

ABSTRACT: 2023 ELAM Institutional Action Plan

Project Title: UC Davis Health Faculty Council for Women's Advocacy: Implementing Evidence-Based Initiatives and Policy Changes to Address Gender and Sexual Harassment

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Topic Category: Faculty Development

Background, Significance of Project: UC Davis Health (UCDH) has made significant investments in supporting women's careers in academic medicine, including our long-standing Women in Medicine and Health Sciences (WIMHS) program. The number of UCDH faculty identifying as women has steadily increased over the past two decades, reaching parity in 2022 (46% men, 46% women, 8% gender unreported). However, the majority of UCDH women faculty are in non-senate series and only 36% of full professors and 23% of department chairs are women. There is an ongoing need to address inequities that contribute to these gaps in senior faculty and leadership positions and to ensure continued progress in the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty.

Purpose/Objective: We propose to expand our WIMHS program to establish the UCDH Faculty Council for Women's Advocacy (FCWA), which will serve as a centralized advocacy body committed to the recruitment and retention of a gender-balanced workforce, and advancing gender equality in senior and leadership roles. The FCWA will: (i) identify and evaluate sources of persistent gender inequities, (ii) develop and implement evidence-based initiatives and policy changes, and (iii) collaborate with Academic Personnel, Council of Chairs and the Office of the Deans to ensure accountability. The FCWA will select a priority focus area each year following the methods described below.

Methods and Approach: We first conducted semi-structured interviews with N=25 UCDH women faculty to identify institutional areas of concern at UCDH. The faculty responses aligned with well-documented inequities identified in the literature: (i) workplace climate and culture, (ii) salary equity, (iii) opportunities for leadership and advancement, and (iv) support for work-life integration. Of these, the high levels of gender and sexual harassment that are a common occurrence in the academic medicine work environment has recently emerged as one of the most pressing national issues (*NASEM, 2018*). Evaluating, addressing and preventing gender and sexual harassment at UCDH will be the priority focus of the FCWA in 2023-2024.

Outcomes and Evaluation Strategy: Preliminary results from the 2022 UCDH Professional Climate Survey are consistent with national data, indicating that women disproportionately experience harassment. The FCWA will work with UCDH stakeholders and leadership to adapt and implement evidence-based institutional strategies and activities (*AAMC, 2022*): (i) disseminating results of the survey to the UCDH community, (ii) collaborating with department chairs to develop prevention plans, (iii) developing novel bystander/ally training, and (iv) providing recommendations for utilizing a new systemwide policy on "Abusive Conduct in the Workplace" to reduce harassment. To evaluate the impact of these prevention strategies, we will re-administer the UCDH Professional Climate Survey in 2025 to compare with 2022 benchmarking data and national trends.

Summary and Conclusions: The FCWA's initial focus on reducing gender and sexual harassment will provide a template for successfully engaging UCDH leadership and establish a pipeline for evaluating and addressing other well-documented inequities at the institutional level. Through these efforts, WIMHS will expand to become a leader in advocacy for women at UCDH and contribute to policy and decision-making processes that impact women's careers.

References:

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: <https://doi.org/10.17226/24994>.

Lautenberger DM, Dandar VM, Zhou Y. Understanding and Addressing Sexual Harassment in Academic Medicine. Washington, DC: AAMC; 2022.