

Ending Campus Sexual Violence: Outcomes from the Culture of Respect Collective Program

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Culture of Respect[®]
Ending Campus Sexual Violence
A NASPA Initiative

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Executive Summary

The problem of sexual violence in America's colleges and universities is undeniable: one in four female, nearly one in four transgender/genderqueer/nonbinary, and one in fourteen male students will experience sexual violence while pursuing a four year degree (Cantor et al., 2019). Institutions of higher education have a legal, and many would argue a moral, obligation to prevent and respond to sexual violence. But for many institutions, addressing sexual violence upstream - thinking beyond the immediacy of the problem - is a challenge so overwhelming, they don't know where to begin.

The Culture of Respect Collective, a NASPA signature initiative, is a two-year program designed specifically to address the enormity of this issue. Grounded in a comprehensive, evidence-informed framework, the program guides institutions of higher education through a rigorous process of self-assessment and targeted organizational change. This report examines the experience and outcomes of Collective Cohorts 1 and 2, particularly the meaningful programmatic and policy changes they made that further the goal of ending campus sexual violence. At the end of their two years in the program, participating institutions completed or made progress on 85% of the objectives they

set for themselves around strengthening sexual violence prevention and response efforts, and 77% saw increased collaboration between departments and colleagues in this vital work. Ninety-two percent of participating institutions also saw an increase in required prevention programming for undergraduate students, and there was an overall rise in institution level interventions. This report considers the factors that facilitated and impeded institutions' success in implementing the program, as well as how the growing number of Collective institutions can impact higher education's understanding of the problem, and how best to address it.

Introduction

Over the last decade, sexual violence in higher education has been a focus for colleges and universities, student activists, parents and families, and the media alike. Particularly following the release of the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter (Ali, 2011) by the Obama administration, institutions of higher education began to see an increase in lawsuits and complaints to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) by both reporting and responding parties; primarily, these focused on the handling of sexual misconduct cases at the institutional level (Anderson, 2019). As institutions responded to these complaints and students demanded action and accountability, it became clear there were too few resources available to address this issue. Specifically, there was a paucity of programs or frameworks to effectively guide colleges and universities in making the organizational and cultural change necessary to prevent sexual violence at the primary level of intervention.

In response to this gap, Culture of Respect developed the Culture of Respect Collective ("the Collective"). The Collective is a two-year program that brings together institutions of higher education who are dedicated to ending campus sexual violence and guides them through a rigorous process of self-assessment and targeted organizational change. The Collective is grounded in evidence-based practices and emerging evidence, with each diverse cohort relying on an expert-developed comprehensive framework, cross campus collaboration, and peer-led learning to make meaningful programmatic and policy changes. The Collective was designed broadly to facilitate implementation at institutions of all types. Specifically, it was developed to include

ABOUT CULTURE OF RESPECT

In 2013, Culture of Respect was founded by parents of college-aged students who were alarmed by the high rate of sexual violence on college and university campuses. With a team of public health and violence prevention researchers from New York University and Columbia University and experts in advocacy, student affairs, higher education policy, and law, they created the Culture of Respect Engagement Blueprint (CORE Blueprint, [Culture of Respect, 2017a]), a six-pillar strategic road map that engages students, parents, faculty, administrators, health professionals, athletes, and other campus stakeholders in implementing the leading practices to shift campus culture to one that is free from sexual violence. In 2015, Culture of Respect became part of NASPA, where they continue to execute their mission: to build the capacity of educational institutions to end sexual violence through ongoing, expansive organizational change.

tailored technical assistance that would allow the information being shared to be meaningful and adaptable based on the specific needs of each institution and the student populations they serve.

This report looks closely at the data and outcomes from the first two cohorts of the Collective. Cohort 1 began the program in January 2017 and Cohort 2 in January 2018, with each cohort graduating two years following their launch in December 2018 and 2019, respectively. Participation was monitored throughout the two year program and staff worked directly with institutional representatives to support the completion of each programmatic goal as outlined in this report.

Participating Institutions

Institutions were recruited for participation in the program in a variety of ways, including via outreach among NASPA members and other higher education associations and groups, and through networks of colleagues and anti-sexual violence organizations. Cohort 1 recruitment included a partnership with the nationally-recognized student-driven organization *It's On Us*, who provided participating institutions supplemental support in engaging student activists. To apply, institutions submitted an application and letter of support from a senior-level administrator, and upon acceptance, provided remuneration for their participation in the program.

In total, Cohorts 1 and 2 of the Collective consisted of 68 institutions of higher education: 53 in Cohort 1 and the remainder in Cohort 2. Thirty-six percent of participating institutions were identified as small colleges or universities (under 5,000 students); 38% were medium-sized (5,001 to 14,999 students); 15% were large institutions (15,001 to 29,999 students); and 10% were very large institutions (over 30,000 students). Across Cohorts 1 and 2, 62% were public institutions, 38% private institutions, 20% religiously affiliated institutions, and 10% were community colleges.

