Maties student raped on campus

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A MAN who allegedly raped a Stellenbosch University student in a car parked at campus residence is expected to appear in court tomorrow.

The incident – which took place in the early hours of yesterday morning – is the second rape at the university to be reported in about three months. The incident sparked an emergency evacuation at the women’s residence near to where the rape occurred. Students were alerted to what happened and were given an undertaking that university authorities would be approached about increasing security.

Police spokeswoman Constable Noloysio Rwexana confirmed a rape case was under investigation. She said a 32-year-old man allegedly raped a 30-year-old woman. He was expected in the Stellenbosch Magistrate’s Court tomorrow.

In a statement Stellenbosch University confirmed a student had reported being raped.

“Information at the university’s disposal, at this stage, is the incident took place in a car in the parking area between the Heemskrake and Metamor Residences,” it said.

“Students provided information that led to the arrest of a male suspect by the (police), assisted by university security staff. The man is in custody. It appears that the suspect is not a student of the university.”

In the previous incident in February a student reported being raped outside the Harmony residence.

Police did not believe the two rapes were linked.

Following the first rape the university appointed a special task team to combat an alleged “rape culture” on campus as well as to make recommendations on safety measures.

However, students complained the task team was doing a lot of deliberating with little action. Rape survivor Melissa Squawor, who is a member of the Women Empowerment Committee, said: “Why are they (the task team) still deliberating when women are getting raped? Maybe they should decide quicker.”

Earlier this week Professor Amanda Gouws, a member of the sexual harassment advisory board, said she was aware students were not satisfied enough was being done to fight the so-called rape culture on campus.

“The need to be a concerted effort to increase the safety of women students,” she said.

Gouws said consciousness had to be raised on what rape culture was.

Several students told Weekend Argus they were worried about the safety of women walking to and from campus.

Many were particularly upset about private security guards hired to protect administration buildings on campus.

Female students had complained some of the private guards had made inappropriate sexist remarks and called them names.

Gouws said she was aware of the issue.

“The security company that is supposed to protect these girls is part of the problem so that needs to be looked at,” she said.

Last month Mthunzi Hlomane was arrested on the mountain slopes above Rhodes Memorial for allegedly raping at least one UCT student.

Since November, five women were raped and a sixth came close to being raped near the memorial. Four of the five victims were UCT students, and the assaults sparked fear on the campus and in surrounding areas. Hlomane may face further rape charges. He is expected back in the Wynberg Magistrate’s Court next month.