

University of California, Merced Commitment Statement in support of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

April 5, 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 mission of the University of California, Merced is to create new knowledge and generate solutions through excellence in research and a community of inquiry; to effectively share that knowledge through educational experiences marked by academic distinction and a commitment to student success; and to serve the public good in a manner that supports a diverse and inclusive community – locally, nationally, and globally.

When we live our values of diversity, equity and inclusion, we do so boldly, daring to look forward and backward, imagining the demands of the 21st century and the importance of diversity, equity and inclusivity in meeting our mission. Sexual harassment is and has always been antithetical to our values. It must be eliminated. We are committed to actively creating inclusive and respectful spaces, whether in the classroom, laboratory, dining center, office space or the field. We are committed to rooting out sexual harassment in our learning and working communities through examination and implementation of effective structures, policy, practices, training and accountability measures. We are committed to communicating often and vociferously that sexual harassment is not welcome in our communities, and swiftly stopping the behavior when we know it is happening.

To advance efforts to prevent and effectively respond to sexual harassment, University of California, Merced 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 California, Merced hereby commits to support the goals of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*.**