

From: [Campus Climate Proposal form](#)
To: [Libby Peterek](#); [Carrie Olson](#)
Subject: New submission from Campus Climate Proposals
Date: Thursday, April 21, 2016 5:53:50 PM

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Group name (if applicable):

N/A

What is your affiliation with UW-Madison? For group submissions, please respond for main contact.

- Student (including undergraduate, graduate, professional)
- University Staff

Describe the concept. If already in use here or elsewhere, please indicate this.

My proposal is to create a space to reflect on the root of many problems: masculinity. The problems that stem from masculinity come from men being unaware of what they are doing or to what extent they are doing it. We see men have to struggle to emotionally connect and open up to their peers, friends, roommates, and even family. This space would allow them to. The overarching theme would be exploring masculinity ideas. From this cloud of masculinity other more specific areas explored would be identity/gender, mental health, and sexual assault. This space would allow men to be able to talk and reflect on not only their own lives but also those of other men and women. So many people on campus are unaware of the problems involving masculinity. We all can acknowledge a rape and how bad it is but it is the subtle, oftentimes subconscious, things we do not notice. This could be anything from advertising, to movie characters, to every day conversation. This space would help men learn and discover through self-reflection and be there for anyone struggling through these issues. It would also serve to educate campus through events and workshops. There are programs like this on campus such as the Men's Project, which is under the MSC, and the GMVP class, which is through the School of Social Work (Soc Work 672). These programs are specific to men to learn about masculinity. While these programs are extremely influential and cause change, one must sign up at the beginning of the year. A new participant cannot join again until the next semester. This space would keep the conversation continuously going for anyone and everyone at any point of time.

How would this affect cultural change on campus?

This campus has one of the highest sexual assault rates in the country. Around one in three women on this campus experience a sexual assault in their undergrad. While we have so many amazing programs for victims to go to (PAVE, EVOC, CWC, LGBTQ) there are no programs being done to combat where these issues originate. Sexual assault is a men's issue. We then should be educating our men through discussion and conversation. Oftentimes a mandated program tries to combat these issues causing them to be taken less serious. The information is much better received when there is discussion between peers and men internalizing the information themselves. There is a need and want for it on campus. Men want to explore masculinity and can through peer discussion. It is much more organic and

real. Users of this space would bring this back to their own communities changing thought and enacting change.

For new ideas, how would you propose piloting this idea to see if it would work? If the idea is already in use at UW-Madison, how would you propose expanding or altering this program for greater impact?

The concept has three primary things all involving education in masculinity. The first goal is to educate the general student population through workshops and events. The second is to hold weekly discussions or lectures based around gender and prevention. The final is to create a drop in space for anyone to come to talk involving masculinity (sexual violence, mental health, direction.)

First we need to educate our campus to where masculinity is critically looked at by the majority, not the minority. This would involve education to any groups on campus. We need to create a support group of knowledgeable men on this topic. This education would come in the form of workshops and events at fraternities, organizations, and classes. The basis would be to define what gender, more specifically masculinity is and how that relates to socializations and finally actions that can be detrimental. This education part would also serve to connect different groups on campus that handle sexual assault, mental health, prevention services, and victim empowerment. There is such a vast wealth of knowledge on this campus involving this. The problem is not the amount of knowledge we have, it is about relaying that knowledge to our campus. This project would serve as a type of coalition to help unite programs while also serving to educate in its own facet.

The next goal of the group would be to hold weekly discussion or lecture series on different topics. We would have a new central topic or theme each week. Themes could involve social constructs, prevention, bystander intervention, media literacy, or anything else that perpetuates gender norms. Each week anyone is welcome to join and discuss these issues. I would hope to have a natural progression through the semester building off the topics. However, I do want the central theme to be masculinity and how it relates to all of these issues. Masculinity would be the main conversation while also introducing new topics with a variety of people, some new and some old.

The final and hardest accomplishment is to create a space for drop in discussion even if that be once a week. This is more of a model such as EVOG does with their drop in for victims 2 hours every day. This would be for any man struggling with masculinity in the terms any problem. There is no real space for men to come and talk about what is on their minds and how different things can affect them. Many men have one, maybe two people who they can open up to emotionally. This space would allow that while also allowing for education and growth. The thing with the discussion groups I have been in (GMVP and the Men's Project) is that you have to sign up and are incentivized in going (GMVP with a grade, MP with more of a desire). However, there is no space to just come whether it be once or periodically. This would allow anyone to be able to talk through issues and learn. There is not commitment to the group which would allow many men to be able to be helped once or many times.

What resources would be needed to implement your suggestion?

First we would need a space to hold workshops and discussions. This could as simple as a room in the MSC or UHS. Many of the workshops can be done at student's organizations as well. However, a more permanent spot may allow us to really create a space. This could lead to the potential of hiring some student staff; those that have talked about these issues. They would also have to be certified in facilitation methods. We would also need resources to talk and communicate with other groups on campus, which hopefully would just come naturally. All in all it would not require a high amount of funding or development as these conversations are already being had across campus, just not in a central location.

If this proposal was developed in partnership with any other organizations, please list them below.

Men's Project