

September 08, 2017

## **UC President Napolitano Affirms Support, Protection for Sexual Violence Survivors**

*University of California President Janet Napolitano issued the following statement today (September 7) following U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos' announcement that appears to roll back guidance by the Office of Civil Rights. The federal changes will impact how schools handle sexual violence.*

Changes to the Title IX policy recently announced signal that the Trump administration aims to undo six years' worth of federal enforcement designed to strengthen sexual violence protections on college campuses. This is extremely troubling.

Beginning with its 2011 guidance known as the Dear Colleague letter, the Education Department instructed schools across the country to keep their students free from sexual violence and establish procedures for promptly and fairly investigating and resolving sexual violence complaints. Today's move will prompt fears of reduced support for survivors of sexual violence, and raise questions about how schools prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

It is important to underscore that state law and federal regulations remain in effect to provide procedural protections and prohibit sexual assault and other forms of sexual violence. The University of California remains firmly committed to protecting its students and staff from sexual violence and sexual harassment, while ensuring a fair process for all involved.

In recent years, UC has taken decisive steps to prevent sexual violence and sexual harassment and more effectively respond when it occurs. We have expanded prevention education requirements, created a systemwide Title IX office, and developed new policies and procedures that protect the rights of all students and employees. Every campus has increased resources in this area and established a confidential CARE advocacy office that supports survivors of sexual violence.

Even in the midst of unwelcome change and uncertainty, the university's commitment to a learning environment free of sexual violence and sexual harassment will not waver. UC will continue its work to foster a culture of safety and security on all its campuses.

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*UC San Diego has a well-established history fighting sexual assault through the campus's CARE at the Sexual Assault Resource Center, established nearly 30 years ago. UC San Diego has been a model for other campus for having a stand-alone resource center dedicated to the prevention of sexual assault and sexual violence. The center's mission is to provide education and support services that empower students, faculty and staff to ensure a safe and respectful campus community that does not tolerate sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking.*

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#### MEDIA CONTACT

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