Sexual Misconduct Case Management Overview

Krista Anderson, Systemwide Title IX Coordinator Sean Flammer, Assistant General Counsel Spring 2022

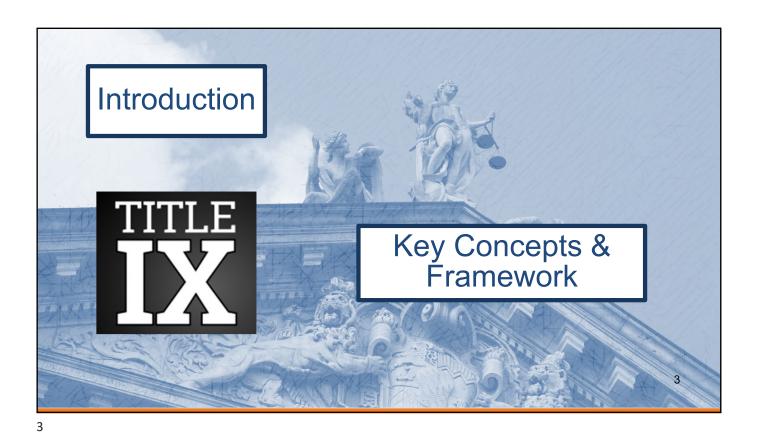


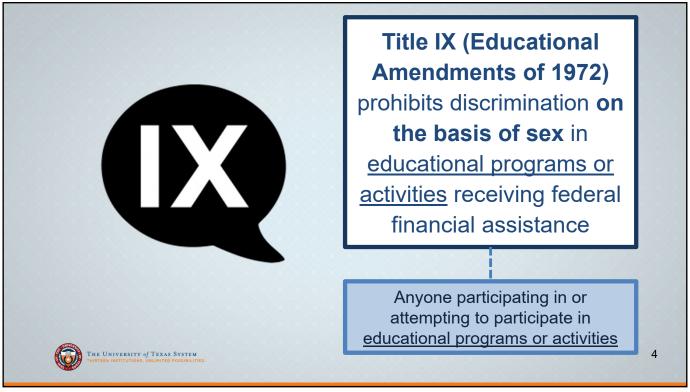
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Agenda

- 1. Title IX Intro
- 2. Triage & Case Mgt
- 3. Resolution Options
- 4. Threat Assessment Overview
- 5. Adjudication Logistics
- Documentation & Record Keeping

2





"Education program or activity" under Title IX

Includes <u>locations</u>, <u>events</u>, <u>or</u> <u>circumstances</u> over which the institution exercises **substantial control** over both the respondent and the context in which the alleged sexual harassment occurs, and also includes <u>any building owned or controlled by a student organization</u> that is officially recognized by the institution.

 Example of a "building owned or controlled by a student organization": Fraternity or sorority house that is occupied by students of the organization, and the student organization is a recognized organization with the institution.



Source: Title IX Regulations (2020)

5

5





Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: 1. An employee of the institution conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the Definition of institution on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (Quid Pro Quo); "Sexual 2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a Harassment" reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively under Title IX denies a person equal access to the institution's education program or activity; or 3. "Sexual assault," "dating violence," "domestic violence," or "stalking" as defined under Clery/VAWA. 8 THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM Source: Title IX Regulations (2020)



#2 Element Examples

- "Severe": Physically threatening or humiliating; effects of the alleged conduct to a reasonable person (using a "reasonable person" standard)
- "Pervasive": Frequency, duration of the alleged conduct
- "Objectively offensive": To a reasonable person (using a "reasonable person" standard)
- "Reasonable person" standard: An <u>objective test</u> to denote a hypothetical person who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct <u>under similar</u> <u>circumstances</u> as a comparative standard.
- "Effectively denies...equal access": Totality of the circumstances

For example, the degree of the alleged conduct's interference with the CP or effects in an educational setting, type of alleged conduct, frequency and duration of the conduct, knowingly unwelcome in nature

9

Definition of "Other Inappropriate Sexual Conduct"

Conduct on the basis of sex that does not meet the definition of "sexual harassment" (under the Model Policy), but is

- Verbal conduct (including through electronic means), unwanted statements of a sexual nature intentionally stated to a person or group of people, that are objectively offensive to a reasonable person and also so <u>severe or pervasive</u> that it created a Hostile Environment, as defined in the Model Policy.
- 2. Physical conduct...



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

10

"Other Inappropriate Sexual Conduct" Cont.

Possible Examples (depending on facts):

- Unwelcome sexual advances (including explicit or implicit proposition(s) of sexual contact or activity);
- Requests for sexual favors (including overt or subtle pressure);
- Gratuitous comments about an individual's sexual activities or speculation about an individual's sexual experiences;
- Gratuitous comments, jokes, questions, anecdotes or remarks of a sexual nature about clothing or bodies;
- Persistent, unwanted sexual or romantic attention;
- Exposure to sexually suggestive visual displays such as photographs, graffiti, posters, calendars or other materials;
- Deliberate, repeated humiliation or intimidation;
- Sexual exploitation;
- · Unwelcome intentional touching of a sexual nature; or
- Deliberate physical interference with or restriction of movement.



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

11

11



Why is it important that <u>institutions</u> respond to reports of sexual misconduct?

