



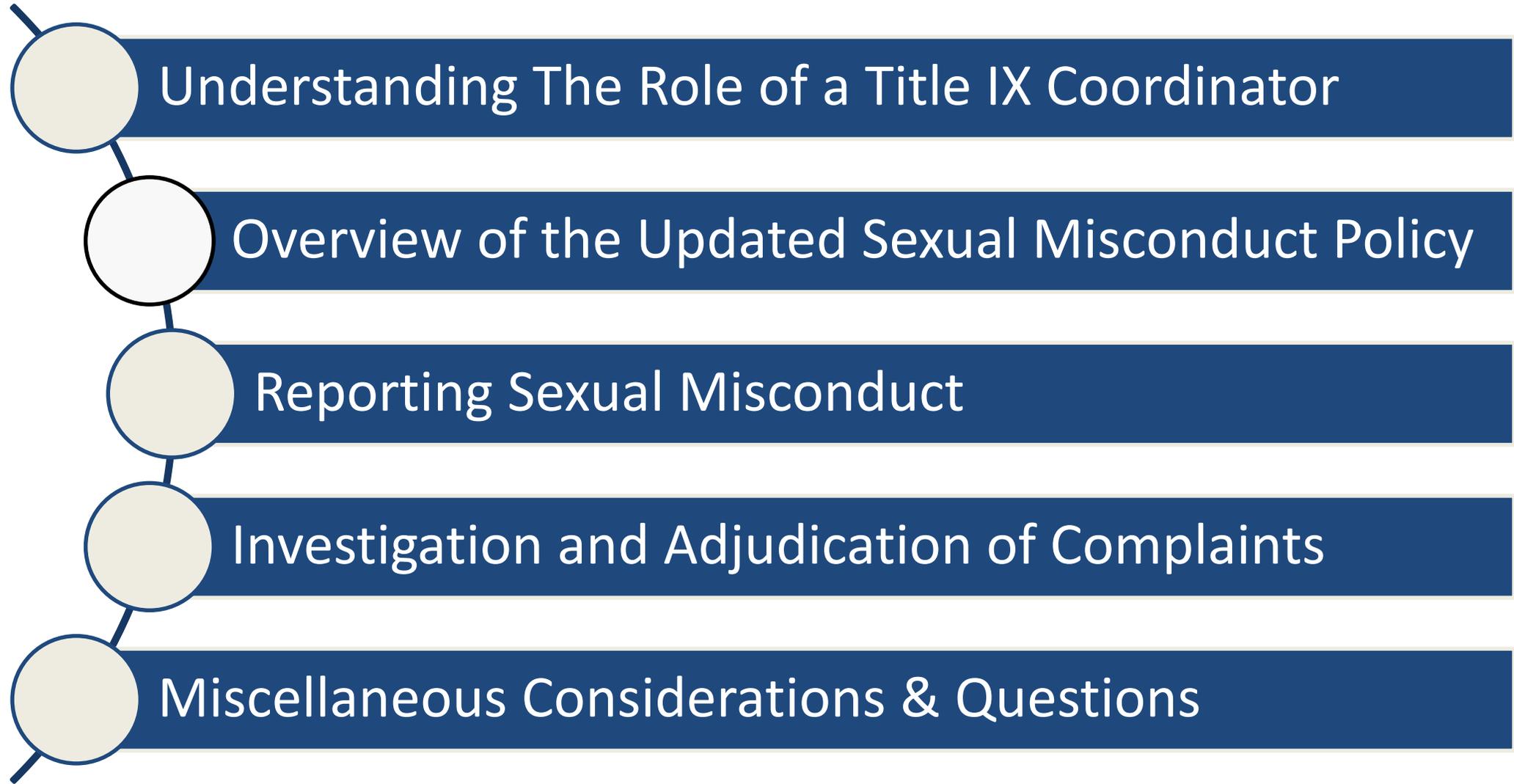
**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Title IX Coordinator Training**

## **Fall 2020**

**Na'Tasha Webb-Prather**

System Director for Equity & Investigations  
Legal Counsel



# What is Required under the Final Rule

A recipient with **actual knowledge** of **sexual harassment** in an **education program or activity of the recipient** against a person **in the United States**, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.



# The Role of a Title IX Coordinator



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- Oversee and coordinate **all** Title IX responsibilities on your campus
  - Compliance
  - Prevention & Awareness
  - Training
  - Investigations
  - Data Collection & Reporting

# The Role of a Title IX Coordinator

Serve as an impartial representative of the institution:

- Ensure involved parties are treated equitably throughout the process
- Avoid prejudging the facts of a matter prior to the conclusion of the process
- Avoid conflicts of interest and bias
  - Recuse yourself and others as necessary



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# **Overview of Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy**

# What Has Changed?

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX Jurisdiction
- Provisions on Retaliation, Amnesty, False Statements
- Role of Advisors
- Adjudication Process
- Timeframe for Completion
- More...



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# What Has Remained the Same?

- Scope of Sexual Misconduct
- Jurisdictional reach of Sexual Misconduct
- Responsible/Confidential/Privileged Employee designations
- Definition of consent and incapacitation
- Standard of evidence
- System Office oversight
- Support services, Interim measures



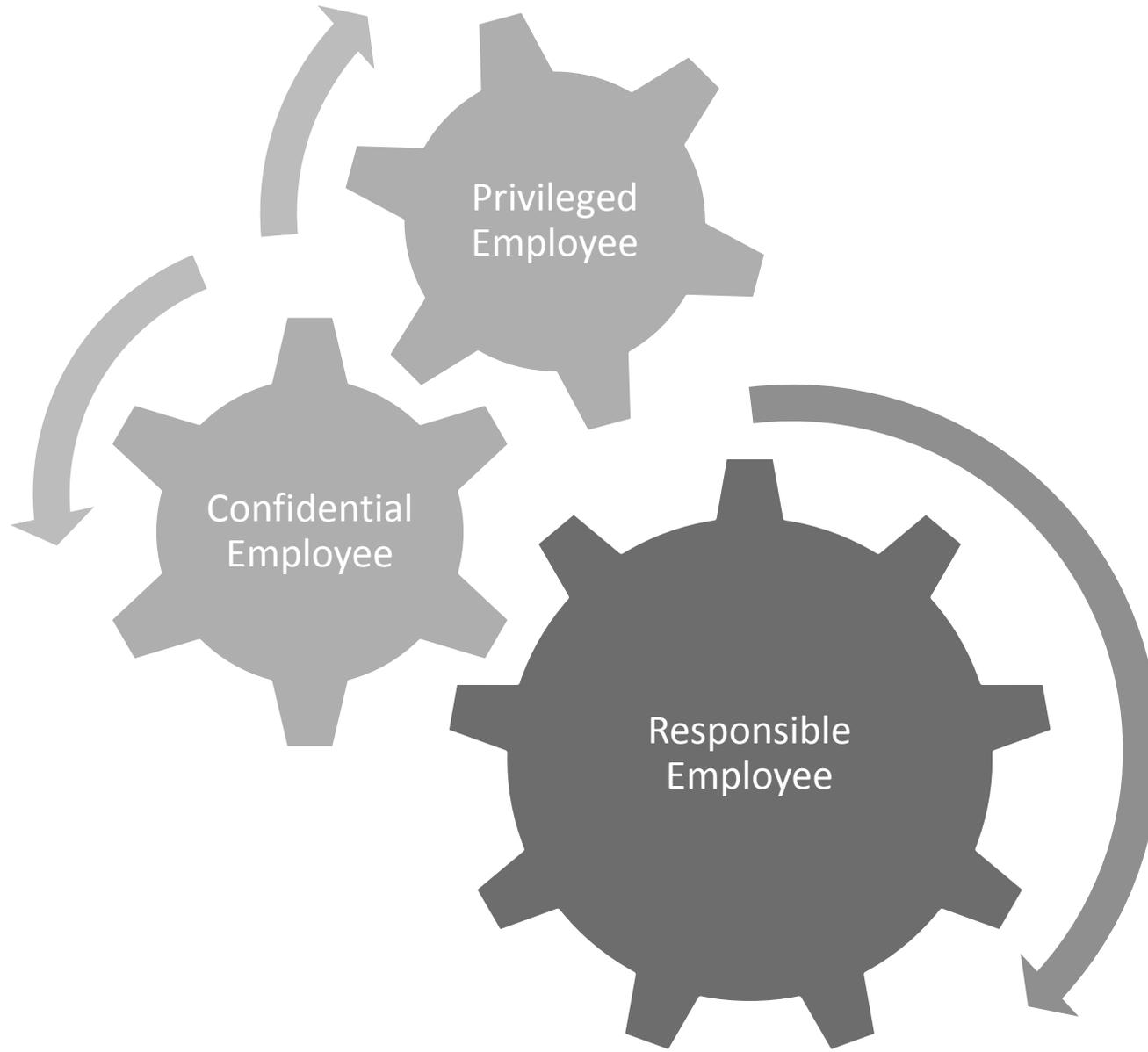


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# **Reporting Prohibited Conduct**

# Effective Date

- According to the Department of Education the Final Rule is proactive from August 14, 2020, and will be enforced as such
- Board Policy effective August 11, 2020
  - Allegations reported and occurring before: Previous policy
  - Allegations reported and occurring after: Current policy



# Title IX Sexual Harassment §106.30

- Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
  - (i) An **employee** conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e quid pro quo); or
  - (ii) **Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, AND objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity;** or
  - (iii) Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in VAWA

# Key Categories of Prohibited Conduct

Sexual  
Misconduct

Dating Violence

Domestic Violence

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Harassment [Under Title IX & Title VII]

Stalking

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration



# Sexual Harassment (Student on Student)

Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), **determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity**



# Sexual Harassment (Other)

**Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct**, based on sex (including gender stereotypes) that may be any of the following:

- Implicitly or explicitly a **term or condition** of employment status in a course program or activity
- **A basis for** employment or education decisions; OR
- Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an **intimidating, hostile, or offensive** work environment
- Note: Behavior may rise to the level of a Title IX violation

# Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Any **physical contact** with another person of a **sexual nature without the person's consent**.

Includes:

- Touching of another's intimate parts (genitalia, groin, breasts, buttocks)
- Touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or
- Forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts

# Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration

Any **penetration** of another's body parts without the person's consent.

Includes:

- Penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part
- Contact between the mouth of one person and the genitals or anus of another person

# Jurisdiction

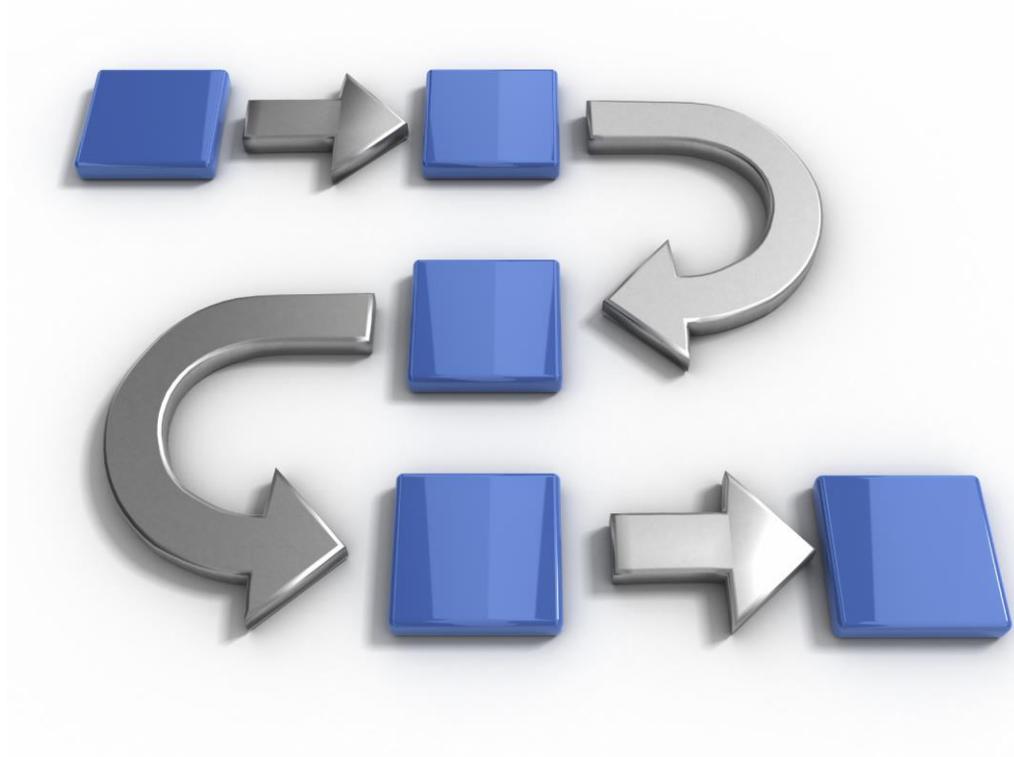
## Title IX

- Institution's program or activity the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations

## Sexual Misconduct

- Institution property
- Institution-sponsored or affiliated events
- Off campus as defined by the institution policies
- Domestic or abroad

# Required Response to a Report § 106.44(a)



Title IX Coordinator must promptly contact the Complainant to discuss:

- Availability and consideration of supportive measures
- Process for filing a complaint

# Support Services & Interim Measures §106.30

- Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services must be offered to the Complainant
  - USG policy requires offering support services to Respondents as well
- Offered upon receiving a report [no Formal Complaint is required]
- Ex: counseling, modifications to work or class schedules, mutual no contact directives

# Emergency Removal § 106.44(c)&(d)

## Interim Suspension

- Individualized safety and risk analysis that determines an immediate threat to physical health or safety to students
- Notice required pre and post removal with opportunity to respond or challenge
- Requires approval from the System Director

## Administrative Leave

- Individualized safety and risk analysis
- Notice required post removal with opportunity to challenge
- System Office notice and consult permissible



