

**Interrupting Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment at USC:
Recommendations by the Joint Provost/Academic Senate Task Force on
Sexual Harassment and Gender Violence**

FINAL REPORT

March 25, 2019

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Executive Summary

The Joint Provost/Academic Senate Task Force on Sexual Harassment was formed in the Summer of 2018. Comprised of faculty, staff, and students, the Task Force was charged with developing recommendations for cultivating a culture and environment at USC in which sexual harassment is not allowed to persist, where reporting of harassment is encouraged and expected, and where reports and instances of harassment are handled appropriately. The Task Force placed special emphasis on three areas: **gender harassment, faculty mentoring and supervisor issues, and communication and transparency**. Separate subcommittees of the Task Force were created to address each of these areas. This report presents the Task Force's recommendations for consideration by the leadership of the University of Southern California, particularly the provost's office and the Academic Senate. Despite the preparation of this report, the work of the Task Force is not done. This is perhaps the key conclusion of the report. As detailed, we recommend creating a standing Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment, comprised of faculty, staff and student leaders. As imagined, the committee would work alongside a proposed new Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention. With oversight, authority, and substantial resources, we are confident that the new committee and Vice President would significantly enhance the university's capacity to continue improving its culture and policies related to sexual misconduct prevention, identification, reporting, and response.

Recommendations

- 1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAST AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE**
 - Commit to Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of All Members of the University Community
 - Integrate Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment Prevention Efforts into the Educational, Research, and Service Mission of the University
- 2. CODIFY VALUES AND PROMOTE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**
 - Transform Cultural Norms
- 3. IMPLEMENT RELEVANT, ACCESSIBLE, AND TRANSPARENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**
 - Review and Revise Existing Policies and Procedures
 - Develop New Policies
 - Develop Procedures and Standards of Behavior
- 4. INSTITUTE AND EVALUATE AN ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE SYSTEM**
 - Formalize the Current Practice of Alternative Intervention
 - Enhance Supports and Services
- 5. STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND GENDER HARASSMENT**
 - Enhance Capacity by Strengthening Organizational Infrastructure
 - Raise Awareness through Education and Training
 - Enhance Data Collection, Reporting, and Use
 - Reform Admissions and Human Resources Practices

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The Joint Provost/Academic Senate Task Force on Sexual Harassment was formed in the Summer of 2018. Comprised of faculty, staff, and students, the Task Force was charged with developing recommendations for cultivating a culture and environment at USC in which sexual harassment is not allowed to persist, where reporting of harassment is encouraged and expected, and where reports and instances of harassment are handled appropriately. The Task Force placed special emphasis on three areas: **gender harassment, faculty mentoring and supervisor issues,** and **communication and transparency**. Separate subcommittees of the Task Force were created to address each of these areas.

This report presents the Task Force's recommendations for consideration by the leadership of the University of Southern California, particularly the provost's office and the Academic Senate. Recommendations were developed largely during the Fall 2018 semester as a result of both Subcommittee and full Task Force meetings and based on review of relevant data, research, reports, and other publications. The recommendations were heavily informed by the review and recommendations made by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine in their report, "Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine" (edited by Paula A. Johnson, Sheila E. Widnall, and Frazier F. Benya) and by the organizational change literature, particularly concepts and empirical findings related to stages of change.

The co-chairs of the Task Force consolidated the recommendations developed by the subcommittees into a single set of recommendations in order to reduce redundancies and to increase the coherence of the recommendations and this report. We shared drafts of the consolidated recommendations with members of the Task Force, the Executive Board of the Academic Senate, and the full Academic Senate before finalizing. The recommendations are intended to encourage university leadership to assume responsibility for the safety and well-being of all its members and to support university administration and faculty in their efforts to change the culture and environment at USC.

Given the complex nature of sexual misconduct and gender harassment, we formulated multidisciplinary recommendations and strategies organized around five distinct but complimentary areas. We appreciate the scope and complexity of our recommendations. We also appreciate the importance of engaging disparate and numerous constituencies from across the university in the next stages of vetting and deliberation of the recommendations, and in planning for implementation of recommendations that are ultimately adopted. To this end, gleaned from the recommendations, we offer considerations and priority actions for each recommendation.