Figure 1

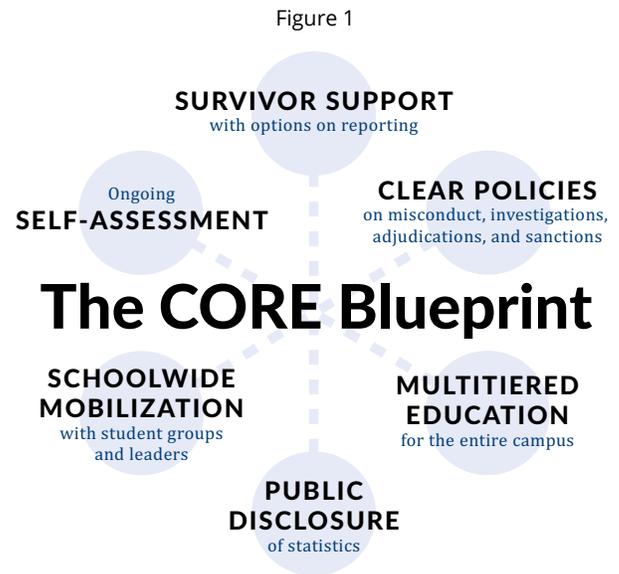
MAP OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS



Collective Program Description

The Collective program model is grounded in the CORE Blueprint, an expert-developed framework for helping institutions address sexual violence (see Figure 2). The CORE Blueprint is organized around six key areas – the six pillars – that help ensure institutions are working to create a comprehensive institutional strategy for addressing sexual violence (Culture of Respect, 2017a).

Collective institutions began the program by establishing a multidisciplinary team of stakeholders from across the institution, led by one to two team leads; these individuals were often positioned in Title IX or prevention offices. These Campus Leadership Teams (CLTs) were in some cases a new group formed specifically to engage in the work of the Collective, while other institutions adapted an existing sexual violence or Title IX task force or working group. Culture of Respect provided guidance on the make-up of the CLT, including a list of potential stakeholders to engage, as well as those roles for whom participation was required, namely representatives from Title IX; prevention, wellness and/or health promotion staff; faculty; senior level administrators (vice president for student affairs or similar); and students, both undergraduate and graduate (as applicable). CLT size and make-up varied greatly by institution with the smallest CLT containing five members and the largest 70; the average CLT contained 22 members.



Both the team leads and CLTs engaged in an onboarding process conducted via webinar by Culture of Respect staff, and team leads completed an initial survey (“Launch Survey”) to assess their current institutional climate, program orientation process, and existing knowledge about sexual violence prevention and response.

The CLTs’ first task was completing the CORE Evaluation (Culture of Respect, 2017b), a robust self-assessment instrument developed by Culture of Respect. Questions in the CORE Evaluation instrument are tied to CORE Blueprint recommendations from across the six pillars. The CORE Evaluation guides institutional leaders in inventorying their efforts to address sexual violence; identifying how these efforts are codified into policy; and assessing how this information is shared with the campus community and evaluated. The tool is updated annually to incorporate new or emerging research and practices.

Collective Program Description *(continued)*

Culture of Respect staff requested that the instrument be completed collaboratively within each CLT. Institutions met this request in a variety of ways, including meeting with the entire group over one or two sessions, planning a series of meetings between key staff members on the working group, or having one employee complete the assessment with some level of feedback from their colleagues. Although Culture of Respect staff presented the first as the preferred approach, institutions were encouraged to adapt this process to meet their needs and make it feasible for their campus to complete the instrument. If inconsistencies were apparent in submissions, Culture of Respect staff followed up with a phone call and, in collaboration with the CLTs, made any necessary changes. On average, CLTs took four and a half hours to administer the CORE Evaluation, either in one meeting or broken up into multiple meetings.

Each institution's CORE Evaluation results were analyzed electronically (see "Methodology") and by Culture of Respect staff, which informed the creation of a comprehensive baseline report provided to the institution's team leads. Each baseline report included:

- A numeric baseline score for each of the six pillars, as well as a cumulative score;¹
- Qualitative feedback, organized by pillar, identifying institutional strengths in sexual violence prevention and response as indicated by the responses to the CORE Evaluation, as well as opportunities for growth; and
- A checklist summarizing consistency with key federal laws and guidance, as indicated by responses to the CORE Evaluation.²

Institutions also received an annotated copy of their CORE Evaluation results.

Each institution's baseline report was designed to guide the CLTs and team leads in creating an Individualized Implementation Plan (IIP): an actionable plan to improve their efforts to prevent and respond to campus sexual violence. IIPs were composed of a series of objectives developed by the CLT, informed by their report's opportunities for growth and checklist(s). Culture of Respect coached team leads in developing objectives that were specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timebound (SMART) and provided feedback on the initial draft via a rubric to inform the final IIP.

Year two of the program was dedicated to implementing the IIP. Team leads were charged with supporting their CLTs in operationalizing the objectives included in the IIP, either individually or via subcommittees (often organized by pillar). CLTs were encouraged to continue to meet monthly in their second year to foster accountability to the IIP process and to each other. In spring of year two, team leads submitted a midpoint IIP update to allow CLTs to take stock of progress to date and assess what objectives could realistically be achieved by the end of the second year, and also completed a Midpoint Survey to assess satisfaction with the program to that point.

¹To establish a scoring schema for the CORE Evaluation, responses were assigned a point value based on how closely they aligned with best practice recommendations from the CORE Blueprint. Select responses were weighted because of their impact or difficulty of implementation.

²In September 2017, the Trump administration rescinded the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter and the 2014 Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence, thereby impacting what fell under the umbrella of federal law and guidance (Ali, 2011; Lhamon, 2014). When Cohort 2 received their baseline reports in spring 2018, the checklist was adapted to include federal laws and guidance that still applied, while practices that were no longer required but continued to be considered good practice were moved to a second checklist, entitled "Recommendations Checklist." Cohort 2's baseline report also included sample comparison data to Cohort 1.

