

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

Washington University in St. Louis

**Academic Medical Leadership Program for Physicians and Scientists**

**This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s):**

3. Leadership Education and Skill Development

**Description of Work:**

Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs Diana Gray, in collaboration with BJC Healthcare and Washington University's Olin School of Business, has developed the Academic Medical Leadership Program for Physicians and Scientists. The goals of this program intersect with the conclusion of the 2018 NASEM report in the belief that "strong and effective leaders at all levels in an organization are required to make system-wide changes to climate and culture in higher education, and that they play a significant role in establishing and maintaining an organization's culture and norms." One of the original objectives in developing this program was to foster executive skillsets in women faculty members in order to grow the number of women leaders at the School of Medicine. However, we believe that developing excellent leaders of all genders is critical to the future of the School and to the creation of a just culture and climate that reduces and prevents sexual harassment. This 72-classroom hour program traditionally runs from January to June and targets faculty who are rising or established leaders in order to educate and train them in executive leadership competencies while participating in a team-building cohort experience. Faculty members must be nominated and sponsored by their department chair or other senior supervisor. Participant enrollment is capped at approximately 30 individuals per year in order to maximize the small group and team-building experience. All participants are assigned to a team (5-6 teams/year) which chooses and develops, using the new knowledge and skills gained through the program, a health care or bioscience project that is ready for implementation by the end of the course. The program curriculum encompasses the following topics led by experts mostly from the WU Olin Business School: strategic planning and management, financial foundations, accelerating change transitions, operational excellence, negotiation, decision making using critical thinking, effective communication, conflict management, and wraps up with a session on leadership, power and politics in the same session as team projects are presented.

The program has been in progress since 2012, and it is evaluated each year by the directors and revisions made as necessary. The 8 hour session on effective communication was added in 2019 and one of the explicit goals was to better prepare all leaders but especially women leaders in oral and written communications to have maximum impact for career development. Implicit in this goal is the expectation that leaders who are better prepared for

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effective communications will more easily resolve conflict, be better mediators/negotiators and ultimately create cultures and climates that reduce the likelihood of sexual harassment. One entire 8-hour session is devoted to difficult conversations and skill building for conflict resolution and mediation. Another 8-hour session is devoted to education and skills development around negotiation. All of the sessions are reviewed and revised each year in order to maximize impact. As judged by participant and sponsor evaluations, this leadership program continues to be extremely successful and in demand. The class fills year after year despite the \$3700 price tag, which we consider a bargain compared to most academic medical leadership development programs.

**Website for further information (if applicable):** <https://facultyaffairs.med.wustl.edu/career-development/academic-medical-leadership-program-for-physicians-and-scientists/>

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