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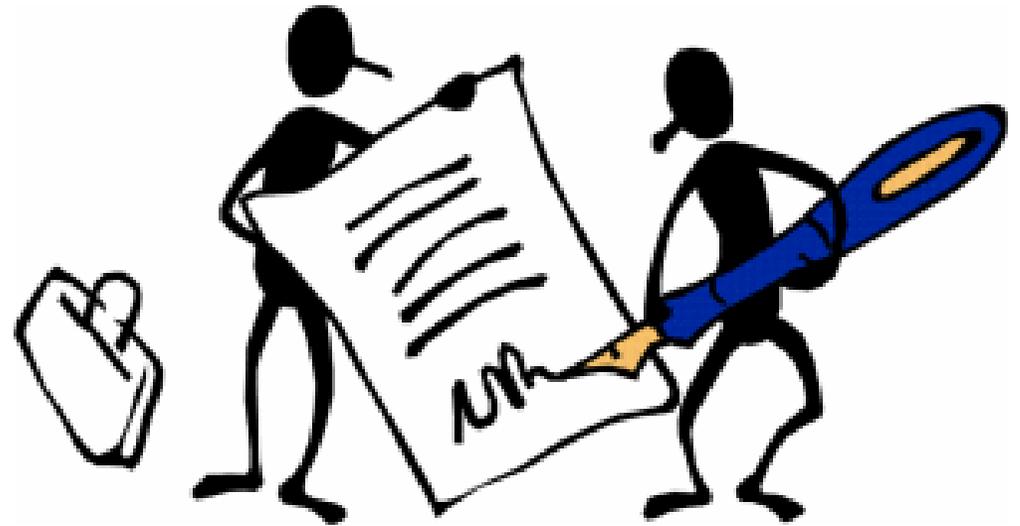
# **Complaints of Sexual Misconduct**

# Formal Complaint § 106.30

- A document filed by a Complainant OR signed by the Title IX Coordinator
- Alleges Sexual Harassment (Title IX)
- Requests an investigation
- **Note:** must be filed while the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in an education program or activity

# Title IX Coordinator Initiated Complaints

- TIXC does NOT become the Complainant
- When to sign? (Permissible)
  - Multiple reports against the same Respondent
  - Violent behavior or use of a weapon
- **Caution:** Be mindful of bias and conflicts of interest claims



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# Complaint Process

- If not a Formal Complaint under Title IX determine whether it is a complaint under Sexual Misconduct or other conduct provisions
- Confirm with the Complainant (in writing) that they wish to investigate their claims
- Once a complaint is filed the timeframe for completion begins

# Complaint Consolidation

- Permissible consolidation when allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances:
  - Against more than one Respondent
  - By more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents
  - Cross complaints
- Parties must have the opportunity to object; institution makes final determination



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# Notice of Complaint § 106.45(b)(2)

- In writing to parties' institution email\*
- Must include:
  - Alleged conduct constituting Sexual Misconduct
  - Identities of the parties involved (if known)
  - Date and location of incident (if known)
  - Presumption that the Respondent is not responsible
  - Final determinations of responsibility are made at the conclusion of the grievance process
  - Notice of the right to an advisor

# Notice of Complaint § 106.45(b)(2)

Must include:

- Notice of right to inspect and review evidence
- Prohibition against false statements
- Prohibition against retaliation
- Copy or link to Sexual Misconduct Policy and accompanying procedures

**Notice must be supplemented as necessary**



# Retaliation §106.71

- **Who is protected:** Reporters, Complainants, Witnesses, Respondents, even those who choose to not participate
- **What is protected:** Intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination
  - Ex. Charging individuals for code of conduct violations that arise out of the same facts or circumstances
  - Ex. Not keeping the identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or any witnesses confidential

# Additional Noteworthy Provisions

## False Statements

Updated standard to cover false statements knowingly made to an institution official

## Amnesty

Updated to explicitly only apply to information regarding student consumption of drugs or alcohol



# Formal Complaint Dismissal § 106.45(b)(3)

## Required

- Conduct alleged would not constitute Sexual Harassment as defined, even if proved
- Outside the institution's education program or activity
- Outside of the United States

## Permissive

- Complainant notifies in writing desire to withdraw the complaint
- The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed at the institution
- Specific circumstances prevent the gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination

# USG Complaint Dismissal

- Any Sexual Misconduct complaint may be dismissed if:
  - The alleged conduct, even if proved, would not constitute Sexual Misconduct
  - The Complainant requests in writing to withdraw
  - The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed
  - There are circumstances that prevent the gathering of sufficient evidence to reach a determination
- Must provide written notice to both parties with opportunity to appeal



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# **The Investigation Process**

# Expectations of Coordinators

- Assign neutral investigators
- Periodic status updates to stay abreast of the investigation status
- Ensure adherence to current policy provisions
  - Procedural rights
  - Ensure objective evaluation of relevant evidence
  - Timelines
- Notify System Director as needed

# Advisors

## Title IX Complaints

- Parties have a right to an advisor of their choice
- Advisor may accompany party to all meetings and hearings
- Provided a copy of the investigation report and directly related information
- All communication will be between the institution and the party

## Sexual Misconduct Complaints

- Parties have a right to an advisor of their choice
- Advisor may accompany party to all meetings and hearings
- All communication will be between the institution and the party

# Evidentiary Considerations § 106.45(b)(5)

- The burden of proof AND burden of gathering evidence is on the institution
- Information protected by legal privilege, may not be accessed, disclosed or relied upon unless a waiver is obtained
- Questions and evidence regarding the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, UNLESS used to prove:
  - Someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct OR
  - Offered to prove consent between the parties

# Access to Information § 106.45(b)(5)(vi)

- Parties have a right to review the investigation report prior to its finalization
- Parties have a right to receive a copy of all directly related information
- Procedurally can occur simultaneously or at different times
- 10 calendar days to review



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# The Investigation Report § 106.45(5)(vii)

- Must fairly summarize relevant evidence
- An objective evaluation of the information [inculpatory and exculpatory]
  - Credibility assessments cannot be based on a person's status
- Sample report sections still apply
- Final report provided to the parties at least 10 days calendar days prior to the hearing



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# **Informal Resolution**

# Considerations

- The institution is a party to the informal resolution
  - Informal resolution is appropriate
  - The terms of the informal resolution are appropriate
- Parties must engage in the process voluntary
- Parties may end the informal resolution process any time prior to reaching the terms

# Informal Resolution under Title IX §106.45(b)(9)

- Not permissible for student allegations against employees
- A Formal Complaint must be filed
- The parties have received notice and explanation of the process and consequences of informal resolution
- The parties have voluntarily agreed to engage in the process



# Additional Considerations

- What methods of informal resolution are available at your institution?
- Title IX Coordinators may continue facilitating the informal resolution process
- **Note:** Anyone who facilitates informal resolution must receive appropriate training



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# **Formal Adjudication**

# Live Hearing § 106.45(b)(6)

- The Final Rule mandates a bifurcated process
- Final determinations of responsibility and sanctions are made by decision-makers
  - CANNOT be the Title IX Coordinator or assigned investigator
- New due process considerations
  - Cross examination
  - Relevancy determinations
  - Impact of party or witness refusal to submit to cross-examination

# Adjudication Processes

## Students

- All matters not informally resolved will be heard by a Hearing Panel
- Hearing Panels comprised of trained faculty and staff

## Employees

- Title IX matters not informally resolved will be heard by a designated decision-maker
  - Single decision-maker OR panel
- Sexual Misconduct matters not informally resolved will be resolved according to previously established procedures
  - Institutions may choose to offer a hearing

# Hearing Officer

- Considered a decision-maker
- Responsible for facilitating the hearing process
  - Scheduling
  - Selection of panel members
  - Any pre-meetings with parties
  - Conducts the hearing
- Responsible for determining issues of relevancy



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# Hearing Panel or Single-Decision Maker

- Serves as a neutral decision-maker
- Makes a final determination of responsibility
- Makes a final determination regarding sanctions and other administrative action that may be appropriate
- Must articulate determinations in a written decision

# Advisors § 106.45(b)(6)

## Title IX

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- Perform cross examination of other party and other witnesses

**\*Note:** Institution required to provide if party does not have their own

## Sexual Misconduct

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- May not actively participate in the hearing process
- May provide written questions to the Hearing Panel to read aloud

# Notice of Hearing

- At least 10 days prior to the hearing parties must receive:
  - The finalized investigation report
  - Notice of the hearing date, time, and modality
  - Notice of decision-maker(s)
- **Recommended:** Engage institutional advisor



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# Hearing Logistics

- At the request of either party, the parties must be permitted to be in separate rooms
- Hearings may be conducted in-person or via videoconferencing
  - Ensure decision-makers receive training on how to use technology
- Have available all directly related information
- Institutions permitted to establish rules of decorum
- All hearings must be recorded

# Standard of Evidence

Decisions regarding student and employee alleged misconduct are based on a preponderance of the evidence



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# The Written Decision §106.45(b)(7)

- Provided to both parties simultaneously must include:
  - The allegations
  - The procedural steps from the complaint through determination
  - Findings of fact supporting the determination
  - Determinations regarding responsibility, sanctions (and remedies) along with the supporting evidence and rationale
  - Information on the appeals process

# Appeals

- Parties will continue to have both institutional level and Board level appeal opportunities
- Grounds for an appeal:
  - New information
  - Procedural Error
    - Ex. Bias or conflict of interest of Title IX personnel
  - Finding inconsistent with the weight of the information



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# **Additional Provisions**

# Record Keeping § 106.45(b)(10)

- 7-year records retention mandate:
  - Reports [supportive measures, why not deliberately indifferent and what measures taken to restore or preserve equal access]
  - Investigations [determinations, recording of hearing, sanctions and remedies implemented]
  - Appeals
  - Informal resolutions [results]
  - Training materials



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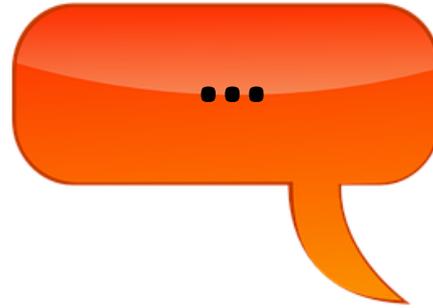
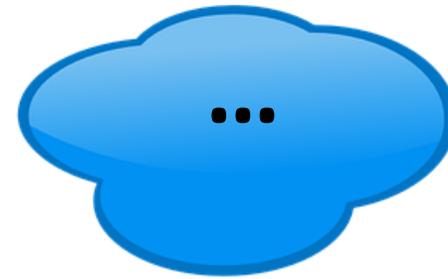
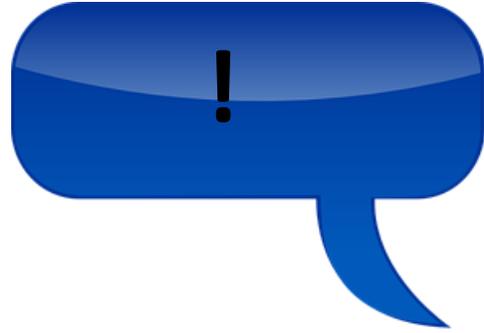
# Training Considerations

- **§106.45(b)(10)D** All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process must be publicly available on your website
- Ensure materials do not include or rely on sex stereotypes
- Promote neutrality and fairness throughout the administrative process

# Website Considerations

- **§106.8(b)** Mandates notification and dissemination of applicable policies and procedures
  - Title IX Coordinator contact information
  - Reporting options
  - Notice of updated policies and procedures
  - Title IX Coordinator and/or Assistant Secretary can field questions
  - Reporting and resolving other alleged Title IX violations







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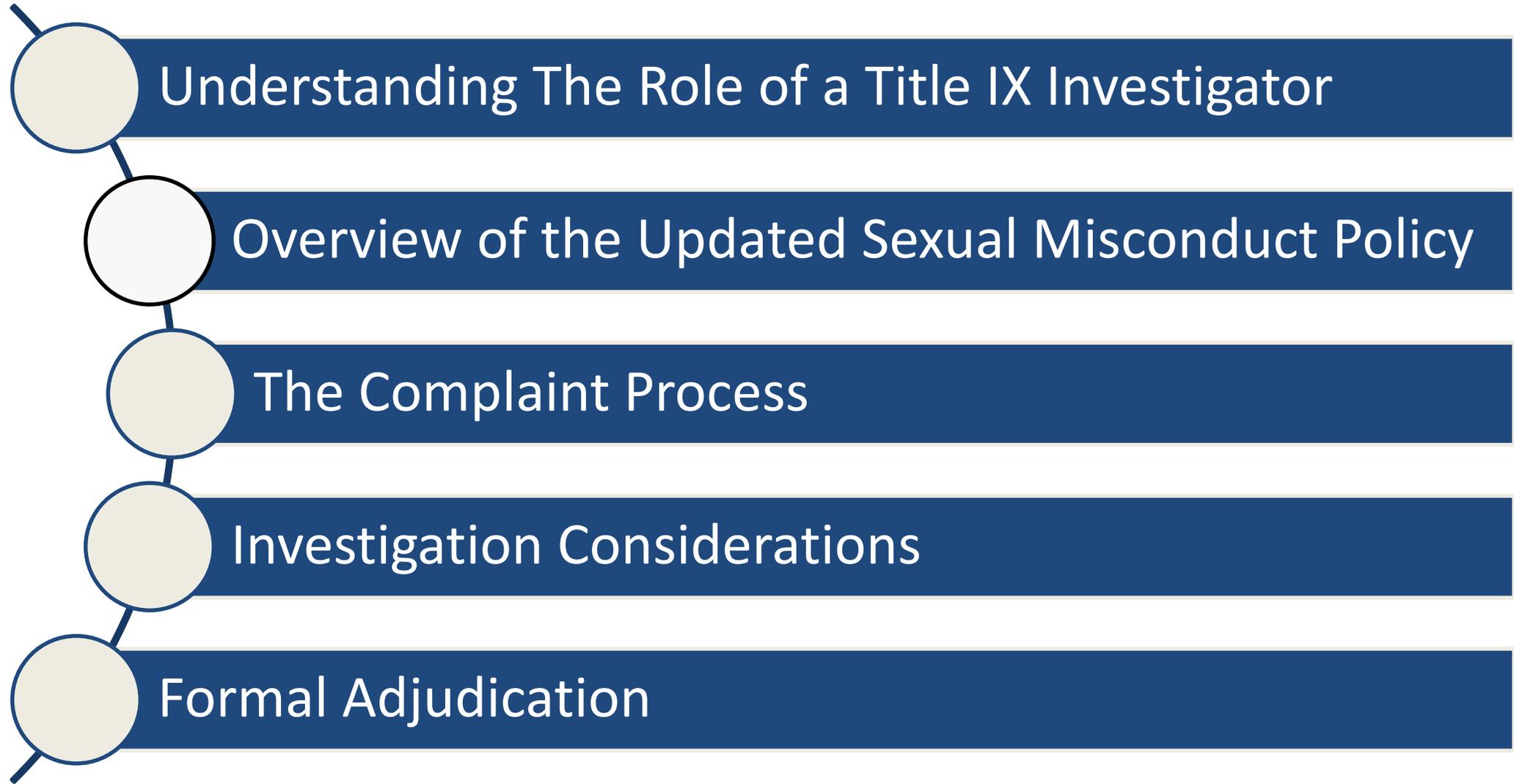
# **Title IX Investigator Refresher Training**