Stop

Prevent

Remedy

Institutions provide:

- Campus remedies & supportive measures (with or without filing a formal complaint)
- Prompt, fair, & equitable grievance processes (by filing a formal complaint)
- Preponderance of the evidence standard (in the formal grievance process)
- An informal resolution option (in some circumstances, if available)



13

13

Key Pillars: Title IX Process

Impartiality

Respect

For all of the participants in the process:

Complainants

Fairness

Equity

Respondents
Witnesses
Third-party Reporters

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM THIRTEEN INSTITUTIONS, UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES.

14

Serving Impartially in Your Role

- Must avoid prejudgment of the facts at issue
- Must avoid conflicts of interest
- Must avoid bias





Source: Title IX Regulations (2020)

15

15

Principles for Title IX Process



- Must maintain complete neutrality & impartiality at all times in investigating alleged conduct violations of institutional policies.
- Understanding bias & whether it exists: Need to take an "objective, common sense approach to evaluating whether a person serving in a role is biased." (Title IX Preamble (2020))...



16

Must **not** treat a party differently: On the basis of the person's sex; o On stereotypes about how men or women behave with respect to sexual violence; and/or **Avoiding** On the basis of the person's Bias characteristics: sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, immigration status, financial ability, socioeconomic status, or other characteristic. Source: Title IX Preamble (2020) 17 THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM

17



Institutional Sexual Misconduct Policy (Example)

Prohibits sex discrimination, sexual harassment, retaliation, and other prohibited conduct under the policy, including:

- Sex Discrimination
- Sexual Harassment
 - Sexual Assault
 - Dating Violence
 - Domestic Violence
 - Stalking

- Retaliation
- Sexual Exploitation
- Other Inappropriate Sexual Conduct
- False Information & False Complaints
- Interference with the Grievance Process
- Failure to Report (for Responsible Employees)

Policy Differences Note: For the purposes of this training, the UTS Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct will be the primary policy reference. UT Institutional policies may have some differences.



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

19

19



First Amendment Rights: Free Speech & Academic Freedom

Constitutionally protected expression cannot be considered Sexual Misconduct (e.g. "sexual harassment," "other inappropriate sexual conduct") under the institution's Sexual Misconduct policy.

Note: Neither party may be restricted from discussing allegations or from gathering evidence in a grievance process.

20



Retaliation Prohibited under Title IX

No institution or other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX; or because an individual has made a report or formal complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

21

Definition of "Retaliation"

Any **adverse action** (including, but is not limited to, intimidation, threats, coercion, harassment, or discrimination) taken against someone <u>because</u> the individual has made a report or filed a Formal Complaint; or who has supported or provided information in connection with a report or a Formal Complaint; participated or refused to participate in a Grievance Process under this Policy; or engaged in other legally protected activities.

Note: Any person who retaliates against (a) anyone filing a report of Sexual Misconduct or Formal Complaint, (b) the parties or any other participants (including any witnesses or any University employee) in a Grievance Process relating to a Formal Complaint, (c) any person who refuses to participate in a Grievance Process, or (d) any person who under this Policy opposed any unlawful practice, is <u>subject to disciplinary action</u> up to and including dismissal or separation from the University.



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

22



Responsible Employee Reporting Requirements

Under the institution's Sexual Misconduct Policy, **Responsible Employees** have a duty to report incidents and information reasonably believed to be sexual misconduct (prohibited conduct defined) under the Policy.

All employees are Responsible Employees (except Confidential Employees or police officers when a victim uses a pseudonym form). Responsible Employees include <u>all</u> administrators, faculty, and staff.

Responsible Employees must report all known information concerning an alleged incident of sexual misconduct to the **Title IX Coordinator**.

Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

23

23

Definition of "Failure to Report" for Responsible Employees

If a Responsible Employee knowingly fails to report all information concerning an incident the employee reasonably believes constitutes stalking, dating violence, sexual assault, or sexual harassment committed by or against a student or employee at the time of the incident, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

Source:



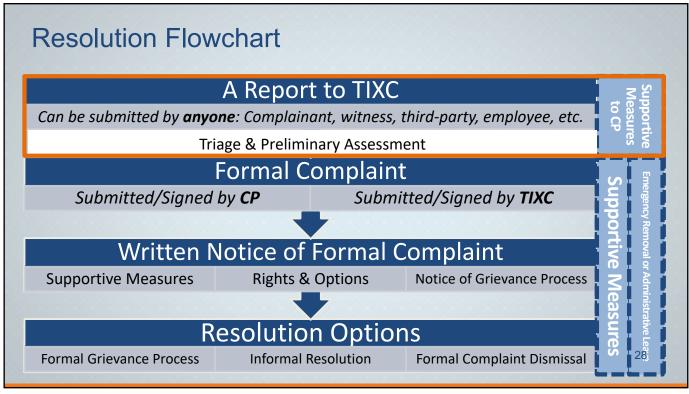
UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021); Tex. Edu. Code Section 51.252-51.259

