

Update
15 February 2018

Dear RCAH Faculty, Students, and Staff,

It has been almost a week since my last update, and as anticipated quite a bit continues to happen.

I think the most important thing is that since our College Academic Committee meeting on the 9th, RCAH is working diligently in collaboration with our counterparts in Lyman Briggs and James Madison to organize teach-ins/learn-ins/Town Halls that will allow all members of the University, not just the three residential colleges to address the effects and underlying causes of sexual violence on campus. The target date for the first gathering is February 27 in the MSU Student Union. More information will be posted and circulated soon.

At the University level, as you may know, the MSU Faculty Senate voted no-confidence (61-4) in the University Board of Trustees. This is a non-binding vote but it sends a clear message that faculty believe that the actions and inaction of this Board have been deeply flawed and do not represent the views of the majority the University.

At the same time, Interim President John Engler, appointed by this Board, has taken several steps to reorganize medical services and medical education at MSU. These include appointing a new associate provost and vice-president for all of the health services at MSU. Provost June Youatt has continued to meet with the deans of all the MSU colleges, and she is meeting with deans, directors, and chairs of the academic units along with the administrators of the support units and facilities on February 20th to present her own plans for reforming health care and changing the culture at MSU. The deans have been invited to suggest a list of topics for this large meeting and a format for discussion at the meeting. Here are the topics we've suggested: search process for the permanent President, mental health on campus, survivor support, culture change on campus, internal communications, governance (eg, MSU Bylaws, Board of Trustees Bylaws), fostering and advancing leadership, financial transparency, and teach-ins.

The last topic was suggested by the three residential colleges, and we hope that it will be addressed in a serious way so that faculty, staff, students, and alumni will be playing an active role going forward in addressing all of these challenges.

Let me close by saying that the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of RCAH, LBC, and JMC have already shown how actively involved they are in this process. My reading of the teach-in/learn-in planning process is that this is a process that can and should continue. Our colleges should be leaders on campus, not just during a crisis, but on an ongoing basis.

Steve