

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

Wellesley College

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training with Bystander Intervention

This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s):

Audience-specific anti-sexual harassment education

Bystander intervention programs

Description of Work:

Background

During the 2020-2021 academic year, Wellesley College developed a new, comprehensive training program designed to educate its students, faculty and staff on sexually harassing behavior that is prohibited by the College's policies and procedures. The goal of the program was to increase awareness of: 1) the problem of sexual harassment; 2) the College's expectations for behavior among members of its community; 3) ways to prevent sexual harassment; and 4) options for response to sexual harassment if it occurs. For additional information please review Wellesley's Year 1 Description of Work at <https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/action-collaborative-on-preventing-sexual-harassment-in-higher-education/repository?Organization=Wellesley%20College>.

Current Status of Work

During the 2021-2022 academic year, Wellesley College continued the sexual harassment education training program identified above in person and remotely. Remote training was incorporated into the program due to the pandemic. Monthly trainings were conducted via Zoom and typically involved 10-25 participants. Participants were educated on changes to Title IX and state laws, Wellesley's policies regarding sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, and resources they can access on and off campus. Small virtual breakout rooms were used to provide participants an opportunity to discuss questions regarding sexual harassment training and practice bystander intervention skills to prevent and/or address sexual harassment. Additionally, Bystander Intervention training was added to the existing sexual harassment education program during the 2021-2022 academic year because of feedback received from its community members that they did not feel equipped to address observations or personal experiences with sexual harassment for a variety of reasons such as comfortability, power dynamics between the persons involved, and lack of resources. Wellesley College believes it is everyone's responsibility to make sure that our Community is a welcoming and inclusive place to study and work.

The purpose of the addition of Bystander Intervention to our training program is to educate and train all members of the community to prevent or help in harmful situations such as potential sexual assault, binge drinking, and harassment or unwanted comments of a sexual, racist,

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transphobic, etc. nature. The goal of the training is to create a safe and supportive educational institution and workplace through awareness, attitudes, and action.

To achieve the goals identified above, Wellesley College identified a core groups of allies among students, faculty and staff who were willing to engage in one hour or 90 minute trainings offered monthly from October 2021 through April 2022. The expanded training program was provided to the following groups:

- Resident assistants and house presidents;
- Confidential resources (counseling, health services, and religious life);
- Sexual Health Educators;
- Student government;
- Student Athletes;
- Coaches and assistant coaches;
- Honor Code Council; and
- Various faculty and staff.

The expanded training programs educated community members on how to employ the 4 D's (direct, delegate, distract and delay) in a manner that focused on the safety of everyone involved. Community members were provided an opportunity to practice how to deescalate potentially harmful situations, and address and disarm peers and colleagues that may be using microaggressions or making other inappropriate comments in the classroom and/or workplace via role-playing and hypothetical case scenarios. Participants were able to discuss situations they regularly faced in the classroom or workplace and obtain resources and skills on how to address them. Participants brainstormed potential responses to harmful comments, practiced de-escalation techniques, and learned about confidential resources they could go to on and off campus to get additional help.

Adding the bystander intervention to the sexual harassment training was helpful as it provided the logical next step to address or prevent sexual harassment. The sexual harassment training program which now included bystander intervention was initially scheduled for 60 minutes, however, I quickly learned that additional time was needed and lengthened the training to 90 minutes. In the future, I recommend either breaking the training up into two sessions or making it a 2-hour training because in the beginning it felt rushed to get through both topics in one hour, especially when questions and role playing resulted in robust discussions.

Next Steps

Wellesley College will use surveys and conduct focus group discussions with stakeholders to assess the efficacy of the training, and gather additional information regarding ongoing gaps in knowledge and skills. The surveys and focus group discussions will be used to improve future trainings. During the next academic year, Wellesley will use a train the trainer model to continue to introduce the expanded program to its community. The community members identified above will engage in a series of train the trainer programs so that they can educate and train their peers and colleagues. These future peer-led trainings will create a broader impact on the College's culture by deepening the community's understanding of the problem with sexual harassment and by developing community members' bystander intervention skills to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and other forms of mistreatment.

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The sexual harassment with bystander intervention training will continue to evolve and grow. Participants will need the opportunity to address complex such as learning to recognize when microaggressions or harmful comments may be occurring, and understanding how power differentials may impact a person's ability or desire to come forward or intervene. These discussions have to continue to occur throughout the whole Wellesley community in a safe and inclusive manner.

Anyone interested in learning more about Wellesley College's sexual harassment training plan may contact the College's Director of Nondiscrimination Initiatives/Title IX Coordinator Dee Carter using the contact information below.

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