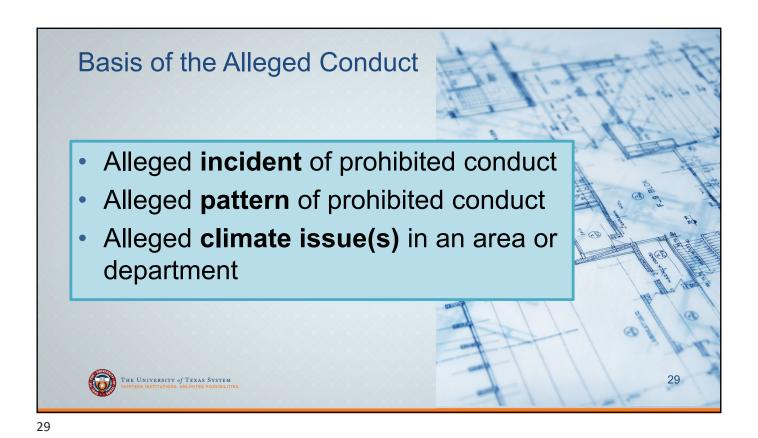
24



Operational Roles, Delegations, & Structure? Title IX Case Mgt Title IX Deputies Investigators Coordinator Coordinators by the Institution Appellate Role for **Legal Affairs Hearing Officers Policy Violation** Others ??? Support Role at Hearings Determinations 26 THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM
THIRTEEN INSTITUTIONS, UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES







Allegation Type(s): Sexual Misconduct Policy? Dating or Sex Sexual Sexual Assault Domestic Discrimination Harassment Violence Other Sexual Stalking Retaliation Inappropriate Exploitation **Sexual Conduct** Interference False Report Other(s) Failure to or False with an Report Information THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM 30

Other Triage Analysis & Considerations

CP & RP Affiliation to the Institution?

Incident Location(s)

Date/Time of Incident

Time of Alleged Incident: Institutional Nexus or Jurisdiction?

Institutional Action?
Preventative
Action?
Remedies?

Level of Concern?
Threat Level?

31

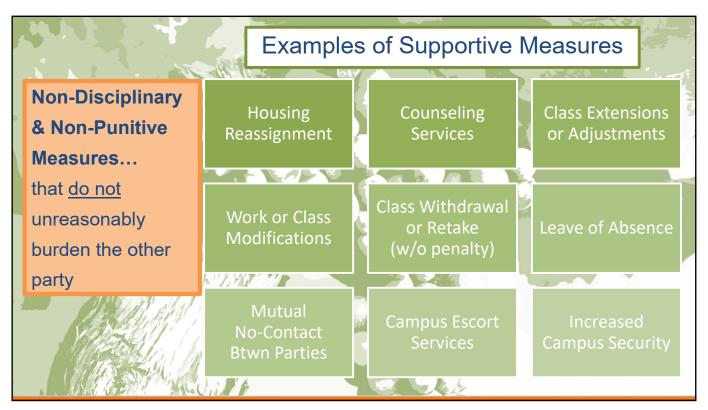
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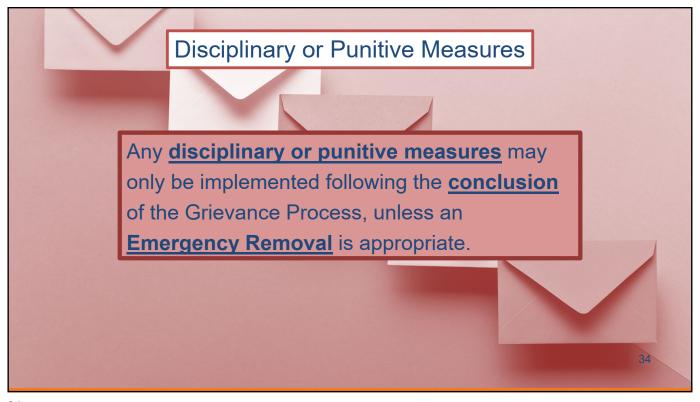
A Report to the Title IX Coordinator (TIXC)

TIXC must promptly contact the **complainant** to discuss the availability of <u>supportive measures</u> (with or without a formal complaint), consider the <u>wishes of the complainant</u>, and explain the process for <u>filing a formal</u> complaint.









Party's Rights (Summary)

A **Complainant** and **Respondent** have the following rights during a grievance process:

- To be informed of and have access to counseling, medical, academic, and other applicable support services, including confidential resources.
- To be informed of the importance of a victim going to a hospital for treatment and the preservation of evidence, if applicable, as soon as practicable after an alleged incident.
- To be informed of a notice of formal complaint to the University, whether filed by a CP or the TIXC.
- To receive a prompt, fair, equitable, and impartial grievance process.
- To receive information and ask questions about the formal and informal processes.



35

35

Party's Rights (Cont.)

- To be given equal chance to participate in a grievance process, including the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence.
- To choose <u>not</u> to actively participate in the grievance process, if desired.
- To have an advisor of choice present during all meetings and grievance proceedings.
- To have an advisor provided for a party at a hearing under the Title IX/SH grievance process, if an advisor of choice is not present.



Party's Rights (Cont.)

- To have access and equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation, and to receive a copy of the completed investigation report.
- To be equally informed of any determinations regarding responsibility, dismissals of formal complaints, and/or a party's filing of an appeal.
- To appeal a <u>determination</u> regarding responsibility and/or <u>dismissals</u> of formal complaints.
- To file a report with local and/or campus law enforcement authorities.



37

37

Complainant's Rights

(related to the Grievance Process)

- To report an incident and/or file a formal complaint with the University.
- To request in writing that the University not investigate a reported incident and be informed of the University's decision whether or not to investigate.
- To request in writing a dismissal of a formal complaint (e.g. withdraws the formal complaint or any allegations therein).