Collective Program Description (continued)

Figure 3

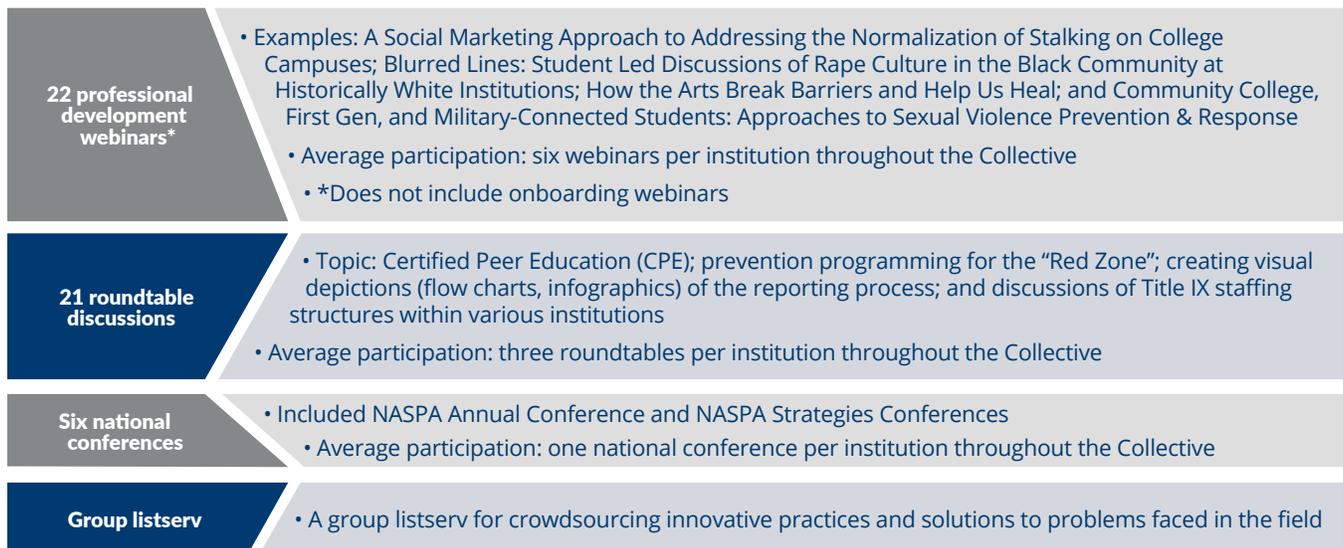
COLLECTIVE PROGRAM MODEL



Throughout the program, but particularly in year two, team leads, CLT members, and other campus stakeholders were encouraged to participate in technical assistance, educational, and networking opportunities provided by Culture of Respect and NASPA (see Figure 4). These offerings were designed to increase knowledge around the prevention of and response to campus sexual violence and related topics so participants could more successfully operationalize their IIPs, and to connect program participants to learn and benefit from each other's knowledge and experience.

Figure 4

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED AND PARTICIPATION



At the conclusion of their second and final year in the program, participating institutions readministered the CORE Evaluation using the same process and participants as at baseline (to the extent possible). Participants also submitted a final IIP update, documenting the extent to which they accomplished the objectives they created, and an endpoint survey ("Closeout Survey") to evaluate the change in knowledge and campus climate, as well as their program satisfaction.

Methodology

The data presented in this report were collected from several surveys: the CORE Evaluation; the Collective Launch Survey; the Collective Midpoint Survey; and the Collective Closeout Survey.

Each cohort completed their baseline CORE Evaluation at the start of the program, with Cohort 1 completing the CORE Evaluation 2nd Edition in early 2017, and Cohort 2 completing the CORE Evaluation 3rd Edition in early 2018. Team leads received a PDF copy of the evaluation, as well as a link to the evaluation instrument in Qualtrics. Instructions for completion included definitions of key terms and a list of data sources and documents needed. Raw response data from Qualtrics were exported to Stata (a data analysis and statistical software) for coding and analysis. Culture of Respect staff translated the data analysis into a comprehensive baseline report provided back to the institution's team leads, in addition to providing an annotated copy of the institution's evaluation responses, as submitted to Qualtrics.

Each cohort completed their endpoint CORE Evaluation at the end of the program, with Cohort 1 completing the CORE Evaluation 2nd Edition in late 2018, and Cohort 2 completing the CORE Evaluation 3rd Edition in late 2019. Endpoint evaluation raw response data was coded and analyzed in Stata, using exactly the same method that was used for the baseline data.

CORE EVALUATION: CHANGES FROM 2ND TO 3RD EDITION

The CORE Evaluation was designed as an instrument that would continually evolve to reflect the best and emerging practices in the field. As such, updates were made between the second and third editions, and continue to be made for subsequent cohorts. Between the two editions, questions were edited for clarity, as needed, and examples of new content added included:

