

Open Forum Remarks

President Zulma R. Toro

April 17, 2018

First, thank you all for joining me here today.

I am deeply concerned, as I think you are, about the reports of a faculty member's long history of alleged sexual misconduct and other abuses targeting students and his colleagues.

The more I've learned during the past week, the more troubled I am. I feel I need to restate this: we will not tolerate sexual misconduct or abusive behavior of any kind.

In addition to setting investigations into motion, I have spent the past week meeting many in our Central Family to gain a deeper understanding about the alleged misconduct and about our campus culture.

After my meeting last night with students from the Theatre Department, I want to make it clear that this is not about *one* department – this is of concern to *all of us*.

Since my arrival at CCSU 15 months ago, I have tried to change the way we do things by creating a more transparent administration. Today's Open Forum is part of that effort. It is my intent to make this Campus Culture Forum an annual meeting each April.

Now, I promised to keep you updated on where things stand:

Please be aware that we are still in the discovery phase, so I must be careful about what I say so that I do not compromise the integrity of our investigations.

- From the start, it became evident to me that we needed an impartial, third-party analysis of the misconduct allegations and complaints, as well as a review of how we handled those complaints. An expedited investigation by the law firm Shipman & Goodwin began last Thursday.
- Currently, we have three different processes on this campus for submitting complaints and concerns, depending on whether a student, faculty, or staff member is involved. We need to determine if this structure and the communication process is effective and efficient.

- To immediately address my concerns about communications, today we launched a webpage called Campus Culture Concerns. We encourage you to use this tool to expedite communication from faculty, staff, and students to my administration.
- The point at which complaints or reports *trigger* an investigation needs to be clearer.
- There are many student and human resource experts on this campus who provide good service to our students, faculty, and staff, but the coordination of them and the reporting structure need to be examined.
- Central's policy that complaints be filed within 90 days of an incident was set decades ago. And though it is legal, in today's environment it needs to be reviewed.
- In May, the System Office will begin review of its Sexual Misconduct policies.
- The Board of Regents Policy on Consensual Relationships does not ban consensual relationships between faculty and undergraduate students. We will review this policy.

I will be establishing a Task Force to examine these issues, as well as to identify current best practices in these areas, to help guide us in our next steps.

There are things I cannot change – certain things from the past. But I do have the authority and the responsibility to make significant changes from this point on.

We have much to accomplish. I am, however, convinced that we will emerge from this stronger, and our campus will be a healthier and safer place for us all.

Today is really about hearing from you, so let us begin.