

# Gender Violence Prevention Plan

*Gender-based violence takes many forms – physical, sexual, psychological, restricted freedoms, coercion and threats – occurring in both the public and private spheres. Men, women and children all fall prey to this "gendered form" of violence. (United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women)*

# Colorado

University of Colorado at Boulder

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The SASH Committee would like to acknowledge the special role played by former Dean of Students **Elease Robbins** in shaping the vision for this committee.

## Defining a Holistic Approach

Chancellor Peterson and Vice Chancellor Wong charged the Sexual Assault/Sexual Harassment (SASH) committee with the responsibility of developing a holistic, integrated, systematic and comprehensive approach to sexual assault/sexual harassment prevention. Because acts of sexual violence occur within a broader context the term “gender violence” is being used, which allows the discussion to be framed holistically.

“Gender violence” is a comprehensive term that emphasizes the interdependence of the various parts of the cultural contexts that support violence (UNIFEM). Community members of all identities are victimized by gender violence. For example, a culture which uses demeaning and derogatory remarks against men who demonstrate traditionally feminine characteristics both springs from and supports gender violence. Gender violence is such a norm in society that it is difficult to imagine a world in which some people are not afraid of being sexually victimized by other people. A holistic and comprehensive approach to gender violence prevention *changes these norms* through consistent interventions at every point along the continuum of gender violence (UN-INSTRAW).

Other factors embedded in the culture which influence and support gender violence involve alcohol and other drug usage, religious influences, and the media and include the constructs of institutionalized privilege based on identity. At the most extreme end of the continuum, the most overt forms of interpersonal violence are evident. These behaviors flow from more subtle forms of devaluation, sexualization, and objectification of subordinated

groups—behaviors that are included in conversations about “climate” on campus.

Emergent understandings of the root causes of violence suggest that violent acts exist along a *continuum*, wherein subtle acts of disrespect and intolerance escalate toward physical and sexual assault, murder and broader scale acts of violence (Tomaszewski, Kelly). Prevention, therefore, is best aimed at changing the culture wherein those small acts of intolerance are considered *normal*. An effective strategy for the University of Colorado (University) community therefore requires a shift toward a public health/social ecological understanding of the problem of gender violence.

## Executive Summary

The SASH committee has been working since September 2008 to produce a Gender Violence Prevention Plan (GVPP). Wave one of the plan identified the philosophical underpinnings of the approach and the second wave consisted of an outline of the plan. The core initiatives are:

- **Initiative 1:** The University of Colorado at Boulder will commit to ensuring all members of the community have a comprehensive understanding of their role as an individual and community member in preventing gender violence.
- **Initiative 2:** Leadership at all levels of the University will foster a community culture where the prevention of violence is central to its mission.
- **Initiative 3:** The University of Colorado at Boulder will prioritize *gender violence prevention* by providing adequate financial and assessment support, utilizing existing expertise to its fullest capacity, actively engaging those that have power and influence, and involving the community at all levels.

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Oversight of the gender violence prevention plan will be done through a collaborative partnership. SASH, the Gender Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator (GVPEC) and the Associate VC of Student Affairs and Dean of Students will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan.

As a result of the planning process the SASH committee has moved toward many immediate changes that align with the new institutional philosophy toward gender violence prevention and the committee also identified a set of key recommendations.

### Key Recommendations

#### Key recommendations requiring new resources:

1. Increase the Gender Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator position from .5 FTE to a permanent 1.0 FTE by July 2009.
2. Add two additional 1.0 FTE Gender Violence Prevention Educators under the Gender Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator by July 2010.
3. Commit the Cabinet and University Officers to participating in ongoing trainings conducted by on-campus and community experts, as well as nationally recognized experts.
4. Fund 18 student peer educators to deliver gender violence prevention education to students.
5. Conduct a Community Readiness Assessment for the University to evaluate the community's knowledge of gender violence and the willingness to engage in prevention activities.
6. Implement a student fee for iClicker technology for each student. The iClicker will be used for assessment and evaluation measures, such as during large group orientation.
7. Continue to support and sustain the University departments that currently provide gender violence prevention education and programs.
8. Develop a gender violence prevention communication plan in collaboration with SASH, University Communications and the Cabinet, to be disseminated throughout the University, including a protocol for responding to the media for incidents related to gender violence (sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, etc.).
9. Educate the campus annually on the sexual harassment policies and ensure adherence.
10. Expand the current policy education on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination to include the education of all students on gender violence prevention and harm reduction/social responsibility.

## SASH History and Philosophical Approach

In March 2004 a select group of University professionals working in

the area of sexual assault and sexual harassment were convened creating SASH. SASH was charged to review current programs and initiatives related to the reduction/prevention of sexual assault and violence against women in the University community and make recommendations to address gaps in programming, services, educational efforts and training.

