# EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, HARASSMENT, AND NONDISCRIMINATION (TITLE IX)

Policy and Procedures | University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

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| **Policy Title** | Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination (Title IX) |
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| **Approved By** | President's Leadership Team |
| **Responsible Vice President** | Vice President for Business and Finance |
| **Responsible Office** | Office of Compliance (Title IX Coordinator) |
| **Applies To** | All faculty, students, employees, and third parties |
| **Supersedes** | Version dated February 14, 2025; Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination summary page (2026-27 Student Handbook) |

**Model Policy Attribution**

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## 1. Glossary

- *Advisor* means a person chosen by a party or appointed by the institution to accompany the party to meetings related to the resolution process, to advise the party on that process, and to conduct cross-examination for the party at the hearing, if any.
- *Complainant* means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute harassment or discrimination based on a protected class; or retaliation for engaging in a protected activity.
- *Complaint (formal)* means a document filed/signed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging harassment or discrimination based on a protected class or retaliation for engaging in a protected activity against a Respondent and requesting that the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma investigate the allegation.
- *Confidential Resource* means an employee who is not a Mandated Reporter of notice of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation (irrespective of Clery Act Campus Security Authority status).
- *Day* means a business day when the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is in normal operation.
- *Education program or activity* means locations, events, or circumstances where the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment or discrimination occurs and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.
- *Final Determination:* A conclusion by a preponderance of the evidence that it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred and whether it did or did not violate policy.
- *Finding:* A conclusion by a preponderance of the evidence that it is more likely than not that the conduct did or did not occur as alleged.
- *Formal Grievance Process* means "Process A," a method of formal resolution designated by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to address conduct that falls within the policies included below, and which complies with the requirements of 34 CFR Part 106.45.
- *Grievance Process Pool* includes any investigators, hearing officers, appeal officers, and Advisors who may perform any or all of these roles (though not at the same time or with respect to the same case) including those contracted by The University of Science & Arts of Oklahoma.
- *Hearing Decision-maker or Panel* refers to those who have decision-making and sanctioning authority within the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Formal Grievance process.
- *Investigator* means the person or persons charged by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma with gathering facts about an alleged violation of this Policy, assessing relevance and credibility, synthesizing the evidence, and compiling this information into an investigation report and file of directly related evidence.
- *Mandated Reporter* means an employee of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma who is obligated by policy to share knowledge, notice, and/or reports of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation with the Title IX Coordinator.
- *Notice* means that an employee, student, or third-party informs the Title IX Coordinator or other Official with Authority of the alleged occurrence of harassing, discriminatory, and/or retaliatory conduct.

- *Official with Authority* (OWA) means an employee of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma explicitly vested with the responsibility to implement corrective measures for harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation on behalf of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.
- *Parties* include the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s), collectively.
- *Process A* means the Formal Grievance Process detailed below and defined above.
- *Process B* means the informal alternative resolution procedures detailed in Appendix C.
- *Recipient* means a postsecondary education program that is a recipient of federal funding.
- *Remedies* are post-finding actions directed to the Complainant and/or the community as mechanisms to address safety, prevent recurrence, and restore access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's educational program.
- *Respondent* means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute harassment or discrimination based on a protected class; or retaliation for engaging in a protected activity.
- *Resolution* means the result of an informal or Formal Grievance Process.
- *Sanction* means a consequence imposed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma on a Respondent who is found to have violated this policy.
- *Sexual Harassment* is the umbrella category including the offenses of sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence and domestic violence. See Section 17.b., for greater detail.
- *Title IX Coordinator* is at least one official designated by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to ensure compliance with Title IX and the University's Title IX program. References to the Coordinator throughout this policy may also encompass a designee of the Coordinator for specific tasks.
- *Title IX Team* refers to the Title IX Coordinator, any deputy coordinators, and any member of the Grievance Process Pool.

## 2. Rationale for Policy

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment, as well as other benefits, programs, and activities, that are free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. To ensure compliance with federal and state civil rights laws and regulations, and to affirm its commitment to promoting the goals of fairness and equity in all aspects of the educational program or activity, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma has developed internal policies and procedures that provide a prompt, fair, and impartial process for those involved in an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected class status, and for allegations of retaliation. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma values and upholds the equal dignity of all members of its community and strives to balance the rights of the parties in the grievance process during what is often a difficult time for all those involved.

## 3. Applicable Scope

The core purpose of this policy is the prohibition of all forms of discrimination. Sometimes, discrimination involves exclusion from activities, such as admission, athletics, or employment. Other times, discrimination takes the form of harassment or, in the case of sex-based discrimination, can encompass sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, sexual exploitation, dating violence or domestic violence. When an alleged violation of this anti-discrimination policy is reported, the allegations are subject to resolution using the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's "Process A" or "Process B," as determined by the Title IX Coordinator, and as detailed below.

When the Respondent is a member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community, a grievance process may be available regardless of the status of the Complainant, who may or may not be a member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community. This community includes, but is not limited to, students,[1] student organizations, faculty, administrators, staff, and third parties such as guests, visitors, volunteers, invitees, and campers. The procedures below may be applied to incidents, to patterns, and/or to the campus climate, all of which may be addressed and investigated in accordance with this policy.

## 4. Title IX Coordinator

The Compliance Director serves as the Title IX Coordinator and oversees implementation of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's policy on equal opportunity, harassment, and nondiscrimination. The Title IX Coordinator has the primary responsibility for coordinating the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's efforts related to the intake, investigation, resolution, and implementation of supportive measures to stop, remediate, and prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation prohibited under this policy.

## 5. Independence and Conflict-of-Interest

The Title IX Coordinator manages the Title IX Team and acts with independence and authority free from bias and conflicts of interest. The Title IX Coordinator oversees all resolutions under this policy and these procedures. The members of the Title IX Team are vetted and trained to ensure they are not biased for or against any party in a specific case, or for or against Complainants and/or Respondents, generally.

To raise any concern involving bias or conflict of interest by the Title IX Coordinator, contact the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma President, Dr. Kayla Hale at 405-574-1201 or khale@usao.edu. Concerns of bias or a potential conflict of interest by any other Title IX Team member should be raised with the Title IX Coordinator.

Reports of misconduct or discrimination committed by the Title IX Coordinator should be reported to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma President, Dr. Kayla Hale at 405-574-1201 or khale@usao.edu. Reports of misconduct or discrimination committed by any other Title IX Team member should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator.

## 6. Administrative Contact Information

Complaints or notice of alleged policy violations, or inquiries about or concerns regarding this policy and procedures, may be made internally to:

[1] For the purpose of this policy, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma defines "student" as any individual who has accepted an offer of admission, or who is registered or enrolled for credit or non-credit bearing coursework, and who maintains an ongoing relationship with the University.

**Title IX Coordinator**
Compliance Director
Troutt Hall, Room 101
1727 W. Alabama
Chickasha, OK 73018
(405) 574-1255 (office)
titleix@usao.edu

**Confidential Reporting Resources**
Counseling Services
Student Center
1727 W. Alabama
Chickasha, OK 73018
(405) 574-1326 (office)
counseling@usao.edu

Andrea Freymiller, MS, LAT, ATC
Athletic Trainer
Fieldhouse, Room 100
1727 W. Alabama Ave.
Chickasha, OK 73018
(405) 574-1398 (office)
afreymiller@usao.edu

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma has also classified most employees as Mandated Reporters of any knowledge they have that a member of the community is experiencing harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation. The section below on Mandated Reporting details which employees have this responsibility and their duties, accordingly.

Inquiries may be made externally to:

**Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education**
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
Customer Service Hotline: (800) 421-3481
Facsimile: (202) 453-6012
TDD: (800) 877-8339
Email: OCR@ed.gov
Web: https://www.ed.gov/ocr

## 7. Notice/Complaints of Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Retaliation

Notice or complaints of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation may be made using any of the following options:

1) File a complaint with, or give verbal notice to the Title IX Coordinator or Deputies. Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or email address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator or any other official listed.
2) Report online, using the designated reporting form at https://usao.allvoices.co/. Anonymous reports are accepted but can give rise to a need to investigate. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma tries to provide supportive measures to all Complainants, which is impossible with an anonymous report. Because reporting carries no obligation to initiate a formal response, and as the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma respects Complainant requests to dismiss complaints unless there is a compelling threat to health and/or safety, the

Complainant is largely in control and should not fear a loss of privacy by making a report that allows the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to discuss and/or provide supportive measures.

A Formal Complaint means a document filed/signed by the Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging a policy violation by a Respondent and requesting that the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma investigate the allegation(s). A complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information in the section immediately above, or as described in this section. As used in this paragraph, the phrase "document filed by a Complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by electronic mail or through an online portal provided for this purpose by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma) that contains the Complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the Complainant is the person filing the complaint.

If notice is submitted in a form that does not meet this standard, the Title IX Coordinator will contact the Complainant to ensure that it is filed correctly.

## 8. Supportive Measures

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will offer and implement appropriate and reasonable supportive measures to the parties upon notice of alleged harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation.

Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the parties to restore or preserve access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's education program or activity, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's educational environment, and/or deter harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation.

The Title IX Coordinator promptly makes supportive measures available to the parties upon receiving notice or a complaint. At the time that supportive measures are offered, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will inform the Complainant, in writing, that they may file a formal complaint with the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma either at that time or in the future, if they have not done so already. The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to ensure that their wishes are taken into account with respect to the supportive measures that are planned and implemented.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will maintain the privacy of the supportive measures, provided that privacy does not impair the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to provide the supportive measures. The University will act to ensure as minimal an academic impact on the parties as possible. The University will implement measures in a way that does not unreasonably burden the other party.

These actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Referral to counseling, medical, and/or other healthcare services
- Referral to community-based service providers
- Visa and immigration assistance
- Student financial aid counseling
- Education to the community or community subgroup(s)
- Altering campus housing assignment(s)
- Altering work arrangements for employees or student-employees
- Safety planning
- Providing campus safety escorts
- Providing transportation accommodations

- Implementing contact limitations (no contact orders) between the parties
- Academic support, extensions of deadlines, or other course/program-related
- Adjustments
- No-Contact orders
- No Trespass orders
- Timely warnings
- Class schedule modifications, withdrawals, or leaves of absence
- Increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus
- Any other actions deemed appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator

Violations of no-contact orders will be referred to the appropriate student or employee conduct processes for enforcement.

## 9. Emergency Removal

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma can act to remove a Respondent entirely or partially from its education program or activities on an emergency basis when an individualized safety and risk analysis has determined that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual justifies removal. This risk analysis is performed by the Title IX Coordinator in conjunction with the Threat Assessment Team using its standard objective violence risk assessment procedures.

In all cases in which an emergency removal is imposed, the student, employee, or two (2) representatives from a student organization, will be given notice of the action and the option to request to meet with the Title IX Coordinator or their designee prior to such action/removal being imposed, or as soon thereafter as reasonably possible, to show cause why the action/removal should not be implemented or should be modified.

This meeting is not a hearing on the merits of the allegation(s), but rather is an administrative process intended to determine solely whether the emergency removal is appropriate. When this meeting is not requested, objections to the emergency removal will be deemed waived. A Complainant and their Advisor may be permitted to participate in this meeting if the Title IX Coordinator determines it is equitable to do so. This section also applies to any restrictions that a coach or athletic administrator may place on a student-athlete arising from allegations related to Title IX. There is no appeal process for emergency removal decisions.

A Respondent may be accompanied by an Advisor of their choice when meeting with the Title IX Coordinator or their designee for the show cause meeting. The Respondent will be given access to a written summary of the basis for the emergency removal prior to the meeting to allow for adequate preparation.

The Title IX Coordinator has sole discretion under this policy to implement or stay an emergency removal and to determine the conditions and duration. Violation of an emergency removal under this policy will be grounds for discipline, which may include expulsion or termination.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will implement the least restrictive emergency actions possible in light of the circumstances and safety concerns. As determined by the Title IX Coordinator, these actions could include, but are not limited to: removing a student from a residence hall, temporarily re-assigning an employee, restricting a student's or employee's access to or use of facilities or equipment, allowing a student to withdraw or take grades of incomplete without financial penalty, authorizing an administrative leave, and suspending a student's participation in extracurricular activities, student employment, student organizational leadership, or intercollegiate/intramural athletics.

At the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, alternative coursework options may be pursued to ensure as minimal an academic impact as possible on the parties.

## 10. Promptness

All allegations are acted upon promptly by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma once it has received notice or a formal complaint. Complaints typically take 90 business days to resolve. There are always exceptions and extenuating circumstances that can cause a resolution to take longer, but the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will avoid all undue delays within its control.

Any time the general timeframes for resolution outlined in University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma procedures will be delayed, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will provide written notice to the parties of the delay, the cause of the delay, and an estimate of the anticipated additional time that will be needed as a result of the delay.

## 11. Privacy

Every effort is made by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to preserve the privacy of reports.[2] The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will not share the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation; any Complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any Respondent, or any witness, except as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g; FERPA regulations, 34 CFR part 99; or as required by law; or to carry out the purposes of 34 CFR Part 106, including the conducting of any investigation, hearing, or grievance proceeding arising under these policies and procedures.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to designate which the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials have a legitimate educational interest in being informed about incidents that fall within this policy, pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Only a small group of officials who need to know will typically be told about the complaint, including but not limited to: Head of University Security, the Threat Assessment Team, the Dean of Students, HR Officer. Information will be shared as necessary with Investigators, Hearing Panel members/Decision-makers, witnesses, and the parties. The circle of people with this knowledge will be kept as tight as possible to preserve the parties' rights and privacy.

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[2] For the purpose of this policy, privacy and confidentiality have distinct meanings. **Privacy** means that information related to a complaint will be shared with a limited number of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma employees who "need to know" in order to assist in the assessment, investigation, and resolution of the report. All employees who are involved in the Recipient's response to notice under this policy receive specific training and guidance about sharing and safeguarding private information in accordance with state and federal law. The privacy of student education records will be protected in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), as outlined in the Recipient's FERPA policy. The privacy of employee records will be protected in accordance with Human Resources policies. **Confidentiality** exists in the context of laws that protect certain relationships, including those who provide services related to medical and clinical care, mental health providers, counselors, and ordained clergy. The law creates a privilege between certain health care providers, mental health care providers, attorneys, clergy, spouses, and others, with their patients, clients, parishioners, and spouses. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma has designated individuals who have the ability to have privileged communications as Confidential Resources. For more information about Confidential Resources, see section 19(a). When information is shared by a Complainant with a Confidential Resource, the Confidential Resource cannot reveal the information to any third party except when an applicable law or a court order requires or permits disclosure of such information. For example, information may be disclosed when: (i) the individual gives written consent for its disclosure; (ii) there is a concern that the individual will likely cause serious physical harm to self or others; or (iii) the information concerns conduct involving suspected abuse or neglect of a minor under the age of 18, elders, or individuals with disabilities. Non-identifiable information may be shared by Confidential Resources for statistical tracking purposes as required by the federal Clery Act. Other information may be shared as required by law.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may contact parents/guardians to inform them of situations in which there is a significant and articulable health and/or safety risk, but will usually consult with the student first before doing so.

Confidentiality and mandated reporting are addressed more specifically below.

## 12. Jurisdiction of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

This policy applies to the education program and activities of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, to conduct that takes place on the campus or on property owned or controlled by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, at University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-sponsored events, or in buildings owned or controlled by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's recognized student organizations. The Respondent must be a member of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's community in order for its policies to apply.

This policy can also be applicable to the effects of off-campus misconduct that effectively deprive someone of access to University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's educational program. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may also extend jurisdiction to off-campus and/or to online conduct when the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct affects a substantial University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma interest.

Regardless of where the conduct occurred, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will address notice/complaints to determine whether the conduct occurred in the context of its employment or educational program or activity and/or has continuing effects on campus or in an off-campus sponsored program or activity. A substantial recipient interest includes:

a. Any action that constitutes a criminal offense as defined by law. This includes, but is not limited to, single or repeat violations of any local, state, or federal law;
b. Any situation in which it is determined that the Respondent poses an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual;
c. Any situation that significantly impinges upon the rights, property, or achievements of oneself or others or significantly breaches the peace and/or causes social disorder; and/or
d. Any situation that is detrimental to the educational interests or mission of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

If the Respondent is unknown or is not a member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will assist the Complainant in identifying appropriate campus and local resources and support options and/or, when criminal conduct is alleged, in contacting local or campus law enforcement if the individual would like to file a police report.

Further, even when the Respondent is not a member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's community, supportive measures, remedies, and resources may be accessible to the Complainant by contacting the Title IX Coordinator.

In addition, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may take other actions as appropriate to protect the Complainant against third parties, such as barring individuals from University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma property and/or events.

All vendors serving the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma through third-party contracts are subject to the policies and procedures of their employers

When the Respondent is enrolled in or employed by another institution, the Title IX Coordinator can assist the Complainant in liaising with the appropriate individual at that institution, as it may be possible to allege violations through that institution's policies.

