Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture Report
March 26, 2024

Contents

Members

Co-Chairs:

Kia Caldwell, vice provost for faculty affairs and diversity

Vijay Ramani, vice provost for graduate education and international affairs

Members:

Kendall Burks, MD/PhD candidate, School of Medicine; president, Graduate Professional Council

Jessica Cissell, director of graduate programming and The Graduate Center

Mike Jones II, director, community engagement & co-curricular experience, Division of Biology & Biomedical Sciences

Mark Leary, co-vice dean of faculty and research, professor of finance, Olin Business School

Saori Pastore, associate professor, physics, Arts & Sciences

Jonathan Silva, Dennis & Barbara Kessler Career Development Professor and director of diversity, biomedical engineering, McKelvey School of Engineering

Peggie R. Smith, vice dean for academic affairs School of Law, Charles F. Nagel Professor of Employment and Labor Law, Faculty Ombuds (Danforth Campus)

Monika Weiss, Professor of Arts, Sam Fox School

Andy Wiegert, director of graduate student affairs, Arts & Sciences

Iva Youkilis, teaching professor and placement coordinator in Italian, Arts & Sciences

Gloria Zhou, PhD candidate in energy, environmental, and chemical engineering; co-chair Graduate Student Senate

Administrative Staff:

Deborah Jaegers, program coordinator, office of the Provost

Executive Summary

In February 2023, Provost Wendland created and charged the Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture (DTFCC) to assess the climate and culture on the Danforth campus, specifically focusing on the interactions between faculty mentors and their mentees, including graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows. The primary objective was to identify behaviors and practices that may lead to negative outcomes for these individuals and recommend best practices to prevent such outcomes. The DTFCC aimed to offer recommendations for creating an inclusive and supportive environment where students and fellows, irrespective of their backgrounds or disciplines, can thrive.

To carry out this charge, the DTFCC examined the complex ecosystem of faculty mentors, advisors, and mentees across the Danforth Schools to understand areas in the current environment functioning well and those that need improvement. The DTFCC discussed ways to address identified weaknesses and establish best practices to improve faculty-mentee interactions. Additionally, the Task Force reviewed existing guidance and policies for dealing with inappropriate behavior or situations on the Danforth Campus, and considered improvements could be made to the content and dissemination of this information.

In order to bring additional expertise to the process, WestEd consultants were selected based on their experience in Higher Education and ability to work within the desired timeline. WestEd conducted a study through in-person focus groups, 1:1 interviews and listening sessions. The results from the qualitative analysis conducted by WestEd were varied, indicating that the sense of belonging, mentoring, and support experienced by graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows greatly depended on the department and program, leading to inconsistent experiences. A common theme that emerged was a lack of awareness among all participants regarding existing policies related to mistreatment and easy access to resources for addressing mistreatment. To improve guidance and support, WestEd's report emphasized the importance of better communication, dissemination of resources, and addressing knowledge gaps resulting from excessive turnover in certain areas. The decentralized nature of support resources was identified as a contributing factor to communication problems as was significant inconsistency in orientations and education around policies and resources for support in these areas. Additionally, WestEd's report highlighted the need for cultural responsiveness, understanding diverse student backgrounds, learning styles, emotional fortitude, and creating inclusive educational environments.

This DTFCC Report concludes with recommendations, including the formation of an implementation committee to ensure that the approved recommendations are acted upon within the next 12-18 months. If instituted, an implementation committee should include key roles/offices and collaborate with Medical Campus colleagues to develop and implement university-wide solutions, wherever practical.

Please note that this report includes survey data that may not be able to be shared broadly but is included here for context. If the decision is to share this report with the WashU community, the contents should first be reviewed with Institutional Research and the Office of General Counsel.

Charge

In February 2023, Provost Beverly Wendland convened a special task force to examine climate and culture on the Danforth campus in relation to interactions between Danforth Campus faculty mentors and their mentees, particularly graduate and professional students, and postdoctoral fellows, as well as to make recommendations for improvements in this area. The charge contained:

> The Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture (DTFCC) will identify behaviors, and practices that may lead to negative outcomes for graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows and will identify and recommend best practices that obviate such outcomes. The DTFCC will also offer insights and recommendations to make the Danforth

Campus a place where graduate and professional students and postdoctoral scholars of all backgrounds, identities and disciplinary orientations can succeed, thrive and experience a genuine sense of belonging. To accomplish its mission, the Task Force was asked to:

- Examine the complex ecosystem of faculty mentors, advisors and mentees across Danforth Schools to identify:
    o Areas of strength and weakness
    o Where and how we can institute best practices.
    o How to remediate areas of weakness
    o Protocols to protect mentees and enhance faculty and mentee interactions

- Review the guidance currently available to those on the Danforth Campus concerning what to do if confronted with or observant of inappropriate behavior or situations and assess whether improvements could be made in the content and dissemination of such information.

The DTFCC's scope did not include reporting around academic misconduct.

Process

Timeline

The Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture (DTFCC) has convened 12 times as of March 2024. The first meeting included a welcome and charge from Provost Wendland. Kia Caldwell, vice provost for faculty affairs and diversity (VPFAD), and Vijay Ramani, vice provost for graduate education and international affairs (VPGE), were co-chairs of the DTFCC and led the group to identify behaviors and practices that may lead to negative outcomes and recommend changes to best practices.

Key activities by DFTCC meeting are listed below. All DFTCC meetings were held virtually via Zoom.

March 28, 2023	Task Force Charged and discussion of charge and overall process.
April 10 & 24, 2023	DFTCC discussion with Dr. Renée Shellhaas, associate dean for faculty promotions and career development, medical school; administrative director, WUSM Task Force on Climate and Culture. Co-Chairs vet consultants. Students for Equal Treatment (SFET) report reviewed, and their recommendations discussed. Beginning discussion on data at WU available to DFTCC.
May 8, 2023	Institutional Research Analyst from WU provides an overview of relevant University data (Doctoral Exit Survey (5-years by Discipline 2021-22; AAU CCS Survey); Working group volunteers requested.
May 22, 2023	WestEd Consultant joins meeting; DFTCC reviewed Learning Questions
June 14, 2023	Director of Gender Equity and Title IX Office reviews office annual report; DFTCC continues review of learning questions and proposed revisions.
June 28, 2023	Learning Questions Discussion (Office of General Council concerns) and review of Medical Task Force summary of survey.
August 18, 2023	Contract signed with WestEd; Site Visit Timeline Discussed Site Visit planning and recruiting for focus groups, interviews and communications disseminated for Listening Sessions; Data Collection Protocols and IRB submission by WestEd.
September 18, 2023	Final research protocols locked in; Focus Group & Listening Session recruiting help requested.

October 4-5, 2023	Site Visit by WestEd on Danforth Campus
November 29, 2023	Site visit findings previewed by WestEd and reviewed by DFTCC; DFTCC recommendations for report discussed.
December 15, 2023	WestEd draft report received and sent to DFTCC for reviews, revisions requested.
January 9, 2024	WestEd final report received; Provost report recommendations discussed Co-chairs ask small group from DFTCC to draft Provost report.
January-February 2024	Outcomes Group drafts report; sent to DFTCC for reviews/revisions.
March 1, 2024	DFTCC meets to discuss Provost report, reviews and requests final revisions.
March 15, 2024	Second Draft report sent to DFTCC with request for final revisions by 3-21.
March 26, 2024	Report finalized and sent to the Provost.

Consultant and Research Methodology

Vice Provosts Caldwell and Ramani met with four external consultants including WestEd to discuss the project and gather required competitive bids for services. The Co-Chairs recommended WestEd due to their expertise in Higher Education and ability to work within our preferred one-year timeline.

A contract was developed with WestEd for the scope of work to include:

> To gather data to support the Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture's charge, WestEd will use the following methods of inquiry: focus groups with graduate students, professional students, and post-doctoral fellows; listening sessions; interviews with a sample of faculty from different departments; a review of artifacts that provide further context regarding existing mentor/mentee relationships; and a review of findings from the Washington University Doctoral Exit Survey. (*from WestEd Contract, Scope of Work, August 2023)*

Three working groups were formed by asking DFTCC members to volunteer.

- **Liaison Group**- *Met with consultants to provide input, suggestions, and feedback.*
- **Outreach Group** - *Provide recommendations for how best to reach target constituencies for listening sessions and focus groups.*
- **Outcomes Working Group –** *Draft final report.*

WestEd began meeting with the DFTCC in May 2023 to develop and refine evaluation questions for research protocols that were finalized in August. A site visit was scheduled for October 3-4, 2023 to collect qualitative data focused on evaluation questions.

Evaluation Questions (from WestEd Final Report – Appendix B)

| Sense of Belonging | • To what extent do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows feel a sense of belonging on campus and in graduate education environments (e.g., labs and non-lab environments)?
• What contributes to their sense of belonging on campus (e.g., peers, faculty, staff)? |
| Mentoring and Support | • What does the constellation of mentors/advisors look like for graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows?
• Who do they go to for support on campus?
• What kind of support does each mentor/advisor provide? |

Mistreatment and Power Dynamics	• How do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows define mistreatment in a professional relationship (e.g., sex-based discrimination and harassment, other misconduct)?
	• To what extent have graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows experienced or witnessed mistreatment on campus/in their professional relationships?
	• How and to what extent are graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows aware of how to navigate a relationship or situation that involves mistreatment? (What training/information has been provided? Do they understand the proper channels to report mistreatment?)
	• How and to what extent do power dynamics play a role in students' experiences of mistreatment and their reporting of these incidents?
	• How and to what extent are faculty and staff aware of what constitutes mistreatment and how to navigate a relationship or situation that involves mistreatment? (What training/information has been provided? Do they understand how to support students who report mistreatment?)
Additional Needs	• What additional supports do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows need to support their sense of safety in professional relationships on campus?
	• What additional training/information do faculty and staff need to support graduate and professional students' and postdoctoral fellows' sense of safety in professional relationships on campus?

Graduate Enrollment on the Danforth Campus

Below is the graduate and professional enrollment data by school for Fall 2023.
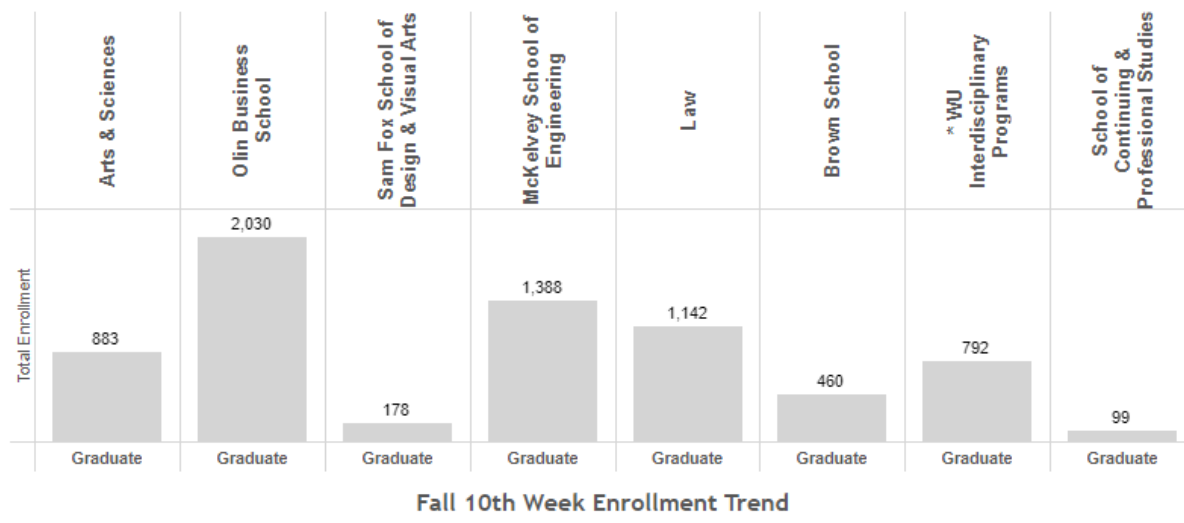
Of the total 827 Post-Doctoral Fellows at WashU, 76% of whom are in the School of Medical *(Source: HR Report, 10/4/2022)*. DFTCC recruitment was focused *only* on Danforth Campus students and post-doctoral fellows.

Engagement with the Danforth Campus Community

The WestEd evaluation team relied on the DTFCC to recruit participants for the study. Information about the study and visit was communicated to the Danforth Campus community through websites, newsletters, and targeted emails at the Vice Provost level and the school level, as well as via student groups such as the Graduate Student Senate and Graduate Professional Council. WestEd allowed anyone to contact them directly with questions. The below table shows a list of recruitment communication types and channels. This list demonstrates main outreach efforts.

Communication Type	Channels
Publications	The Record
Websites	Provost's Office; Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs; Office of Grad Studies; Vice Provost of Grad Education; The Graduate Center
Newsletters	Graduate Professional Council (GPC), Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Diversity, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and International Affairs (VPGE), Office of Grad Studies for Arts & Sciences,
Emails to Listservs/Groups	Graduate & Professional Council (GPC), Center for Career Engagement office and advisors, Communications Directors in all schools, Graduate Student Senate (GSS), Post-Doctoral Affairs Office, A&S Chairs and Directors, Directors of Graduate Studies (DGS's) and Graduate Program Administrators, A&S Office of Graduate Studies to all A&S graduate students
Emails from Vice Provost Office	All Danforth Graduate and Professional students (excluding new FL23 cohorts); all Postdoctoral Fellows
Handouts	Graduate Center Events – Fliers in center and at all events

Analysis

Data Analysis

DTFCC reviewed available WashU data and reports:

- 2023 Executive Faculty Task Force on Climate & Culture (School of Medicine). **(Appendix C)**
- Students For Equal Treatment Recommendations (SFET). **(Appendix D)**
- Data: WashU AAU Doctoral Exit Survey (5-years by Discipline 2021-22). **(Appendix E)**
- Data: AAU CCS Survey **(Appendix F)**
- University policies: Abusive Conduct Policy and the Alcohol Use Policy for Graduate Students.

DFTCC members found no consistent policy for mistreatment for Danforth-only graduate students. A WUSM policy exists, which states that DBBS students are included.

Other relevant data about mentoring was difficult to find, especially for master's or professional students. The Law School has not adopted a "mentoring" model with their students and no surveys were identified for master's students within the Olin, Brown and Sam Fox schools.

For PhD students, there is a recent *WashU AAU Doctoral Exit Survey* which showed inconsistent mentoring across schools and disciplines. A few areas showed a lower percentage of students who considered a faculty member other than their main advisor as a mentor for advising -- Physical Sciences and Math (52%) and Engineering (47%).

Table A: WashU AAU Institutional Research & Analysis Report: Doctoral Exit Survey five years by discipline through 2021-22

Was there another faculty member whom you considered to be a mentor (i.e., a faculty member who gave you advice about your education career development or other matters of concern to you as a graduate student)?

	Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Yes	83%	65%	69%	52%	47%	82%	78%	78%
No	17%	35%	31%	48%	53%	18%	22%	22%
n	112	159	373	163	276	45	41	18

If "yes", was the faculty member in your program/department?

	Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Yes	88%	84%	75%	84%	70%	86%	88%	79%
No	12%	16%	25%	16%	30%	14%	13%	21%
n	93	103	257	83	128	37	32	14

Survey results from the same report, showed consistent averages between 70-80% of respondents agreeing that the overall climate of their program was positive.

Climate

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

		Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Students in my program are treated with respect by faculty	Strongly agree	43%	31%	35%	35%	40%	42%	45%	67%
	Agree	31%	43%	51%	47%	42%	44%	33%	33%
	Ambivalent	23%	19%	12%	11%	11%	7%	19%	0%
	Disagree	2%	4%	2%	4%	4%	2%	2%	0%
	Strongly disagree	2%	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	371	166	273	45	42	18
The intellectual climate of my program is positive	Strongly agree	41%	31%	43%	36%	41%	44%	45%	61%
	Agree	29%	50%	46%	46%	49%	42%	38%	28%
	Ambivalent	19%	8%	8%	10%	7%	9%	14%	6%
	Disagree	6%	8%	2%	7%	3%	0%	2%	6%
	Strongly disagree	5%	3%	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	371	166	273	45	42	18
The social climate of my program is positive	Strongly agree	32%	24%	35%	32%	34%	36%	43%	56%
	Agree	37%	46%	47%	48%	43%	38%	31%	28%
	Ambivalent	21%	18%	14%	10%	16%	13%	21%	11%
	Disagree	4%	9%	3%	8%	5%	7%	5%	6%
	Strongly disagree	6%	3%	0%	1%	1%	7%	0%	0%
	n	109	156	370	166	273	45	42	18
Students in my program are collegial	Strongly agree	44%	43%	47%	37%	41%	38%	40%	56%
	Agree	37%	42%	46%	51%	46%	44%	45%	39%
	Ambivalent	15%	12%	6%	9%	12%	11%	14%	6%
	Disagree	4%	3%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%	0%
	Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	370	166	273	45	42	18

Source: WashU AAU Institutional Research & Analysis Report: Doctoral Exit Survey five years by discipline through 2021-22

An *AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct* gathered data about a set of behaviors that could constitute sexual harassment and presented WashU's overall responses at about the same levels as other AAU institutions participating in the survey.

