Supporting Faculty Against   
Online Harassment and Abuse

TRANSCRIPT

## INTRODUCTION

What is Online Harassment? We’ll begin by first briefly exploring this topic in more detail. While the definition of online harassment varies, a number of targeted phenomena are typically considered harassment, including things like offensive name-calling, purposely embarrassing, and more serious things like stalking, sexual harassment, and doxing.

While there is space for debate and discussion online (as well as conflicting ideas!), what separates online harassment from healthy discourse is the focus on harm: including publishing personal information, sending threats with the intention to scare or harm, using discriminatory language against an individual, and even directly promoting harm against a person or organization.

We all want to be a part of a respectful, equitable, professional, and ethical workplace. You have a role to play. As workplaces become more virtual, our institutions need to support faculty when they experience online abuse and harassment, just as they would in physical work environments.

This training is designed specifically for administrators, to equip you with the knowledge and tools you need to support your faculty. By following the guidelines in this training, we can all be better equipped to contribute to a safe, respectful, equitable, professional, and ethical workplace.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

*Upon completion of the training, you will be able to:*

1. Name 3 reasons why online harassment may be underreported at your institution.
2. Examine how adopting a system for supporting faculty during or after an experience of online harassment can improve equity within the department.
3. Identify the best course of actions to take to support faculty targeted with online harassment.
4. Distinguish between strategies that you can use to support your faculty vs. strategies that are likely to be unhelpful.

## MODULE INSTRUCTIONS

Click each tile to begin, starting with Module 1. To successfully complete a topic, visit every screen and pass the end-of-topic knowledge check. The Wrap Up module unlocks when all other topics are complete.

## MODULE 1 | RESPONDING TO ONLINE HARASSMENT AND ABUSE

Why is online harassment often underreported? Our research finds that administrators tend to think of online harassment in terms of faculty-to-faculty abuse, student-to-student abuse, or student-to-faculty abuse. Rarely did they identify online mobs or external actors as perpetrators that they need to be prepared for. Additionally, many institutions have no formal system for reporting online abuse. The implicit expectation is that staff will raise their concerns. However, targets of online abuse are often discouraged from reporting their experience because they’re uncertain about what to do and who to speak to, or because the institutions’ procedures for addressing abuse don’t fit their needs. Our research also indicates that individuals are largely coping with online abuse on their own. This can be a huge drain on the time and energy of your faculty. Having clear and dynamic reporting mechanisms can empower your faculty to speak up and help you to resolve issues quicker.

### Three Reasons Why Faculty Don’t Reach Out

It’s important to understand why faculty may choose to not report an incident.

1. **Fear:** *“I’m worried that I’ll be punished or blamed for the abuse if I bring it up.”*

*“As a proud member of the LGBT+ community, I wear my pride boldly. When I write about social justice and equity, I am very opinionated, and people already think I’m difficult. I’m worried that I’ll be punished or blamed for the abuse if I bring it up.”*

1. **Skepticism:** *“I’m just not sure there is anything anyone can do.”*

*“My research focuses on climate science and environmental policies. I get that this is a controversial topic, especially in today’s political environment. The comments I receive on my work can be harsh, but I’m just not sure there is anything anyone can do.”*

1. **Uncertainty:** *“I’m worried about what will happen.”*

*“I post a lot on social media. I don’t mind sharing my personal life with my work. I recently posted my COVID-19 vaccination status along with my publication on this topic and ended up receiving a lot of hateful comments. And they keep coming! Now I’m worried. What will happen if I bring this to my chair or my dean? Will they be helpful? What are the protocols?”*

#### Summary

Fears over job security or being labeled a ‘whiner’ or ‘complainer,’ are a few of the key reasons why faculty are afraid to report online abuse. They don’t want to be perceived as ‘causing problems’ that might put their future with the institution in jeopardy. The expectation that online abuse is just ‘part of the job’ discourages workers from raising concerns. With online abuse, it’s a losing strategy to wait until a problem is brought to you before you act. Having a proactive approach that is publicly available can provide clarity on what counts as abuse, what warrants reporting as a workplace issue, how to report, and what will happen if they do. Reduce uncertainty about online abuse at your organization by working with your faculty to establish policies, reporting channels, and procedures that meet their needs. It’s important to remember that they may be embarrassed, humiliated, and worry that perhaps they’ve done something that caused the abuse.

