

STATEMENT ON FEDERAL LAWSUIT (APR. 11, 2018)

Late Monday afternoon, Apr. 9, 2018, MSU was notified that a Jane Doe filed a lawsuit against the university and "Unidentified Roes" (employees or counselors of the MSU Counseling Center) claiming that she was raped by three unnamed MSU athletes and, when she sought help, the university convinced her not to take her case to the authorities. The media has taken these allegations about MSU's response to her assault as established fact. Unfortunately, they are untrue.

Here are the facts:

- We have confirmed that, in April 2015, Jane Doe did visit MSU Counseling Center and that our records show that appropriate care and relevant information for a rape victim was provided to the student. We have not found any evidence or indication that she was discouraged in any way to make a Title IX complaint or a complaint to the police department. On the contrary, the student said she was then too distraught to discuss her circumstances. The counselor also suggested she visit the Sexual Assault Program unit on campus.
- In February 2016, Jane Does visited the Sexual Assault Program unit to receive additional services. She was provided appropriate services, including group counseling sessions, participating in a consultation with a sexual assault advocate, and scheduling an initial appointment with a sexual assault program therapist (an appointment which she did not appear for).
- In October 2015, Jane Doe's father contacted her academic advisor to discuss concerns over academic performance. Through that conversation, the advisor learned about the alleged sexual assault. Academic advisors are mandatory reporters under MSU's policies and the academic advisor promptly took the appropriate step of notifying the MSU Police Department about the potential assault.
- The MSUPD Special Victims Unit took the report seriously and tried to reach Jane Doe to start the investigation and gather more information, but Jane Doe did not respond to their outreach. An informational email was sent to her that outlined resources available to her, including Title IX information, options to contact the Office of Institutional Equity and relevant counseling services.
- Jane Doe never revealed the names of her alleged assailants nor, until she filed her lawsuit, did she publicly assert that an assault had occurred. To date, she has yet to exercise her right to make a Title IX complaint or contact the MSUPD or respond to the effort of the Special Victims Unit to learn information about the assault her father brought to the academic advisor's attention.
- Any information shared during meetings with MSU counseling and psychiatric services is private and confidential. When attempting to investigate the issue, MSUPD did not have names or any information about possible assailants as Jane Doe never responded to their inquiry. At no point was MSU Athletics Department or the Basketball Program or Head Basketball Coach aware of or notified of the existence of a Jane Doe's sexual assault allegation.

Message from Interim President

"We are deeply saddened when any student comes to us as the result of a sexual assault. For the unfortunate cases where it does happen, MSU has the resources tools and expertise to respond. These resources are available to every member of the community, 24-7, no exceptions," said MSU Interim President John Engler.