

# Changing the Dialogue and Thinking on Campus Regarding Sexual Harassment through a University-level Workshop Series for Academic Leaders, Staff, and Faculty

## Moving the Needle Parts I and II

RIT

*Sexual Harassment of Women* Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine

### NASEM Report on Sexual Harassment

In 2016, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) assembled a committee to conduct a study on the impact of sexual harassment in academia on the career advancement of women in the scientific, technical, and medical workforce. Consensus report was released in June 2018 (<http://sites.nationalacademies.org/shstudy/index.htm>):

- Extensive report on improving the culture and climate in academic sciences, engineering, medicine.
- Consequences of experience with sexual harassment can lead to reduced motivations, declined productivity, hindered learning, and career changes.
- Identified key findings on the causes and impacts of sexual harassment, and recommendations (policies, strategies, practices) to address and prevent it.

### It's the Culture

The 2018 report on sexual harassment outlines three forms of sexual harassment:

1. **Gender Harassment** (sexist behavior such as remarks, hostilities, objectification, exclusion or marginalization)
2. **Unwanted Sexual Attention** (verbal or physical sexual advances)
3. **Sexual Coercion** (preferably treatment conditioned on sexual activity)

Gender harassment is the most common form of sexual harassment. Repeated incidences of gender harassment can have consequences as significant as single incidences of sexual coercion. And when gender harassment is tolerated in an environment, it opens the door for more aggressive and egregious behaviors.

**ADVANCE RIT**  
Reimagining our Careers and Campus Culture

### NSF AdvanceRIT Project (#1209115)

GOAL: Increase representation and advancement of women faculty. Funded in 2012, \$3.8 million received to date

AdvanceRIT Project Includes:

- Connectivity Series
- Connect Grants & Partnership Grants
- Implicit Bias Education Workshops
- Allies and Advocates Program
- NSF Faculty Data Indicators
- Dual Career Assistance Program
- Salary Equity Study & Dissemination
- Social science research – women of color and deaf and hard of hearing women faculty, lived experiences

Program achievements can be found at: <https://www.rit.edu/nsfadvance/advance-rit-project-outcomes>



"Reimagining our Careers and Campus Culture"

Reshape institutional culture and practice to promote a more inclusive and equitable working and learning environment at RIT while supporting the resilience, conviction, and courage of women faculty.

AdvanceRIT is now embedded within the Office of the Provost!

### Campus Workshops

AdvanceRIT workshops focus on retention and advancement of faculty as well as organizational learning and development. From 2012 - 2019, we offered 50 unconscious bias-related events with a total of 500 unique women attendees and 350 unique men attendees. Examples of offerings include:

- Six large-scale annual workshops by the Michigan Players from the University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT), focused on departmental climate, faculty search, promotion & tenure deliberations, campus inclusion for students, **sexual harassment**, and student mental health concerns – each workshop explores power, privilege and unconscious bias.
- Four years of annual **bystander awareness & action** workshops, often including various forms of theater offered to faculty, staff, and academic leaders at college-level and university-level events. Collaborators are RIT's Diversity Theater <https://www.rit.edu/diversity/diversity-theater> and Maureen Scully, U Mass, Boston.
  - See details on "Supporting a College-level Environment that Values Civility and Respect through Annual Bystander Awareness and Action Workshops" (poster XXXXXX).
- Software Engineering Workshops were offered for various audiences (first year students, design team coaches, faculty) within RIT's Golisano College of Computing and Information Sciences. Workshops focus on "Creating a Vibrant Learning Environment within Software Engineering". Read about participation feedback and evaluation results [here](#).

Initiatives grounded in the work of AdvanceRIT have created momentum towards change in dialogue and thinking on campus regarding sexual harassment, including the 2019 university-level workshop series offered in close collaboration with the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) Players and UW Center for Evaluation & Research for STEM Equity (CERSE)

**M** CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON LEARNING AND TEACHING  
CRLT PLAYERS  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

### Moving the Needle Parts I and II 9-10 April 2019

#### Part I: Shifting the Conversation around Sexual Harassment

Partly research presentation, partly embodied case-study, and partly community conversation, Part I challenged participants to expand their understanding of what sexual harassment is, how it impacts individuals and communities, and what makes an environment prone to its presence. The session length was 2.5 hours. In it, participants worked together to:

- 1) Identify behaviors that constitute sexual harassment.
- 2) Discuss how those behaviors impact individuals and communities.
- 3) Reflect on ways an organization might develop a climate that is more resistant to sexual harassment.
- 4) Consider ways to support individuals who disclose a concern about sexual harassment.



