



**Johns Hopkins University Commitment Statement in support of the
National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
*Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education***

October 3, 2023

Johns Hopkins University is firmly committed to fostering a community free from sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. The mission of Johns Hopkins University is to educate students and cultivate their capacity for lifelong learning, to foster independent and original research, and to bring the benefits of discovery to the world. This mission can be fulfilled only if we actively create inclusive environments where sexual misconduct is not tolerated and vigorously work to eliminate factors in our environment that allow sexual harassment to persist.

To that end, in 2019, Johns Hopkins University became a founding member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education* ("Action Collaborative"). The [Action Collaborative](#) creates an active space where colleges, universities, and other research and training institutions move beyond basic legal compliance to evidence-based policies and practices at the individual and systems levels for addressing and preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a culture of respect in higher education. Johns Hopkins' membership in the Action Collaborative has enabled important collaboration with other institutions on the critical issues of preventing sexual misconduct and related retaliation, addressing such conduct when it occurs, and supporting individuals who have experienced sexual misconduct. This collaboration dovetails with the work of JHU's Sexual Violence Advisory Committee (SVAC), which likewise focuses on the "three pillars" approach spanning prevention, accountability and support. The SVAC – whose co-chairs both serve as University representatives for the Action Collaborative – is a broad group of students, faculty, and staff from all JHU divisions, charged with providing community input and advice to the Provost on issues related to sexual misconduct, including education, training, preventive measures, reporting, policies and procedures, and community engagement.

During the past four years, through the University's work with the Action Collaborative and the efforts of SVAC, we have identified various barriers to effective prevention and response at the University and worked to address these with concrete, evidence-based action. This includes:

- Identifying a knowledge gap in students' understanding of affirmative consent during sexual activity via our Student Climate Survey on Sexual Misconduct, and developing a university-wide communications campaign to increase awareness;

- Recognizing the need for additional and university-wide confidential resources to support survivors of sexual misconduct at all campuses, and recommending the creation of new university-wide confidential roles devoted to gender-based violence (now in place);
- Expanding our evidence-based undergraduate Bystander Intervention Training program to graduate students;
- Responding to the chilling effect of fear of retaliation by offering “[anti-retaliation plans](#)” to proactively address retaliation concerns and thereby encourage reporting; and
- Partnering with the [Center for Communication Programs](#) at the University’s Bloomberg School of Public Health to develop a student-focused, evidence-based campaign to enhance awareness of and trust in supportive resources for survivors.

As the University continues its work in the Action Collaborative, we will advance the goals of the Action Collaborative goals through our membership:

1. To facilitate and inform action on preventing and addressing harassment;
2. To share and elevate evidence-based policies and strategies for reducing and preventing sexual harassment;
3. To advance research on sexual harassment prevention, and gather and apply research results across institutions;
4. To raise awareness about sexual harassment and its consequences, and motivate action to address and prevent it; and
5. To assess progress in higher education toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

The SVAC will continue to play an important role in promoting and translating the University’s collaborative work with the Action Collaborative into concrete, evidence-based measures within our community that enhance the prevention of sexual misconduct, increase accountability, and expand support for all impacted.



Shanon Shumpert
Vice Provost for Institutional Equity



Maria Oliva-Hemker
Vice Dean for Faculty, School of Medicine