

May 15, 2013

Dear Students and Colleagues,

Thanks to so many in our community, we have been engaged in lively discussions about civility, diversity, tolerance, social justice, and sexual violence over the past year, beginning with our Civility Metanoia last fall.

However, our work on these issues has just begun as these societal challenges are complex and grave. There is no better place to make progress in these areas than a university campus, where we should be able to discuss even the most difficult and emotionally-charged issues with thoughtfulness and respect.

To this end, I have appointed a Task Force on Civility and Campus Culture to explore all matters related to civil behavior and speech at the University. I am grateful to Professors Veronica Makowsky and Carol Polifroni for leading this effort as co-chairs. The task force's membership and charge are included below this message.

The task force will work intensely beginning in late August, but leaders and members will be considering topics and directions during the summer months as well. If you have any specific topics you would like considered or have any other ideas related to these subjects, please do send those to either co-chair.

I urge you to evaluate our current policies, procedures and approaches very closely, since the task force will be reviewing these as well to find opportunities to enhance or update them. Among the critical resources are the [Community Standards page](#) and our [Sexual Violence Awareness site](#), introduced this past January.

Please note the student members of the group will be appointed in August, as we near the beginning of the fall semester.

I expect the task force to present its recommendations to me in December.

Thank you for a wonderful year of discussion and debate; let us join together and continue to ensure this university is a model of civility, openness and peace.

Sincerely,



Susan Herbst

## **President's Task Force on Civility and Campus Culture**

*University of Connecticut*

*Fall 2013*

### **Membership**

Co-Chair: Veronica Makowsky, Professor of English

Co-Chair: Carol Polifroni, Professor of Nursing; Chair, President's Athletic Advisory Committee

Elizabeth Conklin, Associate Vice President for Diversity and Equity/Title IX Coordinator

Fleurette King, Director, Rainbow Center

Edward Courchaine, President, Undergraduate Student Government

Three student members (to be appointed in August)

Deborah Corum, Senior Associate Director of Athletics

Jonathan Plucker, Professor of Education

Francoise Dussart, Professor of Anthropology

Nancy Naples, Professor of Sociology and Women's Studies

Barbara O'Connor, Chief of Police/Director of Public Safety

James Penders, Head Coach, Baseball

Kathleen Holgerson, Director, Women's Center

Cathy Cocks, Director of Community Standards

Michael Alfultis, Regional Campus Director

Dana Wilder, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Affairs & Diversity

President's Designee: Michael Kirk, Deputy Chief of Staff to the President

Staff: Lillian Bosques

### **Charge**

The President's Task Force on Civility and Campus Culture is to formulate and present to the president specific recommendations that are both effective and practical, which the University may implement to enhance and support a culture of civility and respect on its campuses.

The task force will promote civil discourse and understanding within our community through developing student leadership, good citizenship, free speech and free expression.

Specifically, the task force will examine and recommend new or expanded programming and avenues of educating and communicating with students regarding the following: effective and courteous ways of exploring and discussing differing opinions in person and electronically, means of supporting civil and respectful discourse, ways to deter and address sexual violence of any kind, harassment, intimidation, bullying, incivility and the stigmatization of individuals or groups of students for any reason.

In addition, the recommendations must be designed to promote problem-solving, positive decision-making, and understanding among UConn's student population, in partnership with faculty and staff.

The task force is to examine the University's existing efforts when it comes to these issues, what resources are available to aid in prevention and victim assistance, how the University currently educates and communicates with students regarding these subjects and what role substance abuse plays in the above behaviors. The task force will then recommend updated or additional steps the University can take to further raise awareness and address this conduct.

Recommendations must include how these efforts can be integrated into students' academic experience.

The task force must present its report and recommendations to the president on or before December 15, 2013.