What did we learn from the 2019 ACR Survey on Safety and Inclusiveness?

Working Committee on Safety & Inclusiveness:
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Survey Purpose

- **To gather:**
  - Empirical evidence of two conference characteristics (Safety & Inclusiveness)
  - Projected and self-reported experiences
  - Ideas for improvement

- **To use the data to:**
  - Understand areas needing improvement
  - Track progress (hopefully) over the years
  - Make practical changes to conference practices
  - See opportunities for ACR policy-making, large or small

- **To serve, in itself, as an influence on ACR culture**
Survey Characteristics

• Written and revised by working committee and executive team
• Fielded via email recruitment on August 2 (reminder Aug. 7)
• 546 participants
• Two sections (safety and inclusiveness)
• 25 questions overall

• See appendix for full survey
Overall message

• Bad stuff does happen at ACR but it is rare
• Most experiences are matters of inclusiveness, not sexual harassment
• Members feel we are doing a decent job
• Most members are glad to be talking about this as a way to “remind” others what is appropriate and respectful
• Worries about addressing this issue is not widespread, but includes:
  • How do you police this? (We don’t for the most part)
  • Does this mean no socializing at ACR? (Nope, just needs to be consensual)
  • Does this imply people aren’t adults who can take care of themselves? (Nope, but in any community with varying status/power, giving folks additional resources can help remove stigmas for those who experience harassment.)
Physical Safety

• Most feel safe. Members overestimate the extent to which others feel unsafe.
Was “unsafe” due to ACR members or Dallas?

About 30 said, “It’s ACR”

About 5 said, “It’s Dallas”
Physical harassment at ACR 2018?

• Did you experience harassment at ACR 2018?
  • No → 96%
  • Yes → 2%
  • Unsure → 2%

• Did you witness harassment at ACR 2018?
  • No → 90%
  • Yes → 3%
  • Unsure → 6%
Most prevalent types of physical harassment at ACR conferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>sexual assault</td>
<td>6.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>battery or other physical assault</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>unsolicited/unwelcome touching</td>
<td>28.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>physical intimidation</td>
<td>2.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>rude or threatening gestures (e.g., bumping, pointing)</td>
<td>7.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>verbal threats</td>
<td>5.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>exploitation or expecting personal favors for professional help</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>25.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How well does ACR promote safety?

Q10 - To what extent does ACR, as an organization, do a good job of protecting participants from this type of harassment at the conference?

1, 2, 3: 23% You can do much better

4: 27% Meh, what can you do?

5, 6, 7: 48% Pretty good
Suggestions to improve:

1. **Educate**
   - Students at Doctoral Symposium (i.e., “it is **not** normal when...”)
   - Members about differing norms (i.e., different countries, different ages)
   - ACR about what other organizations are doing

2. **Remind/Build Norms**
   - Have a code of conduct
   - Have signage at registration
   - Conduct survey to keep conversation going
   - Have leaders talk publically about importance of not exploiting status

3. **Resources for victims**
   - Confidential mentors at ACR

4. **Saturday Gala**
   - Communal gathering is good as it precludes private parties
   - Rein in the drink tickets
   - Make something other than alcohol the “treat” (e.g., chocolate)

5. **Whova**
   - **FIX**: Senior professors use it to offer “assistance” to junior faculty with a “let’s meet for coffee” invite

*Red text indicates what we are doing in 2019*
Emotional/social harassment

- A bigger problem than physical safety
- Though again expect more people feel unsafe than they themselves do
- And it’s ACR, not Dallas!
Emotional/social harassment at ACR 2018?

• Did you experience harassment at ACR 2018?
  • No → 86%
  • Yes → 7%
  • Unsure → 6%

• Did you witness harassment at ACR 2018?
  • No → 77%
  • Yes → 10%
  • Unsure → 13%
Most prevalent types of social harassment at ACR conferences?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>racist comments</td>
<td>4.26% 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>age-discrimination comments</td>
<td>4.43% 62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LGBTQ+ discrimination comments</td>
<td>1.64% 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>discriminatory comments about nation or region (e.g., stereotypes, accents)</td>
<td>9.06% 127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>discriminatory comments about family status</td>
<td>3.07% 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>pressure to drink alcohol</td>
<td>11.56% 162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>pressure to socialize</td>
<td>17.42% 244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>mocking or disrespectful language</td>
<td>9.78% 137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>poor treatment of individuals because of gender, race, age, sexual-orientation</td>
<td>0.35% 99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>victim shaming</td>
<td>2.00% 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>pressure to not report inappropriate behavior of others</td>
<td>0.71% 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>9.56% 134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From open-ended:
School-based derision
How well does ACR promote inclusiveness?