Similarly, the Title IX Coordinator may be able to advocate for a student or employee Complainant who experiences discrimination in an externship, study abroad program, or other environment external to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma where sexual harassment or nondiscrimination policies and procedures of the facilitating or host organization may give recourse to the Complainant.

## 13. Time Limits on Reporting

There is no time limitation on providing notice/complaints to the Title IX Coordinator. However, if the Respondent is no longer subject to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's jurisdiction and/or significant time has passed, the ability to investigate, respond, and provide remedies may be more limited or impossible.

Acting on notice/complaints significantly impacted by the passage of time (including, but not limited to, the rescission or revision of policy) is at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, who may document allegations for future reference, offer supportive measures and/or remedies, and/or engage in informal or formal action, as appropriate.

When notice/complaint is affected by significant time delay, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will typically apply the policy in place at the time of the alleged misconduct and the procedures in place at the time of notice/complaint.

## 14. Online Harassment and Misconduct

The policies of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma are written and interpreted broadly to include online and cyber manifestations of any of the behaviors prohibited below, when those behaviors occur in or have an effect on the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's education program and activities or use the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma networks, technology, or equipment.

While the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may not control websites, social media, and other venues in which harassing communications are made, when such communications are reported to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, it will engage in a variety of means to address and mitigate the effects.

Members of the community are encouraged to be good digital citizens and to refrain from online misconduct, such as feeding anonymous gossip sites, sharing inappropriate content via Snaps or other social media, unwelcome sexting, revenge porn, breaches of privacy, or otherwise using the ease of transmission and/or anonymity of the Internet or other technology to harm another member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community.

Any online postings or other electronic communication by students, including cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, cyber-harassment, etc., occurring completely outside of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's control (e.g., not on University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma networks, websites, or between University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma email accounts) will only be subject to this policy when such online conduct can be shown to cause a substantial in-program disruption.

Otherwise, such communications are considered speech protected by the First Amendment. Supportive measures for Complainants will be provided, but protected speech cannot legally be subjected to discipline.

Off-campus harassing speech by employees, whether online or in person, may be regulated by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma only when such speech is made in an employee's official or work-related capacity.

## 15. Policy on Nondiscrimination

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma adheres to all federal and state civil rights laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination in public institutions of higher education.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student, or applicant for admission on the basis of:

- Race,
- Religion,
- Hearing status,
- Personal appearance,
- Color,
- Sex,
- Pregnancy,
- Political affiliation,
- Source of income,
- Place of business,
- Residence,
- Creed,
- Ethnicity,
- National origin (including ancestry),
- Citizenship status,
- Physical or mental disability (including perceived disability),
- Age,
- Marital status,
- Family responsibilities,
- Sexual orientation,
- Gender identity,
- Gender expression,
- Veteran or military status (including disabled veteran, recently separated veteran, active duty wartime or campaign badge veteran, and Armed Forces Service Medal veteran),
- Predisposing genetic characteristics,
- Domestic violence victim status,
- Height,
- Weight
- or any other protected category under applicable local, state, or federal law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any grievance process on campus, with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or other human rights agencies.

This policy covers nondiscrimination in both employment and access to educational opportunities. Therefore, any member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community whose acts deny, deprive, or limit the educational or employment or residential and/or social access, benefits, and/or opportunities of any member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community, guest, or visitor on the basis of that person's actual or perceived membership in the protected classes listed above is in violation of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy on nondiscrimination.

When brought to the attention of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, any such discrimination will be promptly and fairly addressed and remedied by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma according to the appropriate grievance process described below.

## 16. Policy on Disability Discrimination and Accommodation

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is committed to full compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities, as well as other federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to individuals with disabilities.

Under the ADA and its amendments, a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

The ADA also protects individuals who have a record of a substantially limiting impairment or who are regarded as disabled by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, regardless of whether they currently have a disability. A substantial impairment is one that significantly limits or restricts a major life activity such as hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, performing manual tasks, walking, or caring for oneself.

The Compliance Director has been designated as the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ADA/Section 504 Compliance Officer responsible for overseeing efforts to comply with these disability laws, including responding to grievances and conducting investigations of any allegation of noncompliance or discrimination based on disability.

Grievances related to disability status and/or accommodations will be addressed using the procedures below.

### a. Students with Disabilities

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities with reasonable accommodations and support needed to ensure equal access to the academic programs, facilities, and activities of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

All accommodations are made on an individualized basis. A student requesting any accommodation should first contact the Coordinator for Student Wellness & Accommodations, who coordinates services for students with disabilities.

The Coordinator for Student Wellness & Accommodations reviews documentation provided by the student and, in consultation with the student, determines which accommodations are appropriate for the student's particular needs and academic program(s).

### b. Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to the ADA, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will provide reasonable accommodation(s) to all qualified employees with known disabilities when their disability affects the performance of their essential job functions, except when doing so would be unduly disruptive or would result in undue hardship to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. An employee with a disability is responsible for submitting a request for an accommodation to the Office of Human Resources and providing necessary documentation. Human Resources will work with the employee's supervisor to identify which essential functions of the position are affected by the employee's disability and what reasonable accommodations could enable the employee to perform those duties.

## 17. Policy on Discriminatory Harassment

Students, staff, administrators, and faculty are entitled to an employment and educational environment that is free of discriminatory harassment. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's harassment policy is not meant to inhibit or prohibit educational content or discussions inside or outside of the classroom that include germane but controversial or sensitive subject matters protected by academic freedom.

The sections below describe the specific forms of legally prohibited harassment that are also prohibited under the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy. When speech or conduct is protected by academic freedom and/or the First Amendment, it will not be considered a violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy, though supportive measures will be offered to those impacted.

### a. Discriminatory Harassment

Discriminatory harassment constitutes a form of discrimination that is prohibited by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy. Discriminatory harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct by any member or group of the community on the basis of actual or perceived membership in a class protected by policy or law.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not tolerate discriminatory harassment of any employee, student, visitor, or guest. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will act to remedy all forms of harassment when reported, whether or not the harassment rises to the level of creating a "hostile environment."

A hostile environment is one that unreasonably interferes with, limits, or effectively denies an individual's educational or employment access, benefits, or opportunities.[3]This discriminatory effect results from harassing verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct that is severe or pervasive ***and*** objectively offensive.

When discriminatory harassment rises to the level of creating a hostile environment, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may also impose sanctions on the Respondent through application of the appropriate grievance process below.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to address offensive conduct and/or harassment that 1) does not rise to the level of creating a hostile environment, or 2) that is of a generic nature and not based on a protected status. Addressing such conduct will not result in the imposition of discipline under the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy, but may be addressed through respectful conversation, remedial actions, education, effective Alternate Resolution, and/or other informal resolution mechanisms.

For assistance with Alternate Resolution and other informal resolution techniques and approaches, employees should contact the Office of Human Resources, and students should contact the Dean of Students.

### b. Sexual Harassment

The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the State of Oklahoma regard Sexual Harassment, a specific form of discriminatory harassment, as an unlawful discriminatory practice.

[3] This definition of hostile environment is based on Federal Register / Vol. 59, No. 47 / Thursday, March 10, 1994: Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students At Educational Recipients Investigative Guidance.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma has adopted the following definition of Sexual Harassment in order to address the unique environment of an academic community, which consists not only of employer and employees, but of students as well.

Acts of sexual harassment may be committed by any person upon any other person, regardless of the sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity of those involved.

Sexual Harassment, as an umbrella category, includes the offenses of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, and is defined as:

Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1) Quid Pro Quo:
    a. an employee of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma,
    b. conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma,
    c. on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; and/or
2) Sexual Harassment:
    a. unwelcome conduct,
    b. determined by a reasonable person,
    c. to be so severe, and
    d. pervasive, and,
    e. objectively offensive,
    f. that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's education program or activity.
3) Sexual assault, defined as:
    a) Sex Offenses, Forcible:
        i) Any sexual act directed against another person,
        ii) without the consent of the Complainant,
        iii) including instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent.
    b) Forcible Rape:
        i) Penetration,
        ii) no matter how slight,
        iii) of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or
        iv) oral penetration by a sex organ of another person,
        v) without the consent of the Complainant.
    c) Forcible Sodomy:
        i) Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person,
        ii) forcibly,
        iii) and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), or
        iv) not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age[4] or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
    d) Sexual Assault with an Object:
        i) The use of an object or instrument to penetrate,
        ii) however slightly,

[4] Per state law.

iii) the genital or anal opening of the body of another person,
iv) forcibly,
v) and/or against that person's will (non-consensually),
vi) or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

e) Forcible Fondling:
i) The touching of the private body parts of another person (buttocks, groin, breasts),
ii) for the purpose of sexual gratification,
iii) forcibly,
iv) and/or against that person's will (non-consensually),
v) or not forcibly or against the person's will in instances in which the Complainant is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

f) Sex Offenses, Non-forcible:
i) Incest:
1) Non-forcible sexual intercourse,
2) between persons who are related to each other,
3) within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by Oklahoma law.
ii) Statutory Rape:
1) Non-forcible sexual intercourse,
2) with a person who is under the statutory age of consent of sixteen.

4) Dating Violence, defined as:
a. violence,
b. on the basis of sex,
c. committed by a person,
d. who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the Complainant.
i. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the Complainant's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition—
ii. Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.
iii. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

5) Domestic Violence, defined as:
a. violence,
b. on the basis of sex,
c. committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the Complainant,
d. by a person with whom the Complainant shares a child in common, or
e. by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the Complainant as a spouse or intimate partner, or
f. by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the Complainant under the domestic or family violence laws of Oklahoma, or

g. by any other person against an adult or youth Complainant who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of Oklahoma.

*To categorize an incident as Domestic Violence, the relationship between the Respondent and the Complainant must be more than just two people living together as roommates. The people cohabitating must be current or former spouses or have an intimate relationship.

6) Stalking, defined as:
   a. engaging in a course of conduct,
   b. on the basis of sex,
   c. directed at a specific person, that
      i. would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety, or
      ii. the safety of others; or
      iii. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

   For the purposes of this definition—

   (i) Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the Respondent directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property.

   (ii) Reasonable person means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the Complainant.

   (iii) Substantial emotional distress means significant mental suffering or anguish that may but does not necessarily require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to impose any level of sanction, ranging from a reprimand up to and including suspension or expulsion/termination, for any offense under this policy.

### c. Force, Coercion, Consent, and Incapacitation[5]

As used in the offenses above, the following definitions and understandings apply:

**Force:** Force is the use of physical violence and/or physical imposition to gain sexual access. Force also includes threats, intimidation (implied threats), and coercion that is intended to overcome resistance or produce consent (e.g., "Have sex with me or I'll hit you," "Okay, don't hit me, I'll do what you want.").

Sexual activity that is forced is, by definition, non-consensual, but non-consensual sexual activity is not necessarily forced. Silence or the absence of resistance alone is not consent. Consent is not demonstrated by the absence of resistance. While resistance is not required or necessary, it is a clear demonstration of non-consent.

**Coercion**: Coercion is unreasonable pressure for sexual activity. Coercive conduct differs from seductive conduct based on factors such as the type and/or extent of the pressure used to obtain consent. When someone makes clear that they do not want to engage in certain sexual activity, that

[5] The state definition of consent is as follows: The term "consent" means the affirmative, unambiguous and voluntary agreement to engage in a specific sexual activity during a sexual encounter which can be revoked at any time. Consent cannot be given by an individual who: • is asleep or is mentally or physically incapacitated either through the effect of drugs or alcohol or for any other reason, or • is under duress, threat, coercion or force Consent cannot be inferred under circumstances in which consent is not clear including, but not limited to: • the absence of an individual saying "no" or "stop", • or the existence of a prior or current relationship or sexual activity (Okla. Stat. tit. 21, § 113) which is applicable to criminal prosecutions for sex offenses in Oklahoma but may differ from the definition used on campus to address policy violations.

they want to stop, or that they do not want to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, continued pressure beyond that point can be coercive.

**Effective consent** is a voluntary, mutually understandable agreement that clearly indicates a willingness to engage in each instance of sexual activity. Consent to one act does not imply consent to another. Consent to engage in sexual activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another. Consent to some sexual contact (such as kissing or fondling) cannot be presumed to be consent for other sexual activity (such as intercourse). A current or previous intimate relationship is not sufficient to constitute consent. Consent can be withdrawn at any time. Any expression of an unwillingness to engage in any instance of sexual activity establishes a presumptive lack of consent. Consent is not effective if it results from the use of physical force, a threat of physical force, intimidation, coercion, incapacitation, or any other factor that would eliminate an individual's ability to exercise their own free will to choose whether or not to engage in sexual activity. Proof of consent or non-consent is not a burden placed on either party involved in an incident. Instead, the burden remains on the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to determine whether its policy has been violated. The existence of consent is based on the totality of the circumstances evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident occurred and any similar, previous patterns that may be evidenced.

Consent in relationships must also be considered in context. When parties consent to BDSM[6] or other forms of kink, non-consent may be shown by the use of a safe word. Resistance, force, violence, or even saying "no" may be part of the kink and thus consensual, so the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's evaluation of communication in kink situations should be guided by reasonableness, rather than strict adherence to policy that assumes non-kink relationships as a default.

**Incapacitation:** A person cannot consent if they are unable to understand what is happening or is disoriented, helpless, asleep, or unconscious, for any reason, including by alcohol or other drugs. As stated above, a Respondent violates this policy if they engage in sexual activity with someone who is incapable of giving consent.

It is a defense to a sexual assault policy violation that the Respondent neither knew nor should have known the Complainant to be physically or mentally incapacitated. "Should have known" is an objective, reasonable person standard which assumes that a reasonable person is both sober and exercising sound judgment.

Incapacitation occurs when someone cannot make rational, reasonable decisions because they lack the capacity to give knowing/informed consent (e.g., to understand the "who, what, when, where, why, or how" of their sexual interaction).

Incapacitation is determined through consideration of all relevant indicators of an individual's state and is not synonymous with intoxication, impairment, blackout, and/or being drunk.

This policy also covers a person whose incapacity results from a temporary or permanent physical or mental health condition, involuntary physical restraint, and/or the consumption of incapacitating drugs.

### d. Other Civil Rights Offenses

In addition to the forms of sexual harassment described above, which fall within the coverage of Title IX, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma additionally prohibits the following offenses as forms of discrimination outside of Title IX when the act is based upon the Complainant's actual or perceived membership in a protected class.

[6] Bondage, discipline/dominance, submission/sadism, and masochism.

- Sexual Exploitation, defined as: taking non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for their own benefit or for the benefit of anyone other than the person being exploited, and that conduct does not otherwise constitute sexual harassment under this policy. Examples of Sexual Exploitation include, but are not limited to:
    - Sexual voyeurism (such as observing or allowing others to observe a person undressing or using the bathroom or engaging in sexual acts, without the consent of the person being observed)
    - Invasion of sexual privacy.
    - Taking pictures, video, or audio recording of another in a sexual act, or in any other sexually-related activity when there is a reasonable expectation of privacy during the activity, without the consent of all involved in the activity, or exceeding the boundaries of consent

        (such as allowing another person to hide in a closet and observe sexual activity, or disseminating sexual pictures without the photographed person's consent), including the making or posting of revenge pornography
    - Prostituting another person
    - Engaging in sexual activity with another person while knowingly infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or a sexually-transmitted disease (STD) or infection (STI), without informing the other person of the infection
    - Causing or attempting to cause the incapacitation of another person (through alcohol, drugs, or any other means) for the purpose of compromising that person's ability to give consent to sexual activity, or for the purpose of making that person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity
    - Misappropriation of another person's identity on apps, websites, or other venues designed for dating or sexual connections
    - Forcing a person to take an action against that person's will by threatening to show, post, or share information, video, audio, or an image that depicts the person's nudity or sexual activity
    - Knowingly soliciting a minor for sexual activity
    - Engaging in sex trafficking
    - Creation, possession, or dissemination or child pornography
- Threatening or causing physical harm, extreme verbal, emotional, or psychological abuse, or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person;
- Discrimination, defined as actions that deprive, limit, or deny other members of the community of educational or employment access, benefits, or opportunities;
- Intimidation, defined as implied threats or acts that cause an unreasonable fear of harm in another;
- Hazing, defined as acts likely to cause physical or psychological harm or social ostracism to any person within the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community, when related to the admission, initiation, pledging, joining, or any other group-affiliation activity (as defined further in the Hazing Policy);
- Bullying, defined as:
    - Repeated and/or severe
    - Aggressive behavior
    - Likely to intimidate or intentionally hurt, control, or diminish another person, physically and/or mentally
    - That is not speech or conduct otherwise protected by the First Amendment.

Violation of any other University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies may constitute a Civil Rights Offense when a violation is motivated by actual or perceived membership in a protected class, and the

result is a discriminatory limitation or denial of employment or educational access, benefits, or opportunities.

Sanctions for the above-listed Civil Rights Offenses range from reprimand through expulsion/termination.

## 18. Retaliation

Protected activity under this policy includes reporting an incident that may implicate this policy, participating in the grievance process, supporting a Complainant or Respondent, assisting in providing information relevant to an investigation, and/or acting in good faith to oppose conduct that constitutes a violation of this Policy.