Recommendations

1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAST AND LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Commit to Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of All Members of the University Community

To effectively interrupt sexual misconduct and gender harassment at USC, the university must take considerable action and invest time, effort, and resources. As an essential first step, demonstrating that the university is fully committed to change and to “doing things differently,” the Task Force recommends that the university explicitly commits to ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the university community. We also strongly recommend that university leadership—including the Board of Trustees, the President, and the Provost—offer a public apology to the university community for failing to keep all its members safe in the past. Thereafter, we recommend regularly disseminating a statement on the university's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the university community.^[2] As a founding member of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's (NASEM) ‘Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education,’ USC will be required to develop and disseminate a public commitment statement that will serve as the official public record of institution joining the Action Collaborative. USC can demonstrate leadership on the issue of sexual misconduct and gender harassment by developing a statement that goes beyond the disciplines of sciences, engineering and medicine and that goes beyond the requirements of the Action Collaborative.

Integrate Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment Prevention Efforts into the Educational, Research, and Service Mission of the University

In order to facilitate widespread change and change that is sustained, the Task Force recommends that the university views and approaches efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of its community as integral to its core identity and mission. For example, content on sexual misconduct and harassment prevention can be incorporated into programs, courses and coursework; faculty and students can engage in the building and dissemination of empirical knowledge on sexual misconduct and gender harassment; services and supports provided by university staff that are designed to enhance safety and well-being can be developed, tested and implemented in and beyond our community. For better or worse, USC is in a somewhat unique position to demonstrate its core values and resolve, and to provide leadership in the area of sexual misconduct and gender harassment prevention. As it has with key initiatives, we hope the university seizes upon this opportunity to bring about transformational change at USC and around the globe.

2. TRANSFORM CULTURAL NORMS BY CODIFYING VALUES AND PROMOTING STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Transform Cultural Norms

Current sexual misconduct and gender harassment policies of the university operate largely in the context of legal compliance, that is, doing what is *minimally* required by the law. For instance, the Office of Equity and Diversity, with the Title IX coordinator, oversee reporting processes and investigations, and university administration is then consulted for determine and implementing sanctions. We must go beyond mere compliance to change the culture of USC to one that is proudly proactive, transparent and accountable. Simply put, the university must set the highest of standards for itself and faculty, not because it is required to do so, but because it

has *chosen* to do so. This will require conducting a more thorough review of policies and procedures than the one carried out by the Joint Task Force. We believe that it will also require engaging administration, faculty, staff and students in a serious conversation about the values of the university and standards of conduct that we expect all members of our community to uphold. To facilitate this process, we recommend condensing our values and standards in our policies and procedures, supplemented by dissemination to disparate audiences and constituencies, including those that may be considered by administration as inconsequential or “fringe” (such as *Concerned Faculty of USC*), using a wide array of strategies. It is imperative to acknowledge that widespread culture change takes time and that a “one size fits all” strategy will be inadequate for transforming cultural norms and for sustaining change. Accordingly, our subsequent recommendations are intentionally designed to target different aspects and elements of our university community and system, both formal (e.g., policies, procedures and infrastructure) and informal (e.g., standards, norms, culture, and climate).

3. IMPLEMENT RELEVANT, ACCESSIBLE, AND TRANSPARENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Review and Revise Existing Policies and Procedures

Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of Title IX and OED offices in adjudication and discipline of sexual violence and sexual harassment cases is essential, we believe, for the university to more effectively address sexual misconduct and gender harassment at USC. We strongly recommend that the university’s sexual misconduct and harassment policies be critically reviewed yearly for the next three years and then every three years. We propose that a new standing committee (see Recommendation #5) assume responsibility for overseeing refinement of the policies and procedures as needed, being sure to include diverse constituencies in their development and vetting. We also strongly recommend that the new standing committee provide leadership or oversight of efforts to raise awareness about and understanding of changes to policies and procedure, education, training, and supports.^[4]

Along with a general recommendation to initiate a comprehensive and multi-year review process, we offer other recommendations pertaining specifically to the revision of several existing policies and procedures, as detailed below.

