

Campus Attitude Toward Safety (CATS) Survey
Aug. 31, 2015

Dear Colleagues and Students,

At 10:00 a.m. this morning, I was joined by Dr. Diane Follingstad of the Center for Research on Violence Against Women (CRVAW) and Student Government Association President Austin Mullen as we announced the preliminary results of the Campus Attitude Toward Safety (CATS) Survey administered during the Spring 2015 semester.

Our work began one year ago when I asked our endowed researchers of the CRVAW to execute this survey - the first of its kind to reach an entire student population of a college campus. Our goal was to build on the extraordinary work of those who came before us and continue to keep UK at the leading edge in addressing campus safety in general and sexual violence in particular.

Because of the hard work of many faculty and staff across our campus, we surveyed 24,382 students to gather information about the campus climate, perceptions, and students' adverse experiences, including sexual violence and partner violence.

I am grateful in particular to our undergraduate, graduate, and professional students who invested the time and serious effort necessary to give us an honest look at where we are and what we must do better. Their responsiveness makes clear our students are deeply committed to the health and well-being of one another.

The preliminary results make clear we have much to be proud of; and we have much work still to do. I assure you we will be aggressive in doing even more to protect the young women and men in our care.

Our students have told us they feel safe at UK and believe in our commitment to fostering a safe community. But we also learned we can do more to increase awareness of, and connect students to, resources available on our campus if they face, or have faced, harassment, bullying, stalking, or sexual assault. Our results are in line with those from other institutional and national surveys using the same metrics and definitions we utilized in the CATS Survey: 4.9 percent of our students reported unwanted sexual experiences that qualify as sexual assault.

For a more detailed look at the preliminary results of the CATS Survey, please visit http://issuu.com/universityofkentucky/docs/cats_brochure-final.

The survey is another step toward fostering a healthier, safer place for our students to live, learn, and work. We conducted this exercise - the first of five surveys over the next five years - so we can make data-driven decisions to improve the effectiveness of our programs and better deploy resources for victims. We have already started sharing the results with the relevant units - Student Affairs, UKPD, UK Health Services, Title IX, and the VIP Center, to name a few - across campus so they can take the appropriate steps to improve.

Our work - and our resolve - to create a safe campus environment for our entire community is never-ending. We all share in the effort to provide quality higher education in a safe environment.

We will continue to share with you our progress in this effort.
Eli Capilouto
President