Acts of alleged retaliation should be reported immediately to the Title IX Coordinator and will be promptly investigated. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is prepared to take appropriate steps to protect individuals who fear that they may be subjected to retaliation.

It is prohibited for the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma or any member of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's community to take materially adverse action by intimidating, threatening, coercing, harassing, or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by law or policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy and procedure.

Charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation.

Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this policy and procedure does not constitute retaliation, provided that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party has made a materially false statement in bad faith.

## 19. Mandated Reporting

All University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma employees (faculty, staff, administrators) are expected to report actual or suspected discrimination or harassment to appropriate officials immediately, though there are some limited exceptions.

In order to make informed choices, it is important to be aware of confidentiality and mandatory reporting requirements when consulting campus resources. On campus, some resources may maintain confidentiality and are not required to report actual or suspected discrimination or harassment. They may offer options and resources without any obligation to inform an outside agency or campus official unless a Complainant has requested the information be shared.

If a Complainant expects formal action in response to their allegations, reporting to any Mandated Reporter can connect them with resources to report crimes and/or policy violations, and these employees will immediately pass reports to the Title IX Coordinator (and/or police, if desired by the Complainant), who will take action when an incident is reported to them.

The following sections describe the reporting options at University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma for a Complainant or third-party (including parents/guardians when appropriate):

### a. Confidential Resources

If a Complainant would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, the Complainant may speak with:

- On-campus licensed professional counselors and staff
- Athletic trainers (if licensed and privileged under state statute, and/or working under the supervision of a health professional)
- Off-campus (non-employees):
    - Licensed professional counselors and other medical providers
    - Local rape crisis counselors
    - Domestic violence resources
    - Local or state assistance agencies
    - Clergy/Chaplains
    - Attorneys

All of the above-listed individuals will maintain confidentiality when acting under the scope of their licensure, professional ethics, and/or professional credentials, except in extreme cases of immediacy of threat or danger or abuse of a minor/elder/individual with a disability, or when required to disclose by law or court order.

Campus counselors are available to help free of charge and may be consulted on an emergency basis during normal business hours.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma employees who are confidential will timely submit anonymous statistical information for Clery Act purposes unless they believe it would be harmful to their client or patient.

### b. Anonymous Notice to Mandated Reporters

At the request of a Complainant, notice may be given by a Mandated Reporter to the Title IX Coordinator anonymously, without identification of the Complainant. The Mandated Reporter cannot remain anonymous themselves.

[If a Complainant has requested that a Mandated Reporter maintain the Complainant's anonymity, the Mandated Reporter may do so unless it is reasonable to believe that a compelling threat to health or safety could exist. The Mandated Reporter can consult with the Title IX Coordinator on that assessment without revealing personally identifiable information].

Anonymous notice will be investigated by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to the extent possible, both to assess the underlying allegation(s) and to determine if supportive measures or remedies can be provided.

However, anonymous notice typically limits the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to investigate, respond, and provide remedies, depending on what information is shared.

When a Complainant has made a request for anonymity, the Complainant's personally identifiable information may be withheld by a Mandated Reporter, but all other details must be shared with the Title IX Coordinator. Mandated reporters may not be able to maintain requests for anonymity for Complainants who are minors, elderly, and/or disabled, depending on state reporting of abuse requirements.

### c. Mandated Reporters and Formal Notice/Complaints

All employees of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (including student employees), with the exception of those who are designated as Confidential Resources, are Mandated Reporters and must promptly share with the Title IX Coordinator all known details of a report made to them in the course of their employment.

Employees must also promptly share all details of behaviors under this policy that they observe or have knowledge of, even if not reported to them by a Complainant or third-party.

Complainants may want to carefully consider whether they share personally identifiable details with non-confidential Mandated Reporters, as those details must be shared with the Title IX Coordinator.

Generally, disclosures in climate surveys, classroom writing assignments or discussions, human subjects research, or at events such as "Take Back the Night" marches or speak-outs do not provide notice that must be reported to the Coordinator by employees, unless the Complainant clearly indicates that they desire a report to be made or a seek a specific response from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

Supportive measures may be offered as the result of such disclosures without formal University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma action.

Failure of a Mandated Reporter, as described above in this section, to report an incident of harassment or discrimination of which they become aware is a violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy and can be subject to disciplinary action for failure to comply.

Though this may seem obvious, when a Mandated Reporter is engaged in harassment or other violations of this policy, they still have a duty to report their own misconduct, though the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is technically not on notice when a harasser is also a Mandated Reporter unless the harasser does in fact report themselves.

Finally, it is important to clarify that a Mandated Reporter who is themselves a target of harassment or other misconduct under this policy is not required to report their own experience, though they are, of course, encouraged to do so.

## 20. When a Complainant Does Not Wish to Proceed

If a Complainant does not wish for their name to be shared, does not wish for an investigation to take place, or does not want a formal complaint to be pursued, they may make such a request to the Title IX Coordinator, who will evaluate that request in light of the duty to ensure the safety of the campus and to comply with state or federal law.

The Title IX Coordinator has ultimate discretion over whether the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma proceeds when the Complainant does not wish to do so, and the Title IX Coordinator may sign a formal complaint to initiate a grievance process upon completion of an appropriate violence risk assessment.

The Title IX Coordinator's decision should be based on results of the violence risk assessment that show a compelling risk to health and/or safety that requires the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to pursue formal action to protect the community.

A compelling risk to health and/or safety may result from evidence of patterns of misconduct, predatory conduct, threats, abuse of minors, use of weapons, and/or violence. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may be compelled to act on alleged employee misconduct irrespective of a Complainant's wishes.

The Title IX Coordinator must also consider the effect that non-participation by the Complainant may have on the availability of evidence and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to pursue a Formal Grievance Process fairly and effectively.

When the Title IX Coordinator executes the written complaint, they do not become the Complainant. The Complainant is the individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute a violation of this policy.

When the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma proceeds, the Complainant (or their Advisor) may have as much or as little involvement in the process as they wish. The Complainant retains all rights of a Complainant under this Policy irrespective of their level of participation. Typically, when the Complainant chooses not to participate, the Advisor may be appointed as proxy for the Complainant throughout the process, acting to ensure and protect the rights of the Complainant.

Note that the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to remedy and respond to notice may be limited if the Complainant does not want the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to proceed with an investigation and/or grievance process. The goal is to provide the Complainant with as much control over the process as possible, while balancing the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's obligation to protect its community.

In cases in which the Complainant requests confidentiality/no formal action and the circumstances allow the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to honor that request, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will offer informal resolution options (see below), supportive measures, and remedies to the Complainant and the community, but will not otherwise pursue formal action.

If the Complainant elects to take no action, they can change that decision if they decide to pursue a formal complaint at a later date. Upon making a formal complaint, a Complainant has the right, and can expect, to have allegations taken seriously by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, and to have the incidents investigated and properly resolved through these procedures.

## 21. Federal Timely Warning Obligations

Parties reporting sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking should be aware that under the Clery Act, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma must issue timely warnings for incidents reported to them that pose a serious or continuing threat of bodily harm or danger to members of the campus community.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will ensure that a Complainant's name and other identifying information is not disclosed, while still providing enough information for community members to make safety decisions in light of the potential danger.

## 22. False Allegations and Evidence

Deliberately false and/or malicious accusations under this policy, as opposed to allegations which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, are a serious offense and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Additionally, witnesses and parties knowingly providing false evidence, tampering with or destroying evidence after being directed to preserve such evidence, or deliberately misleading an official conducting an investigation can be subject to discipline under the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's policy.

## 23. Amnesty for Complainants and Witnesses

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community encourages the reporting of misconduct and crimes by Complainants and witnesses. Sometimes, Complainants or witnesses are hesitant to report to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials or participate in grievance processes because they fear that they themselves may be in violation of certain policies, such as underage drinking or use of illicit drugs at the time of the incident. Respondents may hesitate to be forthcoming during the process for the same reasons.

It is in the best interests of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community that Complainants choose to report misconduct to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials, that witnesses come forward to share what they know, and that all parties be forthcoming during the process.

To encourage reporting and participation in the process, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma maintains a policy of offering parties and witnesses amnesty from minor policy violations – such as underage consumption of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs – related to the incident.

Amnesty does not apply to more serious allegations such as physical abuse of another or illicit drug distribution. The decision not to offer amnesty to a Respondent is based on neither sex nor gender, but on the fact that collateral misconduct is typically addressed for all students within a progressive discipline system, and the rationale for amnesty – the incentive to report serious misconduct – is rarely applicable to Respondent with respect to a Complainant.

**Students:** Sometimes, students are hesitant to assist others for fear that they may get in trouble themselves (for example, an underage student who has been drinking or using marijuana might hesitate to help take an individual who has experienced sexual misconduct to the Campus Security.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma maintains a policy of amnesty for students who offer help to others in need. While policy violations cannot be overlooked, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may provide purely educational options with no official disciplinary finding, rather than punitive sanctions, to those who offer their assistance to others in need.

## 24. Federal Statistical Reporting Obligations

Certain campus officials – those deemed Campus Security Authorities – have a duty to report the following for federal statistical reporting purposes (Clery Act):

a) All "primary crimes," which include homicide, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson;
b) Hate crimes, which include any bias motivated primary crime as well as any bias motivated larceny or theft, simple assault, intimidation, or destruction/damage/vandalism of property;
c) VAWA[7]-based crimes, which include sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking; and
d) Arrests and referrals for disciplinary action for weapons-related law violations, liquor-related law violations, and drug abuse-related law violations.

All personally identifiable information is kept private, but statistical information must be passed along to campus security regarding the type of incident and its general location (on or off-campus or in the surrounding area, but no addresses are given) for publication in the Annual Security Report and daily campus crime log. Campus Security Authorities include: student affairs/student conduct staff, campus security, coaches, athletic directors, residence life staff, student activities staff, human

[7] VAWA is the Violence Against Women Act, enacted in 1994 codified in part at 42 U.S.C. sections 13701 through 14040.

resources staff, advisors to student organizations, and any other official with significant responsibility for student and campus activities.

# INTERIM RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE POLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, HARASSMENT, AND NONDISCRIMINATION (KNOWN AS PROCESS "A")

## 1. Overview

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will act on any formal or informal notice/complaint of violation of the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination ("the Policy") that is received by the Title IX Coordinator[8] or any other Official with Authority by applying these procedures, known as "Process A."

The procedures below apply **only** to qualifying allegations of sexual harassment (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as defined above) involving students, staff, administrator, or faculty members.

If other policies are invoked, such as policies on protected class harassment or discrimination above, please see Appendix C for a description of the procedures applicable to the resolution of such offenses, known as "Process B."

Process B can also apply to sexual harassment (including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as defined above) when jurisdiction does not fall within Process A, as determined by the Title IX Coordinator.

The procedures below may be used to address collateral misconduct arising from the investigation of or occurring in conjunction with reported misconduct (e.g., vandalism, physical abuse of another). All other allegations of misconduct unrelated to incidents covered by the Policy will be addressed through procedures elaborated in the student, faculty and employee handbooks.

## 2. Notice/Complaint

Upon receipt of a complaint or notice to the Title IX Coordinator of an alleged violation of the Policy, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma initiates a prompt initial assessment to determine the next steps the University needs to take.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will initiate at least one of three responses:

1) Offering supportive measures because the Complainant does not want to proceed formally; and/or
2) An informal resolution; and/or
3) A Formal Grievance Process including an investigation and a hearing.

The investigation and grievance process will determine whether or not the Policy has been violated. If so, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will promptly implement effective remedies designed to ensure that it is not deliberately indifferent to harassment or discrimination, their potential recurrence, or their effects.

[8] Anywhere this procedure indicates "Title IX Coordinator," the University may substitute a trained designee.

## 3. Initial Assessment

Following receipt of notice or a complaint of an alleged violation of this Policy, the Title IX Coordinator[9] engages in an initial assessment, which is typically one to five business days in duration. The steps in an initial assessment can include:

- If notice is given, the Title IX Coordinator seeks to determine if the person impacted wishes to make a formal complaint, and will assist them to do so, if desired.
    - If they do not wish to do so, the Title IX Coordinator determines whether to initiate a complaint because a violence risk assessment indicates a compelling threat to health and/or safety.
- If a formal complaint is received, the Title IX Coordinator assesses its sufficiency and works with the Complainant to make sure it is correctly completed.
- The Title IX Coordinator reaches out to the Complainant to offer supportive measures.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to ensure they are aware of the right to have an Advisor.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to determine whether the Complainant prefers a supportive and remedial response, an informal resolution option, or a formal investigation and grievance process.
    - If a supportive and remedial response is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to identify their wishes and then seeks to facilitate implementation. No Formal Grievance Process is initiated, though the Complainant can elect to initiate one later, if desired.
    - If an informal resolution option is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator assesses whether the complaint is suitable for informal resolution, which informal mechanism may serve the situation best or is available and may seek to determine if the Respondent is also willing to engage in informal resolution.
    - If a Formal Grievance Process is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator determines if the misconduct alleged falls within the scope of Title IX:
        - If it does, the Title IX Coordinator will initiate the formal investigation and grievance process, directing the investigation to address:
            - an incident, and/or
            - a pattern of alleged misconduct, and/or
            - a culture/climate issue, based on the nature of the complaint.
        - If it does not, the Title IX Coordinator determines that Title IX does not apply (and will "dismiss" that aspect of the complaint, if any), assesses which policies may apply and refers the matter for resolution under Process B. Please note that dismissing a complaint under Title IX is just procedural, and does not limit the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's authority to address a complaint with an appropriate process and remedies.

[9] If circumstances require, the President or Title IX Coordinator will designate another person to oversee the process below should an allegation be made about the Coordinator or the Coordinator be otherwise unavailable or unable to fulfill their duties.

### a. Violence Risk Assessment

In many cases, the Title IX Coordinator may determine that a Violence Risk Assessment (VRA) should be conducted by the Behavioral Threat Assessment Team as part of the initial assessment. A VRA can aid in ten critical and/or required determinations, including:

- Emergency removal of a Respondent on the basis of immediate threat to physical health/safety;
- Whether the Title IX Coordinator should pursue/sign a formal complaint absent a willing/able Complainant;
- Whether to put the investigation on the footing of incident and/or pattern and/or climate;
- To help identify potential predatory conduct;
- To help assess/identify grooming behaviors;
- Whether it is reasonable to try to resolve a complaint through informal resolution, and what modality may be most successful;
- Whether to permit a voluntary withdrawal by the Respondent;
- Whether to impose transcript notation or communicate with a transfer University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma about a Respondent;
- Assessment of appropriate sanctions/remedies (to be applied post-hearing); and/or
- Whether a Clery Act Timely Warning/Trepass order/Persona-non-grata is needed.

Threat assessment is the process of evaluating the actionability of violence by an individual against another person or group following the issuance of a direct or conditional threat. A VRA is a broader term used to assess any potential violence or danger, regardless of the presence of a vague, conditional, or direct threat.

VRAs require specific training and are typically conducted by psychologists, clinical counselors, social workers, case managers, law enforcement officers, student conduct officers, or other Threat Assessment Team (TAT)/CARE team members. A VRA authorized by the Title IX Coordinator should occur in collaboration with the TAT or CARE team. Where a VRA is required by the Title IX Coordinator, a Respondent refusing to cooperate may result in a charge of failure to comply within the appropriate student or employee conduct process.

A VRA is not an evaluation for an involuntary behavioral health hospitalization (e.g., 5150 in California, Section XII in Massachusetts, Baker Act in Florida), nor is it a psychological or mental health assessment. A VRA assesses the risk of actionable violence, often with a focus on targeted/predatory escalations, and is supported by research from the fields of law enforcement, criminology, human resources, and psychology.

### b. Dismissal (Mandatory and Discretionary)

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma must dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation or hearing, it is determined that:

1) The conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in the Policy hereinabove, even if proved; and/or
2) The conduct did not occur in an educational program or activity controlled by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (including buildings or property controlled by recognized student organizations), and/or the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not have control of the Respondent; and/or
3) The conduct did not occur against a person in the United States; and/or
4) At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant is not participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may dismiss a formal complaint or any allegations therein if, at any time during the investigation or hearing:

1) A Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein; or
2) The Respondent is no longer enrolled in or employed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma; or
3) Specific circumstances prevent the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon any dismissal, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the rationale for doing so simultaneously to the parties.

This dismissal decision is appealable by any party under the procedures for appeal below. A Complainant who decides to withdraw a complaint may later request to reinstate it or refile it.

## 4. Counterclaims

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is obligated to ensure that the grievance process is not abused for retaliatory purposes. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma permits the filing of counterclaims but uses an initial assessment, described above, to assess whether the allegations in the counterclaim are made in good faith. Counterclaims by the Respondent may be made in good faith, but are, on occasion, also made for purposes of retaliation. Counterclaims made with retaliatory intent will not be permitted.

Counterclaims determined to have been reported in good faith will be processed using the grievance procedures below. Investigation of such claims may take place after resolution of the underlying initial allegation, in which case a delay may occur.