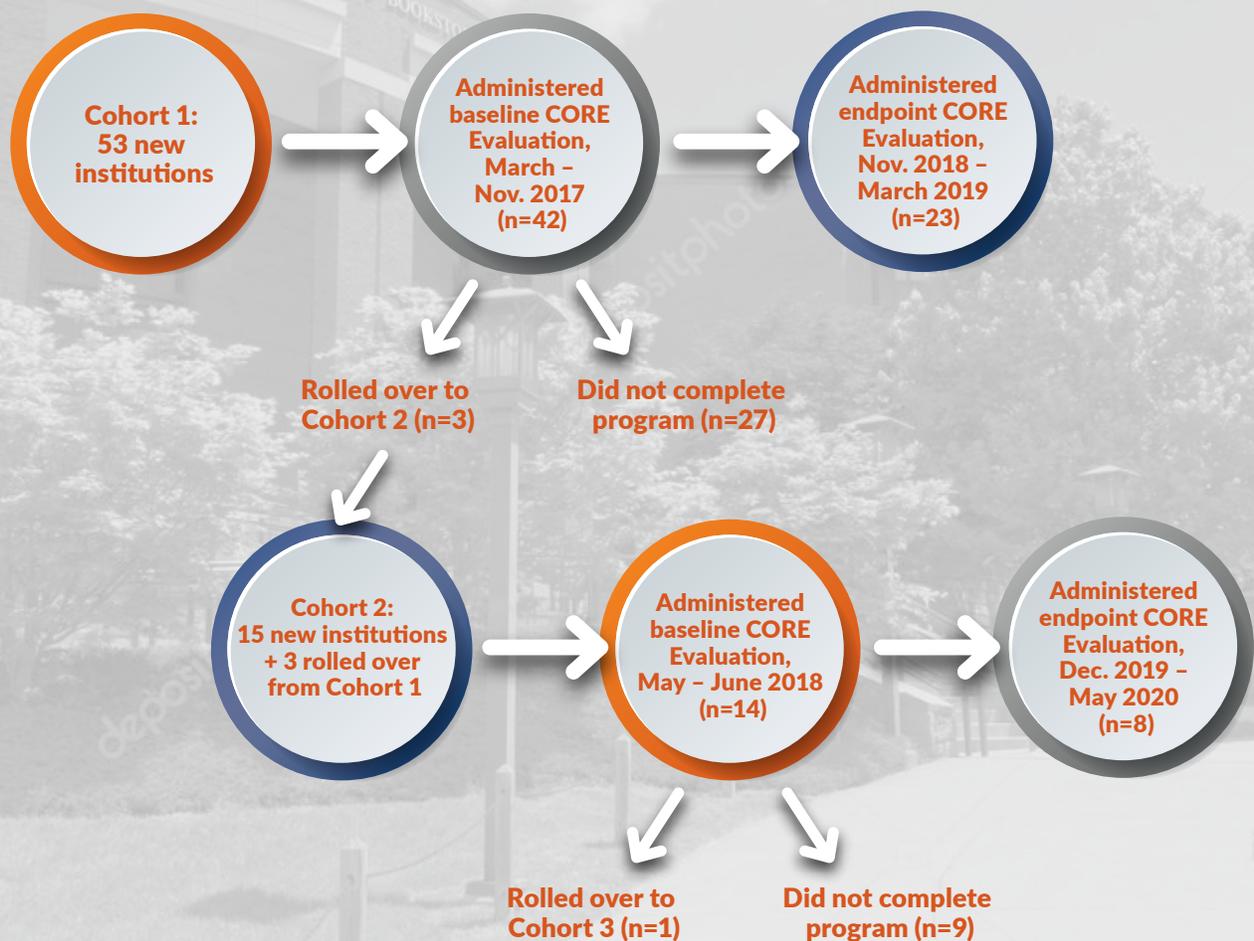
- Employees as survivors of sexual violence (i.e. access to supportive services and information provided in employee trainings and materials);
- Accessibility of sexual misconduct policies;
- Use of informal resolution processes, including restorative justice;
- Availability of sexual health promotion services and programs; and
- Use of tools and processes to inform and standardize issuing of timely warnings.

Methodology (continued)

This report features CORE Evaluation data from institutions that completed both their baseline and endpoint evaluations: 23 institutions from Cohort 1 and eight institutions from Cohort 2 (see Figure 5).³ For the analysis presented in this report, aggregate baseline numeric scores for each pillar were compared to aggregate endpoint numeric scores for each pillar. Additionally, aggregate baseline scores for select questions were compared to aggregate endpoint numeric scores for select questions.

Figure 5

COLLECTIVE METHODOLOGY AND TIMELINE



³Please see “Discussion” section for additional information about factors that facilitated or impeded successful Collective completion and the most commonly cited reasons that institutions were not able to complete the program. Figure 5 includes institutions who were unable to keep pace with programmatic deadlines of their original cohort but did not wish to withdraw from the program; these institutions “rolled over” to the next cohort.

Methodology (continued)

The CORE Evaluation instrument presents two limitations. First, because it relies on self-reported information, social desirability bias is a concern: institutions may have been hesitant to report any noncompliance with federal laws or admit to any fractures in their approach to addressing sexual violence on campus. Yet, the varied responses demonstrate that institutions were willing to be honest about their current practices as part of an effort to make meaningful programmatic changes. Additionally, because institutions differed in their approaches for administering the instrument, there was variability in how questions were answered. If relevant stakeholders were not consulted, some responses could have been recorded inaccurately.

