

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
PRE-FILED RESOLUTION
(Final; Action)

RS.20.02 Resolution on Sexual Harassment Reporting

WHEREAS, recent media reports have identified eight members of the faculty and staff on the Urbana-Champaign campus who have been identified as being subject to sexual harassment or assault complaints in recent years not including those who have been accused but the allegations have not been disclosed;

WHEREAS, the Report from the Committee on Faculty Sexual Misconduct stated that only 3.4% of victims of faculty sexual misconduct come forward, in part, out of fears of retaliation;

WHEREAS, NPR Illinois, currently part of the University of Illinois at Springfield, is a journalistic enterprise that has done recent work in bringing many of these sexual harassment and assault cases to light;

WHEREAS, the University of Illinois responded to NPR Illinois reporting by instructing all journalists they were mandatory reporters who had to disclose all conversations with victims to University authorities pursuant to institutional and system policies;

WHEREAS, the federal law known as "Title IX" provides discretion to the University on who is and who is not a "mandatory reporter" (termed "responsible employee" in the law);

WHEREAS, by designating reporters associated with the University as "mandatory reporters" has had, if not by intent than by effect, a "chilling effect" on victims and yet another incentive to not only not report, but not to publicly disclose their experiences; and

THEREFORE, be it resolved, that the Senate, in the interest of faculty sexual harassment and assault survivors, formally requests the Chancellor of the Urbana-Champaign and the President of the University of Illinois System to:

1. Explore changing to definition of "responsible employee" to explicitly exclude all journalists associated with the University or any of its campuses;
2. To establish a committee at the campus and system levels to review the mandatory reporter policy in a victim-centric way to both protect the rights of victims to be heard and to tell their stories as they see fit.

Submitted by senator
John Bambenek