
- Reasons to Care
  - Overview of stats/prevalence rates
    - Nationally
      - e.g. 1 in 5 women victim of attempted/completed rape during time in college
    - At UMD
      - e.g. In 2010-2011 academic year, 114 clients served by SARPP
  - University Liability:
    - Governing legislation
      - Title IX
      - Clery Act
      - Sexual Assault Victim Bill of Rights
    - Consequences of non-compliance
      - Fines; loss of federal funds
      - Helpful to reference Penn State scandal?
- What to do if student discloses
  - Helpful behaviors
    - e.g. providing them with options/resources, referring them to SARPP
  - Harmful behaviors
    - e.g. forcing them to do things; breaking confidentiality
  - How to report crime to University

- Wrap up
  - Contact Information
    - SARPP Office, Room 2118D in the University Health Center
      - Walk in hours: 9:00 AM - 5 PM, Mon-Fri
      - Office phone: 301-314-2222
      - **24/7** Crisis Cell: 301-741-3442
      - Advocacy email: sarppadvocate@health.umd.edu
      - Education email: [sarppeducators@health.umd.edu](mailto:sarppeducators@health.umd.edu)
  - How to request a presentation
    - Email the SARPP Education Office at [sarppeducators@health.umd.edu](mailto:sarppeducators@health.umd.edu)
    - Include date, time, location, and type of presentation needed, and estimate of audience size

**Lack of Faculty and Staff Awareness about the  
Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program**

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Proposal: Supporting Information

January 2, 2011

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## **Introduction**

Research by the U.S. Department of Justice indicates that during her college career, one in five women will experience an attempted or completed rape.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, one in four women will experience domestic violence during her lifetime, with women between the ages of 20 and 24 at the greatest risk.<sup>2</sup>

In reaction to these high prevalence rates, the University of Maryland formed the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program (SARPP), whose goal is to respond to incidents of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment on campus through assistance to victims and community education.<sup>3</sup>

However, despite the advanced services offered by SARPP, many go underutilized. This is largely due to an overall lack of awareness about SARPP among University faculty and staff. This paper outlines the detrimental consequences of this lack of awareness, both for victims of sexual assault and relationship violence and for the University. We will also discuss the causes of sexual assault and relationship violence, as well as the factors contributing to the lack of faculty and staff awareness about SARPP. Finally, we will describe our proposed solution to this problem: a mandatory SARPP presentation given at incoming faculty and staff orientations.

## **Statement of the Issue**

Sexual assault is a form of interpersonal violence defined by the threatening or forcing of another person to engage in an unwanted sexual act, ranging from sexual harassment to rape.<sup>4</sup> Statistics show that sexual assault is a widespread problem: every two minutes, a woman in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.<sup>5</sup> Although women are the most



common victims of sexual assault, 10% of victims are men.<sup>6</sup> Sexual assault not only affects victims, but their families and friends as well.

While sexual assault occurs at all ages, women between 20 and 24, the ages that correspond to the time many women are in college, are especially at risk.<sup>7</sup> Nationwide, one in five female students will be the victims of sexual assault during her time at school.<sup>8</sup> Despite such prevalence, only 5% of rapes on college campuses are reported.<sup>9</sup> The National Institute of Justice estimates that at a school the size of University of Maryland, 900 undergraduate women may be the victims of sexual assault each year.<sup>10</sup>

Sexual assault is not the only type of threat faced by college women. Another form of interpersonal violence is relationship abuse. This may be defined as any form of violence or abuse committed within the context of an intimate or dating relationship. While relationship abuse is generally equated with physical violence, such as hitting and choking, there are several other types of relationship violence. This includes verbal abuse, such as name-calling, threats and yelling; emotional abuse, involving isolation from friends and family and humiliation; and sexual abuse, such as rape.<sup>11</sup>

As with sexual assault, relationship violence is a problem prevalent on college campuses. In fact, 32% of college students report having been subjected to dating violence by a previous partner, and 21% report violence by a current partner.<sup>12</sup> Again, women are more likely than men to be victims of relationship abuse, with one in five women being in an abusive relationship during her time in college.<sup>13</sup> It is important to note an important distinction between relationship violence and sexual assault. Unlike sexual assault, which tends to be an isolated incident, relationship violence occurs in a cycle. This cycle occurs in three phases: the Honeymoon phase, the Tension-building phase, and the Crisis phase. In

the Honeymoon Phase, the partner who commits the abuse is caring and contrite, apologizing for any previous abuse and promising that no further abuse will occur. In the Tension-building Phase, stress and tension escalate. Instances of abusive behavior increase, and the victim fears that the abuse will escalate. The Crisis Phase is categorized by episodes of threats, physical violence, acute emotional and verbal abuse and property damage or destruction. Once the Crisis Phase is over, the partner who has committed the abuse will apologize. The relationship then enters another Honeymoon Phase, and the cycle begins again.<sup>14</sup>