Counterclaims may also be resolved through the same investigation as the underlying allegation, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. When counterclaims are not made in good faith, they will be considered retaliatory and may constitute a violation of this policy.

## 5. Right to an Advisor

The parties may each have an Advisor of their choice present with them for all meetings and interviews within the resolution process, if they so choose. The parties may select whoever they wish to serve as their Advisor as long as the Advisor is eligible and available.

Choosing an Advisor who is also a witness in the process creates potential for bias and conflict-of-interest. A party who chooses an Advisor who is also a witness can anticipate that issues of potential bias will be explored by the hearing Decision-maker(s).

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may permit parties to have more than one Advisor upon special request to the Title IX Coordinator. The decision to grant this request is at the sole discretion of the Title IX Coordinator and will be granted equitably to all parties.

### a. Who Can Serve as an Advisor

The Advisor may be a friend, mentor, family member, attorney, or any other individual a party chooses to advise, support, and/or consult with them throughout the resolution process. The parties may choose Advisors from inside or outside of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma community.

The Title IX Coordinator will also offer to assign a trained Advisor for any party if the party so chooses. If the parties choose an Advisor from the pool available from the University of Science and Arts of

Oklahoma, the Advisor will be trained and be familiar with the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's resolution process.

If the parties choose an Advisor from outside the pool of those identified by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, the Advisor may not have been trained and may not be familiar with University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies and procedures.

Parties also have the right to choose not to have an Advisor in the initial stages of the resolution process, prior to a hearing.

### b. Advisors in Hearings/University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-Appointed Advisor

Under U.S. Department of Education regulations applicable to Title IX, cross-examination is required during the hearing, but must be conducted by the parties' Advisors. The parties are not permitted to directly cross-examine each other or any witnesses. If a party does not have an Advisor for a hearing, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will appoint a trained Advisor for the limited purpose of conducting any cross-examination.

A party may reject this appointment and choose their own Advisor, but they may not proceed without an Advisor. If the party's Advisor will not conduct cross-examination, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will appoint an Advisor who will do so, regardless of the participation or non-participation of the advised party in the hearing itself. Extensive questioning of the parties and witnesses may also be conducted by the Decision-maker(s) during the hearing.

### c. Advisor's Role

The parties may be accompanied by their Advisor in all meetings and interviews at which the party is entitled to be present, including intake and interviews. Advisors should help the parties prepare for each meeting and are expected to advise ethically, with integrity, and in good faith.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma cannot guarantee equal Advisory rights, meaning that if one party selects an Advisor who is an attorney, but the other party does not or cannot afford an attorney, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is not obligated to provide an attorney.

### d. Pre-Interview Meetings

Advisors may request to meet with the administrative officials conducting interviews/meetings in advance of these interviews or meetings. This pre-meeting allows Advisors to clarify and understand their role and University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's policies and procedures.

### e. Advisor Violations of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma Policy

All Advisors are subject to the same University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies and procedures, whether they are attorneys or not. Advisors are expected to advise their advisees without disrupting proceedings. Advisors should not address the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials in a meeting or interview unless invited to (e.g., asking procedural questions). The Advisor may not make a presentation or represent their advisee[10] during any meeting or proceeding and may not speak on behalf of the advisee to the Investigator(s) or other Decision-maker(s) except during a hearing proceeding, during cross-examination.

The parties are expected to ask and respond to questions on their own behalf throughout the investigation phase of the resolution process. Although the Advisor generally may not speak on behalf of their advisee, the Advisor may consult with their advisee, either privately as needed, or by conferring or passing notes during any resolution process meeting or interview. For longer or more involved discussions, the parties and their Advisors should ask for breaks to allow for private consultation.

[10] Subject to the state law provisions or the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's policy above.

Any Advisor who oversteps their role as defined by this policy will be warned only once. If the Advisor continues to disrupt or otherwise fails to respect the limits of the Advisor role, the meeting will be ended, or other appropriate measures implemented. Subsequently, the Title IX Coordinator will determine how to address the Advisor's non-compliance and future role.

### f. Sharing Information with the Advisor

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma expects that the parties may wish to have the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma share documentation and evidence related to the allegations with their Advisors. Parties may share this information directly with their Advisor or other individuals if they wish. Doing so may help the parties participate more meaningfully in the resolution process.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma also provides a consent form that authorizes the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to share such information directly with their Advisor. The parties must either complete and submit this form to the Title IX Coordinator or provide similar documentation demonstrating consent to a release of information to the Advisor before the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is able to share records with an Advisor.

If a party requests that all communication be made through their attorney Advisor, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will comply with that request at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator.

### g. Privacy of Records Shared with Advisor

Advisors are expected to maintain the privacy of the records shared with them. These records may not be shared with third parties, disclosed publicly, or used for purposes not explicitly authorized by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may seek to restrict the role of any Advisor who does not respect the sensitive nature of the process or who fails to abide by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's privacy expectations.

### h. Expectations of an Advisor

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma generally expects an Advisor to adjust their schedule to allow them to attend the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma meetings when planned, but may change scheduled meetings to accommodate an Advisor's inability to attend, if doing so does not cause an unreasonable delay.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may also make reasonable provisions to allow an Advisor who cannot attend in person to attend a meeting by telephone, video conferencing, or other similar technologies as may be convenient and available.

### i. Expectations of the Parties with Respect to Advisors

A party may elect to change Advisors during the process and is not obligated to use the same Advisor throughout. The parties are expected to inform the Investigator(s) of the identity of their Advisor at least two (2) business days before the date of their first meeting with Investigators (or as soon as possible if a more expeditious meeting is necessary or desired).

The parties are expected to provide timely notice to the Title IX Coordinator if they change Advisors at any time. It is assumed that if a party changes Advisors, consent to share information with the previous Advisor is terminated, and a release for the new Advisor must be secured. Parties are expected to inform the Title IX Coordinator of the identity of their hearing Advisor at least two (2) business days before the hearing.

As a public entity, University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma fully respects and accords the Weingarten rights of employees. For parties who are entitled to union representation, the University of

Science and Arts of Oklahoma will allow the unionized employee to have their union representative (if requested by the party) as well as an Advisor of their choice present for all resolution-related meetings and interviews. To uphold the principles of equity, the other party (regardless of union membership) will also be permitted to have two Advisors. Witnesses are/are not permitted to have union representation or Advisors in grievance process interviews or meetings.

## 6. Resolution Processes

Resolution proceedings are private. All persons present at any time during the resolution process are expected to maintain the privacy of the proceedings in accordance with University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy. While there is an expectation of privacy around what Investigators share with parties during interviews, the parties have discretion to share their own knowledge and evidence with others if they so choose. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma encourages parties to discuss this with their Advisors before doing so.

### a. Informal Resolution

Informal Resolution can include three different approaches:

- When the parties agree to resolve the matter through an alternate resolution mechanism including mediation, restorative practices, etc.;
- When the Respondent accepts responsibility for violating policy, and desires to accept a sanction and end the resolution process; or
- When the Title IX Coordinator can resolve the matter informally by providing supportive measures to remedy the situation.

To initiate Informal Resolution, a Complainant needs to submit a formal complaint, as defined above. If a Respondent wishes to initiate Informal Resolution, they should contact the Title IX Coordinator to so indicate.

It is not necessary to pursue Informal Resolution first in order to pursue a Formal Grievance Process, and any party participating in Informal Resolution can stop the process at any time and begin or resume the Formal Grievance Process.

Prior to implementing Informal Resolution, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will provide the parties with written notice of the reported misconduct and any sanctions or measures that may result from participating in such a process, including information regarding any records that will be maintained or shared by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will obtain voluntary, written confirmation that all parties wish to resolve the matter through Informal Resolution before proceeding and will not pressure the parties to participate in Informal Resolution.

### b. Alternate Resolution

Alternate Resolution is an informal process, including mediation or restorative practices, etc. by which a mutually agreed upon resolution of an allegation is reached. All parties must consent to the use of Alternate Resolution.

The Title IX Coordinator may look to the following factors to assess whether Alternate Resolution is appropriate, or which form of Alternate Resolution may be most successful for the parties:

- The parties' amenability to Alternate Resolution;
- Likelihood of potential resolution, taking into account any power dynamics between the parties;
- The parties' motivation to participate;

- Civility of the parties;
- Cleared violence risk assessment/ongoing risk analysis;
- Disciplinary history;
- Whether an emergency removal is needed;
- Skill of the Alternate Resolution facilitator with this type of complaint;
- Complaint complexity;
- Emotional investment/intelligence of the parties;
- Rationality of the parties;
- Goals of the parties;
- Adequate resources to invest in Alternate Resolution (time, staff, etc.)

The ultimate determination of whether Alternate Resolution is available or successful is to be made by the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator maintains records of any resolution that is reached, and failure to abide by the resolution agreement may result in appropriate responsive/disciplinary actions. Results of complaints resolved by Informal Resolution or Alternate Resolution are not appealable.

### c. Respondent Accepts Responsibility for Alleged Violations

The Respondent may accept responsibility for all or part of the alleged policy violations at any point during the resolution process. If the Respondent indicates an intent to accept responsibility for all of the alleged misconduct, the formal process will be paused, and the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether Informal Resolution can be used according to the criteria in that section above.

If Informal Resolution is applicable, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether all parties and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma are able to agree on responsibility, sanctions, and/or remedies. If so, the Title IX Coordinator implements the accepted finding that the Respondent is in violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy and implements agreed-upon sanctions and/or remedies, in coordination with other appropriate administrator(s), as necessary.

This result is not subject to appeal once all parties indicate their written assent to all agreed upon terms of resolution. When the parties cannot agree on all terms of resolution, the Formal Grievance Process will resume at the same point where it was paused.

When a resolution is accomplished, the appropriate sanction or responsive actions are promptly implemented in order to effectively stop the harassment or discrimination, prevent its recurrence, and remedy the effects of the discriminatory conduct, both on the Complainant and the community.

### d. Negotiated Resolution

The Title IX Coordinator, with the consent of the parties, may negotiate and implement an agreement to resolve the allegations that satisfies all parties and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. Negotiated Resolutions are not appealable.

## 7. Grievance Process Pool

The Formal Grievance Process relies on a pool of administrators (“the Pool”) to carry out the process. Members of the Pool are announced in an annual distribution of this policy to all students, parents/guardians of students, employees, prospective students, and prospective employees.

The list of Grievance Process Pool members and a description of the Pool can be found at: https://usao.edu/about/title-ix.html

### a. Pool Member Roles

Members of the Pool are trained annually, and can serve in in the following roles, at the direction of the Title IX Coordinator:

- To provide appropriate intake of and initial guidance pertaining to complaints
- To act as an Advisor to the parties
- To serve in a facilitation role in informal resolution or Alternate Resolution if appropriately trained in appropriate resolution modalities (e.g., mediation, restorative practices]
- To perform or assist with initial assessment
- To investigate complaints
- To serve as a hearing facilitator (process administrator, no decision-making role)
- To serve as a Decision-maker regarding the complaint
- To serve as an Appeal Decision-maker

### b. Pool Member Appointment

The Title IX Coordinator, in consultation with the President, appoints the Pool which may include outsourcing or contracting with an outside agency, which acts with independence and impartiality.

### c. Pool Member Training

The Pool members receive annual training. This training includes, but is not limited to:

- The scope of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- How to conduct investigations and hearings that protect the safety of Complainants and Respondents, and promote accountability
- Implicit bias
- Disparate treatment and impact
- Reporting, confidentiality, and privacy requirements
- Applicable laws, regulations, and federal regulatory guidance
- How to implement appropriate and situation-specific remedies
- How to investigate in a thorough, reliable, and impartial manner
- How to uphold fairness, equity, and due process
- How to weigh evidence
- How to conduct questioning
- How to assess credibility
- Impartiality and objectivity
- How to render findings and generate clear, concise, evidence-based rationales
- The definitions of all offenses
- How to apply definitions used by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma with respect to consent (or the absence or negation of consent) consistently, impartially, and in accordance with policy
- How to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes
- How to serve impartially by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias
- Any technology to be used at a live hearing
- Issues of relevance of questions and evidence

- Issues of relevance to create an investigation report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence
- How to determine appropriate sanctions in reference to all forms of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation allegations

Specific training is also provided for Appeal Decision-makers, intake personnel, Advisors (who are University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma employees), and Chairs. All Pool members are required to attend these trainings annually. The materials used to train all members of the Pool are publicly posted here: https://usao.edu/about/title-ix.html

### d. Pool Membership

The Pool includes but is not limited to:

- Representatives from Student Affairs
- Representatives from Academic Affairs
- Representative from Human Resources,
- Representatives from Campus Safety
- Representatives from Staff
- Representatives from Athletics

Pool members are usually appointed to three-year terms.

## 8. Formal Grievance Process: Notice of Investigation and Allegations

The Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the investigation and allegations (the "NOIA") to the Respondent upon commencement of the Formal Grievance Process. This facilitates the Respondent's ability to prepare for the interview and to identify and choose an Advisor to accompany them. The NOIA is also copied to the Complainant, who is to be given advance notice of when the NOIA will be delivered to the Respondent. The NOIA will include:

- A meaningful summary of all of allegations,
- The identity of the involved parties (if known),
- The precise misconduct being alleged,
- The date and location of the alleged incident(s) (if known),
- The specific policies implicated,
- A description of the applicable procedures,
- A statement of the potential sanctions/responsive actions that could result,
- A statement that the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma presumes the Respondent is not responsible for the reported misconduct unless and until the evidence supports a different determination,
- A statement that determinations of responsibility are made at the conclusion of the process and that the parties will be given an opportunity to inspect and review all directly related and/or relevant evidence obtained during the review and comment period,
- A statement about the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's policy on retaliation,
- Information about the privacy of the process,
- Information on the need for each party to have an Advisor of their choosing and suggestions for ways to identify an Advisor,
- A statement informing the parties that the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Policy prohibits knowingly making false statements, including knowingly submitting false information during the resolution process,
- Detail on how the party may request disability accommodations during the interview process,

- A link to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's VAWA Brochure,
- The name(s) of the Investigator(s), along with a process to identify, in advance of the interview process, to the Title IX Coordinator any conflict of interest that the Investigator(s) may have, and
- An instruction to preserve any evidence that is directly related to the allegations.

Amendments and updates to the NOIA may be made as the investigation progresses and more information becomes available regarding the addition or dismissal of various charges.

Notice will be made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person, mailed to the local or permanent address(es) of the parties as indicated in official University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma records, or emailed to the parties' University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-issued email or designated accounts. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

## 9. Resolution Timeline

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will make a good faith effort to complete the resolution process within a sixty-to-ninety (60-90) business day time period, including appeal, which can be extended as necessary for appropriate cause by the Title IX Coordinator, who will provide notice and rationale for any extensions or delays to the parties as appropriate, as well as an estimate of how much additional time will be needed to complete the process.

## 10. Appointment of Investigators

Once the decision to commence a formal investigation is made, the Title IX Coordinator appoints an investigator(s) to conduct the investigation within a reasonable timeframe.

## 11. Ensuring Impartiality

Any individual materially involved in the administration of the resolution process including the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), and Decision-maker(s) may neither have nor demonstrate a conflict of interest or bias for a party generally, or for a specific Complainant or Respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator will vet the assigned Investigator(s) to ensure impartiality by ensuring there are no actual or apparent conflicts of interest or disqualifying biases. The parties may, at any time during the resolution process, raise a concern regarding bias or conflict of interest, and the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the concern is reasonable and supportable. If so, another Pool member will be assigned and the impact of the bias or conflict, if any, will be remedied. If the source of the conflict of interest or bias is the Title IX Coordinator, concerns should be raised with the USAO President.

The Formal Grievance Process involves an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence obtained, including evidence which supports that the Respondent engaged in a policy violation and evidence which supports that the Respondent did not engage in a policy violation. Credibility determinations may not be based solely on an individual's status or participation as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma operates with the presumption that the Respondent is not responsible for the reported misconduct unless and until the Respondent is determined to be responsible for a policy violation by the applicable standard of proof.

## 12. Investigation Timeline

Investigations are completed expeditiously, normally within thirty (30) business days, though some investigations may take weeks or even months, depending on the nature, extent, and complexity of the allegations, availability of witnesses, police involvement, etc.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will make a good faith effort to complete investigations as promptly as circumstances permit and will communicate regularly with the parties to update them on the progress and timing of the investigation.

## 13. Delays in the Investigation Process and Interactions with Law Enforcement

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may undertake a short delay in its investigation (several days to a few weeks) if circumstances require. Such circumstances include, but are not limited to: a request from law enforcement to temporarily delay the investigation, the need for language assistance, the absence of parties and/or witnesses, and/or accommodations for disabilities or health conditions.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will communicate in writing the anticipated duration of the delay and reason to the parties and provide the parties with status updates if necessary. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will promptly resume its investigation and resolution process as soon as feasible. During such a delay, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will implement supportive measures as deemed appropriate.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma action(s) are not typically altered or precluded on the grounds that civil or criminal charges involving the underlying incident(s) have been filed or that criminal charges have been dismissed or reduced.

