

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment
Community Engagement Plan

Summary: The University of Tennessee is committed to addressing the underlying issues that allow sexual harassment to exist and persist in the academic environment.

On August 20, 2019, Chancellor Donde Plowman charged a Working Group to identify recommendations in the National Academies Publication [Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine \(2018\)](#)¹ on which to focus. Per the charge, the University of Tennessee will focus our immediate concern on the most vulnerable members of our academic community, graduate and undergraduate students. Long term, the work will likely be expanded to the experiences of faculty and staff. In order to ensure successful implementation, the Working Group recommended establishing a UTK Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment (UTK Action Collaborative).

The UTK Action Collaborative will align campus initiatives to the work of the National Academies Action Collaborative. The UTK Action Collaborative will manage the successful implementation and execution of the working group's recommendations.

The UTK Action Collaborative will implement the following recommendations:

- Create diverse, inclusive, and respectful environments;
- Move beyond legal compliance to address culture and climate;
- Improve transparency and accountability;
- Diffuse the hierarchical and dependent relationship between trainees and faculty; and
- Provide support for the target.

On October 4, 2019, Chancellor Plowman accepted the recommendations and the draft action items of the Working Group.

The University of Tennessee Community Engagement plan includes:

- (a) Establish of the UTK Action Collaborative with membership representation to include (scheduled November 4, 2019):
 - (i) A representative from each College, appointed by the Dean, to serve a 3-year term, which will count toward the faculty member's Service requirement;
 - (ii) A representative from Student Government Association, Graduate Student Senate, and Faculty Senate will be appointed by the respective body annually;
 - (iii) A representative from Human Resources, Office of Provost, Graduate School, Office of Title IX and the Office of Equity and Diversity will be appointed by the respective office to serve a three-year term; and
 - (iv) Title IX Coordinator to serve as chair.

¹ National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24994>.

- (b) Convene the UTK Action Collaborative to develop a strategic plan, timelines, and priorities for implementation of the Working Group recommendations (update due November 30, 2019).
- (c) Engage Constituents
 - (i) Monthly Meeting of the UTK Action Collaborative (starting November 4, 2019)
 - (ii) Development of VOLS A.C.T. faculty, staff, and Graduate Student focused active bystander program (initiated Fall 2019)
 - (iii) Inclusion of VOLS A.C.T. training in homegrown Mandatory Reporter Training and Annual Faculty/Staff Communications (initiated Fall 2019)
 - (iv) Presentation to Counsel of Deans (complete 8/15/2019)
 - (v) Presentation to Commission for Women (complete 10/3/2019)
 - (vi) Presentation to Commission for Blacks (TBD)
 - (vii) Presentation to Commission for LGBTQ People (TBD)
 - (viii) Annual Town Hall Meetings (Spring 2020)
 - (ix) Focus Group Graduate Students (TBD)
 - (x) Faculty Senate (TBD)
 - (xi) Faculty Senate Executive Committee (TBD)
 - (xii) Women's Administrators Group (scheduled 3/24/2019)
 - (xiii) UTK Action Collaborative to work with College representative to create and engage with college department heads (Department Head Institute).
 - (xiv) Action Collaborative representatives will meet with Vice Chancellor for Communications and Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Engagement to develop messages and use various media tools to convey information to the broader campus community (scheduled 10/21/2019)