### Module 1 Pause and Reflect

Let’s take a moment to reflect. Think about your faculty at your institution while you answer the following:

1. What can you do to be more proactive about faculty online abuse?
2. What forms of communication are considered online abuse and should be reported?
3. Who should faculty report to and how?
4. What processes will be set in motion when an incident is reported?

Here are some ideas to help you effectively respond to online abuse:

* Be explicit, proactive, and repetitive in communicating your intent to protect, defend, and support any faculty who experiences online abuse.
* Issue a public statement to make it clear that any form of abuse or mistreatment directed towards your faculty members will not be tolerated.
* Make regular check-ins a priority and create opportunities for conversations about online abuse on an ongoing basis.

### Module 1 Knowledge Check

Test your knowledge on the information covered in this module.

Sharon recently published her research in a respectable journal. She shared a link to her article on LinkedIn. Shortly after, she began receiving abusive comments and personal attacks on her post, due to the controversial topic of her research. How should you advise Sharon?

**Question 1.** Sharon is reluctant to report this harassment. Why might she be hesitant to report this to you? Select all that apply.

1. She is afraid of being targeted.
2. She is embarrassed.
3. She doesn’t expect to be supported.
4. She does not know the process.

The correct answers are a, b, c, and d.

**Question 2.** Sharon chose to wait and see what happens, but later that day, she shares with you that she received a threat of violence in her direct messages.

1. Advise Sharon that these things happen and that this is just part of the job.
2. Politely recommend that Sharon delete her post to avoid this type of situation.
3. Suggest discussing additional security options that you can offer to enhance her safety.

The correct answer is c.

### Module 1 Summary

Remember, online abuse is a profoundly isolating experience. Being publicly attacked and humiliated on an open forum for all your colleagues, peers, and friends to see can produce intense feelings of shame, self-doubt, and self-blame. Remind the faculty members that you support them, they are not alone, and that they are not to blame for the abuse. Do not minimize the experience of harassment or abuse because it occurred online. Be explicit that you take this very seriously and that online abuse is not just “part of their job.” Finally, be prepared with a list of available resources that your institution can provide such as an employee assistance plan, counselling services, legal advice, peer support networks, and/or adjusted workloads.

## MODULE 2 | PROTECTING YOUR PERSONNEL

Research suggests that online abuse has become a common consequence of Internet use. In their most recent work, researchers at Pew found evidence to suggest that the abuse has become more extreme. It’s important to acknowledge that women, LGBTQIA2S+, Black, Indigenous, Persons of Colour, and disabled faculty members are disproportionately targeted. The likelihood of being targeted is heightened for anyone who has an intersectional identity. For instance, Black women are more likely to be targeted for online abuse than white women or Black men. Additionally, shielding themselves from online harassment and abuse and responding to attacks takes time and costs money. These are extra burdens for some faculty members, which prevents them from participating to the same level as their white, cis male, heterosexual, and able-bodied colleagues.

Those most at risk of experiencing online harassment and abuse are also most likely to experience oppression and marginalization. Online abuse exacerbates and further entrenches existing social and economic inequities. Left unchecked, these types of targeted attacks undermine diversity and equity at your institution. In addition, because the severity of threat is not the same across all identities, nor is the severity of impact the same across all faculty members, it is important to take your lead from the target when protecting faculty, instructors, and staff from online abuse.

### The Impacts on Targeted Faculty Members

It’s important to understand that online abuse has both damaging impacts on a target’s personal and professional life, as well as consequences that reverberate outward to affect broader society.

**Personal***“As an adjunct, I already don’t feel like I have the same support as my tenured colleagues. The amount of hate I receive online because of my family dynamic really takes a toll on my mental and emotional well-being. My partner and I are concerned because I feel unsafe, yet this is my primary source of income.”*

**Professional***“After publishing my research on the negative portrayal of Black women in modern media, false information has been spread about me online. I’ve been on several interviews recently and I constantly find myself having to defend the credibility of my work. I’m fighting back but this ongoing battle drains my energy and enthusiasm for the work.”*