In response to the prevalence of sexual assault and relationship violence on college campuses, the University of Maryland has created The Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program (SARPP). This organization is dedicated to raising awareness about sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking within the campus community. The program has two primary services: (1) an advocacy office for both direct and indirect victims of sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking, and (2) a preventive education program.<sup>15</sup>

The advocacy office, which is run through the University Health Center, provides free services to all students, faculty, staff and individuals associated with the University. SARPP works both with victims of violence and with their friends, families, and/or partners. It provides a wide range of resources and support to victims of sexual violence, including academic and financial support, referrals to legal aid and mental health services, and liaison services between victims and other campus offices, such as ResLife and the University Police.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to advocacy services, SARPP also strives to educate the campus community through two types of outreach programs. The first, called Violence Intervention Assistant Training, teaches University students about intervention techniques for bystanders. In one 8-hour day, students are taught the consequences of sexual violence, how to identify a high-risk violent situation, and how to safely intervene to prevent these situations from happening. The goal is to create a network of advocates for survivors of sexual violence, to reduce the stigma associated with victimization, and to prevent further violence from occurring within the campus community.<sup>17</sup>

The second method of outreach is through the Peer Education Program, which provides educational presentations to various campus organizations such as Greek Life, ResLife, and UNIV100 classes. These presentations provide information on a range of topics covering sexual violence, relationship violence, stalking, and bystander intervention.<sup>18</sup>

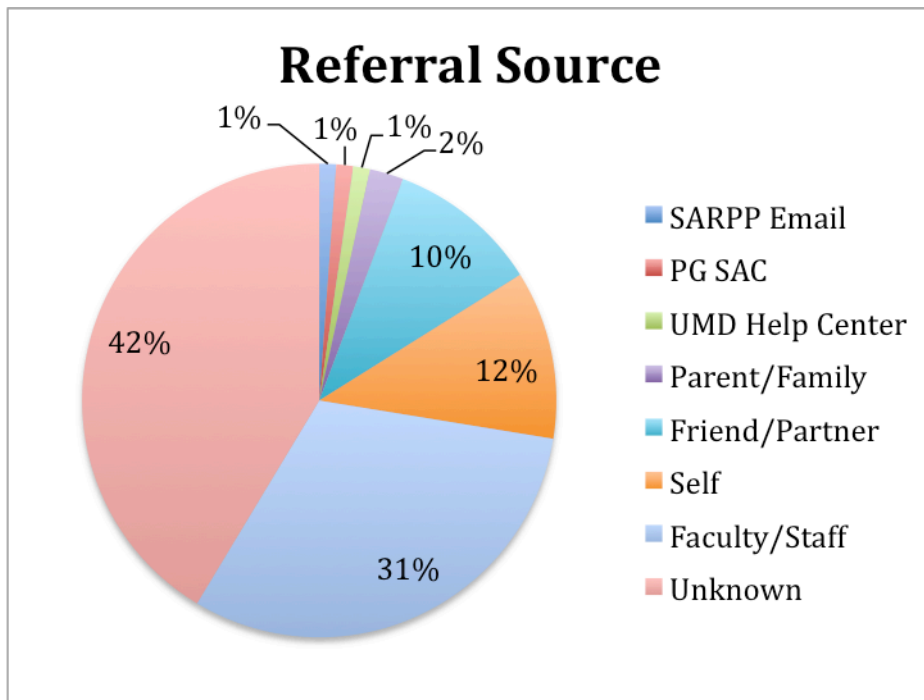
### **Consequences of the Issue**

Despite the advanced nature of the program, many of SARPP's services are underutilized. To a large extent, this is a result of a lack of awareness by University faculty and staff about SARPP. This is detrimental for several reasons: it prevents SARPP from reaching and helping potential clientele, it forces SARPP staff to engage in inefficient communication with faculty and staff on behalf of victims, and it results in fewer students receiving SARPP's educational presentations. If overlooked, this lack of awareness could lead to legal problems for the University.

