



The University of New Mexico Commitment Statement in support of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

The National Academies report on Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2018) found that between 20 and 50 percent of women students and more than 50 percent of women faculty and staff experienced sexually harassing behavior while in academia. Research demonstrates that sexual harassment undermines the professional and educational attainment and mental and physical health of people of all genders. It also shows that these consequences are not limited to those experiencing it directly, but that bystanders – people of all genders – who experience ambient harassment in their work or education environment are also affected.

This in turn affects organizations, as employees disengage, withdraw, and leave their work so as not to become the next target. The Sexual Harassment of Women report concludes that system-wide changes to the culture and climate in higher education are needed and provides a roadmap for making these changes.

To advance efforts to prevent and effectively respond to sexual harassment, The University of New Mexico, a Carnegie High-Research and Hispanic-Serving Institution that educates and serves New Mexico's diverse communities, is joining other institutions and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to form an *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*. This Action Collaborative will facilitate partnerships and joint action on addressing and preventing sexual harassment. Together, with the other institutional members of the Action Collaborative, we will take targeted, collective action to implement evidence-based policies and practices at the individual and systems levels for preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a culture of civility and respect. The Action Collaborative's goals are to:

- Raise awareness about sexual harassment and how it occurs, the consequences of sexual harassment, and the organizational characteristics and recommended approaches that can prevent it.
- Share and elevate evidence-based institutional policies and strategies to reduce and prevent sexual harassment.
- Contribute to setting the research agenda, and gather and apply research results across institutions.
- Develop a standard for measuring progress toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

In its efforts to fulfill an agreement on Title IX reached with the Department of Justice in November 2016 [<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-reaches-agreement-university-new-mexico-protect-students-sexual-assault>], UNM has in recent years intensified its efforts to respond effectively to campus sexual violence, in particular by revising key policies, increasing

mandatory trainings across the campus, improving procedures for responding to reports of assault, continuously evaluating the campus climate, and improving support and advocacy services [link to DOJ year 3 report?]. At the same time, staff, and faculty across the university have advanced efforts to study, develop and refine UNM's institutional response, including the National Science Foundation-supported ADVANCE project [<https://advance.unm.edu/>], a Violence Against Women Act grant to strengthen support and advocacy services [<https://news.unm.edu/news/unm-womens-resource-center-awarded-300-000-grant>], and UNM's Faculty for a Sexual Assault-Free Environment organization [<https://facultysafeunm.wordpress.com/>].

These achievements reflect noteworthy progress, critical self-evaluation, and support from administrative leaders. However, UNM also recognizes the need to deepen and extend its commitment to create diverse, inclusive, and respectful environments in which it is clear that sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and actively work to eliminate those contributing factors that allow sexual harassment to occur.

The University of New Mexico hereby commits to support the goals of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*