

Overview of Investigation

Timeframe

The Title IX Coordinator(s) will seek to complete the investigation and any resulting disciplinary process, excluding appeals, within 45 business days after receipt of the complaint.

There may be circumstances that require the extension of timeframes for good cause, including extension beyond 45 business days. Timeframes may be extended to ensure the integrity and completeness of the investigation, comply with a request by external law enforcement, accommodate the availability of witnesses, or accommodate delays by the Parties; or for other legitimate reasons, including the complexity of the investigation and the severity and extent of the alleged misconduct. The University will notify the Parties in writing of any extension of the timeframes for good cause, and the reason for the extension.

Although cooperation with law enforcement may require the University to temporarily suspend the fact-finding aspect of a Title IX investigation, the University will promptly resume its Title IX investigation as soon as it is notified by the law enforcement agency that the agency has completed the evidence gathering process. The University will not, however, wait for the conclusion of a criminal proceeding to begin its own investigation and, if needed, will take immediate steps to provide interim measures for the complainant.

Investigations will proceed according to the aforementioned timeframes during the summer and at other times when the University is not in session. The Title IX Coordinator(s) will work with the Parties to balance the need for promptness and the preference for in-person meetings regarding the investigation.

Timeframes for all phases of the disciplinary process, including the investigation, any related disciplinary proceedings, and any related appeal, apply equally to both Parties.

Investigation Overview

During the investigation, the parties will have an equal opportunity to be heard, to submit information and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence, to identify witnesses including fact and expert witnesses, and to submit questions that they believe should be directed by the investigator to the other or to any witness. The investigator will notify and seek to meet separately with the parties and third-party witnesses and will gather other relevant and available information including, without limitation, electronic or other records of communications between the parties or witnesses, photographs, and written documentation.

The University will not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence during the investigation, hearing, or determination of responsibility that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

The University will not allow questions or evidence, during the investigation, hearing, or determination of responsibility, about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

The University will not restrict either Party from discussing allegations under investigation or from presenting relevant evidence.

Participation

Exclusive of the Complainant and the Respondent, UST expects all members of the University community to cooperate fully with the investigation and disciplinary procedures. The University recognizes that an individual may be reluctant to participate in the process; nevertheless, any student or member of the faculty or staff who refuses to cooperate in an investigation may be subject to discipline. Refusal to cooperate includes delaying or failing to acknowledge requests from University officials for information and delaying or failing to make oneself available for meetings with University officials.

It is understood that there may be circumstances in which a Complainant wishes to limit their participation. The complainant retains this right and will not be subject to discipline, although the University may be obligated to conduct an investigation.

Equally, there are numerous reasons why a Respondent may choose not to participate in the process. If a Respondent chooses not to participate in an investigation for any reason, the University process will continue, findings will be reached with respect to the alleged conduct, and the University will issue any sanctions, as appropriate. The University will not, however, draw any adverse inference from a Respondent's silence or stated desire to not participate.

The University will protect the privacy of the participating Parties and witnesses in any proceeding, meeting, or hearing to resolve complaints

Inspection of Evidence and the Investigative Report

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the Title IX Coordinator(s) will send to each Party a preliminary investigative report containing the evidence subject to inspection and review, redacted of personally identifiable information as necessary, in an electronic format or a hard copy. The Parties will have 10 business days to submit a written response, to meet again with the Investigator, and/or to request the collection of additional evidence by the Investigator. The evidence subject to inspection and review includes any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegation including the evidence upon which the University does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a Party or other source. The evidence subject to inspection and review will not contain any privileged or inadmissible information as defined in this policy.

Following the opportunity to review the preliminary investigative report, the Investigator will create a final investigative report that incorporates any written response or new information from the Parties or collected by the Investigator. The final investigative report will also fairly summarize the relevant evidence. The Investigator has the discretion to determine the relevance of any proffered evidence.

The Title IX Coordinator(s) will send to each Party the final investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, for their review and the parties will have 10 business days to submit a written response.