38

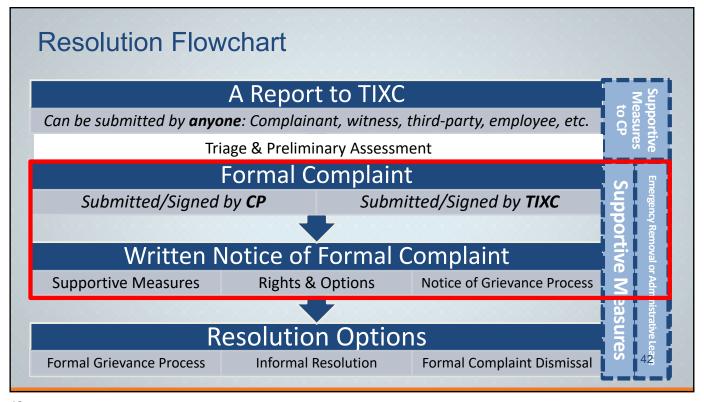
Other Required Action?	
Type of Concern	

Type of Concern	Action
Non-emergency behavioral or wellness issues(s)	Refer to Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) or campus equivalent
Immediate safety concerns (emergencies) or welfare check required	Report immediately to 911
Clery reportable crimes that meet Clery geography requirements and/or timely warning requirements	<u>Timely Warnings</u> : Report immediately to campus law enforcement <u>Clery Crime Reporting</u> : Report to the campus Clery Manager
Alleged abuse and/or neglect of minors	Report immediately to Dept. of Family & Protective Services (DFPS): 800-252-5400
Alleged conduct could violate other institutional policies	Refer to the appropriate office(s) who oversees the applicable policies

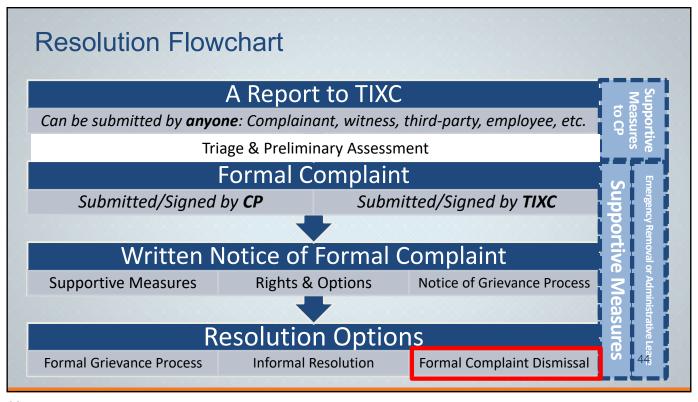
TIXC: Options for Next Steps

- Supportive Measures for the CP
- CP's right to file a formal complaint
- TIXC files a formal complaint, in lieu of a Reluctant Complainant and/or compelling reasons to investigate further...

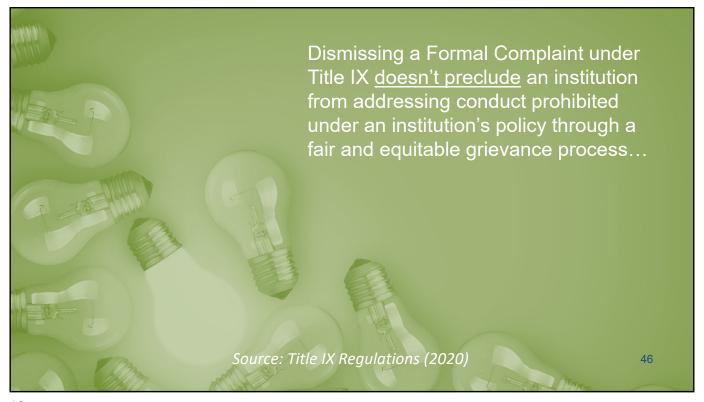












Mandatory Formal Complaint Dismissals under Title IX

Under Title IX regulations, universities are **required** to distinguish between prohibited conduct that is "under Title IX" and prohibited conduct that is a violation of university policy. Under Title IX, the University **must dismiss** a Formal Complaint or the part of the allegations in a Formal Complaint, if applicable, where:

Sexual Harassment is alleged and where:

- The conduct alleged does not meet the definition of Sexual Harassment;
- The alleged conduct did not occur in the University's education program or activity; or
- The alleged conduct did not occur against a person in the United States.

Note: A dismissal under this provision only applies to allegations of Sexual Harassment under Title IX. In such an instance, the University may still investigate a Formal Complaint for allegations of Sexual Harassment under this Policy. The University may also investigate allegations of prohibited conduct under this Policy but it will not technically be "under Title IX."



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

47

47

If **Mandatory Dismissal** is required, then are additional <u>discretionary reasons</u> for a dismissal applicable to the specific circumstances?

- CP expressly prefers to dismiss the formal complaint or requests to not investigate the matter.
- RP was an employee and is no longer employed by the institution at the time the formal complaint is filed.
- Any specific circumstances that prevent the institution from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations.
- The conduct alleged <u>does not</u> meet the definition of **any** prohibited conduct under the institution's Sexual Misconduct Policy.