Policy on Responsible Employee Requirements. USC policy currently requires all faculty to report protected class misconduct, including sex/gender harassment.^[2] Within the science and medical fields, in particular, this policy may inadvertently discourage reporting if trainees are concerned about the implications for their own careers and that of a faculty member's when the offense is unwelcome but not perceived as egregious. Designating only Chair-level faculty and other senior administrators as Responsible Employees would encourage discussion and identification of prohibited conduct amongst students, staff and faculty, and ultimately reporting. Note that this revised policy does not imply that individuals must report incidents of sexual harassment to their chair or other administrative supervisor, only that all faculty should no longer be designated as Responsible Employees. Additionally, the revised policy would allow for anyone to self-report and for others to report using a variety of mechanisms in order to minimize existing barriers to reporting?

Policy on Intimate Relationships.^[5] Currently, disclosure of intimate relationships between faculty and students at USC is not required, but only strongly recommended: *“The University strongly recommends that such relationships generally be avoided.”*^[6] *If the*

relationship is nevertheless not avoided, the University strongly recommends that the faculty member disclose it..." (Section 6-I of the USC Faculty Handbook). We recommend revising the policy on intimate relationships^[3], such that it goes beyond compliance with state and federal laws. The policy should be designed to be consistent with other policies at USC regarding relationships. Finally, the policy should be consistent for all trainer/trainee relationships, regardless of the position of the trainer (e.g., faculty, lecturer, or teaching assistant) or trainee (e.g., undergraduate or graduate student, post-doctoral fellow, resident). Given the broad impact, this policy should be written after consultation with all stakeholders. In this regard, the task force considered two alternatives. Many task force members feel strongly that intimate relationships between trainers and trainees should be banned entirely, similar to the policy recently adopted at the University of Michigan (<https://record.umich.edu/articles/policy-prohibits-faculty-others-romantic-relationships-learners#.XG1os0v3tIY.mailto>). Other task force members feel that intimate relationships between trainers and trainees should be framed as a conflict of interest, similar to other professional conflicts of interest (see Section 3-G of the University Faculty Handbook). Accordingly, timely disclosure of such a relationship should be required of the faculty member, and a formal plan to manage the relationship should be submitted. Failure to disclose an intimate relationship or to comply with a management plan should constitute a violation of faculty policy and be punishable as such. Given the complexity of this issue, the task force did not reach a consensus. Therefore, we recommend that the proposed Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment should engage the university community to discuss these and other alternatives and to collectively develop a new policy on intimate relationships.

Develop New Policies

Along with revising existing policies and procedures, the Task Force recommends developing several new policies and related procedures. These include an explicit **Policy on Sexual Misconduct**^[4] and a **Policy on Bystander Responsibility and Support**. From an intersectional perspective and using gender neutral language, the new policies should clearly define sexual misconduct/gender harassment offenses (according to recent and upcoming updates from the Department of Education^[5]), delineate the process by which they are to be investigated, as well as how the outcomes of investigations are to be disseminated and follow up on.^[7] As with some other universities, we recommend instituting a policy requiring investigations to be completed within 60 business days, and decisions about sanctions to be made and disseminated within 40 days of completion of the investigation. Currently, investigations are perceived as lengthy, disrupting normal operations for both the faculty member as well as students and trainees for several months.

The Task Force also recommends developing a **Policy on Reporting of Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment**. To increase awareness and understanding of reports, as well as of reporting policies, procedures, and mechanisms related to sexual misconduct and gender harassment, we recommend instituting a policy requiring routine dissemination and discourse on changes to relevant policies, procedures, and mechanisms. For example, for faculty and staff, this could take the form of a series of written or mixed-media communications or trainings, or presentations and discussions at meetings for faculty, staff, deans, and leadership (e.g., departmental meetings and Academic Senate meetings). For students, this could take the form of addenda to student orientation and registration material or to course syllabi; it could also be addressed through discussion and dissemination of material in select courses, student meeting, or student events.