Overall by Level and Gender		AAU	WU Overall	by level and gender					
				Undergraduate			Graduate		
				Woman	Man	TGQN	Woman	Man	TGQN
		n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
			2,369	845	537	31	538	405	13
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Specific behaviors	Made sexual remarks, or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?	27.0	28.0	46.1	26.7	49.4	25.8	10.8	35.1
	Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone's else's body, appearance, or sexual activities?	33.7	36.0	56.4	41.6	48.5	28.3	16.8	21.0
	Said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?	16.0	15.8	27.3	18.5	25.6	10.5	5.8	20.5
	Used social or on-line media to send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos to you; or communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos about you?	8.2	6.8	12.5	7.9	11.0	4.6	1.8	7.6
	Continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks, or have sex even though you said, "No?"	11.2	9.9	23.0	7.1	19.0	7.1	0.9	0.0
	Any incident of sexual harassment since entering college?	41.8	43.2	64.6	49.9	61.1	36.2	20.7	35.1
Effects of experiences	Interfered with your academic or professional performance	15.2	15.7	19.6	4.1	14.0	21.7	16.6	21.5
	Limited your ability to participate in an academic program	7.7	8.0	8.1	2.1	9.6	13.5	9.8	17.8
	Created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social, academic, or work environment	41.1	40.0	49.0	23.2	50.7	49.2	25.7	100.0
	At least one of the above	45.3	44.5	52.8	24.3	58.0	55.2	35.9	100.0
Overall	Students experiencing harassing behavior that interfered, limited their ability to participate, or created intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment	18.9	19.1	34.0	12.1	35.5	19.9	7.4	35.1

Source: AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct, 2019 wave

However, the de-aggregated data for Graduate & Professional Men and Women from the same survey showed variances of experience of behavior or effects of experience in several categories when broken out by gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and/or race (**See full report in Appendix E**).

Qualitative Analysis

Following WestEd's qualitative research process and IRB protocols, the DFTCC invited students and post-doctoral fellows to participate in focus group sessions by category during the site visit (see full schedule: https://wustl.box.com/s/bipv7ev7f9ld9on9743448caiwfrts5u)

- 3 PhD Student Focus Groups
- 2 Professional Students Focus Groups
- 1 Post-Doc Fellows Focus Group

All participants were required to sign IRB consent forms. Nineteen interviews were conducted with faculty and staff stakeholders and a few individual students. Two Listening and Learning sessions were held for faculty, staff, and graduate and professional students. Exhibits 3-5 in the WestEd report (**Appendix B**) provide the numbers of respondents for each data collection effort. Six DTFCC members were among the 64 total respondents. While we met the goals for most focus groups and interviews, both the post-doctoral fellow and Listening & Learning sessions were poorly attended.

WestEd's analysis was based upon their Evaluation Question areas. Data results were mixed and varied, "As with sense of belonging, mentoring and support varied considerably for graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows depending on the department and program, with the only consistency in responses being inconsistent experiences."

Key findings, by category, from WestEd's presentation to the DFTCC were:

Sense of Belonging

- Sense of belonging on campus in general but less so in their specific departments
- Students found community on campus through clubs and student organizations.
- Several racially underrepresented students said the lack of diversity in their departments hindered their ability to cultivate a sense of belonging.

Mentorship and Support Available

- Students consider their PI/faculty advisor their mentor and few have other mentors on campus.
- Respondents who experienced supportive relationships with faculty advisors attributed the positive experiences to developing trusting relationships and the faculty treating them like peers.
- Students said their main source of mentoring support on campus is through students in cohorts before theirs.

Student/Fellow Definitions of Mistreatment

- Power imbalance was a consistent theme amongst all groups and this imbalance showed up in classrooms, labs, advising sessions, and mentoring relationships.
- Excessive work hours were a prevalent theme for PhD students working in labs and postdocs.
- Microaggressions were identified based on race, culture, gender, and economic status.

Experienced or Witnessed Mistreatment

- Mistreatment has shown up in classrooms (virtually and in-person) and through off campus experiences.
- Mentoring/PI relationships is one of the main places where graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows experienced mistreatment.
- Students and fellows fear reporting and retaliation.
- Advising sessions are supposed to support students, yet some students are encouraged to drop programs or leave the school, while others don't know their advisor(s).

How to Navigate Mistreatment

- No clear process for reporting incidents of mistreatment.
- Lack of discussion and training on how to handle instances of mistreatment.
- Available trainings need better marketing, especially to international students.
- Respondents thought text on syllabi and university offices prioritize university's interests over the interests of individuals seeking assistance.
- Students and fellows sought guidance from the Office of the Ombuds and student-led organizations.

Role of Power Dynamics

- Power dynamics and mistreatment inextricably linked.
- Fear of retaliation.
- Faculty with large grants yield the most power.
- Women and faculty of color feel the burden of being an extra support system/counselor for students because there is a lack of representation or faculty members committed to student's personal well-being.
- International students/postdocs feel vulnerable given their work tied to their visa.

<u>Additional Support Needed</u>

- Clearer and more accessible communication regarding reporting policies and student and fellow rights
- Student and fellow training around power dynamics, and characteristics of a healthy mentoring relationship, and culturally responsive training
- Safer channels to report mistreatment and transparency with processes related to addressing mistreatment.
- Accountability for those with the upper hand in the power imbalance, such as faculty, mentors, PIs, advisors, and lab leads.
- Intentionality behind any next steps taken to support students and fellows instead of the university.

A common theme throughout WestEd's findings is a need for better communication. "The most commonly noted suggestion was to improve communication on the Danforth Campus regarding existing policies related to mistreatment and easy access to the steps to take if they encounter mistreatment."

The university must do a much better job of communicating available resources (e.g., training, policies, offices, etc.) and making updates/changes that are implemented across campus. There are community members who genuinely want to assist, but they may not have the most current information to provide the best support and that does not inspire confidence in our students and fellows/trainees. Further, there has been excessive turnover in several areas (e.g., departmental staff, DGSs, unit/office staff, etc.), and our community acutely notices this subsequent lack of institutional knowledge and relationships to help provide guidance and support.

The decentralized nature of many support resources exacerbates communication problems. For example, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) efforts are decentralized across the university. The Office of Institutional Equity may serve all individuals affiliated with the university, but many are not aware of its existence or familiar with its purpose. Since there is no overall University orientation for graduate students, there are inconsistencies in how policies are provided and disseminated.

Considering cultural shifts in the post-COVID era, we collectively face challenges in effectively meeting student needs and expectations. Cultural responsiveness, understanding students with diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and emotional fortitude, and creating educational environments that work for all are essential.

Committee Recommendations

An **implementation committee should be appointed** to ensure approved recommendations are acted upon within the next 12-18 months. The implementation committee should include, but would not be limited to, The Graduate Center, Gender Equity and Title IX Compliance Office, Title IX Advisory Committee, and other key roles/offices. To the greatest extent possible, approved recommendations should be implemented in consultation with Medical Campus colleagues to develop and align university-wide solutions wherever practicable.

The response to the WestEd interviews and focus groups resulted in a small sample size (n=; %) but provided rich qualitative data. Based on the qualitative data results from the Danforth Campus and the extensive data gathered on the Medical Campus, the DTFCC assumes similar issues are prevalent on both campuses and, while commonalities exist, some issues are unrelated. Therefore, we present the following recommendations to expeditiously move forward with steps intended to improve the culture and climate on the Danforth Campus.

Communication

1. **Share DTFCC findings at Danforth Campus Town Hall.** Share results of this report, as approved by the Provost, with the Danforth community to provide an opportunity to review findings, ask questions and share feedback. Additionally, this forum should be used to share future assessment plans around culture and climate on the Danforth Campus.

2. **Improve communication about what constitutes mistreatment including the dissemination of policies, reporting mechanisms, education materials, etc.**

   a. **Create and host a section on the Canvas platform with relevant resources** (i.e., an expanded version of the "syllabus language" document annually distributed by the Provost's Office) to disseminate information and resources consistently to all graduate and professional students. Every course should automatically have a page containing this information. This approach will ensure a course syllabus remains concise while providing students access to critical information updated regularly for accuracy. Students are then not reliant on instructors to include the information on their syllabus. The Graduate Center is a central point to maintain the Canvas module in collaboration with other campus units/centers.

      i. Add a site with the same information for Post-Docs to Office of Postdoctoral Affairs' website and include dissemination during their orientation period.

   b. **Create and distribute a user-friendly visual or infographic that clearly presents the steps one should take when they experience mistreatment** based on their specific circumstances, such as the decision tree used on the Medical Campus. This visual should also include clear contact information for the relevant university offices and counselors.

      i. Use information to **develop a mobile phone-based application** that students and faculty can use to help guide them to the correct resources. *(see Recommendation #2 under Systems of Support for Students and Fellows)*

   c. **Host an annual town hall event** where offices such as Gender Equity and Title IX, Title IX Advisory Committee, Human Resources, etc., share their annual reports, review policies and reporting mechanisms, and address questions. This is an opportunity for proactive, ongoing engagement among community members. We request that the Graduate Professional Council appoints a standing student liaison role to encourage student engagement throughout the year and in preparing for the annual event. These events should be coordinated by the Provost's Office.

   d. **List all relevant policies in the University Bulletin**. Ensure that conduct policies particularly relevant to graduate students, professional students, postdocs and faculty are up-to-date and included in the University Bulletin (e.g., policies including Professional Standards, Consensual Relationships, Abusive Conduct, Discrimination & Harassment, Title IX, Drug & Alcohol, Dress and Personal Appearance, etc.). The link to these policies in the Bulletin should be included in the Canvas page and updated via the annual Bulletin update process.

3. **Implement Standardized and Regular Education Modules.** Implement a standardized suite of education modules for students, post-doctoral fellows, faculty, staff, and administrators. The implementation committee should present the Provost with a recommended list of relevant education and training for each of the above categories of individuals for approval. DTFCC recommends completion of modules be required annually.

   a. Education for all parties (students, fellows, faculty staff, et al.) should include information about their rights, healthy mentoring relationships, and power dynamics. This should

describe what healthy mentoring relationships look like, and how to navigate issues related to power dynamics, including how to address bullying behavior and the process for addressing instances of mistreatment.

b. Require in-person training session for all Mandatory Reporters.

c. Provide cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and mentor education to faculty.

d. Offer expanded Center for Improvement of Mentored Experience (CIMER) training to graduate-advising faculty on campus. Departments and programs should be encouraged to follow up on the trainings and use faculty meetings and newsletters to discuss the application of learnings and highlight successful mentoring relationships in their departments. (See section below on Mentoring).

4. **Deliver a university-wide orientation for key information, policies, etc.** Deliver a graduate and professional student orientation on university-wide resources to ensure that all incoming students have a) access to consistent, current information on resources and policies, b) information to feel empowered to reach out to resources, units, staff, faculty, etc., outside of their program and school during their time at WashU, and c) opportunities to build community with diverse groups from across the institution. Currently, schools and departments have their own orientations, which is helpful for program- and school-specific content. However, this system can result in the sharing of inconsistent and outdated information on central resources (e.g., Center for Career Engagement (CCE), Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), The Graduate Center (TGC), Habif Health and Wellness Center). Additionally, not all of these central resources are included in the school- and department-level orientations which contributes to the uneven knowledge found by the DTFCC. A centralized orientation for university-wide resources would free up schools and departments to focus on content specific to their areas. Such an event should be led by The Graduate Center in partnership with relevant university-wide offices.

5. **Perform ongoing assessment of Climate & Culture.** Conduct ongoing biannual assessments of campus climate and culture through a regular process to make targeted interventions and improvements. A survey with appropriate comparator institutions should be selected (e.g., AAU, CGS). It will be critical to invest in analyses to permit campuswide, School-, Department- and Program-level responses to address the results. Assessments should include appropriate review and follow-up for Schools, Departments, and/or Programs where problematic behaviors are identified. The implementation committee should consult with the Medical Campus on coordination of such assessments. See **Appendix A** for initial recommendations for this survey effort.

Systems of Support for Students and Fellows

1. **Reinstate permanent WashU ombudsperson serving graduate and professional students and postdocs.** The university outsourced the ombuds role serving graduate and professional students, postdocs, and staff following the departure of the last individual in that role. Community members should have a dedicated employee ombudsperson physically located at WashU, available to meet those in need, and aware of WashU's culture, systems, etc. When reinstating the resource on campus, administration should consult peer institutions and subject authorities to ensure WashU has an appropriate number of ombudspersons based on the number of graduate and professional students, faculty, staff, and postdocs.

2. **Develop a mobile phone-based application** that students and faculty can use to help guide them to the correct resources, the ombudsman, or other offices given their questions and concerns. Utilize AI for this application.
OR

3. **Create a central liaison role for students and fellows.** Establish a single point of contact for students and fellows to quickly and seamlessly get direction to necessary resources. Rather than having a student try to figure out when to contact Title IX vs. Ombuds vs. BRSS, etc., there should

be a designated liaison to direct students to the most appropriate resource(s). This liaison will also help faculty, who may be uncertain about where to direct students for help or to report mistreatment. Centrally located in The Graduate Center, the liaison will provide direction to the appropriate campus resource(s), not serve as a triage point.

4. **Implement a Peer Advocate program** on the Danforth campus (based on the SOM model). The program would include a faculty/administrative supervisor who trains student participants and collects anonymized data to allow for ongoing "hot spot" identification of resource utilization.

5. **Implement a Danforth version of the SAFE reporting mechanism.** DTFCC recognizes that this is a significant endeavor, and that the SAFE mechanism was designed to address complexities and constituencies specific to the Medical Campus. A Danforth version would need to be developed and carefully rolled out to avoid any confusion with or negative impact on the Medical Campus' SAFE mechanism.

6. **Support student and fellow community building.** Students and fellows greatly benefit from the support of their peers. Ensure funding and administrative structures (such as the university-wide groups run through The Graduate Center (TGC) continue to exist for graduate, professional, and postdoctoral organizations and events to provide opportunities for students and fellows from different programs to build community. Provide additional opportunities to strengthen the community with more evening and weekend events in TGC spaces, which are dedicated to graduate and professional student use. Work toward goal of space equity when comparing graduate vs undergraduate space utilization on campus.

Policy

1. **Revise the University Alcohol Use Policy.** There should be a single Alcohol Use Policy for the University that is clear and concise. The current policy is inconsistently applied across schools, departments, etc. which leads to confusion and at times blatant disregard of the policy. The revised policy should recognize that alcohol-focused events are exclusionary to individuals that do not drink. Leadership should determine if the policy should be expanded to include other substances. Additionally, it should state standardized repercussions for non-adherence to the policy.

2. **Revise the Reporting Abusive Conduct Policy.** This policy should be revised to clarify reporting mechanisms and procedures for processing and responding to reports. The current policy does not offer specific guidance to those who experience abusive conduct in terms of how and to whom to report it, or to supervisors in terms of how to respond once receiving such a report.

3. **Develop and implement comprehensive mentoring resources.** Not all schools and programs have mentor relationships as PhD students do. For example, while law faculty offer informal guidance to students on career paths and the like, there is no faculty mentoring program at the law school. As a professional school, the primary channel for career counseling is the school's career center. When considering the following recommendations related to mentorship, leaders should determine how to address climate and culture in the context of the specific area. For units without formal mentors, the focus should be on how to eliminate unhealthy power dynamics and practices that otherwise exist in a unit and how to cultivate greater respect and support for students in those units.

a. Establish a formal and acknowledged relationship between the mentor and mentee by having all mentors, including postdocs or faculties other than the Principal Investigator, complete a **compact and expectations form** (e.g., the DBBS Mentor-Mentee Compact and Expectations form). The purpose is to ensure that everyone involved in the mentee's training is aware of their roles and responsibilities and can provide the necessary support and guidance. Compacts should be reviewed annually with departmental advisors of whether tenets of the compact are being met. Leadership should define which relationships rise to the level of a formal mentor-mentee relationship and require such a compact.

b. Create a robust and well-resourced **mentoring training program** in collaboration with the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Diversity and Center for Teaching and Learning. Additionally, the Office of Institutional Equity's Commit Series may be an additional collaborator. The program can recognize strong faculty mentorship with rewards and recognition, certifications and badges.

    i. Increase staff in VPFAD office to increase and accelerate CIMER training efforts across campuses.

    ii. Conduct a feasibility study to establish a Center for Mentoring for Danforth Campus to have a bi-directional focus on mentor training from bottom up for students.

c. To disrupt issues that arise from power dynamics, leadership should have departments offer more than one mentor to students and fellows through the **implementation of mentoring committees.** This would provide students and fellows with multiple people in their department to provide support and serve as an additional resource to voice concerns. Training or guidance will likely be needed to help units understand what this would look like and how to implement it.

d. Create a route where students are not subject to a single supervisor for the communication of their work output to the Principal Investigator. A School's Graduate Program Office serves as an additional regular contact point to communicate students' research experience.

Additional Recommendations Adjacent to DTFCC's Work

1. **Continue to prioritize hiring diverse faculty.** Underrepresented students who work with same-race faculty reported feeling supported in their programs and being able to confide in their faculty advisor. Hiring diverse faculty brings a breadth of lived experiences and perspectives that can enrich the academic community. University leadership should continue to support efforts to cultivate a diverse faculty across schools and departments by prioritizing the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty members. In particular, STEM programs would benefit from more diverse faculty.
    a. Explore faculty incentive structures for recruitment, retention, and mentoring.

    b. Fully leverage new reporting capabilities through WorkDay to report on faculty and staff hire, retention, and departure to proactively review trends, perhaps in confidential consultation with trends reported from ombudspersons, etc.

