

2024 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Santa Barbara City College

Implementation of Pre-Departure Trainings for Field Trips

Relevant Rubric Area(s):

1. Prevention: Audience-specific Anti-sexual Harassment Education
2. Prevention: Identifying and Reinforcing Community Values
3. Response: Providing Anonymous and Non-mandatory Reporting Resources and Tools

Description of Work:

In an effort to continue to strengthen the sexual harassment prevention efforts and to broaden the education efforts around available reporting resources at the institution, pre-departure meetings for field trips and overnight student club events in STEM fields have been implemented this year.

Previous initiatives shared by other Action Collaborative member institutions on prevention and response efforts during field research activities, as well as feedback from student field experiences at Santa Barbara City College provided the background to initiate these efforts. While the initiatives shared by other Action Collaborative member institutions were mostly focused on research activities carried out by graduate students and post-docs, we adapted these interventions to our institutional setting, focusing on field experiences for undergraduate students.

The initial roll-out of this effort at Santa Barbara City College in Summer 2023 focused on one STEM department offering significant numbers of field experiences for students, mostly in the form of day and overnight field trips. Focusing on one department initially provided an opportunity to pilot this effort on a smaller scale, making adjustments as necessary, before rolling it out more broadly across more STEM disciplines.

The project was initiated by the Title IX and Gender Equity Office in late Spring 2023, drawing from some of their experiences giving department- and unit-specific sexual harassment prevention trainings across campus, in collaboration with the Office of the STEM Dean of Educational Programs. The corresponding Department Chair and faculty leadership in the targeted field experiences were invited for conversations around the goals of the project, the content of the proposed trainings, their potential value and impact, and the logistics around when and how to offer them. National Academies Action Collaborative resources proved incredibly valuable in this process with regards to providing the background on a national level, the associated research pointing to the need and value of this type of training, and aligning it with the bigger picture. Including National Academies material in these outreach efforts proved very helpful in terms of generating broad buy-in and support at the departmental level.

During the initial project implementation phase, overnight field trips were targeted due to the more complex nature of these events, compared to day field trips for a laboratory course

2024 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

component. Due to these overnight field trips including faculty, staff, and students, the trainings were integrated as a separate module into existing pre-departure meetings that all participants are required to attend. In some cases, particularly for field trips with larger numbers of participants, several of these pre-departure meetings are held to accommodate varying availability among participants, which in turn requires flexibility on the part of the trainer to present these modules potentially multiple times.

In alignment with the 2018 National Academies report, these pre-departure trainings are delivered by qualified trainers with the Title IX and Gender Equity Office and are tailored specifically to the participants in the particular field trip, usually consisting of cross-constituency groups of faculty, staff, and undergraduate students. The aim is not only to clearly communicate behavioral expectations and specify consequences for failing to meet those expectations, but also to inform participants about specific reporting resources available while out in the field. Some of these reporting resources provide options for anonymous reports, as was outlined in previous Descriptions of Work on the institution's "Report a Concern" process and associated form ([2020 description](#) and [2022 description](#)). The trainings include aspects of gender harassment, as well as specific examples of potential scenarios encountered during overnight field trips. Also based on recommendations of the 2018 National Academies report, these trainings are conducted live and in-person only and are designed to reinforce shared community values.

Since the initial implementation of these trainings for overnight field trips, and with the inclusion of feedback from the initial participants, the corresponding pre-departure meetings have since been expanded to include overnight student club events. As additional champions for this work are being developed at the faculty and staff levels, next steps for the expansion of this project are to broaden its reach by including additional STEM departments offering overnight field trips or overnight student club events. Feedback from department leadership and training participants, and regular review of reports received that are based on field trips, will allow the Title IX and Gender Equity Office in collaboration with the Office of the Dean of Educational Programs to further refine and expand this work. Anticipated next steps are the inclusion of off-campus field trips that do not include overnight stays, in an effort to continue to strengthen the prevention and response efforts for these types of academic environments at the institution in alignment with recommendations from the 2018 National Academies report.

Website for further information (if applicable): <https://www.sbccc.edu/titleix/>

Point of Contact Name: Jens-Uwe Kuhn

Email Address for Point of Contact: jkuhn@sbccc.edu