Additional Considerations



Triage Again Consider if there are compelling reasons: 1. the alleged conduct;

- The nature, circumstances, & seriousness of
- The safety & risk of harm to others; 2.
- Any pattern evidence, other similar conduct or 3. allegations of the RP;
- RP's affiliation with the institution & applicable 4. options for institutional action; and/or
- 5. Other relevant factors in the specific matter?



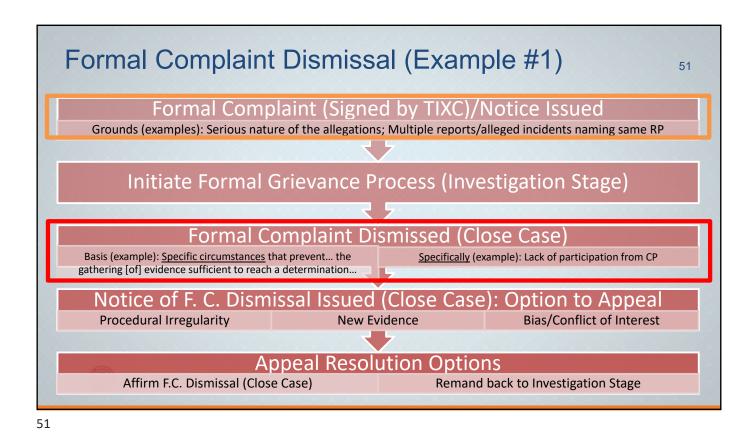
49

Notice of Formal Complaint Dismissal

- Note the reasons for the mandatory dismissal "under Title IX" (if applicable).
- Explain the basis/rationale for the following:
 - Additional discretionary reason(s) for dismissing the formal complaint under the institution's policy and closing the case; or
 - Additional compelling reason(s) for continuing a grievance process under the institution's policy (e.g. the allegations still apply to the policy).
- Option to Appeal the F.C. Dismissal 3.
- Outline next steps in the process (if applicable) or note the conclusion/end of the process with this formal complaint dismissal.







Formal Complaint Dismissal (Example #2) Formal Complaint (Signed by CP)/Notice Issued Allegation(s): "Sexual harassment" allegation (e.g. hugs, shoulder touches, "romantic date" requests, comment about CP's appearance) Initiate Formal Grievance Process (Investigation Stage) Formal Complaint Dismissed ("Under Title IX" & Cont. Investigation Basis "Under Title IX" (example): Allegations don't meet "severe, Reason(s) for Continuing (example): Allegations meet pervasive, and obj. offensive" elements of definition(s) of other prohibited conduct under SM Policy "sexual harassment" definition Notice of F. C. Dismissal Issued ("Under Title IX" Option to Appeal Procedural Irregularity **New Evidence** Bias/Conflict of Interest Appeal Resolution Options Affirm F.C. Dismissal ("Under Title IX") & Cont. Investigation under SM Policy Cont. Investigation "Under Title IX" (e.g. with "other inapp. sexual conduct" allegations) (e.g. with "sexual harassment" allegations)



A Report to TIXC

Can be submitted by anyone: Complainant, witness, third-party, employee, etc.

Triage & Preliminary Assessment

Formal Complaint

Submitted/Signed by CP

Submitted/Signed by TIXC

Written Notice of Formal Complaint

Supportive Measures

Rights & Options

Resolution Options

Formal Grievance Process

Informal Resolution

Formal Complaint Dismissal

Informal Resolutions: Introduction

It's an alternative resolution option once a formal complaint is filed.

- Voluntary agreement made by both parties, if available.
- Available as an option <u>at any time</u> prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility.
- <u>Doesn't</u> involve a full investigation & adjudication.
- May be facilitated through <u>mediation</u> (as an example).

Note: Each party has a right to **withdraw** from the informal resolution process and resume the formal grievance process at any point prior to an agreement.



55

55

Not Permitted When...

- Not permitted as a resolution option "under Title IX" when an **employee respondent** is alleged of "sexual harassment" by a **student complainant**.
- Examples of other non-applicable reasons* due to <u>seriousness</u> and/or <u>pattern</u> of allegations:
 - Sexual Harassment cases
 - Sexual Violence cases
 - Dating or Domestic Violence cases
 - Stalking cases
 - The same respondent has previous informal resolution agreements

^{*} Check the institution's Sexual Misconduct Policy for specific provisions



Source: Title IX Regulations (2020); UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

56

What's left? "Other Inappropriate Sexual Conduct"

Possible Examples (depending on facts):

- Unwelcome sexual advances (including explicit or implicit proposition(s) of sexual contact or activity);
- Requests for sexual favors (including overt or subtle pressure);
- Gratuitous comments about an individual's sexual activities or speculation about an individual's sexual experiences;
- Gratuitous comments, jokes, questions, anecdotes or remarks of a sexual nature about clothing or bodies;
- Persistent, unwanted sexual or romantic attention;
- Exposure to sexually suggestive visual displays such as photographs, graffiti, posters, calendars or other materials;
- Deliberate, repeated humiliation or intimidation;
- Sexual exploitation;
- o Unwelcome intentional touching of a sexual nature; or
- Deliberate physical interference with or restriction of movement.