2. **Encourage discussion of professionalism and communication expectations** within Schools, programs, labs, etc. to help promote a shared understanding of acceptable practices outside of policies. Ideally, these discussions would occur at the start of the academic year, lab rotations, and similar settings so that expectations are known by all at the outset to help avoid conflicts. Based on DTFCC findings, recommended areas include:
    a. Expectations around professional communication practices (e.g., standard response time, formality, sending reminders, etc.)
    b. Expectations around standard hours during which regular mandatory lab functions, including lab meeting, individual meetings, etc., typically occur.
    c. Set expectation that participation in off-campus "social" activities is optional and would not impact student standing or opportunities.

    d. Share expectation of adherence to university policy banning the consumption of alcohol and drugs at non-sanctioned events on university property, including at lab meetings, non-sanctioned social functions, and in workspaces. Include standardized repercussions for non-adherence to this policy.

3. DTFCC discussed the need to differentiate recommendations by schools and programs where necessary (e.g., professional schools and mentors).

Appendix A: Future Data Collection Strategy Recommendations

Initial recommendations based on the DTFCC's work include:

1. Refine the survey communication strategy with a centralized message and programming efforts led by The Graduate Center (TGC) and all six schools on the Danforth Campus (including the Division of Biology & Biomedical Sciences (DBBS)).
   - o Clarity & Connection: Ensure the survey communication is clear and concise. Clearly explain the purpose, importance, and benefits of participating. Connect to existing programming efforts and co-create new collaborations that can yield high community engagement (i.e., graduate and professional students, postdocs, staff and faculty).
   - o Establish Timeline & Data Collection Goals: Choose optimal periods for data collection to avoid periods of high stress or workload for the community and, for in person activities, offer a variety of times to accommodate varying schedules.
2. Incentives and Rewards: Offer incentives to encourage participation, such as food, gift cards, and the opportunity to win prizes and raffles as a reward for participation.
3. Engage Student Organizations: Collaborate with the Graduate Student Senate, Graduate Professional Council, and university-wide graduate student groups to gain by-in and promote the data collection within their networks and school-based organizations.
4. Personalized Outreach: Determine the utility of personalized invitations by school and university leadership relaying how the student input is valuable and will contribute to positive changes.
5. Increase Utilization of Social Media: Create engaging social media campaigns to promote the data collection.

Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture

Evaluation Report

December 2023

Appendix B: WestEd Final Report

WestEd.org

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Introduction

The Washington University in St. Louis (WashU) Provost Beverly Wendland convened a special task force, the Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture (Task Force), to examine climate and culture on the Danforth Campus in relation to interactions between faculty mentors and their mentees, particularly graduate and professional students, and postdoctoral fellows.[1] The Task Force contracted with WestEd to collect data from various respondent groups on campus to understand current experiences at WashU and how the Danforth Campus culture and climate may be improved.

Evaluation

In collaboration with the Task Force, WestEd conducted a qualitative evaluation of the climate and culture on the Danforth Campus. The evaluation questions were refined and finalized in collaboration with the Task Force and address sense of belonging, mentoring and support, mistreatment and power dynamics, and additional needs to support students' and fellows' experiences (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1. Evaluation Questions

Topics	Evaluation Questions
Sense of Belonging	• To what extent do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows feel a sense of belonging on campus and in graduate education environments (e.g., labs and non-lab environments)? • What contributes to their sense of belonging on campus (e.g., peers, faculty, staff)?
Mentoring and Support	• What does the constellation of mentors/advisors look like for graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows? • Who do they go to for support on campus? • What kind of support does each mentor/advisor provide?

1 https://provost.wustl.edu/programs-initiatives/danforth-campus-task-force-on-climate-culture/

Mistreatment and Power Dynamics	• How do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows define mistreatment in a professional relationship (e.g., sex-based discrimination and harassment, other misconduct)? • To what extent have graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows experienced or witnessed mistreatment on campus/in their professional relationships? • How and to what extent are graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows aware of how to navigate a relationship or situation that involves mistreatment? (What training/information has been provided? Do they understand the proper channels to report mistreatment?) • How and to what extent do power dynamics play a role in students' experiences of mistreatment and their reporting of these incidents? • How and to what extent are faculty and staff aware of what constitutes mistreatment and how to navigate a relationship or situation that involves mistreatment? (What training/information has been provided? Do they understand how to support students who report mistreatment?)
Additional Needs	• What additional supports do graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows need to support their sense of safety in professional relationships on campus? • What additional training/information do faculty and staff need to support graduate and professional students' and postdoctoral fellows' sense of safety in professional relationships on campus?

To answer the evaluation questions, WestEd conducted focus groups, interviews, and Listening and Learning sessions with graduate and professional students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, staff, and administrators. The evaluation team also reviewed relevant documents and websites and existing climate survey data to provide further contextual details. WestEd collaborated with the Task Force to develop a suite of data collection protocols tailored for the various respondent groups.

Recruitment

The evaluation team relied on the Task Force to recruit participants for the study. The study was communicated to the Danforth community through websites, newsletters, and targeted emails. Exhibit 2 presents a list of all recruitment communication types and channels.

Exhibit 2. Participant Recruitment Communication

Communication Type	Channels
Publications	The Record
Websites	Provost Office; Office of Post-Doctoral Affairs

Newsletters	Graduate Professional Council; Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Diversity; Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs
Emails to Listservs or Groups	Graduate and Professional Leaders Group; Center for Career Engagement/Career Center Advisors; Communications Directors in all Schools; GSS; Post-Doctoral Office; A&S Chairs, Directors of Graduate Studies and Graduate Program Advisors; A&S Office of Graduate Studies to all students
Emails from Vice Provost Office Staff	All Danforth Graduate and Professional Students (excluding Medical School and new Fall 2023 cohorts); All Postdoctoral Fellows
Handouts	Graduate Center Events – Flyers in center and at any events

Data Collection and Analysis

As a result of the recruitment efforts, 64 unique respondents participated in data collection during the on-site visit and post-visit Zoom interviews. WestEd conducted 6 focus group sessions with graduate and professional students, and postdoctoral fellows; 19 individual interviews with graduate students, faculty, staff, and administrators; and 2 Listening and Learning sessions for all parties in graduate education to attend. Exhibits 3-5 provide the numbers of respondents for each data collection effort.

Exhibit 3. Focus Group Participants

Participant Type	Number of Participants
Graduate/Doctoral Students	17
Professional Students	14
Postdoctoral Fellows	1
Total	32

Exhibit 4. Interview Participants

Participant Type	Number of Participants
Graduate/Doctoral Students	2

Faculty/Staff/Administrators	17
Total	19

Exhibit 5. Listening and Learning Session Participants

Session	Number of Participants
Session 1	10
Session 2	3
Total	13

The evaluation team analyzed the qualitative data using thematic analysis by systematically identifying and interpreting recurring patterns and themes in the data and triangulating those themes across respondent groups. The main themes encompass the findings of the report.

Positionality

The WestEd evaluation team purposely sought to engage in anti-racist and culturally responsive evaluation practices. The evaluation team consists of three women of color. During interviews and focus groups, we worked to foster a safe environment and shared understanding with the study participants. We acknowledge and reflect on how our own assumptions, biases, and experiences related to gender, race and ethnicity may influence data collection and analysis.

Findings

This evaluation report is organized around the study's research questions corresponding to the following areas: Sense of Belonging, Mentorship and Support, Mistreatment and Power Dynamics, and Additional Needs. Each of the sections presents findings from the focus groups, interviews, and Listening and Learning sessions to highlight strengths and areas for improvement. Throughout the report, respondent quotes are provided to illustrate and give voice to the findings. The report concludes with recommendations to improve campus climate

and support graduate and professional students' and postdoctoral fellows' sense of safety in their professional relationships.

Sense of Belonging

Graduate and professional students' and postdoctoral fellows' sense of belonging varies by context. Respondents provided differing reports regarding their sense of belonging in their program, department, and campus environments and among their peers.

Students discussed how they feel a sense of belonging on campus in general but less so in their specific departments. They noted the presence of events and clubs on campus that offer opportunities for involvement but mentioned a lack of community-building initiatives in certain departments. One graduate student highlighted this difference, stating, "Our department struggles very much with generating a sense of belonging. At least in the first two years, I know part of it was COVID of course… On the campus I've always found it very successful. They have lots of organizations on the campus and events. My department, no, not really." A graduate student from a different department commented on a similar feeling and attributed it to a disconnect between the Medical Campus and the Danforth Campus. "I think for my program, we're divided between Danforth and the Medical Campus, so I think I feel belonging to WashU, but then I wouldn't say I felt belonging to my department, and I think there's maybe like a disconnect between different campuses. I think I'm very active outside the department with student groups, so that's where my sense of belonging comes across."

Students spoke about how some departments lack an inclusive culture, making it more challenging to find a sense of community. One business student commented on this issue, stating, "I don't think there's an effort made to be inclusive or to go above and beyond. So, a lot of closed doors. A lot of people working on research, so… there's also not a culture of, 'New person, hi, or who are you?'"

Students discussed the challenge of finding a place where they had a sense of belonging when the department did not provide that feeling. One professional student noted, "I have to go out of my way here to find a community." A graduate student talked about the difficulty in finding a community, saying, "I think sometimes it can be isolating when you talk about the sense of belonging on campus. And still trying to find community. Still trying to connect with different groups. Yeah, some of it is taking some time, some of it has just been a transition in this environment, at this university… Some of it is just kind of finding out, trying to socialize, and get outside of my department and meet new people. My department and the school itself can sometimes be very insular."

Another graduate student highlighted an extreme case of lacking any sense of belonging in the department, stating, "Department is an extreme case of lacking. And then in general I think it's tough in a PhD program because it is just inherently isolating… It's a little bit harder to connect

with people in meaningful ways… When I would like to engage in real conversations with the people who are actually involved in the problematic context that is giving rise to this extreme loneliness, extreme lack of a sense of belonging, there is very much almost tangible discomfort and trying to minimize my concern or make light of it or ignore it or shift the conversation away. Or in some other way indicate that it is inappropriate for me to be expressing discomfort or dissatisfaction in some way. And so that's really difficult."

Students of Color

Racially underrepresented student respondents commented on the lack of diversity in their departments and this hindering their ability to cultivate a sense of belonging. One graduate student commented on the lack of diversity in the department, saying, "I feel as an African American woman in the… department, which contains labs that we only see white male figures in that role, so it doesn't give me any hope to want to be in academia, because I don't feel like I would belong in that area."

Students of color spoke about experiencing microaggressions in their interactions with faculty and other students, contributing to their feelings of isolation. A PhD student talked about the challenging experiences being the only person of color in the program, stating, "I would say my first couple years I had a very low non-existent sense of belonging… I was the only Black student in my program… I would say I definitely felt isolated and marginalized, so much so that firstly people isolated me or marginalized me, but then I self-isolated out of protection because it was so violent and injurious. A lot of the experiences and interactions that I had with students and faculty members, so I didn't necessarily have a sense of belonging at all."

Conversely, the few underrepresented students who work with same-race faculty and peers noted the opposite in terms of their sense of belonging. An African American student commented on her positive experiences in the department,

"My sense of belonging is fairly high. I feel like I have support. Part of that is because I have advisors and mentors who also look like me in terms of same race, same gender, so I think that helps a lot. There are other African American students in the program, so I'm able to have just students of color in general."

Belonging Among Peers

Students tended to report good relationships with their peers in their programs, which contributed to their feelings of belonging. One graduate student talked about sense of

belonging with people on campus, saying, "I don't attach especially strongly to the campus or as much to my program either, but certainly some folks within my program, some folks in larger and smaller graduate organizations. But overall, I don't know that I have a sense that I belong on the campus. I have a sense that there are people here that I fit well with." Another graduate student talked about feeling a sense of belonging among peers, noting, "There's people that make me feel like I belong here, but not necessarily the campus as a whole... It really feels like it's the people that I know that make it feel like I belong here." Finally, an international law student talked about how international students tend to spend time with other international students to find community, stating, "There is definitely also a bit of a tendency from international students to stick together of course because it's easier. Or we are more in the same situation and it's easier to connect than with the locals and the natives who have been here for a longer time."

Like international students, postdoctoral fellows tend to find community with other scholars. Postdoctoral fellows meet others through their lab work, organizations, or online forums.

Respondents discussed the challenge of being a postdoctoral fellow and being treated more like staff than a student yet not receiving the same benefits as staff on campus or being valued by leadership. One fellow commented on this disparity, stating, "The issue was as a postdoc it felt like we are always considered whatever is more convenient for everyone else. So either we fall in the category of students, or we fall into the category of staff, which is also what is written on our ID card... There is just no category 'postdocs.' So you can either check you're a student or you faculty/staff and you're like, well I'm neither... Why are we not acknowledged as a group of people? A group of people who contribute a lot to the actual scientific output, but then somehow it seemed like on the university level we are kind of non-existent." One administrator spoke about this issue for postdoctoral fellows and the lack of community-building for them, "We may be losing amazing talent because we're not creating a community."

Students spoke about finding community on campus through clubs and student organizations. One graduate student talked about finding a sense of belonging by joining different student associations, stating, "I kind of started compensating by stepping out of my departmental bubble a little bit and trying to engage with the graduate student community as a whole, and that has really helped me to feel home on campus, not just my department or arts and science, but the campus as a whole, like with the graduate student senate. There are all sorts of organizations for graduate students, larger ones, more niche ones, and that has really helped me to feel like I belong here."

Other students discussed building community with those in their cohort and department, like organizing social events or connecting over Zoom, that were not necessarily organized by or endorsed by the faculty and department administrators. One professional student spoke about

this tension, saying, "We've been saying that there's community among students in spite of the administration essentially."

A commonly reported complaint among international students was that those from China in particular feel like they are not getting an international experience given most in their cohort are also from their home country, impacting their ability to develop a sense of belonging with local students. One Chinese professional student commented on the lack of diversity in her department, saying, "I'm a student from the Olin Business School. I think the atmosphere in my department is nice, but there's so many Chinese, I want more. I think it'll be better if they are more locals in my department and I want the atmosphere to more diversified." A fellow professional student in the Business school noted this same concern from his Chinese colleagues during a different focus group, stating, "Some of them kind of feel bamboozled when coming here. They're like, 'Oh, I went to study in America.' And then they come to the classroom, and they see people from the exact same city they're from or from the same university. And they're like, 'Oh, my class is mostly Chinese people.'"

Mentoring and Support

As with sense of belonging, mentoring and support varied considerably for graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows depending on the department and program, with the only consistency in responses being inconsistent experiences. One staff member talked about the difference in departments and faculty when it comes to mentoring, saying, "Every department is a different size and has differently engaged faculty." A faculty member commented, "I hear from our trainees that it's very much up to the individual relationship between student and PI, or mentor and mentee, and it depends on how that relationship is built." An administrator commented on the variation in mentoring in their department and the onus being put on the student, stating, "I think for the most part it seems to be there isn't necessarily a policy or a standard as to how people are receiving mentorship. It's just up to the student and this interaction between them and the faculty member." Another staff member spoke specifically about the variation in mentoring experiences for postdoctoral fellows,

"From what I hear anecdotally, the experiences of postdocs are all over the place, in terms of some have great experiences, feel very supported, feel like they can really grow as a professional as a scholar. Others can't leave WashU fast enough because of how toxic the environment in their department or lab is, or they feel like they're not being supported by their mentor, their PI… hearing from postdocs

that their experience is all over the map in terms of quality and workplace

environment, whether or not they feel supported."

The mentoring supports provided through each department also vary widely. For example, some departments offer peer-to-peer mentoring, and some establish mentor-mentee compacts to create shared expectations and goals for the relationship. An administrator talked about the peer support offered in the department, stating, "We have a group of students who serve as peer academic advisors and when they enroll or when they matriculate, they are assigned to a peer academic advisor who is someone who just checks in on them." Establishing mentor compacts between faculty PIs and students and fellows is becoming more of a norm in some schools across the Danforth Campus, but these compacts are not mandated across all programs.

As another point of variation, some departments established DEI committees, offer mentor training for faculty, and include mentorship statements as part of faculty profiles, while others do not. One faculty member in chemistry talked about how support recently changed in the department, saying, "There is a newly formed community engagement sort of role, which has a very active DEI component and I serve on that committee. So there's a very intentional set of activities that are very different than in the past. In the past it was a very different landscape, but again, different leaders… means that there are different processes in place. And so yeah, there's very directed, intentional, better mentoring or offering for people who want to learn how to do better mentoring."

Respondents were unaware of any policies that exist in relation to mentoring. One faculty member talked about the lack of policy to support postdoctoral fellows, noting, "There isn't a policy that exists, at least on the postdoc side, specific to mentorship. It is implied that career development, obviously it's a mentor position, and that career development should be part of it. How much that actually happens in practice is up to the mentor and the PI. And sometimes that means there's no time carved out for that and mentorship levels vary. So yeah, in terms of policy, there's not one."

Supportive Relationships

Respondents who experienced supportive relationships with faculty advisors attributed the positive experiences to developing trusting relationships and the faculty treating them like peers. One graduate student spoke highly of the support from the department chair, saying, "I have to say that I have a great advisor. Most of the PhD students in my department work with her, though, so I think that's just her as a person. And she really kills herself, she's also the chair, and does a million other things, and she's always there, both personal and professional advice." Another graduate student talked about how lucky she feels to have two faculty

members she trusts, stating, "There's two faculty that I feel comfortable closing the door and saying whatever I need to say."