Develop Procedures and Standards of Behavior

Presented in or as a compliment to formal policies published in the USC Faculty Handbook, we recommend the development of procedures and standards of behavior designed to provide clear guidance as it relates to USC’s values, expectations and policies—particularly those pertaining to sexual misconduct and harassment prevention, identification, reporting, and response. The fear of sexual harassment charges should not discourage close professional ties between mentors and students/trainees. Recognizing that an individual’s background and perspective, subtlety and nuance of a situation, and context can powerfully influence how an action is understood and responded to, the Task Force identified several areas that appear to increase risk for actual or perceived sexual misconduct and harassment. Along with further exploration and articulation of expected standards of behavior, the Task Force recommends development of procedures and strategies for minimizing risk for sexual misconduct and harassment in the following areas as detailed below:

Professional behavior off-campus and off-hours. It is imperative that all faculty understand that they are expected to demonstrate professional behavior not only at USC during “working” hours, but also in other professional settings (e.g., conferences, field sites, and social events with trainees and junior colleagues) currently not included in the faculty handbook.^[6]

Advising and mentorship. Some graduate programs admit students without a commitment to a particular group or lab and offer rotations or other mechanisms to choose a mentor in the first year or two (pooled). Others admit to a specific group or lab (paired). ***Pooled admissions*** (not paired) may offer more protection for junior students who are not tied to a particular mentor. For programs that currently use paired admissions, it may be possible to build up a source of funds to support students in their first year or two. ***Co-advising*** offers a breadth of skills and provides checks and balances in the mentoring relationship. Using the model from MIT, one person is the research advisor and another assists with career mentoring in a more casual setting by checking in regularly. Pivotal in changing the culture of USC is to decouple mentorship relationships between graduate students and faculty from resources available to graduate students. For example, graduate students could be assigned two co-advisors so that the resources available to them are not solely dependent on one faculty member. Removing the weight of resources would also preemptively rebalance the power dynamic between faculty advisors and students, and in the case of possible harassment issues, reduce hesitation to report. Alternatively, a student can be jointly advised by their dissertation committee, which consists of at least three faculty members.

4. INSTITUTE AND EVALUATE AN ALTERNATIVE RESPONSE SYSTEM

Formalize the Current Practice of Alternative Intervention

USC should recognize different types of sexual misconduct and gender harassment and associated risk behaviors. The Task Force recommends providing responses tailored to the different types of offenses and behaviors. This approach, which is often referred to as an “alternative” or “differential response,” typically involves creating local and informal mechanisms to address less “severe” misconduct or harassment or, importantly, *risk*, for future misconduct or harassment. The university’s response to reports of sexual misconduct or gender harassment should consider the nature, quality, and impact of the conduct on the workplace/academic environment and the desired outcome of the affected parties. For isolated incidents of relatively less-extreme behavior and when appropriate, the Task Force recommends

implementing the Vanderbilt "cup of coffee"^[7] approach (or similar) in order to provide a response proportionate to the offense and to reduce risk for subsequent offenses. This is just one strategy that should be included in a wholistic system that provides alternative responses along a continuum. The system should consider responses not just for the perpetrator of misconduct or harassment, but also for victims and other affected by the misconduct or harassment. Along these lines, the Task Force recommends offering enhanced supports and services for students at minimum, as discussed below, and ideally for staff and faculty.

Enhance Supports & Services

Expand Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services. USC's Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) provide confidential therapy services for situations related to gender and power-based harm (such as sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking). Currently, RSVP provides supports to students. We recommend increasing funding for RSVP in order to expand services and supports for students who are victims of relationship and sexual violence, as well as to students' support systems. We also recommend exploring the benefit and viability of providing RSVP to all members of the university community, including faculty and staff, and possibly to members of the broader community. Additionally, we encourage RSVP/USC to partner with community organizations that are interculturally competent in addressing issues of sexual misconduct and gender harassment among culturally diverse populations, using both an intersectional and trauma-informed lens.

There may be opportunities for USC to launch an initiative, to support the establishment of a center (along the lines of the Rape Treatment Center at UCLA Medical Center, Santa Monica), or to create an institute addressing culture and power-based harm (e.g., interpersonal violence, sexual misconduct, gender harassment, bullying, etc.). Efforts such as these could conceivably provide an array of direct and indirect services and supports to individuals, families, and groups that make up the USC community, as well as to the broader community. Secondly, they could provide a host of research, educational, and training opportunities for USC students, staff, and faculty.