## **Fall 2020**

**Na'Tasha Webb-Prather**

System Director for Equity & Investigations

Legal Counsel





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# **Understanding the Role of an Investigator**

# Role of the Investigator

- A neutral institutional fact finder and gatherer
  - Fair and unbiased review of matter
- Follow the Policy
  - Standard of proof
  - Avoid burden shifting
- Make a preliminary determination regarding the charge(s) and recommendations for the parties to consider





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# **Overview of Title IX**

# Title IX

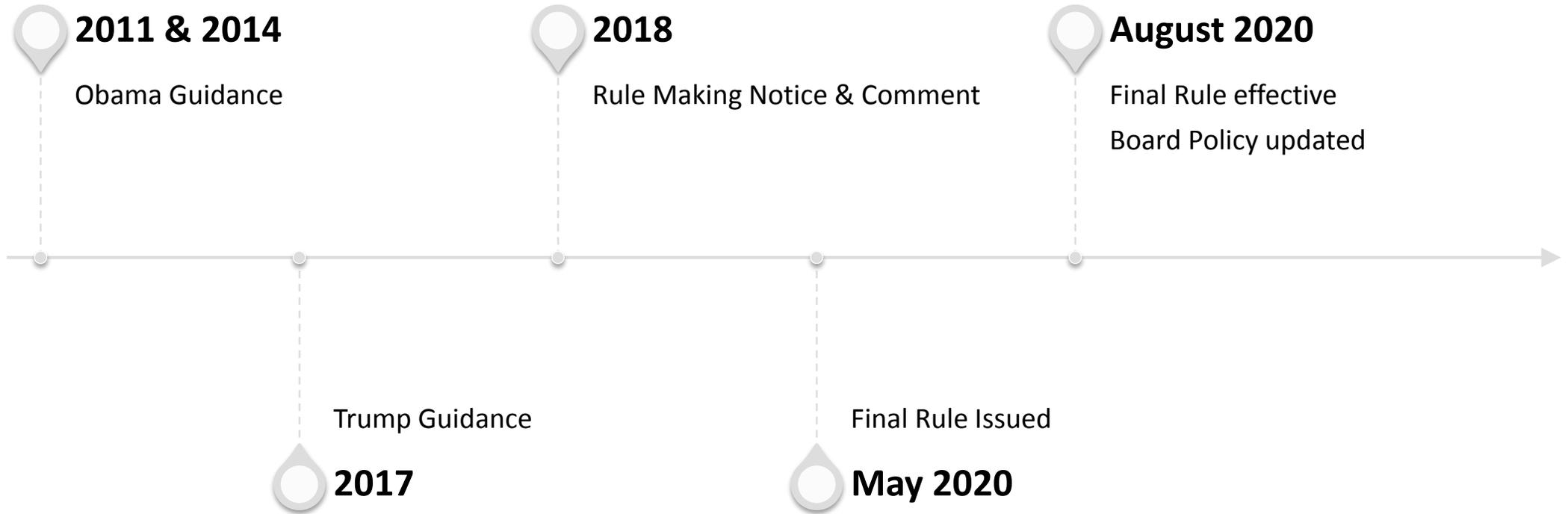
The law states that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

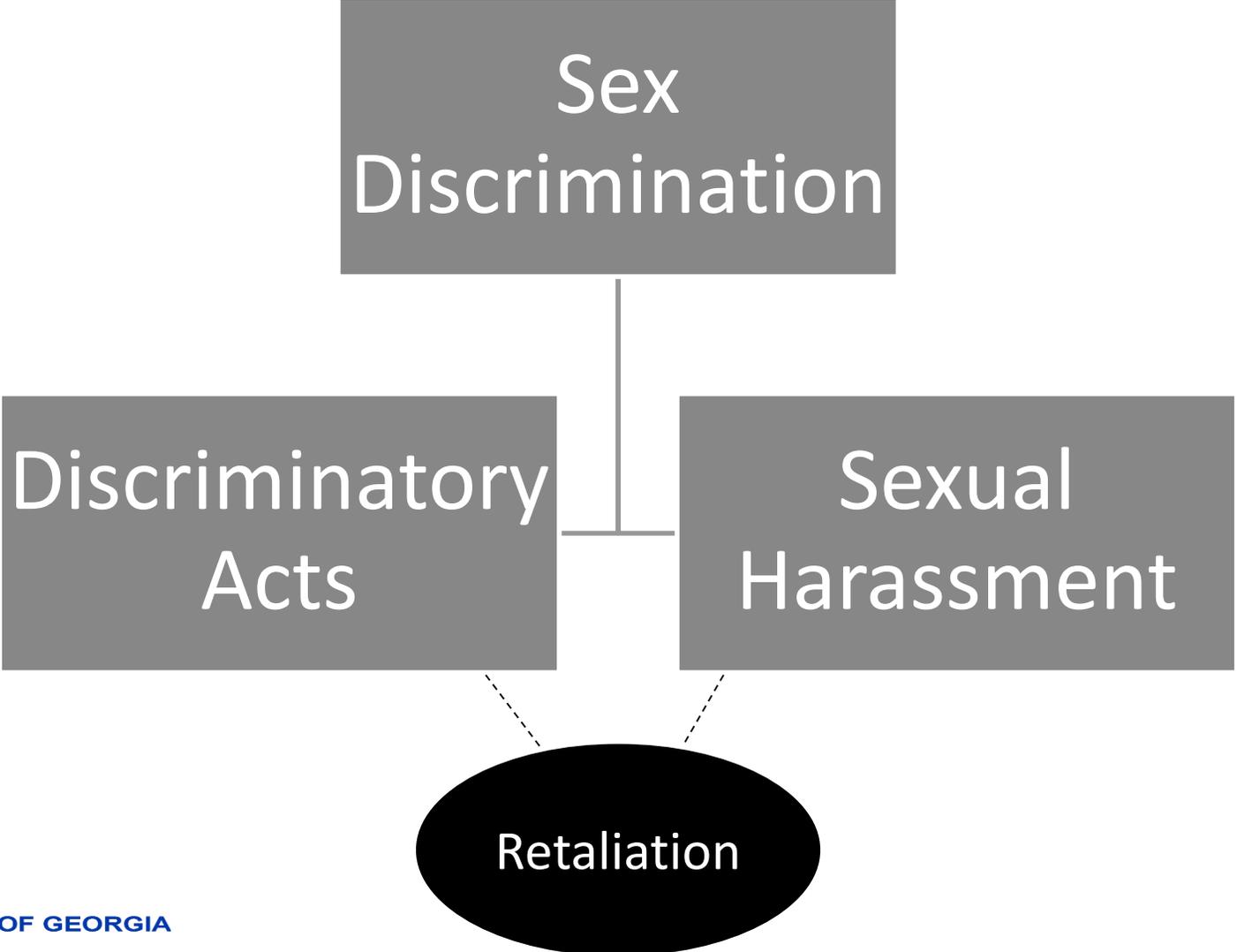
—United States Code



# Administrative Action on Title IX



# What is Sex Discrimination?



# What is Required under the Final Rule?

A recipient with **actual knowledge** of **sexual harassment** in an **education program or activity of the recipient** against a person **in the United States**, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.



# Title IX Sexual Harassment §106.30

- Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
  - (i) An **employee** conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e quid pro quo); or
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  - (iii) Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in VAWA



# Title IX Jurisdiction

- Institution's program or activity in the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations



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# **Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy**

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX

Other Sexually  
Based Behavior



# What Has Changed?

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX Jurisdiction
- Provisions on Retaliation, Amnesty, False Statements
- Role of Advisors
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- Timeframe for Completion
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# What Has Remained the Same?

- Scope of Sexual Misconduct
- Jurisdictional reach of Sexual Misconduct
- Responsible/Confidential/Privileged Employee designations
- Definition of consent and incapacitation
- Standard of evidence
- System Office oversight
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# **Prohibited Conduct: Definitions & Jurisdiction**

# Key Categories of Prohibited Conduct

Sexual  
Misconduct

Dating Violence

Domestic Violence

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Harassment

Stalking

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration



# Dating Violence

**Violence** committed by a person who is or has been in a **social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature** with the alleged victim.

- Includes sexual or physical abuse
- Includes threats of such abuse
- The existence of a covered relationship is based on the totality of the circumstances

# Domestic Violence

**Violence** committed by:

- a current **spouse**, former spouse or **intimate partner**
- a person whom **shares a child**
- a person who is **cohabiting** with or cohabitated with the alleged victim

# Stalking

Engaging in a **course of conduct** directed at a specific person that **would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety** or the safety of others OR suffer **substantial emotional distress**.

- Can be direct actions or through third parties
- Could include the use of devices or other methods
- Includes following, monitoring, observing, surveilling, threatening, communicating to or about a person, or interfering with a person's property

# Sexual Exploitation

**Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage** of another for **one's own advantage or benefit**, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited.

Examples include:

- Non-consensual photos, videos, or audio of sexual activity
- Non-consensual distribution of photo, video, or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity was consensual
- Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breast, buttocks, groin, or genitals in non-consensual circumstances

# Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Any **physical contact** with another person of a **sexual nature without the person's consent**.

Includes:

- Touching of another's intimate parts (genitalia, groin, breasts, buttocks)
- Touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or
- Forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts

# Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration

Any **penetration** of another's body parts without the person's consent.

Includes:

- Penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part
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Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), **determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity in violation of Title IX.**



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**Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct**, based on sex (including gender stereotypes) that may be any of the following:

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- **A basis for** employment or education decisions; OR
- Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an **intimidating, hostile, or offensive** work environment
- Note: Behavior may rise to the level of a Title IX violation

# Comparing Jurisdiction

## Title IX

- Institution's program or activity the United States
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## Sexual Misconduct

- Institution property
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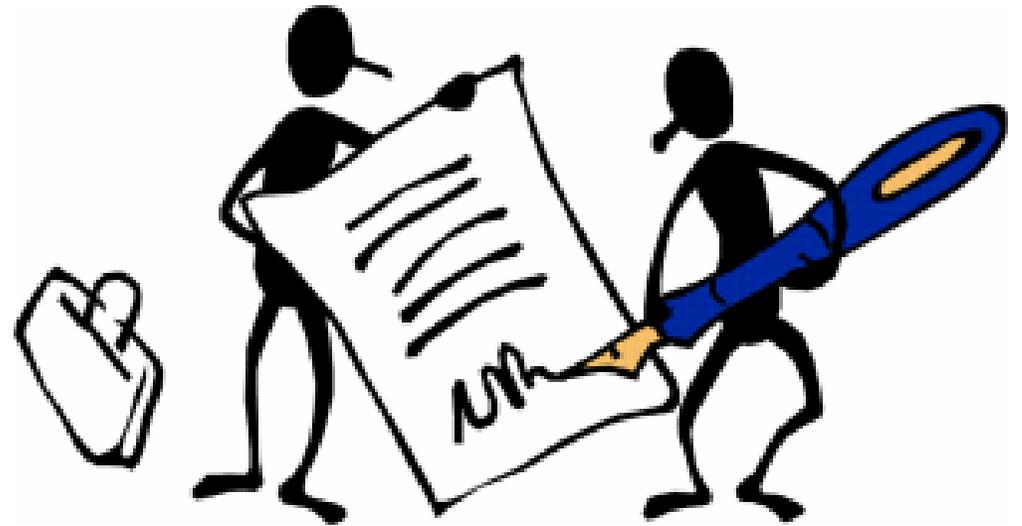
# **The Complaint Process**

# Formal Complaint § 106.30

- A document filed by a Complainant OR signed by the Title IX Coordinator
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- Requests an investigation
- **Note:** must be filed while the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in an education program or activity

# Title IX Coordinator Initiated Complaints

- TIXC does NOT become the Complainant
- When to sign? (Permissible)
  - Multiple reports against the same Respondent
  - Violent behavior or use of a weapon
- **Caution:** Be mindful of bias and conflicts of interest claims



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# Complaint Process

- If not a Formal Complaint under Title IX may be a complaint under Sexual Misconduct
- **Recommended:** Confirm with the Complainant (in writing) that they wish to investigate their claims
- Once a complaint is filed the timeframe for completion begins

# Complaint Consolidation

- Permissible consolidation when allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances:
  - Against more than one Respondent
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- Parties must have the opportunity to object; institution makes final determination



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- Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services must be offered to the Complainant
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- Offered upon receiving a report [no Formal Complaint is required]
- Ex: counseling, modifications to work or class schedules, mutual no contact directives



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# **The Investigation Process**

# Evidentiary Considerations § 106.45(b)(5)

- The burden of proof AND burden of gathering evidence is on the institution
- Information protected by legal privilege, may not be accessed, disclosed or relied upon unless a waiver is obtained
- Questions and evidence regarding the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, UNLESS used to prove:
  - Someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct OR
  - Offered to prove consent between the parties

# Standard of Evidence

Decisions regarding student and employee alleged misconduct are based on a preponderance of the evidence



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# Advisors

## Title IX Complaints

- Parties have a right to an advisor of their choice
- Advisor may accompany party to all meetings and hearings
- Provided a copy of the investigation report and directly related information
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- **What is protected:** Intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination
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  - Ex. Not keeping the identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or any witnesses confidential

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- Must fairly summarize relevant evidence
- An objective evaluation of the information [inculpatory and exculpatory]
  - Credibility assessments cannot be based on a person's status
- Sample report sections still apply
- Final report provided to the parties at least 10 days calendar days prior to the hearing

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- 10 calendar days to review



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# **Informal Resolution**

# Considerations

- The institution is a party to the informal resolution
  - Informal resolution is appropriate
  - The terms of the informal resolution are appropriate
- Parties must engage in the process voluntary
- Parties may end the informal resolution process any time prior to reaching the terms

# Informal Resolution under Title IX §106.45(b)(9)

- Not permissible for student allegations against employees
- A Formal Complaint must be filed
- The parties have received notice and explanation of the process and consequences of informal resolution
- The parties have voluntarily agreed to engage in the process





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# **Formal Adjudication**

# Live Hearing § 106.45(b)(6)

- The Final Rule mandates a bifurcated process
- Final determinations of responsibility and sanctions are made by decision-makers
  - CANNOT be the Title IX Coordinator or assigned investigator
- New due process considerations
  - Cross examination
  - Relevancy determinations
  - Impact of party or witness refusal to submit to cross-examination