In addition to the data from the CORE Evaluation, this report also features data from the Collective Launch Survey, the Collective Midterm Survey, and the Collective Closeout Survey, all designed by Culture of Respect staff (see Table 1 for survey distribution and response rate). Participating institutions' team leads and CLT members were invited via Qualtrics to participate in the surveys. The Launch Survey collected data on the current conditions on participants' campuses related to capacity to enact organizational change related to campus sexual violence, participants' experience with the Collective orientation, and participants' requests for professional development and training. The Midterm Survey—administered approximately one year after each cohort began—collected data on program implementation on campus and participants' experience with Collective program components. As the cohorts were coming to an end, participants were asked to complete a Closeout Survey, which collected data on campus climate

related to efforts to address sexual violence and participants' experience with Collective program components. Ideally, the same participants from each cohort would complete all three surveys and their responses would be tracked over time; however, staffing changes at Collective institutions made it impossible to conduct a longitudinal analysis of data from these three surveys. For the analysis presented in this report, responses from individuals in Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 were aggregated by question, for each survey.

Table 1
SURVEY DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE RATE

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2
Launch Survey		
Date administered	Early 2017	Early 2018
# of participants invited	149	33
# of responses	75	10
Response rate	50%	30%
Midterm Survey		
Date administered	Early 2018	Early 2019
# of participants invited	67	60
# of responses	30	16
Response rate	45%	27%
Closeout Survey		
Date administered	Late 2018	Late 2019
# of participants invited	125	50
# of responses	26	10
Response rate	21%	38%

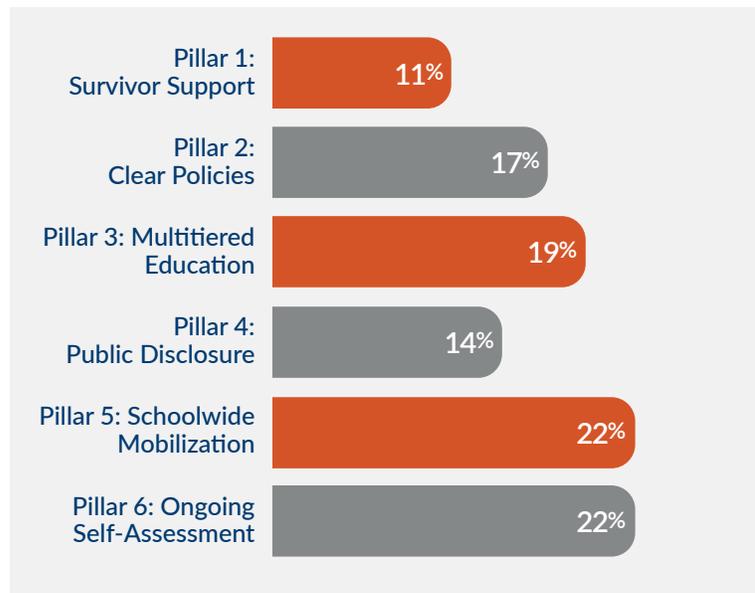
Results

Changes in CORE Evaluation Scores and Successful Completion of Objectives

Cumulatively, participating institutions' CORE Evaluation scores increased from baseline to endpoint in all six pillars, ranging from an increase of 11% to 22% per pillar (see Figure 6). Individually, institutions' scores increased in five of the six pillars, on average, and by an average of more than fifty points from baseline compared to endpoint.

Figure 6

CHANGE IN CORE EVALUATION SCORES FROM BASELINE TO ENDPOINT BY PILLAR



IIPs included an average of 22 objectives across the six pillars; the minimum number of objectives was eight, and the maximum 67. On average, ten different individuals, offices, or departments were assigned responsibility for implementation of these objectives. This diffusion of responsibility was intentional in the program design and IIP development and helped to ensure that the work of creating institutional change was shared across the CLT. **At the conclusion of the program, institutions had completed or made progress on an average of 85% of their objectives.** Cumulatively, the greatest number of objectives completed occurred in Pillar 1, Survivor Support (71 objectives) and Pillar 3, Multitiered Education (87 objectives).

Results (continued)

Changes in Federal Compliance and Recommended Practices

Baseline CORE Evaluation reports for Cohort 1 included a checklist of compliance with federal laws and guidance, including the Clery Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and guidance from the Department of Education. Cohort 2 reports included a checklist for federal laws and guidance, but also a “Recommendations Checklist,” which included practices that were no longer required after the 2017 guidance rescissions, but were still considered good practice. Checklists were updated based on the responses provided in the institution’s endpoint CORE Evaluation responses. At the conclusion of the program, institutions were newly compliant with an average of three federal law or guidance practices (Cohorts 1 and 2) and an average of two recommended practices (Cohort 2).

Key Findings by Pillar

SURVIVOR SUPPORT

The score for the Survivor Support pillar increased 11% from baseline to endpoint, with the greatest amount of change occurring around improvements related to creating a supportive environment for survivors to report sexual violence. Notable improvements included: expanding the content and clarity of survivor-centered processes and procedures in the institution’s sexual misconduct policy (25%); establishing or clarifying amnesty policies (35%); clearly explaining the responsibilities of the Title IX

coordinator/officer in policy (45%); and ensuring there was a team to coordinate the provision of services to survivors of sexual violence (43%). Also notable was a 200% increase in informing survivors how and when timely warnings about their assaults would be distributed to the campus community, thus reducing the likelihood of potential retraumatization.

CLEAR POLICIES

The score for the Clear Policies pillar increased 17% from baseline to endpoint, with the greatest increase related to changes in sanctions and sanctions language in policy. Institutions noted a 48% increase in the frequency with which they reviewed or revised their sexual misconduct policy: at endpoint, 25 institutions were reviewing them at least annually. Cohort 2 also saw a 100% increase in the formats in which policies related to sexual misconduct were accessible for those with disabilities and/or for whom English is not a first language. Across both cohorts, participants indicated an 89% increase in the use of the less legalistic and more neutral “reporting party” and “responding party” language in reference to pending or potential investigations.