According to SARPP's 2010-2011 annual report, 32% of victims were referred to SARPP by University faculty and staff (see Figure 1).<sup>19</sup> This may have occurred because

students interact with faculty and staff on a daily basis, from professors to the janitorial staff. Consequently, victims of sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking may feel comfortable disclosing their victimization to these individuals.

The lack of adequate knowledge about SARPP on the part of most faculty and staff is problematic. If a student confides in them about being victimized, many faculty and staff members are unsure of what to do and, as a result, potential clients are not referred to the program.



**Figure 1:** Breakdown of the referral sources of 51 SARPP clients.

This underutilization of SARPP’s services poses a significant health issue for the University community. Victims who are left without resources for dealing with their trauma can develop serious physical and psychological problems. Women who have

experienced relationship abuse are 50-70% more likely to experience an array of physical and psychological conditions, such as depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, headaches, and chronic back pain.<sup>20</sup> A study from the *Journal of Family Violence* also found that victims of domestic violence experienced changes in weight, nervousness or dizziness, anxiety, substance abuse, and/or the contraction of sexually transmitted infections.<sup>21</sup>

One reason students in violent relationships are particularly vulnerable to these kinds of health problems is because abuse can take many forms: it can be physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, and even financial.<sup>22</sup> These problems also manifest easily, as abuse tends to be long lasting if it is not recognized and addressed. The repetitive nature of physical abuse puts individuals at a higher risk for headaches, chronic neck pain, chronic back pain, pelvic pain, arthritis, gastrointestinal problems, and heart disease.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, continuous verbal and emotional abuse makes victims feel worthless, as if they are not smart enough, pretty enough, or good enough for anyone. This greatly damages self-esteem, which exacerbates depressive and suicidal feelings and may contribute to the development of eating disorders.<sup>24</sup>

According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), victims of sexual assault may experience similar problems. This includes Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, self-injury, sleep disorders, eating disorders, and suicide.<sup>25</sup> The Abuse, Rape & Domestic Violence Aid & Resource Collection (ARDVARC) explains that individuals with PTSD can experience violent flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, insomnia, hyper-vigilance, and emotional numbing.<sup>26</sup> A victim and former student at Maryland told SARPP:

I constantly felt on edge. Certain things would trigger me to think about that night and would cause severe panic attacks. Little things like guys winking at

me or touching me in the same places he did were triggers. While those were bad, big things like seeing him on the street while driving caused me panic attacks that were so bad that I nearly got into a car accident.<sup>27</sup>

This demonstrates how the traumatic effects of sexual assault prevent students from living their lives normally.

Unfortunately, it is common for victims to go without help from their schools. For example, Megan Wright, a 19-year-old student at Dominican College, was gang raped at the end of her freshman year. She sought help from the proper authorities, but received no justice. Despite overwhelming evidence, the school and authorities did nothing to punish the offenders. Unable to cope with her fear of re-victimization and depression, Megan dropped out of school and later committed suicide.<sup>28</sup> As this example of a university's response to an incident of sexual assault is not rare, it is imperative that faculty and staff at Maryland know about SARPP so that they have the tools to help similar students in need.

The lack of faculty and staff awareness about SARPP also makes advocating for victims more difficult. As a part of their services, the SARPP staff contact faculty and staff members on behalf of victims, in order to obtain extra support that they may need due to the circumstances of the assault. This can include extensions on assignments, policy exceptions, housing changes, referrals to mental health services, and more.<sup>29</sup>

The lack of faculty and staff awareness makes this process unnecessarily complicated. Instead of actually bringing about helpful changes or exceptions for victims, advocates are forced to spend their time explaining SARPP's authority to make these changes. This complicates and delays the healing process for victims. It also adds stress to the work of faculty and staff, who are forced to make last minute changes for victims without warning.

If they had been aware of SARPP services beforehand, the whole process could proceed more smoothly for all parties involved. Furthermore, limited outreach directed at University faculty and staff not only leads to fewer clients accessing SARPP's advocacy services, but also leads to fewer requests for presentations of SARPP's educational program.