# Adjudication Processes

## Students

- All matters not informally resolved will be heard by a Hearing Panel
- Hearing Panels comprised of trained faculty and staff

## Employees

- Title IX matters not informally resolved will be heard by a designated decision-maker
  - Single decision-maker OR panel
- Sexual Misconduct matters not informally resolved will be resolved according to previously established procedures
  - Institutions may choose to offer a hearing

# The Written Decision §106.45(b)(7)

- Provided to both parties simultaneously must include:
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  - The procedural steps from the complaint through determination
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  - Determinations regarding responsibility, sanctions (and remedies) along with the supporting evidence and rationale
  - Information on the appeals process

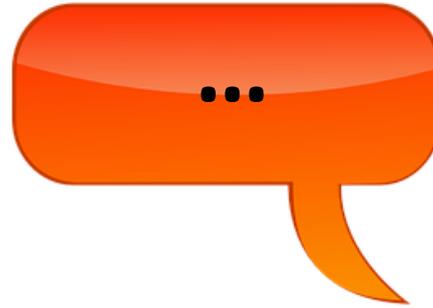
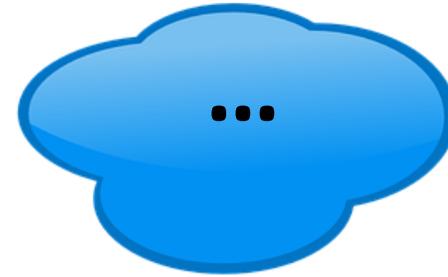
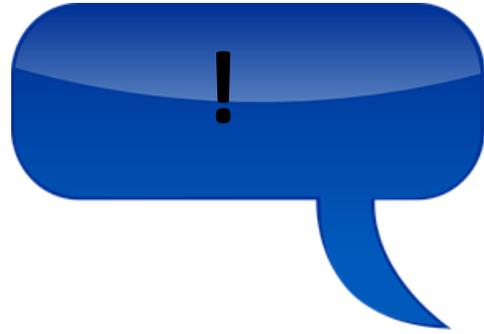


# Appeals

- Parties will continue to have both institutional level and Board level appeal opportunities
- Grounds for an appeal:
  - New information
  - Procedural Error
    - Ex. Bias or conflict of interest of Title IX personnel
  - Finding inconsistent with the weight of the information



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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

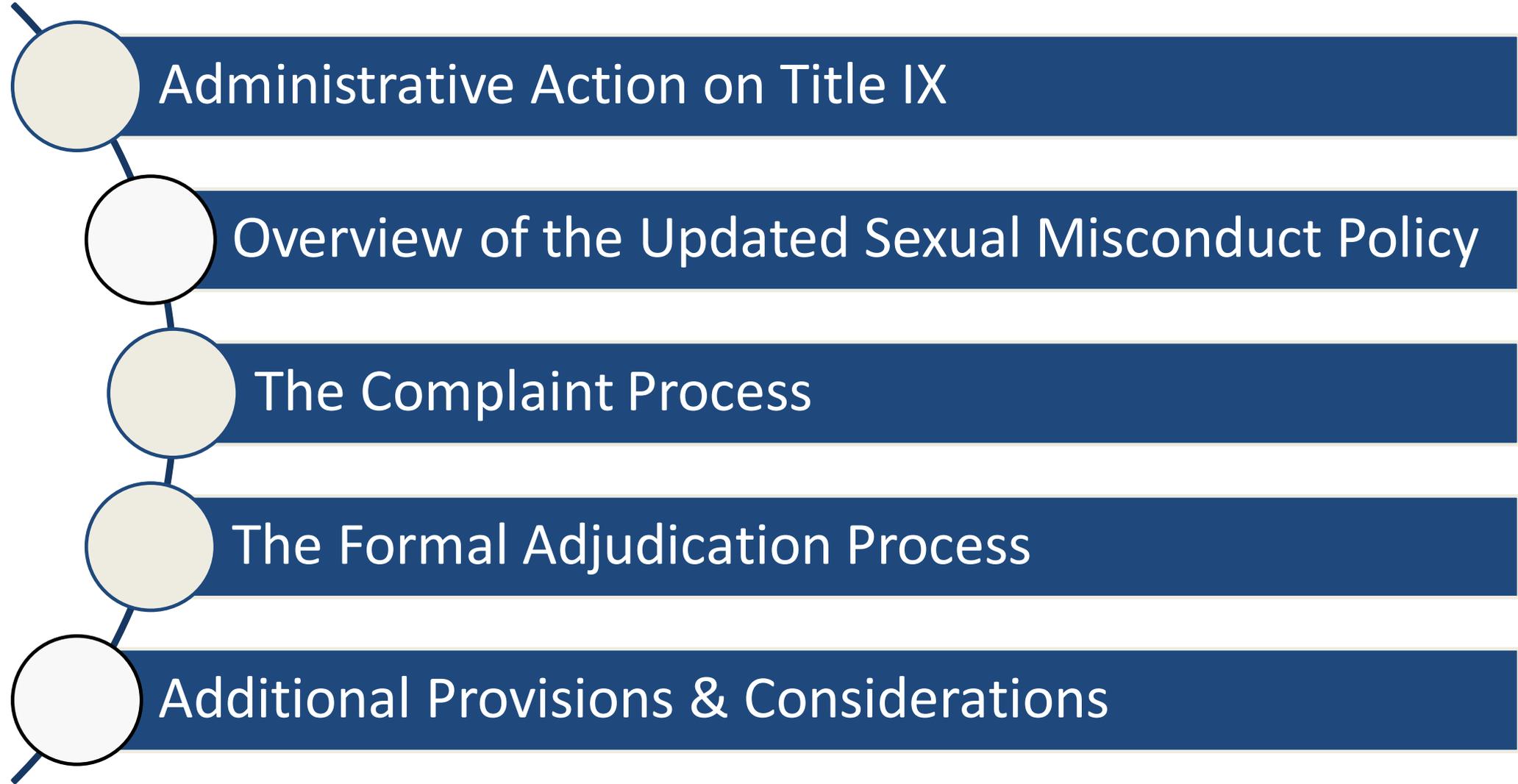
# **Hearing Panelist Refresher Training**

**Fall 2020**

**Na'Tasha Webb-Prather**

System Director for Equity & Investigations

Legal Counsel





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Overview of Title IX**

# Title IX

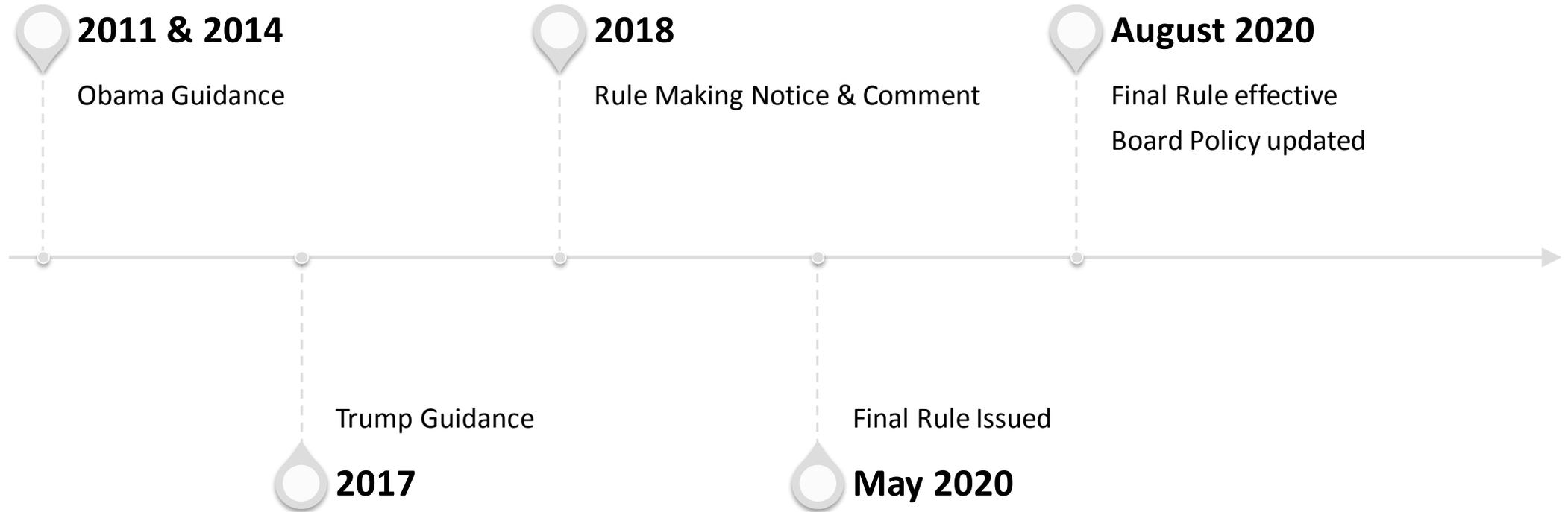
The law states that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

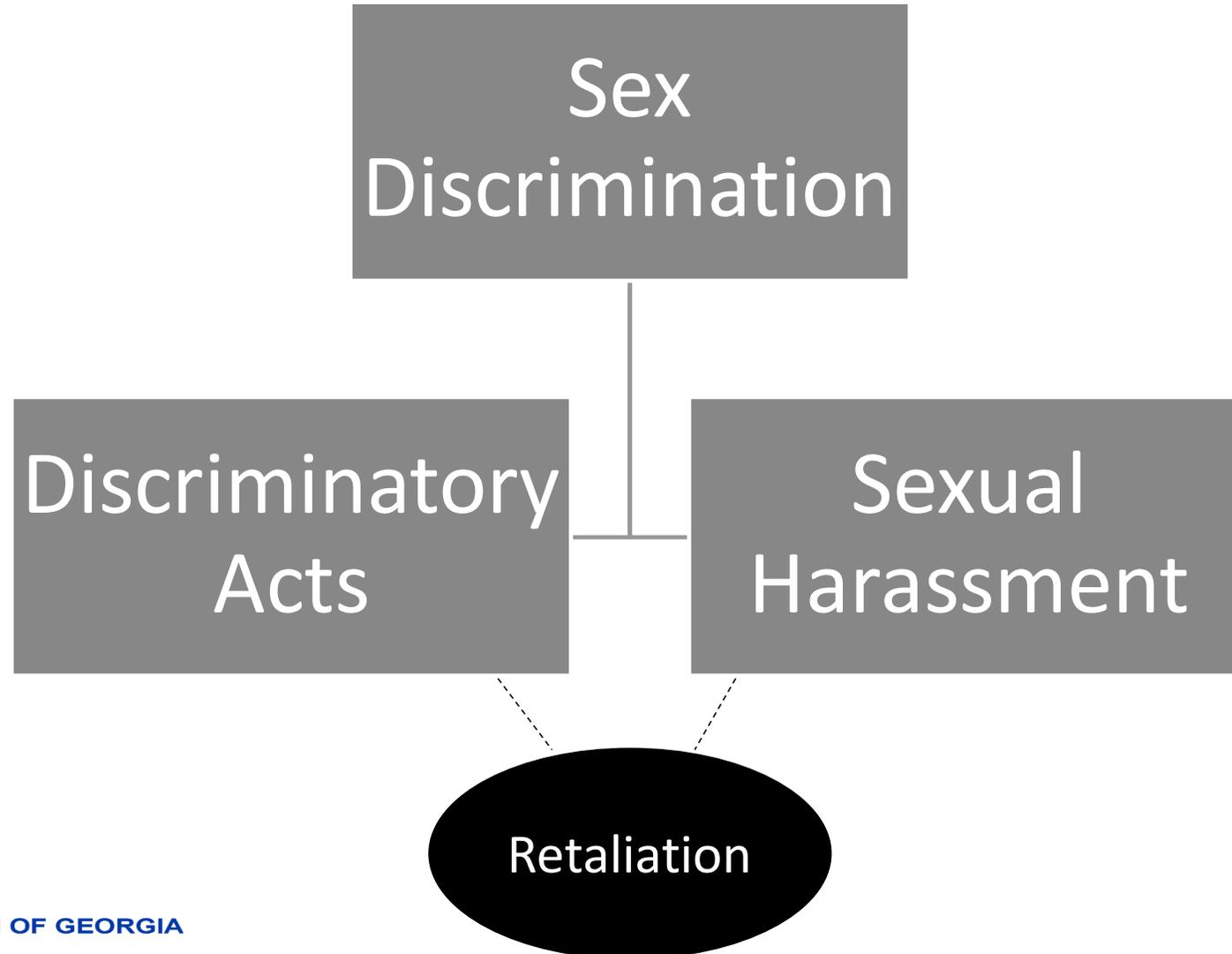
—United States Code



# Administrative Action on Title IX



# What is Sex Discrimination?



# What is Required under the Final Rule?

A recipient with **actual knowledge** of **sexual harassment** in an **education program or activity of the recipient** against a person **in the United States**, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.



# Title IX Sexual Harassment § 106.30

- Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
  - (i) An **employee** conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e quid pro quo); or
  - (ii) **Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, AND objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity;** or
  - (iii) Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in VAWA

# Title IX Jurisdiction

- Institution's program or activity in the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations



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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy**

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX

Other Sexually  
Based Behavior



# What Has Changed?

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX Jurisdiction
- Provisions on Retaliation, Amnesty, False Statements
- Role of Advisors
- Adjudication Process
- Timeframe for Completion
- More...



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# What Has Remained the Same?

- Scope of Sexual Misconduct
- Jurisdictional reach of Sexual Misconduct
- Responsible/Confidential/Privileged Employee designations
- Definition of consent and incapacitation
- Standard of evidence
- System Office oversight
- Support services and Interim measures





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Prohibited Conduct: Definitions & Jurisdiction**

# Key Categories of Prohibited Conduct

Sexual  
Misconduct

Dating Violence

Domestic Violence

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Harassment

Stalking

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration



# Dating Violence

**Violence** committed by a person who is or has been in a **social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature** with the alleged victim.

- Includes sexual or physical abuse
- Includes threats of such abuse
- The existence of a covered relationship is based on the totality of the circumstances

# Domestic Violence

**Violence** committed by:

- a current **spouse**, former spouse or **intimate partner**
- a person whom **shares a child**
- a person who is **cohabiting** with or cohabitated with the alleged victim



# Stalking

Engaging in a **course of conduct** directed at a specific person that **would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety** or the safety of others OR suffer **substantial emotional distress**.