## 14. Steps in the Investigation Process

All investigations are thorough, reliable, impartial, prompt, and fair. Investigations involve interviews with all relevant parties and witnesses; obtaining available, relevant evidence; and identifying sources of expert information, as necessary.

All parties have a full and fair opportunity, through the investigation process, to suggest witnesses and questions, to provide evidence and expert witnesses, and to fully review and respond to all evidence on the record.

The Investigator(s) typically take(s) the following steps, if not already completed (not necessarily in this order):

- Determine the identity and contact information of the Complainant
- In coordination with campus partners (e.g., the Title IX Coordinator), initiate or assist with any necessary supportive measures
- Identify all policies implicated by the alleged misconduct and notify the Complainant and Respondent of all of the specific policies implicated
- Assist the Title IX Coordinator with conducting a prompt initial assessment to determine if the allegations indicate a potential policy violation
- Commence a thorough, reliable, and impartial investigation by identifying issues and developing a strategic investigation plan, including a witness list, evidence list, intended investigation timeframe, and order of interviews for all witnesses and the parties
- Meet with the Complainant to finalize their interview/statement, if necessary

- Prepare the initial Notice of Investigation and Allegation (NOIA). The NOIA may be amended with any additional or dismissed allegations
    - Notice should inform the parties of their right to have the assistance of an Advisor, who could be a member of the Pool or an Advisor of their choosing present for all meetings attended by the party
- Provide each interviewed party and witness an opportunity to review and verify the Investigator's summary notes (or transcript) of the relevant evidence/testimony from their respective interviews and meetings
- Make good faith efforts to notify the parties of any meeting or interview involving the other party, in advance when possible
- When participation of a party is expected, provide that party with written notice of the date, time, and location of the meeting, as well as the expected participants and purpose
- Interview all available, relevant witnesses and conduct follow-up interviews as necessary
- Allow each party the opportunity to suggest witnesses and questions they wish the Investigator(s) to ask of the other party and witnesses, and document in the report which questions were asked, with a rationale for any changes or omissions.
- Complete the investigation promptly and without unreasonable deviation from the intended timeline
- Provide regular status updates to the parties throughout the investigation.
- Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, provide the parties and their respective Advisors (if so desired by the parties) with a list of witnesses whose information will be used to render a finding
- Write a comprehensive investigation report fully summarizing the investigation, all witness interviews, and addressing all relevant evidence. Appendices including relevant physical or documentary evidence will be included
- The Investigator(s) gather, assess, and synthesize evidence, but make no conclusions, engage in no policy analysis, and render no recommendations as part of their report
- Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, provide the parties and their respective Advisors (if so desired by the parties) a secured electronic or hard copy of the draft investigation report as well as an opportunity to inspect and review all of the evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the reported misconduct, including evidence upon which the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not intend to rely in reaching a determination, for a ten (10) business day review and comment period so that each party may meaningfully respond to the evidence. The parties may elect to waive the full ten days. Each copy of the materials shared will be watermarked on each page with the role of the person receiving it (e.g., Complainant, Respondent, Complainant's Advisor, Respondent's Advisor).
- The Investigator(s) may elect to respond in writing in the investigation report to the parties' submitted responses and/or to share the responses between the parties for additional responses
- The Investigator(s) will incorporate relevant elements of the parties' written responses into the final investigation report, include any additional relevant evidence, make any necessary revisions, and finalize the report. The Investigator(s) should document all rationales for any changes made after the review and comment period
- The Investigator(s) shares the report with the Title IX Coordinator and/or legal counsel for their review and feedback
- The Investigator will incorporate any relevant feedback, and the final report is then shared with all parties and their Advisors through secure electronic transmission or hard copy at least ten (10) business days prior to a hearing. The parties are also provided with a file of any directly related evidence that was not included in the report

## 15. Role and Participation of Witnesses in the Investigation

Witnesses (as distinguished from the parties) who are employees of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma are expected to cooperate with and participate in the University's investigation and resolution process. Failure of such witnesses to cooperate with and/or participate in the investigation or resolution process constitutes a violation of policy and may warrant discipline.

While in-person interviews for parties and all potential witnesses are ideal, circumstances (e.g., study abroad, summer break) may require individuals to be interviewed remotely. Skype, Zoom, FaceTime, WebEx, or similar technologies may be used for interviews if the Investigator(s) determine that timeliness or efficiency dictate a need for remote interviewing. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will take appropriate steps to reasonably ensure the security/privacy of remote interviews.

Witnesses may also provide written statements in lieu of interviews or choose to respond to written questions, if deemed appropriate by the Investigator(s), though not preferred. If a witness submits a written statement but does not intend to be and is not present for cross examination at a hearing, their written statement may not be used as evidence.

## 16. Recording of Interviews

No unauthorized audio or video recording of any kind is permitted during investigation meetings. If Investigator(s) elect to audio and/or video record interviews, all involved parties must be made aware of and consent to audio and/or video recording.

## 17. Evidentiary Considerations in the Investigation

The investigation does not consider: 1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they evidence a pattern; 2) the character of the parties; or 3) questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, 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.

## 18. Referral for Hearing

Provided that the complaint is not resolved through Informal Resolution, once the final investigation report is shared with the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will refer the matter for a hearing.

The hearing cannot be less than ten (10) business days from the conclusion of the investigation –when the final investigation report is transmitted to the parties and the Decision-maker–unless all parties and the Decision-maker agree to an expedited timeline.

The Title IX Coordinator will select an appropriate Decision-maker or Decision-makers from the Pool depending on whether the Respondent is an employee or a student. Allegations involving student-employees will be directed to the appropriate Decision-maker depending on the context of the alleged misconduct.

## 19. Hearing Decision-maker Composition

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will designate a single Decision-maker or a three-member panel from the Pool, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. The single Decision-maker will also Chair the hearing. With a panel, one of the three members will be appointed as Chair by the Title IX Coordinator.

The Decision-maker(s) will not have had any previous involvement with the investigation. The Title IX Coordinator may elect to have an alternate from the Pool sit in throughout the resolution process in the event that a substitute is needed for any reason. Those who have served as Investigators will be witnesses in the hearing and therefore may not serve as Decision-makers. Those who are serving as Advisors for any party may not serve as Decision-makers in that matter.

The Title IX Coordinator may not serve as a Decision-maker or Chair in the matter but may serve as an administrative facilitator of the hearing if their previous role(s) in the matter do not create a conflict of interest. Otherwise, a designee may fulfill this role. The hearing will convene at a time determined by the Chair or designee.

## 20. Evidentiary Considerations in the Hearing

Any evidence that the Decision-maker(s) determine(s) is relevant and credible may be considered. The hearing does not consider: 1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they evidence a pattern; 2) the character of the parties; or 3) questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, 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.

Previous disciplinary action of any kind involving the Respondent may be considered in determining an appropriate sanction upon a determination of responsibility, assuming the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma uses a progressive discipline system. This information is only considered at the sanction stage of the process.

The parties may each submit a written impact statement prior to the hearing for the consideration of the Decision-maker(s) at the sanction stage of the process when a determination of responsibility is reached.

After post-hearing deliberation, the Decision-maker renders a determination based on the preponderance of the evidence; whether it is more likely than not that the Respondent violated the Policy as alleged.

## 21. Notice of Hearing

No less than ten (10) business days prior to the hearing, the Title IX Coordinator or the Chair will send notice of the hearing to the parties. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered. The notice will contain:

- A description of the alleged violation(s), a list of all policies allegedly violated, a description of the applicable procedures, and a statement of the potential sanctions/responsive actions that could result.
- The time, date, and location of the hearing and a reminder that attendance is mandatory, superseding all other campus activities.

- Any technology that will be used to facilitate the hearing.
- Information about the option for the live hearing to occur with the parties located in separate rooms using technology that enables the Decision-maker(s) and parties to see and hear a party or witness answering questions. Such a request must be raised with the Title IX Coordinator at least six (6) business days prior to the hearing.
- A list of all those who will attend the hearing, along with an invitation to object to any Decision-maker on the basis of demonstrated bias. This must be raised with the Title IX Coordinator at least two (2) business days prior to the hearing.
- Information on how the hearing will be recorded and on access to the recording for the parties after the hearing.
- A statement that if any party or witness does not appear at the scheduled hearing, the hearing may be held in their absence, and the party's or witness's testimony and any statements given prior to the hearing will not be considered by the Decision-maker(s). For compelling reasons, the Chair may reschedule the hearing.
- Notification that the parties may have the assistance of an Advisor of their choosing at the hearing and will be required to have one present for any questions they may desire to ask. The party must notify the Title IX Coordinator if they do not have an Advisor, and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will appoint one. Each party must have an Advisor present. There are no exceptions.
- A copy of all the materials provided to the Decision-maker(s) about the matter, unless they have been provided already.[11]
- An invitation to each party to submit to the Chair an impact statement pre-hearing that the Decision-maker will review during any sanction determination.
- An invitation to contact the Title IX Coordinator to arrange any disability accommodations, language assistance, and/or interpretation services that may be needed at the hearing, at least seven (7) business days prior to the hearing.
- Whether parties cannot bring mobile phones/devices into the hearing.

Hearings for possible violations that occur near or after the end of an academic term (assuming the Respondent is still subject to this Policy) and are unable to be resolved prior to the end of term will typically be held immediately after the end of the term or during the summer, as needed, to meet the resolution timeline followed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and remain within the 90 business day goal for resolution.

## 22. Alternative Hearing Participation Options

If a party or parties prefer not to attend or cannot attend the hearing in person, the party should request alternative arrangements from the Title IX Coordinator or designee at least six (6) business days prior to the hearing.

The Title IX Coordinator or the Chair can arrange to use technology to allow remote testimony without compromising the fairness of the hearing. Remote options may also be needed for witnesses who cannot appear in person. Any witness who cannot attend in person should let the Title IX Coordinator or designee know at least six (6) business days prior to the hearing so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

[11] The final investigation report may be shared using electronic means that preclude downloading, forwarding, or otherwise sharing.

## 23. Pre-Hearing Preparation

The Chair, after any necessary consultation with the parties, Investigator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinator, will provide the names of persons who will be participating in the hearing, all pertinent documentary evidence, and the final investigation report to the parties at least ten (10) business days prior to the hearing.

Any witness scheduled to participate in the hearing must have been first interviewed by the Investigator(s) or have proffered a written statement or answered written questions, unless all parties and the Chair assent to the witness's participation in the hearing. The same holds for any evidence that is first offered at the hearing. If the parties and Chair do not assent to the admission of evidence newly offered at the hearing, the Chair will delay the hearing and instruct that the investigation needs to be re-opened to consider that evidence.

The parties will be given a list of the names of the Decision-maker(s) at least five (5) business days in advance of the hearing. All objections to any Decision-maker must be raised in writing, detailing the rationale for the objection, and must be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible and no later than two days prior to the hearing. Decision-makers will only be removed if the Title IX Coordinator concludes that their bias or conflict of interest precludes an impartial hearing of the allegation(s).

The Title IX Coordinator will give the Decision-maker(s) a list of the names of all parties, witnesses, and Advisors at least five (5) business days in advance of the hearing. Any Decision-maker who cannot make an objective determination must recuse themselves from the proceedings when notified of the identity of the parties, witnesses, and Advisors in advance of the hearing. If a Decision-maker is unsure of whether a bias or conflict of interest exists, they must raise the concern to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible.

During the ten (10) business day period prior to the hearing, the parties have the opportunity for continued review and comment on the final investigation report and available evidence. That review and comment can be shared with the Chair at the pre-hearing meeting or at the hearing and will be exchanged between each party by the Chair.

## 24. Pre-Hearing Meetings

The Chair may convene a pre-hearing meeting(s) with the parties and/or their Advisors to invite them to submit the questions or topics they (the parties and/or their Advisors) wish to ask or discuss at the hearing, so that the Chair can rule on their relevance ahead of time to avoid any improper evidentiary introduction in the hearing or provide recommendations for more appropriate phrasing. However, this advance review opportunity does not preclude the Advisors from asking at the hearing for a reconsideration based on any new information or testimony offered at the hearing. The Chair must document and share their rationale for any exclusion or inclusion at this pre-hearing meeting.

The Chair, **only** with full agreement of the parties, may decide in advance of the hearing that certain witnesses do not need to be present if their testimony can be adequately summarized by the Investigator(s) in the investigation report or during the hearing.

At each pre-hearing meeting with a party and their Advisor, the Chair will consider arguments that evidence identified in the final investigation report as relevant is, in fact, not relevant. Similarly, evidence identified as directly related but not relevant by the Investigator(s) may be argued to be relevant. The Chair may rule on these arguments pre-hearing and will exchange those rulings between the parties prior to the hearing to assist in preparation for the hearing. The Chair may consult with legal counsel and/or the Title IX Coordinator, or ask either or both to attend pre-hearing meetings.

The pre-hearing meeting(s) will be recorded.

## 25. Hearing Procedures

At the hearing, the Decision-maker(s) has the authority to hear and make determinations on all allegations of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation and may also hear and make determinations on any additional alleged policy violations that have occurred in concert with the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation, even though those collateral allegations may not specifically fall within the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination.

Participants at the hearing will include the Chair, any additional panelists, the hearing facilitator, the Investigator(s) who conducted the investigation, the parties (or three (3) organizational representatives when an organization is the Respondent[12]), Advisors to the parties, any called witnesses, and anyone providing authorized accommodations or assistive services.

The Chair will answer all questions of procedure. Anyone appearing at the hearing to provide information will respond to questions on their own behalf.

The Chair will allow witnesses who have relevant information to appear at a portion of the hearing in order to respond to specific questions from the Decision-maker(s) and the parties and will then be excused.

## 26. Joint Hearings

In hearings involving more than one Respondent or in which two (2) or more Complainants have accused the same individual of substantially similar conduct, the default procedure will be to hear the allegations jointly.

However, the Title IX Coordinator may permit the investigation and/or hearings pertinent to each Respondent to be conducted separately if there is a compelling reason to do so. In joint hearings, separate determinations of responsibility will be made for each Respondent with respect to each alleged policy violation.

## 27. The Order of the Hearing – Introductions and Explanation of Procedure

The Chair explains the procedures and introduces the participants. This may include a final opportunity for challenge or recusal of the Decision-maker(s) on the basis of bias or conflict of interest. The Chair will rule on any such challenge unless the Chair is the individual who is the subject of the challenge, in which case the Title IX Coordinator or designee will review and decide the challenge.

The Chair AND/OR hearing facilitator then conducts the hearing according to the hearing script. At the hearing, recording, witness logistics, party logistics, curation of documents, separation of the parties, and other administrative elements of the hearing process are managed by a non-voting hearing facilitator appointed by the Title IX Coordinator. The hearing facilitator may attend to: logistics of rooms for various parties/witnesses as they wait; flow of parties/witnesses in and out of the hearing space; ensuring recording and/or virtual conferencing technology is working as intended; copying and distributing materials to participants, as appropriate, etc.

[12] Subject to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Code of Organizational Conduct.

## 28. Investigator Presents the Final Investigation Report

The Investigator(s) will then present a summary of the final investigation report, including items that are contested and those that are not, and will be subject to questioning by the Decision-maker(s) and the parties (through their Advisors). The Investigator(s) will be present during the entire hearing process, but not during deliberations.

Neither the parties nor the Decision-maker(s) should ask the Investigator(s) their opinions on credibility, recommended findings, or determinations, and the Investigators, Advisors, and parties will refrain from discussion of or questions about these assessments. If such information is introduced, the Chair will direct that it be disregarded.

## 29. Testimony and Questioning

Once the Investigator(s) present their report and are questioned, the parties and witnesses may provide relevant information in turn, beginning with the Complainant, and then in the order determined by the Chair. The parties/witnesses will submit to questioning by the Decision-maker(s) and then by the parties through their Advisors ("cross-examination").

All questions are subject to a relevance determination by the Chair. The Advisor, who will remain seated during questioning, will pose the proposed question orally, electronically, or in writing (orally is the default, but other means of submission may be permitted by the Chair upon request or agreed to by the parties and the Chair), the proceeding will pause to allow the Chair to consider it, and the Chair will determine whether the question will be permitted, disallowed, or rephrased.

The Chair may explore arguments regarding relevance with the Advisors, if the Chair so chooses. The Chair will then state their decision on the question for the record and advise the party/witness to whom the question was directed, accordingly. The Chair will explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant, or to reframe it for relevance.

The Chair will limit or disallow questions on the basis that they are irrelevant, unduly repetitious (and thus irrelevant), or abusive. The Chair has final say on all questions and determinations of relevance, subject to any appeal. The Chair may consult with legal counsel on any questions of admissibility. The Chair may ask advisors to frame why a question is or is not relevant from their perspective but will not entertain argument from the advisors on relevance once the Chair has ruled on a question.

If the parties raise an issue of bias or conflict of interest of an Investigator or Decision-maker at the hearing, the Chair may elect to address those issues, consult with legal counsel, and/or refer them to the Title IX Coordinator, and/or preserve them for appeal. If bias is not in issue at the hearing, the Chair should not permit irrelevant questions that probe for bias.

