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## GRIEVANCE

Continued from Page 1

al way," he said.

Some victims may opt to speak to friends or counselors instead of filing a grievance. Students often have refrained from filing formal complaints against their professors out of fear that the professors will retaliate against them, such as victimizing them on their final grade, he said.

Lehrman said that some students file informal complaints because they say, "I don't want to get this guy in trouble — it will stop his job." Or, some students will say, "I wonder if what happened is what really happened."

"There is a tremendous amount of self-evaluation and potential doubt," he said.

As a result, some students make an informal complaint, which can be filed anonymously, with the request that nothing be done to the teacher.

"It's difficult for us to decide whether that is a complaint or not," Lehrman said. "But at the same time, we want to respect their wishes and not drag the grievants into investigations if they don't want to," he said, adding that if every grievant were required to cooperate in a full investigation of the respondent, the number of grievances would be greatly reduced.

Six women who did cooperate in investigations regarding sexual harassment by a University professor appealed the chancellor's office last year after four of the grievances were dismissed. The chancellor's decision to uphold only two of the grievances — because the others weren't filed within the 180-day deadline — drew much publicity as the women denounced the University's deadline in a televised press conference last December.

The women also accused the University of ignoring the women's complaints until the deadline passed in order to protect the reputation of the institution.

Lehrman denounced the accusation that the University is ignoring women's complaints, saying that if it were discovered that University officials were covering up that information, the University would be vulnerable to a lawsuit.

## OPTIONS

Continued from Page 1

Another avenue is the Office of Student Advocacy, where Director Marlene Drescher will listen to and act as an advocate for students who have experienced harassment. Students can file grievances at both places, which are then forwarded to the affirmative action office.

University ombud officer Janet Wentworth can informally seek a resolution to the problem, such as talking to the alleged perpetrator on behalf of the student, or accompanying a scared student to talk with the individual. Wentworth also can schedule an appointment at the University Counseling Center or with Jacqueline Gibson, the University mediation director. Gibson can bring both the grievant and the respondent together in an attempt to reach a resolution.

Students also can approach the affirmative action office directly, and will be referred to Mark Zunich, the human rights investigator, who will inform students of their options. Students who wish to file informal grievances are

usually referred to Wentworth, and formal complaints are taken by Zunich, who will immediately draft letters to the accused individual. The letters list the rules against sexual harassment and retaliation, and state that the respondent must reply to Zunich within five days. Witness contact lists are provided by both parties in order to get testimony to corroborate or dismiss the allegations.

When Zunich finishes his fact-finding report, he forwards it to the Affirmative Action Administrative Council, composed of six administrators, which reviews the report. The council debates the facts and then advises the appropriate vice president, who will decide either to dismiss the case or to impose sanctions against the respondent.

University President Myles Brand is informed of the decision, and Brand reports the decision to Chancellor Thomas Bartlett, who files the report. Grievants can appeal the decision, in which case the chancellor either will uphold or overturn the decision.

The University administration is getting pressure to change the 180-day deadline to 365 days, and discussion is underway to consider that change.

A 365-day deadline would have pluses and minuses, Lehrman said. Because sexual harassment cases are heavily dependent on witness testimony, such a deadline may cause witnesses' memories to fade, or witnesses may have graduated or moved within that period, making it difficult for investigators to compile an accurate case, he said.

However, Lehrman said he realized that many women who are sexually harassed are severely affected by the incident and that women may go through counseling for six months to get up the self-esteem needed to face a grievance procedure. For them, sometimes 180 days goes by pretty quickly, he said.

"It is a bit unfair in certain cases to have a short time line," he said. "Should we simply freeze people out of their right to file a grievance simply because the emotional experience they've had has made it difficult to come forward?"

It was difficult to come forward for Newman, whose grievance was dismissed because she filed it more than 180 days after the incident occurred. Because the professor had admitted to the incident, Newman felt like she had been "kicked in the stomach" when her grievance was dismissed.

Newman, who still finds the incident difficult to talk about, said she wishes she had been stronger to stand up to the harassment when it first began. But by speaking out, "I hope I can make other women aware of the problem at the University," she said.

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