

Year 1 Public Description of Work for  
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

## The University of Massachusetts Amherst

Enhance Search Policies and Procedures to Emphasis Campus Goal of Promoting  
Diversity, Inclusion and Respect

**This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s):**

Embedding the Values of Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect into Hiring, Promotion, Advancement, and Admissions (1): Research shows that an organization that is male-dominated (in number, leaders, and/or culture) is one of the strongest predictors of sexual harassment. Therefore, organizations should take explicit steps to achieve greater gender and racial equity in hiring and promotions, and to improve minoritized representation at every level. Building on the 2018 NASEM report on Sexual Harassment of Women and the 2020 NASEM report on Promising Practices for Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women , this includes:

- Strategies for hiring that take into account and gather information about behavior at prior institutions
- Develop processes to evaluate behavior in promotion / advancement and performance review
- Educating faculty hiring committees, with particular attention to how to mitigate biases within the hiring process
- Changes to DEI staff or structure to support office (e.g., hiring chief diversity officer, centralizing / decentralizing staff structure, etc.)

**Description of Work:**

The University has undertaken several steps toward this effort primarily through the Office of Human Resources (OHR).

- **Strategies for hiring that take into account and gather information about behavior at prior institutions**—the question related to previous violations of policies covering discrimination, harassment, or bullying has been added to the faculty and staff employment application in PageUp, the university's applicant portal and administration system. The Provost reviews matters related to faculty applicants, and the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources reviews matters related to staff applicants.
- **Educating faculty hiring committees, with particular attention to how to mitigate biases within the hiring process**—STRIDE (Strategies and Tactics for Recruiting to Improve Diversity and Excellence) workshops are for faculty members with an important role in faculty recruitment efforts (e.g., search committee chairs and members and other key faculty). These two-hour workshops review research driven best practices to

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recruit for diversity and excellence across every stage in the search process and is designed to help faculty produce diverse candidate pools and run effective searches by:

- Getting great applications from the best applicants
- Developing a strong short list
- Managing the visit
- Choosing and attracting the best candidate

STRIDE is required for all faculty involved in search committees. Access to candidate files is only be granted upon completion of the training. Exceptions to this are made only at the discretion of the school/college dean. Training is valid for a three -year period, after which must be renewed. To promote small-group discussion and interaction, workshops are capped at 20 participants.

- **Changes to DEI staff or structure to support office (e.g., hiring chief diversity officer, centralizing / decentralizing staff structure, etc.)**
  - The University has reorganized its DEI structure to clarify functions and elevate the leadership positions in this area. The position of Associate Chancellor for DEI has been elevated to a Vice Chancellorship, and the Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity has been elevated to an Associate Vice Chancellor. The University has been searching for experienced leaders in both of these roles. With the onset of the pandemic and the uncertainties about the next school year, the search was suspended with the hopes that we will relaunch it in Spring 2021. In the meanwhile, Dr. Nefertiti Walker, associate dean for an inclusive organization in the Isenberg School of Management, continues as Interim Vice Chancellor for DEI until the end of the next academic/fiscal year.
  - OHR continued its partnership with the Office of Equity and Inclusion and launched Employee Resource Groups in February. OHR provided extensive input to the creation of the diversity matrix that will provide the foundational structure of the Office of Equity and inclusion going forward. Workplace Learning & Development has been laying the groundwork for launching a Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Program which will recognize staff and faculty who have participated in 10 classroom hours in employee development that supports becoming adept at working in a diverse and inclusive work environment.

Finally, the Office of Human Resources added a Diversity Recruiting Specialist in fall 2019. The position focuses on building recruiting pipelines within communities of color with a focus on the greater Springfield, MA metropolitan area. In its first few months, the newly hired specialist, who is bilingual, attended multiple job fairs, began building a diversity recruiting framework, and has started building recruiting materials aimed at underrepresented groups.

**Website for further information (if applicable):** <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/learn/stride-faculty-recruitment-workshops>

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