

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

Boston University

Beyond Bystanders

Relevant Rubric Area(s):

- Bystander Intervention Programs.
- Audience-specific anti-sexual harassment education.
- Ally or Ambassador Programs.

Description of Work:

Beyond Bystanders is a longitudinal bystander intervention training series designed to provide male graduate students in STEM programs with the skills to identify and interrupt sexual misconduct, with a focus on gender harassment.

The *Beyond Bystanders* series builds upon the *Interrupt* training developed in 2019 by Boston University's Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center (SARP) and presented at the 2019 and 2020 NASEM Public Summits. *Beyond Bystanders* was developed over the summer of 2020 in a collaboration between BU's ARROWS: Advance, Recruit, Retain & Organize Women in STEM program, SARP, and Graduate Women in Science & Engineering (GWISE) and WISEGuys student organizations. A pilot run was held during the 2020-21 academic year, and based on the success of the pilot, the series will continue into and expand during the 2021-22 academic year.

The series is structured as four 1.5-hour workshop trainings held over the course of an academic year, with descriptions of each workshop below:

- Workshop 0: This first training, held early in the fall semester, introduces vocabulary terms related to sexual misconduct, examples of the different forms of harassment, the statistics around sexual misconduct in higher education (both nationally and at Boston University), and the *Interrupt* framework bystanders can use to interrupt harassment. The vocabulary terms, examples, and statistics shared heavily draw from the 2018 National Academies Report on Sexual Harassment of Women.
- Workshop 1: This second training, held later in the fall semester, spends its first half revisiting the vocabulary terms from Workshop 0 and providing an open forum for

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students to discuss any harassment they've observed or interrupted since the previous workshop, or to discuss harassment or male allyship more generally. The second half of the workshop has students applying the *Interrupt* framework to fictional scenarios they could find themselves in as graduate students in which they are at the higher end of the power dynamic related to the harasser (i.e. they are interrupting when an undergraduate is the harasser).

- Workshop 2: This third training, held early in the spring semester, is structured the same as Workshop 1: revisiting the vocabulary around harassment, holding an open forum for discussion, and practicing the *Interrupt* framework with scenarios. In this workshop, the scenarios used have participants at equal ends of the power dynamic related to the harasser (i.e. they are interrupting when a fellow graduate student is the harasser).
- Workshop 3: This fourth and final training, held later in the spring semester, is structured the same as Workshops 1 and 2. In this workshop, the scenarios used have participants at the lower end of the power dynamic related to the harasser (i.e. they are interrupting when a faculty, postdoc, or staff member is the harasser).

For each workshop, a pre- and post-workshop survey was sent to participants, asking about their confidence in identifying harassment and interrupting harassment, their thoughts on the responsibility to interrupt, their familiarity with resources, and more. The data collected indicate that for each of the four workshops, students experienced improvement along most metrics asked about, with occasional cases of no changes. Additionally, the data show that students who previously attended one or more of the workshops on average feel more confident interrupting harassment than those attending a workshop for the first time, bolstering the longitudinal approach of this series.

Two additional important aspects of this training series to highlight include:

- Peer Facilitators: Each of the workshops is led by a team of 3 facilitators, who are themselves also male graduate students in STEM programs, just like the workshops' participants. By having (trained) peers lead the workshops, the series provides a safe space so that participants feel as comfortable as possible engaging with the difficult subject matter.
- Intersectionality: A major focus of the 2018 NASEM report was the harassment faced by those with multiple marginalized identities, and this training series was designed with this reality in mind. The scenarios used in all workshops consist of two parts: the main scenario, plus at least one additional modifier. The main scenario is designed to be broadly general and to allow participants to practice interrupting harassment in a

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(relatively) easier case. Once participants have gone through the main scenario, a modifier is introduced to add elements of race, sexuality, gender identity, disability, etc. in order to have participants reflect on and practice interrupting harassment as it relates to people with multiple marginalized identities.

As mentioned, the quantitative and qualitative results of the pilot warrant the training series' continuation and expansion during the 2021-22 academic year. Moving forward, ARROWS will assume responsibility for operating the program, with facilitator training provided by SARP and with SARP, GWISE, and WISEGuys all being kept up-to-date on the program's efforts and consulted for any major decisions that may come up. Additionally, ARROWS currently plans to partner with 3-4 STEM departments during this next year to have them directly advertise the workshops to the male students in their graduate programs. This collaboration team has also submitted an abstract proposal to share this work with other institutions at the 2021 NASEM Public Summit.

Website for further information (if applicable):

<http://www.bu.edu/arrows/programs/graduate/beyond-bystanders/>

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