**Societal***“While my institution does have resources that are helpful, I’m just not sure if it’s worth posting anymore. I feel discouraged from participating in online discussions or sharing my perspectives. I do have allies that come to my defense but sometimes, it’s so overwhelming, I just delete the post altogether.”*

#### Summary

Our research underscores that online harassment takes a serious toll on targets’ mental and emotional health with negative consequences for an individual’s worldview, work, relationships, overall happiness, and quality of life. The second most frequently cited personal impact was an elevated concern for one’s safety and the safety of their loved ones. Targets of abuse may lose out on opportunities and promotions or be deterred from making career advances or shifts altogether. They are unable to control a narrative that is made publicly accessible to their colleagues, prospective employers, and their online community. Research also indicates that online abuse impacts a target’s finances. Targets often self-censor in response to online abuse and often express the desire to leave platforms like social media altogether. This constrains the plurality of voices and perspectives, ultimately harming the public sphere. This is especially concerning considering that individuals from equity deserving groups are most likely to experience online harassment and abuse. When diverse voices are silenced, we miss out on valuable insights, experiences, and solutions which limits our ability to foster inclusivity, empathy, and understanding among different communities.

### Module 2 Pause and Reflect

Let’s take a moment to reflect. Think about your faculty at your institution while you answer the following:

1. What additional forms of protection does the institution offer to faculty members of disproportionally targeted groups?
2. What protocols are in place to assess the severity of threats made against faculty members?
3. Are reporting policies and procedures properly socialized into the culture of your institution?
4. What concrete supports can you offer to women, LGBTQIA2S+, Black, Indigenous, Persons of Colour, and disabled faculty members that are victims of online abuse?

The reality of online abuse of faculty points to a diversity, equity, and inclusion issue. Systems of oppression, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia place individuals at a higher risk of online abuse. Other factors, such as one’s online visibility and the topic of discussion also put individuals at greater risk of abuse. Targeted online abuse also has severe consequences with respect to diversity of thought in the knowledge economy and institutions with damaging implications for innovation. The impact that online abuse has on equity-deserving groups must be considered when adopting a system for supporting faculty during or after an experience of online harassment.

### Module 2 Knowledge Check

Test your knowledge on the information covered in this module.

To celebrate Pride Month, the university posted an article about Keith who recently received an award for his research on occupational segregation. You notice that someone has commented on the post with a racial and homophobic slur in response to the article due to Keith’s racial identity and sexual orientation. It’s likely that Keith has seen the post, but he has not reported this to you. How should you respond to this situation?

**Question 1.** It’s likely that Keith has seen the post, but he has not reported this to you. How should you respond to this situation? *[Select the best response.]*

1. Do nothing. Keith has not reported the incident, so no action is needed until he does so.
2. Report the incident to a trusted senior staff member or to the Legal department once Keith comes forward.
3. Reach out to Keith and be prepared with a list of support resources and services.

The correct answer is c.

### Module 2 Summary

Remember, the cost of online abuse is not evenly distributed across social groups. Members of equity-deserving groups are having to invest more heavily in preventing, responding to, and mitigating the damage of online harassment and abuse. This constitutes a drain on their resources with serious repercussions for their professional advancement, equity in the workplace, diversity across industries, and innovation across society at large.

There is no-one-size-fits-all response to online abuse. Some faculty might welcome a public statement of support from the institution that condemns the abusers. Others might prefer to reduce the amount of time they spend online for a while and let the situation quiet down. Be flexible in your policies and procedures and base your response upon the needs and priorities of each individual faculty member. They should be part of any decision-making processes that are likely to affect them.

## MODULE 3 | STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

What does it mean to stand in solidarity with others? Solidarity is an action word. It represents more than a feeling or statement. Standing in solidarity with those who experience online harassment means being explicit, proactive, and repetitive in communicating your intent to protect, defend, and support any faculty member who experiences online abuse. It is not uncommon for victims to have their concerns dismissed or to be told to turn off their computers. Additionally, many victims are urged to involve law enforcement, but it is crucial to acknowledge that not everyone has equal access to police support, especially those who experience systemic racism and discrimination and do not view the police as an institution that can help. Providing a range of options that offer different levels of support is part of a well-rounded program that can meet the diverse needs of faculty who experience online abuse.

### Standing in Solidarity with Faculty Members

Here are some ideas for various ways you can support faculty members who experience online abuse, ranging from awareness-building measures to creating safe spaces for dialogue and providing ongoing support.

