

Sexual Assault Policy
Emergency Phone Number (337) 274-9790

When reporting a sexual assault, confidentiality is vital. Sexual assault is an act of violence in which a person subjects a victim to contact of a sexual nature against the victim's will. It is an illegal act on the SOWELA campus. Sexual assault includes rape, assault to commit rape, sexual battery, aggravated sexual battery, object rape, statutory rape, sodomy, aggravated sodomy public indecency, and stalking. Sexual assault, in its various forms, is defined under Louisiana law.

Procedures

1. Students should immediately report incidents of sexual assault to the SOWELA Safety Coordinator.
2. The Safety Coordinator will write an incident report and notify the Dean of Instruction.
3. Students will be assisted in seeking counseling and follow-up medical care, addressing academic concerns, and reporting incident(s) to the appropriate authorities. It is crucial that a victim receive prompt medical attention. For medical and counseling services, contact the Louisiana Rape Crisis Center 24-hour crisis line at 1-800-656-HOPE(4673).
4. A victim of sexual assault should preserve any evidence that can be used to prove an occurrence of sexual assault. Victims are advised to consult law enforcement officials before showering, bathing, changing, or laundering clothing worn during an assault. Even if a victim bathes, showers, or somehow compromises evidence, the victim should report the assault. Valuable information can still be obtained by an investigation conducted from remaining evidence taken from a victim's person.
5. After a sexual assault is reported, campus personnel should take reasonable and necessary steps to secure the crime scene and protect the victim.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Victim

1. A report of sexual assault is treated seriously, and the victim treated with dignity. Campus Organizations/personnel who deal with sexual assaults should be contacted to assist the victim.
2. A victim has the right to have the alleged sexual assault(s) investigated and adjudicated by the duly constituted criminal and civil authorities of the governmental jurisdiction where the alleged incident(s) occurred and to full and prompt cooperation and assistance of campus personnel in notifying the proper authorities. Campus disciplinary proceedings are held in addition to these procedures.
3. Campus personnel are prohibited from pressuring a victim to do the following:
 - a. Not report the crime(s) to civil/criminal investigating authorities, campus law enforcement personnel, or disciplinary authorities.
 - b. Report the crimes as less than what actually occurred.
4. SOWELA offers a victim advice, assistance, or representation at campus disciplinary proceedings, the same as offered to the accused.
5. A victim is notified of the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings.
6. Campus personnel should cooperate in obtaining, securing, and maintaining evidence(including medical examination documentation) required to prove the occurrence of criminal sexual assault for subsequent legal proceedings.

7. SOWELA personnel are to contact and exercise the option(s) provided by state and federal laws and regulations regarding mandatory testing of sexual assault suspects for communicable diseases and in notifying victims of the results of the testing.
8. A victim is provided information regarding counseling.

Rights of the Accused

1. The accused has the right to have the alleged sexual assault(s) investigated and adjudicated by the duly constituted criminal and civil authorities of the governmental jurisdiction where the alleged incident(s) occurred; and to full and prompt cooperation and assistance of campus personnel in notifying the proper authorities and in providing any exculpatory information. Campus disciplinary proceedings are held in addition to these procedures.
2. SOWELA offers the accused advice, assistance, or representation at campus disciplinary proceedings, the same as offered to the victim.
3. The accused is notified of the outcome of the disciplinary proceedings.
4. The accused receives full and prompt cooperation from campus personnel in obtaining securing, and maintaining evidence that may disprove the occurrence of criminal sexual assault in subsequent legal proceedings.
5. The accused is provided information regarding counseling.