

**Year 2 Public Description of Work for
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

Harvard University

The Office for Gender Equity

This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s):

Improved Communication and Increased Transparency

Description of Work:

As a member of the NASEM Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education, Harvard University is consistently reviewing the ways in which preventing and addressing sexual harassment across all disciplines and among all people in higher education can be improved for our community. A critical piece of this work involves community engagement and feedback.

Harvard University is committed to working toward an environment free of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual assault and gender-based harassment. Since 2014, Harvard has addressed issues of sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct through three dedicated offices. Two of these offices, the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR) and the University Title IX Office, were designated to engage in prevention, education, and awareness efforts. The third dedicated office, the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR), implements the University's policies and procedures for students, staff, and, in almost all Schools, faculty, with respect to requests for information or advice, requests for informal resolution, and formal complaints concerning sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct.

Over the past year (FY21), the Offices of the President and Provost, including leadership within the Harvard University Title IX Office and Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), engaged in expansive outreach to students, staff, faculty, and postdoctoral fellows to examine how the University could better meet the needs of our community around issues of sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct.

Throughout this process, themes emerged around the University's need to:

- Streamline access to resources
- Better promote the resources available to students, staff, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty
- Provide resources dedicated to restorative practices
- Provide resources dedicated to individuals who cause harm within their communities
- Offer psychoeducational support groups to those who have experienced harm

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- Improve communication about existing prevention efforts and commit to expanding prevention initiatives

Community members also shared information about existing services, expressing the importance of:

- High quality/accessible crisis counseling
- Bystander intervention programming and education focused on gender equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Ready access to supportive measures for students, staff, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty
- An anonymous means of sharing a concern of sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct

Using the data garnered from these feedback sessions to guide next steps, the University streamlined services by uniting, expanding, and elevating resources previously housed within OSAPR and the Title IX Office into one central space, the [Office for Gender Equity](#) (OGE). Formal complaints will continue to be investigated by the professional investigators within ODR.

The newly formed OGE, situated within the Office of the Provost, uses a multipronged approach to address sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct, ranging from designing and implementing prevention and education programs to providing individualized supports.

Individuals may choose to engage in one or more of the offerings provided by OGE. These include:

Prevention and Education - OGE offers a robust set of research-based prevention and education initiatives that work to advance a climate and culture of gender equity. Customized workshops are designed to meet the specific needs of any group engaging with OGE's programming. With workshops such as Gender Diversity and Inclusion, Consent Education, Bystander Intervention, and more, OGE's education initiatives are aimed at generating meaningful, culture-changing conversations around critical issues.

Sexual Harassment/Assault Resources & Education (SHARE) - As part of OGE, SHARE Counselors provide critical, confidential services to Harvard community members. These services include crisis response, trauma-informed advocacy-based counseling, education, and other supports for individuals impacted by interpersonal violence and abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Resources within SHARE are also trained in restorative practices and community restoration, and SHARE will be adding a team member in Fall 2021 whose role will be dedicated to providing direct services to community members who cause harm. SHARE Counselors are confidential and privileged resources and are clinically supervised by HUHS. SHARE also maintains a 24-hour hotline for those who have experienced interpersonal harm, including sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct.

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Title IX Resource Coordinators - OGE supports the University's network of Title IX Resource Coordinators. Together, OGE and local Title IX Resource Coordinators receive disclosures of sexual harassment and/or sexual misconduct, facilitate individualized supports for community members, and partner on prevention and education initiatives across every Harvard School and unit.

Resource for Online Anonymous Disclosures (ROAD) – Individuals may also raise a concern anonymously through the Resource for Online Anonymous Disclosures, or the “ROAD.” The ROAD provides Harvard community members with an online means to anonymously disclose concerns of sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct and correspond with Title IX resources at Harvard, without having to share personally identifying information. This system is hosted by an independent, third-party vendor who provides secure, anonymous reporting services.

Formal Complaints - Students, staff, faculty, post-doctoral students, and third parties may file a formal complaint alleging a violation of the University policies by submitting the complaint to the University Title IX Coordinator at oge@harvard.edu.

With an official launch date of July 6, 2021, the newly formed OGE serves as a single point of access for all community members with a mission of empowering and supporting the Harvard community to advance a climate of gender equity and inclusion through evidence-based educational initiatives; excellence in research and practice; and delivery of direct services.

Website for further information (if applicable): oge.harvard.edu

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