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Thursday July 28th, 2016

(/)

## Letter: UNM is trying its best to improve its handling of campus sexual assault

By Daily Lobo Readers (http://www.dailylobo.com/staff/daily-lobo-readers) Published 07/27/16 12:01am | Updated 07/26/16 7:21pm

f campus sexual assault) (http://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?%20Lobo:%20Letter: UNM is trying its best to improve its handling of

%20Daily%20Lobo:%20http://www.dailylobo.com/article/2016/07/27-

Editor,

Sexual assault is arguably the most disturbing issue on our college campuses nationwide. At UNM, it has become a primary focus over the past few years, beginning with some high profile cases involving our students, and culminating in a Department of Justice review of our policies and procedures.

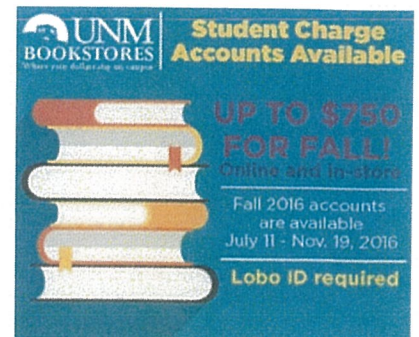
I am keenly aware of the pain surrounding this complex issue, and I want to assure you that having a safe campus that addresses the concerns in as sensitive a manner as possible while providing a fair process for all is of utmost importance to me and my administration.

As we pursue our discussions with the DOJ, we are moving aggressively ahead with major changes in our campus-wide response, based on information the report provided and other national authorities. In fact, we have been actively working to improve how we handle these cases since before the DOJ review began, and have made strong advances just within the past year, after that review had ended.

Still, no matter how much progress we make, or how many resources we offer, it cannot minimize or mitigate the trauma of a sexual assault.

Even one rape is one too many! What we can do is strive to make the response faster and fairer, in attempt to not cause further suffering. We understand that an investigation itself, which can require repeated recounting of what happened, impersonal gathering of evidence and time-consuming processes, can be traumatizing. That is why we continue to work diligently to educate and train our campus community try to prevent sexual assault from happening and to deal with it as sensitively as possible when it does.

Here are just a few highlights of recent changes that will provide better Response, Education, Support, Prevent, Empower, Consent and Train... or as we sum it up in our acronym, LoboRESPECT:



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Upcoming Events (/calendar/)

- Opening of the LoboRESPECT Advocacy Center
- Additional positions and staffing in the Office of Equal Opportunity which investigates Title IX cases including sexual assault and harassment
- Updated and consolidated policies including an overarching sexual misconduct policy
- Additional and continued training campus-wide
- An independent, scientific campus climate survey of nearly 3000 UNM students (to be released soon)
- Increased collaboration among all campus entities dealing with sexual assault reporting, advocacy, training or safety

These are continuing steps forward, and may need to be tweaked as we work with the DOJ to complete an agreement on how we will specifically address this serious concern. I pledge that we are cooperating fully in the process with the DOJ and will work conscientiously to adopt their recommendations.


What I ask of all of you - staff, faculty, advocates, students, parents, alums, lawmakers, community members - is to join with us in this effort. Step up in your area of impact, your world of influence. Learn more about what is available and how to access it, then use that knowledge to help prevent and respond to sexual assault around you. Our students rally "Protect the Pack." That's something we all must do! Working together, we can change UNM, and UNM can lead the way to change elsewhere.

Robert G. Frank  
UNM president

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- 11:45am | Lobo Toastmasters Meeting  
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