To accomplish this charge, SASH operated from the following underlying premises:

- Sexual assault/harassment are complex issues that cross multiple social group identities.
- The reduction or prevention of assault and violence is broader than just a women's issue or concern.
- Repeated, consistent opportunities for education and conversation create the best climate for cultural change.
- A comprehensive approach requires ongoing and enhanced financial and administrative buy-in and support from all levels of the University.
- Educational efforts must include programming directed towards the male population on campus.
- Prevention efforts must be tied to a university-wide campaign to address these and related student life issues.

Working from these premises over the past four years, SASH's efforts have resulted in many accomplishments while also experiencing challenges and obstacles. SASH remains committed to the initial charge and strives to engage the greater campus community in achieving the goal of education and prevention of gender violence.

## Literature Review

The review of the literature on gender violence prevention<sup>1</sup> suggests several cultural

shifts and focused actions are necessary to achieve a holistic, comprehensive, integrated and systematic approach. From these models several principles were gleaned that form the framework for the approach:

- All members of the university community must be trained to understand their potential contribution to the prevention of gender violence as bystanders to everyday acts of intolerance (Department of Education, American College Health Association, Berkowitz).
- Top level administrators must consistently communicate clear anti-violence values (Hong).
- Education programs should challenge unhealthy beliefs and attitudes, teach skills and encourage healthy behavior among students (Department of Education).
- The community's norms and the collective behavior of (especially) men should be the locus of change, not only through policy interventions, but through modeling at all levels of the institution,

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<sup>1</sup> The literature on gender violence is not always specific to college campuses. The concepts synthesized from this body of research will serve the campus in creating a gender violence prevention model.

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inside and outside of the classroom. (Department of Education, Langford, American College Health Association, Berkowitz, Hong).

- Intervention models must be inclusive of cultural differences within the communities that make up the university (Berkowitz, Burk, Hong).
- Alcohol and other drug abuse must be understood not as a cause of gender violence, but as a concurrent risk present in an overwhelming percentage of acts of violence. (Department of Education, Hong, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism).

SASH's analysis of the gender violence prevention education available at CU Boulder suggests that there are significant expertise and programming available to address the issue among students. Gaps identified include: a) a campus-wide commitment to address the problem at all levels of the institution, b) the resources to *adequately* and *consistently* train members of the University community, and c) a general institutional tendency toward *reaction* rather than *prevention*. In this, CU Boulder is not unlike many institutions across the country.

### Plan Overview

human, structural and financial resources necessary to ensure effective implementation, ongoing assessment and refinement of

**Repeated, consistent opportunities for education and conversation create the best climate for cultural change.**

SASH developed an action plan that is framed in the gender violence prevention literature. This plan identifies

these programs and activities. Implementation of this action plan will result in CU Boulder being a recognized model in the prevention of gender violence and will create a climate where all members of the community can thrive.

The SASH committee created the GVPP based on three core initiatives, associated objectives and action items for each objective. The GVPP identifies action steps, responsible departments, resource requirements and assessment methodologies. The GVPP is a combination of new strategies and revisions to current procedures, programs and policies, all designed to align programmatic efforts with the holistic philosophy of gender violence prevention. While the plan's timeline is proposed to take place over the next three years, some key recommendations are ready for immediate implementation.

### Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and ongoing evaluation of the GVPP will measure the effectiveness of the action steps, whether or not the stated goals are being met, and what knowledge or skills are being acquired. With the information garnered from the outcome data, the action steps and goals can be modified and tailored as the implementation of the GVPP moves forward. Further, the data will provide the framework for the assessment and evaluation for years two and three of the GVPP.

The following will be assessed in order to inform and guide implementation of year one of the GVPP:

1. The University community's current capacity to address gender violence.
2. What environmental factors can be changed to include more gender neutral and accessible spaces and signage?

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3. Individual University community members' ability to identify behaviors that fall along the continuum of gender violence.

4. Individual University community members' ability to identify effective bystander intervention strategies.

The assessment methodologies for year one of the GVPP will consist of a Community Readiness evaluation, an environmental scan and pre/post surveys. Understanding the level of readiness for the University community is essential for developing appropriate and successful gender violence prevention strategies. Community Readiness assessment was developed by the Tri Ethnic Center at Colorado State University and it measures the community's awareness and knowledge of gender violence. The findings will be used to establish a base line.

An environmental scan of the physical spaces of the campus will be conducted. The information from the scan will be used to determine what spaces and signage can be altered to be gender neutral in addition to increasing campus accessibility for all University community members.