1. **Posters around the office.**
   1. Placing posters around the office can serve as a visual reminder to all faculty members about the importance of addressing and preventing online abuse.
2. **Email reminders.**
   1. Sending regular email reminders reinforces the message that online abuse is not tolerated and encourages faculty to speak up if they experience such abuse.
3. **Integrate the message into all staff meetings.**
   1. Incorporating discussions about online abuse into regular staff meetings provides an opportunity for open dialogue, sharing experiences, and brainstorming strategies to address the issue collectively.
4. **Issue a public statement to make it clear that any form of abuse or mistreatment directed towards your faculty members will not be tolerated.**
   1. Making a public statement or including a clear policy on your website or communication channels sends a strong message that any form of abuse towards your faculty will not be tolerated.
5. **Make regular check-ins a priority and create opportunities for conversations about online abuse on an ongoing basis.**
   1. Regularly checking in with faculty members and creating a safe space for conversations about online abuse allows them to share their experiences, seek support, and discuss potential solutions or interventions.
6. **Drop-in sessions, especially with faculty who have experienced online abuse.**
   1. Organizing drop-in sessions specifically for faculty who have experienced online abuse provides them with dedicated time and space to discuss their concerns, receive guidance, and access resources or support services.
7. **Coffee break conversations.**
   1. Encouraging informal conversations during coffee breaks or other casual settings can help foster a supportive culture where faculty members feel comfortable discussing their experiences with online abuse.
8. **Recurrent 'health checks' with communication staff.**
   1. Regularly checking in with communication staff members who handle online platforms and interactions can help identify any potential issues or patterns of abuse. It allows for ongoing evaluation and adjustment of communication strategies to better protect faculty members from online abuse.

#### *Summary*

It’s important to provide solidarity and support when someone has become the target of online harassment. Other recommendations involve expressing support through personal messages or public statements, offering to help document or report the abuse, lending a supportive ear, defending the target through counter-speech, advocating on behalf of targets by rallying others, and avoiding victim-blaming or dismissive rhetoric.

### Supporting Academic Freedom

At the organizational level, it is equally important to articulate support for faculty and academic freedom early and often. The recommendations from the research can be grouped into three overarching themes that emphasize the importance of:

1. being proactive with policies, procedures, and staff training
2. supporting targets
3. implementing broader organizational changes that are better suited to the realities of digital workplaces.

Here are some ideas on how you can offer support:

* Implement campus wide discussions of how online harassment and abuse is affecting faculty and particularly faculty of colour.
* Give marginalized faculty easy access to information they need to be safe and successful.

### Module 3 Pause and Reflect

Let’s take a moment to reflect. Think about your faculty at your institution while you answer the following:

1. Does your institution’s media office have a protocol already in place for threats against its faculty?
2. Does the faculty senate or governance committee have a clear policy in place about social media and public scholarship?
3. Have faculty been trained in the appropriate precautions to take to protect themselves and know what to do if they or a colleague are attacked?
4. Do the faculty feel a sense of reassurance from people with power and authority?

Silence speaks volumes. Our research shows that when faculty don't hear from a supervisor or administrators after an incident, it sends the message that they don't care. Reaching out to acknowledge their experience can make a big difference. There should also be protocols in place for responding to phone and email onslaughts, assessing the credibility of threats, as well as a clear public communications plan that does not exacerbate or prolong the abuse of faculty members. In developing these policies and procedures, administrators are advised to reach out to other organizations and learn from those who have implemented strong response mechanisms.

### Module 3 Knowledge Check

Test your knowledge on the information covered in this module.

Dr. Thomas has a visible disability and is an advocate for disability rights. He was recently targeted online with derogatory comments mocking his disability. Despite reporting the abusive behavior to the social media platform, he continues to face online harassment. How should you respond to this situation?

**Question 1.** Which of the following actions demonstrate concrete support that expresses solidarity? Select all that apply.

1. Help with documenting the abuse.
2. Help with additional cybersecurity protections.
3. Provide links to online safety training.
4. Assist with contacting the public relations or communications office.
5. Refer to the local police department.

The correct answers are a, b, and d.