#### Part II: Creating a Culture Resistant to Sexual Harassment

Building on introductory conversations about the widespread presence and consequences of sexual harassment on individuals and communities in higher education, Part II gave groups an opportunity to envision a different, more equitable future. Available to individuals who participated in Part I, participants engaged in communal responsibility by brainstorming concrete strategies their units could implement to attempt to shift their unit climate. Given the collaborative and iterative nature of the work, the session length was 3 hours. In this active, working session participants worked together to:

- 1) Remind themselves of key information about sexual harassment they were introduced to in Part I.
- 2) Clarify their understanding of the problem(s) of sexual harassment so that their brainstorming could be directed productively toward shifting climate.
- 3) Engage in design thinking exercises with the goal of disrupting their habitual patterns of thinking and interacting to enable innovative ideation around ways that units might cultivate organizational climates that were more resistant to sexual harassment.

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### Evaluation Outcomes

#### ATTENDANCE:

PART I: SHIFTING THE CONVERSATION AROUND SEXUAL HARASSMENT SESSION: 168 ATTENDEES  
PART II: CREATING A CULTURE RESISTANT TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT SESSION: 145 ATTENDEES  
In total, these sessions reached 181 unique individuals

#### Initial (Day-of) Survey Response Rates

Part I 137/168 = 82%  
Part II 109/145 = 75%

#### Follow-up Survey Response Rate

Part I 116/181 = 64%

#### Part I

Assistant Professor	9
Associate Professor	27
Associate/Staff	1
Full Professor	34
Full/Staff	4
Lecturer	7
Other	1
Staff/Admin	85
Grand Total	168

#### Part II

Assistant Professor	9
Associate Professor	29
Associate/Staff	1
Full Professor	27
Full/Staff	3
Lecturer	7
Other	1
Staff/Admin	68
Grand Total	145

Gender Women 104  
Men 64

Women 85  
Men 60

#### INITIAL SURVEY SUMMARY:

- There were strong increases in awareness around sexual harassment from Part I participation.
- Part II helped people think through how units can shift their cultures, and how cultures come about in units and institutions.
- There is more work for RIT to do in terms of leadership training, and broadly sharing easy to understand explicit guidelines and expectations around reporting processes.

#### FOLLOW-UP SURVEY SUMMARY (CONDUCTED 3 WEEKS LATER):

- Awareness of sexual harassment behaviors, impact, and factors that contribute to permissive cultures increased for about 83-90% of respondents.
- About 68-74% of respondents took action, by sharing with others, or doing something to shift org. culture, in the 3 weeks between the workshop and the survey.
- While most people agree that sexual harassment is not tolerated and would be investigated, about 34% feel that sexual harassers get away with it; 28% would be afraid to file a complaint
- There are areas for growth regarding creating a culture of reporting and action toward sexual harassers.

#### INTERESTING GROUP DIFFERENCES (CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS):

- Key differences were in norms regarding reporting.

	Women	Men	Chi Square Signif.
Sexual harassment is not tolerated in my unit.	27% Str. Agree	60% Str. Agree	P=.015
I would be afraid to file a sexual harassment complaint.	15% Str. Disagree	43% Str. Disagree	P=.003
Actions are being taken by my employer to prevent sexual harassment.	15% Str. Agree	37% Str. Agree	P=.056 (marginal)
Individuals who sexually harass others get away with it.	17% Str. Agree	3% Str. Agree	P=.068 (marginal)

#### DIFFERENCES FOUND BETWEEN AALANA AND NON-AALANA:

- A total of 47% of AALANA respondents (n=17) vs. 16% of non-AALANA reported that they now cared "a lot more" about the problem of sexual harassment culture (p=.017)
- A total of 24% of AALANA respondents vs 51% of non-AALANA strongly agreed, agreed, or were neutral about "I would be afraid to file a sexual harassment complaint." (p=.04)

#### ONE DIFFERENCE FOUND BETWEEN PEOPLE WITH MARGINALIZED SEXUAL ORIENTATION IDENTITIES AND HETEROSEXUALS:

A total of 50% of people with marginalized sexual orientation identities (n=6) vs 89% of heterosexual respondents strongly agreed, agreed, or were neutral about the statement: sexual harassment is not tolerated in my unit. (p=.006)

NOTE: ONLY SIX RESPONDENTS CLAIMED A SEXUAL ORIENTATION THAT IS MARGINALIZED IN OUR SOCIETY. CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS SHOULD BE INTERPRETED WITH CAUTION DUE TO A LOW N.

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