

Minoritized Student Perspectives on Preventing Violence, Harm, and Oppression on Campus

Study Info



Study Summary: Between fall 2018 – spring 2019, the study collected ideas from students minoritized* by race, gender, and/or sexual identity via face-to-face focus groups as to how violence, harm, and oppression can be prevented across Rutgers University campuses. Then via an online platform, students categorized ideas by theme, and rated each idea based on importance and the level of influence they and their peers have over implementing each idea.

- Ideas were brainstormed in response to the question, “One thing that would support students in becoming active bystanders who prevent violence, harm and oppression on this campus is...”
- 101 students participated across Camden, Newark, and New Brunswick campuses
- Participants were required to identify with at least one minoritized identity, and students of various and non-exclusive gender, sexual, and racial identities were represented

Findings indicate a need for bystander intervention efforts to widen their focus beyond sexual and dating violence to address other forms of harm such as microaggressions that compound the experiences of minoritized students. This requires employing an intersectional, social justice lens.



Findings



Students identified six main categories for preventing violence, harm, and oppression on campus, listed below in order of highest to lowest importance rating:

1. **Creating and improving student services**, such as increasing the availability of direct student services, offering alternative accountability measures such as restorative justice, and providing supportive resources for bystanders
2. **Building institutional respect for identity**, including a call for the in-depth education of faculty and staff regarding race, gender, and sexuality and intersectional representation within positions of authority
3. **Providing programming rooted in identity and social justice**, centering minoritized identities and systems/histories/realities of oppression, to be taught by those with minoritized identities
4. **Providing institutional assurance of safety and justice**, through building student confidence in provision of justice for victims/survivors and holding those who commit acts of perpetration (including faculty and staff) accountable
5. **Intensifying bystander initiatives**, including the expansion of bystander education to faculty and staff, and ensuring programming is more accessible, in-depth, and ongoing for students
6. **Shifting campus norms via community collaboration**, including shifting campus norms toward feelings of solidarity and willingness to intervene

The categories students deemed most important were also those students felt they had less influence over, emphasizing the need for institutional-level interventions