



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

# “Holding the Emotional Door”: Faculty Roles in Response to Sexual Violence

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Texas Christian University and University of Texas at Arlington

## Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine faculty motivations for participation in a bystander intervention program and perspectives regarding their roles on campus in response to sexual violence.

## Introduction

## Methods

## Results

## Conclusion

## Background

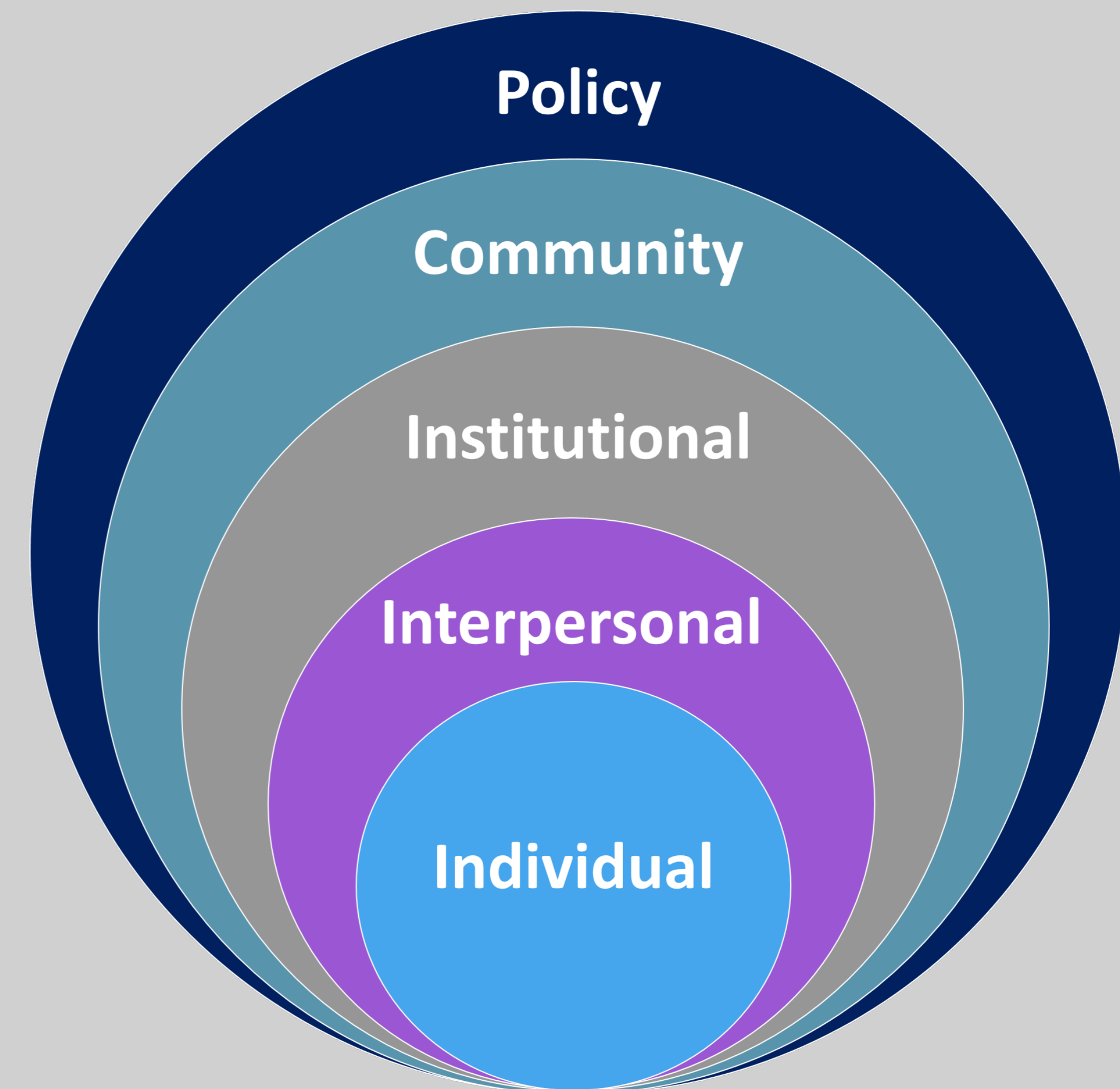
### Bystander Facilitators for Faculty

- Positive bystander behavior connected to community support
- Reduce sexual violence as a community
- Change social norms around sexual violence
- Motivated by personal experiences

### Theoretical Framework: Ecological Model

### Faculty Role on University Campus

- Ability to raise awareness about important issues on campus
- Leadership roles influence the culture of an institution
- Understanding their role in becoming a prosocial bystander
- Knowing when and how to intervene



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Qualitative, Exploratory Approach

10 faculty  
(6 women, 4 men)

Three 1-1.5 hour mixed-gender focus groups in Fall 2017

Faculty were recruited through voluntary program participation

Focus groups led by two researchers using a semi-structured interview guide

Focus groups were audiotaped and professionally transcribed

Qualitative software program, Dedoose, was used to assist in the focus group coding

Three different types of triangulation strategies were used to enhance rigor



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## Impacting Community

• “By understanding that we can intervene in a non-threatening way. In a non-confrontational way, but simply intervene in a way that is affective, that we can think through our behaviors and hopefully change how the community functions.”

## Acting as a Bystander

• “I think it's reminded me that it is my business, it is my obligation, it is a part of my job and my duty as a human being and as a professor and as a part of this community to intervene. I think before I would tell myself it's my job to teach them this subject not to get involved in their personal life.”

## Empowerment

• “...a big part of what the whole process is about, you know, us being empowered to recognize and feel confident that we can recognize the situation when we see it and then know what to do to act on it.”



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• “So I think for me in terms of my role in changing the culture around sexual violence, it's a conversation about gender and what it actually means to be a man, and the ways in which we are programmed to be and act.”

## Culture

• “I just think that this work is ever important...as these issues are more and more prevalent, I feel that it is our responsibility and it behooves us to do this work on campus.”

## Facilitator Program Involvement

## Facilitators

## Skills

Bystander Focus Groups  
10 Faculty

## Faculty Role

## Taking Responsibility

• “Yeah, I think I've always been the faculty member that students will come to when they're in a state of trauma. But, I think I've always been kind of much more than reacting and trying to help after a situation, rather than trying to be more proactive. So, I feel that's changed.”

## Resource to Students

• “I think why it's so good that someone from each department go through is because we know within our little silo, for lack of a better word, what the biggest risks are for our students and recognizing what those risks are. And starting to figure out how to try and cut off any potential threats that we see.”

## Situational Awareness

• “My eyes are little more open, I look at interactions between people slightly differently because now I have a tool that I feel like, well now I don't have to be worried about it, I can do something really easy, I can just walk up to them and be like, “Hey, where's the library?” You know? And so now I'm looking for that, like a situation where I can use that.”



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## Discussion

- Faculty are motivated to participate in bystander intervention programming to be part of a movement to change cultural norms regarding sexual violence and other risky behaviors
- Faculty have the opportunity to utilize bystander behaviors and skills with students and recognize the importance of intervening when necessary
- Faculty should be provided training to develop bystander skills to safely intervene when presented with a student who is in a dangerous situation

## Limitations

- Small sample size which limits generalizability
- Lack of diversity in sample

## Implications

- Informs campus leaders about how to most effectively promote cultures of non-violence through sexual violence prevention initiatives centered around bystander interventions

## References

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