Source:

UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

57

57

Informal Resolution Timeframe (Example)

Informal Resolutions of a formal complaint will be concluded within <u>45 days</u> of notice to the institution that both parties wish to proceed with the Informal Resolution process

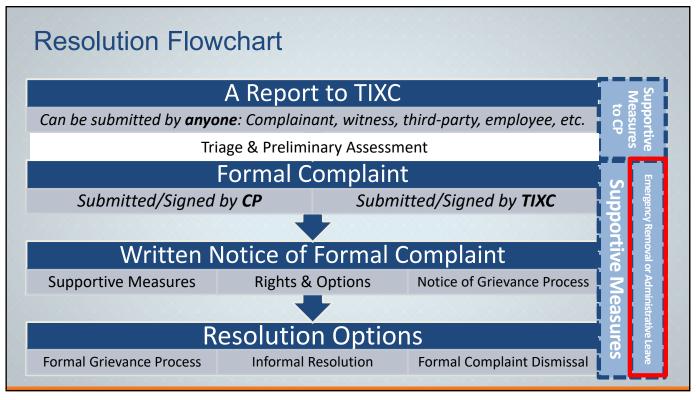
Note: Circumstances may require a **temporary delay** in this timeframe & the institution may <u>extend</u> this timeframe for <u>good cause</u>.

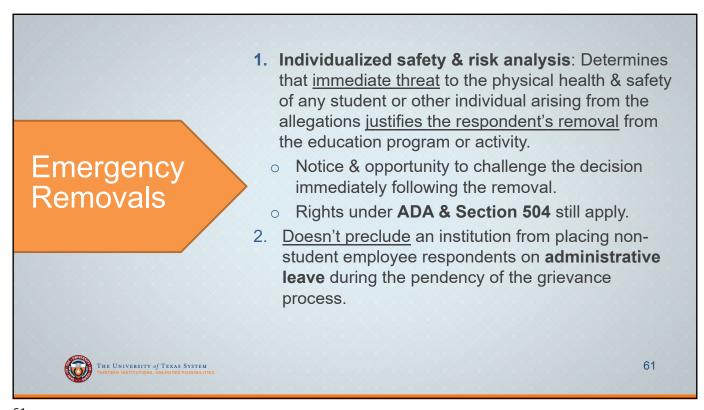
• Provide **notice** to the parties for temporary delays or extensions



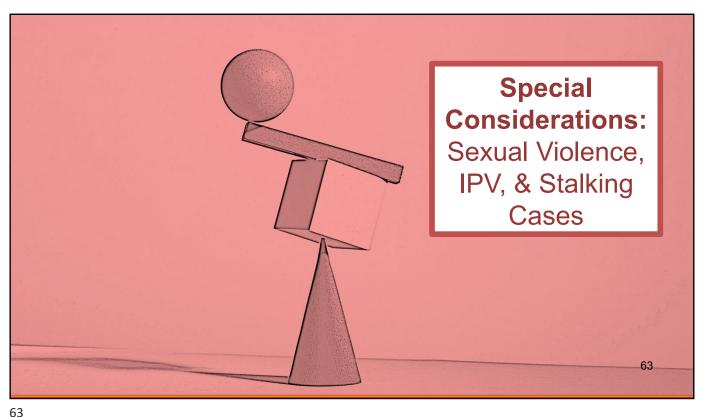
Source: UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)