Q32 - To what extent does ACR, as an organization, do a good job of protecting participants from this type of harassment at the conference?

- 1, 2, 3: 25% You can do much better
- 4: 26% Meh, what can you do?
- 5, 6, 7: 49% Pretty good

Same stats as before!
Suggestions to improve

• **More topic-oriented meet & greets**
• **Minimize drinking pressure**
  • Always have mocktails available at receptions
  • Less alcohol (fewer tix) and better food
• **Get senior scholars to be explicit allies**
• **Remind people about non-North America bias**
• **Remind people about non-R1 Research Univ bias**
• **Build structure for kids to come**
  • Shared babysitters, rooms to use for kids/sitters when available
  • Local parent for each conference to give advice pre-conference
• **Build structure for more non-NA, non-R1 scholars to come**
  • Conferences near good international airports
  • Time presentations for second day for people from other time zones
  • More travel scholarships for non-R1 scholars
## Respondent breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>30.00% 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Non tenure-track Faculty</td>
<td>3.47% 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tenure-Track faculty</td>
<td>27.96% 137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tenured faculty</td>
<td>36.33% 178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Employed in an Industry position</td>
<td>0.82% 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Employed in a non-academic governmental organization</td>
<td>0.00% 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What did ACR do in response?

• More messaging at registration and on-site
• Mention survey and coming results to full lunch crowd (i.e., signal that this is important to ACR)
• Creation of ACR Ombuds-team

• What did Ombuds-team announcement look like? Email message to ACR membership and messaging at registration and Friday lunch. (See email...
Dear fellow ACR members,

Our recent ACR survey of your opinions on conference safety and inclusiveness was a great success in terms of participation and insight – thank you! We will be circulating a report after ACR 2019 to highlight some findings. We will also continue doing the survey on a regular basis to track our members' perceptions.

However, in advance of our upcoming conference in Atlanta, we are delighted to announce that we now have a team of volunteer ACR members who will serve as an "Ombuds-team" at ACR conferences starting this year at ACR 2019. The team consists of ACR members who will serve an initial 2-year term with the possibility of additional service. While our needs for the ombuds-team is likely to evolve over the next few years, anyone who is unclear about the general role that ombuds play in academia can see more details here (https://www.ombudsassociation.org or https://www.higheredjobs.com/articles/articleDisplay.cfm?ID=1087). In general, the ombuds’ role is to be a confidential listening ear and can help people experiencing harassment to understand their rights and options. We are fortunate that the following three wonderful leaders in our field have agreed to serve as the ACR Ombuds-team:

• Gita Johar (Columbia University)
• David Crockett (University of South Carolina)
• Simona Botti (London Business School)

IF YOU NEED THEM, a central email (ACR.Ombuds@gmail.com) and phone number (+1 218-209-2313) has been set up with the Ombuds-team monitoring the email, phone calls, and texts during the conference. This email and phone number will be on prominent conference signs and the app. These messages are completely confidential to the ombuds-team.

As important as this is, it is just one of many efforts we are taking to improve safety and inclusiveness at our conferences. Here are some other initiatives already in place:

1. As many of you know, ACR does have a Standard of Conduct and a specific policy on safety and inclusiveness. Our ACR policy on safety and inclusiveness is now more prominent on the conference website and on-site signage, the Saturday Gala signage, the main ACR website, the program, the conference app and will remain prominent on future conference sites. We will also send out a "Know Before You Go" email to all registrants before the conference that will include a reminder on the policy. Our main tool for protecting our members is to create a culture that values diversity in scholars and scholarship; these reminders will help all ACR stakeholders reinforce our cultural norm for professional respect and equality.

2. We now include a statement as part of our conference registration and explicitly require registrants to agree to the following two statements prior to registering:
   • I agree to abide by ACR’s Standard of Conduct while onsite at the ACR 2019 Conference.
   • I have not been found guilty of workplace harassment by any institution.

3. As researchers, we would be remiss to miss out on more data! So, we plan to resend the ACR survey on conference safety each year and report on our progress to our members regularly.
What should we do next?

Keep the conversation going! Support the Ombuds-team. Emphasize our desire to be an equitable community of scholars.