## 30. Refusal to Submit to Cross-Examination and Inferences

Cross-examination is an all or nothing proposition, meaning that if any question is refused, no statements of that party or witness are admissible. Only if a party or witness is willing to submit to cross-examination, and answers all questions, will their statements prior to or at the hearing be fully admissible. If a party or witness chooses not to submit to cross-examination at the hearing, either because they do not attend the meeting, or they attend but refuse to participate in questioning, then the Decision-maker(s) may not rely on any prior statement made by that party or witness at the hearing (including those contained in the investigation report) in the ultimate determination of responsibility. The Decision-maker(s) must disregard all statements. Evidence provided that is something other than a statement by the party or witness may be considered.

Whether a party or witness does or does not answer questions from the Decision-maker, their statements will be admissible as long as they are willing to submit to cross-examination questions, even if they are not asked such questions. The Decision-maker(s) may not draw any inference solely from a party's or witness's absence from the hearing or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

The Decision-maker(s) may not draw any inference solely from a party's or witness's absence from the hearing or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

If charges of policy violations other than sexual harassment are considered at the same hearing, the Decision-maker(s) may consider all evidence it deems relevant, may rely on any relevant statement as long as the opportunity for cross-examination is afforded to all parties through their Advisors, and may draw reasonable inferences from any decision by any party or witness not to participate or respond to questions.

If a party's Advisor of choice refuses to comply with the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's established rules of decorum for the hearing, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may require the party to use a different Advisor. If a University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-provided A refuses to comply with the rules of decorum, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may provide that party with a different Advisor to conduct cross-examination on behalf of that party.

## 31. Recording Hearings

Hearings (but not deliberations) are recorded by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma for purposes of review in the event of an appeal. The parties may not record the proceedings and no other unauthorized recordings are permitted.

The Decision-maker(s), the parties, their Advisors, and appropriate administrators of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will be permitted to listen to the recording in a controlled environment determined by the Title IX Coordinator. No person will be given or be allowed to make a copy of the recording without permission of the Title IX Coordinator.

## 32. Deliberation, Decision-making, and Standard of Proof

The Decision-maker(s) will deliberate in closed session to determine whether the Respondent is responsible or not responsible for the policy violation(s) in question. If a panel is used, a simple majority vote is required to determine the finding. The preponderance of the evidence standard of proof is used. The hearing facilitator may be invited to attend the deliberation by the Chair, but is there only to facilitate procedurally, not to address the substance of the allegations.

When there is a finding of responsibility on one or more of the allegations, the Decision-maker(s) may then consider the previously submitted party impact statements in determining appropriate sanction(s).

The Chair will ensure that each of the parties has an opportunity to review any impact statement submitted by the other party(ies). The Decision-maker(s) may – at their discretion – consider the statements, but they are not binding.

The Decision-maker(s) will review the statements and any pertinent conduct history provided by the Title IX Coordinator or designee and will recommend the appropriate sanction(s) in consultation with other appropriate administrators as required.

The Chair will then prepare a written deliberation statement and deliver it to the Title IX Coordinator, detailing the determination, rationale, the evidence used in support of its determination, the evidence disregarded, credibility assessments, and any sanctions or recommendations.

This report typically should not exceed three (3) to five (5) pages in length and must be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator within two (2) business days of the end of deliberations, unless the Title IX Coordinator grants an extension. If an extension is granted, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the parties.

## 33. Notice of Outcome

Using the deliberation statement, the Title IX Coordinator will work with the Chair to prepare a Notice of Outcome. The Notice of Outcome may then be reviewed by legal counsel. The Title IX Coordinator will then share the letter, including the final determination, rationale, and any applicable sanction(s) with the parties and their Advisors within 10 business days of receiving the Decision-maker(s)' deliberation statement.

The Notice of Outcome will then be shared with the parties simultaneously. Notification will be made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person, mailed to the local or permanent address of the parties as indicated in official University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma records, or emailed to the parties' University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-issued email or otherwise approved account. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

The Notice of Outcome will identify the specific policy(ies) reported to have been violated, including the relevant policy section, and will contain a description of the procedural steps taken by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma from the receipt of the misconduct report to the determination, including any and all notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to obtain evidence, and hearings held.

The Notice of Outcome will specify the finding on each alleged policy violation; the findings of fact that support the determination; conclusions regarding the application of the relevant policy to the facts at issue; a statement of, and rationale for, the result of each allegation to the extent the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share such information under state or federal law; any sanctions issued which the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share according to state or federal law; and any remedies provided to the Complainant designed to ensure access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's educational or employment program or activity, to the extent the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share such information under state or federal law (this detail is not typically shared with the Respondent unless the remedy directly relates to the Respondent).

The Notice of Outcome will also include information on when the results are considered by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to be final, any changes that occur prior to finalization, and the relevant procedures and bases for any available appeal options.

## 34. Statement of the Rights of the Parties (see Appendix B)

## 35. Sanctions

Factors considered when determining a sanction/responsive action may include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, severity of, and circumstances surrounding the violation(s)
- The Respondent's disciplinary history
- Previous allegations or allegations involving similar conduct
- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to bring an end to the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation

- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to prevent the future recurrence of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation
- The need to remedy the effects of the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation on the Complainant and the community
- The impact on the parties
- Any other information deemed relevant by the Decision-maker(s)

The sanctions will be implemented as soon as is feasible, either upon the outcome of any appeal or the expiration of the window to appeal without an appeal being requested.

The sanctions described in this policy are not exclusive of, and may be in addition to, other actions taken or sanctions imposed by external authorities.

### a. Student Sanctions Examples

The following are the usual sanctions[13] that may be imposed upon students or organizations singly or in combination:

- *Warning:* A formal statement that the conduct was unacceptable and a warning that further violation of any University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy, procedure, or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- *Required Counseling:* A mandate to meet with and engage in either University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-sponsored or external counseling to better comprehend the misconduct and its effects.
- *Probation:* A written reprimand for violation of institutional policy, providing for more severe disciplinary sanctions in the event that the student or organization is found in violation of any institutional policy, procedure, or directive within a specified period of time. Terms of the probation will be articulated and may include denial of specified social privileges, exclusion from co-curricular activities, exclusion from designated areas of campus, no-contact orders, and/or other measures deemed appropriate.
- *Suspension:* Termination of student status for a definite period of time not to exceed two years and/or until specific criteria are met. Students who return from suspension are automatically placed on probation through the remainder of their tenure as a student at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.
- *Expulsion:* Permanent termination of student status and revocation of rights to be on campus for any reason or to attend University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-sponsored events. This sanction will be noted permanently as a Conduct Expulsion on the student's official transcript, subject to any applicable expungement policies.
- *Withholding Diploma*: The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may withhold a student's diploma for a specified period of time and/or deny a student participation in commencement activities as a sanction if the student is found responsible for an alleged violation.
- *Revocation of Degree:* The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to revoke a degree previously awarded from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma for fraud, misrepresentation, and/or other violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies, procedures, or directives in obtaining the degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.
- *Organizational Sanctions*: Deactivation, loss of recognition, loss of some or all privileges (including University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma registration) for a specified period of time.

[13] Recipient policies on transcript notation will apply to these proceedings.

- *Other Actions:* In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

### b. Employee Sanctions

Responsive actions for an employee who has engaged in harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation include:

- *Warning – Verbal or Written*
- *Performance Improvement/Management Process*
- *Required Counseling*
- *Required Training or Education*
- *Probation*
- *Loss of Annual Pay Increase*
- *Loss of Oversight or Supervisory Responsibility*
- *Demotion*
- *Suspension with pay*
- *Suspension without pay*
- *Termination*
- *Other Actions:* In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

## 36. Withdrawal or Resignation While Charges Pending

Students:

Should a student decide to not participate in the resolution process, the process proceeds absent their participation to a reasonable resolution. Should a student Respondent permanently withdraw from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, the resolution process ends, as the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma no longer has disciplinary jurisdiction over the withdrawn student.

However, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will continue to address and remedy any systemic issues or concerns that may have contributed to the alleged violation(s), and any ongoing effects of the alleged harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation. The student who withdraws or leaves while the process is pending may not return to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. The appropriate admitting offices(s) will be notified that they cannot be readmitted. They may also be barred from University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma property and/or events.

If the student Respondent only withdraws or takes a leave for a specified period of time (e.g., one semester or term), the resolution process may continue remotely and that student is not permitted to return to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma unless and until all sanctions have been satisfied.

Employees: Should an employee Respondent resign with unresolved allegations pending, the resolution process ends, as the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma no longer has disciplinary jurisdiction over the resigned employee.

However, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will continue to address and remedy any systemic issues or concerns that contributed to the alleged violation(s), and any ongoing effects of the alleged harassment or discrimination.

The employee who resigns with unresolved allegations pending is not eligible for rehire with the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, and the records retained by the Title IX Coordinator will reflect that status.

All University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma responses to future inquiries regarding employment references for that individual will include that the former employee resigned during a pending disciplinary matter.

## 37. Appeals

Any party may file a request for appeal ("Request for Appeal"), but it must be submitted in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within 3 days of the delivery of the Notice of Outcome.

A three-member appeal\panel chosen from the Pool will be designated by the Title IX Coordinator OR a single Appeal Decision-maker will Chair the appeal. No appeal panelists or Decision-maker will have been involved in the process previously, including any dismissal appeal that may have been heard earlier in the process. A voting Chair of the Appeal panel will be designated.

The Request for Appeal will be forwarded to the Appeal Chair for consideration to determine if the request meets the grounds for appeal (a Review for Standing).

This review is not a review of the merits of the appeal, but solely a determination as to whether the request meets the grounds and is timely filed.

### a. Grounds for Appeal

Appeals are limited to the following grounds:

(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, Investigator(s), or Decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the specific Complainant or Respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

If any of the grounds in the Request for Appeal do not meet the grounds in this Policy, that request will be denied by the Chair and the parties and their Advisors will be notified in writing of the denial and the rationale.

If any of the grounds in the Request for Appeal meet the grounds in this Policy, then the Appeal Chair will notify the other party(ies) and their Advisors, the Title IX Coordinator, and, when appropriate, the Investigators and/or the original Decision-maker(s).

The other party(ies) and their Advisors, the Title IX Coordinator, and, when appropriate, the Investigators and/or the original Decision-maker(s) will be mailed, emailed, and/or provided a hard copy of the request with the approved grounds and then be given 7 business days to submit a response to the portion of the appeal that was approved and involves them. All responses will be forwarded by the Chair to all parties for review and comment.

The non-appealing party (if any) may also choose to raise a new ground for appeal at this time. If so, that will be reviewed for standing by the Appeal Chair and either denied or approved. If approved, it will be forwarded to the party who initially requested an appeal, the Investigator(s) and/or original Decision-maker(s), as necessary, who will submit their responses in 7 business days, which will be circulated for review and comment by all parties.

Neither party may submit any new requests for appeal after this time period. The Appeal Chair will collect any additional information needed and all documentation regarding the approved grounds and the subsequent responses will be shared with the Appeal Panel, and the Chair/Panel will render a decision in no more than 7 business days, barring exigent circumstances. All decisions are by majority vote and apply the preponderance of the evidence standard.

A Notice of Appeal Outcome will be sent to all parties simultaneously including the decision on each approved ground and rationale for each decision. The Notice of Appeal Outcome will specify the finding on each ground for appeal, any specific instructions for remand or reconsideration, any sanctions that may result which the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share according to state or federal law, and the rationale supporting the essential findings to the extent the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share under state or federal law.

Notification will be made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person, mailed to the local or permanent address of the parties as indicated in official institutional records, or emailed to the parties' University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-issued email or otherwise approved account. Once mailed, emailed and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

### b. Sanctions Status During the Appeal

Any sanctions imposed as a result of the hearing are stayed during the appeal process. Supportive measures may be reinstated, subject to the same supportive measure procedures above.

If any of the sanctions are to be implemented immediately post-hearing, then emergency removal procedures (detailed above) for a hearing on the justification for doing so must be permitted within 48 hours of implementation.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may still place holds on official transcripts, diplomas, graduations, and course registration pending the outcome of an appeal when the original sanctions included separation.

### c. Appeal Considerations

- Decisions on appeal are to be deferential to the original decision, making changes to the finding only when there is clear error and to the sanction(s)/responsive action(s) only if there is a compelling justification to do so.
- Appeals are not intended to provide for a full re-hearing (de novo) of the allegation(s). In most cases, appeals are confined to a review of the written documentation or record of the original hearing and pertinent documentation regarding the specific grounds for appeal.
- An appeal is not an opportunity for Appeal Decision-makers to substitute their judgment for that of the original Decision-maker(s) merely because they disagree with the finding and/or sanction(s).
- The Appeal Chair/Panel may consult with the Title IX Coordinator on questions of procedure or rationale, for clarification, if needed. Documentation of all such consultation will be maintained.
- Appeals granted based on new evidence should normally be remanded to the original Investigator(s) and/or Decision-maker(s) for reconsideration. Other appeals may be remanded at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator or, in limited circumstances, decided on appeal.
- Once an appeal is decided, the outcome is final: further appeals are not permitted, even if a decision or sanction is changed on remand (except in the case of a new hearing).
- In rare cases where a procedural or substantive error cannot be cured by the original Decision-maker(s) (as in cases of bias), the appeal may order a new hearing with a new Decision-maker(s).
- The results of a remand to a Decision-maker(s) cannot be appealed. The results of a new hearing can be appealed, once, on any of the three available appeal grounds.
- In cases in which the appeal results in reinstatement to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma or resumption of privileges, all reasonable attempts will be made to restore the

Respondent to their prior status, recognizing that some opportunities lost may be irreparable in the short term.

## 38. Long-Term Remedies/Other Actions

Following the conclusion of the resolution process, and in addition to any sanctions implemented, the Title IX Coordinator may implement additional long-term remedies or actions with respect to the parties and/or the campus community that are intended to stop the harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation, remedy the effects, and prevent reoccurrence.

These remedies/actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Referral to counseling and health services
- Education to the individual and/or the community
- Permanent alteration of housing assignments
- Permanent alteration of work arrangements for employees
- Provision of campus safety escorts
- Climate surveys
- Policy modification and/or training
- Provision of transportation accommodations
- Implementation of long-term contact limitations between the parties
- Implementation of adjustments to academic deadlines, course schedules, etc.

At the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, certain long-term support or measures may also be provided to the parties even if no policy violation is found.

When no policy violation is found, the Title IX Coordinator will address any remedies owed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to the Respondent to ensure no effective denial of educational access.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will maintain the privacy of any long-term remedies/actions/measures, provided privacy does not impair the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to provide these services.

## 39. Failure to Comply with Sanctions and/or Interim and Long-term Remedies and/or Responsive Actions

All Respondents are expected to comply with the assigned sanctions, responsive actions, and/or corrective actions within the timeframe specified by the final Decision-maker(s) (including the Appeal Chair/Panel).

Failure to abide by the sanction(s)/action(s) imposed by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or any other reason, may result in additional sanction(s)/action(s), including suspension, expulsion, and/or termination from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and may be noted on a student's official transcript.

A suspension will only be lifted when compliance is achieved to the satisfaction of the Title IX Coordinator.

## 40. Recordkeeping

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will maintain for a period of seven years records of:

1. Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility and any audio or audiovisual recording or transcript required under federal regulation;
2. Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the Respondent;
3. Any remedies provided to the Complainant designed to restore or preserve equal access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's education program or activity;
4. Any appeal and the result therefrom;
5. Any Informal Resolution and the result therefrom;
6. All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an Informal Resolution process. University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will make these training materials publicly available on University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's website. (Note: If the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not maintain a website, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma must make these materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.); and
7. Any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, including:
    a. The basis for all conclusions that the response was not deliberately indifferent;
    b. Any measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's education program or activity; and
    c. If no supportive measures were provided to the Complainant, document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will also maintain any and all records in accordance with state and federal laws.

## 41. Disabilities Accommodations in the Resolution Process

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and support to qualified students, employees, or others with disabilities to ensure equal access to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's resolution process.

Anyone needing such accommodations or support should contact the Coordinator for Student Wellness & Accommodations or the Office of Human Resources if employee, who will review the request and, in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation and the Title IX Coordinator, determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary for full participation in the process.

## 42. Revision of this Policy and Procedures

This Policy and procedures supersede any previous policy(ies) addressing harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, and/or retaliation and will be reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX Coordinator. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to make changes to this document as necessary, and once those changes are posted online, they are in effect.

During the resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator may make minor modifications to procedures that do not materially jeopardize the fairness owed to any party, such as to accommodate summer schedules. The Title IX Coordinator may also vary procedures materially with notice (on the

institutional website, with the appropriate effective date identified) upon determining that changes to law or regulation require policy or procedural alterations not reflected in this Policy and procedures.

If government laws or regulations change – or court decisions alter – the requirements in a way that impacts this document, this document will be construed to comply with the most recent government regulations or holdings.

This document does not create legally enforceable protections beyond the protection of the background state and federal laws which frame such policies and codes, generally.