- Can be direct actions or through third parties
- Could include the use of devices or other methods
- Includes following, monitoring, observing, surveilling, threatening, communicating to or about a person, or interfering with a person's property

# Sexual Exploitation

**Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage** of another for **one's own advantage or benefit**, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited.

Examples include:

- Non-consensual photos, videos, or audio of sexual activity
- Non-consensual distribution of photo, video, or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity was consensual
- Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breast, buttocks, groin, or genitals in non-consensual circumstances

# Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Any **physical contact** with another person of a **sexual nature without the person's consent**.

Includes:

- Touching of another's intimate parts (genitalia, groin, breasts, buttocks)
- Touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or
- Forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts

# Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration

Any **penetration** of another's body parts without the person's consent.

Includes:

- Penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part
- Contact between the mouth of one person and the genitals or anus of another person

# Sexual Harassment (Student on Student)

Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), **determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity**



# Sexual Harassment (Other)

**Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct**, based on sex (including gender stereotypes) that may be any of the following:

- Implicitly or explicitly a **term or condition of** employment status in a course program or activity
- **A basis for** employment or education decisions; OR
- Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an **intimidating, hostile, or offensive** work environment
- Note: Behavior may rise to the level of a Title IX violation

# Comparing Jurisdiction

## Title IX

- Institution's program or activity the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations

## Sexual Misconduct

- Institution property
- Institution-sponsored or affiliated events
- Off campus as defined by the institution policies
- Domestic or abroad



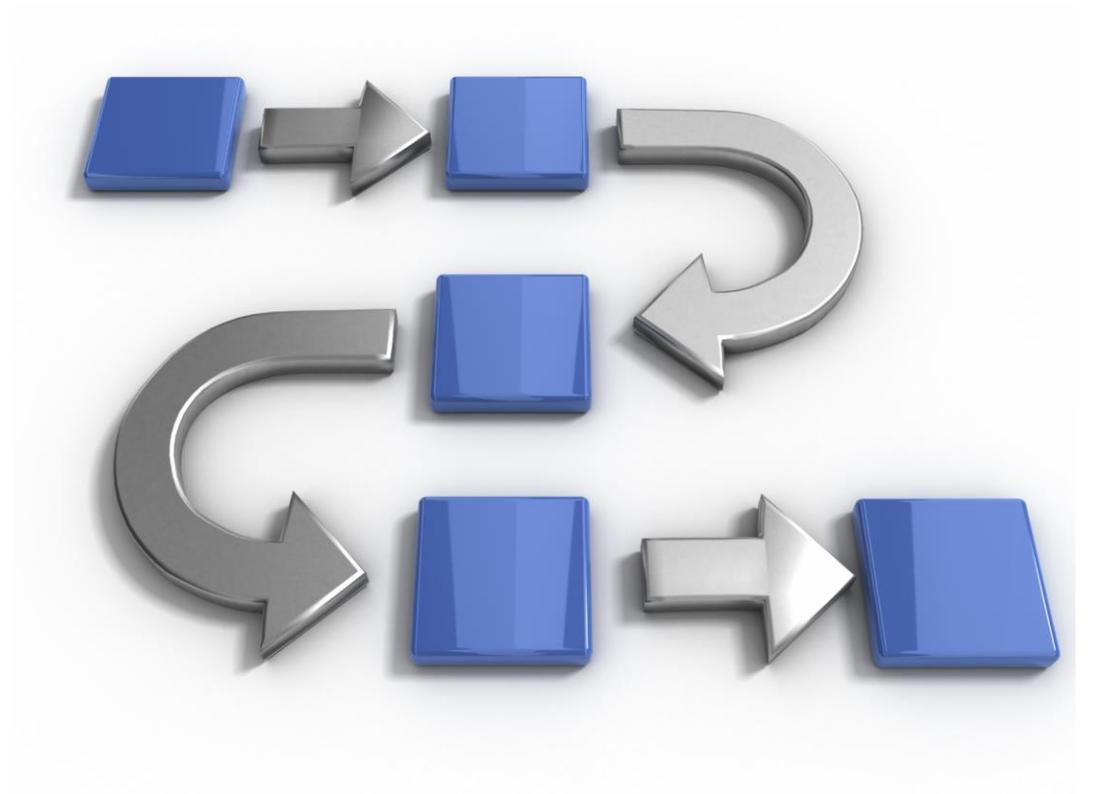


**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Overview of Complaint Process**

# Pre-Hearing Complaint Process

- A report of misconduct has been made
- The Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator has initiated the formal investigation process
- Notice of the investigation has been sent to the parties
- The assigned investigator(s) have made preliminary determinations
- The parties and the institution have been unable to reach an informal resolution



# Complaint Consolidation

- Permissible consolidation when allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances:
  - Against more than one Respondent
  - By more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents
  - Cross complaints
- Parties must have the opportunity to object; institution makes final determination



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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **The Formal Adjudication Process**

# Live Hearing § 106.45(b)(6)

- The Final Rule mandates a bifurcated process
- Final determinations of responsibility and sanctions are made by decision-makers
  - CANNOT be the Title IX Coordinator or assigned investigator
- New due process considerations
  - Cross examination
  - Relevancy determinations
  - Impact of party or witness refusal to submit to cross-examination
- Institutions can establish rules of decorum



# The USG Adjudication Processes

## Students

- All matters not informally resolved will be heard by a Hearing Panel
- Hearing Panels comprised of trained faculty and staff

## Employees

- Title IX matters not informally resolved will be heard by a designated decision-maker
  - Single decision-maker OR panel
- Sexual Misconduct matters not informally resolved will be resolved according to previously established procedures
  - Institutions may choose to offer a hearing

# Hearing Panel or Single-Decision Maker

- Serves as a neutral decision-maker
- Makes a final determination of responsibility
- Makes a final determination regarding sanctions and other administrative action that may be appropriate
- Must articulate determinations in a written decision

# Hearing Officer or Hearing Chair

- Considered a decision-maker
- Responsible for facilitating the hearing process
  - Scheduling
  - Selection of panel members
  - Facilitating advisor selection
  - Any pre-meetings with parties
  - Conducts the hearing
- Responsible for determining issues of relevancy



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# Advisors § 106.45(b)(6)

## Title IX

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- Perform cross examination of other party and other witnesses

**\*Note:** Institution required to provide if party does not have their own

## Sexual Misconduct

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- May not actively participate in the hearing process
- May provide written questions to the Hearing Panel to read aloud

# Hearing Logistics

- At the request of either party, the parties must be permitted to be in separate rooms
- Hearings may be conducted in-person or via videoconferencing
  - Ensure decision-makers receive training on how to use technology
- Have available all directly related information
- Institutions permitted to establish rules of decorum
- All hearings must be recorded

# Evidentiary Considerations

- The burden of proof AND burden of gathering evidence is on the institution
- Parties are permitted to present evidence and call witnesses to advance their claims and defenses
  - In Title IX Hearings that may include fact or expert witnesses
  - Permitted to establish the weight given to certain types of evidence

# Relevancy Determinations During Title IX Hearings

- Prior to any question being answered, relevancy must be determined
- Must provide the reason for excluding the question or evidence
- Not required to permit a rebuttal



# Assessing Relevancy

## Relevant

- Relevant information relates to the incident at issue
- Relevant information provides sufficient value in making the overall determination

## Irrelevant

- Questions and information regarding the Complainant's sexual history or sexual predisposition unless to prove
  - Someone else other than the Respondent committed the alleged misconduct
  - Consent between the parties

# Other Evidentiary Exclusions

- Legally privileged information is protected
- A party's treatment records cannot be used without their voluntary, written consent
- Duplicative evidence may be deemed irrelevant
- If an individual does not submit to cross examination, at a Title IX hearing, their statements cannot be relied upon

# Standard of Evidence

Decisions regarding student and employee alleged misconduct are based on a preponderance of the evidence



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# The Written Decision § 106.45(b)(7)

- Provided to both parties simultaneously must include:
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- Parties will continue to have both institutional level and Board level appeal opportunities
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# **Additional Provisions**

# Retaliation §106.71

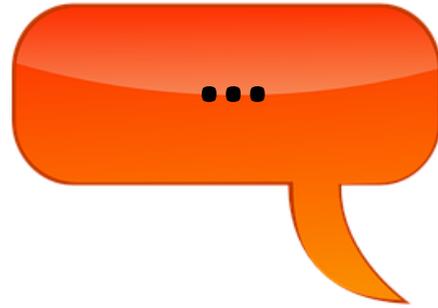
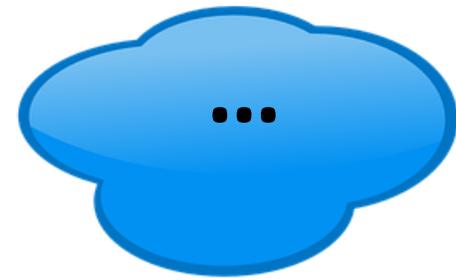
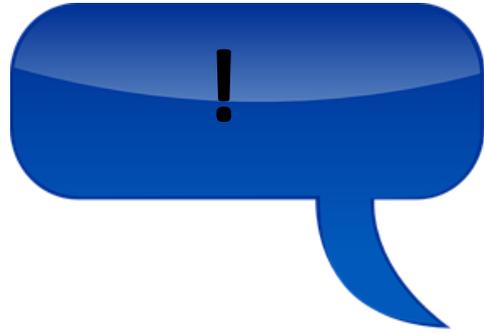
- **Who is protected:** Reporters, Complainants, Witnesses, Respondents, even those who choose to not participate
- **What is protected:** Intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination
  - Ex. Charging individuals for code of conduct violations that arise out of the same facts or circumstances
  - Ex. Not keeping the identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or any witnesses confidential

# Record Keeping § 106.45(b)(10)

- 7-year records retention mandate:
  - Reports [supportive measures, why not deliberately indifferent and what measures taken to restore or preserve equal access]
  - Investigations [determinations, recording of hearing, sanctions and remedies implemented]
  - Appeals
  - Informal resolutions [results]
  - Training materials



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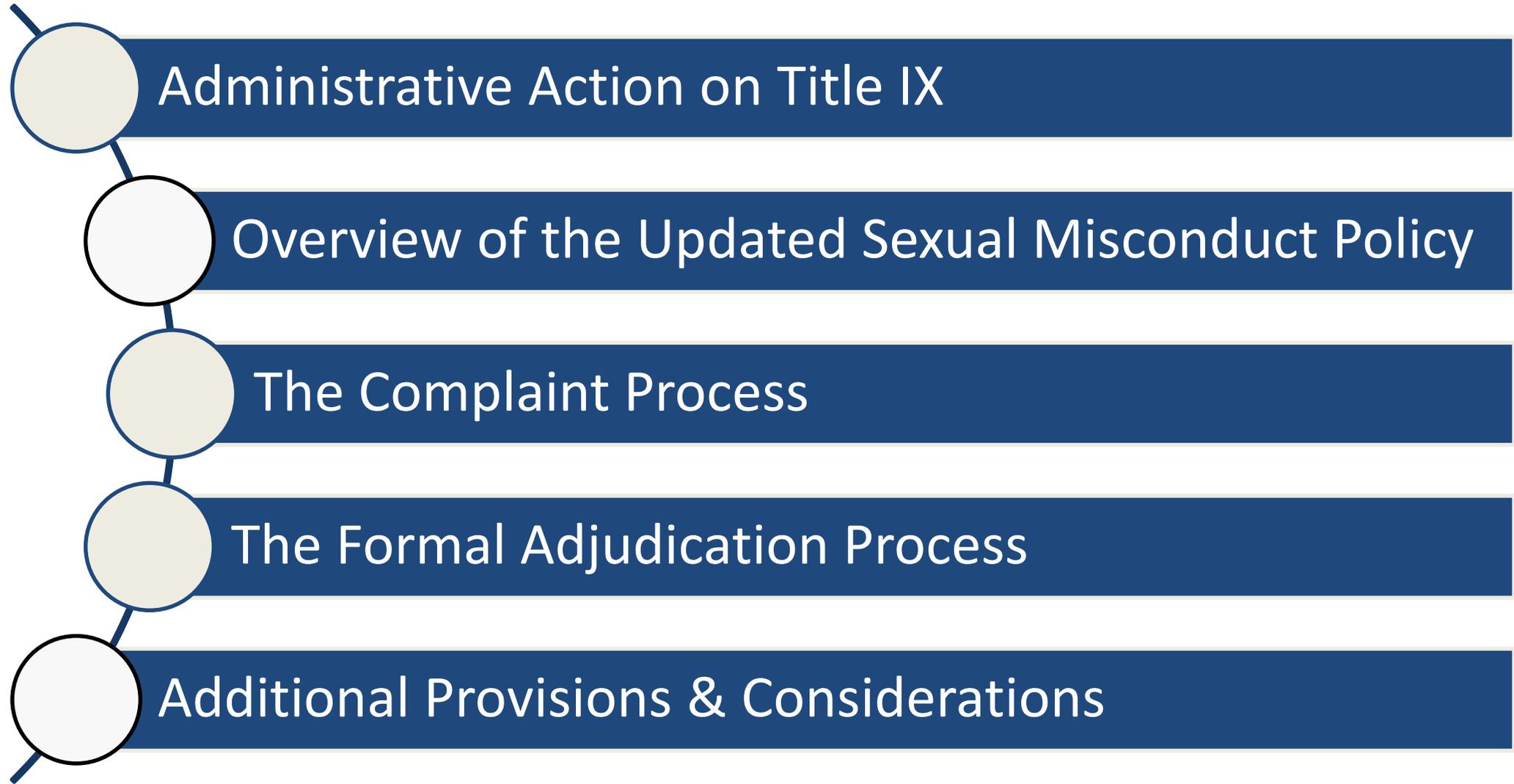
**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Hearing Officer Training: Employee Sexual Misconduct**

