

As Chancellor of the University of Missouri, I believe one of our greatest responsibilities is the safety of our campus and the security of our students, faculty and staff. Since I took office almost six months ago, the University of Missouri System and our campus in Columbia, have evaluated and reviewed our policies and resources related to sexual assault and mental health. As a result of this review, we have instituted sweeping changes. Among them:

- President Wolfe issued Executive Order No. 40 to strengthen the University of Missouri's Title IX nondiscrimination policies and to clarify reporting structures for any staff or faculty members who may become aware of an incident of sexual harassment of any kind. Everyone on campus, except those with professional privilege – counselors, healthcare workers, etc. – became “mandated reporters” as a result of this Executive Order.
- Training is being provided to students, staff and faculty most likely to witness or receive reports of sexual harassment and violence so that victims are immediately offered appropriate resources.
- A full-time Title IX coordinator and additional deputies, representing Student Affairs, Athletics, MU Health Care, and Human Resources/faculty, have been identified. A full-time Title IX investigator was hired.
- President Wolfe identified and hired a nationally known consulting firm to advise us on the restructuring of our student conduct processes and give us an independent analysis of all current resources. With this expert external guidance, we look forward to strengthening our current resources and processes as we move forward.
- Our Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, Mike Alden, created a sub-task force solely to examine how our Department of Intercollegiate Athletics handles student incidents and concerns, a committee which includes an independent prosecutor, our campus sexual assault coordinator and the Associate Dean of the University's Law School.
- We also are reviewing how our Office of Student Conduct addresses cases involving sexual assault, and we may, ultimately, create an independent committee specifically to handle these cases.
- We have strengthened many of our existing programs and resources aimed at preventing sexual assault and assisting victims. For example, our Relationship, Sexual Violence & Prevention (RSVP) Center is staffed with trained professionals who address any issues related to physical or mental health and may accompany victims to the hospital or to a mental health counselor. Our RSVP Center staff also can help students with changing living accommodations, seeking legal counsel, changing class schedules or taking other appropriate actions.
- Finally, not unlike our peer institutions around the country, we must continue to examine our policies as they relate to alcohol and our enforcement of those policies. Missouri is not immune to the damaging consequences of underage drinking and alcohol abuse by those of legal age.

I know that even one case of sexual assault, domestic violence or a lack of resources to address a mental health concern violates our sacred responsibility to our students. Our students and their parents, our faculty and staff, our alumni and community neighbors all deserve a safe and secure campus environment, and you have my word and my solemn promise that I and our entire administration will continue to work toward that end. The changes and investments we have already made and the ones you will see in the future will make MU an exemplar for the safety and security of our students and a campus culture of respect in all of higher education.