If there is significant, substantive, new information and/or evidence provided in the written response, the Investigator will make the final determination regarding whether a revised Final Investigative Report will be issued to both Parties. The Final Investigative Report and any written responses will be provided to the Decision-Maker at least three business days prior to the date of the hearing.

For cases that meet the threshold for Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator(s) will secure written permission from the Parties to share the preliminary and final investigative reports with the Party's Advisor. The University will not share reports with any support person not acting in the role of the Advisor of Choice.

Assignment to Grievance Procedures

If at the conclusion of the investigation, the University has not previously determined if the case meets the threshold and jurisdiction for Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator(s) will make a final determination as to whether to proceed under the Title IX or Non-Title IX Grievance Procedures. If the case does not meet the threshold and jurisdiction for Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator(s) will dismiss the case for purposes of Title IX and proceed under the Non-Title IX Grievance Procedures.

Determination Regarding Responsibility

At the conclusion of the Investigation, the Parties will be provided with the name(s) of the Decision-Maker(s) and will be allowed five business days to request the removal and replacement of a Decision-Maker based on bias or conflict of interest. Any request for a change in a Decision-Maker must be accompanied by supporting information and the decision to assign a new Decision-Maker will be made by the Title IX Coordinator(s). At that time, either party may also request that the Parties not to be in the same room for any hearing or meeting in which both may attend. The University will determine the appropriate use of technology to satisfy the request.

Non-Title IX Grievance Procedures-Students

For Non-Title IX cases in which the Respondent is a student, the determination regarding responsibility will be made at a live hearing utilizing the procedures outlined in this section.

The Parties may have an Advisor of Choice to accompany them to the hearing. The Advisor of Choice may not actively participate but may confer with the Party as is reasonably necessary. If the Advisor of Choice violates the rules or engages in behavior or advocacy that harasses, abuses, or intimidates either Party, a witness, or the Decision-Maker, that Advisor of Choice may be prohibited from further participation.

At least five business days prior to the hearing, the Parties must submit names of witnesses they would like to appear at the hearing and any relevant questions to be asked of the witnesses and the other party. The Party's may ask additional relevant questions at the hearing, but pre-submitted questions will be vetted in advance for relevancy and admissibility and ruled on during the live proceeding. Questions at the hearing are limited to those assessing credibility and relevant questions that have not previously been asked and answered in the final investigative report.

At the hearing, the Decision-Maker is responsible for maintaining an orderly, fair, impartial, and respectful hearing. The Decision-Maker has broad authority to respond to disruptive or harassing behaviors, including adjourning the hearing or excluding any offending person. The Decision-Maker will determine the method for questioning at the hearing, but exclusively the Decision-Maker will ask all questions posed by the Parties.

In the absence of good cause, as determined by the Decision-Maker, information, witnesses, and other evidence discoverable through the exercise of due diligence that is not provided to the Investigator during the investigation will not be considered at the hearing.

All hearings are closed to the public. A recording will be made by the University, but all other recordings are prohibited.

A Complainant, Respondent, or witness may decline to participate in the hearing. The Decision-Maker will not draw an inference about the responsibility determination based solely on a party's or witness's absence from the Hearing or refusal to submit to questions.

Non-Title IX Grievance Procedures-Employees

For Non-Title IX cases in which the Respondent is an employee, the determination regarding responsibility will be made by the Decision-Maker based on the final investigative report (there is no live hearing.) The Decision-Maker is responsible for maintaining an orderly, fair, and impartial process. The Decision-Maker, in his or her discretion, may pose additional questions to the Parties or to witnesses in writing or in person. A Complainant, Respondent, or witness may decline to further participate. The Decision-Maker will not draw an inference about the responsibility determination based solely on a party's or witness's refusal to submit to additional questions.

In the absence of good cause, as determined by the Decision-Maker, information, witnesses, and other evidence discoverable through the exercise of due diligence that is not provided to the Investigator during the investigation will not be considered at the hearing.

Title IX Grievance Procedures for Students and Employees

For cases that have been determined by the Title IX Coordinator(s) to meet the threshold for Title IX Sexual Harassment as well as the Title IX jurisdictional requirements, the determination regarding responsibility will be made at a live hearing utilizing the procedures outlined in this section.