Results (continued)

MULTITIERED EDUCATION

The score for the Clear Policies pillar increased 19% from baseline to endpoint; increases in this pillar were most strongly associated with prevention education provided to students. While some improvements in this pillar are attributed to increased completion rates for existing prevention education, institutions also added at least one additional dose of prevention education programming for incoming undergraduate (three institutions) and graduate students (two institutions), which increased endpoint scores by 83% and 175%, respectively. Institutions also indicated an increase in the frequency with which primary prevention and awareness programming was required for continuing undergraduate students (92%) and graduate students (57%). This increase for graduate students is particularly notable given the gaps in education for graduate students identified in the baseline CORE Evaluations. Other increases can be tied to increased campus-wide prevention (see Table 2).

Table 2

INCREASED CAMPUS-WIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Institution-Level Intervention	Score Increase from Baseline to Endpoint
Commemorates Stalking Awareness Month	350%
Primary prevention and awareness programming for students and training for employees recognizes the intersection of sexual violence and marginalized identities	94%
Hosts a campus-wide primary prevention and awareness campaign	100%

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

The score for the Public Disclosure pillar increased 14% from baseline to endpoint, with increases most notably attributed to increased communication with campus stakeholders about prevention and response as well as sharing more information about the institutional strategy to address sexual violence. At endpoint, institutions more proactively shared the results of their climate surveys and incorporated discussions of sexual violence prevalence and institutional response into annual reports (57% and 100% increases, respectively). Participating institutions also expanded data collection and reporting on the prevalence of sexual violence among specific student demographics and identities, in the hope that these would inform additional support and prevention education accordingly.

SCHOOLWIDE MOBILIZATION

The score for the Schoolwide Mobilization pillar increased 22% from baseline to endpoint. The bulk of this increase was tied to increased student engagement. Schools offered peer educators compensation for the first time or offered new types of compensation (n=8). Institutions also added student representatives to their Title IX working groups or increased existing student attendance at the working group meetings (n=10). There was also a 200% increase in schools reporting a formal system that allows student groups and individual students to submit feedback regarding the campus sexual misconduct policy and its implementation.

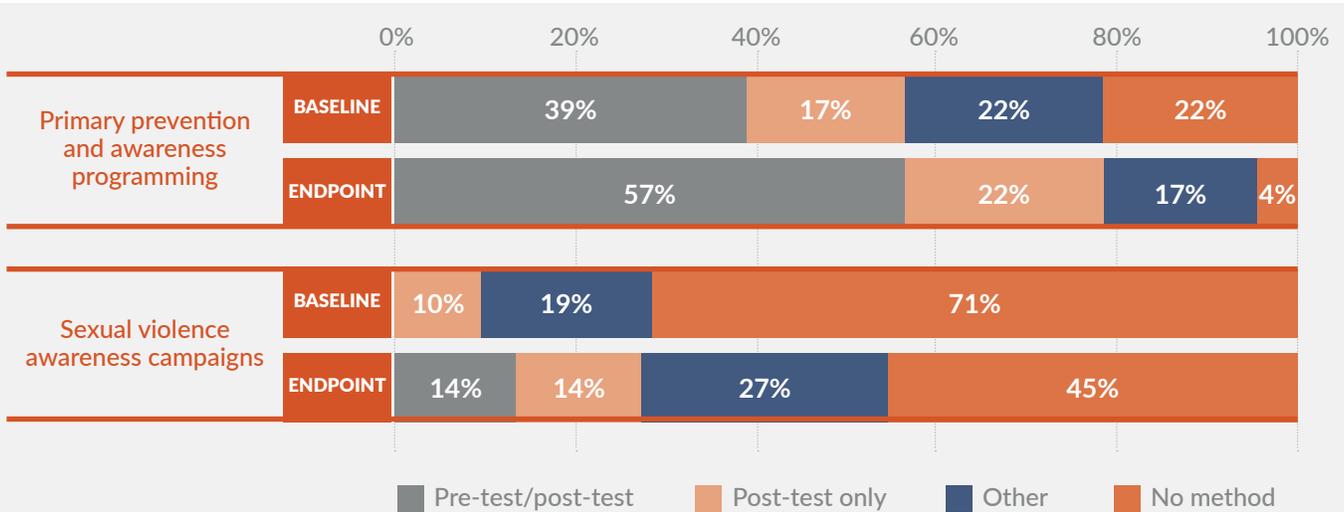
Results (continued)

ONGOING SELF-ASSESSMENT

Finally, the score for the Ongoing Self-Assessment pillar increased 22% from baseline to endpoint. This increase was the result of (1) expanded assessment of primary prevention and awareness programming, (2) assessment of sexual violence awareness campaigns, and (3) evaluation of services and processes (see Figure 7). At endpoint, six institutions were newly evaluating the effectiveness of their survivor support services and three were newly evaluating the effectiveness and fairness of their campus conduct and Title IX proceedings. Recognizing that budgets in higher education are perpetually a challenge, even more so in the current historical context, it will be more important than ever for institutions to assess the effectiveness of their prevention and response efforts now and moving forward.