**Fall 2020**

**Na'Tasha Webb-Prather**

System Director for Equity & Investigations  
Legal Counsel





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Overview of Title IX**

# Title IX

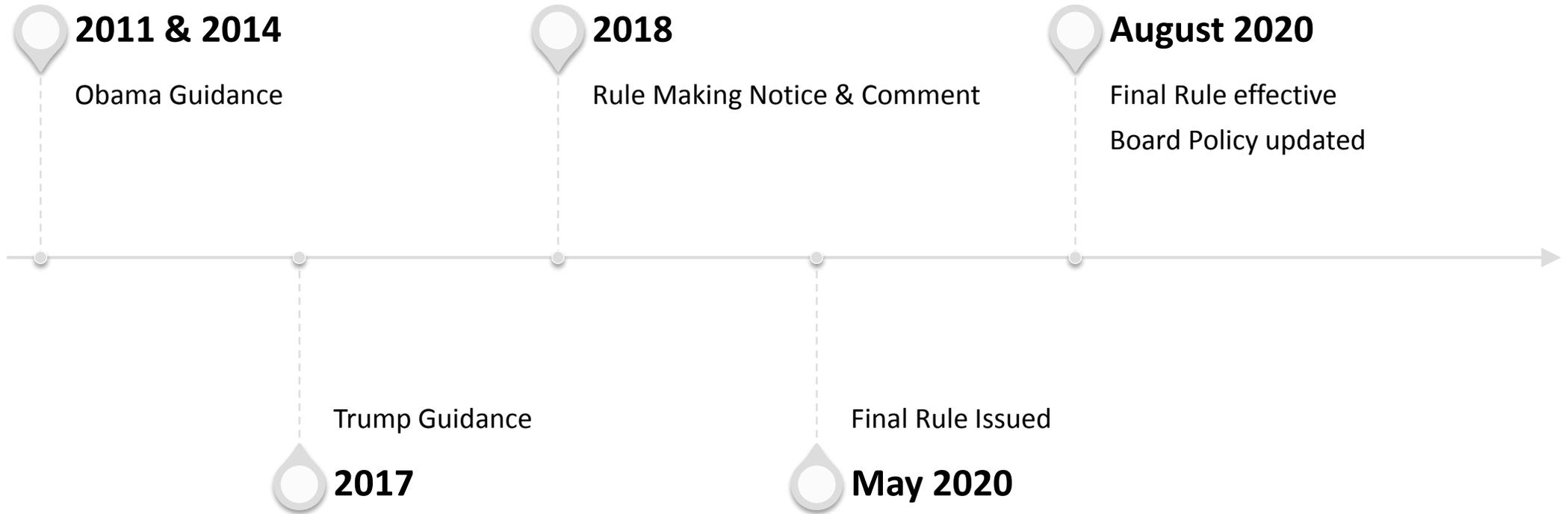
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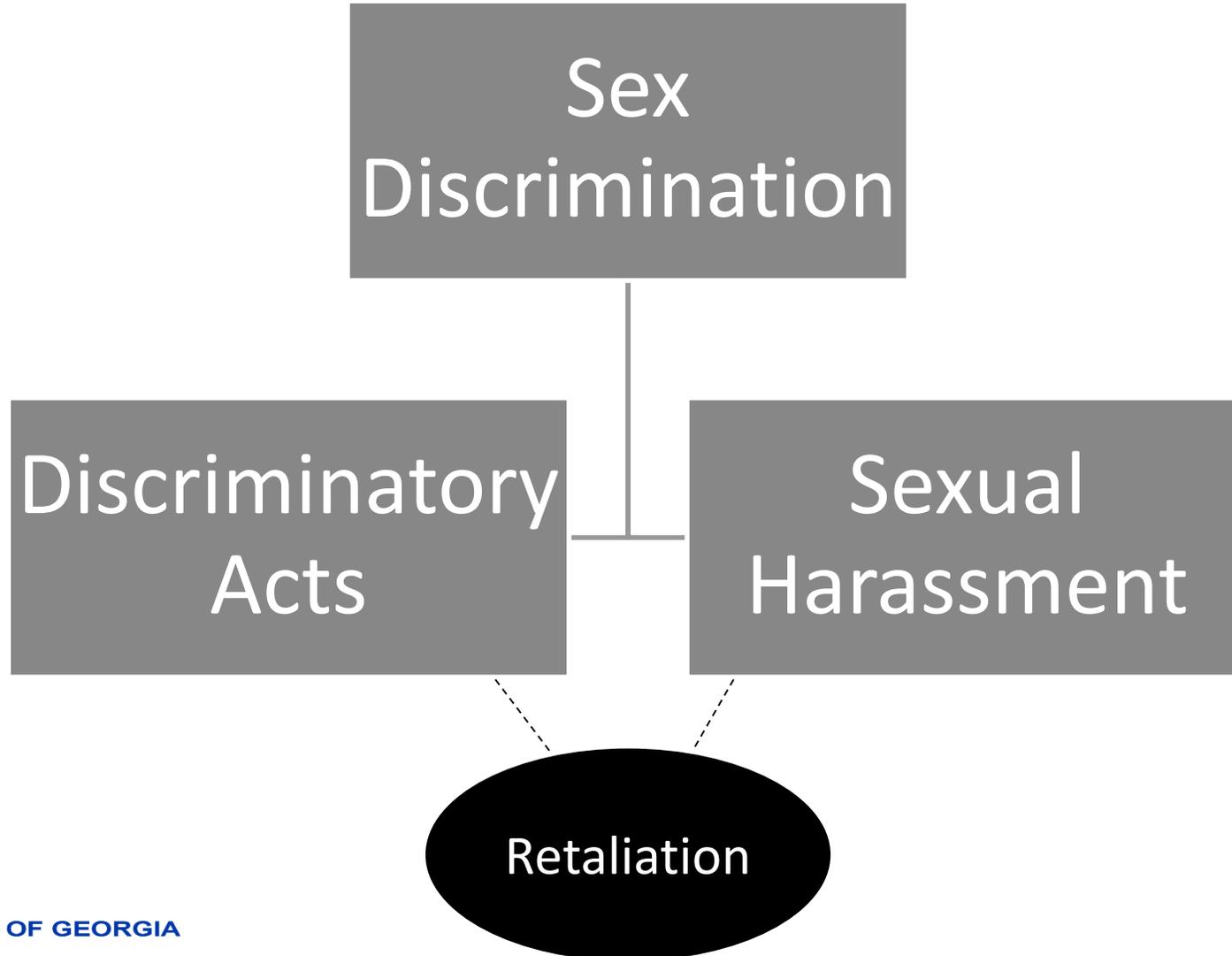
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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy**

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX

Other Sexually  
Based Behavior



# What Has Changed?

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX Jurisdiction
- Provisions on Retaliation, Amnesty, False Statements
- Timeframe for Completion
- Role of Advisors
- The Employee Adjudication Process
- More...



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# The USG Employee Adjudication Processes

## Title IX

- Title IX matters not informally resolved will be heard by:
  - Single decision maker OR
  - Hearing Panel
- Hearing Panels comprised of trained faculty and staff

## Sexual Misconduct

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  - Institutions may choose to offer a hearing or utilize a designated decision maker



# What Has Remained the Same?

- Scope of Sexual Misconduct
- Jurisdictional reach of Sexual Misconduct
- Responsible/Confidential/Privileged Employee designations
- Definition of consent and incapacitation
- Standard of evidence
- System Office oversight
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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Prohibited Conduct: Definitions & Jurisdiction**

# Key Categories of Prohibited Conduct

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Sexual Exploitation

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Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), **determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity**



# Sexual Harassment (Other)

**Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct**, based on sex (including gender stereotypes) that may be any of the following:

- Implicitly or explicitly a **term or condition** of employment status in a course program or activity
- **A basis for** employment or education decisions; OR
- Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an **intimidating, hostile, or offensive** work environment
- Note: Behavior may rise to the level of a Title IX violation

# USG Obligations under Title IX & Title VII

## Title IX Standard

- Quid pro quo sexual harassment
- Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is **so severe, pervasive, AND objectively offensive** that it effectively **denies a person equal access** to the school's education program or activity

## Title VII Standard

- Quid pro quo sexual harassment
- Unwelcome conduct that is **sufficiently severe, persistent, OR pervasive to interfere** with one's work or educational performance creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment, or interfering with or **limiting one's ability to participate** in or to benefit from an institutional program or activity.

# Comparing Jurisdiction

## Title IX

- Institution's program or activity the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
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## Sexual Misconduct

- Institution property
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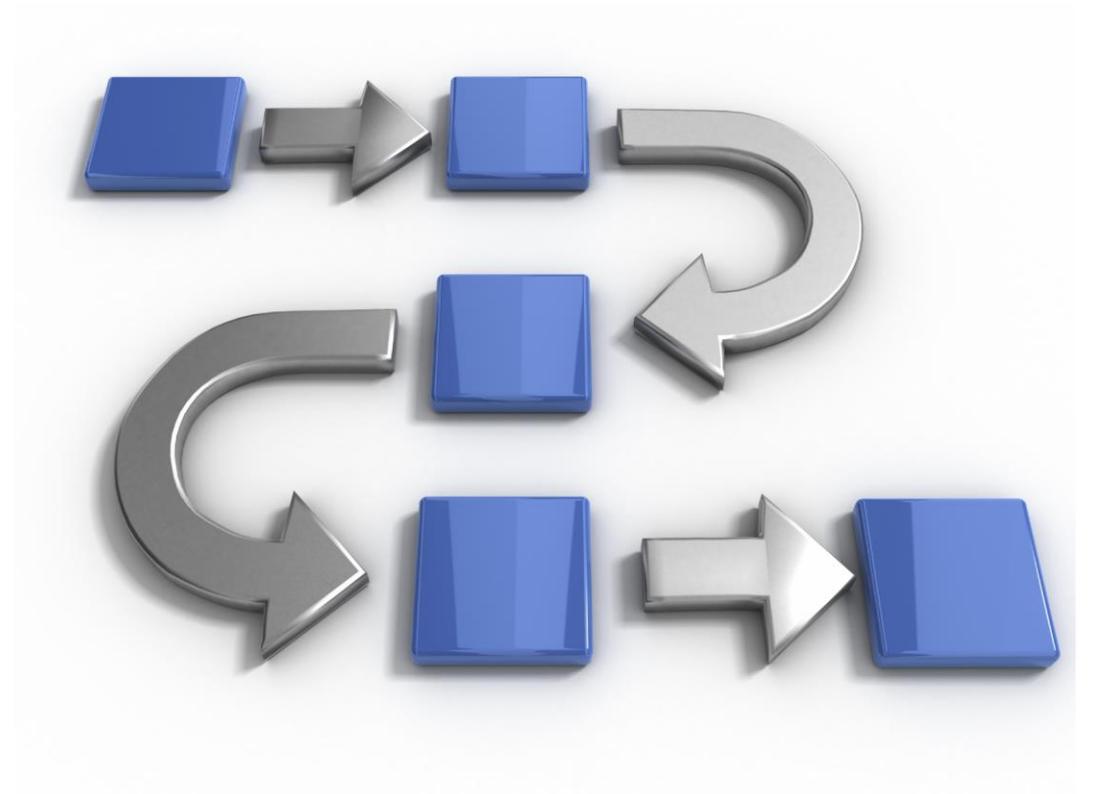


**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Overview of Complaint Process**

# Pre-Hearing Complaint Process

- A report of misconduct has been made
- The Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator has initiated the formal investigation process
- Notice of the investigation has been sent to the parties
- The assigned investigator(s) have made preliminary determinations
- The parties and the institution have been unable to reach an informal resolution



# Complaint Consolidation

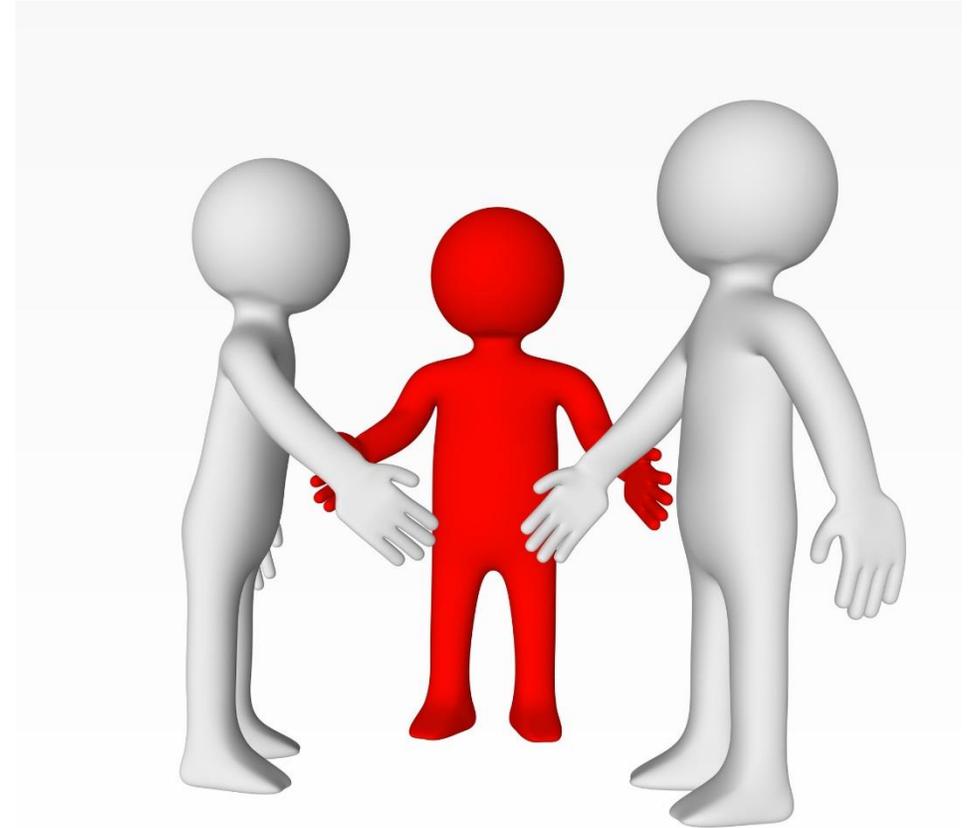
- Permissible consolidation when allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances:
  - Against more than one Respondent
  - By more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents
  - Cross complaints
- Parties must have the opportunity to object; institution makes final determination



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# Informal Resolution

- Parties must engage in the process voluntary
- The institution is a party to the informal resolution
  - Informal resolution is appropriate
  - The terms of the informal resolution are appropriate
- Parties may end the informal resolution process any time prior to reaching the terms
- The parties have received notice and explanation of the process and consequences of informal resolution
- Additionally, for Title IX matters [§106.45(b)(9)]
  - Not permissible for student allegations against employees
  - A Formal Complaint must be filed





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **The Formal Title IX Adjudication Process**

# Hearing Officer

- Considered a decision-maker
- Responsible for facilitating the hearing process
  - Scheduling
  - Selection of panel members
  - Facilitating advisor selection
  - Any pre-meetings with parties
  - Conducts the hearing
- Responsible for determining issues of relevancy



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# Hearing Panel or Single-Decision Maker