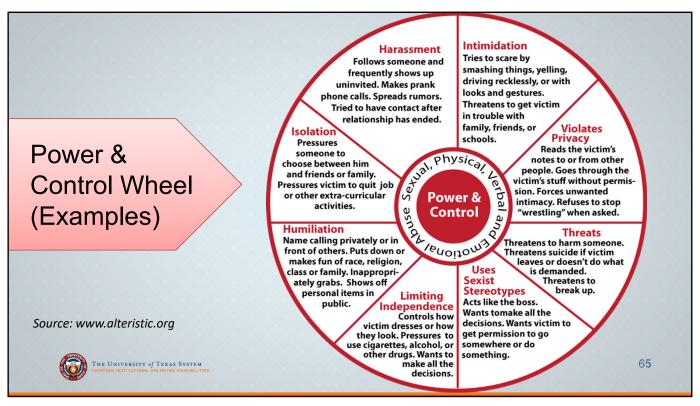


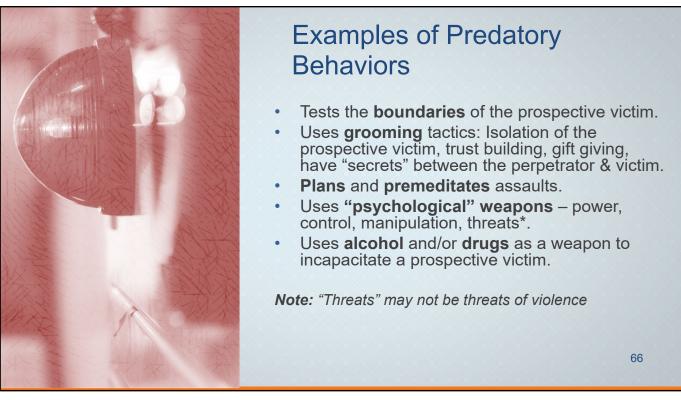




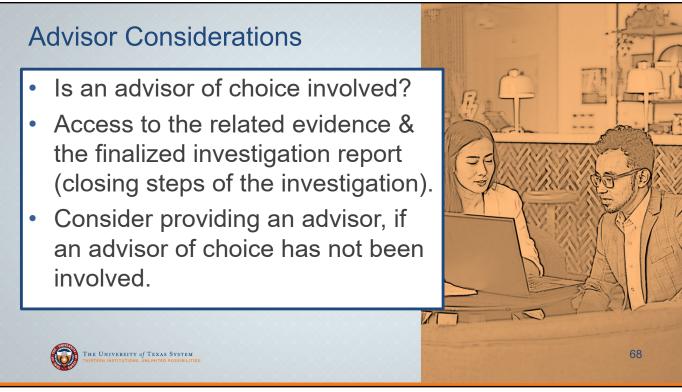


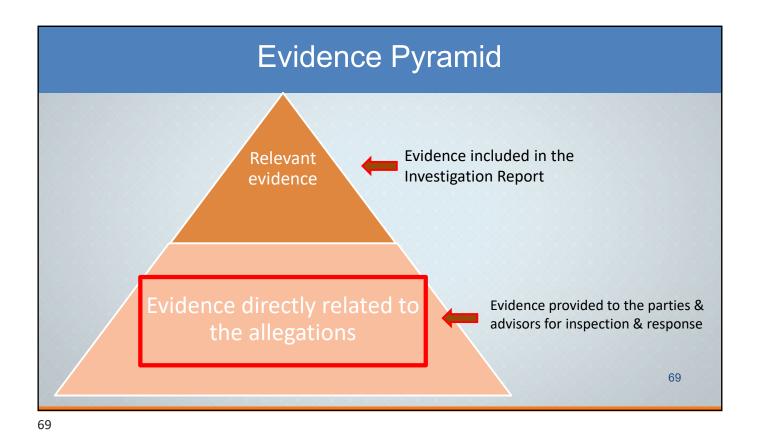
Common Considerations: Indicators of power & control Presence or threat of a weapon History of dating or domestic violence **Determining** Aggressive or hostile body language **Predominant** Pre-existing protective orders or "no Aggressors contact" directives Comparative extent of injury (if both are injured) **Property** damage Elements of fear Source: 64 The National Center for Campus Public Safety











Equal opportunity to both parties (& the advisors) to inspect & review any evidence obtained that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint.

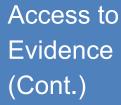
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70

Access to Evidence: When? • Upon request from a CP, RP, or an Advisor? • At the end of the investigation? THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM TOTAL SHAPEN.

71

Send each party (& the advisors*) the applicable evidence: In hard copy or electronic format Access to At least 10 days to inspect, 0 review, & respond to the Evidence evidence (Cont.) All responses to the evidence must be submitted in writing to the investigator(s) * Advisor of choice; or the provided advisor by the institution (If applicable) 72 THE UNIVERSITY of TEXAS SYSTEM



The investigators will consider all timely responses submitted by the parties **prior** to completing the investigation report.



73

73

Draft vs. Completed Investigation Report FAQ's: • When should the investigation report be released to the parties (and the party's advisors)? • Can the institution provide a draft investigation report first?

Access to the Completed Investigation Report

Send each party (& the advisors*) the completed investigation report:

- At least 10 days prior to the scheduled hearing
 - Why? Opportunity for the parties to inspect, review, & respond to the investigation report (at the hearing)
- A copy of the investigation report to the TIXC and hearing officer assigned.

* Advisor of choice; or the provided advisor by the institution (If applicable)



75

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Investigation Timeframe (Example)

The investigation of a formal complaint will be concluded within <u>90 days</u> of the filing of a formal complaint

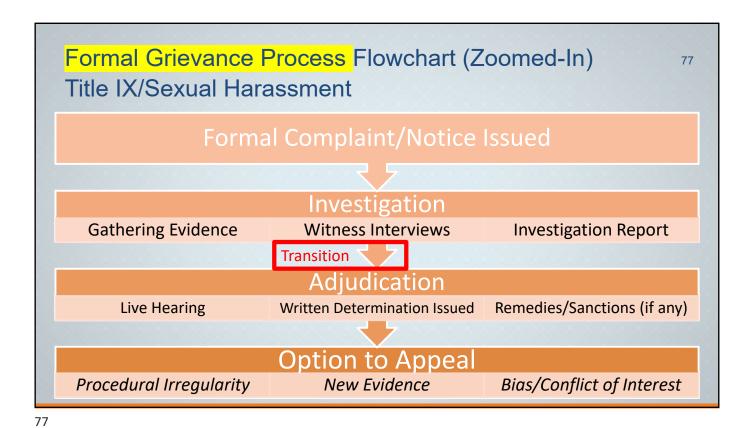
Note: Circumstances may require a **temporary delay** in this timeframe & the institution may extend this timeframe for good cause.