Many students said their main source of mentoring support on campus is through students in cohorts before theirs. For example, a professional law student noted, "All my success I attribute to meeting people years above me and asking how they did it and how they succeeded." A graduate student talked about how advising is best from other students, saying, "In terms of actual advising, both for being a PhD student and life in general, our department, I think, succeeds more in grad student-led networks of mentorship… The mentors I was assigned to my first year were the ones who got me through first year more than anything, was having them to reach out and just talk and figure out how to be a grad student from my apartment for a year." Another graduate student noted, "I think I have a really good supportive network among the peers, but I wouldn't say I have a good mentor that I can seek advice within the department."

A few respondents talked about having different people who offer diverse types of support. For example, a graduate student talked about relying on her faculty advisor and peers, saying, "I should also say that I have a really wonderful advisor. She is very kind, very supportive, and very available. But also, there are professional boundaries there, right? Like not only is there a power differential, we're also just at work a lot, so there are certainly many types of support that I would not go to her for. But I think for me, most of the support that I've received has been peer support in general, outside of the sort of specific structured ways that one tends to turn to an advisor for support." Another graduate student discussed advice from the department to find different advisors, saying, "In my department, it came up that maybe your advisor should just be for professional advice and maybe having another faculty advisor to be your mentor because maybe you don't want to always share personal problems with your advisor."

Lack of Support

During focus groups, graduate and professional students provided various examples illustrating the lack of support from their academic advisors. For instance, students mentioned consistently not receiving email responses from their advisors, being unable to meet with them, or not even knowing who their academic advisor is. One professional student commented, "Very consistently I'll have to send multiple follow-up emails just to get a question answered. It can take weeks." Another professional student talked about the challenge of getting approval for requests, saying, "I have found so much unpleasantness in trying to get her to approve my basic stuff that I don't feel like I could go to her with questions about my experience, which I'm supposed to be able do when something's not going well."

Graduate and professional students in different departments and programs talked about the issue of staff turnover and how it impacts their level of support. Respondents said it takes longer to get their questions answered as new staff need to be onboarded. One professional student commented on the change in academic advisor, "In my experience, there's just been so

much turnover. And so my academic advisor didn't know anything about either of my programs when I first spoke to her… I think there's just been a lot of turnover within the Brown School and people have way too many students that they're helping." A graduate student in a different department talked about staff turnover and the time it takes to bring new staff on, saying, "I think we're now on our third program manager since I've been in their program. Seems like we can't really keep them and then it takes a long time for them to learn things."

Some students told disturbing stories about the lack of support they received from faculty. One student with a disability who requested accommodations talked about how he was denied accommodations for his exams and as a result, failed his exams and was exited from the program. Another student discussed his negative experiences in asking for help from faculty. He talked about how his experiences differed greatly from his expectations based on what he was told, saying, "This wasn't the agreement that I was told when I got in. You were selling your school. You were telling me how inclusive, how the professors are welcoming. They work with you, they help you, they guide you. I did not get any of this."

Support for International Students

Some departments offer additional support for international students, such as a tailored orientation, writing center and English support, a specific coordinator, and mentoring. Respondents from the Title IX Office talked about doing climate surveys and disaggregating the data by student group, such as underrepresented minorities and international students, to assess their unique experiences.

While there are some tailored supports provided, the evaluation team heard of housing issues for international students. One staff member commented on hearing about the housing concerns from a member of the community trying to help, "I met with someone who's religious in the community and they're taking care of our international graduate students who are begging for housing in the community. Some of our students are going to churches or posting online."

Mistreatment and Power Dynamics

Students and fellows provided numerous definitions of mistreatment and examples of how they witnessed or experienced mistreatment during their time at WashU. A common theme in conversations about mistreatment was how instances of mistreatment are intertwined with power dynamics in academia.

Mistreatment Defined

Students and fellows defined mistreatment as lack of support or feedback, excessive work hours, microaggressions, power imbalances, and inappropriate sexual behavior. Students and

fellows spoke about how they lack support and communication from their faculty advisors and PIs, and how it negatively impacts them when trying to complete program requirements, build networking relationships, and further their careers. One graduate student elaborated on lack of communication and feedback, stating, "I think another example of mistreatment is not reading emails, not reading work, and correlated feedback that's not constructive." Graduate and professional students consistently highlighted experiences where they struggled to get support and communication from faculty, as one student commented,

> *"I sent many emails to my advisor to reach him, and so he wasn't responding to my emails. Then I was like 'Okay, now I need to move on and find another advisor,' and then they turned around and a couple of them came together and they put constraints on me like, 'Okay we'll work with you, but you shouldn't be publishing, you shouldn't be attending conferences, you shouldn't be doing anything but your classes.' I was like, 'This doesn't make any sense.' You are the problem because you are not responding to my emails. You are not doing what you're supposed to do and I'm the one who's being punished here."*

Students and fellows talked about being required to work excessive hours or complete tasks outside of their roles and responsibilities. One graduate student highlighted overbearing working conditions, sharing, "There's this culture of just constant work, constantly getting emails at 2:00am, just that kind of stuff." Another student shared a similar sentiment, "I think the other thing as far as what is considered mistreatment, I think is the exploitation of PhD students. The ideal of like, 'I need you to help crank out papers even though you should be in class.'" As students and fellows elaborated on the topic of excessive and inappropriate working conditions, a student shared a specific account of mistreatment that involved a faculty member's abuse and retaliation against a student, explaining, "One professor in our department used PhD students for babysitting. There was one student in our department who tried to report that babysitting professor… and she got targeted in our department. Our chair was talking about that student in a very negative way to other professors and other students, she tried to make us isolate her."

Respondents reported racial microaggressions in classrooms and in their interpersonal relationships with faculty and peers that forced them into uncomfortable situations and fostered negative mindsets. One graduate student talked about harmful experiences with cultural bias from faculty, stating, "There is a power dynamic between people's cultures which is not always understood." Another graduate student of color shared her personal experiences

that underscore her fear of safely voicing her opinion or sharing concerns, saying, "Most people look at Black people as complaining so I don't want to be put in that box." Students of color shared experiences when other students made them feel uncomfortable, such as offering to send them money to account for any oppression they experienced or by deferring to them for answers concerning challenges experienced by their racial group.

Experiences with Mistreatment

Graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows reported examples of mistreatment in various spaces and relationships across the Danforth Campus. Respondents shared experiencing mistreatment in classrooms, in lab settings, during off-campus events, and within their mentoring, advising, PI, and peer relationships.

Respondents provided examples of mistreatment that occurred during course sessions, both in-person and virtually. Students shared instances where faculty members made comments about a group of students, either in class or through a Zoom chat, making those students feel uncomfortable. A business student noted an example of this during class, saying, "In the business school, a professor of Indian descent made some broad generalization comments about Chinese students in class and the lecture was reported." A graduate student reported an unprofessional comment made by a faculty member during a class session, noting, "A faculty asked students to shut up in a very rude manner when discussing an issue in class. I was shocked to see this. The situation made me feel insecure about raising questions."

Students and fellows reported that some faculty members have no regard for the different identities, backgrounds, and experiences of those they work with. One professional student reflected on a racialized experience and how a faculty member handled the situation, sharing, "I am in law school, and we had to go to court, and they thought I was the client, and my professor didn't address it. I told her and she was like, 'Well you know,' and that upset me." Students noted other instances in class when the faculty member did not step in and address racialized comments being made by other students, making it appear as though they too support the comments. One student noted this during a focus group, "There are some derogatory comments flying around classrooms around race that don't get addressed."

Graduate students and postdoctoral fellows reported often feeling unable to speak with faculty, staff, or administrators about their challenges and needs. One graduate student talked about not being able to express concerns, saying, "The way my situation is, I can't express anything to my advisor or the committee." When the student was finally able to speak to someone about some of the issues, he was told by a faculty member, "You are welcome to drop out of the program."

Students and fellows reported experiencing mental health issues during their program and not feeling supported to share them, risking their psychological safety. Students and fellows reported sharing about their mental health issues with faculty members, assuming it was safe

to do so and that there would be a level of confidentiality maintained; however, this was not always the case. For example, a graduate student reflected on the experience of discussing mental health with a faculty member to which the faculty member reportedly stated, "Don't talk to me about your mental health. I don't feel safe." Subsequently, the faculty member went on to share the student's mental health status with other faculty, discouraging the student from finding another faculty member to work with. Another graduate student shared the experience of a peer who struggled with mental health issues and lack of support from the PI which affected his ability to complete his PhD requirements, saying, "This PI, his first PhD student didn't graduate with a PhD but with a master's because he struggled for five years mentally, and all this student does is blame himself when a lot of us know him not getting his PhD had a lot to do with the PI." Students shared that they tend to rely on the safety they feel among peers or by using the telehealth service TimelyCare[2] for mental health support.

Students who reported experiences with mistreatment to faculty and leadership recounted that they were not always met with support or comfort around these experiences. One graduate student described her experience with trying to bring her concerns to the department, stating, "I had a situation literally two weeks ago… where somebody came in that I had an extremely negative history with and that I did not feel safe around at all and [the program coordinator's] response was, 'Well, do you want to file a Title IX case?' And I said, 'No, there's other people involved in this who don't want to,' and they said, 'Yeah, there's nothing we can do about it then, just suck it up.'" The process of reporting concerning behavior, including inappropriate sexual behavior, being difficult was a common theme across all focus groups. A professional student stated, "I think it's very hard to report sexual harassment to faculty or PIs."

Power Dynamics

Power dynamics and mistreatment are inextricably linked. Power dynamics are present in all aspects related to mistreatment in graduate and postdoctoral experiences, such as professional opportunities, voicing concerns to the PI, and reporting cases of mistreatment to the administration. One administrator noted the following about power in academia, "I think in general, academics is really challenged by the fact that there's so much power that individuals have over other individuals. And so much of the experience is individual and no one's measuring the performance of the individuals and the positions of power."

When asked about power dynamics, every respondent group interviewed reported that the faculty who bring in money yield the most power on campus. One staff member commented on the pressure to bring in funding and how this pressure becomes toxic to students, saying, "There are certain faculty that will never face any consequences because they bring in money to the department or to the school. Those are obviously the people who are the most ruthless people in the world because they have to be that way because of the structure of financial dependence on the government grants on other things. They have to constantly be passing on

that pressure that they get from the dean onto students and onto undergrads, graduate students, all of them. To do the work that they've now been funded to do so that they can get more money."

Respondents also reported there being no recourse if a student or fellow experiences a problem with a faculty member who successfully brings in funding to the institution. One graduate student asked the question, "Can we generally talk about how there is no accountability culture among PIs and that's part of why student experiences swing so wildly from advisor to advisor?" Another graduate student commented on the lack of accountability, saying, "I just would love to see actual action taking place like removal of grad students from a faculty member is in some way rewarding the behavior, because they're getting paid the same to do less work, so that should be unacceptable... Regardless of reputation or funding, the university needs to protect the people that are here and do what's right rather than what is in their best interest... It's like on some level, all of us know whatever the situation is, at the end of the day, there's probably nothing that's going to happen, especially if this person has a reputation that precedes the university or brings in a lot of money or whatever it might be. Just having tenure." A graduate student commented on having to earn your right to complain, noting, "You have to earn your place at the table in order to complain first. You have to produce work and then you're allowed to speak about whatever issue."

In relation to power dynamics, women and faculty of color reported feeling the burden of being an extra support or counselor for students because there is a lack of representation among faculty or other faculty committed to student well-being. One female faculty member commented on this disparity, saying, "I'm in a department with the majority of the PhD students present as female. They come to their female professors if something is going on, which also means that the women end up doing much more of the mentoring work... I've seen the women do that much more, and I've seen them [students] being more hesitant to address the male faculty members in the same way too... problematic gender dynamics come out like that, where women are doing all the work and men are the great intellects." Students also noted this difference, recognizing that some faculty carry more of the workload in supporting students than others in their departments.

Retaliation

Power dynamics also control if cases of mistreatment get reported given the significant fear of retaliation. One faculty member noted hearing this common concern from students, stating, "I would characterize what I hear from students as the central theme in all of those dynamics as power, that there is great and very valid concern of speaking... Concern around speaking out against or trying to find a different mentor, switching labs, because that can harm your reputation through your entire academic career." A staff member commented on what she frequently hears from postdoctoral fellows, saying, "I would say fear of retaliation is something that I always think about particularly because we get a lot of postdocs that will come to our

office, say, 'I'm having this issue,' and then say, 'but I don't want you to tell anyone about it, don't tell anyone.' So they're looking for a solution to just deal with it because they're afraid of retaliation, or afraid of losing intellectual property rights or losing their position as an author on a paper that's going to come out. So retaliation and fears around normal parts of professional development like producing your own research or getting listed as an author on paper."

An administrator commented on the significant weight of retaliation on a person's career, stating, "There's a lot of coercion and the reality is that when you're in a graduate program, your career trajectory is largely defined by your program, the connections you make, the recommendations you're going to get, the publication opportunities you're going to get are really defined within that department. And so oftentimes there is this feeling of a lack of safety to bring things forward because it could be career ending." Another faculty member noted,

> *"Power dynamics control whether experiences with mistreatment get reported, and most often do not for fear of retaliation with some saying it's not worth it."*

Only One Mentor

According to respondents, part of what reinforces the role of power dynamics in reporting mistreatment is that students and fellows generally have only one faculty advisor, whom they also consider their mentor, rather than a constellation of mentors to provide support in different aspects of their educational experience. A staff member spoke about this challenge,

> *"There's this problem in all of higher ed where there's an expectation of our faculty who invite students in a research capacity or an academic capacity to also serve as their mentor. I don't think that's a healthy expectation because they hold power, for lack of a better word, over this student and their publications and their research and what they do. And so to expect that person to also serve as this sort of guided mentor for professional development and life coaching is, I don't think that's possible. And so the way that translates to this is that when I've got this faculty person who has this power over my future and they're my advisor and they're my mentors, they're sort of my only person, and then something happens or something that occurs that maybe that is involved in there, must just*

feel like there's no recourse for this… it just naturally makes it more difficult to hold people accountable and students willing to step forward themselves."

A graduate student spoke about her experiences with not having another person to go to when issues arise with her PI who brings in funding to the department, saying, "I think in my personal case, I see maybe inequitable contribution of authorship within the lab, and then I think that kind of makes it difficult for me to really build a genuine connection with my PI… I'm not sure who to reach out into the department because I think the department, like the PI has 50% of their funding going to [the] department, and as long as the PI can bring money, I don't see a reason why the department will step in, so I think there may be a lack of structure as in what the person I can trust to report."

Visas

International postdoctoral fellows were reported to be especially vulnerable to power dynamics due to their reliance on the university and their PI to sponsor their visa. One administrator spoke about this issue for international postdoctoral fellows, saying, "Our postdocs are a very vulnerable situation because the principal investigator, the PI is the mentor, is their supervisor, is the employer and is the visa sponsor. So, it's a very complicated situation."

One staff member talked about the lack of knowledge among international postdoctoral fellows about their rights and how this can manifest as abuse by faculty, stating, "That's definitely something that we hear in our office from our international postdocs because the relationship that they have with their PI or faculty mentor is slightly different, and in that they are employees of the university so their job could be terminated and there are policies in place about steps towards terminating a postdoc. We've experienced difficulty with faculty not being aware of those policies and trying to terminate postdocs. And then the postdoc comes to our office and they're freaking out and we're like, 'Well, they can't terminate you anyways because they didn't follow any of these things, so you're okay.' But they don't know that and then they think that they're here on a visa and if they aren't employed, they can't stay here. So the PI and the faculty mentor know that that is a huge element in terms of power, and balance and using that explicitly against postdocs to get them to do whatever they want them to do in their lab and enforce whatever the terms are that they've set."

International students' and fellows' American counterparts reported this issue as well. One graduate student noted the lack of power international students have on campus, saying, "I feel like our international students, especially, they have no power to talk about things." Another student noted the following struggles for international students, "If you are an international student, forget about it. You have no loans. You can't get a job depending on what your visa is.

It depends. If you have a mental illness that you need to take time off, your visa determines how much time you get. You may need more time, but you can get deported."

Actions Taken to Disrupt Power Dynamics

There has been recent work on campus by select departments and champions for equity in graduate education to disrupt power dynamics. For example, some departments established mentoring committees for students. One staff member talked about the application and benefits of mentoring committees, stating, "One of the ways that this is being addressed… across arts and sciences, is that more and more we're using mentoring committees that are sometimes where the chair of that committee is not the PI, the mentor. And so part of the power dynamics are diffused because there's a whole mentoring committee that can be leveraged. And so that's a relatively new thing. While it has existed in the past, I think these mentoring committees have more influence, and so it gives students a place to go if they are facing a difficult situation, it also can become an alternate source of letter writers and people who can ensure the students' success. So I think that structure helps diffuse some of the tension."

Faculty and the administration talked about WashU now offering resources[3] to support improved mentoring experiences under the direction of new campus leadership, such as the Faculty Mentoring Summit in October 2023 and access to mentor training through the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research (CIMER).[4] One faculty member noted the following, "We have brand new leadership at the university, and as we're kicking off these new efforts, like Kia Caldwell is really pushing CIMER training, which is wonderful. It's an evidence-based model… I think that it's building awareness of those kinds of possibilities and new ways of looking at mentorship." Roughly 30 faculty from the Medical and Danforth Campuses attended the Faculty Mentoring Summit and 60 faculty completed CIMER's Entering Mentoring training to attain a Level 1 Certification.

