June 24, 2015

Dear Colleagues:

I’d like to share with you the results of the University of Michigan’s campus climate survey on sexual misconduct experienced by our students. This is an important part of our work to address sexual misconduct and help survivors.

Earlier this year, 3,000 students were selected as a representative sample and invited to participate in the survey designed by expert University of Michigan faculty from the Institute for Social Research. U-M is making findings from the survey public to promote transparency and allow others to learn from our data, but no information identifying student respondents will be shared.

I invite you to review the information related to the survey here.

Our goal is to gain a deep understanding of sexual misconduct affecting students on our campus. Thanks to the efforts of many, we are now armed with strong, scientific data that we can use to address this very complex problem.

Though existing research provides some evidence that young people enrolled in college are at less risk of sexual assault than those who are not, the risk on campuses must be addressed. Even a single instance of sexual assault at the university should not be tolerated.

The findings from our survey give us information at a level of detail we have never had before. We will use this information to improve our education and prevention efforts, enhance existing services that help survivors and others, and improve our investigation procedures, while working to create a safer, more respectful and more caring community overall.

We have consulted with subject-matter experts on our faculty on the interpretation of the findings, and will continue to do so as we analyze them further.

While we are glad to have this population data, we must not lose sight of the human beings whose lives are being affected by sexual misconduct. I’ve heard many painful stories from survivors of sexual assault. They shared with me what they went through and have asked for my help.

I feel personally responsible for the safety and well-being of every student at U-M. I thank you for your work to help our students and make our community safer.

Sincerely,
Mark Schlissel
President