Penn State University is committed to the concept of affirmative action to ensure equal opportunity in all aspects of employment for those historically excluded and to foster diversity in the University community. The University has a comprehensive Affirmative Action Plan which sets forth programs and goals for increasing the representation of historically excluded groups.

Mission

The Affirmative Action Office is a service organization that supports and enhances the University’s commitment to diversity, providing expert advice and leadership to colleges, departments, faculty and staff in their efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce and ensure an environment free from discrimination and harassment.

Vision

To provide quality services in support of the University's vision to foster an academic community that provides leadership for constructive participation in a diverse, multicultural world.
Outcomes

➢ To consider and understand the impact of personal perceptions and individual lenses

➢ To be able to define and identify types of harassment

➢ To be familiarized with Penn State’s policies on Sexual Harassment and Nondiscrimination

➢ To identify strategies and resources to remedy instances of potential or perceived harassment
How many squares do you see?

4
Count the number of black dots
Perceptions
It’s a fan!
It’s a wall!
It’s a rope!
It’s a spear!
It’s a snake!
It’s a Tree!
Our perceptions are shaped by:
- Expectations
- Experiences
- Education

Our perceptions shape our lens...
the way in which we view or understand what is happening around us.
Sexual harassment of faculty, staff or students is prohibited at The Pennsylvania State University. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment violates the dignity of individuals and impedes the realization of the University’s educational mission. The University is committed to preventing and eliminating sexual harassment of faculty, staff and students through education and by encouraging faculty, staff and students to report any concerns or complaints about sexual harassment. Prompt corrective measures will be taken to stop sexual harassment whenever and wherever it occurs.
The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.
Discrimination is conduct of any nature that violates the policy set forth above by denying equal privileges or treatment to a particular individual because of the individual’s age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status.

Harassment is a form of discrimination consisting of physical or verbal conduct that

- (1) is directed at an individual because of the individual’s age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or veteran status; and

- (2) is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to substantially interfere with the individual’s employment, education or access to University programs, activities and opportunities.

To constitute prohibited harassment, the conduct must be such that it detrimentally affects the individual in question and would also detrimentally affect a reasonable person under the same circumstances.
Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is a condition for employment, promotion, grades or academic status;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting an individual;
- such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering unreasonably with the individual’s work or academic performance or creates an offensive, hostile, or intimidating working or learning environment.
1. Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment – “This for That”

Major Elements:

- The sexual advances or demands are unwanted;
- the harassment is sexual; and
- submission is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or academic standing.
2. Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment

Major Elements:

- A working or learning environment created by unwelcome sexual behavior;

- Offensive, hostile and/or intimidating behavior directed at someone because of his or her gender; or

- Offensive, hostile and/or intimidating behavior that adversely affects a person’s ability to fully participate in their work or learning environment.
Examples of Hostile Environment
Sexual Harassment

- Sexual innuendos, jokes, stories or comments
- Pornographic material, posters, and calendars that degrade women or men
- Use of sexual or vulgar language in conversation
- Staring or making suggestive or obscene sexual gestures with hands, face or body movements
- Unwanted letters, gifts, or materials of a sexual nature
Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature.

General harassment involves behavior that is intended to humiliate, demean, or belittle but is not necessarily sexual in nature or due to race, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.
Impacts on Workplace Climate

- Increased absenteeism
- Frequent conflict
- Denial of the issue(s)
- Chilly/hostile climate
- Strained/poor communications
- Lack of motivation
- Poor performance
- High personnel turnover
- Less creativity and vision
- Poor public image
Microaggressions

20
Definition:

- “subtle, stunning, often automatic, and non-verbal exchanges which are ‘put downs’”
  - Dr. Chester Pierce, 1978

- “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignity that, either intentionally or unintentionally, communicates hostile, negative, or derogatory slights or insults on the basis of color, gender, or sexual orientation”
  - Dr. Derald Wing Sue, 2007
Forms:

- **Microassault**
  - Explicit verbal or non-verbal action of name-calling, avoidant behavior or purposeful discriminatory action.