The Parties may have an Advisor of Choice at the hearing. The Advisor is responsible for conducting the cross-examination, which includes asking the other Party, and any witnesses all relevant questions and follow-up questions, including those challenging credibility. If a Party does not have an Advisor, the University will appoint one on behalf of the Party free of charge. In this capacity, the Advisor will be appointed for the sole purpose of conducting cross-examination of the other Party and witnesses. If the Advisor violates the rules or engages in behavior or advocacy that harasses, abuses, or intimidates either Party, a witness, or the Decision-Maker, that Advisor or Support Person may be prohibited from further participation.

At the hearing, the Decision-Maker is responsible for maintaining an orderly, fair, impartial, and respectful hearing. The Decision-Maker has broad authority to respond to disruptive or harassing behaviors, including adjourning the hearing or excluding any offending person. The Decision-Maker will determine the method for questioning at the hearing. Only relevant cross examination and other questions may be asked of a Party or witness. Before a Complainant, Respondent, or witness answers a cross-examination or other question, the Decision-Maker must first determine whether the question is relevant and explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. The Decision-Maker must explain to the Party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

In the absence of good cause, as determined by the Decision-Maker, information, witnesses, and other evidence discoverable through the exercise of due diligence that is not provided to the Investigator during the investigation will not be considered at the hearing.

All hearings are closed to the public. The University will make a recording, but all other recordings are prohibited.

A Complainant, Respondent, or witness may decline to participate in the hearing and the Decision-Maker will not rely on any previous statement of that party or witness in reaching a determination as to responsibility. The Decision-Maker will not draw an inference about the responsibility determination based solely on a party's or witness's absence from the Hearing or refusal to submit to questions.

Findings

Standard of Evidence

The Decision-maker shall use a preponderance of the evidence standard to determine whether the alleged violation of the policy occurred. The preponderance of the evidence means a standard of proof in which the totality of the evidence offered in support of a fact is greater or more convincing than the evidence which is offered in opposition to it; given the totality of information the version of events that is more likely than not. Preponderance of the evidence is understood to require more than 50 percent certainty to determine responsibility for a policy violation (51% or greater).

Written Determination of Responsibility

The Complainant and Respondent will simultaneously receive a written determination regarding responsibility applying the preponderance of the evidence standard typically within five (5) business days of the determination of responsibility. The written determination letter, drafted by the Decision-Maker, will include:

The allegations constituting sexual harassment;

A description of the procedural steps taken during the grievance process;

Findings of fact supporting the determination;

Conclusions regarding the application of the Policy to the facts;

A statement, and rationale for the result of each allegation including findings, sanctions, and remedies; and

Options for appeal.

The determination of responsibility becomes final either on notification of the results of the appeal, or the date on which an appeal would no longer be considered timely.

Sanctions and Remedies

If there is a finding of responsibility based on a preponderance of the evidence, the determination of sanctions and remedies will be made by the Decision-Maker in consultation with the respective trained University Administrator.

Sanctions will be determined based on the seriousness of the misconduct and the Respondent's previous disciplinary history (if any).

Remedies are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity. Such remedies may include Supportive Measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.

The following are types of disciplinary action that may be imposed, singly or in combination for student Respondents who are found to have violated this Policy:

- Admonition - a written or verbal reprimand.
- Disciplinary Warning - indicates that further violations may result in more severe disciplinary action. The warning shall not exceed a period of one calendar year and shall be removed automatically when the imposed period expires.
- Disciplinary Probation - indicates further violations may result in additional disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion. Such probation may last longer than one calendar year.
- Restitution - reimbursement for damages, monies owed, or misappropriation of property. Reimbursement may take the form of service in kind.
- Fine – a monetary fine applied to the student's account. Fines are used sparingly, and only if the violation warrants a fine. Fines may also be used if there is a time restraint.
- Educational - an assignment designed to educate a student about the potential impact of misconduct and to prevent reoccurrence. May include referral to a campus department, educational workshops, or an assignment (i.e. reflection papers, flyer, and journal).
- Loss of Privileges - a temporary or permanent loss of university privileges, including but not limited to loss of privileges to access a building(s), to hold a leadership position in a student group, to participate in study abroad programs, to hold a part-time job on campus, to register as a student group, or to participate in social or extracurricular events/activities; may also result in withholding of an official transcript or blocking enrollment for a specified period of time. This flexible penalty may impose limitations to fit the particular case.
- Residence Hall Suspension – a temporary or permanent removal of a student from a specific residence hall or from all University housing.
- Student Group Suspension – removal of privileges and recognitions accorded to student groups for a specified period.
- Suspension from the University - prohibits the student during the period of suspension from entering the University campus, attending University-sponsored functions, and from registering for or attending classes.
- Expulsion from the University - permanent severance from the University.
- University Withdrawal – a student may be administratively withdrawn from a class, a course, or all courses. A withdrawn student may also be prohibited from entering University premises and barred from re-enrollment until specific conditions are met. Reasons for University withdrawal include, but are not limited to, (1) to prevent the disruption of the education process; (2) the student failed to respond to an official summons from a University official; (3) the student has been suspended or expelled from the University.
- Immediate Suspension – immediate removal from all or part of the University premises while the conduct process is pending when a violation reasonable indicates that the student's continued presence poses a substantial or immediate danger to the health, safety or welfare of any member of the University community or to the University premises (This is applicable only to Non-Title IX complaints.)
- No-Contact Order – the Dean of Students may impose a limited or campus-wide No-Contact Order between parties involved in a conduct matter when the fear of retaliation and/or harassment may be present. Specific instructions will accompany the No-Contact Order outlining expected behavior including face-to-face contact, correspondence, email, social media, or telephone. Friends and relatives are also prohibited from contact on behalf of either party.
- Removal of Good Conduct Standing – a temporary or permanent removal of good conduct standing, which may prevent the student from accepting / maintaining leadership roles on campus.
- The following are types of disciplinary action that may be imposed, singly or in combination for employee Respondents who are found to have violated this Policy:
- Oral Warning-For infractions that the University deems to be minor, the employee will at a minimum be issued an oral warning.

- Written Warning Notice-For repeated minor infractions, or a more substantial infraction, the employee will, at a minimum, be issued a written warning notice. The written warning notice, for a more substantial infraction, may include a probationary statement with possible dismissal. The written warning notice should be prepared following a corrective action discussion with the employee. The employee will be given an opportunity to comment in writing and should be asked to sign the notice, acknowledging receipt. Three copies of the notice will be distributed as follows: (1) employee; (2) supervisor, and (3) personnel file.
- Discharge – For infractions management deems to be sufficiently serious or continued failure to respond appropriately to prior corrective action, discharge is appropriate. The approval of the President or Associate Vice President of Human Resources must be obtained prior to the discharge of an employee under any circumstances.

The Complainant and the Respondent have equal rights to an impartial appeal. All appeals will be referred to an Appellate Decision-Maker appointed by the President. The Decision-Maker for the appeal will not have served as Investigators or Decision-Maker in the previous steps of the process.

A Complainant or Respondent may file a written appeal with the Title IX Coordinator(s) because:

- A. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- B. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- C. The Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

The purpose of an appeal is not to initiate a review of substantive issues of fact or a new determination of whether a violation of University rules has occurred. The appellate Decision-Makers may decide to uphold the original decision, to alter the imposed penalty, or to return the case for additional proceedings or other action.

The deadline for filing a written appeal is five business days from the date the Parties are provided the written determination of responsibility. If either Party files an appeal, the Title IX Coordinator(s) will notify the other Party in writing and provide both parties in writing the opportunity to submit a written statement in support of or challenging the outcome.

The Title IX Coordinator(s) will have primary responsibility for interactions with the Parties, for the gathering of information needed for the appeal, and for notifying both Parties in writing of the outcome of any appeal. The written decision regarding the appeal will be provided simultaneously within five business days after the conclusion of the review and will describe the results of the appeal and the rationale for each result.