Offer accommodations for trainees and students who are targets of sexual harassment. The Task Force recommends offering emergency financial and academic support (e.g., through TAs and peer counselors or tutors), particularly for graduate students who need to switch advisors or leave a lab due to sexual harassment, as finding new funding is often a problem. Initially, these accommodations should be made available for students who are harassed by faculty, but they could be expanded to include harassment by other trainees such as graduate students and post-docs.

Increase social support for students and trainees. Graduate programs promote varied levels of social connection and support among students. Post-doctoral students are often isolated in their labs. When trainees are strongly bonded through their graduate program or other trainee organizations, they have more networks for support to avoid, report and recover from harassment. Therefore, the Task Force recommends increasing supports for students and trainees and providing funding for such supports.

5. STRENGTHEN INFRASTRUCTURE ON SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND GENDER HARASSMENT

Enhance Capacity by Strengthening Organizational Infrastructure

While efforts to address sexual misconduct and gender harassment are increasing and becoming a greater part of the fabric at USC, these efforts often appear to be somewhat haphazard and to lack widespread organizational support. To this end, the Task Force offers the following recommendations designed to enhance the university's capacity to interrupt sexual harassment and gender misconduct by strengthening its infrastructure.

Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment. Create a standing Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment, such as the one developed at Yale University. This committee could assume responsibility for developing, monitoring, evaluating, and improving policies and practices related to sexual misconduct prevention, identification, reporting, and response. They could also oversee and support data collection. Conceivably, the new committee could be responsible for or involved in determining sanctions^[12] of sexual misconduct and gender harassment cases. For example, once a case has been investigated and a determination of misconduct or harassment has been made, the case could be presented to the committee to impose, implement, and monitor sanctions. If acted upon, we strongly recommend that the Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment be comprised of culturally-diverse faculty, staff, and student leaders; researchers; and practitioners—all of whom should have expertise and receive ongoing training on sexual harassment and sexual violence. Importantly, they should also be compensated or provided support for their service on the committee. We also recommend that the committee be headed by the proposed Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention.

It should be noted that the work of the Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment is specific to creating gender equity at USC and not simply an “add-on” to other diversity related committees. It is imperative therefore that the responsibilities of the Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment not be relegated to an already established compliance office, diversity and inclusion committee, or a campus climate committee. The work of the Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment is highly specialized and specific to creating gender equity at USC and not simply an “add-on” to another committee.

Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention. As indicated above, the Task Force recommends that the proposed Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment be led by a new Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention. This new Vice President position should be an academic/faculty position that addresses sexual misconduct and gender harassment as it relates to the mission of the university with a focus on educating the community rather than a staff position focusing on legal compliance. To this end, the Vice President position should be charged with advancing research and teaching collaborations designed to enhance policy, procedure, communication and transparency related to sexual harassment and sexual violence. This will require the Vice President to collaborate closely with individuals and groups on campus that conduct research and evaluation on sexual misconduct and gender harassment, such as the Center for Feminist Research and Center for Education, Identity and Social Justice, as well as individuals, groups, and organizations beyond the university. We also recommend that the Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment

Prevention oversee the expanded Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) (as discussed earlier), Title IX Office, and Office of Equity and Diversity.

Given our recommendation that Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention be an academic, the university should ensure that this Vice President receive course releases as well as an administrative stipend or other support to ensure that this individual has sufficient time to carry out their/her/his primary academic responsibilities. The salary for the position should be competitive and commensurate with the level of expertise desired for the position and with the significant responsibility of the position. Moreover, the Vice President should have a generous budget and resources to support highly qualified and culturally-diverse staff to support the activities of the office, including the proposed Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment.

Raise Awareness through Education and Training

Changing the culture and environment at USC requires not only addressing incidents of harassment and violence, but also providing education and training across the USC community to establish expectations and goals for interpersonal relations among faculty, staff and students. These expectations need to arise from conversations within the university community, rather than being imposed from the administration. To this end, the Task Force recommends that the university invest in raising awareness about policies and procedures during activities and events that present unique opportunities to target and engage [prospective] perpetrators, victims, and bystanders, particularly those shown to be at increased risk of sexual misconduct or gender harassment. As detailed in the NASEM report, generic mandatory sexual harassment training is largely ineffective, and may even have a negative effect on behavior. In response, the Task Force recommends implementing the following strategies to raise awareness about sexual misconduct and gender harassment prevention, identification, reporting, and response.

