

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

Rutgers University

**Significantly Increasing Faculty and Staff Education and Skill
Development**

This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s): 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, and 16

Description of Work: We R Here Staff and Faculty Training Initiative

A full-time Staff and Faculty Training Coordinator, a position and conceptualization of the work entirely new to Rutgers, was hired at Rutgers in November of 2019 to launch the new “We R Here Staff and Faculty Training Initiative” across all Rutgers’ campuses. A core, in-person, anti-sexual harassment training was created. This training, developed with principles of trauma-informed bystander intervention strategies, provides skills to recognize, correct, and address sexual harassment (with a focus on gender-based harassment), support impacted students and colleagues, and effectively use University policies for action and to create positive culture shift. This interactive training has been tailored for delivery at Rutgers’ New Jersey School of Medicine for 700 staff/faculty, and will be customized for other University ecosystems accordingly. The We R Here Faculty and Staff Training Initiative will also include the development of a faculty ambassador train-the-trainer program and a comprehensive tool kit with specific, actionable items of change for departments, schools, and academic leaders to adopt to ensure sustainable change.

The goals of the Staff and Faculty Training Initiative are to 1) clearly define sexual and gender-based harassment, 2) discuss how sexual harassment manifests in each specific university environment, 3) provide concrete skills to interrupt sexual harassment in the work place using trauma-informed bystander intervention strategies, and 4) explore concrete action steps to encourage behavior change and to sustainably prevent sexual harassment at Rutgers.

This work aligns with the recommendations of the 2018 NASEM consensus study report entitled *Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering and Medicine*, particularly in the areas of prevention, leadership education and skill development, bystander intervention programs, audience-specific anti-sexual harassment programs, ally and ambassador programs, and prevention toolkits.

As mentioned in the report, the faculty and staff trainings have been designed not to change ‘beliefs’ but instead to ‘clearly communicate behavioral expectations’, and to provide individuals with the tools to effectively identify, intervene, and prevent sexual harassment both in the workplace and among students. Rather than a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach, trainings are

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specifically tailored to each audience and ecosystem, and are skills-based, interactive and trauma informed.

Recognizing that training alone cannot bring about lasting culture change, the Faculty and Staff Training Coordinator will also create a comprehensive tool kit, which will include best practices for onboarding, sample informal policies and behavioral change measures, trauma-informed resources, sample syllabus statements and classroom exercises to encourage discussion, social media templates, and departmental and self-assessment tools. A faculty ambassador component is also being developed. In line with the NASEM report's findings that women of color are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment, as well as less likely to report, each training and intervention has been designed incorporating principles of intersectionality and with an anti-racist, anti-oppressive lens.

This work is currently in progress and continues. Several of the core trainings have been researched, designed, and delivered via WebEx, and outreach to faculty and staff is ongoing. The Training Coordinator will offer a training series in the Fall of 2020 remotely, open to all faculty and staff, that focuses on supporting colleagues and staff remotely during COVID, with a particular focus on Black and POC colleagues and students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and systemic racism at large. The series will also feature prominent anti-racist, anti-sexual assault advocate Wagatwe Wanjuki who will focus specifically on supporting Black students remotely.

In addition to offering WebEx and limited in-person trainings for faculty and staff in the coming year, the Training Coordinator will focus on research, development, and dissemination of the staff and faculty toolkit as well as launching the ambassador program.

It is important to note that certain revisions or changes to the work have taken place, a result of adapting to a remote environment due to COVID-19. The Training Coordinator worked during March and April to migrate all trainings to an on-line platform, although she will still offer limited in-person training to faculty and staff who remain on the ground (for instance, essential medical personnel). Also due to COVID transitions and stressors, demand for training has decreased but the Training Coordinator continues to reach out to faculty and staff, including via virtual postcards with action steps and resources, and by offering more training options and making sure content is tailored to shifting needs. A tip sheet for responding to disclosures remotely during COVID-19 was also developed and posted on the university-wide resource site coronavirus.rutgers.edu, as well as on the university's Sexual Harassment Prevention website, sexualharassment.rutgers.edu.

Assessment is an integral part of the program. Evaluations are provided to each participant after every training, and an online form has been created for WebEx programs. These evaluations will be used to gather feedback, be analyzed for continuous improvement, and to ensure that trainings align with Action Collaborative goals. There will also be questions

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about training and engagement on the upcoming university-wide faculty, student, and staff climate survey, scheduled to be put into the field during the Fall of 2021. Interventions and training will be modified accordingly, in response to assessment results.

With regard to involvement of stakeholders in the work, this position itself was developed specifically to engage multiple stakeholders. The Training Coordinator spends 50% of their time with University Human Resources, in an effort to streamline training efforts, engage more faculty and staff, and ensure that university policy is appropriately responsive to faculty, staff, and administrators' needs around sexual harassment. The Training Coordinator also works with the leadership of the Rutgers Sexual Harassment Prevention and Culture Change Initiative, Rutgers' NASEM Action Collaborative representatives, Rutgers' Center on Violence Against Women, University Title IX offices, and all Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) offices in order to coordinate training, share resources, and remain up to date on university services and policies.

With regard to next steps for the work, in addition to the creation of the toolkit and ambassador program, the next steps will be to continue to respond and adapt to the needs of faculty, staff, and administrators during COVID, including bringing awareness to the fact that sexual and gender-based harassment do not disappear when colleagues and students are working remotely. Since harassment may take different forms, and the responses and interventions need to be tailored accordingly, the Training Coordinator will continue to work to modify training content and offer flexible opportunities as needed. And since all of the aforementioned work is funded by an external grant that ends in August of 2021, the Training Coordinator will continue to explore options for sustainability with university leadership.

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