### Module 3 Summary

Remember, solidarity is an action word. The research shows that targets are already doing what they can. When a member of your faculty approaches you to tell you that they are being harassed online, your goal in this interaction is to minimize the harm of the online abuse they’re experiencing and to ensure that your faculty member leaves this conversation feeling supported by you and the institution. Effectively tackling the issue of online abuse requires a more robust approach whereby institutions acknowledge the important role that they have to play in preventing online abuse and supporting the workers who become targets. By implementing the ideas shared in this module, you can create a supportive environment that upholds and champions academic freedom among your faculty, fostering an atmosphere conducive to intellectual growth, critical thinking, and the pursuit of knowledge.

## MODULE 4 | ALLY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

What does it mean to be an ally? Based on current research, recommendations for dealing with online harassment addressed a variety of stakeholders, including individual targets, bystanders such as friends, family and peers, employers, platform companies, law and law enforcement, as well as governments and policymakers. Each of these has a role to play in combating the problem of online abuse.  
  
The research frequently advises supporting targets in the aftermath of an attack by providing access to legal counsel, mental health counselling, and modifying the target’s work responsibilities as requested. Institutions are advised to denounce the abuse publicly and stand in support of their faculty members when doing so. Failing to do this can embolden perpetrators and exacerbate the abuse. Other supportive recommendations include taking all reports of online abuse seriously, acknowledging the harm of the incident, and not minimizing or dismissing the severity of the event.

### Module 4 Sorting Activity

Read each response and determine whether it is a helpful or unhelpful response to a faculty member who has experienced online abuse.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Helpful Responses** | **Unhelpful Responses** |
| Confidence and clarity regarding support for academic freedom. | Silence. |
| A plan to respond. | Being sent to the police. |
| Reassurance from people with power and authority. | Prioritizing donor interests or the institution’s public image. |
| Supportive messages from colleagues. | “Reassurance” that minimizes experience or the need for concern. |
| Advice, comradery, and backup from others with similar experiences. | A “wait and see what happens” strategy. |
| IT support. | Explain that it’s part of the job. |
| Providing updates on actions taken. | Hands-off approach. |
| Check-ins after the fact. |  |

Here are some additional suggestions you may find helpful:

* Produce instructions: management checklists; a decision-making tree; a manual; a contact list; or best practices guides to support your institution’s leaders.
* Get people and departments that are in a position of support (IT, media offices, security, etc.) on the same page in terms of procedures and protocols.
* Articulate support for faculty and academic freedom early and often.
* Have regular institution-wide discussions of how online abuse is affecting faculty and particularly faculty of colour.
* Keep faculty informed about decisions and actions being taken and seek their input.
* Provide funding to cover costs incurred because of online abuse such as increased security measures, counselling costs, etc.
* Make the process of removing contact information and classroom information from the website easier.
* Provide additional support for administrative and professional services staff who field calls and manage inboxes of university executives and administrators.
* Institute an Office of Victim’s Assistance.

### Institutional Responses: Helpful vs Unhelpful Strategies

Remember, any implemented policies, reporting mechanisms, or other protocols must take a gender and race-sensitive approach. In developing these, employers must consider how different identities and lived experiences will provide different frameworks through which online abuse is experienced and understood. Responding publicly to an incident of online abuse is a delicate matter. You should always consult with the faculty about how they would like to proceed. Do not release a statement, promise anything to members of the public, or take any action at all without first speaking with the target to better understand the situation. Unions and employers alike can also lobby governments to do more to prevent online harassment by raising awareness and educating the public about the issue, collaborating internationally to protect democracy, and ensuring compliance with international human rights law.

### Module 4 Pause and Reflect

Let’s take a moment to reflect. Think about your faculty at your institution while you answer the following:

1. How will you ensure that faculty are regularly reminded where to find information on policies and procedures related to online abuse?
2. How will you communicate these procedures to ensure that all faculty and staff members know what to do before an attack occurs?
3. What feedback mechanisms are in place to ensure that faculty voices are heard?
4. What other departments need to be involved if a faculty member is attacked online? Make a list and have a point of contact in each department.