Figure 7

INCREASED ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL PROGRAMMING AND CAMPAIGNS



Results (continued)

PROGRAM SATISFACTION

Consistently, administering the CORE Evaluation with stakeholders from across the institution was seen as an integral part of the program: in the Midpoint Survey, respondents noted that “the CORE Evaluation was effective in helping our institution identify areas for growth and improvement” (63% strongly agree, 24% somewhat agree). In the Closeout Survey, “administering the CORE Evaluation with your campus team” and “receiving baseline CORE Evaluation results and feedback from Culture of Respect staff” were identified as the two most valuable components of the program.

Other program components identified as effective were the development and implementation of the IIP and the accountability the program provided (see Figure 8).

Figure 8

ASSESSMENT OF COLLECTIVE PROGRAM COMPONENTS' EFFECTIVENESS



Results *(continued)*

PROGRAM SATISFACTION *(continued)*

At the conclusion of the program, participants confirmed that the Collective was successful in helping them identify and implement improvements to their institutional sexual violence strategy, including:

- Identification of new strategies for campus sexual violence prevention and response (86%);
- Increased collaboration between departments and colleagues (77%);
- Utility of Culture of Respect framework for organizing and planning institution's ongoing work (66%);
- Increased buy-in from upper-level administrators (55%) and enthusiasm from colleagues (52%); and
- Motivation to complete tasks because of the accountability structure provided by the program (48%).

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

Participating institutions experienced implementation challenges that often had more to do with existing infrastructure and resources than program design. Respondents to the Closeout Survey noted the following barriers during Collective implementation: staff turnover (80%); lack of sufficient person-power to implement the program (73%); lack of financial resources to make the desired changes (47%); and resistance from colleagues (23%).

Additional factors that impacted the implementation were: shifts in organizational structure (54%); departure of the lead prevention staff (50%); change in leadership in key staff at the administrative level (50%); and departure of the lead Title IX staff member (29%). Funding cuts to relevant departments occurred in 21% of the institutions. Those responding to the Closeout Survey indicated that these changes impacted their work to address campus sexual violence, including participation in the Collective, "very much" (36%) or "moderately" (29%).

Discussion

Factors that Facilitated Implementation

COLLECTIVE TOOLS AND STRUCTURE

The successes that stemmed from participation in the Collective were the result of multiple factors and, according to responses from the Midpoint and Closeout Surveys, participants found a variety of aspects of the Collective program valuable. The most helpful aspect of the Collective for institutions was the CORE Evaluation, which allowed them to identify new strategies for addressing campus sexual violence prevention and response. Institutions also reported that the use of the IIP in practice, as well as the accountability provided by Culture of Respect staff, helped them in achieving their goals.

EFFICACY OF THE TEAM APPROACH IN ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Additionally, the Collective's structure and design in fostering success are supported by the findings of a 2020 research article from the University of Kansas. In this study, Mabachi, Quiason, Doan, & Carlson looked at the efficacy of sexual violence task forces on a series of college and university campuses and determined that barriers to effective teams include limited capacity, lack of knowledge, limited student engagement, and bureaucratic structure, while a positive campus culture and pre-existing programming were both identified as facilitators to being effective (2020).

The Collective's use of a multi-stakeholder team, provision of professional development opportunities, encouragement to engage students throughout the two-year process, and requirement of support from upper-level

administrators all align with the recommended practices identified by the authors. While the Collective model predates this particular piece of research, its impact is notable: at endpoint, there was a 45% increase in self-reported effectiveness of the CLT in implementing improvements to institutional sexual violence response.

Implementation Challenges and Limitations

INSTITUTIONAL STAFF TURNOVER

Results of the Midpoint and Closeout Surveys, as well as exchanges between Culture of Respect staff and the team leads, revealed key challenges to program implementation. Most notable was staff turnover, experienced by 80% of participating institutions. Staff turnover frequently occurred in the team lead position, which made program continuity, accountability, and institutional memory difficult. Culture of Respect staff noted this challenge with Cohort 1 and modified the program accordingly, asking Cohort 2 to identify two leads to help ensure continuity. While this modification was helpful, it did not eradicate the challenge entirely.

Discussion *(continued)*

INSUFFICIENT RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL

Availability of resources, both financial and personnel-related, also impacted implementation. Lack of financial resources to make the desired changes was identified as a challenge by nearly half of those who responded to the Closeout Survey, and one in five institutions experienced cuts to relevant departments. Additionally, maintaining adequate levels of personnel was the most significant barrier: nearly three-quarters of participants indicated that lack of sufficient staff (“person-power”) to implement the program was a significant barrier to success.

INABILITY TO CREATE SPACE FOR LARGE-SCALE CHANGE

Finally, an additional challenge noted by participants was balancing the daily demands of higher education (particularly student affairs) with the long term work of organizational change. Team leads frequently noted that meeting the needs of students in crisis was (understandably) their top priority, which resulted in the work of the Collective being delayed. Recognizing this challenge, Culture of Respect staff were extremely flexible around deadlines; regardless, 27 institutions in Cohort 1 and nine in Cohort 2 were not able to complete the program. The most common reasons cited for inability to complete the program were: insufficient time and personnel to implement the program (12 institutions); inability to get the program off the ground (7 institutions), and staff turnover (3 institutions). Notably, of the institutions who did not complete the program, three from Cohort 1 and one from Cohort 2 who were unable to keep pace with their original cohort “rolled over” to future cohorts rather than withdraw, noting the value of the program and their desire to see it to completion.

