3 February 2016

Colleagues,

I write to update all of us on our ongoing efforts to create in Campbell Hall a welcoming and inclusive educational environment free of harassment and unwanted behavior.

Let me first express my gratitude for the great number of people — faculty, students, postdocs, and staff — who have pitched in with their energy, expertise, and positivity.

Below is a compilation — still growing — of the Berkeley Astronomy Department’s various activities and actions from October 2015 through the present time of writing:

1. We have created a new Astronomy Department website describing the many resources available to address issues of harassment and discrimination:
   
   http://astro.berkeley.edu/department-resources/reporting-harassment

   This website was created “by Berkeley astronomers for Berkeley astronomers,” after consulting in-person with representatives from the following campus offices: the Office of the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD); the Confidential Care Advocate; the Tang Center; the UC Police Department; Respondent Services; Students of Concern; the Student and Staff Ombuds Offices; and the Gender Equity Resource Center.

   You will see on the website that care is taken to distinguish between confidential and non-confidential resources. A key confidential resource is provided by the Confidential Care Advocate (510 642 1988: a number worth committing to memory).

2. We have created a new team of Astronomy Climate Advisors, whose mission is to be educated on issues of sexual harassment and discrimination; to serve as pointers to campus resources; and to help devise and implement solutions to climate problems not necessarily involving formal investigations.

   Any member of the Department can come to a Climate Advisor for help. Although we will do our best to keep the information reported to us private, Climate Advisors are non-confidential: violations of Title IX policy reported to us will be forwarded to OPHD. The general rule is that if anyone wishes confidentiality, they should ask before confiding.

   The Climate Advisors are Eugene Chiang, Mariska Kriek, and Eliot Quataert (faculty); Tanmoy Laskar (postdoc); Melanie Veale (graduate student); Sara Gutierrez (undergraduate student); and Lochland Trotter (staff).
3. The **education of the Climate Advisors** began in November 2015 with a 2-hr meeting with Director Denise Oldham of OPHD, and continued with a second 2-hr session in January 2016 with the entire OPHD Case Management Team comprising representatives from the campus offices listed above.

4. We have created a new team of **Astronomy Representatives to maintain open lines of communication between faculty, postdocs, graduate students, undergraduates, and staff**. The Astronomy Reps are Eugene Chiang (department chair); Aaron Parsons (head graduate advisor); Mariska Kriek (head undergraduate advisor); Lochland Trotter (staff); Isaac Shivvers (graduate student); Adrian Liu and Philipp Mösta (postdocs); and Diana Kossakowski (undergraduate student).

   The Astronomy Representatives meet every ~3 weeks in **touch-base meetings** to discuss all variety of problems and propose solutions. Since November 2015, the issues discussed range from undergraduate access to Campbell Hall; graduate student progress; our faculty search; trash collection; and first aid kits (now stockpiled in the 5th floor front office; eventually every floor will be outfitted).

5. As of January 2016, the **Astronomy faculty, and the first-year Astronomy graduate students, are 100% compliant with on-line sexual harassment training**.

6. In December 2015, Frances Hellman (Mathematical and Physical Sciences Dean) organized an **interactive theater workshop focussed on improving faculty climate**. Faculty from Astronomy, Physics, Math, Statistics, and Earth and Planetary Science attended the 3-hour-long event involving a short play, an improvisatory question-and-answer period, and group discussions. Two faculty members devoted ~10 hours of their time to serve as volunteer actors (Rudy Mendoza-Denton of Psychology and Eugene Chiang of Astronomy).

7. **Berkeley astronomers have been in discussions with senior administrators to discuss policy issues related to harassment.** (a) The Department met with Provost Claude Steele and Vice Provost Janet Broughton in a 10/2015 Town Hall. (b) Berkeley Astronomy faculty initiated a meeting with Steele, Broughton, and Dean Hellman in 10/2015. (c) Berkeley Astronomy faculty initiated a meeting with Senate Chair Ben Hermalin and Vice Chair Bob Powell in 11/2015. (d) Powell followed up with Astronomy faculty in 2/2016. The long-term goal is to implement new policy reforms to stop harassing behavior by faculty — perhaps along the lines suggested by a letter to Steele, Broughton, Hermalin, and Powell that can be found under our Statement of Diversity webpage:

   [http://astro.berkeley.edu/about/diversity-and-climate](http://astro.berkeley.edu/about/diversity-and-climate)
8. The “Respect is Part of Research” event for Physics graduate students will be expanded to include all Astronomy graduate students. The ~2-hr program, which usually occurs during Fall Orientation, is designed to educate students on issues related to climate through a series of case studies. Discussion is led by graduate student facilitators, including Simca Bouma, Sam Kohn, and Melanie Veale. A call for more facilitators — this time reaching out to Astronomy graduate students — will be made in Spring 2016. Campbell Hall 131 will be made available for the combined Physics and Astronomy event this Fall 2016.

9. The AstroJustice Workgroup met with the UC Postdocs Union (President Anke Schennink) to enhance and clarify anti-discrimination resources for postdocs. The Union will consider improvements to the UC postdoc contract and advocate for the extension of UCB Astronomy’s Climate Advisor program to other departments.

10. Hardcopies of OPHD’s Survivor Support Handout were distributed to all students in our undergraduate majors course Astronomy 7B (~50 students) on the first day of class in Spring 2016. The class website for Astronomy 7B now links directly to OPHD’s website, and states that the University is obligated to provide an environment free of discrimination and harassment. All of this information was highlighted as part of the first day’s lecture. We plan for this practice to be applied universally across all Astronomy courses.

11. Following a decades-long tradition, the Astronomy faculty put together, from scratch, a full-length (3-act) play for the entire Department to enjoy in December 2015. The play addressed, in a metaphorical way, issues of climate and responsibility.

There are further activities being discussed. One is a climate survey, like the one we conducted in Spring 2015, that we hope to conduct annually to keep track of our progress. Another future activity might be a Town Hall on the subject of graduate advising, in which graduate alumni from our Department would be invited back to be panelists to discuss their experiences and recommend best practices.

Our activities serve to demonstrate the Berkeley Astronomy Department’s commitment to building community; preventing harassment; openly articulating the difference between right and wrong professional conduct; and curbing unwanted behavior speedily and effectively. Our goal is to lead the world not only in the scientific arena, but also in the fields of equity and social justice. With the developments listed above, and more to come, we are on our way to achieving this goal.
Eugene Chiang  
Chair of Astronomy  

Diana Kossakowski, Mariska Kriek,  
Adrian Liu, Philipp Mösta, Aaron Parsons,  
Isaac Shivvers, and Lochland Trotter  
serving as Astronomy Representatives  

Sara Gutierrez, Mariska Kriek,  
Tanmoy Laskar, Eliot Quataert,  
Lochland Trotter, and Melanie Veale  
serving as Astronomy Climate Advisors  

Ryan Trainor  
on behalf of the AstroJustice Workgroup