While governments, policymakers, and social media platform companies need to recognize their responsibility in combating online harassment, it is most helpful to be prepared with a list of available resources that your institution can provide such as an employee assistance plan, counselling services, legal advice, peer support networks and/or adjusted workloads. Any organizational policies should provide social media guidelines for staff, outline the steps faculty should take in the event of an attack, and include the forms of protection and support that the organization will provide should a worker be targeted. Remember, it is important to create institution-wide opportunities for conversations about online abuse on an ongoing basis.

### Module 4 Knowledge Check

Test your knowledge on the information covered in this module.

James, a faculty member in your department, shares with you that he is frustrated because he keeps receiving sexually harassing comments online in response to his work, and it is starting to take a toll. How should you respond to this situation?

**Question 1.** Which of the following actions would be most helpful when responding to James’ situation? Select all that apply.

1. Require he completes trauma-informed response training.
2. Contact IT Support to assess his needs regarding cybersecurity.
3. Refer him to counselling services and encourage seeking mental health service.
4. Refer to the local police department.
5. Offer to adjust his workload while dealing with the abuse.

The correct answers are b, c, and e.

### Module 4 Summary

The research shows that faculty are already doing what they can to deal with online harassment. However, effectively tackling the issue of online abuse will require a more robust approach whereby institutions acknowledge the important role that they have to play in preventing online abuse and supporting the workers who become targets. By recognizing the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, we can work towards a collective effort to combat online abuse effectively and create safer digital spaces for everyone.

## MODULE 5 | WRAP UP: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Let’s put it all together.

### Conversation Practice

We all know that being well-prepared for strategic conversations can make a huge difference. To better enhance your skills in handling difficult situations, we have designed an activity for you to practice and explore different responses in a scenario involving online faculty abuse. The goal is to see how your choice of response can impact the outcome of the conversation. Choose the best response based on the situation presented.

#### Scenario

Dr. Davis, a senior faculty member approaches her chair for advice. She is feeling frustrated because she keeps receiving hateful and racially charged comments online in response to her work. Her chair has received training on responding to reports of online abuse but has taken a “wait and see what happens” approach. As the dean, Dr. Davis comes to you for help.

1. Dr. Davis: *“I recently shared my most recent publication on LinkedIn. Ever since then, I’ve been inundated with a flood of hateful emails and social media comments. Someone even published my home address online. Is there anything you can do?”*

* **Correct response:** I’m sorry to hear this is happening. Have you talked about this with your chair?
* **Incorrect response:** I’m sorry to hear this is happening. Unfortunately, this sort of thing is common. You should contact the police.

1. Dr. Davis: “*I spoke with my chair, and they recommended that we just wait and see if it stops eventually, but I’m concerned about my safety.”*

* **Correct response:** I’m glad you brought this to my attention. There are protocols in place for these types of situations. I think we should start by documenting the incident then contacting the IT and Legal departments. Is this okay with you?
* **Incorrect response:** I’m glad you brought this to my attention. I will recommend that your chair receives additional training about online abuse and trauma-informed response training.

1. Dr. Davis: “*Thank you, but I am not sure that I want to get legal involvement just yet. What other options do I have?”*
   * **Correct response:** Our IT department can assist with reporting, blocking, and recording the abusive comments to the appropriate platform. We can also issue a public statement condemning the abusive and harassing behavior. How would you feel about this?
   * **Incorrect response:** You really should get the police involved. Aren’t you concerned about your safety? Our IT department can assist with reporting, blocking, and recording the abusive comments to the appropriate platform.
2. Dr. Davis: “*Some of my peers who came to my defense have also received hateful comments and replies, so I think a public statement of support would be impactful.”*
   * **Correct response:** I will work with our communications office and public relations to address this incident and ensure that the university issues a public statement of support.
   * **Incorrect response: Ok** great, you should go to the communications office to inform them of the incident.
3. Dr. Davis: “*I’m relieved to hear that there is a communications plan in place.”*
   * **Correct response:** I will also recommend that your chair receives further training on online abuse and trauma-informed response training. Would you like to explore additional options for addressing this incident?
   * **Incorrect response:** You’re welcome! I’m glad that I was able to help. There is a proactive communications strategy in place that prioritizes the safety and well-being of their employees. [Scenario ends but offers that this was not the best answer].
4. Dr. Davis: “*Thank you. I am actually interested in learning more about alternative ways the university handles this type of situation.*”
   * **Correct response:** The university offers various forms of security interventions and protocols. We recognize that there is no one-size-fits-all approach, so let’s schedule a follow-up meeting in about a week to check-in on how we’re handling this incident.
   * **Incorrect response:** Certainly! You can reach out to our Communications team for more information. Our policies and procedures are adaptable to each experience.

