



Addressing Sexual Misconduct at Postsecondary Educational Institutions

Introduction:

Central Washington University (CWU) respectfully submits the following report in accordance with RCW 28B.112.050 requiring every public four-year institution of higher education to report the following information to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature. It requires, (1) summaries of any campus climate assessments conducted since the effective dates of this section; (2) efforts to reach out to and capture information from students who have traditionally been marginalized or experience disproportionate impacts of systemic oppression; (3) how information obtained in the assessments was used to design and improve policies, programs, and resources for the campus community; (4) and, the impacts of this act on institutional hiring practices, campus safety, and other relevant considerations.

This report summarizes the requested information in RCW 28B.112.050.

Summaries of any campus climate assessments conducted since the effective dates of this section:

In 2020, CWU partnered with EAB to conduct a Campus Climate Survey, which focused on topics related to diversity and inclusion, basic needs, sexual violence/misconduct, and prevention. It was reported that nearly one-fourth of respondents experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact prior to college. Over sixty percent of respondents received some form of sexual violence prevention training or information, and most felt the training was useful in increasing their overall knowledge. Out of those respondents who experienced sexual violence, over eighty percent reported the incident through a campus entity and sixty percent told a roommate, friend, or classmate about the incident. The results of this survey led to a faculty task force and a recommendation list provided by faculty on ways to improve CWU's campus climate. Many of these recommendations were put on hold during the pandemic, and a second campus climate assessment was developed internally in 2022.

CWU developed and conducted a comprehensive campus climate assessment in 2022 that was administered to faculty, exempt staff, and classified staff. The survey was a combination of questions answered in the 2018 climate survey and included questions from previous Human Resources surveys. The response rate was 30.7%. The survey results identified four issues that CWU should address. These included the following needs: (1) communicate more effectively and elevate/practice shared governance; (2) be more intentional and provide more transparency; (3) provide more in-depth educational opportunities for all university community members to identify anti-racist practices and methods for dismantling structural racism; (4) develop a comprehensive strategic response to equity issues identified in the survey. These identified needs provided a foundation for institutional focus in the future.

Efforts to reach out and capture information from students:

CWU has conducted Student Success Surveys for first-year students annually from 2019 to 2022 in which students are asked questions regarding campus climate. In addition, the College of Business conducted its own student survey in 2020-21 to learn more about the student experience. These surveys were utilized to capture information from students who are disproportionately impacted by systemic



oppression and to discover ways to support these students. The Diversity and Equity Center (DEC) also provides individual and group support to students. The DEC is responsive to student needs through identity-based and cultural programming and provides spaces that allows students to be their full selves.

How information obtained in the assessments was used:

In response to feedback, several faculty and staff professional development opportunities were developed. In 2021, CWU sponsored a series of workshops for faculty and staff on diversity, equity, inclusivity and campus climate. In addition, faculty members hosted community practice groups and trainings across departments to evaluate campus climate and further improve well-being. These trainings provided opportunities for open-ended conversations on difficult topics that require additional time and support.

The impacts of this act on institutional hiring practices, campus safety, and other relevant considerations:

A university working group developed a [Workforce Diversity Plan](#) in 2019. The goals set forth in this plan attempt to ensure CWU's ability to successfully recruit, hire, promote, educate, and retain a diverse workforce, while creating a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and equity to enable individuals to participate at their full potential. This includes developing a culture that promotes campus safety and institutional hiring practices that champion equity. Included in the plan was the establishment of the Diversity Advocate Program (DAP) in 2020. The purpose of DAP is to advance the university's efforts to obtain a workforce that is representative of the CWU student body. The mission of the DAP is to enhance equity, integrity, validity, and inclusivity in employee search and selection. The addition of a Diversity Advocates on search committees ensures a diversity champion is present in formal and informal processes. They have become an essential and active component for faculty and most administrative search committees.

HB 2327 has required that CWU disclose sexual misconduct data on current and former CWU employees applying to other institutions. In addition, it requires that each CWU candidate, who is offered a position, have their current and former employers be contacted. This act has impacted the CWU hiring timeline by increasing the time from offering a position to the actual hire. Only one candidate has been denied a position due to the results of the sexual misconduct disclosure.

Beginning winter quarter 2022, CWU developed a shared governance work group, CWU Safe, to analyze CWU's work on prevention and handling of gender-based violence and to make recommendations for improvement based on research, best practices, and the evolving landscape of federal law and regulation. CWU Safe held several town halls that allowed anyone from the CWU community to identify issues and suggest strategies to address those issues. CWU Safe recommendations included requiring CWU to conduct an action-focused and comprehensive culture and climate study that informs the development of a short-, intermediate-, and long-term action plan. This long-range plan will occur every three to five years. To support this climate study and its findings, CWU is in the process of forming a climate survey committee. Furthermore, as a result of the CWU Safe recommendations, CWU has created a standing [Culture of Respect Council](#) to ensure this important work continues and is institutionalized.