Climate in Which the Program Occurred

The societal landscape during the duration of Cohorts 1 and 2 of the Collective was rife with political disagreement regarding Title IX and saw a shift in how individuals, communities, and systems responded to accusations of sexual violence. Recruitment of Cohort 1 (September through November 2017) occurred concurrently with the exposure of behaviors by Harvey Weinstein and the resurgence of the #MeToo movement in American society and the #TimesUp movement in Hollywood. Shortly thereafter, during the official launch of Cohort 1 in January 2017, Donald J. Trump was inaugurated into office as the 45th president of the United States, following a heated political campaign and multiple accusations of sexual assault brought against him. Over the next three years came the rescission of the 2014 Q&A on Title IX and the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter (both released during the Obama administration); the testimony of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford in September 2018 regarding historical allegations of sexual assault by Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh; the notice of proposed rulemaking that outlined prospective massive changes in Title IX regulations in November 2018 and the subsequent comment period during which victim rights advocates sought to halt the proposed rules; and the September 2019 fine levied against Michigan State University for failing in its response to the abuse of hundreds of athletes by former gymnastics team doctor Larry Nassar. Cohort 2 formally concluded just months later in December 2019.

While this landscape may not be directly impactful to the data found, it is impossible to separate any potential correlation between institutional results

Discussion *(continued)*

and the national events related to sexual violence that transpired during the time changes were being made.

Lessons Learned and Looking to the Future

As with any program in its initial years, much of what was learned from Cohorts 1 and 2 of the Collective was integrated into the program design for future cohorts. Some key takeaways and lessons learned are shared below.

- **Meaningful change cannot happen without buy-in.** The importance of programmatic buy-in to make meaningful change happen cannot be overstated. Buy-in must come from leadership within the institution - those who can set the expectation that sexual violence will not be tolerated and can lend support and weight to actualize that goal - and from those on the ground, working daily with individuals impacted by sexual violence who can speak to the importance of the work and how it can and should be done. While many Collective institutions saw increased collaboration, buy-in from administrators, and enthusiasm from colleagues, feedback from team leads and responses in the Closeout Survey speak to the importance of ensuring that all stakeholders understand and are committed to the success of the Collective. Time and again, team leads conveyed that CLTs that struggled with political and “turf” battles were able to devote less time to the actual work, whereas CLTs with a shared sense of accountability and desire for change felt more empowered and effective.

- **Make the most of what you have.** Now more than ever, as higher education navigates the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, colleges and universities need to work efficiently to maximize their impact in addressing sexual violence. Institutions cannot afford to spend limited resources on programs (sexual violence prevention or otherwise) that have little to no impact. Rather, institutions must rely on evidence-based practices and robust evaluation to ensure time, energy, and money are being utilized effectively. At a time when every dollar needs to be stretched, allocating resources in the institutional strategy to prevent and respond to sexual violence is a sound investment in today’s student well-being and tomorrow’s overall health of the institution. As noted by Joseph Storch, associate counsel of the State University of New York (SUNY): “Prevention is really an olive tree and you have to be willing to invest time and resources now in order to bear fruit years down the line. Because you have to change the entire culture,” (Bullard, 2020).
- **Compliance is a floor, not a ceiling.** The movement to end campus sexual violence has had significant ups and downs, especially during the three years in which Cohorts 1 and 2 participated in the Collective. From the early years of campus activism to the release of the new Title IX rule in May 2020, the work to end campus sexual violence has been an ever-changing landscape; this landscape may continue to shift as the country looks towards a presidential election in November

Discussion *(continued)*

2020. While cultural and legislative winds may change, the need for this work is constant. Federal law such as the Title IX rule and the Clery Act provide a “floor” in terms of an institution’s requirements for addressing sexual violence, but colleges and universities can - and should - consider how they may help reach a higher “ceiling” above and beyond compliance, creating policies, programs, and procedures that help foster a culture of respect and work to end sexual violence.

Conclusion

Despite the many gains that have been made over the past years as a result of shining a bright and long overdue light on campus sexual violence and its tragic impacts, there is still much work to be done before it can be eradicated. Colleges and universities are in a unique position to make significant and meaningful change at an individual, institutional, and community level by doing everything in their power to prevent sexual violence from occurring. When it does occur, institutions should support those impacted by violence in healing and aid them in continuing on their path to a bright future, rather than contributing to a situation in which survivors’ futures are derailed.

This report from Cohorts 1 and 2 supports the programmatic premise of the Culture of Respect Collective: using a comprehensive framework, evidence-based practices, cross campus collaboration, and peer-led learning, institutions can successfully make meaningful programmatic and policy changes that support

the goal of ending campus sexual violence. Building on the success of the initial cohorts, Culture of Respect is continuing the work of the Collective: at the time of publication, Cohorts 3 and 4 are actively engaged in the program and recruitment for Cohort 5 is underway. As the number of participating institutions grows - currently, more than 100 colleges and universities have participated in the Collective - so does the opportunity to look at trends across cohorts and distill findings and practices that can inform the ways in which higher education can work to end campus sexual violence.

Colleges and universities are one part of a much larger landscape that shapes the way American culture thinks about and responds to sexual violence. While much of this larger landscape is beyond any one individual’s control, institutions of higher education have the opportunity to significantly impact the ways in which sexual violence is addressed on campus, and these efforts can greatly reduce its effects on their community. As institutions across the country embrace the Collective model and rise to the challenge of the difficult but essential work of creating large scale change to end campus sexual violence, higher education moves closer to the reality of fostering a culture of respect.

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