Great job completing this practice scenario! Remember, it is your responsibility to safeguard yourself and your faculty. Online harassment leads to a wide variety of adverse impacts. Creating a culture of care and implementing a proactive approach to responding to online faculty abuse helps us serve our faculty, staff, and students better. If you recognize a situation that leads to online abuse, take action to address the issue immediately.

### Key Learning Points

Let’s review our key learning points:

1. Online harassment is often underreported due to concerns of safety, confidentiality, fear, skepticism, and lack of awareness about reporting mechanisms.
2. Implementing a system for supporting faculty facing online harassment can improve department equity by promoting inclusivity and fostering a safe environment for those that are disproportionally targeted.
3. The best courses of action that support faculty targeted with online harassment include establishing clear policies and procedures, offering emotional and professional assistance, and first involving the faculty member when addressing the issue.
4. It is important to engage in supportive strategies such as training, activism, and counselling, versus unhelpful approaches such as victim-blaming or downplaying the severity of online harassment.

### Additional Resources

Here are some further resources to explore:

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| --- | --- |
| **Resource** | **Description** |
| Pen America [Online Harassment Field Manual](https://onlineharassmentfieldmanual.pen.org/) | Whether you’re experiencing or witnessing online abuse, this field manual offers concrete strategies for how to defend yourself and others. |
| Faculty First Responders  [Resources for Administrators](https://facultyfirstresponders.com/administrators/) | This resource offers guidelines for how administrators might successfully respond to right-wing attacks on their employees and students. |
| American Association of University Professors [What You Can Do About Targeted Online Harassment](https://www.aaup.org/issues/targeted-harassment/what-you-can-do-about-targeted-online-harassment) | This AAUP resource provides guidance on how to recognize and respond to online harassment, including steps to take for self-protection, reporting incidents, and seeking support. |
| Digital Public Interest Collective [Digital Toolkit for Managers and Employees](https://www.dpicollective.com/online-abuse-digital-toolkit-2/) | This digital toolkit was produced with funding from the SSHRC Knowledge Synthesis grant program to better equip employers and managers with the tools they need to support their employees when they experience online abuse and harassment. |
| Universities UK [Tackling Online Harassment and Promoting Online Welfare](https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-07/tackling-online-harassment.pdf) | This document serves as a resource guide for universities and higher education institutions and offers a set of principles and practical recommendations to support universities to enhance their own policies and practice. |
| Coalition Against Online Violence [Online Violence Response Hub](https://onlineviolenceresponsehub.org/) | This Hub is a resource center where women journalists can come to find the latest information on online abuse and harassment. |
| Crash Override | C.O.A.C.H. [Crash Override’s Automated Cybersecurity Helper](http://www.crashoverridenetwork.com/coach.html) | COACH will help walk you through locking down your online identity step-by-step and give you direct links to tools and websites that will help you secure yourself. |
| Access Now [Digital Security Helpline](https://www.accessnow.org/help/) | Access Now offers real-time, direct technical assistance and advice to civil society groups & activists, media organizations, journalists & bloggers, and human rights defenders. |
| The eQuality Project [Legal Briefs” Tech-facilitated Violence  and the Law](https://www.equalityproject.ca/resources/legal-briefs-answering-your-questions-about-cyberbullying-law/) | This page offers a collection of legal briefs that provide information and answers to common questions about cyberbullying laws. It covers topics such as the definition of cyberbullying, legal consequences for perpetrators, reporting mechanisms, and available legal remedies for victims. |
| X (formerly known as Twitter) [Staying Safe on X and Sensitive Content](https://help.x.com/en/forms/safety-and-sensitive-content/abuse) | Use this link to report abusive user on X, formerly known as Twitter. |
| Facebook [Reporting Content on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/help/1417189725200547) | Use this link to report abusive user on Facebook. |
| Instagram [Report Violations of Community Guidelines](https://help.instagram.com/contact/383679321740945) | Use this link to report abuse on Instagram. |

## CONCLUSION

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the training.