- Serves as a neutral decision-maker
- Makes a final determination of responsibility
- Makes a final determination regarding disciplinary action and other administrative action that may be appropriate
- Must articulate determinations in a written decision

# Advisors § 106.45(b)(6)

## Title IX

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- Perform cross examination of other party and other witnesses

**\*Note:** Institution required to provide if party does not have their own

## Sexual Misconduct

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- May not actively participate in the hearing process
- May provide written questions to the Hearing Panel to read aloud

# Notice of Hearing

- At least 10 days prior to the hearing parties must receive:
  - The finalized investigation report
  - Notice of the hearing date, time, and modality
  - Notice of decision-maker(s)
- **Recommended:** Engage institutional advisor



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# Hearing Logistics

- At the request of either party, the parties must be permitted to be in separate rooms
- Hearings may be conducted in-person or via videoconferencing
  - Ensure decision-makers receive training on how to use technology
- Have available all directly related information
- Institutions permitted to establish rules of decorum
- All hearings must be recorded

# Typical Order of a Hearing

- Opening by Decision Maker
- Opening statements by both parties
- Questioning of the Complainant
  - By the decision maker or panel
  - By other party (through their advisor)
- Questioning of the Respondent
  - By the decision maker or panel
  - By other party (through their advisor)
- Questioning of any Witnesses
  - By the decision maker or panel
  - By the parties (through their advisor)
- Closing statements by both parties
- Closing by Decision Maker

# Things to Keep in Mind

- Before the Hearing
  - Review all available materials i.e. Sexual Misconduct policy, investigative report and supplemental documentation
  - Prepare questions in advance
  - Get prepared for anything
    - Advisors and/or Attorneys
    - Party non-participation
- During the Hearing
  - Be patient
  - Listen
  - Don't draw conclusions until all evidence and testimony are presented
  - Be mindful of the seriousness of the situation
  - Take breaks if necessary

# Effective Questioning

- Questions should be used to determine:
  - Who
  - What
  - When
  - Where
  - How
- Be mindful of how a question could be perceived and develop them with caution



# Effective Questioning

- Ask open-ended questions to start the conversation
- LISTEN, ask follow-up questions at the end
- Don't be afraid of silence
- Don't be afraid to ask for clarification
- Maintain your professionalism at all times



# Effective Questioning

## What are your goals?

- Learn the facts
- Establish a timeline
- Determine what is more likely than not to have occurred [if possible]

## What are NOT your goals?

- Satisfying your curiosity
- Answering every unknown to get the “Truth”

# Evidentiary Considerations

- The burden of proof AND burden of gathering evidence is on the institution
- Parties are permitted to present evidence and call witnesses to advance their claims and defenses
  - In Title IX Hearings that may include fact or expert witnesses
  - Permitted to establish the weight given to certain types of evidence

# Relevancy Determinations During Title IX Hearings

- Prior to any question being answered, relevancy must be determined
- Must provide the reason for excluding the question or evidence
- Not required to permit a rebuttal



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# Assessing Relevancy

## Relevant

- Relevant information relates to the incident at issue
- Relevant information provides sufficient value in making the overall determination

## Irrelevant

- Questions and information regarding the Complainant's sexual history or sexual predisposition unless to prove
  - Someone else other than the Respondent committed the alleged misconduct
  - Consent between the parties

# Other Evidentiary Exclusions

- Legally privileged information is protected
- A party's treatment records cannot be used without their voluntary, written consent
- Duplicative evidence may be deemed irrelevant
- If an individual does not submit to cross examination, at a Title IX hearing, their statements cannot be relied upon



# Standard of Evidence

Decisions regarding student and employee alleged misconduct are based on a preponderance of the evidence



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# The Written Decision §106.45(b)(7)

- Provided to both parties simultaneously must include:
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  - Information on the appeals process



# Appeals

- Parties will continue to have both institutional level and Board level appeal opportunities
- Grounds for an appeal:
  - New information
  - Procedural Error
    - Ex. Bias or conflict of interest of Title IX personnel
  - Finding inconsistent with the weight of the information



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**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Additional Provisions**

# Retaliation §106.71

- **Who is protected:** Reporters, Complainants, Witnesses, Respondents, even those who choose to not participate
- **What is protected:** Intimidation, threats, coercion, discrimination
  - Ex. Charging individuals for code of conduct violations that arise out of the same facts or circumstances
  - Ex. Not keeping the identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or any witnesses confidential

# Training Considerations

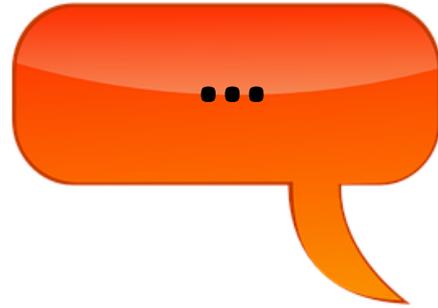
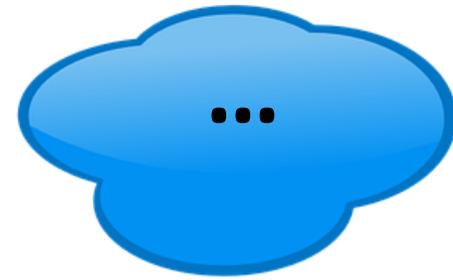
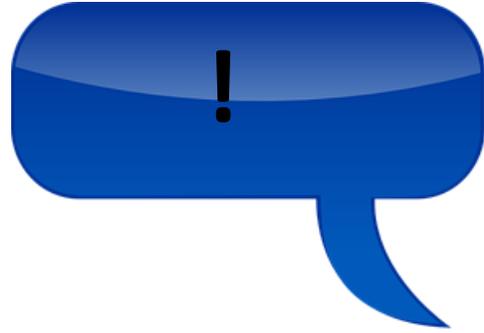
- **§106.45(b)(10)D** All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and anyone who facilitates an informal resolution process must be publicly available on your website
- Ensure materials do not include or rely on sex stereotypes
- Promote neutrality and fairness throughout the administrative process
- Ensure that Hearing Panelists are familiar with the technology to be used at the hearing

# Record Keeping § 106.45(b)(10)

- 7-year records retention mandate:
  - Reports [supportive measures, why not deliberately indifferent and what measures taken to restore or preserve equal access]
  - Investigations [determinations, recording of hearing, sanctions and remedies implemented]
  - Appeals
  - Informal resolutions [results]
  - Training materials



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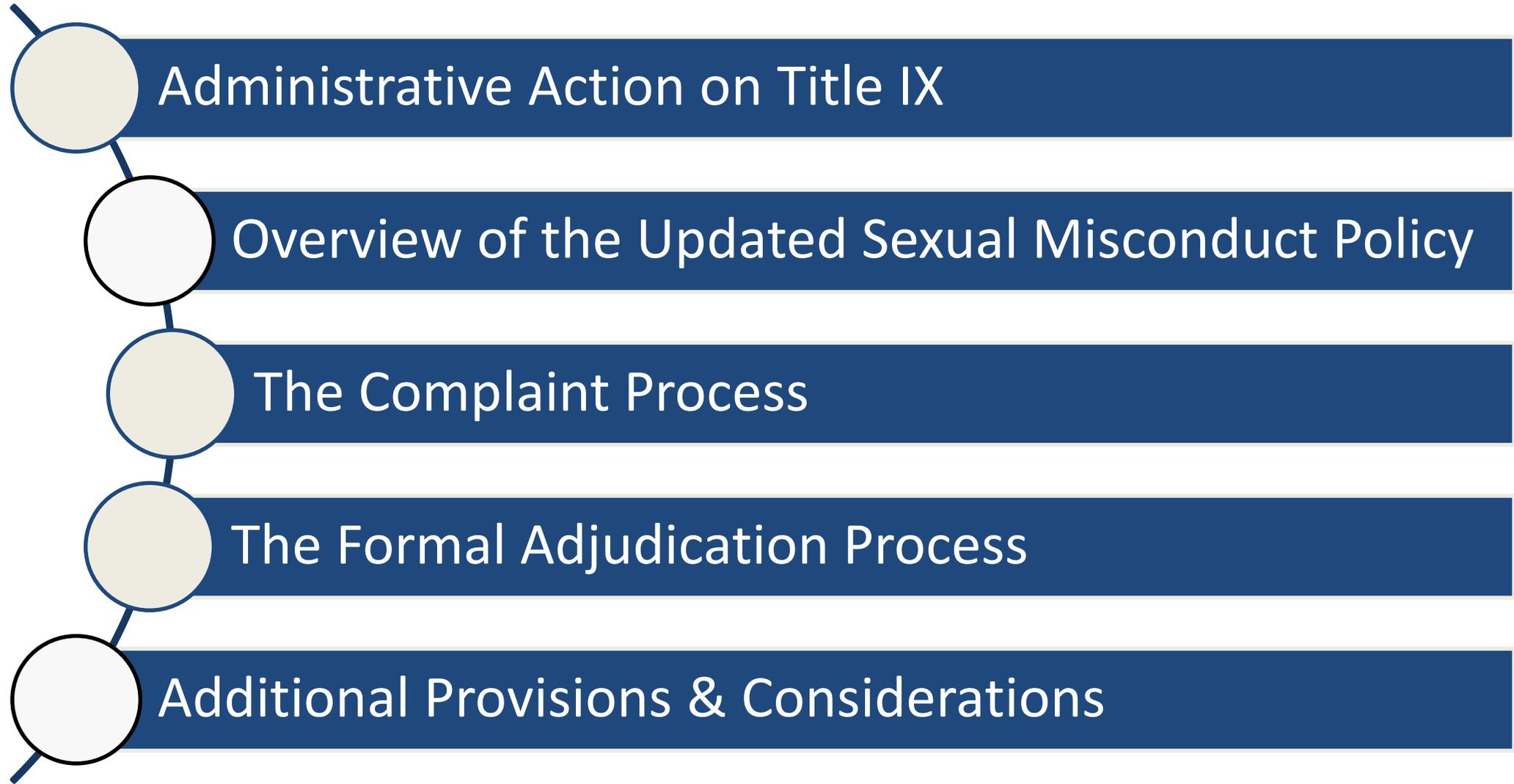


**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Appellate Decision Makers Refresher Training Fall 2020**

**Na'Tasha Webb-Prather**

System Director for Equity & Investigations  
Legal Counsel





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# **Overview of Title IX**

# Title IX

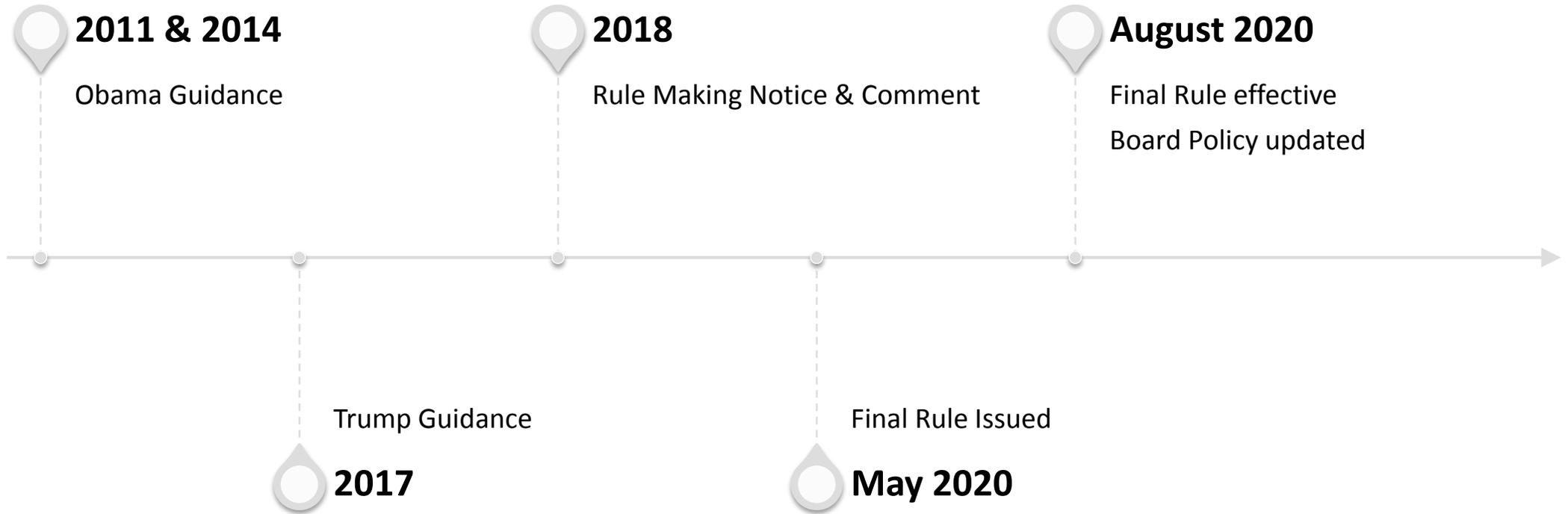
The law states that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance..."