Faculty who participated in the CIMER trainings were selected based on who was involved in certain networks, who was recommended to participate, and who came to the minds of those hosting the trainings. The administration reported that the participating faculty appreciated the formalized training to support their work with students and fellows. However, mentor training is generally not readily available for most faculty members.

Awareness Among Students

Awareness of how to navigate relationships or situations involving mistreatment varied significantly among graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows. In the School of Medicine, students have access to a simple decision tree that branches out to QR codes for

[3] https://provost.wustl.edu/vpfad/faculty-mentoring-resources/

[4] https://cimerproject.org/

the various offices and resources that could address their incident of mistreatment based on the answers to each question prompt. On the Danforth Campus, though, interviewees noted there is a lack of communication and training on how to handle instances where they or others around them are mistreated, as well as specific instances such as sexual harassment and assault.

Students and fellows agreed they did not receive adequate training during their orientations at the beginning of their programs. A few students and fellows noted there is infrequent training offered through their departments or the Center for Teaching and Learning. For instance, one student reported seeing resources from the Olin Business School on the internet, but a review of the resources was not part of any training. Students and fellows also thought the resources could be communicated better, especially to international students, who often require more training in mistreatment due to differences in cultural norms between the United States and their home countries.

Most students expressed that they would not know where to report incidents if needed, and that there is no clear process of where to go and what to do when reporting incidents of mistreatment. Students talked about the boilerplate language on their syllabi devoted to contact information for the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center (RSVP) and Title IX Office, but they all felt the language was provided in the interest of protecting the university rather than fostering a safe environment for graduate students and fellows. Students and fellows feel entities such as the Title IX Office, Human Resources, and department heads prioritize the university's interests over those of the individuals seeking assistance. Some students reportedly tried to go up the "chain of command" in their respective schools but found that relationships between faculty in the school made it difficult to find a resolution. For example, one student shared, "I think there may be a lack of structure, as in what person I can trust to report… [one student] had a problem reaching out to the department chair, and it turned out that PI is very close friends with the department chair, so the issue wasn't being addressed."

Students and fellows sought guidance from various sources, including the Office of the Ombuds and student-led organizations, to address the lack of access or knowledge of adequate resources and training related to mistreatment. However, even these resources were found to be lacking. Students felt confused, unheard, or disrespected after speaking to an Ombuds officer, while others did not know about the Office of the Ombuds. One student wished there was more follow-up with themselves and their faculty member after speaking to an Ombuds officer, stating, "Speaking with the Ombudsman was great, but at the end of the day, there wasn't anybody to come in and be that mediator." Students and fellows who turned to student-led organizations found community with other students who experienced mistreatment. Students and fellows share resources or advice with each other; however, they also noted that the advice may not follow the proper channels to report mistreatment.

Awareness Among Faculty/Staff

Understanding what constitutes mistreatment and how to navigate a relationship or situation that involves mistreatment varied among the interviewed administrators, faculty, and staff members. Within the spectrum of understanding, interviewees stated that relationships with power imbalances were at the center of most instances of mistreatment, with one administrator saying, "Mistreatment is the abuse of power over somebody that you have power over." Definitions of mistreatment encompassed instances of dominating relationships, emotional or verbal abuse, inappropriate sexual engagement, sexual harassment, and stalking or threatening physical behavior. Other forms noted include bullying, belittling, racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia. Additionally, the administration, faculty, and staff defined mistreatment as setting unrealistic academic or professional goals, not valuing student and fellows' voices on papers and in class, making students and fellows work unrealistic hours in the lab, withholding academic or professional opportunities, or encouraging inappropriate lab expectations, such as students having to consume alcohol in the lab. A few administrators, faculty, and staff shared that some faculty members expect mistreatment to occur, as they believe these instances are a natural part of the culture of academia. One administrator shared, "They probably experienced inappropriate boundaries themselves as students." One faculty member shared that younger and more diverse faculty are often more aware of what constitutes mistreatment.

Understanding of how to navigate reporting mistreatment also varied among the interviewed members of the administration, faculty, and staff. Interviewees from different schools and departments had different approaches for addressing mistreatment. Respondents reported approaching their department directors, department chairs, school deans, or the provost. Some also reported using processes from the Title IX Office, the Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) through the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, or the Office of Graduate Students. However, the effectiveness of these reporting mechanisms was questioned, with one faculty member stating, "One of the problems about the Title IX process and any other kind of process is that I call it an invisible cage or an invisible set of handcuffs. If I make a Title IX report, I don't know what happens to the person who has exhibited the abusive behavior." Administrators, faculty, and staff also said they suggest channels to students who experience mistreatment, such as the Office of the Ombuds, the Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, or seeking out a Faculty/Student Liaison.

Interviewees revealed a lack of training available to administrators, faculty, and staff and a lack of consistency and accountability for the available training. One faculty member commented on the lack of understanding of the process for reporting mistreatment, saying, "It's not intuitive the way if someone asks me, where can I print my thesis? I know immediately. It's not as in my system as it should be." Trainings available to administrators, faculty, and staff include Bystander Intervention training, Sexual Harassment training, Anti-Racism training, and CIMER

training. Most of these trainings are not mandated or enforced, with respondents sharing that mandating training could lead to resistance from faculty members.

Interviewees expressed that some faculty and administrators demonstrate a genuine commitment to creating a safe learning environment and are open to feedback. However, when these individuals are faced with an instance of mistreatment, they may not respond appropriately. One administrator shared that they often see cases where the faculty member tried to handle the incident of mistreatment themselves and ended up making the situation worse, causing the student to feel more mistreated. The lack of consistency across the Danforth Campus in handling cases of mistreatment reportedly causes confusion for the administration, faculty, and staff.

Additional Needs

Graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows recommended supports to improve their sense of safety in their professional relationships on campus. Suggestions included improved communication, reporting and follow-up about issues related to mistreatment, faculty training, and accountability measures.

Communication, Reporting and Follow-up

The most commonly noted suggestion was to improve communication on the Danforth Campus regarding existing policies related to mistreatment and easy access to the steps to take if they encounter mistreatment. Students suggested streamlining and updating syllabi to be more concise and accessible, and a dedicated tab on each course page for essential reporting information. Students also suggested the Danforth Campus implement a student conduct code that addresses issues of abuse or harassment on social media. Postdoctoral fellows requested clarification about their benefits and their rights.

Students and fellows called for safer ways to report mistreatment and improved advocacy for those who experience mistreatment. Multiple students and fellows suggested a student liaison role, who would check in with students throughout the year on their mental health and psychological safety. Respondents noted that the student liaisons should be outside their departments, so they feel comfortable sharing experiences with faculty or administrators without fear of retaliation or repercussions.

Graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows also expressed the need for transparency in processes related to addressing mistreatment. Students shared concerns about the perceived lack of confidentiality in sharing personal information with offices like the Offices of the Ombuds and the Title IX Office. Students and fellows were frustrated by the amount of time it takes to resolve issues, not receiving any updates on their case, and the lack of accountability for those responsible for the mistreatment. One graduate student talked about

the need for improved communication about the steps taken to address an incident, saying, "I agree with more communication, and I think communication, not just of the polices... but when there are incidents, communication about what steps [are] being taken." Students and fellows also proposed bringing schools across the Danforth Campus together to share processes and policies and learn about promising practices for each school.

Students and fellows expressed their need for training in healthy mentoring relationships, cultural responsiveness in academia, and how to navigate issues related to power dynamics including how to address bullying behavior. Students and fellows also want dedicated spaces for open discussions about power dynamics and mentorship. For schools where graduate/professional student associations are not already set up, they proposed holding student meetings while faculty convene their own meetings. These spaces could serve as open forums for dialogue among students and fellows.

Faculty Training

All respondent groups, including faculty and administrators, recommended training for faculty. Respondents suggested different training topics such as cultural responsiveness, implicit biases, classroom conduct and professionalism, best practices for mentoring relationships, along with improving overall communication and information sharing around resources and support that are available on campus. One faculty member discussed the need for more training, saying, "We don't have necessarily a centralized one training that everybody does," which reportedly creates a culture where faculty address situations as they see fit rather than a unified approach.

Faculty reported there is a mandatory sexual harassment training they complete, however, there is no follow-up around how they respond to issues involving sexual harassment. Due to the stark differences in how faculty respond to complaints of mistreatment, a faculty member shared, "I think it would be great if I was measured on how I handled reports of complaint and harassment... I'd love to have some feedback and evaluation."

Students and fellows want the faculty to complete mentorship training. One graduate student noted the following about faculty training, "Just mentor training, regular mentor training, not just for new faculty coming in, also refreshers for older faculty particularly." Another graduate student commented, "I wish my PI was trained as a mentor. They want to be a good mentor, but they just don't know how to be."

Faculty members agreed that mentor training is needed. One faculty member spoke about supporting postdoctoral fellows and the need for more direct training in mentorship, noting, "We do not receive any kind of support of how to mentor these particular types of career scientists." Another faculty mentor shared sentiments about the importance of improving the mentoring ecosystem on campus through mentoring compacts and faculty commitment, stating, "I think training, yeah, we could definitely do more with training, but I think, one of the things that we've done, and we didn't require it, but I think requiring it could

be good, is to establish mentoring compacts and mentoring plans. And the idea would be that a student would only sign up to work in that lab with that PI if they are willing to abide by that mentoring plan."

Students and fellows also suggest faculty be trained in culturally responsive practices, especially those working with international students. Students and fellows shared incidents in various schools where international students face challenges or academic repercussions due to cultural misunderstandings. One student shared, "There's this assumption that you are coming in from whatever country having never set foot in the United States and know how we do things here. Similarly, with social work and public health… a baseline understanding of the US government and our very unique system and key programs that we have, like Medicaid and Medicare for example is necessary. And [faculty] assume that everyone knows what those things mean." Faculty respondents agreed that culturally responsive and implicit bias training is needed to create a safe environment for all students and fellows. One faculty member shared, "Training is necessary because everybody has biases, but we're trying to create an environment where the people who are working the closest with students are aware of their own identities, biases and are there to support students."

Accountability

Students and fellows stressed the need for accountability for those who abuse power imbalances, such as faculty mentors, PIs, advisors, and lab leads. Students want to see actual repercussions and consequences for faculty who repeatedly mistreat students and fellows. Expectations for professional conduct should be clearly laid out so they and those working with them understand the boundaries of the relationship. Students proposed incorporating mentorship participation into faculty evaluations and linking it with mandated training.

Ultimately, graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows want their voices heard and their concerns addressed by campus leadership. Students and fellows reported frustration with the existing system where they feel they lack a dedicated advocate within the administration to support individuals rather than prioritizing the university's interests. One student shared, "There's no grad student advocate who is like, 'I am here to help this grad student. I know the policies of the university and I think they should be implemented this way to protect this person' versus, 'I know the policies. How about we interpret them this way so then the university is not held liable?' That advocate for the individual doesn't exist." A graduate student shared the difficulty in finding someone to trust due to the reported self-protective culture on campus, stating, "There are so many internal politics that it's a very difficult environment to navigate and find support in because you don't know what somebody else must do to protect themselves. There's a lot of that that's hidden from us and hidden from each other. The environment is really, really cold, very self-protective, so it's hard to know who I can go to with certain issues." Students called for follow-up surveys to assess a broader group of students who could not participate in WestEd data collection. Finally, students and fellows

hope campus, department, and program leadership follow through on their suggestions and enact tangible change.

Conclusion

The experiences of graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows who participated in this study vary considerably in relation to their sense of belonging and the support they receive from their mentoring and advising relationships. While a few respondents described productive and respectful relationships, most students and fellows reported not receiving the support they anticipated at WashU. Students and fellows also cited numerous instances of mistreatment, accompanied by significant power imbalances that deter them from reporting due to fear of retaliation. Although there have been efforts at the university to address the negative consequences of power dynamics through mentoring training and committees, more support is needed to ensure the physical and psychological safety of graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows on the Danforth Campus.

The reported experiences of students and fellows at WashU on the Danforth Campus align with many scholars' experiences in graduate programs across the country and represent a larger concern pervasive in graduate education.[5] Traditional academic hierarchies and the demanding nature of research and academic environments can contribute to challenges such as imbalanced power dynamics, stress, fatigue, and mental health issues among students, fellows, and faculty. A change in the traditional academic culture in higher education would require an evolution in the norms, practices, and values within the university to create more inclusive and supportive research and learning environments. This evolution should include prioritizing equity, diversity, and inclusion, disrupting traditional power dynamics, and encouraging interdisciplinary collaboration. It could also involve reevaluating existing faculty recruitment, hiring, and evaluation practices, placing new emphasis on diversity, mentorship, and supporting the holistic development of students and fellows, including their mental well-being and work-life balance. Achieving significant culture change in graduate education requires a sustained commitment from everyone on campus, including administrators, faculty, staff, students, and fellows.

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[5] Posselt, J. R. (2021). Promoting Graduate Student Well-Being: Cultural, Organizational, and Environmental Factors in the Academy. Council of Graduate Schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following recommendations are provided to the Task Force to improve the climate and culture on the Danforth Campus in relation to interactions between faculty mentors, staff, and graduate and professional students and postdoctoral fellows. The recommendations are focused on tangible and actionable steps that could address both the immediate concerns of respondents and, over time, steadily contribute to a larger-scale culture change on campus. The recommendations are categorized into five topic areas: Communication, Training, Systems of Support, Policy, and Additional Considerations.

Communication

Improve communication about what constitutes mistreatment and the process for reporting. There is a general lack of understanding among students, fellows, faculty, staff, and administrators on the Danforth Campus as to what the university defines as mistreatment or how to report instances of mistreatment. Campus leadership should collaborate with university offices, such as the Title IX Office and the Office of the Ombuds, to provide clearer and more frequent messaging to all parties on the process and steps to take when they encounter instances of mistreatment.

Make information about mistreatment more accessible. Campus leadership may consider creating a simple visual or infographic, such as the decision tree used on the Medical Campus, that clearly presents the steps one should take when they experience mistreatment based on their specific circumstances. This visual should also include clear contact information for the relevant university offices and counselors.

Update and condense sections on course syllabi regarding resources and support when reporting mistreatment. Students expressed that the language on their course syllabi is outdated and appears to protect the university rather than students. Campus leadership may consider working with schools and departments to create new syllabi language that centers student safety. The new language should also be easily accessible to students, such as being posted within their online course tabs.

Training

Provide training for all parties on what mistreatment is and how to handle it. In addition to improving communication about mistreatment, campus leadership may consider providing a standardized training across the Danforth Campus that provides students, fellows, faculty, staff,

and administrators with a clear definition of what mistreatment is, examples of what it can look like in different settings, and the process for addressing instances of mistreatment.

Provide training to students and fellows about their rights, healthy mentoring relationships, and power dynamics. Campus leadership should consider providing students and fellows training and resources that clearly explain their rights as students and postdoctoral fellows at WashU, what healthy mentoring relationships look like, and how to navigate issues related to power dynamics including how to address bullying behavior.

Provide cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and mentor training to faculty. Campus leadership should provide training to faculty in culturally responsive practices and implicit bias and continue to expand the CIMER Entering Mentoring training to all faculty on campus. Departments and programs would be encouraged to follow up on the trainings and use faculty meetings and newsletters to discuss the application of learnings and highlight successful mentoring relationships in their departments.

Systems of Support for Students and Fellows

Offer safer channels for students and fellows to report mistreatment. Students and fellows felt that they could not report mistreatment for fear of retaliation. Campus leadership should consider creating a role or office external to schools and departments that provides support to students. This student liaison role or office could provide a safe process for reporting cases of mistreatment, along with mental health support.

Consider implementation of mentoring committees. To disrupt issues that arise from power dynamics, campus leadership should have departments offer more than one mentor to students and fellows through the implementation of mentoring committees. This would provide students and fellows with multiple people in their department to provide support and serve as an additional resource to voice concerns.[6]

Support student and fellow community building. Students and fellows greatly benefitted from the support of their peers. Campus leadership should encourage schools and departments to support graduate and professional student and postdoctoral fellow organizations and events and provide opportunities for students and fellows from different programs to meet on a regular basis.

Policy

Develop policy for faculty related to mentoring. Given the enormous variation in mentoring experiences on campus, Danforth leadership should consider convening representatives from different schools across the Danforth Campus to collaboratively develop a campus-wide policy

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6 See the UC Irvine example of DECADE Graduate Mentoring Communities: https://inclusion.uci.edu/core-programs/decade/

that provides clear expectations for faculty mentoring and establishes a system of accountability through faculty evaluations.

Mandate faculty training in cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and mentoring. Campus leadership should consider a policy to mandate faculty training in cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, and mentoring, like the sexual harassment training faculty are already required to complete.

Additional Considerations

Administer a climate survey to gather a more representative sample. Danforth leadership may consider conducting further inquiry into the culture and climate on campus by administering a climate survey to graduate and professional students, postdoctoral fellows, international students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Data gathered through a survey could provide a more universal and inclusive view of the perceptions of people on campus. To support participant confidentiality and lessen concerns about possible retaliation based on their responses, the survey should be administered by an external organization and refrain from gathering identifiable information from respondents (such as email addresses or student ID numbers).

Prioritize hiring diverse faculty. Underrepresented students who work with same-race faculty reported feeling supported in their programs and being able to confide in their faculty advisor. Hiring diverse faculty brings a breadth of lived experiences and perspectives that can enrich the academic community. University leadership should consider prioritizing the recruitment and hiring of diverse faculty members to contribute to the WashU community and provide students with diverse role models.

