

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

University of Washington

Climate Survey

This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s): Evaluation #23 and #25

Description of Work:

The first-ever university-wide climate survey was administered at the University of Washington in October and November of 2019. Although climate surveys have been conducted previously at UW, they were primarily focused on undergraduates on the Seattle campus. This most recent survey was administered to all UW community members—faculty, staff, and students—across all UW locations. The executive summary of the results were published to the UW community in late May, 2020. Sexual misconduct was included as one element of this comprehensive survey and data will be available for deeper analysis in the summer and fall of 2020.

The decision to include sexual harassment/sexual misconduct questions in our climate survey is a reflection of the increasing awareness of the enormous and negative impact these behaviors have on our students and employees. In addition, it acknowledges that formal reports of sexual harassment are not an accurate measure of the prevalence of the problem.

A 30-member climate study group worked in consultation with an external consultant, Rankin and Associates, to develop the survey tool and tailor it for four primary UW locations: Seattle campus, Bothell campus, Tacoma campus, and Health Sciences. The sexual misconduct questions were reviewed and edited by a subgroup of the Title IX climate committee. In alignment with the NASEM report's recommendations, the questions were crafted with a focus on describing behaviors rather than using vague terms such as "sexual harassment" or "sexual misconduct."

In alignment with the 2018 NASEM report, the summary results of the UW survey were made available to the UW community. The plan had been to host live Town Hall meetings in May, but given the impacts of COVID-19 these sessions were conducted virtually and summary documents were posted on the UW climate survey website.

Early review of the climate survey summary documents reveal broad-stroke trends which are helpful in some ways, while also underscoring the need for more in-depth analysis of the data. This analysis is currently being conducted by the UW Office for Educational Assessment with an early focus on preparing detailed reports for each of the academic schools. More in-depth analysis of sexual misconduct responses will then be completed in the fall of 2020. When that analysis is available, we will be looking at a number of metrics, including

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specific populations who may be experiencing a higher rate of harassment, more prevalent behaviors so as to seek interventions to combat those behaviors, and intersectional impacts and experiences of harassment. In addition, we will analyze how the experience of harassment influences perceptions of the workplace/educational environment and performance. We will also assess general awareness of resources and support options to determine if/how to best communicate and make our services and support options most accessible to our community.

A Climate Oversight Committee consisting of high-level leaders has been appointed to review the reports, determine the best ways to implement key findings, and provide overall strategic direction. Additionally, a Title IX Climate Working Committee has been appointed to propose action steps and assist in coordinating a transparency-focused communication plan related to the sexual misconduct data. The working committee's charge can be found [here](#).

Website for further information (if applicable):

<https://www.washington.edu/uwclimatesurvey/>

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