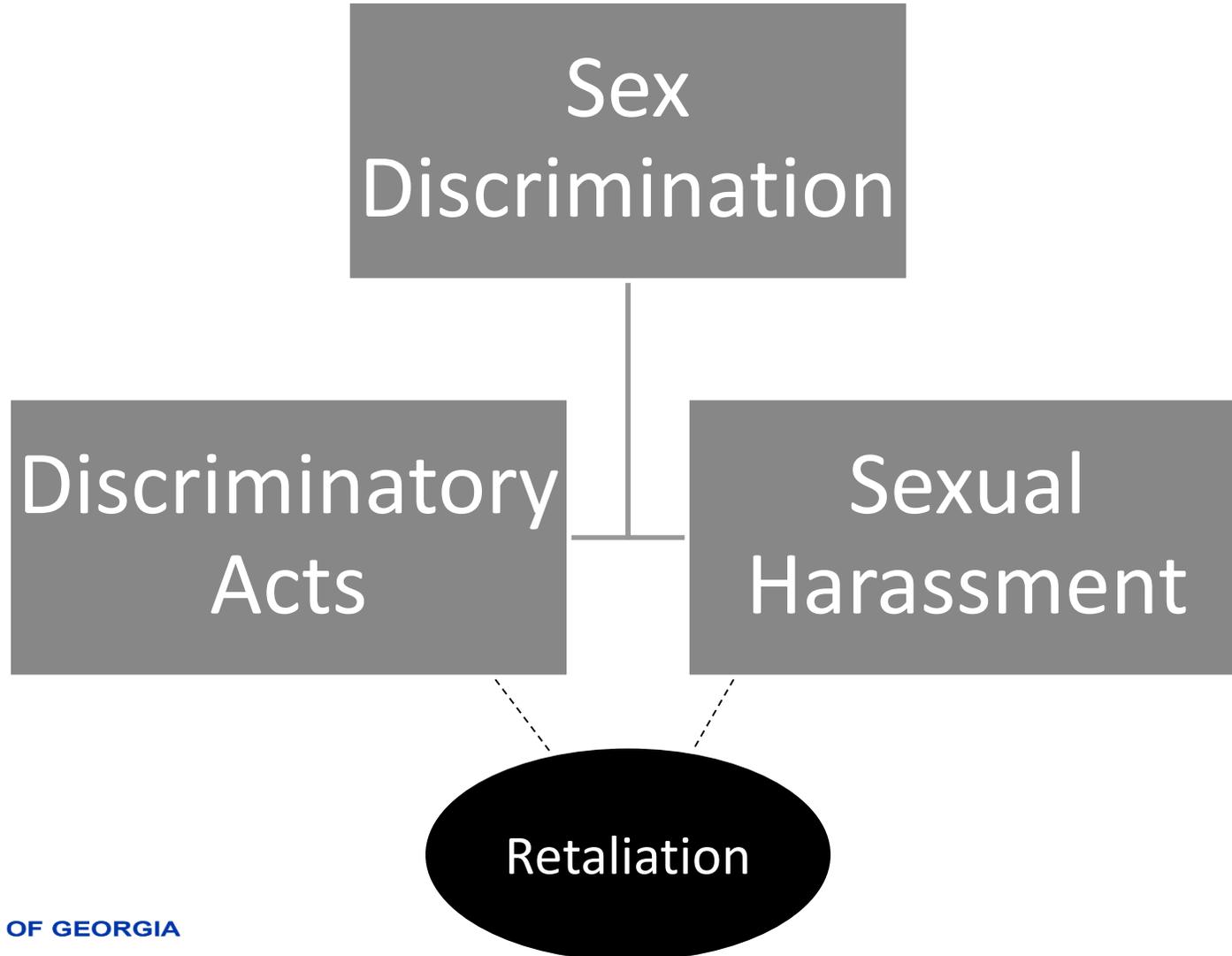
—United States Code



# Administrative Action on Title IX



# What is Sex Discrimination?



# What is Required under the Final Rule?

A recipient with **actual knowledge** of **sexual harassment** in an **education program or activity of the recipient** against a person **in the United States**, must respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.



# Title IX Sexual Harassment §106.30

- Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
  - (i) An **employee** conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e quid pro quo); or
  - (ii) **Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, AND objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity;** or
  - (iii) Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in VAWA

# Title IX Jurisdiction

- Institution's program or activity in the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations



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# Live Hearing § 106.45(b)(6)

- The Final Rule mandates a bifurcated process
- Final determinations of responsibility and sanctions are made by decision-makers
  - CANNOT be the Title IX Coordinator or assigned investigator
  - Informal resolution not permissible for student allegations against an employee
- New due process considerations
  - Cross examination
  - Relevancy determinations
  - Impact of party or witness refusal to submit to cross-examination
- Institutions can establish rules of decorum





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy**

# Sexual Misconduct Policy

Title IX

Other Sexually  
Based Behavior



# What Has Changed?

- Definitions of Prohibited Conduct
- Title IX Jurisdiction
- Provisions on Retaliation, Amnesty, False Statements
- Timeframe for Completion
- Role of Advisors
- The Employee Adjudication Process
- More...



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# What Has Remained the Same?

- Scope of Sexual Misconduct
- Jurisdictional reach of Sexual Misconduct
- Responsible/Confidential/Privileged Employee designations
- Definition of consent and incapacitation
- Standard of evidence
- System Office oversight
- Support services and Interim measures





**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Understanding the Role of an Appellate Decision Maker**

# Appeals

- Parties will continue to have both institutional level and Board level appeal opportunities
- Grounds for an appeal:
  - New information
  - Procedural Error
    - Ex. Bias or conflict of interest of Title IX personnel
  - Finding inconsistent with the weight of the information



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# Expectations of Appellate Decision-Makers

- Be a neutral decision maker who gives a fair and unbiased review of the matter
- Adhere to current policy provisions
  - Definitions and standards
  - Procedural rights
- Reasonably prompt review of the matter
  - Communication with the involved parties
  - Communication with the Title IX Coordinator



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# **Prohibited Conduct: Definitions & Jurisdiction**

# Key Categories of Prohibited Conduct

Sexual  
Misconduct

Dating Violence

Domestic Violence

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Harassment

Stalking

Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration



# Dating Violence

**Violence** committed by a person who is or has been in a **social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature** with the alleged victim.

- Includes sexual or physical abuse
- Includes threats of such abuse
- The existence of a covered relationship is based on the totality of the circumstances

# Domestic Violence

**Violence** committed by:

- a current **spouse**, former spouse or **intimate partner**
- a person whom **shares a child**
- a person who is **cohabiting** with or cohabitated with the alleged victim

# Stalking

Engaging in a **course of conduct** directed at a specific person that **would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety** or the safety of others OR suffer **substantial emotional distress**.

- Can be direct actions or through third parties
- Could include the use of devices or other methods
- Includes following, monitoring, observing, surveilling, threatening, communicating to or about a person, or interfering with a person's property

# Sexual Exploitation

**Taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage** of another for **one's own advantage or benefit**, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited.

Examples include:

- Non-consensual photos, videos, or audio of sexual activity
- Non-consensual distribution of photo, video, or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity was consensual
- Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breast, buttocks, groin, or genitals in non-consensual circumstances

# Nonconsensual Sexual Contact

Any **physical contact** with another person of a **sexual nature without the person's consent**.

Includes:

- Touching of another's intimate parts (genitalia, groin, breasts, buttocks)
- Touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or
- Forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts

# Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration

Any **penetration** of another's body parts without the person's consent.

Includes:

- Penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part
- Contact between the mouth of one person and the genitals or anus of another person

# Sexual Harassment (Student on Student)

Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct based on sex (including gender stereotypes), **determined by a Reasonable Person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to participate in or to benefit from an institutional education program or activity**

# Sexual Harassment (Other)

**Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct**, based on sex (including gender stereotypes) that may be any of the following:

- Implicitly or explicitly a **term or condition** of employment status in a course program or activity
- **A basis for** employment or education decisions; OR
- Sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an **intimidating, hostile, or offensive** work environment
- Note: Behavior may rise to the level of a Title IX violation

# Comparing Jurisdiction

## Title IX

- Institution's program or activity the United States
  - Institution property
  - Institution sponsored or affiliated events [**substantial control** is key]
  - Buildings owned or controlled by officially recognized student organizations

## Sexual Misconduct

- Institution property
- Institution-sponsored or affiliated events
- Off campus as defined by the institution policies
- Domestic or abroad



**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

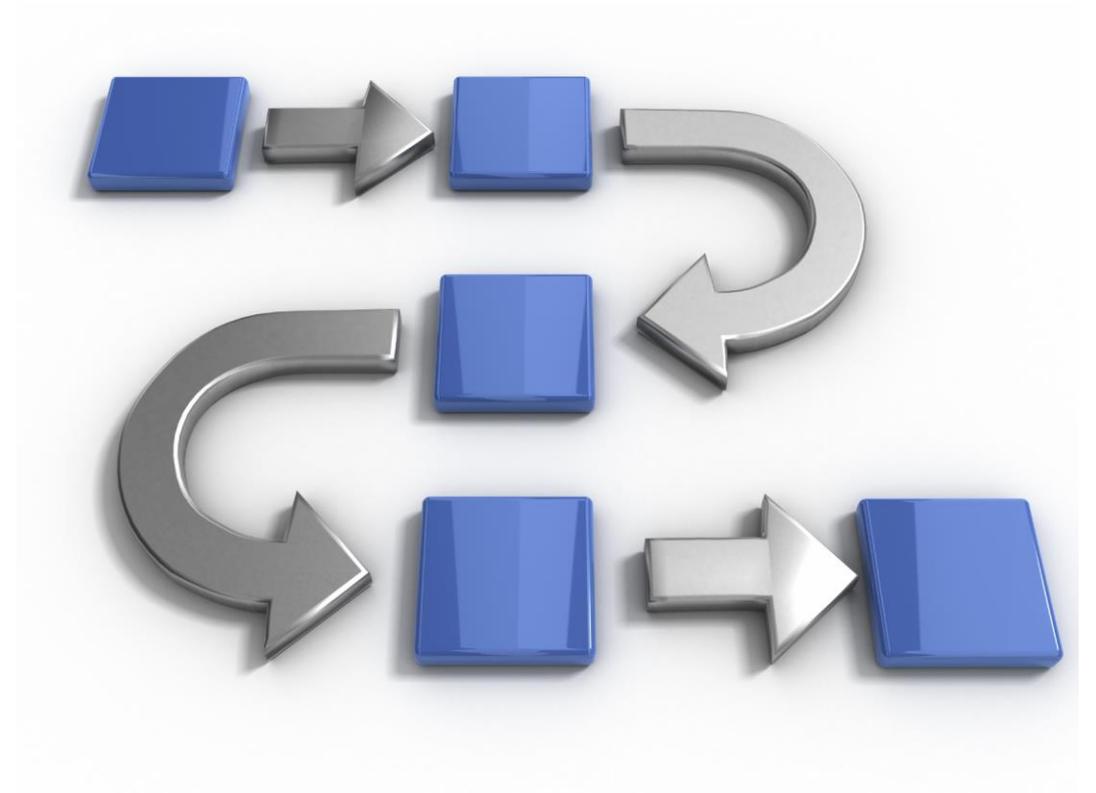
# **Overview of the Complaint Process**

# Formal Complaint § 106.30

- A document filed by a Complainant OR signed by the Title IX Coordinator
- Alleges Sexual Harassment (Title IX)
- Requests an investigation
- **Note:** must be filed while the Complainant is participating in or attempting to participate in an education program or activity

# USG Complaint Process

- A report of misconduct has been made
- The Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator has initiated the formal investigation process
  - Formal Complaint under Title IX
  - Sexual Misconduct Complaint
- Notice of the investigation has been sent to the parties



# Complaint Consolidation

- Permissible consolidation when allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances:
  - Against more than one Respondent
  - By more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents
  - Cross complaints
- Parties must have the opportunity to object; institution makes final determination



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# Formal Complaint Dismissal §106.45(b)(3)

## Required

- Conduct alleged would not constitute Sexual Harassment as defined, even if proved
- Outside the institution's education program or activity
- Outside of the United States

## Permissive

- Complainant notifies in writing desire to withdraw the complaint
- The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed at the institution
- Specific circumstances prevent the gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination

# USG Complaint Dismissal

- Any Sexual Misconduct complaint may be dismissed if:
  - The alleged conduct, even if proved, would not constitute Sexual Misconduct
  - The Complainant requests in writing to withdraw
  - The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed
  - There are circumstances that prevent the gathering of sufficient evidence to reach a determination
- Must provide written notice to both parties with opportunity to appeal



**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **The Investigation Process**

# Advisors

## Title IX Complaints

- Parties have a right to an advisor of their choice
- Advisor may accompany party to all meetings and hearings
- Provided a copy of the investigation report and directly related information
- All communication will be between the institution and the party

## Student Sexual Misconduct Complaints

- Parties have a right to an advisor of their choice
- Advisor may accompany party to all meetings and hearings
- All communication will be between the institution and the party

# Evidentiary Considerations § 106.45(b)(5)

- The burden of proof AND burden of gathering evidence is on the institution
- Information protected by legal privilege, may not be accessed, disclosed or relied upon unless a waiver is obtained
- Questions and evidence regarding the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, UNLESS used to prove:
  - Someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct OR
  - Offered to prove consent between the parties

# Access to Information § 106.45(b)(5)(vi)

- Parties have a right to review the investigation report prior to its finalization
- Parties have a right to receive a copy of all directly related information
- Procedurally can occur simultaneously or at different times
- 10 calendar days to review



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# The Investigation Report § 106.45(5)(vii)

- Must fairly summarize relevant evidence
- An objective evaluation of the information [inculpatory and exculpatory]
  - Credibility assessments cannot be based on a person's status
- Sample report sections still apply
- Final report provided to the parties at least 10 days calendar days prior to the hearing



**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

# **Formal Adjudication**

# Adjudication Processes

## Students

- All matters not informally resolved will be heard by a Hearing Panel
- Hearing Panels comprised of trained faculty and staff

## Employees

- Title IX matters not informally resolved will be heard by a single decision-maker or panel
- Sexual Misconduct matters not informally resolved will be resolved according to established institutional procedures
  - Institutions may choose to offer a hearing or utilize single decision-maker

# Hearing Officer

- Considered a decision-maker
- Responsible for facilitating the hearing process
  - Scheduling
  - Selection of panel members
  - Any pre-meetings with parties
  - Conducts the hearing
- Responsible for determining issues of relevancy



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# Hearing Panel or Single-Decision Maker

- Serves as a neutral decision-maker
- Makes a final determination of responsibility
- Makes a final determination regarding sanctions and other administrative action that may be appropriate
- Must articulate determinations in a written decision

# Advisors § 106.45(b)(6)

## Title IX

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- Perform cross examination of other party and other witnesses

**\*Note:** Institution required to provide if party does not have their own

## Sexual Misconduct

- Provide advice, counsel, and support to a party
- May not actively participate in the hearing process
- May provide written questions to the Hearing Panel to read aloud

# Notice of Hearing

- At least 10 days prior to the hearing parties must receive:
  - The finalized investigation report
  - Notice of the hearing date, time, and modality
  - Notice of decision-maker(s)
- **Recommended:** Engage institutional advisor



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# Hearing Logistics

- At the request of either party, the parties must be permitted to be in separate rooms
- Hearings may be conducted in-person or via videoconferencing
  - Ensure decision-makers receive training on how to use technology
- Have available all directly related information
- Institutions permitted to establish rules of decorum
- All hearings must be recorded

# Standard of Evidence

Decisions regarding student and employee alleged misconduct are based on a preponderance of the evidence



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# The Written Decision §106.45(b)(7)

- Provided to both parties simultaneously must include:
  - The allegations
  - The procedural steps from the complaint through determination
  - Findings of fact supporting the determination
  - Determinations regarding responsibility, sanctions (and remedies) along with the supporting evidence and rationale
  - Information on the appeals process



**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

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