Currently, incoming students at the University of Maryland are not required to receive any training regarding sexual assault prevention. According to SARPP's annual report, only 5,077 students received a presentation in the last academic year. While this is an improvement over previous years, there are more than 26,000 undergraduates at the University, meaning only 18% of students were reached.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, all of Greek Life is required to request SARPP's presentations, so the majority of the students being reached are from the same population. This leaves a large part of the student body uneducated, largely due to the lack of faculty and staff awareness.

Professors, club sponsors, resident hall directors, and others are able to request presentations on behalf of the students they teach or represent. However, this rarely happens because of their unfamiliarity with SARPP services. This is unfortunate, as SARPP's presentations promote safety on campus by teaching students how they can best help victims of interpersonal violence, as well as how they can intervene in potentially violent situations to prevent them from escalating.

Victims are also hurt by this lack of awareness, as they may never learn that there are people on campus willing and able to help them after an incident occurs. As a result, some victims may remain in dangerous living or working situations, may find their grades slipping, and may see their relationships suffer, all while trying to cope with their trauma

on their own. The American College Health Association states that “it is the responsibility of faculty, staff, and administrators...to provide educative opportunities for the primary prevention of sexual violence.”<sup>31</sup> This cannot be done if the faculty and staff are unaware of SARPP’s existence.

The lack of faculty and staff awareness about SARPP has potential liability issues for the University. As an institution that receives federal aid, the University of Maryland is required to take certain actions to protect victims of sexual assault under three laws: Title IX, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (aka the Clery Act), and the Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights. Faculty and staff need to know about SARPP to ensure that victims are properly cared for and that the University stays in compliance with each of these laws.

Title IX is a part of the Education Amendments of 1972, and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational institution receiving federal money. Specifically, it requires that schools create a policy against sex discrimination (which encompasses sexual assault) and publish corresponding procedures for reporting complaints. Moreover, when an incident occurs, schools must demonstrate that "reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, and effective corrective action" was taken on behalf of the victim.<sup>32</sup> Non-compliance with these polices could result in legal action against the school, heavy fines from the U.S. Department of Education, and/or the loss of federal aid.<sup>33</sup> This is all detrimental to the University’s reputation and financial stability. SARPP keeps the University in compliance with this legislation, as it provides individuals with the necessary resources after their victimization. However, SARPP cannot do this if University employees fail to refer victims to their services due to lack of awareness.



In addition to Title IX, the Clery Act protects victims of sexual assault by requiring all federally funded colleges and universities to publicly report all known information about crimes on and around their campuses. The law mandates that schools publish an annual report of their crime statistics and security policies over the past three years. The report must also include a description of the school's policy on sexual assault, a list of victims' basic rights, and the procedures for reporting crimes. A crime must be reported if it occurs on campus, in areas that run through campus, in public areas adjacent to campus, and in affiliated non-campus areas, such as Greek housing.<sup>34</sup> Similar to Title IX, the Clery Act is enforced by the Department of Education, and has the same consequences for non-compliance. SARPP helps keep the University in compliance with this law, but only to the extent that the faculty and staff help SARPP to do so.

Finally, the Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights guarantees victims the following:

1. Survivors of sexual assault will be given the option to notify law enforcement about their victimization.
2. Survivors will be given the option to use counseling/support services.
3. Survivors will be given the option to change their academic and/or living situation to ensure their safety.
4. Both the survivor and the alleged offender must have an equal opportunity to present their sides during a campus judiciary proceeding.
5. Both the survivor and alleged offender must be informed of the outcome of the proceedings.<sup>35</sup>

SARPP ensures that victims are afforded all of these rights, but only if they are given the

opportunity. Thus, educating faculty and staff about SARPP is beneficial on multiple fronts. Victims are more likely to receive the treatment they need, and the University stays in compliance with federal regulations.

### **Factors Contributing to the Issue**

Given the nature of this situation, one must question how it developed in the first place. In this section we will analyze the factors that contribute to the current environment regarding sexual assault on campus.

While it may be hard to believe that violence could ever be tolerated or even endorsed by society, cultural norms in the United States reinforce the image of an aggressive man as the symbol of masculinity, thereby reinforcing male violence.<sup>36</sup> One of the driving forces behind this phenomenon is contemporary American media. Men in movies, television shows, and sports serve as role models for young boys, and masculinity in the media is largely portrayed through violence and aggression. In action movies, men are seen with perfectly toned bodies and larger-than-life biceps and chests. They are shown in violent situations that require them to wield machine guns, engage in fights, and detonate explosives. In sports, men aggressively compete with and harm in order to come out as the winner, using physical intimidation to disarm their opponents. These images of men in the media suggest that in order to be a “real man,” one must be large, strong, tough, intimidating and powerful.<sup>37</sup> A “real man” is always in control and demands respect.