This Policy and procedures are effective August 14, 2020.

## APPENDIX A: AN ATIXA FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMAL RESOLUTION (IR)

ATIXA has framed a process for IR that includes:

1. A response based on supportive measures; and/or
2. A response based on a Respondent accepting responsibility; and/or
3. A response based on alternative resolution, which could include various approaches and facilitation of dialogue.

Alternative resolution approaches like mediation, restorative practices, transformative justice, etc., are likely to be used more and more often by colleges and universities. ATIXA does not endorse these approaches as better or worse than other formal or informal approaches.

ATIXA believes that if they are to be used in, and are effective for, sex offenses, they need to be designed and executed carefully and thoughtfully and be facilitated by well-trained administrators who take the necessary time to prepare and lay a foundation for success. While no approach is a panacea, the framework below can help to lay that foundation, regardless of which approach(es) are used.

Here are the principles to be considered for supporting various approaches to informal resolution:

- IR can be applied in any sex/gender-based interpersonal conflict but should be only be cautiously considered for violent incidents (sexual violence, stalking, domestic and dating violence, severe sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, etc.)
- Situations involving dangerous patterns or significant ongoing threat to the community should not be resolved by IR.
- The determination of whether to permit an IR-based resolution is entirely at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator (TIXC) and in line with the requirements for IR laid out in the Title IX regulations.
- Any party can end IR early-, mid-, or late-process for any reason or no reason.
- IR can be attempted before and in lieu of formal resolution as a diversion-based resolution (although a formal complaint must be filed if you are within Section 106.30, per OCR).
- Alternative approaches can inform formal resolution, as in a formal resolution model infused with restorative practices.
- IR could be deployed after formal resolution, as an adjunct healing/catharsis opportunity (that could potentially mitigate sanctions or be a form of sanction).
- Alternate Resolution approaches to IR must be facilitated by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma or a third-party. There may be value in creating clearly agreed-upon ground rules, which the parties must sign in advance and agree to abide by, otherwise the informal resolution process will be deemed to have failed.
- Technology-facilitated IR can be made available, should the parties not be able or willing to meet in person.
- If IR fails, a formal resolution can take place thereafter. No evidence elicited within the "safe space" of the IR facilitation is later admissible in the formal resolution unless all parties consent.
- With cases involving violence, the preferred alternative approach typically involves a minimal number of essential parties and is not a wide restorative circle approach in order to ensure confidentiality.
- Some approaches require a reasonable gesture toward accountability (this could be more than an acknowledgement of harm) and some acceptance, or at least recognition, by the Respondent that catharsis is of value and likely the primary goal of the Complainant. A full admission by the Respondent is not a prerequisite. This willingness needs to be vetted carefully in advance by the TIXC before determining that an incident is amenable/appropriate for resolution by IR.

- IR can result in an accord or agreement between the parties (Complainant, Respondent, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma) which is summarized in writing by and enforced by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. This can be a primary goal of the process.
- IR can result in the voluntary imposition of safety measures, remedies, and/or agreed-upon resolutions by the parties, that are enforceable by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. These can be part of the accord/agreement.
- As a secondary goal, IR can result in the voluntary acceptance of "sanctions," meaning that a Respondent could agree to withdraw, self-suspend (by taking a leave of absence), or undertake other restrictions/transfers/online course options that would help to ensure the safety/educational access of the Complainant, in lieu of formal sanctions that would create a formal record for the Respondent. These are enforceable by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma as part of the accord/agreement, as may be terms of mutual release, non-disparagement, and/or non-disclosure.
- While a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) could result from IR, it would have to be mutually agreed-upon by the parties in an environment of non-coercion verified by the TIXC.
- Institutions must develop clear rules for managing/facilitating the conference/meeting/dialogue of alternative resolution approaches, to ensure they are civil, age-appropriate, culturally-competent, reflective of power imbalances, and maximize the potential for the resolution process to result in catharsis, restoration, remedy, etc., for the harmed party(ies).

## APPENDIX B: STATEMENT OF RIGHTS OF THE PARTIES

- The right to an equitable investigation and resolution of all credible allegations of prohibited harassment or discrimination made in good faith to University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials.
- The right to timely written notice of all alleged violations, including the identity of the parties involved (if known), the precise misconduct being alleged, the date and location of the alleged misconduct (if known), the implicated policies and procedures, and possible sanctions.
- The right to timely written notice of any material adjustments to the allegations (e.g., additional incidents or allegations, additional Complainants, unsubstantiated allegations) and any attendant adjustments needed to clarify potentially implicated policy violations.
- The right to be informed in advance of any public release of information regarding the allegation(s) or underlying incident(s), whenever possible.
- The right not to have any personally identifiable information released to the public without consent provided, except to the extent permitted by law.
- The right to be treated with respect by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials.
- The right to have University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies and procedures followed without material deviation.
- The right not to be pressured to mediate or otherwise informally resolve any reported misconduct involving violence, including sexual violence.
- The right not to be discouraged by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials from reporting sexual misconduct or discrimination to both on-campus and off-campus authorities.
- The right to be informed by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials of options to notify proper law enforcement authorities, including on-campus and local police, and the option(s) to be assisted by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma authorities in notifying such authorities, if the party so chooses. This also includes the right not to be pressured to report, as well.
- The right to have allegations of violations of this Policy responded to promptly and with sensitivity by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma officials.
- The right to be informed of available interim actions and supportive measures, such as counseling; advocacy; health care; legal, student financial aid, visa, and immigration assistance; or other services, both on campus and in the community.
- The right to a University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-implemented no-contact order or a no-trespass order against a non-affiliated third party when a person has engaged in or threatens to engage in stalking, threatening, harassing, or other improper conduct that presents a danger to the welfare of the party or others.
- The right to be informed of available assistance in changing academic, living, and/or working situations after an alleged incident of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation, if such changes are reasonably available. No formal report, or investigation, either campus or criminal, needs to occur before this option is available. Such actions may include, but are not limited to:
    - Relocating an on-campus student's housing to a different on-campus location
    - Assistance from University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma staff in completing the relocation
    - Changing an employee's work environment (e.g., reporting structure, office/workspace relocation)
    - Transportation accommodations
    - Visa/immigration assistance

    - Arranging to dissolve a housing contract and a pro-rated refund
    - Exam, paper, and/or assignment rescheduling or adjustment
    - Receiving an incomplete in, or a withdrawal from, a class (may be retroactive)
    - Transferring class sections
    - Temporary withdrawal/leave of absence (may be retroactive)
    - Campus safety escorts
    - Alternative course completion options.
- The right to have the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma maintain such actions for as long as necessary and for supportive measures to remain private, provided privacy does not impair the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's ability to provide the supportive measures.
- The right to receive sufficiently advanced, written notice of any meeting or interview involving the other party, when possible.
- The right to ask the Investigator(s) and Decision-maker(s) to identify and question relevant witnesses, including expert witnesses.
- The right to provide the Investigator(s)/Decision-maker(s) with a list of questions that, if deemed relevant by the Investigator(s)/Chair, may be asked of any party or witness.
- The right not to have irrelevant prior sexual history or character admitted as evidence.
- The right to know the relevant and directly related evidence obtained and to respond to that evidence.
- The right to fair opportunity to provide the Investigator(s) with their account of the alleged misconduct and have that account be on the record.
- The right to receive a copy of the investigation report, including all factual, policy, and/or credibility analyses performed, and all relevant and directly related evidence available and used to produce the investigation report, subject to the privacy limitations imposed by state and federal law, prior to the hearing, and the right to have at least ten (10) business days to review the report prior to the hearing.
- The right to respond to the investigation report, including comments providing any additional relevant evidence after the opportunity to review the investigation report, and to have that response on the record.
- The right to be informed of the names of all witnesses whose information will be used to make a finding, in advance of that finding, when relevant.
- The right to regular updates on the status of the investigation and/or resolution.
- The right to have reports of alleged Policy violations addressed by Investigators, Title IX Coordinators, and Decision-maker(s) who have received at least eight hours of relevant annual training.
- The right to a Hearing Panel that is not single-sex in its composition, if a panel is used.
- The right to preservation of privacy, to the extent possible and permitted by law.
- The right to meetings, interviews, and/or hearings that are closed to the public.
- The right to petition that any University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma representative in the process be recused on the basis of disqualifying bias and/or conflict of interest.
- The right to have an Advisor of their choice to accompany and assist the party in all meetings and/or interviews associated with the resolution process.
- The right to the use of the appropriate standard of evidence, preponderance of the evidence to make a finding after an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence.
- The right to be present, including presence via remote technology, during all testimony given and evidence presented during any formal grievance hearing.
- The right to have an impact statement considered by the Decision-maker(s) following a determination of responsibility for any allegation, but prior to sanctioning.

- The right to be promptly informed in a written Notice of Outcome letter of the finding(s) and sanction(s) of the resolution process and a detailed rationale therefor (including an explanation of how credibility was assessed), delivered simultaneously (without undue delay) to the parties.
- The right to be informed in writing of when a decision by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is considered final and any changes to the sanction(s) that occur before the decision is finalized.
- The right to be informed of the opportunity to appeal the finding(s) and sanction(s) of the resolution process, and the procedures for doing so in accordance with the standards for appeal established by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.
- The right to a fundamentally fair resolution as defined in these procedures.

# APPENDIX C: PROCESS B

- Process B is applicable when the Title IX Coordinator determines Process A is inapplicable, or offenses subject to Process A have been dismissed.
- If Process A is applicable, Process A must be applied in lieu of Process B.
- University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma can substitute any alternative process instead of Process B, if desired.
- VAWA Section 304 requirements apply to Process B or any alternative process for reports that fall under VAWA.
- Title IX requirements outside of Section 106.30 (based on the original 1975 regulations, the 2001 Revised Guidance, etc.) may also be applicable to Process B.

# INTERIM RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE POLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, HARASSMENT, AND NONDISCRIMINATION

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will act on any formal or informal allegation or notice of violation of the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination that is received by the Title IX Coordinator[14] or a member of the administration, faculty, or other employee, with the exception of confidential resources, as articulated in the Policy above.

The procedures described below apply to all allegations of harassment or discrimination on the basis of protected class status involving students, staff, faculty members, or third parties with the exception of at-will employees. Unionized or other categorized employees will be subject to the terms of their respective collective bargaining agreements/employees' rights to the extent those agreements do not conflict with federal or state compliance obligations.

These procedures may also be used to address collateral misconduct arising from the investigation of or occurring in conjunction with harassing or discriminatory conduct (e.g., vandalism, physical abuse of another). All other allegations of misconduct unrelated to incidents covered by this policy will be addressed through the procedures elaborated in the respective student, faculty and staff handbooks.

## 1. Initial Assessment

Following intake, receipt of notice, or a complaint of an alleged violation of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's nondiscrimination Policy, the Title IX Coordinator[15] engages in an initial assessment, which is typically one to five business days in duration. The steps in an initial assessment can include:

- The Title IX Coordinator reaches out to the Complainant to offer supportive measures.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to ensure they have an Advisor.
- The Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to determine whether the Complainant prefers a supportive response or an Administrative Resolution.
    - If a supportive and remedial response is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator works with the Complainant to identify their wishes and then seeks to facilitate implementation. The Administrative Resolution process is not initiated, though the Complainant can elect to initiate it later, if desired.
    - If an Informal Resolution option is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator assesses whether the complaint is suitable for informal resolution, which informal mechanism may serve the situation best or is available and may seek to determine if the Respondent is also willing to engage in Informal Resolution.
    - If Administrative Resolution is preferred, the Title IX Coordinator initiates the investigation process and determines whether the scope of the investigation will address:
        - Incident, and/or
        - A potential pattern of misconduct, and/or
        - A culture/climate issue.

[14] All references herein to a Title IX Coordinator also include a designee of the Title IX Coordinator.

[15] If circumstances require, the President or Title IX Coordinator will designate another person to oversee the process below should an allegation be made about the Coordinator or the Coordinator be otherwise unavailable or unable to fulfill their duties.

- In many cases, the Title IX Coordinator may determine that a Violence Risk Assessment (VRA) should be conducted by the Threat Assessment Team as part of the initial assessment. A VRA can aid in ten critical and/or required determinations, including:
    - Interim suspension of a Respondent who is a threat to health/safety;
    - Whether the Title IX Coordinator should pursue Administrative Resolution absent a willing/able Complainant;
    - Whether to put the investigation on the footing of incident and/or pattern and/or climate;
    - To help identify potentially predatory conduct;
    - To help assess/identify grooming behaviors;
    - Whether a Complaint is amenable to Informal Resolution, and what modality may be most successful;
    - Whether to permit a voluntary withdrawal by the Respondent;
    - Whether to impose transcript notation or communicate with a transfer University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma about a Respondent;
    - Assessment of appropriate sanctions/remedies;
    - Whether a Clery Act Timely Warning/Trespass order/Persona-non-grata is needed.

Based on the initial assessment, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will initiate one of two responses:

- Informal Resolution – typically used for less serious offenses and only when all parties agree to Alternate Resolution, or when the Respondent is willing to accept responsibility for violating policy. This can also include a remedies-only response.
- Administrative Resolution – investigation of policy violation(s) and recommended finding, subject to a determination by the Title IX Coordinator or Decision-maker and the opportunity to appeal to an Appeal Pane/Appeal Decision-maker.

The investigation and the subsequent Administrative Resolution determine whether the nondiscrimination policy has been violated. If so, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will promptly implement effective remedies designed to end the discrimination, prevent recurrence, and address the effects.

The process followed considers the preference of the parties but is ultimately determined at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. At any point during the initial assessment or formal investigation, if the Title IX Coordinator determines that reasonable cause does not support the conclusion that policy has been violated, the process will end, and the parties will be notified.

The Complainant may request that the Title IX Coordinator review the reasonable cause determination and/or re-open the investigation. This decision lies in the sole discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, but the request is usually only granted in extraordinary circumstances.

## 2. Resolution Process Pool

The resolution processes rely on a pool of officials ("Pool") to carry out the process. Members of the Pool are announced in an annual distribution of this Policy to all students and their parents/guardians, employees, prospective students, and prospective employees.

The list of members and a description of the Pool can be found at https://usao.edu/about/title-ix.html. Members of the Pool are trained annually in all aspects of the resolution process and can serve in any of the following roles, at the direction of the Title IX Coordinator:

- To provide sensitive intake for and initial advice pertaining to the allegations

- To act as optional process Advisors to the parties
- To facilitate Informal Resolution
- To investigate allegations
- To serve as a Decision-maker
- To serve on an Appeal Panel

The Title IX Coordinator, in consultation with the President, appoints the Pool which acts with independence and impartiality.

Pool members receive annual training organized by the Title IX Coordinator, including a review of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies and procedures as well as applicable federal and state laws and regulations so that they are able to appropriately address allegations, provide accurate information to members of the community, protect safety, and promote accountability.

The Pool members receive annual training jointly or specific to their role. This training includes, but is not limited to:

- The scope of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- How to conduct investigations and hearings that protect the safety of Complainants and Respondents and promote accountability
- Implicit bias
- Disparate treatment and impact
- Reporting, confidentiality, and privacy requirements
- Applicable laws, regulations, and federal regulatory guidance
- How to implement appropriate and situation-specific remedies
- How to investigate in a thorough, reliable, and impartial manner
- How to uphold fairness, equity, and due process
- How to weigh evidence
- How to conduct questioning
- How to assess credibility
- Impartiality and objectivity
- Types of evidence
- Deliberation
- How to render findings and generate clear, concise, evidence-based rationales
- The definitions of all offenses
- How to apply definitions used by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma with respect to consent (or the absence or negation of consent) consistently, impartially, and in accordance with policy
- How to conduct an investigation and grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes
- How to serve impartially, by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias
- Any technology to be used
- Issues of relevance of questions and evidence
- Issues of relevance to create an investigation report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence
- How to determine appropriate sanctions in reference to all forms of harassment and discrimination allegations

Specific training is also provided for Appeal Decision-makers, intake personnel, and Advisors. All Pool members are required to attend this annual training.

The Resolution Process Pool includes but is not limited to:

- Representatives from Student Affairs
- Representatives from Academic Affairs
- Representative from Human Resources,
- Representatives from Campus Safety
- Representatives from Staff
- Representatives from Athletics

Pool members are usually appointed to three-year terms.

## 3. Counterclaims

Counterclaims by the Respondent may be made in good faith but are also sometimes made for purposes of retaliation. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is obligated to ensure that any process is not abused for retaliatory purposes.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma permits the filing of counterclaims, but uses the initial assessment, described above in the Policy section, to assess whether the allegations are made in good faith. If they are, the allegations will be processed using the resolution procedures below, typically after resolution of the underlying allegation.

A delay in the processing of counterclaims is permitted, accordingly. Occasionally, allegations and counterclaims can be resolved through the same investigation, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. When counterclaims are not made in good faith, they will be considered retaliatory, and may constitute a violation of this Policy.