Provide notice to the parties for temporary delays or extensions

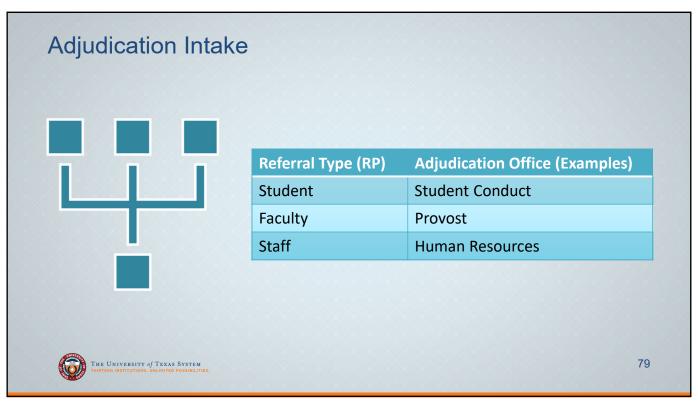


Source: UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)

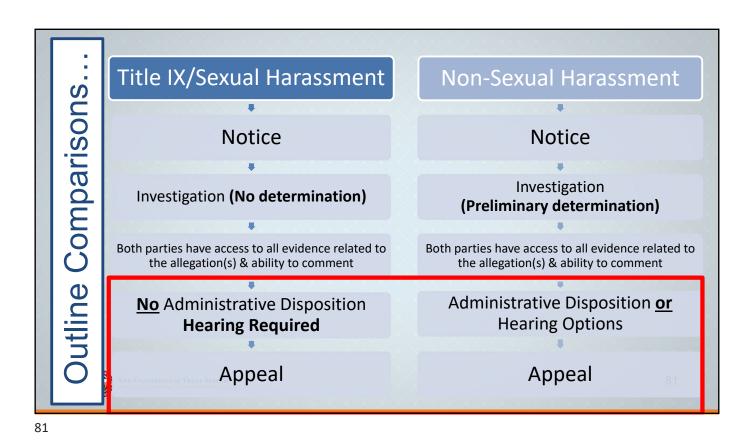
76



Transition to Adjudication
Transition process to the adjudication office? Referral?
An administrative coordinator for the adjudication intake, scheduling, organizing, & communicating the next steps (e.g. hearing) to all participants.







Adjudication Flowchart

Adjudication Report Referral

Adjudication Intake

Administrative Disposition Option? (if applicable)

Live Testimony & Cross-Examination of Witnesses

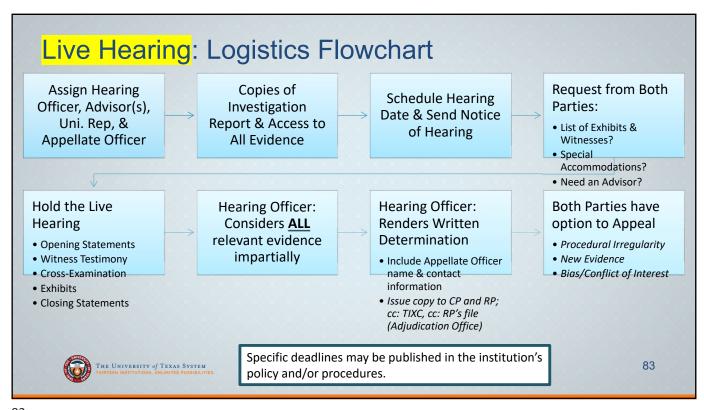
Written Determination Issued Remedies/Sanctions (if any)

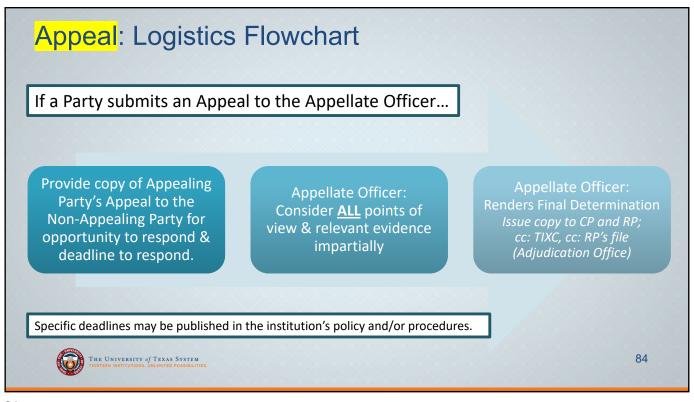
Option to Appeal

Procedural Irregularity

New Evidence

Bias/Conflict of Interest





Grievance Process Timeframe (Example)

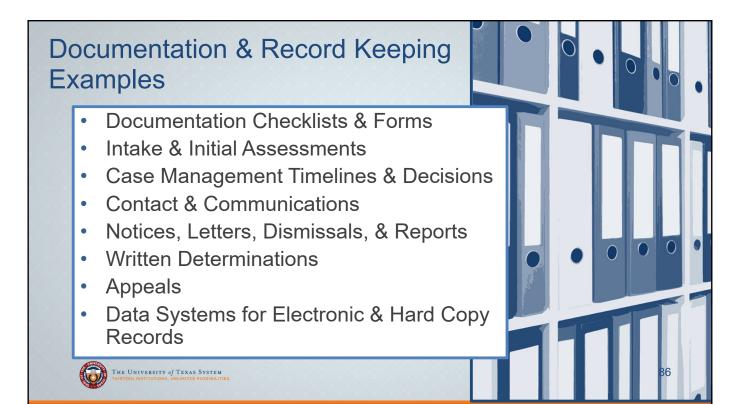
The entire Grievance Process will be completed in no more than <u>150 days</u> from the filing of the formal complaint

Note: Circumstances may require a **temporary delay** in this timeframe & the institution may <u>extend</u> this timeframe for <u>good cause</u>.

• Provide <u>notice</u> to the parties for temporary delays or extensions



Source: UT System Model Policy for Sexual Misconduct (2021)





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