AN ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACH TO REDUCING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

A toolkit for academic departments

Why this project?
We needed a more systematic approach to preventing harassment in the academic department setting; one that went beyond workshops and training. The challenge was how to create a tool and process that are both comprehensive and manageable for a busy department. Departments requested a roadmap, with customizable options but also concrete, practical information about how to implement change strategies. This toolkit is the result.

What is it?
The toolkit moves a working group through a one-semester process that will produce a robust, detailed, actionable set of recommendations to departmental leadership for endorsement, support, and resources.

Who is it for?
Decision-makers in academic departments. It helps them identify a cross-functional project team to move through the process and create the recommendations.

How does it work?
A working group meets every two weeks for one semester and works through each section, or step, of the toolkit. By the end of the semester, they have a set of specific, actionable recommendations for leadership.

What are the steps?
Step 1: Identifying champions and allies
Step 2: Looking at data (understanding existing data and considering collecting further data)
Step 3: Assessing individual knowledge, skills, and understanding
Step 4: Getting on the same page regarding interpersonal relationships
Step 5: Analyzing and improving community events
Step 6: Bolstering policies, feedback structures, and accountability
Step 7: Using existing media and communications to best advantage
Step 8: Creating safe field placements and internships
Step 9: Improving labs and classrooms
Step 10: Taking advantage of on-campus opportunities
Step 11: Ensuring you have equitable recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion practices

How do we know if it works?
Process evaluation: Did the working group finish the toolkit? Are there recommendations? Did the Chair, Dean, or other leadership endorse it?
Outcome evaluation: Compare pre and post climate data, and the degree to which implementation mirrors the recommendations. Longer term results such as reduction in harassment will be harder to ascribe to the toolkit and we welcome advice.