



Message from Chancellor Philip L. Dubois
February 23, 2017

To Students, Staff, Faculty, and UNC Charlotte Parents:

In light of the recent allegations of sexual assault involving UNC Charlotte students, I write to address some of the concerns I have heard from members of our campus community and the public, and to give some broad context regarding how, what, and when we communicate when serious issues like these arise.

It is important to know that the safety of our campus community is always our top priority. We do not tolerate sexual harassment and assault, and place a priority on educating our campus members on prevention and creating awareness around consent, bystander intervention, and reporting options.

The federal Clery Act requires that all crimes occurring on campus, whether serious or minor, must be reported in annual security reports. These are currently available for inspection on the [Police and Public Safety website](#). At the same time, federal law (FERPA) provides strict protections for the privacy of student information.

What this means is that when a serious crime occurs on campus and it is believed there is an imminent threat to the safety of the campus community, a campus alert is issued. However, if a potential threat is averted or neutralized, such as by an arrest, we do not issue campus alerts.

In the recent instance of an alleged sexual assault that occurred in a campus residence hall, the two students involved were known to each other and a timely arrest was made. No campus alert was issued because there was no imminent threat to the safety and welfare of others in that residence hall or on campus. When students who are known to each other are involved in an assault, it does not change the seriousness of the crime, but it may determine if there is an imminent threat to others. I can assure you that a campus alert would have been issued, for example, if it appeared that the sexual assault was the result of an unauthorized entry into the residence hall by an individual not known to the victim and who had not yet been apprehended.

Crimes or alleged crimes that occur off campus are not reported in campus crime reports and the University would not typically comment on students accused of criminal behavior or victimized by it. However, in the most recent case of a student-athlete, the University and the head football coach wanted to respond to reassure the community that appropriate disciplinary measures were taken with respect to the student's status on the team pending the formal resolution of the criminal charges.

Quite apart from what the University may say about allegations of crime occurring on or off campus, all students are subject to the provisions of the [Code of Student Responsibility](#). In some circumstances and depending upon the criminal charges alleged, we may determine that an accused student should not be permitted to continue attending classes on campus until formal criminal charges are resolved or student disciplinary proceedings are completed. If such a decision is made, however, our obligations to protect student privacy do not permit us to make that fact generally known.

I also want to mention some changes we are making for the future. Over the past year, the University has been engaged in a communication planning effort, working on how we communicate with our communities in emergency and non-emergency situations. Many of you have participated in that effort by providing valuable input that informs our understanding of the

different needs of students, faculty, staff, and families. The results of our surveys, along with conversations with members of the community, have helped us in the development of a comprehensive crisis communication plan in partnership with a strategic communication and research firm. You will be hearing from me in the coming weeks about the changes already in progress, including how and when you can expect to receive information from the University going forward.

It is important to us to ensure that you are aware of the facts in these situations as they impact you, and know of the [resources available to those who may need assistance or support](#). As some of you know, this has been a personal priority for me. There is nothing more important than the safety and security of our community, and effective communication is paramount in that effort.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Phil". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Philip L. Dubois
Chancellor