Given these portrayals of masculinity, is it any wonder that boys respond to societal pressure to be “masculine” by conforming to what they see in the media? This by no means implies that all men are violent; however, it is clear that men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators of acts of sexual assault and relationship abuse. Men commit 95% of domestic

violence incidents, 25% of men will abuse their partners in their lifetimes, and 90% of perpetrators of rape are men.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, since the media depicts violent masculinity as a cultural norm, boys who act violently in order to reinforce their feelings of masculinity are not chastised for their actions.<sup>39</sup>

Alcohol plays an important role in fueling the environment that leads to a high rate of rape and relationship abuse in colleges. Over 50% of sexual assaults on campus happen under the influence of alcohol.<sup>40</sup> Alcohol is known to lower inhibitions, cloud the decision-making process, and create gaps in memory, making it a perfect facilitation tool for perpetrators of sexual assault. These properties may prevent the victim of the assault from giving an accurate or comprehensive account of what happened due to the influence of the drug. Additionally, victims may start blaming themselves for their assault, thinking that they would have recognized the dangerous situation earlier had they not been drinking. Perpetrators also use alcohol to excuse their own behavior, claiming that in their inebriated state, they could not recognize the signs of resistance coming from the victim.

In addition, alcohol can exacerbate stress and anger and enhance an abuser's feelings of power and domination.<sup>41</sup> Since instances of relationship abuse often involve a man trying to assert his power and control, alcohol contributes to feelings of power being channeled into abuse. Lastly, because alcohol impairs judgment, it makes abusers less likely to feel remorse for their actions.

Of all the contributory factors leading to sexual assault and relationship abuse, the most intractable is violence that took place within the childhood home of the abuser. Indeed, 81% of abusers grew up in abusive households where they either witnessed abuse or were abused themselves.<sup>42</sup> When children are abused by their parents or see one parent

being abusive to the other, they learn that violence is the way to solve problems and that abuse is normal behavior in a relationship.<sup>43</sup> They learn that the way to deal with stress, depression, anxiety, and other negative emotions is to take them out on someone else. In the case of relationship abuse, that “someone else” ends up being the abuser’s significant other. In the absence of positive role models, these children grow up believing that violence and aggression are appropriate ways to handle their problems. Once this behavior becomes engrained, it is extremely difficult to change. Consequently, boys who grow up in abusive homes are 1,000 times more likely to beat their wives than boys who do not come from abusive environments.<sup>44</sup> In this way, the cycle of violence is perpetuated by successive generations.

Compounding the problem is the fact that 42% of victims do not tell anyone when they have been assaulted.<sup>45</sup> The following have been cited as reasons for this phenomenon:

- Embarrassment and shame
- Fear of publicity
- Fear of reprisal from assailant
- Fear of social isolation from the assailant's friends
- Fear that the police will not believe them
- Fear that the prosecutor will not believe them or will not bring charges
- Self-blame for drinking or using drugs before the rape
- Self-blame for being alone with the assailant, perhaps in one's own or the assailant's residence
- Mistrust of the campus judicial system
- Fear that their family will find out

- Lack of knowledge about how they can receive help

These feelings grow out of a larger societal problem, namely, that sexual violence is a taboo topic, hence the reluctance to talk about it publically. As stated by Charlotte Bunch, the founder of the Center for Women’s Global Leadership, violence against women historically has been considered a private issue –one to be dealt with individually. Only recently has it become a political matter to be addressed publicly.<sup>46</sup> This is partly due to the graphic and sexual nature of such crimes. People feel uncomfortable when confronted with images of rape and find it a difficult topic to discuss.

Clearly, allowing sexual violence to remain a taboo topic is extremely detrimental. Despite the prevalence of sexual assault and relationship violence, the lack of public acknowledgment of the issue makes it seem less pervasive than it really is. Compounding the problem is the fact that sexual violence is considered a “women’s issue.” Research shows that, while victims of sexual assault and relationship violence can be of either gender, they are overwhelmingly female. According to the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network, one out of every six women has been the victim of a rape or attempted rape in her lifetime, compared to one out of every 33 men.<sup>47</sup> Consequently, crimes of this nature have been “gendered,” perpetuating the belief that sexual violence only affects women.