- **Microinsult**
  - Rudeness or insensitivity that demean a person’s identity

- **Microinvalidation**
  - Verbal or non-verbal communication that dismiss or exclude the thoughts, feelings, or experienced reality of a person of color

(Sue, et al, 2007)
Manifested through

- Language used
- Preferential treatment or attention

More likely to be conscious or deliberate, though expressed in limited “private” settings to provide anonymity for the perpetrator
Subtle snubs, often unknown to the perpetrator
Convey a hidden insulting message to the recipient

I believe the most qualified person should get the job or promotion regardless of race or gender
Often occur in an attempt to be helpful
  - “I’m sure that’s not what they meant”
  - “I don’t see color.”
  - “Are you sure you aren’t just being a little sensitive?”
Case Studies
Points for Consideration:

- Are there identifiable troubling behaviors or dispositions represented?
- Are there specific instances of harassment or microaggressions occurring in the following scenarios?
- What, if any, assumptions are you operating under?
- Do the actions or inactions appear intentional or unintentional?
- Who has the responsibility to provide corrective learning opportunities?
- What can be done to reduce the miscommunication, misperception or incivility displayed?
During a faculty meeting, a junior faculty member offers a suggestion for consideration by the body. Immediately following this suggestion, a senior faculty member offers an alternate option without acknowledging the previous suggestion. Discussion of the senior faculty member’s contribution ensues with no discussion occurring on the previous suggestion.

- Adapted from *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*
At a departmental diversity/climate committee meeting, a question was raised by a new member of the committee, a young man attending the first meeting of the semester. He asked why so few faculty from the department participated, and a graduate student replied that the group was lucky to at least have one present. The new member questioned what was meant by “one,” and the graduate student gestured to the older male at the head of the table. The new committee member replied that he was also a faculty member in the department.
A University-wide committee of senior college leadership is meeting for one of its regularly scheduled monthly meetings. As the group discusses plans for collaborative projects across several units, a woman on the committee is providing insight into her experiences with leading projects similar to the one being discussed. At the other end of the table, a male member of the group who has been trying to contribute to the discussion begins to wave his hand and whistle to get the attention of the committee and interrupts his colleague to begin making his point.
Case Study Four

The Dean has created and charged a steering committee to help with the development of the college’s next strategic plan. The steering committee is comprised of senior leadership and faculty members from various programs in the college. At one of the first meetings, one of the senior administrators in the college, who is not a tenure-track faculty member, comes in to the conference room a few minutes late and has a seat at the table. Discussion around the table continues; however, the faculty member seated on the right of the latecomer keeps their chair turned and body leaned forward effectively blocking the presence and participation of this other committee member.
A co-worker comes to you to discuss a situation which has recently made her more uncomfortable at work. She works at the front desk in the office and one of the regular customers who utilizes the services you provide has made repeated comments to her about her physical appearance (how attractive she is, etc.) At first, she was not concerned with these interactions because they seemed harmless and she was somewhat attracted to him. She even thought about the possibility of seeing him romantically if he asked her out. His comments however have become more inappropriate in recent weeks and she is becoming increasingly uncomfortable with the situation. On several occasions, he has asked questions such as what size bra she wears and what kind of underwear she has on. The co-worker has come to you because she is unsure about how to handle this situation now and feels as if she might be partially to blame as she didn’t discourage his earlier attention.
Climate Impact
Lead to patterns or feelings of being overlooked, under-respected, and devalued (*Sue & Constantine, 2007*)

Decreased performance and productivity (*Dietch, Barksy, Butz, Chan, Brief & Bradley, 2003; Sue & Constantine, 2007*)

Perpetuate bias, stereotypes, and privilege (*Leiva, 2012*)

Create hostile work and educational environments (*Sue & Constantine, 2007*)
Implications for Change

▪ Pay attention
▪ Be cognizant of your own lens
▪ Be willing to listen
▪ Seek feedback when unsure or when necessary
▪ Demonstrate/model the behaviors expected from all community members
▪ Provide education and insight
Personal Responsibilities

- Make a personal commitment to foster a harassment free environment in your classroom or workplace.

- Develop a greater awareness of cues in the environment that may suggest a need for preventive measures.

- Examine your own behavior.
Immediately report discrimination or harassment to:

- Administrator or faculty member in department or unit
- OHR
- For Sexual harassment concerns -- SHRP
  - Lisa Bontrager
  - Dawn Datt
  - Helen O’Leary
  - Tom Yahner
- AAO
- Student Affairs
- Educational Equity
IS MY BEHAVIOR APPROPRIATE?

- Do I know how the person will take my words or actions?
- Is there equal power between me and the other person?
- Is there equal participation between me and the other person?
- Would I behave the same way if my significant other was standing next to me?
- Would I want someone to say or do such things to me, my family or friends?
- Would others feel comfortable telling me that they are offended or harassed by what I say or do?
- Review your attitudes and actions toward others. Is your behavior sex, gender, race, or age neutral and bias free?
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