Educate incoming graduate students about standards and expectations at USC.

Once the university community establishes expectations for interpersonal behavior, it is important to articulate these standards to incoming students and to continue to reinforce them. This is particularly relevant for graduate students. In the AAU Campus Climate Survey for USC, sexual harassment of students by faculty was found to be a much larger problem for graduate and professional students (15.7% of women, 13.8% of men) than undergraduate students (6.1%, 5.9%). Furthermore, when graduate students report sexual harassment from a peer, it often occurs in a professional setting (lab or research group).

Ultimately, graduate students will serve as TAs, post-docs, and faculty. In particular, international students may be more likely to be involved in sexual harassment (either as the target or the offender) if they are not aware of the norms and expectations for mentoring relationships in the US. Therefore, graduate student training should include (i) what to expect from academic mentoring relationships (broadly tailored for different fields), (ii) how to address and report sexual harassment, (iii) how to be active bystanders to improve culture and prevent harassing behavior, and (iv) expectations for student conduct. Providing peer advocates can ensure that policies and procedures are transparent, clear, and well-understood.

Educate graduate students on how to address harassment in professional settings off campus. As mentioned above, sexual harassment occurs not only at the home institution, but also at conferences and field sites. We recommend offering education and training to graduate

students covering what to expect, how to handle situations (reduce risk), and how to protect themselves and others.

Speaker Series. An essential part of changing the culture and environment at USC is to educate faculty, staff, and students about the negative impact of male dominance, toxic masculinity, and patriarchal structure that women at USC face on a daily basis, and which creates a hostile environment for everyone. Thus, implementing a speaker series for faculty and staff would be beneficial.

Promote education and incentives for mentoring excellence. Alongside efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct at USC, we should also recognize and celebrate excellence in interpersonal relationships. Everyone in academia participates in mentoring of some form. The Task Force recommends offering more training opportunities and incentives to promote and recognize mentoring excellence. Training could include strategies on how to establish an inclusive and safe culture in a research group, since students often complain about the behavior of other people in their group. Trainings could also include strategies on how to mentor each other, as not all interactions include a faculty member. Although we recognize the demands on faculty, given the ubiquity of mentoring and the importance of mentoring training, we recommend additional exploration of the pros and cons of mandatory mentor training, including strategies for making mandated mentor training manageable for faculty.

Other examples of activities and events the Task Force encourages the university to consider include: 1) incorporating sexual harassment training and education in orientations for new faculty, staff and students; 2) providing an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to participate in Relationship Violence Awareness month in October; 3) enhancing sexual harassment trainings for faculty, staff, and students so that they go beyond an online training; 4) developing supplemental trainings for faculty and student leaders, PIs, and managers and supervisors who oversee staff and student workers; and 5) developing other supplemental trainings and resources for at-risk populations using an intersectional lens.

Enhance Data Collection, Reporting, and Use

Implement a centralized data collection system headed by the proposed Vice President for Culture Change and Harassment Prevention to facilitate structured decision-making. The Task Force strongly recommends the implementation of a centralized data system to collect and maintain relevant anonymized individual level data that allows for both individual and group level analyses and reporting. These data should relate to alleged misconduct and harassment, but also to characteristics and demographics of faculty, students, staff, and units as well as to programs, services and other strategies being implemented. Currently, comprehensive data on risk and protective factors associated with various offenses, reports, investigations, and outcomes are not available, particularly in a format that will allow statistical modeling. The Task Force recommends institutionalizing mandatory collection of relevant data. The collected data could be used for ensuring compliance of university policy and standards, educational purposes when training the university community, and for research/evaluation purposes as it relates to culture change. Due to concerns about repeated offenses, there also needs to be a reporting mechanism to our university-wide database (iSight). As needed, we recommend the collection and integration of supplemental data into the data collection system on an annual basis.

Monitor and report non-compliance of implementation of policies and procedures. The Task Force recommends the development of mechanisms for monitoring and reporting

compliance/non-compliance and providing funding to implement such mechanisms. To incorporate compliance/non-compliance into Academic Reviews carried out by the University Committee on Academic Reviews (UCAR), the university could incentivize and report compliance as well as penalize and report non-compliance.

