Advanced Title IX Coordinator Training

Level 3: Writing Workshop and Discussion of Self-Care
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Disclaimers

• **We can’t help ourselves – we’re lawyers**
• We are not giving you legal advice – consult with your legal counsel regarding how best to address a specific situation
• This training does not cover all of the basic subjects required for Title IX Coordinators, institution-specific grievance procedures, policies, or technology.
• Use the chat function to ask general questions and hypotheticals
• This training is not being recorded, but we will provide you with a packet of the training materials to post on your website for Title IX compliance
Presentation Rules

Again... we can’t help ourselves. We’re still lawyers.

- Questions are encouraged!
- “For the sake of argument...”
- Be aware of your own responses and experiences
- Follow-up with someone if you have questions and concerns
- Take breaks as needed
Can We Post these Materials?

34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(10)(i)(D)

• Yes!

• Your Title IX Coordinator is required by 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(10)(i)(D) to post materials to train Title IX personnel on its website

• We know this and will make this packet available to your institution electronically to post
Topics: Writing Workshop

Documentation, Investigation Reports, Decisions, Appeals

• Recordkeeping for Supportive Measures, Dismissals, Referrals

• Coordinating the drafting of investigation reports, decisions, informal resolution documentation, and appeals

• Structure of reports & decisions

• Common Mistakes that Prevent Clarity in Writing

• Best Practices for Writing Neutral Decisions on Sensitive Subjects
Topics: Self-Care

Burnout, Turnover, and Self-Care

- Trends
- Signs and Sources of Burnout
- Practical Ideas
- Assessing your office climate
Recordkeeping Basics

34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(10)

• Develop a process for required recordkeeping, including:
  • Maintaining all investigatory, informal resolution, and appeal records for a period of seven years
  • Collecting and publicly posting all materials used to train TIX team
Documenting Supportive Measures

- Document all aspects
  - The offer of supportive measures (have a list that you use with everyone)
  - Discussion of specific measures
  - Basis for not providing a certain supportive measures to a party

- Consider sharing this documentation with the party
  - Email
  - Memo or checklist
Supportive Measures Reminders

- What we do for one, we do for the other
  - Unless there’s a reason not to, in which case – write that reason down
  - Be neutral and unbiased
  - If you are uncomfortable documenting the reason for the distinction – consider whether the rationale is truly neutral and unbiased

- Remember to continue documenting throughout the process
  - Discussions re: supportive measures may come up on multiple occasions and lead to different results
Documenting Dismissals & Referrals

• Exit Ramps
  • Who
  • What
  • Where
  • When
  • Why

• Consider using IRAC style – Issue, Rule, Application, Conclusion
  • We’ll look at examples in a few slides
• “Dismissal” from Title IX does not preclude action under another provision of the recipient’s code of conduct, employee handbook, etc.

• Recipient “must promptly send written notice of the dismissal and reason(s) therefor simultaneously to the parties.”

• Show your work
May dismiss if:

1. Complainant asks in writing to withdraw the Formal Complaint.
2. Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the recipient.
3. “Specific circumstances prevent the recipient from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the Formal Complaint or allegations therein.”
Written Notice of Dismissal

• Explain the reasons for dismissal/referral in a readable and understandable way

• Explain the issue, the rules that apply for purposes of dismissal, your analysis applying the facts to the rules, and draw your conclusion
  • IRAC
Rationale for Dismissal

“Show Your Work”

Application of Policy to Allegations

• IRAC or CRAC
  o Issue/Conclusion
  o Rule
  o Application
  o Conclusion

• “Rule” = your policy provisions (the ones that address Title IX jurisdiction + Title IX definitions)
• “Application” = your analysis as to whether the information, as alleged, meets the requirements for Title IX jurisdiction
• Conclusion = the result of your analysis for each allegation
IRAC Example #1

Student A reported that her ex-girlfriend of three years called her disparaging names during the relationship and tried to control her interactions with others.

**Issue:** Does the conduct alleged constitute Title IX Sexual Harassment under your Policy?

**Rule:** [Insert definitions from your policy that might address the alleged conduct]

**Application:** Explain whether the information above means that Student A has alleged conduct that meets your Policy definitions.

**Conclusion:** “For these reasons, the conduct reported by Student A does not meet the definition of Sexual Harassment or Dating Violence under the Title IX Policy. However, this matter is being referred to the Office of Student Affairs for review of potential violations of the Mutual Respect Policy.”
IRAC Example #2

Complainant reported that Respondent, a fellow student who had asked her out on several occasions despite her explanation that she is not interested romantically, inappropriately touched her arm while the two were talking at an off-campus party last weekend. More specifically, Complainant reported that Respondent asked her to find a quiet spot where they could be alone, then put his hand on her shoulder and gradually moved it down the length of her arm in a way that “gave [her] the creeps.”

