Selected Title IX Q & A for SUNY Cortland Faculty and Staff

Title IX Reporting – Who, What, When, Where, Why? Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination in educational programs and activities, and extends to extreme forms of gender discrimination such as sexual assault, domestic or dating violence, and/or stalking, as well as verbal or non-verbal sexual harassment. A victim/survivor might choose to confide in any employee on campus. Campuses must ensure that all employees know how to respond to reports of sexual violence . . . and responsible employees have an obligation to report. We want individuals to feel safe seeking help, and we want them to know what steps they can take. All faculty and staff can assist in getting the word out on available confidentiality, rights, remedies and services.

Who is protected under Title IX? Title IX is applicable to all members of the campus community – students, employees, individuals who do business with the campus, visitors, and volunteers on campus.

What is required of SUNY Cortland regarding Title IX? The College has an obligation to promptly respond to complaints of sexual violence and sexual harassment to limit negative effects and prevent future recurrences. Schools and colleges are required to comply and must document compliance. Colleges are required to designate specific people who are trained to address sexual violence and sex discrimination, including helping victims/survivors navigate options and seek remedies. The campus has designated Responsible Employees for Title IX (administrators, supervisors, managers). Additionally there are several Title IX Deputy Coordinators.

When are reports made? A victim or survivor may choose to report their incident right away, or they may choose to wait. There is no statute of limitations on when the harassment or violence occurred. Whenever a report is made to a faculty or staff member, reports should be made to the Title IX Coordinator within 24 hours of any report, complaint or request for assistance. There are a few employees on campus who are considered confidential reporters who typically do not have to report to Title IX and those reporters include professional counselors, pastoral counselors, and medical providers.

Where do incidents occur that require reporting? Title IX is concerned with sexual violence or harassment that occurs on campus, in any location connected with College programs, and with anyone affiliated with SUNY Cortland. These incidents might occur on or off campus, online, or overseas with study abroad programs and campus related travel.

Why report to Title IX? Reporting assists the college in having accurate data, helps us see where patterns may exist so that we can more promptly and accurately address issues, and alerts the community to danger. Reporting is recommended not only because the Office of Civil Rights considers that a school has notice of peer sexual violence if a reasonable employee knew or should have known . . . but because it is the right thing to do.
What should I do if someone reports sexual violence or sexual harassment to me?

- Be a non-judgmental listener.
- Avoid statements or questions that might do harm to the victim/survivor – (e.g. avoid any suggestion that the individual is at fault, or that they should have acted in a different manner).
- Advise the individual of options for confidential disclosure.
- Reinforce that you can help the individual take steps to help them feel safer.
- Assure the individual that they will be treated with respect and given privacy.
- Know that there is an amnesty policy for alcohol and drug use in sexual violence cases.
- Recognize the limits of your expertise and don’t try to get all the details.
- Refer the individual to the Title IX Coordinator or a deputy coordinator so that the victim/survivor can learn about their options and resources!
- If the victim/survivor prefers no action at that time, inform the individual that you will share that with the Title IX Coordinator, and the Title IX Coordinator will contact her/him, but it is that person’s choice whether or how to respond to that contact.

What can I expect when I make a report to the Title IX Coordinator?

- The individual who disclosed the incident(s) will be treated with respect, care and dignity, and disclosures will be treated seriously.
- The victim/survivor’s privacy is carefully maintained. The individual will be asked to describe the incident to as few individuals as practicable and will not be required to unnecessarily repeat a description of the incident.
- The victim/survivor can decide whether or not to participate in the conduct or criminal justice process free from pressures from college officials.
- The Title IX Coordinator will provide information on available resources such as medical services, counseling, rape crisis advocacy, etc.
- The Title IX Coordinator will explain all options for disclosure/reporting to the victim/survivor, including reporting to the police and/or student conduct system (if the accused is a student) and/or Human Resources (if the accused is an employee).
- The victim/survivor can elect to not report and to change one’s mind about pursuing reporting process at any time.
- The victim/survivor will be afforded available interim measures and accommodations such as a change in academic, housing, employment, or other applicable arrangements in order to ensure safety, prevent retaliation, and avoid an ongoing hostile environment.

**TITLE IX CONTACT INFORMATION**
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