Jackson Katz, a leading male activist in the fight against sexual assault, points out that viewing sexual violence as a women’s issue is problematic for many reasons. In his book, *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help*, he explains that labeling sexual assault as a women’s issue limits who pays attention to the problem, ignores the consequences that sexual assault has on men, and prevents the collaboration of both men and women in the fight to end gender-based violence.<sup>48</sup> In short, relegating

sexual violence to the female half of the population gives men an excuse to not care about the problem.

At the University of Maryland, SARPP exists as a critical resource for victims of sexual assault in getting them the help they need. However, there is a significant lack of awareness about SARPP on the Maryland campus. This raises the question of why such a vital university resource is so unknown. Clearly, for all the reasons discussed, the reluctance to talk about sexual violence is a factor contributing to the lack of faculty and staff awareness about SARPP services. Another factor is that sexual assault and information about SARPP's services is only one of the many issues facing the university's faculty and staff. When a faculty member concerned about possible furloughs, gaining tenure, publishing articles and developing a curriculum, there is little room for other issues. In light of this, and given the many other issues competing for attention on campus, it is difficult to make SARPP awareness a priority.

Moreover, sexual violence is not an academic issue. It is possible that some faculty and staff, especially those who interact with students less regularly, may question why it is even their responsibility to be involved with this matter. There is little to motivate them to learn about SARPP's services on their own.

The complex organizational structure of the university is another factor leading to lack of faculty and staff awareness of SARPP's services. With 14 separate colleges and over 100 academic departments and programs, communication is difficult. There is no uniform way in which departments distribute information to faculty and staff, and the organization and effectiveness of each varies greatly. For example, while some departments have orientation programs in place for new faculty and staff, others do not. This hardly ensures

that all faculty and staff are adequately or uniformly trained about critical issues such as sexual violence.

Currently, the Human Resources Department hosts one large orientation for incoming faculty and staff each August. However, according to last year's schedule, they only set aside a short amount of time at the end of the day to introduce campus resources. This is done through an "orientation fair," which includes over 40 on and off campus vendors.<sup>49</sup> Currently, the University Health Center has a table in the fair, although SARPP specifically is not represented. Regardless, even if SARPP individually were to become of these vendors, the format of the fair does not require everyone to stop by each organization. As a result, many faculty and staff don't even learn about the program until it's too late. Allison Bennett, the director of SARPP, mentions that for most faculty and staff "their first contact [with SARPP] is when we reach out to them on behalf of a student." This makes helping victims much more time consuming, as SARPP staff are forced to explain and justify the program to faculty members each time they contact them. Bennett adds, "at a minimum, [involving SARPP in] orientation would be great. Our presence at an annual training would at least guarantee that faculty and staff learn about our program within a year of working at the University."

### **Proposed Solution to the Issue**

We propose that incoming staff and faculty members at the University of Maryland be required to attend a training session about sexual assault on campus and the available resources for victims. The New Faculty Orientation Program would be the perfect environment to implement such measures. As previously stated, SARPP is not represented in the orientation fair. Our proposal requests that SARPP be allotted a 15-minute time slot

during the day-long orientation program. During this session, SARPP will provide the faculty and staff with valuable information about the services SARPP offers, why SARPP is important for both victims and the University, and how faculty and staff members can refer their students to SARPP.

Sexual assault and relationship violence are prevalent on our campus and their consequences can be devastating. SARPP can provide victims with the services they need, but without proper awareness of their resources, many victims will go without help. This problem can be addressed by educating faculty and staff about the program during their orientation to the University. If this proposal is accepted, we can ensure that this education will be provided at least once. Ultimately, this will allow SARPP to reach more victims and provide services where they are truly needed.



## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Bonnie S. Fisher, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner, "The Sexual Victimization of College Women," *U.S. Department of Justice* (2000), 1-39.
- <sup>2</sup> *Statistics, Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network*, <http://www.rainn.org/statistics> (Sept. 25, 2011).
- <sup>3</sup> Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Program, "What is the SARPP Advocate Office?," *University Health Center* (Oct. 6, 2011).
- <sup>4</sup> *Who are the Victims?*, Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network, <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/sexual-assault-victims> (Sept. 25, 2011).
- <sup>5</sup> <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/sexual-assault-victims>.
- <sup>6</sup> <http://www.rainn.org/statistics>.
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/sexual-assault-victims>.
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