

SNAPPY RESPONSES TO SPICY PUSHBACK

Campus Toolkit for Combatting Sexual Violence

Many students' unions face pushback from administration when talking about sexual assault and consent education and awareness on campus. The following are possible questions or concerns administration may pose, and sample responses to ensure anti-violence work by students' unions is supported on campus.

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ADMINISTRATION

PUTTING SEXUAL ASSAULT INFORMATION IN ORIENTATION KITS WILL FRIGHTEN STUDENTS

STUDENTS' UNION

Education is the best form of prevention. By not talking about sexual assault and violence on campus we are ignoring the reality and lived experiences of many students. Creating an environment of awareness and education is more helpful in violence prevention on campus than ignoring that it is an issue.

ADMINISTRATION

BY TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT, WE ARE ADMITTING IT OCCURS AND THAT IS BAD BRANDING FOR THE INSTITUTION

STUDENTS' UNION

Often times the bad branding for an institution occurs after a sexual assault happens and there is a lack of response and prevention at the institutional level. If the administration supported prevention methods and education, there is a lot of potential for positive branding and support from students and community members. Sexual assaults do and will occur, and whether or not a high-profile incident occurs, prevention and adequate response protocols are necessary.

ADMINISTRATION

STUDENTS ARE TOO IMMATURE TO TALK ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT AND VIOLENCE AND IT WILL ONLY MAKE MATTERS WORSE BY TALKING ABOUT IT

STUDENTS' UNION

Post-secondary students are adults and should be treated as such. By eliminating the responsibility entirely you are demeaning the importance of every student's role in prevention and education on campus. Trusting students with education and awareness instills responsibility for their actions and the actions of the campus community.

ADMINISTRATION

OUR INSTITUTION DOESN'T HAVE A DEPARTMENT WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO DO THIS WORK

STUDENTS' UNION

Sexual assault prevention should be a priority of the entire institution as it is the responsibility of the institution to create, promote and ensure safer spaces for all students that attend our school. The students' union is committed to doing this work and will work in cooperation with the administration on this, or the students' union can take the responsibility of programming and education with the administration's support. Starting an open committee for interested campus community members to do this work is a good place to start and helps share the responsibility.

ADMINISTRATION

WE'VE DONE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION PROGRAMMING BEFORE AND SEXUAL ASSAULTS STILL OCCUR

STUDENTS' UNION

Sexual assault prevention is never conclusive and is an ongoing process. It is important that the institution include the community and students along the way to ensure prevention measures are reflective of stakeholders and appropriately address situations as a community as they occur.

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ADMINISTRATION

DOESN'T TALKING ABOUT "CONSENT" JUST ENCOURAGE SEXUAL ACTIVITY?

STUDENTS' UNION

Acknowledging that students are adults comes with acknowledging that sexual activity happens between students. Talking about consent is being proactive about conversations that are important to have when working to prevent sexual assault and violence. Consent awareness and outreach creates safer spaces for the community to talk about respect, an important factor that is absent in situations of sexual assault and violence.

ADMINISTRATION

WE ARE ALSO RESPONSIBLE TO THE PARENTS OF STUDENTS THAT ATTEND OUR INSTITUTION. WE RECEIVE COMPLAINTS WHEN SEXUAL ASSAULT AND CONSENT IS DISCUSSED ON CAMPUS.

STUDENTS' UNION

Although we appreciate your responsibility to parents, your primary responsibility is to the students who attend the institution. If the campus comes together as a community and collectively establishes an environment of education and awareness, the institution will have support behind them when dealing with these types of complaints. Parents will ultimately respect the institution's efforts to prevent sexual assault from happening on campus.