



September 21, 2017

Dear Claire:

Thank you for your recent letter to the LSA Executive Committee (EC), signed by over 1,000 members of the linguistics community, calling on the Society to take action to address the problem of sexual harassment. The EC met earlier this week to discuss the specific requests contained in your letter, along with a number of related issues. As you know, the LSA had already taken certain actions to address the problem of sexual harassment prior to the receipt of your letter. In particular, the EC authorized the inclusion of a special session on "Sexism, Harassment, and Title IX Rights" at its upcoming Annual Conference in Salt Lake City. A number of LSA committees have also been actively discussing this problem and potential ways the Society might take further action.

In response to your letter, the EC has taken the following actions:

- 1) Established a new Initiative on Fostering Civility in the Linguistics Community. The Initiative will be coordinated by two members of the EC, incoming President Penny Eckert (Stanford University), and member at-large Sharon Inkelas (UC Berkeley). We welcome the involvement of LSA members and the broader linguistics community in this new Initiative.
- 2) Established a planning workgroup for the special session mentioned above. This workgroup will have representatives from four LSA committees: Student Issues & Concerns (COSIAC), the Status of Women in Linguistics (COSWL), Ethics, and Ethnic Diversity in Linguistics (CEDL). The workgroup will be led by the two coordinators of the Initiative, with at least one member to be in a junior faculty position.
- 3) Reaffirmed the LSA's existing statements on sexual harassment and on ethics. The EC will ask both COSWL and the Ethics Committee to revisit these statements and propose any appropriate revisions, consistent with their ongoing mission and charges. The EC further affirmed this statement: "Sexual harassment; the abuse of power; the creation of hostile work or study environments; failing to take survivors' reports seriously; and protecting perpetrators of sexual harassment and other abuses of power are unacceptable."
- 4) Endorsed the concept of developing online and other resources for linguists to assist with promoting civility and preventing harassment. We invite LSA committee members and the signatories to your letter to help the Society develop these resources.
- 5) Agreed to develop and disseminate codes of conduct for LSA-organized events, particularly the Annual Meeting and the Linguistic Institutes, and to offer substantive programming on these issues at every event.

6) Reaffirmed its existing financial policy: LSA committees may request support for specific projects during the Spring budgeting cycle, and can submit special requests at any time, with appropriate justification for how the funds will be spent.

Finally, the EC agreed that the Society's effectiveness as an organization is reliant upon the thousands of members who support its work. We invite members who signed this letter to get involved in this effort by: serving on a committee, drafting resource materials, planning a workshop/session, offering constructive suggestions for additional activities to address the problem, or making a donation to the LSA to support these activities. And crucially, we invite those linguists who are not current members of the Society to join the LSA and thereby support its essential work to address this problem. There is strength in numbers. Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry M. Hyman".

Larry Hyman, President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alyson Reed".

Alyson Reed, Executive Director

Linguistic Society of America