

**University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Commitment Statement in support of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

April 9, 2019

[The National Academies report on \*Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine \(2018\)\*](#) found that between 20 and 50 percent of women students and more than 50 percent of women faculty and staff experienced sexually harassing behavior while in academia. Research demonstrates that sexual harassment undermines the professional and educational attainment and mental and physical health of people of all genders. It also shows that these consequences are not limited to those experiencing it directly; but that bystanders – people of all genders – who experience ambient harassment in their work or education environment are also affected and this in turn affects organizations as employees disengage, withdraw, and leave their work so as not to become the next target. The [\*Sexual Harassment of Women\*](#) report concludes that system-wide changes to the culture and climate in higher education are needed and provides a roadmap for higher education to make these changes.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is among the original 37 public land-grant universities established by the Morrill Act of 1862. We are charged by our state to enhance the lives of people in Illinois, across the nation, and around the world through our leadership in learning, discovery, engagement, and economic development. In order to deliver on our founding promise of open access to the opportunities presented by transformational educational experiences, we must be a community that is truly diverse, inclusive and respectful of all who join us. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and we must actively work to ensure that our policies, practices and standards of conduct offer our students, staff and faculty the protection to pursue their studies and careers. We have an obligation to act without excuse and without delay.

To advance efforts to prevent and effectively respond to sexual harassment, Illinois is joining other institutions and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to form an *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*. This Action Collaborative will facilitate partnerships and joint action on addressing and preventing sexual harassment. Together, with the other institutional members of the Action Collaborative, we aim to achieve targeted, collective action toward evidence-based policies and practices at the individual and systems levels for addressing and preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a culture of civility and respect. The four goals of the Action Collaborative are to:

- Raise awareness about sexual harassment and how it occurs, the consequences of sexual harassment, and the organizational characteristics and recommended approaches that can prevent it.

- Share and elevate evidence-based institutional policies and strategies to reduce and prevent sexual harassment.
- Contribute to setting the research agenda and gather and apply research results across institutions.
- Develop a standard for measuring progress toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is proud to join our higher educational peers across the country in supporting the goals of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*.

