

**Year 3 Public Description of Work for  
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

**National Association of Graduate-Professional Students**

**Leadership Development Training**

**Relevant Rubric Areas:**

Leadership Education and Skill Development

**Background:**

Graduate and professional students often work in an isolating environment and depend greatly on support and guidance from faculty members and their advisor - both inside and outside of their area of work. This power dynamic, coupled with the isolating environment in which many graduate and professional students work, make them particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment from faculty. In fact, graduate students are nearly twice as likely to have been sexually assaulted by their advisor or another faculty member as their undergraduate counterparts, with nearly 25% of all reported cases falling into this category.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, with how closely graduate and professional students are often expected to work with faculty members, the impact on their work can be tremendous. Compounding this problem even further, significantly less attention is given and fewer resources allocated to help graduate students resolve these problems when they occur. It is therefore critical that graduate students engage their communities, bring attention to these issues, and advocate for policies which will help to resolve them.

The National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) represents over 250,000 students at institutions across the country, and is committed to addressing these issues by training our members to be leaders at their own institutions and to advocate for changes in policies at both an institutional and national level. It is our objective to train a network of effective graduate student advocates and leaders; (1) to amplify grad student voices nationwide and advocate for policy changes that will reduce the incidence of sexual harassment against graduate and professional students, and (2) to effect positive change at their home institutions and in their everyday lives. Pursuing this second mission, we hosted a series of workshops over the past year which provided our members with resources and training on preventing sexual harassment on a more individual scale.

**Summary of work: Leadership Development Training**

As part of our efforts to develop graduate student leaders on campuses nationwide, we have hosted a series of workshops and presentations over the past year, as part of our annual Leadership Summit, as well as our new "Ongoing Leadership Development Training", which will now run year round.

We would like to highlight two of these events in particular: the first, our leadership conference of August 2021; the second, our February leadership development workshop.

Our 2021 Leadership Summit featured a full day of programming on various aspects of leadership. One of our featured speakers was Alyx McLuckie, Research and Well-being Coordinator at Ohio University, who spoke on "Stewarding Care: An Introduction to Trauma-Informed Care". In her talk, Alyx discussed the main points of trauma-informed care, as well as examples of how it could be applied in the life of a graduate student. Also featured during the summit was Violetta Soboleva, Fulbright Scholar at Syracuse University, who spoke on "How I Explored that Everyone Is a Leader Even without Knowing It", focused on how everyone can have an impact on those around them.

---

<sup>1</sup> American Association of Universities (2020). Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct.

## Year 3 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Our February leadership development workshop was run by Phylliceia Brown, who discussed "Gut Leadership", touching on emotional awareness and resilience. During her presentation and the following discussion, she worked with attendees on how they can leverage their intuition and insights to maintain better awareness of potentially bad situations around them, as well as better manage themselves during these situations.

During these events, our goals are to provide attendees with high-quality resources and skills training for them to take back to their home institutions, as well as to instill a sense of personal empowerment in our attendees. We want to not only equip them with the skills necessary to effect change, but also to encourage them to actively use and develop them. We believe that in order for these workshops to be effective, attendees must believe that what they are doing will make a difference. It is for this reason that we include talks on "how everyone is a leader" and encourage the sharing of stories by those in the workshops, so that attendees can see that these skills can, when properly applied, make significant impacts in their communities, both individually and to the climate at large.

### Next Steps:

NAGPS will continue to work with our members to provide programming which provides useful and high quality resources for them. We are continuing to carry out these leadership development seminars over the course of the year, and will be following up with both attendees and our membership in general. With attendees, we solicit their opinions of the specific workshop as well as if and how they may have utilized what they have learned. We will also be checking in with our membership in general at the end of this year with what we have done and learned through these events, and solicit feedback on how to improve the seminars and how we can better support our members. We will continue to educate, equip, and encourage our members to improve the climate at their home institutions, as well as engage with our partner organizations in order to continually improve this program.

**Website for further information:** <http://nagps.org/legislative-action-days/>

**Point of Contact:** Thad Potter

**Email Address for Point of Contact:** president@NAGPS.org