**Issue:** Does the conduct alleged constitute Title IX Sexual Harassment under your Policy?

**Rule:** [Insert definitions from your policy that might address the alleged conduct]

**Application:** Explain whether the information above means that Complainant has alleged conduct that meets your Policy definitions.

**Conclusion:** “For these reasons, the conduct reported by Complainant does not meet the definition of Sexual Harassment or Fondling under the Title IX Policy. However, this matter is being referred to the Office of Student Affairs for review of potential violations of the Mutual Respect Policy.”
IRAC in Other Settings

• Investigation reports
  o But remember – no conclusions as to the allegations

• Title IX Hearing Decisions

• Appeal Decisions

• Informal Resolution Documentation
  o Ex: Rationale for terminating an Informal Resolution
Coordinating the Writing of Your Team

(1 of 2)

• Before
  o Templates, training, Q&A re: expectations

• During
  o Be available to assist with clarity, form, procedure
  o Be careful not to take over the work that’s been delegated to others under your Policy or by the Regs

• After
  o Review to ensure readability, consistency, neutrality
  o Consult with GC when necessary
Coordinating the Writing of Your Team

• Remember, you may have been separated from a writing project for a reason
  o You can’t be the decision-maker, appeals officer, or informal resolution officer
    – If you aren’t the investigator – don’t write the investigation report

• Don’t substitute your reasoning for others on your team

• Don’t let your interactions with the parties affect your review of the team’s work
  o Ex: Demands for supportive measures, experiences with the parties’ legal counsel
  o Make sure the process was followed and documented
• Does the report make sense?

• Does the report include enough detail for someone unfamiliar with your campus or the case to understand what is being said?

• Does the report comply with your Policy and with the Regs?
  - Ex: Was the evidence shared with the parties before the final report?
  - Ex: Were all the parties given an equal opportunity to present fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence?
• Does the report accurately describe the information gathered and the process of gathering it?

• Is the report neutral in tone? Equal opportunities for both parties?
• Does the decision make sense?
• Does the decision include enough detail for someone unfamiliar with your campus or the case to understand what is being said?
• Does the report comply with your Policy and with the Regs?
  o See next slide - 34 C.F.R. 106.45(b)(7)(ii)
• Does the decision accurately describe the process leading up to the hearing?
• Did the Decision-Maker “show their work”?
• Is the decision neutral in tone?
Decision Checklist

34 C.F.R. 106.45(b)(7)(ii)(A)-(E)

- Allegations
- Procedural Steps
- Findings of Fact
- Application of the Policy to the Facts
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation:
  - a determination regarding responsibility,
  - any disciplinary sanctions the recipient imposes on the respondent, and
  - whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity will be provided by the recipient to the complainant;
- Appeal
• Does the appeal decision make sense?

• Does the appeal decision include enough detail for someone unfamiliar with your campus or the case to understand what is being said?

• Does the report comply with your Policy and with the Regs?
  o Remember the bases for appeal included in the Regs
  o Are there others in your Policy?
• Does the appeal decision accurately describe the process leading up to the hearing?
• Did the Appeals Officer “show their work”?
• Is the appeal decision neutral in tone?
Coordinating the Writing of Your Team
- Informal Resolution Officer

• Are the agreed-upon terms of the Informal Resolution in a written agreement?
  • Important if there are disputes later
  • Important if OCR reviews the matter
• Does the agreement make sense? Are the terms realistic?
• Does the agreement (or other documentation) describe the process that the parties to the resolution?
  • Specifically, does it explain that the Informal Resolution process was used instead of a formal process after the parties gave voluntary written consent to the process?
“Storytelling”**

- Each case includes at least TWO stories, maybe more
- Set the scene visually
- Be clear as to the source of information. Compare:
  - “Bob stated this happened.”
  - “This happened.”
- Make sure it is readable
  - Could someone unfamiliar with the incident pick up the decision and understand what happened?
Story One of (at least) Two

The Underlying Case

Each case includes at least TWO stories in one:

(1) The facts of the underlying case
   o On August 25, 2020, Complainant and Respondent attended a party together at Thompson Point Residence Hall
   o Complainant reports A, B, and C
   o Respondent reports X, Y, and Z
Story Two of (at least) Two

The Investigation of the Underlying Case

Each case includes at least TWO stories in one:

(2) The process of the underlying case

- On August 30, 2020, Complainant filed a formal complaint
- On September 5, 2020, Complainant spoke with Investigator
- On December 10, 2020, Complainant shared the Investigation Report with Witnesses 1, 2, and 3
Different Ways to Tell These Stories

Structural Considerations

• Template
• Typical practice for your institution
• Remember the required components
• Common structural tools
  • Chronology
  • Subject Matter
  • IRAC or CRAC
Where to Begin?