Join the Equity in Graduate Education Consortium. The Equity in Graduate Education (EGE) Consortium[7] brings together change-ready universities, graduate programs, and leaders to align policies and practices with commitments to equity and inclusion. Campus leadership should consider applying to the EGE Consortium to join other universities and experts in the field in learning how to build a supportive and sustainable infrastructure for change and demonstrate a genuine commitment to equity and inclusion in graduate education.

Disseminate results of this evaluation and next steps with the Danforth community. The students and fellows who participated in the evaluation want to be kept abreast of the findings and next steps. Campus leadership should consider communicating the results of the evaluation and next steps through a one-pager, information sessions, and newsletters to let students and fellows know their voices and safety on campus matter.

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[7] https://equitygraded.org/

2023

Executive Faculty Task Force on Climate & Culture

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Task Force Members

Co-Chairs:

Benjamin A. Garcia, PhD

Dineo Khabele, MD

Director:

Renée A. Shellhaas, MD, MS

Administrative Support:

Kaitlyn Hamilton

Student Representatives:

Jennifer Lawrence, PhD candidate (Doctoral degree programs)

Aishwarya Rajesh, PhD (Postdoctoral research)

Christina Su, MD candidate (Medical degree program)

House Staff Representative:

Kai Jones, MD

DEI Liaison Representative:

Rosie Jones, MPPA

Physical Therapy & Occupational Therapy Representative:

Lisa Tabor Connor, PhD, MSOT, OTR/L

Faculty Representatives:

Rakhee Bhayani, MD

Kendall Blumer, PhD

Shaina Eckhouse, MD

Kilannin Krysiak, PhD

Barbara Warner, MD

Gregory Wu, MD, PhD

The Task Force is grateful to the Diversity Liaisons of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion who supported and facilitated the Listening Sessions.

Executive Summary

The **2023 Executive Faculty Task Force on Climate & Culture** was charged with assessment of the current state of Washington University School of Medicine (WashU Medicine) with regard to learner and faculty experiences of sexual harassment and gender discrimination and a focus on the academic mission of the School. The **culture** of WashU Medicine is based on the history and traditions of our School and reflects our values and norms. Our **climate** is how we experience this culture. A positive climate can decrease sexual harassment, reduce retaliation and fear of reporting, and thereby provide the psychological safety needed for students, trainees, staff, and faculty to do their best work. Climate is directly influenced by unit leaders, while culture evolves over time from the mutual experiences and shared learning of a community. Thus, this Task Force set out to assess elements of both culture and climate at WashU Medicine. The focus of this report is on learners and faculty – ongoing efforts through Human Resources and individual Departments, Programs, and Units will continue to address culture and climate for staff.

The Task Force worked with an external consultant, Catalyst – a multinational nonprofit that focuses on inclusion in the workplace. Together with Catalyst, Task Force members reviewed data collected through surveys, focus groups, interviews, listening sessions, and anonymous messages and developed a series of recommendations designed to improve the climate for all learners, staff, and faculty at WashU Medicine.

The formal mixed methods data analysis revealed themes regarding culture, leadership, and career advancement & retention. In particular, trust, communication, and fair processes were emphasized as key areas of focus.

Based on the data analyses, the Task Force developed a set of recommendations to address (1) reporting of sexual harassment and unprofessional behaviors; (2) ongoing assessment of climate and culture; (3) prevention of unacceptable behaviors – including prevention of retaliation; (4) ongoing assessment and enhancement of leadership skills with a focus on Division Chiefs, Section Heads, and Principal Investigators; (5) deliberate attention to any potential or perceived inequities in faculty career advancement.

Institutions – and leaders at all levels – have a critical impact on the climate in which learners, staff, and faculty work and study. It is crucial that the WashU Medicine community, and its leaders, take clear and consistent action to visibly demonstrate that harassment and unprofessional behavior of any kind are unacceptable and that retaliation against those who report any such behaviors is not tolerated.

Summary List of Recommendations

1. **Reporting unprofessional or otherwise inappropriate behavior:**
   a. Simplify the structure of reporting with "one front door" for all types of report.
   b. Accelerate a broad communication campaign to raise awareness of the existing and revised reporting structures.
   c. Provide an annual WashU Medicine Human Resources Report.

2. **Training regarding prevention of sexual harassment and retaliation:**
   a. Continue to mandate annual training on each of these topics.
   b. Tailor training for leaders separately from faculty, trainees, students, and staff.
   c. Create and implement new training on how to report incidents of concern and when reporting is mandatory.
   d. Continue WashU Medicine involvement in the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education.

3. **Develop or revise targeted policies:**
   a. Develop a new policy regarding alcohol consumption in laboratories and during WashU Medicine activities.
   b. Update the WashU Medicine faculty parental leave policy.

4. **Ongoing assessment of Climate & Culture:**
   a. Select and deploy a biannual Climate Survey for WashU Medicine.
   b. Develop and implement a system for exit surveys and exit interviews.

5. **Leadership Development:**
   a. Accelerate the development and implementation of a comprehensive leadership development program for WashU Medicine faculty. Focus on Division Chiefs, Section Heads, and Principal Investigators.
   b. Expedite the development and implementation of a coaching program for WashU Medicine faculty.
   c. Enhance annual evaluations to focus on leadership development for WashU Medicine faculty leaders.

6. **Complete the revision of WashU Medicine Promotion Criteria to recognize and reward the full range of careers at WashU Medicine:**
   a. Include an updated statement on professionalism.
   b. Monitor time to promotion across demographic groups to discern and address potential inequities.

Full Report

Background and Charge

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's 2018 report, _Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Science, Engineering and Medicine_, suggested that "the most potent predictor of sexual harassment is organizational climate." Organizations that tolerate, or are perceived as tolerant of, this behavior have higher rates of sexual harassment than organizations that are seen as intolerant of sexual harassment. Importantly, sexual harassment does not happen in a vacuum – efforts to reduce harassment must target the climate in which such behaviors arise.

The **culture** of WashU Medicine is based on the history and traditions of our School and reflects our values and norms. Our **climate** is how we experience this culture. A positive climate can decrease sexual harassment, reduce retaliation and fear of reporting, and thereby provide the psychological safety needed for students, trainees, staff, and faculty to do their best work. Climate is directly influenced by unit leaders, while the culture evolves over time from the mutual experiences and shared learning of a community. Thus, this Task Force set out to assess elements of both climate and culture at WashU Medicine.

The **WashU Medicine Executive Faculty (EF) Task Force on Climate & Culture** was commissioned in December 2022 by vote of the EF, with sponsorship from the Dean's Office. The charge of the Task Force was to:

- Gather data and assess the current state of resources for addressing and preventing sexual harassment and gender discrimination among faculty, students and trainees.

- Develop recommendations for improving faculty and learner education and training regarding sexual harassment and gender discrimination. This will include raising awareness of existing policies; clarifying reporting obligations and channels; improving training on bystander intervention; and making recommendations regarding how best to address problematic behavior and its impact on others.

- Develop recommendations for improving the reporting process and ensuring accountability in instances of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and misconduct.

- Develop recommendations for improving overall workplace culture at the School of Medicine to ensure that all members of our community are safe and supported in their work and studies.

Approach and Process

Task Force Membership

The Task Force was comprised of students and trainees, a staff liaison to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, as well as junior and senior faculty members of the School of Medicine. Task Force members were nominated by leaders based on their areas of expertise and interest, and aimed to be as representative as possible of the academic medical school community. While the Task Force focus was on learners and faculty, staff input was deliberately sought; more than 100 staff members participated in listening sessions, and more than 1,000 responded to the climate survey.

Selection of an External Consultant

Task Force leaders solicited proposals from four consulting firms with expertise in prevention of sexual harassment, as well as expertise in best practices to promote gender equity and inclusion in the workplace. We selected **Catalyst**, an international nonprofit that focuses on workplace inclusion. Catalyst has more than 60 years of experience working with leading multinational corporations to accelerate progress for women and people from under-represented backgrounds through workplace inclusion. In selecting Catalyst, the Task Force deliberately sought to learn from the experiences of large corporations as well as academic medical centers, to benefit from a diverse set of industry standards. Of note, in 2023 Catalyst selected a large academic health system — the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center — for one of its annual Catalyst awards, an honor given to organizations in recognition of outstanding initiatives, climate and culture that drive representation and inclusion for women.

Also of note, through the consulting agreement with Catalyst, all WashU-affiliated learners, staff and faculty gained access to a comprehensive, helpful set of online resources related to climate and culture.

Timeline of the Task Force

The full Task Force first convened in March 2023 and continued a regular cadence of meetings and working sessions throughout 2023 (**Figure 1**, below).

March 2023 Data Review Listening Sessions → **April 2023** Launch Session → **April – May 2023** 1:1 Leader Interviews Focus Groups Listening Sessions → **June 2023** Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator Survey

August 2023 Data Synthesis & Report of Key Findings → **August/September 2023** Diagnostic Read-Out Session → **September 2023** Strategy Sessions → **September – December 2023** Task Force Completed Report

FIGURE 1: Timeline of the 2023 Executive Faculty Task Force on Climate & Culture

Engagement with WashU Medicine Community

Members of the WashU Medicine Community were encouraged to share their perspectives with the Task Force. Hundreds of learners, staff, and faculty engaged through Community Listening Sessions, Focus Groups, Leader Interviews, and Anonymous Messages (see **Box 1**, below). More than 4,200 people participated in an anonymous survey – the Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator – designed to evaluate the current climate of the School. In addition, to provide historical context, results of previous surveys, initiatives, and relevant complementary data from Programs and Departments were collated, reviewed by Task Force leaders, and assessed by our consultants at Catalyst.

250+ participants at 9 Listening Sessions	**85+** participants at 8 Focus Groups	**8** 1:1 Leader Interviews	**250+** Messages via Anonymous Web Portal	**4,245** Catalyst survey responses
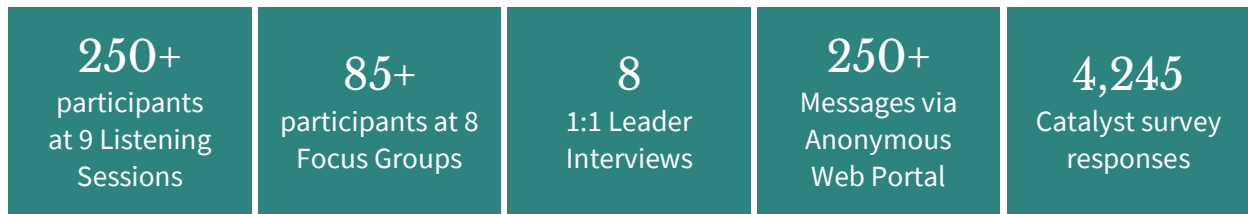
BOX 1: WashU Medicine community engagement

The Task Force provided monthly email updates to the WashU Medicine Community throughout the process and maintained a website (culture.med.wustl.edu) with updates and resources.

Mixed Methods Data Analysis

Catalyst conducted a formal mixed methods analysis of the collected data. Quantitative data from the Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator were analyzed using standard survey methods. Subgroup analyses were informed by Task Force input. A rigorous approach was applied to qualitative analyses of background data, focus groups and leader interviews. This included formal thematic analyses, as well as structured analysis of focus group and interview data (using Nvivo). This approach used machine learning to categorize information by theme and valence and to identify trends in the data. The Catalyst Research & Development Team reviewed the Nvivo output and coding for accuracy and manually coded as needed. Finally, combined quantitative and qualitative analyses, informed by the background data review, were used to triangulate key themes.

Data Summary

The key themes in our background data, qualitative data and Task Force member discussions were reflected in the quantitative survey results. These were:

1. Culture
2. Leadership
3. Retention and Career Advancement

Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator survey results

A total of 4,245 individuals participated in the June 2023 survey. The response rate of 22.5% exceeded the industry standard target of 20%. See **Table 1** for details of participants' demographics.

Average Age	Gender	Race or Ethnicity	LGBTQ+	Department Participation
Respondents: 44 years	*Respondents:* 72% women 26% men 2% another gender	*Respondents:* 75% identified as only white 25% identified as member of an Underrepresented racial and/or ethnic group	*Respondents:* 14% LGBTQ+ 86% Cisgender heterosexual	Medicine: 15% of responses 24% of WUSM Neurology: 8% of responses 6% of WUSM Pediatrics: 6% of responses 8% of WUSM Anesthesiology: 6% of responses 5% of WUSM Surgery: 6% of responses 6% of WUSM
WUSM: 40 years	*WUSM:* 67% women 32% men	*WUSM:* 62% identify as only white	*WUSM:* Data not available	

TABLE 1: Demographics of respondents to the Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator Survey

Strengths identified by the survey included **work engagement**, and managers' **ownership** and **courage** (**Figure 2**).
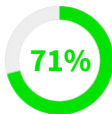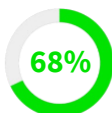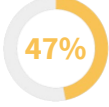
Inclusion Metric	WUSM Score	
Work Engagement You are emotionally invested in your work and the organization's mission	**73%**	Percentage of individuals reporting that they **"often" or "always"** feel engaged at work *Satisfactory score* *Comparators' average: 71%*
Ownership Your manager guides team members to solve their own problems and make their own decisions.	**71%**	Percentage of individuals reporting that their manager **"often" or "always"** engages in ownership behaviors *Satisfactory score* *Comparators' average: 74%*
Courage Your manager acts in accord with their principles.	**68%**	Percentage of individuals reporting that their manager **"often" or "always"** engages in courage behaviors *Satisfactory score* *Comparators' average: 71%*

FIGURE 2: Areas of Strength identified through the Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator Survey.

Key opportunities for improvement included **procedural fairness**, **ability to innovate**, and **psychological safety** (see **Figure 3**). In all areas, women who identified as being from a group that is underrepresented in medicine reported the lowest scores while men who identified as white reported the highest scores.

Inclusion Metric	WUSM Score	
Procedural Fairness Fair, timely, and respectful decision-making processes are in place for individual outcomes.	29%	Percentage of individuals reporting that they **"often" or "always"** have a positive experience of this aspect of inclusion in their organization *Weak score* *Comparators' average: 36%*
Ability to Innovate You think innovatively about new ideas, processes, or products as an individual contributor	47%	Percentage of individuals reporting that they **"often" or "always"** have the ability to be creative at work *Fair score* *Comparators' average: 45%*
Psychological Safety: Latitude You feel you can be different and make mistakes without being penalized.	50%	Percentage of individuals reporting that they **'agree' or 'strongly agree'** that they feel accepted at work *Fair score* *Comparators' average: 45%*

Significant differences between men and women, white and underrepresented groups.

FIGURE 3: Opportunities for improvement identified through the Catalyst Inclusion Accelerator Survey

Procedural fairness represents the perception of fair, timely, transparent, and respectful communication, feedback, and decision-making processes. Results for this theme were low for people in all roles, faculty tracks, and ranks. Women rated this area worse than men, and respondents who identified as belonging to racial or ethnic groups that are under-represented in medicine (URiM) rated this theme worse than did white respondents.

Psychological safety represents feelings that one can be different and make mistakes without being penalized, and that one feels secure in taking risks and addressing difficult issues. Results for this theme were significantly worse for women than men and for people in URiM groups than for white respondents across all roles, faculty tracks, and ranks.

Qualitative Results

The formal qualitative data analysis of focus groups and leader interviews (~ 100 participants) revealed five primary insights into three themes:

Theme 1: Culture (Box 2)

1. Interviews revealed an *intense culture with highly talented individuals,* but both men and women agree that the culture is less supportive of women and potentially hostile toward them.
2. Culture is siloed and inconsistent, varying between roles and departments. Some areas are inclusive while others are described as "boys' clubs," exclusionary toward women, or potentially sexist.

Appendix C: 2023 Executive Faculty Task Force on Climate & Culture (School of Medicine)

Positive	Negative
• Intense, driven, competitive • Collaborative / Teamwork • Collegial / Supportive • Welcoming / Kind • Depth of Talent	• Intense, driven, competitive • Complicated • Inconsistent / Varied / Siloed / Cliquish • Patriarchal and Hierarchical • Old-Fashioned / Traditional / Backwards / Conservative • Frustrating / Exhausting • Judgmental • "Whisper network"

Representative positive comments about culture:

It's a very high-powered academic environment, although one of the most collaborative in my career."
– Woman Leader

"We pride ourselves on being resident-run. We set the tone."
– Woman Resident

"[I'm inspired by WashU's] science, quality of medicine, and whole group of colleagues."
– Woman Faculty

Representative negative comments about culture:

"It's very dependent on the lab you're in. I was in one lab that was very segregated. People had cliques. It was very toxic. I thought WashU was the worst place. I switched labs. Now WashU is a supportive place."
– Man PhD Student

"I don't know if we're creating those safe spaces that we seem to say we are."
– Woman Resident

"Every day, I feel like I am both the elephant in the room and invisible at the same time."
– Student from an Underrepresented Ethnic or Racial Group

"At the med student level, women are recognized for their work. Same at the residency level. But after that, look at who gets promoted and when. There are amazing women leaders, but their recognition is not the same [as men]."
– Woman Resident

"I have been conditioned not to speak up …"
– Woman Postdoc

"Women are often afraid to speak up."
– Woman Leader

BOX 2: How we describe our WUSM culture
(responses from focus groups and leader interviews)

Theme 2: Leadership (Box 3)

1. Perception of unclear accountability mechanisms for leadership.
2. Perception of history of bullying and retaliation from leadership.

