

Office of the Dean

Donald E. Hall

Robert L. and Mary L. Sproull Dean

Faculty of Arts, Sciences & Engineering



## Dean's Letter of Commitment to Preventing Harassment and Discrimination

National Institutes of Health  
Division of Biomedical Research Workforce  
Office of Extramural Research

Dear Sir or Madam,

As support to this NIH training grant application, I am pleased to provide documentation of our absolute commitment to the prevention of harassment and discrimination in Arts, Sciences, and Engineering (AS&E) at the University of Rochester.

As the Dean of Faculty of AS&E, I am responsible for establishing a culture in which every student, faculty and staff member can reach his or her full potential. Along with the deans who report to me, I have made a diverse, respectful and inclusive culture the foundation of our community. We have adopted clear policies, established complaint procedures, and conduct regular training to prevent discrimination and harassment and ensure that all of our constituents know how to reports suspected cases of discrimination and harassment.

### University-wide framework

The University of Rochester's institutional employment policies provide a solid framework upon which we have built our efforts. Fundamental to this is Policy 106, the University's commitment to maintaining a workplace and academic environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment. Policy 106 defines discrimination and harassment, describes the process for lodging and resolving a complaint, and prohibits retaliation against individuals making a claim of harassment or discrimination. This policy provides protections to all learners, employees and faculty, regardless of rank.

Specific concerns about harassment of students on the basis of sex are managed through either the University's Title IX office, or if the respondent is a staff or faculty member, through the Policy 106 process. The University investigates alleged violations of all applicable policies, takes interim action where needed, and makes any required notification to the HHS Office of Civil Rights. Where the University of Rochester determines that disciplinary action or other administrative actions must be taken under discrimination or harassment policies against a person who also serves as a Program Director/Principal Investigator or other key personnel (collectively "PD/PI") on an NIH funded award, the University of Rochester will communicate

through an Authorized Organizational Representative to request NIH approval for any necessary changes in the PD/PI. Depending on where a grant sits within AS&E, that request may appropriately come from the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences (Gloria Culver), the Dean of the Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (Wendi Heinzelman), or the Dean of Research (David Williams), all of whom report directly to me.

For more than 40 years, the University also has offered intercessors who help to resolve interpersonal and departmental disputes and advocate for fairness. Appointed by the Provost, these intercessors provide helpful insight about policy improvements and collaborate on training and education to prevent harassment and discrimination.

All faculty, staff and students are required to complete training each year on preventing and handling sexual misconduct. For staff and faculty, failure to complete this training disallows salary increases in the next fiscal year.

In 2018, the University redoubled its commitment to *Cultivating a Culture of Respect* in a campus-wide initiative led by the President, Provost, the Office of Faculty Development and Diversity, the Office of Staff Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Commission for Women and Gender Equity in Academia. This focused process has resulted in the development of shared values and behaviors, clearer pathways for reporting and greater transparency, workforce-wide training in harassment and unconscious bias, numerous conferences and events, affinity groups, and the proposed hiring of the University's first Vice President for Equity and Inclusion.

### **AS&E Specific Measures**

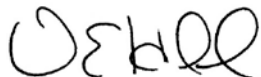
In addition to these University initiatives and resources, AS&E has also worked to create and maintain a culture of respect and prevent discrimination and harassment. Among the steps we've taken:

- All new faculty (regardless of rank) attend a day-long orientation specific to AS&E. This orientation covers everything a new faculty member needs to become acculturated to the school and university, and covers our policies, including those around sexual (and other) harassment.
- AS&E's Faculty Ombudsperson is available to meet with faculty to learn of their experiences, to help problem solve, and to escalate complaints that need attention. These discussions often impact policy and procedural efforts.
- The David T. Kearns Center and the Paul J. Burgett Intercultural Center offer training for departments, as well as smaller groups of faculty and graduate students on creating inclusive research, teaching, and clinical environments. These sessions are crafted specifically for the requesting department/environment, and are well-attended.

- AS&E is in the process of embedding a restorative justice approach to handling conflict including that which arises from sexual misconduct. Many department chairs, faculty members, and staff have completed initial training on restorative practices, and are making use of them in their daily interactions.
- We have established a position of Assistant Director of Graduate Student Support who oversees aspects of graduate student development including serving as lead consultant in utilizing and coordinating student services, facilitating graduate student, faculty and staff programming and training around graduate student needs including mentor/mentee relationships, conflict resolution, responsible conduct of research, and other professional development skills, and assisting with incidents related to student conduct, Title IX, and related policies with graduate students.
- We have also created an ombuds program for graduate students which includes two central faculty members and individual departmental faculty members who provide impartial and independent advice, serve as a resource for information about institutional policies, act as facilitators to help students resolve their problems, accompany the student in discussions of problems or issues with faculty or administrators, and act as an informal mediator between the student and faculty or administrators.
- We have established written policies regarding the rights, responsibilities, and due process associated with scholarly work and research endeavors for all graduate student trainees
- Our AS&E Office of Disability Resources offers a variety of services for graduate students and faculty to provide an inclusive experience and equal access to academic content, research, and program requirements.

In summary, we have taken significant measures to ensure that AS&E has a culture that supports all students, faculty, and staff to achieve their greatest potential. We have clear procedures in place that prohibit discrimination and harassment and that provide avenues for both reporting and addressing incidents if they do occur. We are proud of our achievements to date, but are committed to continuing to develop and maintain our culture of respect.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DEH', written in a cursive style.

Donald E. Hall