The primary assessment methodologies employed by current prevention programs on campus are pre and post surveys. Pre and post surveys will be used to measure gains in knowledge and skills around gender violence prevention and bystander intervention concepts. Student Voice, iClickers, and Survey Monkey will be used to disseminate the surveys and compile the data.

**The assessment methodologies will consist of a Community Readiness evaluation, an environmental scan, and pre/post surveys.**

## The Implementation Plan

**Initiative 1: The University of Colorado at Boulder will commit to ensuring all members of the community have a comprehensive understanding of their role as an individual and community member in preventing gender violence.**

**Objective 1a** *Students, faculty and staff will be active members of the community by participating in education and training about their role in creating and maintaining an inclusive and accessible campus environment.*

- Action step: The GVPEC will develop multisession gender violence prevention curricula for students, faculty and staff.
- Action step: Both the public health and social ecological approach to gender violence prevention will be used to develop educational programming and training. This will include bystander intervention, the role of alcohol and other drugs, and risk and protective factors that contribute to or prevent gender violence and will be delivered to students, staff and faculty.
- Action step: Campus experts and programs charged with gender violence prevention education will provide training to all members of the University on concepts related to gender identity and gender roles/stereotypes.

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- Action step: Programs within the University will host guest speakers, national experts, and conferences that address gender violence.

**Objective 1b** *SASH will identify student groups, campus programs, faculty and other campus organizations to mobilize around gender violence prevention initiatives.*

**Initiative 2:** Leadership at all levels of the University will foster a community culture where the prevention of violence is central to its mission.

**Objective 2a** *Every division and department will create and implement a gender violence prevention plan for students, staff and faculty.*

- Action step: The GVPEC and other units involved in SASH will act as consultants and resources to departments and divisions to assist with the development of gender violence prevention plans.

**Objective 2b** *The Cabinet will participate in and ensure ongoing training and education programs on gender violence prevention.*

- Action step: The Cabinet will commit to participating in ongoing trainings conducted by on-campus and community experts, as well as nationally recognized experts (e.g. Dr. Luoluo Hong, VCSA at UH-Hilo).
- Action step: The Cabinet will continue to support current gender violence prevention programs at the University.

**Objective 2c** *All faculty will participate in education programs on gender violence prevention and how it relates to their responsibilities in the classroom.*

- Action step: Faculty will commit to participating in ongoing trainings conducted by on-campus and community experts, as well as nationally recognized experts (e.g., Dr. Luoluo Hong, VCSA at UH-Hilo).

**Initiative 3:** The University of Colorado at Boulder will prioritize gender violence prevention by providing adequate financial and assessment support, utilizing existing expertise to its fullest capacity, actively engaging those that have power and influence, and involving the community at all levels.

**Objective 3a** *All positions and programs charged with developing and implementing prevention initiatives will be fully funded and sustained.*

- Action step: Adequate and accessible space and facilities supporting gender violence prevention will be provided (i.e. Orientation, office space for additional staff, more gender neutral areas).
- Action step: The current Gender Violence Prevention and Education Coordinator will be funded permanently at 1.0 FTE starting in FY 09-10.
- Action step: Funding for professional development for on-campus gender violence experts will be provided so as to assure ongoing integration of current evidenced based prevention practices into educational and training content and programs.
- Action step: A full-time gender violence prevention educator, under the supervision of the GVPEC, will be hired to train faculty.

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- Action step: A full-time gender violence prevention educator, under the supervision of the GVPEC, will be hired to train staff.

**Objective 3b** *The Cabinet will develop an understanding of which systems and campus experts exist that will be mobilized for responding to incidents related to gender violence and assisting with gender violence prevention education.*

**Both the public health and social ecological approach to gender violence prevention will be utilized.**

- Action step: Training for the Cabinet will focus on current systems and campus experts that exist to be mobilized in responding to incidents related to gender violence, as well as information about current campus resources, systems and experts who work to prevent gender violence.

**Objective 3c** *Gender violence prevention will be integrated into all levels of the University of Colorado at Boulder community.*

- Action step: Working with University Communications and the Cabinet, SASH will develop a communication plan including talking points on the anti-violence message to be delivered and sustained by the Cabinet, Student Affairs and other University departments.

**Objective 3d** *Ensure that all policies promote long-term solutions for sexual harassment and assault.*

- Action step: Enforce current University sexual harassment and sexual assault policies and assure ongoing review and evaluation.

- Action step: Advocate for policy changes and cultural shifts related to gender (i.e., gender identity in non-discrimination policy, gender neutral bathroom advocacy).

- Action step: Train 20% of all staff, faculty and student employees annually on the “Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Response Protocol,” so they can comply with their mandatory duty to report in the most victim-friendly way.

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