Representative comments:

"I don't feel safe talking to my leaders. Reporting is not easy …"
– Woman Faculty

"I have examples of retaliation. I've sent them to HR. I've been told they've gone to the director of HR, but I don't know if they're really looked into."
– Woman Leader

"I've asked … at least three times what they consider retaliation and how to protect against it. I've never gotten an answer."
– Woman PhD Student

"What could use a lot of work: the idea of psychology safety. Feeling you can go to your leadership without fearing retribution or it may come back to harm you in some way."
– Woman Faculty

"… it's really important that individuals learn how to manage people and ensure people working in labs are receiving the training they need to effectively run a lab. We hire based on them knowing their science, but they may not know how to manage people."
– Woman Leader

"In my division, there has never been any formal assessment of managerial capabilities."
– Woman Leader

"We don't train our faculty on how to be good managers/executives. Usually, they are good at their [subject matter expertise]. That doesn't equip somebody for dealing with other issues that come up …"
– Woman Participant

BOX 3: Leadership

Theme 3: Retention and Career Advancement (Box 4)

1. Inconsistent, unclear, and informal processes for promotion and career growth.

Participants spoke at length about perceived unfairness around career advancement.

Perceptions included:

- *Unclear and inconsistent process for awarding advancement opportunities.*
- *Women and underrepresented groups disadvantaged in ability to advance.*
- *Struggles in retaining talent, especially women and underrepresented groups.*

Representative comments regarding retention:

"We have had a fair amount of turnover of some women leaders and senior leaders working [in different areas]. There is a perception that there is a bit of a revolving door."
– Woman Leader

"We see a lot of turnover in areas where these [DEI] issues go unaddressed or inappropriately addressed."
– Woman Participant

"The retention issue isn't just about WashU. It's about Missouri. It's hard to be a woman or a minority in Missouri."
– Woman Faculty

BOX 4: Retention and Career Advancement

Interpretation: The Task Force identified systemic challenges related to climate and culture. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive, longitudinal engagement and sustained commitment of time, energy, and resources.

Recommendations

Through a series of data review and strategy sessions facilitated by Catalyst, the Task Force developed a set of recommendations that address three key focus areas:

1. Communication
2. Prevention
3. Leadership

What follows is a summary of these recommendations. Importantly, the Task Force recognizes that in the hierarchical culture of academic medicine, improving the climate – particularly for learners, staff, and junior faculty members – requires a focus on leaders' behavior. Thus, many of the recommendations are directed at faculty with the understanding that gains in this realm will result directly in an improved climate for learners and staff.

Focus 1: Communication

Communication: *Reporting*

The data revealed confusion and misunderstandings regarding the mechanisms for appropriate reporting of unacceptable behaviors. Additionally, concerns about retaliation were pervasive and currently limit our community members' willingness to report incidents of concern. There was also a theme of mistrust of the effectiveness of the reporting and investigative systems. As a corollary, improvements in reporting systems and advances in trust of the process are expected to result in *increased* numbers of reports of concerning incidents.

> **Recommendation 1***:* Simplify the structure of reporting for unprofessional or otherwise inappropriate behavior. Develop a single "front door" for reporting such behavior that is readily accessible to all members of the WashU Medicine community. The Task Force suggests leveraging the existing SAFE portal system, which is already on all WashU Med core image computer desktops, to allow individuals to easily navigate the systems for reporting incidents of any type.

> > **Recommendation 1a**: When laboratories or faculty principal investigators are the subject of investigations regarding unacceptable behaviors, both the Department Head and the Associate Dean of DBBS should be notified in order to enable appropriate interventions for learners and staff.

> **Recommendation 2:** Design and implement an effective communications campaign to explain the existing (and revised) reporting systems broadly and to encourage individuals to report incidents of concern. This enhanced communication could include development of flow charts that visually depict ways to report and what happens after reports are received. A short-term measure of success for this communications campaign will be an increase in numbers of filed reports.

Recommendation 3: To improve transparency and to track the quantity and types of reports, provide an annual report from WashU Medicine Human Resources. This report would be akin to, but separate from, the existing annual report of the Title IX Office.

Recommendation 4: There was particular concern raised by graduate students that their assigned Ombuds is now a remote service, rather than a local individual who has direct experience with WashU and is available for in-person meetings. The Task Force recommends exploring the possibility of hiring a local ombuds for this student population. Of note, staff, medical students, and faculty already have local ombuds.

Communication: *Ongoing Assessment of Climate & Culture*

Recommendation 5: Establish a system for routine conduct of faculty exit surveys and exit interviews to ascertain themes and permit targeted interventions.

> **Recommendation 5a**: Exit surveys could be administered electronically through the Human Resources system to all departing faculty 3-6 months after their end dates at WashU Medicine. Work is underway to initiate this program.

> **Recommendation 5b**: Exit interviews should be conducted by a neutral party in order to alleviate concerns about conflict of interest and retaliation. These interviews could be reserved for units with higher than expected faculty turnover.

> **Recommendation 5c**: Data from exit surveys and interviews must be analyzed to identify themes. Aggregate data and themes should be communicated regularly to WashU Medicine leaders in order to facilitate appropriate interventions. This initiative will be incorporated as Recommended 5a is rolled out.

Recommendation 6: Teach leaders to conduct "stay interviews." Stay interviews are designed to proactively identify opportunities to support and enhance the careers of high-performing individuals. Conduct of stay interviews can be included in training workshops for leaders on best practices for Annual Reviews. One such workshop has been completed in 2023, and another is planned for Spring 2024; this can be an annual offering.

Recommendation 7: Conduct ongoing assessment of WashU Medicine climate and culture, and improvements that may result from targeted interventions, through a biannual culture and climate survey. A survey with appropriate comparator institutions should be selected (e.g. AAMC, Press Ganey, etc.). It will be critical to invest in analyses to permit schoolwide and individual Department and Program responses to address the results.

Focus 2: Prevention of Unacceptable Behaviors

Prevention of Unacceptable Behaviors: *Training*

Beyond compliance, training should be designed to emphasize desired behaviors, equip community members to respond appropriately to unacceptable behaviors, and deliberately position WashU Medicine for the desired changes in climate and culture.

Recommendation 8: Create and implement enhanced training on retaliation and update existing training on prevention of sexual harassment. Importantly, such training must be in compliance with state medical licensing boards, many of which mandate training on prevention of sexual harassment. This *mandatory* annual training should follow best practices for adult learning and be tailored by role (e.g. training for leaders is not identical to training for students, trainees, staff, or other faculty members). Training for leaders and faculty should include information about the 2022 NIH/NSF reporting policy for principal investigators.

Recommendation 9: Create and implement enhanced training on how to report incidents of concern and when (and by whom) reporting is mandatory.

Recommendation 10*:* Increase WashU Medicine involvement in the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. WashU is a member of the Action Collaborative and has two senior leaders who represent the University; appointment of additional representatives to work groups could augment learning and application of best practices here at WashU Medicine.

Prevention of Unacceptable Behaviors: *Policies*

Recommendation 11: Multiple anonymous messages to the Task Force, as well as participants in focus group and listening sessions, highlighted concerns about a culture of alcohol use in research laboratories. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that WashU Medicine evaluate options for a new policy on alcohol consumption during WashU Medicine activities, including activities that occur in laboratory spaces or with laboratory teams whether on or off campus.

Recommendation 12: Anonymous messages to the Task Force, as well as participants in focus groups and listening sessions, raised concerns about inconsistent application of the parental leave policy and fear about retaliation for parents who access parental leave. Appropriate parental leave is critical for the health and well-being of parents and their infants, as well as to parents' career development and retention. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the WashU Medicine faculty parental leave policy be revised and then implemented consistently across all of the School's Departments and Programs. Of note, the policy for Medical School faculty is separate from the Danforth Campus faculty parental leave policy. Parental leave policies for learners and staff are also distinct from the faculty policy.

Focus 3: Leadership

Leadership: *Continuous Development of Leaders*

Recommendation 13: Develop and implement a comprehensive leadership development curriculum with activities tailored to roles and levels of leadership. The highest priority groups for this training include Division Chiefs and Section Heads, as well as Principal Investigators who supervise learners and staff. The emphasis of leadership training should include trust, communication, procedural fairness, and psychological safety. To expedite implementation of this curriculum, a consultant may be required.

Recommendation 14: Develop a coaching program for WashU Medicine faculty. Coaching is ideally used proactively to augment emerging and established leaders' career development. To expedite this effort, a consultant may be required.

Recommendation 15: Develop and offer targeted workshops for faculty that are designed to improve the climate for learners, staff, and faculty. Examples of key topics include: Addressing Unprofessional Behavior, Crucial Accountability™, Basic Coaching Skills, Approach to the Annual Review, Understanding Promotion Criteria, etc. Each of these is already scheduled for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Recommendation 16: Update the annual review process for leaders.

> **Recommendation 16a**: The Task Force recommends that annual reviews for leaders include assessment of engagement with leadership development activities and related leadership goals and accomplishments, as well as discussions about promotions, mentorship and sponsorship of faculty.

> **Recommendation 16b**: To facilitate assessment of leaders, the Task Force recommends that resources be developed for leaders to participate regularly in 360^0 evaluations.

Leadership: *Career Advancement*

Recommendation 17: Establish and communicate expectations and structures for Division Chiefs and Department Heads to proactively and equitably manage career development and advancement for faculty.

Recommendation 18: While the Task Force did not specifically ask participants about promotions, many faculty shared concerns about equity in promotions. Therefore, the Task Force endorses the ongoing plan to revise the faculty promotion criteria to focus on recognition of faculty across the range of academic medicine careers.

Recommendation 18a: Revised faculty promotion documents and criteria should include an updated statement on expectations for professionalism.

Recommendation 18b: Leaders will require education on best practices for evaluation of faculty for promotion, while faculty will require education on the revised criteria.

Recommendation 18c: Time to promotion should be monitored across demographic groups.

Recommendation 19: Revision of the faculty promotion criteria and monitoring time to promotion are important next steps to address the perceptions of unequal opportunities for advancement. Should Recommendation 18 fail to result in improvements in real or perceived inequities in faculty promotions, the Task Force recommends eventual evaluation of potential changes to current promotion committee processes.

Additional Key Considerations

- The Danforth Campus of Washington University also has commissioned a Danforth Task Force on Climate and Culture to conduct a review of the University's complex ecosystem of faculty mentors, advisors and mentees, and to review the guidance available to people on the Danforth Campus concerning what to do if confronted with inappropriate behavior or situations. The Danforth Campus Task Force is focused primarily on the experience of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The output from that Task Force should be considered if it can provide some additional benefit to our plan.

- There are many ongoing efforts and existing information and resources related to improving climate and culture across the Medical and Danforth campuses at Washington University. These are housed on various websites and within different units. Those existing resources should be leveraged to the extent possible when refining materials and updating best practices.

- All training and education efforts, especially required training, require buy-in from the community. Best practices for change management approaches and techniques are needed, and will need engagement from unit, Program and Department leaders.

- Execution of the recommendations presented in this report requires the investment of time, energy, and additional resources.

Next Steps

Institutions – and leaders at all levels – have a critical impact on the climate in which learners, staff, and faculty work and study. It is crucial that the WashU Medicine community, and its leaders, take clear and consistent action to visibly demonstrate that harassment and unprofessional behavior of any kind are unacceptable and that retaliation against those who report any such behaviors is not tolerated.

Consistent, visible support from leaders for ongoing efforts to enhance our climate and culture are crucial to the success of this work. We call on leaders to model the desired behaviors, cultivate trust and psychological safety, actively listen and respond to members of the community, and demonstrate good judgment and appropriate transparency. Hiring, developing, and promotion of leaders who demonstrate skilled attention to and willingness to constructively address unacceptable behaviors is key to our School's success.

Culture change takes ongoing investment of time, energy, and resources. The recommendations in this report are intended to encompass a range of next steps that can have a meaningful impact on the climate of WashU Medicine's academic enterprise. This work will be challenging but must be concerted and longitudinal. The Task Force is optimistic that our community is ready for this difficult work, and that we are all committed to the consistent and patient efforts needed to achieve our goals.

The next phase of this work at the School of Medicine will be the appointment of a new Executive Faculty Implementation Task Force. Implementation Task Force members will include Executive Faculty leaders, as well as representatives from Human Resources, Marketing & Communications, and the Office of General Counsel. The School of Medicine Offices of Education, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and Faculty Promotions & Career Development also will be involved in the implementation of individual recommendations. The Implementation Task Force is committed to updating the WashU Medicine Community with regard to progress on the above Recommendations.

Appendix D: Students for Equal Treatment (SFET) Recommendations

To the leaders of Washington University and the School of Medicine,

We, medical students and graduate students of Washington University, draft this letter as a summary of discussion with over fifty of our peers and multiple faculty members here and at other institutions. We have identified specific deficiencies that contribute disproportionately to the lack of personal and professional safety experienced by students.

I. University-wide tolerance and promotion of **non-sanctioned alcohol use** in workplace settings
II. Absent or insufficient training among **Mandatory Reporters**
III. Insufficient knowledge and enforcement of **Standards of Conduct policies** as detailed in the WUSM Employee Handbook
IV. Insufficient **utilization of existing reporting resources** (SAFE, Title IX, ombudsmen, peer advocates)
V. Insufficient **transparency** regarding campus-wide mistreatment and abuse
VI. Insufficient **oversight of student research activities and responsibilities** from Principal Investigators, Graduate Program Directors, and the MSTP office

The sum of these deficiencies is to perpetuate an unsafe environment for all students. We recommend the following changes to University policy:

I. To address **alcohol misuse**:
   a. Enforcement of University policy banning the consumption of alcohol and drugs at non-sanctioned events on University property, including at lab meetings, non-sanctioned social functions, and in workspaces, generally
   b. Publish standardized punishments for non-adherence to this policy

Goals: Ensure a professional workplace free of the safety risks associated with alcohol use.

II. To address insufficient training among **Mandatory Reporters:**
   a. Annual requirement for an in-person training session for all Mandatory Reporters in addition to an in-person training session at the time of first assuming this responsibility
   b. Publish clear University Policy and repercussions for failing to fulfill the duties of a Mandatory Reporter

Goals: Every Mandatory Reporter must be aware of their responsibility and be appropriately trained to carry out their duties as legally mandated.

Appendix D: Students for Equal Treatment (SFET) Recommendations

III. To address the **Standards of Conduct policies**:
   a. Every lab distribute a standardized Laboratory Handbook with Standards of Conduct policies, as detailed in the WUSM Employee Handbook, concerning Professional Standards, Consensual Relationships, Discrimination & Harassment, Title IX, Drug & Alcohol Policy, Dress and Personal Appearance, etc.
   b. At orientation and/or onboarding, new students and faculty should be educated on the Standards of Conduct at an in-person didactic session
   c. Publish clear University Policy and repercussions for failure of Principal Investigators to communicate and adhere to the Standards of Conduct in the laboratory environments that they lead

Goals: Every member of the WUSM community adheres to the workplace Standards of Conduct policies.

IV. To address **insufficient utilization of existing reporting resources**:
   a. Annual requirement for in-person training sessions on the utilization of existing mistreatment reporting resources with distribution of accessible take-aways (flyers, fridge magnets, business cards, etc.)
   b. Expand the peer advocate program to DBBS and diversify the roster of peer advocates
   c. Hire a third-party contractor to serve as a completely confidential, victim-centered, and impartial resource for those who prefer a confidant outside of University employ

Goals: Every student is knowledgeable of existing reporting resources. Qualified peer and non-university affiliates exist for students who prefer such avenues.

V. To address insufficient **transparency of campus-wide mistreatment**:
   a. Publish and distribute to the entire student body quarterly summary and department-level data of SAFE and Title IX reporting in clearly advertised emails with no additional content
   b. Organize an immediate campus-wide survey conducted by a third-party to canvas the campus climate as it pertains to mistreatment, abuse, and discrimination with publication of the full results
   c. Individuals with multiple internal complaints over time should be investigated by a third-party commission

Goals: Students are aware of the current campus climate regarding mistreatment, abuse, and discrimination. Community members trust that repeat offenders will face impartial investigations and that the University will impart punitive actions if recommended.

VI.   To address insufficient **oversight of student research activities and responsibilities:**
   a. Require formal managerial training for all Principal Investigators and any post-doctoral candidates who oversee students
   b. Requirement of the DBBS Mentor-Mentee Compact and Expectations form, or some appropriate adoption thereof, that includes principles related to authorship (e.g., as defined by ICMJE), for all students (rotation students, MSTP students, graduate students, medical students) prior to beginning research activities
   c. Requirement of regular meetings with the Program Director or Co-Director at the halfway point of month-long rotations and semi-annually during longer periods of research activity for MSTP and Graduate students
   d. Requirement of a special exemption by the MSTP office for MSTP students within Phase 1 to work more than 12 hours per week on research activities with quarterly meetings to renew the exemption
   e. Ban of any regular mandatory lab functions, including lab meeting, journal club, individual meetings, etc. outside the hours of 9-6 M-F and during holidays

Goals: Students and Principal Investigators share expectations of the student's research experience. The Principal Investigator is directly aware of the week-by-week work hours, work conditions, and research contributions of students. Students are not subject to a single supervisor for the communication of their work output to the Principal Investigator. The Program Director or MSTP office serves as an additional regular contact point to communicate the students research experience. Participation in off-campus activities is optional and does not impact student standing or opportunities in the workplace.

We seek active collaboration among students, faculty members, and the administrative leadership to enact University policy as it is currently written, increase the transparency of mistreatment reporting, and identify any other actionable reforms to improve students' personal and professional safety.

