

President's Task Force on Campus Climate
Bucknell University

A. Statement to the Faculty

At the Faculty Meeting of October 5, 2010, the following text was read into the Minutes by John Bravman, Professor of Electrical Engineering and President of the University:

Since my arrival as President, I have learned a great deal about the University, almost all of it positive, which is no surprise. As a result of the responsibilities of the President, I have also been involved in a number of discussions related to the campus climate that have given me reason for concern. Many of you are aware of the nature of these concerns, some of which have been the subject of discussion among the faculty.

I take from such discussions that many of you share with me deep concerns about how some individual students treat one another, the support we as a university provide in helping students meet their community responsibilities, and the role of university policies and practices in supporting a civil and positive learning community.

I do not know what if any additional steps we should take to strengthen the campus climate, but I need to learn more in a comprehensive and systematic way. I therefore am going to appoint a task force of administrators and faculty, including from relevant University committees, to review all related data and to gather other information of use for a thorough analysis. I will be developing a formal charge for the task force to give this request specific shape.

My goal is to create a sound context for a prompt, thorough and informative assessment of the campus climate and, if appropriate, to gather recommendations on how it might be improved to ensure that we are supporting and encouraging the most positive university experience for our students.

I expect to appoint the task force and provide it with its formal charge within a week. My hope and expectation will be that the task force provides its analysis and recommendations to me by next semester for consideration by the administration and the appropriate committees. Thanks in advance to all those we will be asking to participate in this review.

B. Charge to the Task Force

The President's Task Force on Campus Climate shall provide the President with a prompt, thorough and informative assessment of how students view and act upon their responsibilities to the University and one another, including their academic, community, social, and interpersonal obligations. The Task Force shall begin its deliberations broadly, but must seek to identify areas of particular concern, e.g., patterns of student behavior outside of generally accepted norms. It should also evaluate the role of University policies, practices, and programs in influencing student choices

and behaviors. The Task Force should evaluate and recommend for adoption, if appropriate, the best practices at peer institutions in terms of encouraging the most positive student experience.

Sources of information for the task force should include, but need not be limited to, currently available campus data about student behavior, including student academic success and public safety reports; interviews with students or student organizations; interviews with relevant faculty and staff; consultation with appropriate University committees; review of best practices at peer institutions; and relevant national reports. The task force should aim for its final report to contribute to a sound understanding of contemporary student behavior at Bucknell as well to the University's ongoing efforts to foster a civil and positive residential learning community.

I request that this report be provided to me by March 1, 2011. The results of the task force may warrant the extension of its term, the expansion of its scope or the creation of other task forces.

John C. Bravman
October 8, 2010