IF YOU ARE HARASSED AND DECIDE TO RESPOND...

• Use “I” statements  
  “I feel uncomfortable when you comment on my physical appearance.”

• Address the behavior rather than the harasser  
  “I felt disrespected when you said that,” is less likely to make a harasser respond defensively than, “You are disrespectful.”

• Separate intent from impact  
  “I’m sure you didn’t mean to be hurtful when you said that, but it made me feel…”

• Appeal to egalitarianism  
  “We went through the same medical training as our colleagues and want to be treated with the same level of respect.”

• Consider what’s in it for the patient  
  “I want to give you the best care that I can, but your comments made me feel unsafe and don’t allow me to care for you to the best of my ability.”

• Use humor with caution  
  Exaggeration of an inappropriate comment or gentle sarcasm may be misconstrued as reinforcement of prejudice

• Set boundaries as needed  
  “I’m leaving the room because I don’t feel comfortable with your behavior.”

• Offer an alternative  
  “I would prefer if you call me, ‘Doctor’, rather than ‘baby’ or ‘honey’.”

• Report harassment that threatens your safety or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (example statement)  

“I’m sure you didn’t mean to be hurtful, but I feel uncomfortable when you comment on my [appearance/identity/background]. I want to give you the best care that I can so [let’s keep our conversation professional/I would prefer if you call me ‘Doctor’/please treat me with the same respect as the other doctors].”
IF YOU OBSERVE HARASSMENT OF A TRAINEE OR COLLEAGUE

• **Assess the situation**
  Does the person who was harassed appear uncomfortable or upset?
  Nonverbal cues should clue you in to whether the person desires help handling the situation.

• **Respond to the harassment in real time**
  “Dr. Y is a skilled physician and a talented surgeon. That’s far more important than his/her [appearance/identity/background]. Most of our physicians prefer to be called, ‘doctor.’”
  “Mr. Z, we want to give you the best care we can and ask that you treat all of our team members with respect.”
  “We don’t tolerate that kind of language here. Let’s keep it professional.”
  Provide the harassed with an opportunity to leave the room.

• **Offer support**
  “That was a difficult encounter. How are you doing?”
  “It seems like Mr. X’s comments made you uncomfortable. How can I help to make this situation better?”
  “I want to hear when things like this happen. It’s important that everyone feel safe and comfortable here.”

• **Empower to respond**
  “I want you to feel empowered to speak up in situations like this. You have my support.”
  Refer the person to tools for responding to harassment.

• **Encourage reporting of severe or pervasive sexual harassment**
  Create a written record of the incident
  Report a problem to the Office of the Sexual Misconduct Response Coordinator
  >> osmrc.uiowa.edu/report-problem-0
  Contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity
  >> diversity.uiowa.edu/office/equal-opportunity-and-diversity

We are in this together. If we all speak up against identity-based harassment, we may be able to change the culture in our institution and in medicine.

Source: www.eyerounds.org/tutorials/sexual-harassment-toolkit/index.htm