Sincerely,

Students For Equal Treatment

Washington University
Doctoral Exit Survey Report By Discipline
Five Years, Responses Combined

Detail: Mentoring and Climate

The AAU Doctoral Exit Survey provides graduating doctoral candidates with an opportunity to evaluate their institution, doctoral program, faculty advising and professional development and report on their plans for the future.

Washington University conducted fifteen waves of the survey during the 2017-18 to 2021-22 academic years (August, December, and May for each academic year). Data from these waves were combined, with 86% of the invited candidates responding. This report includes detailed tables of the responses. The survey instrument is available at: **provost.wustl.edu/institutional-research-analysis**.

This report is intended for the use of Washington University administrators and faculty, for the purpose of institutional improvement. This is not intended for public release; please do not circulate it to any media or outside of WU without further review from Institutional Research & Analysis.
This is not intended for use in any work that meets the federal definition of research.

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Sample Size and Response Rate

By Year	Surveyed	Responses	Response Rate
2017-18	256	228	89%
2018-19	290	253	87%
2019-20	294	250	85%
2020-21	253	214	85%
2021-22	301	256	85%
By Area	**Surveyed**	**Responses**	**Response Rate**
Arts & Sciences	946	817	86%
Humanities	130	112	86%
Social Sciences	181	162	90%
DBBS	435	377	87%
Physical Science & Math	200	166	83%
Engineering	321	277	86%
Social Work	53	45	85%
Business	53	44	83%
Med Campus PhDs *	21	18	86%
Total	1,394	1,201	86%

* Medical Campus PhDs include the PhD in Rehabilitation and Participation Science, the PhD in Movement Science, and the PhD in Speech and Hearing Sciences.

Overall Satisfaction

Please rate your overall satisfaction with each of the following:

		Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Your academic experience at Washington University	Excellent	43%	38%	49%	45%	41%	58%	42%	67%
	Very good	37%	38%	37%	34%	39%	22%	28%	28%
	Good	13%	16%	12%	16%	16%	18%	19%	0%
	Fair	5%	6%	2%	4%	4%	2%	12%	6%
	Poor	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
	n	112	160	376	166	277	45	43	18
Your student life experience at Washington University	Excellent	28%	23%	38%	42%	39%	40%	47%	44%
	Very good	27%	41%	38%	30%	30%	27%	23%	44%
	Good	26%	20%	18%	18%	20%	24%	12%	6%
	Fair	12%	14%	6%	8%	8%	2%	19%	0%
	Poor	7%	3%	1%	2%	2%	7%	0%	6%
	n	111	160	376	166	276	45	43	18
Your overall experience at Washington University	Excellent	33%	30%	44%	43%	42%	49%	42%	56%
	Very good	38%	41%	37%	32%	35%	31%	28%	39%
	Good	16%	21%	15%	19%	20%	13%	14%	0%
	Fair	11%	6%	4%	4%	3%	2%	16%	6%
	Poor	3%	3%	0%	2%	1%	4%	0%	0%
	n	112	160	376	166	277	45	43	18

Faculty Mentoring and Advising

How helpful was the advice you received from your primary research/thesis advisor in each of these areas?

		Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Selection of a dissertation topic	Very helpful	68%	74%	72%	83%	77%	84%	71%	83%
	Somewhat helpful	22%	21%	22%	13%	17%	11%	20%	6%
	Not very helpful	5%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%	6%
	Not at all helpful	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
	N/A – I did not receive	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	7%	6%
	n	112	159	371	165	275	45	41	18
Your dissertation research	Very helpful	70%	76%	75%	81%	73%	89%	83%	83%
	Somewhat helpful	21%	18%	21%	15%	21%	7%	15%	11%
	Not very helpful	8%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	0%	6%
	Not at all helpful	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
	N/A – I did not receive	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%
	n	112	159	371	165	276	45	41	18
Writing and revising your dissertation	Very helpful	76%	69%	54%	76%	65%	78%	75%	72%
	Somewhat helpful	14%	22%	30%	16%	20%	18%	20%	28%
	Not very helpful	7%	6%	10%	6%	9%	4%	5%	0%
	Not at all helpful	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	0%	0%	0%
	N/A – I did not receive	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
	n	112	159	371	165	275	45	40	18
Academic career options	Very helpful	53%	55%	55%	55%	57%	71%	63%	72%
	Somewhat helpful	28%	26%	29%	28%	25%	16%	20%	11%
	Not very helpful	13%	11%	8%	9%	5%	7%	7%	11%
	Not at all helpful	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	0%	2%	0%
	N/A – I did not receive	4%	5%	5%	6%	8%	7%	7%	6%
	n	112	159	368	162	267	45	41	18
Nonacademic career options	Very helpful	18%	15%	27%	41%	46%	37%	33%	41%
	Somewhat helpful	26%	20%	29%	23%	24%	21%	18%	6%
	Not very helpful	20%	20%	19%	17%	15%	12%	5%	24%
	Not at all helpful	15%	19%	10%	7%	6%	7%	13%	6%
	N/A – I did not receive	21%	26%	15%	12%	10%	23%	31%	24%
	n	107	154	359	161	271	43	39	17
Search for employment or training	Very helpful	41%	45%	43%	50%	48%	55%	54%	50%
	Somewhat helpful	34%	21%	27%	22%	27%	30%	17%	17%
	Not very helpful	14%	15%	11%	13%	11%	9%	12%	11%
	Not at all helpful	5%	7%	9%	6%	6%	2%	5%	11%
	N/A – I did not receive	5%	12%	11%	9%	7%	5%	12%	11%
	n	112	156	360	162	271	44	41	18

Appendix E: WashU AAU Institutional Research & Analysis Report:
Doctoral Exit Survey five years by discipline through 2021-22

Was there another faculty member whom you considered to be a mentor (i.e., a faculty member who gave you advice about your education career development or other matters of concern to you as a graduate student)?

	Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Yes	83%	65%	69%	52%	47%	82%	78%	78%
No	17%	35%	31%	48%	53%	18%	22%	22%
n	112	159	373	163	276	45	41	18

If "yes", was the faculty member in your program/department?

	Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Yes	88%	84%	75%	84%	70%	86%	88%	79%
No	12%	16%	25%	16%	30%	14%	13%	21%
n	93	103	257	83	128	37	32	14

Climate

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

		Human-ities	Social Sciences	DBBS	Physical Science & Math	Engi-neering	Social Work	Busi-ness	Med Campus PhDs
Students in my program are treated with respect by faculty	Strongly agree	43%	31%	35%	35%	40%	42%	45%	67%
	Agree	31%	43%	51%	47%	42%	44%	33%	33%
	Ambivalent	23%	19%	12%	11%	11%	7%	19%	0%
	Disagree	2%	4%	2%	4%	4%	2%	2%	0%
	Strongly disagree	2%	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	371	166	273	45	42	18
The intellectual climate of my program is positive	Strongly agree	41%	31%	43%	36%	41%	44%	45%	61%
	Agree	29%	50%	46%	46%	49%	42%	38%	28%
	Ambivalent	19%	8%	8%	10%	7%	9%	14%	6%
	Disagree	6%	8%	2%	7%	3%	0%	2%	6%
	Strongly disagree	5%	3%	0%	1%	1%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	371	166	273	45	42	18
The social climate of my program is positive	Strongly agree	32%	24%	35%	32%	34%	36%	43%	56%
	Agree	37%	46%	47%	48%	43%	38%	31%	28%
	Ambivalent	21%	18%	14%	10%	16%	13%	21%	11%
	Disagree	4%	9%	3%	8%	5%	7%	5%	6%
	Strongly disagree	6%	3%	0%	1%	1%	7%	0%	0%
	n	109	156	370	166	273	45	42	18
Students in my program are collegial	Strongly agree	44%	43%	47%	37%	41%	38%	40%	56%
	Agree	37%	42%	46%	51%	46%	44%	45%	39%
	Ambivalent	15%	12%	6%	9%	12%	11%	14%	6%
	Disagree	4%	3%	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%	0%
	Strongly disagree	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	4%	0%	0%
	n	110	156	370	166	273	45	42	18

AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct, 2019

Washington University: Detail for Harassment

Focus: Graduate & Professional Students

The AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct gathered data about a set of behaviors that could constitute sexual harassment. Respondents who had experienced one or more of these behaviors were asked about the effects of the experience(s) on them. Follow-up questions were asked about the offender's association with Washington University.

The data presented here is for the percentage of each group of students that experienced the event since entering college.

Contents:

How to read these tables:

Demographic Subgroup being Considered		Interpretation
Specific behaviors	Made sexual remarks, or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?	Values here show the percent of students indicating that they experienced each event.
	Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone's else's body, appearance, or sexual activities?	
	Said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?	
	Used social or on-line media to send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos to you; or communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos about you?	
	Continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks, or have sex even though you said, "No?"	
	Any incident of sexual harassment since entering college?	% of students experiencing at least one of these events
Effects of experiences	Interfered with your academic or professional performance	Among the group that experienced an incident of sexual harassment, the percent saying it had this effect on them
	Limited your ability to participate in an academic program	
	Created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social, academic, or work environment	
	At least one of the above	% of those experiencing sexual harassment who report one of these consequences
Overall	Students experiencing harassing behavior that interfered, limited their ability to participate, or created intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment	% of students who experienced sexual harassment that had one of these consequences
Offender association with WU	Student	Among the group that experienced an incident of sexual harassment, the characteristics of the offender(s)
	Student teaching assistant	
	Faculty or instructor	
	Research staff	
	Other staff or administrator	
	Coach or trainer	
	Alumni	
	Other person associated with [University]	
	The person was not associated with [University]	
	Unsure about association with [University]	

The panels labeled "Specific behaviors" and "Overall" give percentages of students (including those who did and those who did not experience sexual harassment).

The panels labeled "Effects of experiences" and "Offender association with WU" give percentages among the subset of people who experienced one or more events of sexual harassment.

Overall by Level and Gender

		AAU	WU Overall	by level and gender					
				Undergraduate			Graduate		
				Woman	Man	TGQN	Woman	Man	TGQN
		n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
			2,369	845	537	31	538	405	13
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Specific behaviors	Made sexual remarks, or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?	27.0	28.0	46.1	26.7	49.4	25.8	10.8	35.1
	Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone's else's body, appearance, or sexual activities?	33.7	36.0	56.4	41.6	48.5	28.3	16.8	21.0
	Said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?	16.0	15.8	27.3	18.5	25.6	10.5	5.8	20.5
	Used social or on-line media to send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos to you; or communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos about you?	8.2	6.8	12.5	7.9	11.0	4.6	1.8	7.6
	Continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks, or have sex even though you said, "No?"	11.2	9.9	23.0	7.1	19.0	7.1	0.9	0.0
	Any incident of sexual harassment since entering college?	41.8	43.2	64.6	49.9	61.1	36.2	20.7	35.1
Effects of experiences	Interfered with your academic or professional performance	15.2	15.7	19.6	4.1	14.0	21.7	16.6	21.5
	Limited your ability to participate in an academic program	7.7	8.0	8.1	2.1	9.6	13.5	9.8	17.8
	Created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social, academic, or work environment	41.1	40.0	49.0	23.2	50.7	49.2	25.7	100.0
	At least one of the above	45.3	44.5	52.8	24.3	58.0	55.2	35.9	100.0
Overall	Students experiencing harassing behavior that interfered, limited their ability to participate, or created intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment	18.9	19.1	34.0	12.1	35.5	19.9	7.4	35.1
Offender association with WU	Student	88.8	87.7	92.6	97.9	95.2	74.7	72.2	59.9
	Student teaching assistant	3.6	4.1	3.6	2.7	4.9	6.1	4.6	19.2
	Faculty or instructor	9.6	12.4	6.2	2.5	9.6	29.3	22.0	80.8
	Research staff	2.0	2.2	0.5	0.9	4.9	7.2	2.1	0.0
	Other staff or administrator	4.0	4.9	7.0	0.8	4.9	4.8	6.9	0.0
	Coach or trainer	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.0	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Alumni	3.3	1.6	1.7	2.6	4.9	0.9	0.0	0.0
	Other person associated with [University]	2.7	3.0	3.6	0.8	4.9	3.2	4.8	0.0
	The person was not associated with [University]	6.6	5.4	6.4	5.2	4.9	4.2	4.7	0.0
	Unsure about association with [University]	8.8	4.5	4.5	3.0	4.9	6.5	4.5	0.0

Graduate & Professional Women

		Sexual Orientation		Ethnicity		Race			
		Straight	Not straight	Hispanic (any race)	Not Hispanic (any race)	White only	Black only	Asian only	Other / Multi-racial
		n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
		416	105	35	503	301	32	151	49
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Specific behaviors	Made sexual remarks, or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?	24.4	30.9	34.4	25.1	31.6	13.6	17.4	30.4
	Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone's else's body, appearance, or sexual activities?	26.1	38.1	33.7	27.9	35.6	10.0	19.3	32.8
	Said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?	8.8	16.3	13.4	10.3	12.0	3.2	8.4	14.2
	Used social or on-line media to send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos to you; or communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos about you?	4.1	6.1	8.4	4.3	3.8	0.0	6.0	8.4
	Continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks, or have sex even though you said, "No?"	7.5	6.4	8.6	7.0	7.4	3.4	7.4	8.4
	Any incident of sexual harassment since entering college?	34.1	45.9	42.8	35.7	43.5	17.0	26.2	45.6
Effects of experiences	Interfered with your academic or professional performance	23.3	17.0	24.7	21.4	23.0	0.0	26.7	13.8
	Limited your ability to participate in an academic program	13.1	13.7	25.0	12.4	13.1	0.0	12.0	23.1
	Created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social, academic, or work environment	46.0	57.1	85.5	45.8	55.7	0.0	29.2	66.6
	At least one of the above	53.1	60.6	85.5	52.4	60.0	0.0	41.6	71.8
Overall	Students experiencing harassing behavior that interfered, limited their ability to participate, or created intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment	18.0	27.8	36.6	18.6	26.0	0.0	10.9	32.7
Offender association with WU	Student	74.3	77.6	81.0	74.2	71.0	100.0	83.2	68.2
	Student teaching assistant	6.0	7.1	12.3	5.5	8.1	0.0	2.8	4.5
	Faculty or instructor	28.0	26.4	32.2	29.1	33.1	0.0	16.9	44.7
	Research staff	7.3	7.5	0.0	7.8	6.3	0.0	10.5	8.7
	Other staff or administrator	5.3	3.6	6.3	4.6	5.2	0.0	2.5	8.7
	Coach or trainer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Alumni	1.2	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Other person associated with [University]	1.9	7.4	6.3	2.9	4.5	0.0	2.3	0.0
	The person was not associated with [University]	5.1	1.7	0.0	4.5	3.1	0.0	8.4	0.0
	Unsure about association with [University]	7.1	5.5	0.0	7.1	5.2	0.0	8.4	8.4

Graduate & Professional Men

		Sexual Orientation		Ethnicity		Race			
		Straight	Not straight	Hispanic (any race)	Not Hispanic (any race)	White only	Black only	Asian only	Other / Multi-racial
		n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
		333	56	25	378	191	30	141	38
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Specific behaviors	Made sexual remarks, or told sexual jokes or sexual stories that were insulting or offensive to you?	8.5	22.6	16.0	10.1	14.0	15.6	5.0	12.9
	Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone's else's body, appearance, or sexual activities?	13.9	32.2	24.4	16.0	21.2	21.9	11.0	16.1
	Said crude or gross sexual things to you or tried to get you to talk about sexual matters when you didn't want to?	6.0	6.2	0.0	6.2	8.1	0.0	4.2	5.0
	Used social or on-line media to send offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos to you; or communicate offensive sexual remarks, jokes, stories, pictures, or videos about you?	0.9	7.6	3.8	1.7	1.6	4.0	1.4	0.0
	Continued to ask you to go out, get dinner, have drinks, or have sex even though you said, "No?"	0.6	3.4	3.8	0.7	1.6	0.0	0.7	0.0
	Any incident of sexual harassment since entering college?	17.1	41.9	32.1	19.6	27.0	21.9	11.7	26.1
Effects of experiences	Interfered with your academic or professional performance	12.1	19.4	12.8	15.3	17.7	30.3	6.8	19.2
	Limited your ability to participate in an academic program	5.0	16.0	12.8	7.5	10.0	18.4	0.0	19.2
	Created an intimidating, hostile, or offensive social, academic, or work environment	23.9	29.8	12.8	27.8	27.9	17.1	11.7	40.4
	At least one of the above	30.8	42.8	25.7	35.8	38.2	47.4	18.4	40.4
Overall	Students experiencing harassing behavior that interfered, limited their ability to participate, or created intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment	5.2	18.0	8.2	7.0	10.3	10.4	2.2	10.6
Offender association with WU	Student	75.4	64.7	70.3	71.8	71.2	48.7	80.5	80.7
	Student teaching assistant	3.2	4.3	0.0	5.2	8.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Faculty or instructor	20.2	25.3	43.5	20.2	24.5	17.1	13.7	29.4
	Research staff	1.6	3.6	0.0	2.4	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Other staff or administrator	7.7	6.1	0.0	7.8	3.7	34.2	6.3	0.0
	Coach or trainer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Alumni	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Other person associated with [University]	5.3	0.0	0.0	5.4	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
	The person was not associated with [University]	5.4	3.9	0.0	5.3	4.0	0.0	12.7	0.0
	Unsure about association with [University]	5.1	3.9	0.0	5.1	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0