

To: Dr. Larry Moneta, Vice President for Student Affairs
From: Kristina Smith, T'19
Re: Gender violence prevention

Gender violence is a prevalent issue that is under-supported by DSG

In 2015, you approved the [Student Experiences Survey](#) that quantified the prevalence of gender violence at Duke: 40% of women and 10% of undergraduate men reported that they are survivors of sexual assault since arriving on-campus. You've shown a willingness to work with activists and listen to student voices by personally engaging student voices and creating formal initiatives such as the Student Affairs' Sexual Misconduct Taskforce. While previous DSG presidents have looked to affect change through [controversial policy](#), I want to partner with your office to formalize proactive student involvement that makes our community safer.

Existing initiatives present issues of equity and lack peer-to-peer accountability

Currently, our university only employs one full-time employee dedicated to preventing gender violence on-campus, and the Women's Center is inundated with requests for trainings and partnerships. The Student Experiences Survey identified that women of color and LGBTQIA+ identifying students experience gender violence at disproportionately high rates versus the rest of the student body, yet it is homogenous living groups that are often accommodated with additional trainings and administrative support. Existing programs such as The Duke Men's Project attempt to combat this narrative by directly undermining the systems that make sexual violence possible, but the lack of resources for these communities should be addressed more intentionally and specifically by Duke as an institution. New training programs that augment [P.A.C.T.](#) such as 5 Key Norms are great first steps to improve accountability within the Duke community, but again, they are implemented for groups fortunate to have staff and faculty advisors.

Next Steps

Above all else, I will be an active and persistent partner to your office and relevant campus organizations, so we can make a concerted effort to reform campus initiatives combating gender violence. Gender violence is not unique to Duke's campus, and I will strive to learn from other schools' successes and failures to better drive initiatives at Duke. For example, I want to work with student groups and administrative offices to replicate Princeton's [SHARE peer](#) program. This program trains over 40 students to be educators that connect fellow students to the infrastructure of support around gender violence that already exists. By being intentional about representation—race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, major, housing, study abroad—the student-led program is equipped to advocate for a range of lived experiences and connect with most students. I think this is a natural progression for the work already being done on-campus, and a step forward students can take towards a campus free of gender violence.