

PLEDGE TO SUPPORT WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

I, _____ (First Name, Last Name), pledge to support women in higher education during and after the global COVID-19 pandemic by listening, learning and advocating for the recruitment, retention, advancement and equitable treatment of women in my institution. I also pledge to take one or more of the following actions, and to use my voice and leadership to encourage others to do the same.

Workplace Flexibility

I pledge to advocate for flexibility for employees to work the schedule and at the location that meets their needs and will encourage workers of all genders to utilize this flexibility. I pledge to model and normalize a focus on quality performance and outcomes over “face time,” advocate for accommodations for interruptions in the traditional work day, and allow for the necessity that many workers will have multiple, competing demands on their attention during the pandemic.

Access to Affordable, Quality Child and Elder Care

I pledge to advocate for access to affordable, quality child and elder care solutions at home and on campus and to encourage people of all genders to access these services. I pledge to normalize the necessity of caregiving during normal business hours during the pandemic: to recognize that people may be providing care to children or elders that may demand attention during meetings in the workday, and to remain patient and empathetic when interruptions occur.

Robust Paid Family Leave

I pledge to advocate for the development and launch of robust paid family leave policies. I pledge to model and normalize utilizing these benefits, and will encourage workers of all genders to utilize them as well.

Equity Assessment

I pledge to assess, evaluate, report and act to address any gender inequities in my department/office, such as access to internal funding, teaching and service loads, professional development opportunities, decisions regarding promotion, layoffs/furloughs, compensation, and membership on leadership teams and decision-making bodies. I pledge to adopt an intersectional equity lens which takes women’s needs into account and doesn’t assume that gender-neutral policies will necessarily benefit women, or that all women have the same needs. I will recognize that women’s experiences will vary based on their race, ethnicity, citizenship, sexual orientation, disability status, economic background, whether they have caregiving responsibilities and more.

Emotional and Wellness Support

I pledge to publicize and advocate for increased access to wellness and emotional support services, such as employee assistance programs and mental health supports, to openly and publicly model utilization of these benefits without stigma, and to encourage employees of all genders to utilize these benefits.

Empathetic Leadership

I pledge to model and champion empathetic relational leadership. I will prioritize the needs of my colleagues and peers as whole people, not simply roles to be filled. I will listen to challenges and accept criticism with curiosity and humility, be willing to admit when I have done harm, and be publicly accountable for my actions with commitment to positive change. I will encourage other leaders in my organization to lead with empathy and humility during this anxious time. I will not expect nor allow the responsibility of empathetic leadership to fall largely on the shoulders of women leaders.

Advocacy and Allyship

I pledge to listen to women, to support women's wellbeing, to mentor and be mentored by women, to sponsor women's career progression, to nominate women for leadership roles, to celebrate women's achievements, and to vocally and repeatedly give credit to women's ideas, scholarship and service. I pledge to listen to and take seriously reports of harassment and discrimination. I pledge to share this pledge and speak about these issues with others in my institution.

Additional Supports

I pledge to: _____

Signed

_____ (Name)
_____ (Institution)
_____ (Date)