



STUDENT AFFAIRS

Office for Student Conflict Resolution
300 Turner Student Services Building, MC-306
610 E. John St.
Champaign, IL 61820

Date of Report: August 1, 2023
Primary Investigator: Devin Andersen
Secondary Investigators: Caitlin Kay
Respondent(s): Howard Wolowitz
Incident No(s): **71304-001-2023**

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SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION

Involved Parties

Complainant: Amy Farrah Fowler

- June 3, 2023: Met with Dean Andersen to request No Contact Directive
- June 4, 2023: Intake meeting with investigators
- June 4, 2023: Notified of charge notice/no contact being sent
- June 5, 2023: Emailed statement for review
- June 5, 2023: Responded to statement review
- July 10, 2023: Emailed noticed that Evidence Packet was available for review

Respondent: Howard Wolowitz

- June 3, 2023: emailed No Contact Directive
- June 4, 2023: emailed charge letter
- June 22, 2023: Met with investigators
- June 23, 2023: Emailed statement for review
- June 30, 2023: replied to statement review
- July 10, 2023: Emailed noticed that Evidence Packet was available for review

Witnesses: Leonard Hoftstader

- June 5, 2023: sent witness request email
- June 22, 2023: met with investigators
- June 22, 2023: statement sent for review
- June 22, 2023: responded to statement review

Beradette Rostenkowski

- June 5, 2023: sent witness request email
- June 23, 2023: met with investigators
- June 23, 2023: statement sent for review

Date of Reported Incident

Throughout Spring 2023

Reports Received From

Complainant

History of Investigation

On June 3, 2023, Amy Farrah Fowler met with Dean Andersen to request a no contact directive and ask questions about the reporting process. Fowler asked to have an intake meeting to be scheduled with the investigators. That same day, Dean Andersen sent a no contact directive to both Amy Farrah Fowler and HOWARD Wolowitz.

On June 4, 2023, Fowler submitted a Title IX Formal Complaint to the Title IX Office and then met with Dean Andersen and Dean Kay to give a statement. At that meeting, Fowler was told that an allegation notice would be sent to Wolowitz. The notice was sent that same day.

On June 5, 2023, Andersen sent a witness request to Leonard Hofstader and Bernedette Rostenkowski. Also, that day, Fowler responded to the notes from the meeting with the investigators.

On June 22, 2023, Leonard Hofstader met with the investigators, and Dean Andersen sent their statement notes. Hofstader responded to those notes the same day.

On June 22, 2023, Howard Wolowitz met with Dean Andersen and Dean Kay.

On June 23, 2023, Dean Andersen sent Wolowitz the interview notes for review.

Also on June 23, 2023, Bernedette Rostenkowski met with Dean Andersen and Dean Kay. Dean Andersen sent Rostenkowski the interview notes for review that same day.

On June 30, 2023, Wolowitz responded to the interview notes.

On July 10, 2020, Dean Andersen notified Wolowitz and Fowler that the evidence packet was available to be reviewed via BOX. Neither party submitted a written response to the packet.

Alleged Violations

For Howard Wolowitz

Violation charge statement from original charge letter: It is alleged that throughout the spring 2023 semester you watched your neighbor, Amy Farrah Fowler, through the peep hole in your door at Nugent Hall. You allegedly showed up on multiple occasions at the location where the Fowler was studying and watched them while they studied, specifically in both the Student Dining and Residential Programs Building and in the Illini Union. You allegedly left anonymous notes on the Fowler's door that said things such as, "Big brother is watching," "You never know what could happen," and "Looking for love in all the wrong places." At some point during the spring 2023 semester, you allegedly snuck into Fowler's room, stole their bunny slippers, and wore them when you were in your room. When other people would show romantic interest in Fowler, you would allegedly talk to them and tell them you didn't appreciate their pursuing someone that they knew you were interested in. On April 20, 2023, you allegedly sent 20 balloons to Fowler while they were in an RSO meeting. Additionally, Fowler would actively avoid you and never did anything to reciprocate the attention you allegedly gave to them.

The investigation focused on alleged violations of the following provisions of the Student Code:

1-302(a) Violent and/or dangerous conduct, including:

- (4)** any verbal threat or physically threatening behavior that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety

1-302(c) Stalking: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress. For the purposes of this definition,

1. course of conduct means two or more acts, including but not limited to, acts which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device or means follows, monitors, observes, surveilles, threatens, or communicates to or about, a person, or interferes with a person's property;
2. reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim; and
3. substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Standard of Proof

In order to determine that a student has violated the Student Code, the university uses the preponderance of the evidence standard. In other words, the decision-maker must determine, based on an examination of the available evidence, that it is more likely than not that the alleged behavior occurred.

INCIDENT NARRATIVE

Throughout the Spring 2023 semester, Amy Farrah Fowler felt like they were being surveilled by their across-the-hall neighbor in Nugent Hall, Howard Wolowitz (Appendix A). Wolowitz said that they do not monitor Fowler, but they do notice when Fowler is around (Appendix B). Witness Leonard Hofstadter said that Wolowitz had a weird interest in Fowler that made Fowler uncomfortable (Appendix C). Witness Bernedette Rostenkowski said that Wolowitz watches Fowler from their room. Additionally, Rostenkowski described two occasions where Fowler was studying at the Union and Wolowitz showed up and stared at Fowler (Appendix D).

On three different occasions during the Spring 2023 semester, Fowler found post-it notes on the door to their room. They read: "Big brother is watching" and "You never know what could happen" and "Looking for love in all the wrong places." (Appendix A) Wolowitz said that they probably have left notes on Fowler's door but that they don't think the notes that Fowler described were notes Wolowitz wrote. (Appendix B) Rostenkowski said that they saw Wolowitz leave post-it notes on Fowler's door but did not know what those notes said. (Appendix D)

At one point, Fowler received bunny slippers in a care package, and they went missing soon after they arrived. (Appendix A) Wolowitz said that they found some bunny slippers in the lounge and started wearing them but did not know those slippers belonged to Fowler. (Appendix B) Hofstadter said that Wolowitz wears the bunny slippers when Fowler isn't around. (Appendix C)

On April 20, 2023, Fowler received a balloon bouquet while they were in an RSO meeting on campus and believes those balloons were sent by Wolowitz. (Appendix A) Wolowitz said that a group of people sent the balloons to Fowler and that Wolowitz did contribute to sending the balloons. Wolowitz said that this was organized over GroupMe. (Appendix B) Hofstadter said that they did not know of a group organizing balloons being sent to Fowler and thought that if people on their floor were doing that Hofstadter would have been included. (Appendix C) Rostenkowski said that they saw Wolowitz have the Party City website pulled up on his computer the night before Fowler received the balloons. Rostenkowski said that they never heard anything about people from the floor contributing to buying the balloons. (Appendix D)

Wolowitz said that they told Bernedette Rostenkowski that talking about romantic interest with Fowler was not cool since Rostenkowski knew that Wolowitz had a crush on Fowler. (Appendix B) Hofstadter said that they heard Wolowitz tell Rostenkowski that it was disrespectful to be interested in Fowler. (Appendix C) Rostenkowski said that Wolowitz said that it was "out of line" to talk about Fowler being attractive. (Appendix D)