Monitor and report sexual misconduct and gender harassment performance and change. Following the development of a centralized system, the Task Force recommends enhancing the transparency of such data by creating an online platform of reports with anonymized data to move beyond the parameters of compliance within the CLERY Act. As current investigations conclude and sanctions rendered, bi-annual reports should be generated in addition to implementing real time notifications of sexual harassment and sexual violence allegations and outcomes via Trojan Alerts. Within the centralized platform, a Sexual Violence Dashboard should be created, containing realtime and historical data as part of a three-tiered reporting process.

Reform Admissions and Human Resources Practices

To interrupt sexual misconduct and gender harassment, the Task Force recommends making amendments to current human resources practices. Hiring practices should also be updated to include USC human resources not only conducting an extensive background check on new hires but to also outreach to past employers and inquire about incidents regarding sexual misconduct and gender equity of candidates at previous institutions. Additionally, to manage issues related to sexual misconduct and gender harassment cases, such as retaliation and whistle-blowing, the Task Force recommends that human resources establish a centralized structure of reporting and investigation as discussed earlier. Thereafter, as a preventative measure, in-person required annual/periodic training for top administration, faculty, including human resources personnel (central as well as each academic unit), and other staff using USC-based experiences and data (USC data and that of other universities), should inform individuals of safety, retaliation, whistle-blowing, hiring practices, and climate as it relates to sexual misconduct and gender harassment. The President, Provosts, Deans, and department chairs should make the prevention and reduction of sexual misconduct an explicit goal in annual reviews of faculty performance, promotion, and tenure. Their performance goals and performance indicators should be disseminated publicly on a yearly basis. USC should also eliminate the practice and requirement for faculty and staff to sign non-disclosure agreements upon hiring.

Closing

A key conclusion of the Task Force is that our work is not done. Before implementing our recommendations, we strongly encourage university leadership to widely publicize, vet, and obtain feedback on the recommendations. As part of the vetting process, it is essential to ensure that as many constituencies as possible have an opportunity to provide input. To this end, we recommend that the remainder of the Spring 2019 semester and the summer be used to begin engaging the university community and to solicit such input. This next stages of engagement and planning should involve students, staff, faculty, and alumni. **Importantly, there should be real and meaningful opportunities for input.** University leadership should document how each recommendation was disseminated and how constituencies were invited to participate in real and meaningful ways. Additionally, the response to each recommendation—whether it is to adopt fully, in part, or not at all—should include detail about what precisely is to be implemented, by whom and when, expected challenges and strategies for addressing those challenges, and what

resources are available. Our recommendation to create a standing Committee for Sexual Misconduct and Gender Harassment would provide a mechanism for carrying out the activities described above. It would also allow the university to build on and continue the important work initiated by the Joint Provost/Academic Senate Task Force on Sexual Harassment.

The extent to which the university engages members of our community in continued deliberation of the recommendations offers the university an incredible opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to sexual misconduct prevention and response and to meaningfully involve faculty, staff, students, and the greater community in determining how best to move forward. Indeed, handled with care, the university's response to the recommendations presents an unparalleled opportunity for the university to restore and build trust and to facilitate healing among members of the university community—its first priority. Other opportunities exist as well, including those for the university to provide leadership beyond USC by developing and test best practices and empirical knowledge about sexual misconduct prevention, identification, reporting, and response.

^[1] <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/law-grievance>

^[2] <https://policy.usc.edu/student-misconduct/> V. Reporting Options, B. Reporting to Title IX

^[3] <https://policy.usc.edu/files/2018/05/Faculty-Handbook-2018.pdf>

^[4] <https://sexualassault.georgetown.edu/gupolicies>

^[5] <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/sexharassresources.html> Non-consensual sexual penetration. Sexual harassment: unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile environment or conditions participation in the workplace/academic environment on submission. Gender harassment: unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on insulting, hostile, and degrading attitudes about gender that creates a hostile environment.

^[6] <https://policy.usc.edu/files/2018/05/Faculty-Handbook-2018.pdf>

^[7] <https://ww2.mc.vanderbilt.edu/cppa/45370>