



Section 5. Reflection Questions for Individual Action

To be clear, the responsibility to create inclusive and equitable work and learning environments is on those individuals and entities with power and influence. Individuals who are the targets of offensive and harmful behavior – often, students, early career professionals, women, people of color, and those within the LGBTQ+ community – should not be expected to take action to protect themselves from sexual, gender, and race-based harassment and discrimination. But incidents happen, even with the best policies. Knowing how to protect yourself is an important tool, when others fail in their responsibilities. The following questions are only intended to encourage individuals to reflect on what they know to be true about their institution’s or society’s policies and practices related to preventing sexual, gender, and race-based harassment. Individuals are encouraged to review the questions below and consider what they may want to learn more about—and whether they want to offer their perspectives to the actions that others must take to build a more inclusive community.

- Do you know where to find your college or university’s written policy(ies) regarding expected conduct by members of the college or university community?
- Have you read the policy(ies)?
- Are the policy(ies) readily accessible and are their core concepts and key provisions available in user friendly formats?
- Do the policy(ies) identify specific examples of professional, ethical, inclusive, and equitable conduct as well harmful and undesirable conduct that are relevant and relatable to the activities you engage in at the college or university? If not, do you want to consider working with student representatives, faculty and leaders in your department to contact the office or committee that drafted the policy(ies) with suggested changes?
- Do you know what options are available, should you need to raise a concern on your own behalf or if you become aware of problematic behavior in your department? Is there an option for informal resolution? For anonymous reporting? Is confidential guidance available on the options for reporting and resolution, as well as the pros and cons of different options? If not, how can you (and do you want to) work collaboratively and constructively with a range of stakeholders, including affected groups, all implicated roles, policymakers, and subject matter experts to enhance availability and accessibility?
- Does your college or university or society offer bystander training? Does it have or plan to develop an “ally” program to raise awareness, take preventative measures, and provide support in the moment to targets of harassment? If not, do you want to consider working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders, including affected groups, all implicated roles, policymakers, and subject matter experts to enhance availability and accessibility?
- Does your department encourage peer intervention and peer-to-peer accountability with effective guidance, tools, and policy? If not, do you want to consider working within your department to make such actions the norm?

- Do you know what process, if any, would be undertaken if you were the subject of an alleged ethical or professional misconduct incident?
- Are there mentoring opportunities within your department? If so, are they actually accessible in a way that seems fair and equitable? If not, do you want to consider working within your department to make such opportunities available?
- If you want to engage in identifying and addressing shortcomings, who would you approach to explore the possibilities? If your society, institution, or department has an ombudsperson or other confidential advisor, that is a good place to start. If not, consider talking with others with whom you feel an affinity and trust to see if they or others they may know can offer guidance on how you can get involved.
 - A Diversity and Equity Office, Student Affairs Office, Graduate Dean’s Office, College Dean or Department Head’s Office, General Counsel’s Office, or Human Resources Office can also be a good source of information and referrals to other resources. Remember that these offices represent the society or institution—not the individual. However, it should be in the institution’s or society’s and individual’s mutual interest to identify system issues and address them before a problem arises. So engaging them proactively in advance of an incident, with a collaborative systems improvement aim, can be an effective means of driving change.
- Even if you don’t feel comfortable engaging to address systemic problems, knowledge is always helpful—so make sure you know about the policies and resources that already exist and make the most of them. National resources are also available in Part Six.