

Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment Public Commitment Statement

Washington University in St. Louis has renewed its commitment as a member of the National Academies' Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. The Action Collaborative brings together leaders from academic institutions and key stakeholders to collaboratively work toward and share targeted action on addressing and preventing sexual harassment across all disciplines and among all people in higher education.

As a Member of the Action Collaborative, we are committed to the Collaborative's shared goals and will continue to actively advance these goals. Jessica Kennedy, Title IX Coordinator, and Renée Shellhaas, School of Medicine Associate Dean for Faculty Promotions and Career Development, are leading the WashU efforts. They will provide annual updates on the WashU efforts as well as the Collaborative's work in this space.

We are committed to advancing these Action Collaborative goals:

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

We recognize that, as individuals and collectively, we are at our best in an environment where everyone is welcomed, valued and celebrated as their most authentic selves. At the same time, we are working on identifying and addressing any elements of the culture here at Washington University that might lead to a negative climate for women, people of color and other vulnerable and marginalized members of our community.



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During our first four years as members of the Action Collaborative, we have (1) worked to engage with diverse representatives of the WashU community; (2) developed educational programming to build skills designed to reduce sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, stalking, and domestic/dating violence on campus; (3) crafted trauma-informed Title IX and Gender Equity policies and processes; and (4) implemented the School of Medicine Supporting A Fair Environment (SAFE) reporting system.

In 2023, the Medical and Danforth campuses have launched parallel Task Forces on Climate and Culture. The Task Force objectives include gathering extensive data from our diverse WashU communities – including those who have experienced harassment and other forms of mistreatment. Informed by leading external consultants, the findings of each Task Force will focus our priorities for the years to come. Advancing inclusive leadership principles, ensuring that everyone on campus knows how to report gender harassment and sexual misconduct, and improving our reporting processes are anticipated areas of focus.

These priorities are directly aligned with the mission of the Action Collaborative and will ensure that WashU continues its work toward creating environments where harassment is prevented and civility and respect for all people are promoted, each and every day.



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