Structuring Your Investigation Reports and Decisions

Introduction

• Should preview both stories
  • How did the underlying story get to the Title IX Office?
  • What about the underlying story was reported?
  • What are the allegations?
    o Remember to use the names of violations as they existed when the conduct is reported to have occurred
    o Same policy for definitions and procedure? Or a split?
Structuring Your Facts

Remember – Suggestions Only

• Use the structure that works for your institution
• Use the structure that works for the particular case
  • Your structure may change depending on the case
• Think about the following:
  – Chronology
  – When does synthesizing facts help the reader?
  – When does separating facts help the reader?
  – Where does hearing testimony fit?
Synthesis 101

Look for opportunities to logically combine related facts

- Undisputed facts at the beginning
  - May give a framework without creating repetition
- Disputed facts
  - Facts may be related by:
    - Timing
    - Source
    - Topic
Pre-Gaming at Apartment B

Complainant and Witnesses A, B, and C, reported that they each took 3 shots of vodka when they arrived at Apartment B. Report, pp. 3, 6-7. This was largely consistent with their hearing testimony, except for Witness C who said they misspoke during their Title IX interview. Hearing Transcript, p. 4. At the hearing, Witness C testified that they only took one shot of vodka at the party. Hearing Transcript, p. 4. Later in the evening, approximately two hours after Complainant and Witnesses A, B, and C arrived and took vodka shots, Respondent arrived at Apartment B with Witness D. During his Title IX interview and at the hearing, Respondent reported that he did not take any shots of vodka and had a clear memory of the night. Report, p. 4; Hearing Transcript, p. 6. Respondent also reported in his interview and at the hearing that he did not observe Complainant take any shots of vodka that night, did not see Complainant stumbling when she walked around the apartment, and did not hear Complainant slur her speech at any time. Report, p. 4; Hearing Transcript, p. 6.
Can you apply these takeaways in your cases?

Several things worth noting in this example:

• The information is presented under a topic heading
  - "Pre-Gaming at Apartment B"

• Information comes from different people and is blended together
  - Parties and witnesses

• Information comes from different documents and is blended together
  - The Investigation Report and the Hearing Transcript
More takeaways

Several things worth noting in this example:

• Discrepancies between the investigation and hearing testimony are noted
  – Witness C

• Transitions to demonstrate shifts in time or topic
  – "Later in the evening, approximately two hours after Complainant and Witnesses A, B, and C arrived and took vodka shots, Respondent arrived at Apartment B with Witness D."
Can you apply these takeaways in your cases?

Report that Respondent choked Complainant

As previously mentioned, Complainant reported four separate acts that might rise to the level of a policy violation. First, Complainant reported that Respondent choked her during their argument on September 1, 2020. Report, p. 1. When Complainant described this incident to the Title IX investigator, she said that Respondent used his hand to encircle her throat and then squeeze, preventing her from breathing or talking. Report, p. 4. Under cross-examination at the hearing, Complainant stated that Respondent used his left hand only, but that his hand was large enough to wrap entirely around Complainant’s neck. Hearing Transcript, p. 10. Complainant submitted photographs of her neck during the Title IX investigation, which were included in the investigation report on pages 10 and 11. Two witnesses, Witness A and Witness B, reported to the Title IX investigator that they observed bruising on the Complainant’s neck when they saw the Complainant the morning of September 2, 2020. Report, p. 6. Both witnesses provided testimony at the hearing that was consistent with their prior statements to investigators. Hearing Transcript, p. 12.

Respondent has consistently denied that he choked Complainant. In his statement to the Title IX Investigator…
Can you apply these takeaways in your cases?

Several things worth noting in this example:

• The information is presented under a topic heading
  – “Report that Respondent Choked Complainant”

• Information comes from different people and is blended together
  – Parties and witnesses

• Information comes from different documents and is blended together
  – The Investigation Report and the Hearing Transcript
Synthesis Example #2 – Takeaways (cont.)

More takeaways

Several things worth noting in this example:

• Discrepancies between the investigation and hearing testimony are noted
  – Complainant’s description of the choking

• Transitions to demonstrate shift from individual factual allegation to the response to that allegation
  – First discussing information supportive of Complainant’s report
  – New paragraph to discuss response from Respondent
Inconsistent Terminology
  • Referring to individuals or locations differently in different places in the report
  • May leave the reader with the impression that you are talking about different places or people
    o Tom, Tom Smith, Mr. Smith, Thomas
    o Tom’s room, Room 4A, Hubbard Hall

Word choice
  • Be as precise as possible
  • This can add time to the writing process, but can pay off in terms of clarity
  • Avoid charged language
Common Writing Mistakes

Empathy and Tone

Empathy

• Stay away from charged words of advocacy
  o Clearly/obviously
  o Innocent/guilty
  o Victim/perpetrator

• Watch your use of adjectives and adverbs – unless they are in a quote
  o “really drunk”
  o “forcefully pushed”

Tone

• Be non-judgmental
• Recognize the impact of your words
Common Writing Mistakes
Cite Your Source

Failing to include sources of information

• If explaining this in every sentence weighs down your writing, use footnotes to add clarity. (“Bob stated this happened.”)
• Citing the source of your information helps the reader and underscores your neutrality

Confusing Quotation Marks

• Is the quoted language from the interviewee or the interviewer?
• Did someone else put the language in quotation marks?
  o Footnote 4: The quoted language was attributed to Respondent on page 6 of the Investigation report.
  o Footnote 10: The quoted language was attributed to Respondent by Claimant during Claimant’s October 10, 2020 Title IX interview.
Common Writing Mistakes
Structure

Topic sentences and transitions
• Provide a roadmap in your introduction and under new headings
• Sentences should flow from one-to-another
• Remember – telling two or more stories to someone unfamiliar with the case

Pronouns
• Be careful of pronoun usage so that the reader always knows who is saying or doing what
• When using pronouns, make sure you are using the right pronouns for the individual
Common Writing Mistakes

Miscellaneous

Typos
- They happen to everyone, but
- Typos in every sentence undermine the integrity of a decision

Run-on sentences/Sentence fragments
- Make sure each sentence has a subject and a verb
- If combining multiple independent clauses, consider whether to separate sentences
Respondent engaged in sexual intercourse with Complainant from behind.

Issues:
- No source of the information
- From behind what? Complainant?
- Word choice

Fix:
According to Complainant, Respondent and Complainant were both standing near the pool table at the time that Respondent began to sexually penetrate Complainant’s vagina with his penis. Complainant reported that her body was facing away from Respondent at the time, towards the table, and that Respondent pushed her forward...
Complainant couldn’t explain why she was sitting on the couch by herself.

Issues:

• Pronouns are not clear

Fix:

At the hearing, Complainant testified that she observed Witness A sitting on the couch by herself. Complainant said that she could not explain why Witness A was sitting alone.
Respondent stated that he was uncomfortable cuddling with women that he was not close with during his freshman year.

Issues:

• Confusing
• Misplaced modifier (to what part of the sentence does “during his freshman year” refer?)

Fix:

Respondent explained that during his freshman year, he was uncomfortable cuddling with women with whom he did not have a close relationship.
There was no evidence to support Complainant’s assertion that the activity occurred without her consent.

Issues:
- Sounds judgmental because the “assertion” itself is being disregarded
- If Complainant’s assertion was not tested by cross-examination, and cannot be considered under your policy, make that clear

Fix:
At the hearing, Complainant declined to answer questions posed by Respondent’s advisor about the issue of consent. For this reason, Complainant’s prior statements may not be considered in reaching this decision. See Section 4.B. of the Title IX Policy.
There was no evidence to support Complainant’s assertion that the activity occurred without her consent.

Issues:

- Sounds judgmental because the “assertion” is being disregarded
- If Complainant’s assertion is not supported by a preponderance of the evidence, explain that

Fix:

Complainant testified that the sexual activity occurred without her consent. This assertion must be weighed against the testimony of two eyewitnesses, both of whom provided consistent accounts of their observations, and the testimony of Respondent.
Burnout, Turnover, and Self-Care

- Trends
- Signs & Sources
- Ideas
- Assessment

More disclaimers:
- Not mental health professionals
- Don’t always practice what we preach
- Small, practical strategies but no silver bullet
Experts say that the Title IX coordinator position is uniquely stressful in that these administrators are often some of the first people to interact with alleged victims, and must delicately ask for precise and difficult details to guide their investigations. And despite criticism from some victims' advocates that Title IX coordinators aren't always sympathetic enough, or prioritize their institution over its students, experts also say these administrators are often drawn to their work because they enjoy helping students. So it's trying, they say, for coordinators to maintain impartiality with victims and their alleged attackers so as not to taint the investigation...

Trends – But Also Lots of New Things

Just in the last 5 years...
• NPRM in 2018
• New Title IX regulations in 2020
• COVID pandemic
• The Great Resignation
• NPRM 2022
• New Final Rule in October 2023

The Result?
• Individuals leaving Title IX and higher education altogether
## Trends – Reasons for Calling it Quits

**NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Ed (data collected June 2021)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and/or compensation packages are not competitive for experience and education required</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of stress and crisis-management responsiveness required for the role lead to burnout</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feel underappreciated/undervalued by the institution</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and/or compensation are not aligned with functions/duties</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of hidden responsibilities that are not transparent in job descriptions or communicated up front</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhappy with long days and weekends</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate institutional support for addressing racism and racial inequities</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job burnout is a special type of work-related stress — a state of physical or emotional exhaustion that also involves a sense of reduced accomplishment and loss of personal identity.

"Burnout" isn't a medical diagnosis. Some experts think that other conditions, such as depression, are behind burnout. Researchers point out that individual factors, such as personality traits and family life, influence who experiences job burnout.

Whatever the cause, job burnout can affect your physical and mental health. Consider how to know if you've got job burnout and what you can do about it.
Burnout “Syndrome”

According to the WHO:

- “Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions:
  - (1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
  - (2) increased mental distance from one’s job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one’s job; and
  - (3) a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment.”

Ask yourself.....

Source: “Job burnout: How to Spot it and take action,” Healthy Lifestyle, Adult Health page, Mayo Clinic website at https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642 (last accessed May 6, 2022)
Practical Ideas for Providing Support

• Pay attention*
• Be available
• Look for on-campus opportunities for relaxing activities
• But….  
  • Don’t add “self-care” to your employees’ to-do list

Leisure & Subjective Well-Being

• Disclaimer: Not a psychologist, statistician, or mental health practitioner
• DRAMMA model
  • Goal: to present a conceptual framework linking leisure to subjective well-being
  • Propose five core psychological mechanisms that leisure potentially triggers to promote subjective well-being
The DRAMMA Model

• Not a typo
• The effect of leisure on subjective well-being → six mechanisms
  o D – Detachment
  o R – Recovery
  o A - Autonomy
  o M - Mastery
  o M - Meaningfulness
  o A - Affiliation
Detachment-Recovery

• Because work takes effort and strains physiological and psychological resources, working continuously can produce negative subjective well-being (e.g., burnout)

• Time away from work is essential for recovery, but...
  o “For instance, one may be ruminating about work albeit trying to relax.”
  o Suggests cognitively switching off by engaging in distraction techniques

• Can occur through rest (lying on the beach, sleeping) or high energy activities like skydiving and travel
Autonomy

• Often viewed as necessary for leisure in many psychological theories
• Link between leisure activities and well-being
• Gives people a sense of control and freedom that contributes positively to subjective well-being
Mastery

• Activities that challenge individuals and provide learning opportunities
• Focuses on the efforts put into improving skills and achieving success
Meaning

• A way to add purpose to life
• Examples: volunteering, religious practices, meditation
• Potential pitfall given the scope of Title IX work
  o Find something meaningful *outside* of your work
Affiliation

- Various psychological models support the idea that connection and a sense of belonging supports subjective well-being
- Encourage positive emotions and improve quality of life
- Social affiliation leads to support from others
- Social affiliation may be the most consistent predictor of subjective well-being
  - The happiest 10% of students spend more time socializing and had stronger social relationships
Assessing Your Office Climate

• When?
• How?
• How often?
• Who?
Questions?
Higher Ed CLE Webinar Series
Presented by Bricker Graydon & Southern Illinois University School of Law

THURSDAY
JUN 1
Affirmative Action Update
WEBINAR - 12:00 PM CT

THURSDAY
JUN 8
AI Goes to College
WEBINAR - 12:00 PM CT

THURSDAY
JUN 15
Pregnancy and Parenting Update
WEBINAR - 12:00 PM CT

THURSDAY
JUN 22
Athletic Compliance Update
WEBINAR - 12:00 PM CT
Upcoming Events

**AICUO 2023 Collaborative Conference**
- Thursday, June 8, 2023
- 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (EST)
- The Point at Otterbein University

**Midwest Clery Day Camp hosted by University of Findlay & Tiffin University**
- Tuesday, June 13, 2023
- 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (EST)
- University of Findlay

[www.bricker.com/events](http://www.bricker.com/events)
Twitter: @BrickerHigherEd
Additional information available at:

Title IX Resource Center at www.bricker.com/titleix

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Text ‘Bricker’ to 555888.