## 4. Advisors

### a. Expectations of an Advisor

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma generally expects an Advisor to adjust their schedule to allow them to attend University meetings when planned, but University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may change scheduled meetings to accommodate an Advisor's inability to attend, if doing so does not cause an unreasonable delay.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may also make reasonable provisions to allow an Advisor who cannot attend in person to attend a meeting by telephone, video conferencing, or other similar technologies as may be convenient and available.

Parties whose Advisors are disruptive or who do not abide by University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policies and procedures may face the loss of that Advisor and/or possible Policy violations.

Advisors are expected to consult with their advisees without disrupting University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma meetings or interviews. Advisors do not represent parties in the process; their role is only to advise.

### b. Expectations of the Parties with Respect to Advisors

Each party may choose an Advisor who is eligible and available to accompany them throughout the process. The Advisor can be anyone, including an attorney, but should not be someone who is also a witness in the process. A party may elect to change Advisors during the process and is not obligated to use the same Advisor throughout.

The parties are expected to inform the Investigators of the identity of their Advisor at least two (2) business days before the date of their first meeting with the Investigator(s) (or as soon as possible if a more expeditious meeting is necessary or desired).

The parties are expected to provide timely notice to the Investigator(s) and/or the Title IX Coordinator if they change Advisors at any time.

Upon written request of a party, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will copy the Advisor on all communications between the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and the party. The Advisor may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) regarding private, sensitive records.

For parties who are entitled to union representation, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will allow the unionized employee to have their union representative (if requested by the party) as well as an Advisor of their choice present for all resolution-related meetings and interviews. To uphold the principles of equity, the other party (regardless of union membership) will also be permitted to have two Advisors. Witnesses are/are not permitted to have union representation or Advisors in grievance process interviews or meetings.

At the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, more than one Advisor may be permitted to the parties, upon request. For equity purposes, if one party is allowed another Advisor, the other party must be allowed one to as well.

## 5. Resolution Options

Proceedings are private. All persons present at any time during the resolution process are expected to maintain the privacy of the proceedings in accord with University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma Policy.

While there is an expectation of privacy around what is discussed during interviews, the parties have discretion to share their own experiences with others if they so choose, but are encouraged to discuss with their Advisors first before doing so.

### a. Informal Resolution

Informal Resolution is applicable when the parties voluntarily agree to resolve the matter through Alternate Resolution mediation, restorative practices, etc., or when the Respondent accepts responsibility for violating Policy, or when the Title IX Coordinator can resolve the matter informally by providing remedies to resolve the situation.

It is not necessary to pursue Informal Resolution first in order to pursue Administrative Resolution, and any party participating in Informal Resolution can stop the process at any time and request the Administrative Resolution process. Further, if an Informal Resolution fails after the fact, Administrative Resolution may be pursued.

#### i. Alternate Resolution

Alternate Resolution is an informal process, such as mediation or restorative practices, by which a mutually agreed upon resolution of an allegation is reached. It may be used for less serious, yet inappropriate, behaviors and is encouraged as an alternative to the Administrative Resolution process (described below) to resolve conflicts. The parties must consent to the use of Alternate Resolution.

The Title IX Coordinator determines if Alternate Resolution is appropriate, based on the willingness of the parties, the nature of the conduct at issue, and the susceptibility of the conduct to Alternate Resolution.

In an Alternate Resolution meeting, a trained administrator facilitates a dialogue with the parties to an effective resolution, if possible. Institutionally-imposed sanctions are not possible as the result of an

Alternate Resolution process, though the parties may agree to accepted sanctions and/or appropriate remedies.

The Title IX Coordinator maintains records of any resolution that is reached, and failure to abide by the resolution can result in appropriate enforcement actions.

Alternate Resolution is not typically the primary resolution mechanism used to address reports of violent behavior of any kind or in other cases of serious violations of policy, though it may be made available after the Administrative Resolution process is completed should the parties and the Title IX Coordinator believe it could be beneficial. The results of Alternate Resolution are not appealable.

#### ii. Respondent Accepts Responsibility for Alleged Violations

The Respondent may accept responsibility for all or part of the alleged policy violations at any point during the resolution process. If the Respondent accepts responsibility, the Title IX Coordinator makes a determination that the individual is in violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma Policy.

The Title IX Coordinator then determines appropriate sanction(s) or responsive actions, which are promptly implemented in order to effectively stop the harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation; prevent its recurrence; and remedy the effects of the conduct, both on the Complainant and the community.

If the Respondent accepts responsibility for all of the alleged policy violations and the Title IX Coordinator or designee has determined appropriate sanction(s) or responsive actions, which are promptly implemented, the process is over. The Complainant will be informed of this outcome.

If the Respondent accepts responsibility for some of the alleged policy violations and the Title IX Coordinator has determined appropriate sanction(s) or responsive actions, which are promptly implemented, for those violations, then the remaining allegations will continue to be investigated and resolved. The Complainant will be informed of this outcome. The parties are still able to seek Alternate Resolution on the remaining allegations, subject to the stipulations above.

#### iii. Negotiated Resolution

The Title IX Coordinator, with the consent of the parties, may negotiate and implement any agreement to resolve the allegations that satisfies all parties and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

### b. Administrative Resolution

Administrative Resolution can be pursued for any behavior for which the Respondent has not accepted responsibility that constitutes conduct covered by the Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination Policy at any time during the process. Administrative Resolution starts with a thorough, reliable, and impartial investigation.

If Administrative Resolution is initiated, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notification of the investigation to the parties at an appropriate time during the investigation. Typically, notice is given at least 48 hours in advance of an interview. Advanced notice facilitates the parties' ability to identify and choose an Advisor, if any, to accompany them to the interview.

Notification will include a meaningful summary of the allegations, will be made in writing, and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person, mailed to the local or permanent address of the parties as indicated in official University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma records, or emailed to the parties' University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-issued or designated email account.

Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered. The notification should include the policies allegedly violated, if known at the time. Alternatively, the policies allegedly violated can be provided at a later date, in writing, as the investigation progresses, and details become clearer.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma aims to complete all investigations within a sixty (60) business day time period, which can be extended as necessary for appropriate cause by the Title IX Coordinator, with notice to the parties as appropriate.

Once the decision is made to commence an investigation, the Title IX Coordinator appoints an investigator(s)to conduct the investigation within a reasonable timeframe.

The Title IX Coordinator will vet the assigned Investigator(s) to ensure impartiality by ensuring there are no conflicts of interest or disqualifying bias.

The parties may, at any time during the resolution process, raise a concern regarding bias or conflict of interest, and the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether the concern is reasonable and supportable. If so, another Investigator will be assigned and the impact of the bias or conflict, if any, will be remedied. If the bias or conflict relates to the Title IX Coordinator, concerns should be raised with the USAO President.

Investigations are completed expeditiously, normally within 30 business days, though some investigations take longer depending on the nature, extent, and complexity of the allegations, availability of witnesses, police involvement, etc.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will make a good faith effort to complete investigations as promptly as circumstances permit and will communicate regularly with the parties to update them on the progress and timing of the investigation.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may undertake a short delay in its investigation (several days to weeks, to allow evidence collection) when criminal charges based on the same behaviors that invoke the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma's resolution process are being investigated by law enforcement. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma will promptly resume its investigation and resolution process once notified by law enforcement that the initial evidence collection process is complete.

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma action(s) are not typically altered or precluded on the grounds that civil or criminal charges involving the underlying incident(s) have been filed or that criminal charges have been dismissed or reduced.

Investigations involve interviews with all relevant parties and witnesses, obtaining available, relevant evidence, and identifying sources of expert information, as necessary.

All parties have a full and fair opportunity, though the investigation process, to suggest witnesses and questions, to provide evidence, and to fully review and respond to all evidence, on the record.

## 6. Investigation

The Investigators typically take the following steps, if not already completed (not necessarily in this order):

- Determine the identity and contact information of the Complainant
- In coordination with campus partners (e.g., the Title IX Coordinator), initiate or assist with any necessary supportive measures
- Identify all policies implicated by the alleged misconduct
- Assist the Title IX Coordinator with conducting an initial assessment to determine if there is reasonable cause to believe the Respondent has violated policy
- If there is insufficient evidence to support reasonable cause, the process is closed with no further action

- Commence a thorough, reliable, and impartial investigation by developing a strategic investigation plan, including a witness list, evidence list, intended investigation timeframe, and order of interviews for all parties and witnesses
- Meet with the Complainant to finalize their statement, if necessary
- Prepare the initial Notice of Investigation and Allegation (NOIA) on the basis of the initial assessment. Notice may be one step or multiple steps, depending on how the investigation unfolds, and potential policy violations may be added or dropped as more is learned. Investigators will update the NOIA accordingly and provide it to the parties.
- Notice should inform the parties of their right to have the assistance of a Pool member as a process Advisor appointed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma or other Advisor of their choosing present for all meetings attended by the advisee
- When formal notice is being given, it should provide the parties with a written description of the alleged violation(s), a list of all policies allegedly violated, a description of the applicable procedures, and a statement of the potential sanctions/responsive actions that could result
- Give an instruction to the parties to preserve any evidence that is directly related to the allegations
- Provide the parties and witnesses with an opportunity to review and verify the Investigator's summary notes from interviews and meetings with that specific party or witness
- Make good faith efforts to notify the parties of any meeting or interview involving the other party, in advance when possible
- Interview all relevant individuals and conduct follow-up interviews as necessary
- Allow each party the opportunity to suggest questions they wish the Investigator(s) to ask of the other party and witnesses
- Complete the investigation promptly and without unreasonable deviation from the intended timeline
- Provide regular status updates to the parties throughout the investigation
- Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, summarize for the parties the list of witnesses whose information will be used to render a finding
- Write a comprehensive investigation report fully summarizing the investigation and all evidence
- Provide parties with a copy of the draft investigation report when it is completed, including all relevant evidence, analysis, credibility assessments, and recommended finding(s)
- Provide each party with a full and fair opportunity to respond to the report in writing within 5days and incorporate that response into the report
- Investigators may choose to respond in writing in the report to the responses of the parties, and/or to share the responses between the parties for their responses, while also ensuring that they do not create a never-ending feedback loop
- Share the report with the Title IX Coordinator or legal counsel for review and feedback.
- Provide the final report to the Title IX Coordinator with one of two options:
    - Include in the report a recommendation to the Title IX Coordinator/Decision-maker on a determination, based on a preponderance of the evidence, whether a policy violation is more likely than not to have occurred; OR
    - Gather, assess, and synthesize evidence without making a finding, conclusion, determination or recommendation.
- Provide the final report to the Title IX Coordinator. Recommend to the Title IX Coordinator a finding, based on a preponderance of the evidence (whether a policy violation is more likely than not).

## 7. Determination

Within two to three days of receiving the Investigator's recommendation, the Title IX Coordinator or a trained, designated Decision-maker from the Pool[16] reviews the report and all responses, and then makes the final determination on the basis of the preponderance of the evidence.

If the record is incomplete, the Title IX Coordinator/Decision-maker may direct a re-opening of the investigation, or may direct or conduct any additional inquiry necessary, including informally meeting with the parties or any witnesses, if needed.

The recommendation of the investigation should be strongly considered but is not binding on the Title IX Coordinator/Decision-Maker. The Title IX Coordinator or Decision-maker may invite and consider impact statements from the parties if and when determining appropriate sanction(s),if any.

The Title IX Coordinator then timely provides the parties with a written Notice of Outcome to include findings, any sanction(s), and a detailed rationale, delivered simultaneously (without undue delay) to the parties

## 8. Additional Details of the Investigation Process

### a. Witness responsibilities

Witnesses (as distinguished from the parties) who are faculty or staff of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma are expected to cooperate with and participate in the University's investigation and resolution process. Failure of a witness to cooperate with and/or participate in the investigation or resolution process constitutes a violation of Policy and may be subject to discipline.

### b. Remote processes

Parties and witnesses may be interviewed remotely by phone, video conferencing, or similar technologies if the Investigator(s) or Decision-maker determine that timeliness or efficiency dictates a need for remote interviewing. Witnesses may also provide written statements in lieu of interviews, or respond to questions in writing, if deemed appropriate by the Investigator(s), though this approach is not ideal. Where remote technologies are used, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma makes reasonable efforts to ensure privacy, and that any technology does not work to the detriment of any party or subject them to unfairness.

### c. Recording

No unauthorized audio or video recording of any kind is permitted during the resolution process. If Investigator(s) elect to audio and/or video record interviews, all involved parties must be made aware of audio and/or video recording.

### d. Evidence

Any evidence that is relevant and credible may be considered, including an individual's prior misconduct history as well as evidence indicating a pattern of misconduct. The process should exclude irrelevant or immaterial evidence and may disregard evidence lacking in credibility or that is improperly prejudicial.

[16] When the Title IX Coordinator is the Investigator or has been heavily involved in the process prior to determination, a Decision-maker should be designated from the Pool to ensure there is no conflict of interest.

### e. Sexual history/patterns

Unless the Title IX Coordinator determines it is appropriate, the investigation and the finding do not consider: (1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they evidence a pattern; (2) the sexual history of the parties (though there may be a limited exception made with regard to the sexual history between the parties); or (3) the character of the parties.

### f. Previous allegations/violations

While previous conduct violations by the Respondent are not generally admissible as information supporting the current allegation, the Investigator(s) may supply the Title IX Coordinator with information about previous good faith allegations and/or findings, when that information suggests potential pattern and/or predatory conduct.

Previous disciplinary action of any kind involving the Respondent may be considered in determining the appropriate sanction(s), if the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma uses a progressive discipline system.

### g. Character witnesses

Neither the Title IX Coordinator nor the Investigator(s) meet with character witnesses, but the Investigator(s) may accept up to two (2) letters supporting the character of each of the parties. Such letters must be provided to the Investigator(s) prior to the report being finalized; otherwise, the parties have waived their right to provide such letters.

### h. Notification of outcome

If the Respondent admits to the violation(s), or is found in violation, the Title IX Coordinator in consultation with other administrators as appropriate determines sanction(s) and/or responsive actions, which are promptly implemented in order to effectively to stop the harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation; prevent its recurrence; and remedy the effects of the discriminatory conduct, both on the Complainant and the community.

The Title IX Coordinator informs the parties of the determination within two to three business days of the resolution, ideally simultaneously, but without significant time delay between notifications. Notifications are made in writing and may be delivered by one or more of the following methods: in person; mailed to the local or permanent address of the parties as indicated in official University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma records; or emailed to the parties' University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-issued or designated email account. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice is presumptively delivered.

The Notification of Outcome specifies the finding for each alleged policy violation, any sanction(s) that may result which the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share pursuant to state or federal law, and the rationale supporting the essential findings to the extent the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is permitted to share under state or federal law.

The notice will detail when the determination is considered final and will detail any changes that are made prior to finalization.

Unless based on an acceptance of violation by the Respondent, the determination may be appealed by either party. The Notification of Outcome also includes the grounds on which the parties may appeal and the steps the parties may take to request an appeal of the findings. More information about the appeal procedures can be found in section 11 below.

## 9. Sanctions

Factors considered when determining any sanction(s)/responsive action(s) may include, but are not limited to:

- The nature, severity of, and circumstances surrounding the violation
- An individual's disciplinary history
- Previous allegations or allegations involving similar conduct
- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to bring an end to the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation
- The need for sanctions/responsive actions to prevent the future recurrence of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation
- The need to remedy the effects of the discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation on the Complainant and the community
- The impact on the parties
- Any other information deemed relevant by the Title IX Coordinator

The sanction(s) will be implemented as soon as is feasible. The sanctions described in this policy are not exclusive of, and may be in addition to, other actions taken, or sanctions imposed by outside authorities.

### a. Student Sanctions Examples

The following are the sanctions that may be imposed upon students or student organizations singly or in combination:

- *Warning:* A formal statement that the behavior was unacceptable and a warning that further infractions of any University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy, procedure, or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- *Probation:* A written reprimand for violation of University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma Policy, providing for more severe disciplinary sanctions in the event that the student or organization is found in violation of any University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma policy, procedure or directive within a specified period of time. Terms of the probation will be articulated and may include denial of specified social privileges, exclusion from co-curricular activities, exclusion from designated areas of campus, no-contact orders, and/or other measures deemed appropriate.
- *Suspension:* Termination of student status for a definite period of time not to exceed two years, and/or until specific criteria are met. Students who return from suspension are automatically placed on probation through the remainder of their tenure as a student at University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. At the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, this sanction may be noted as a Disciplinary Suspension on the student's official transcript.
- *Expulsion:* Permanent termination of student status, revocation of rights to be on campus for any reason or attend University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma-sponsored events. This sanction will be noted as a Conduct Expulsion on the student's official transcript.
- *Withholding Diploma and/or Official Transcripts*: The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may withhold a student's diploma and/or official transcripts for a specified period of time, and/or deny a student participation in commencement activities, if the student has an allegation pending, or as a sanction if the student is found responsible for an alleged violation.
- *Revocation of Degree:* The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to revoke a degree previously awarded from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma for fraud, misrepresentation, or other violation of University of Science and Arts of

Oklahoma policies, procedures, or directives in obtaining the degree, or for other serious violations committed by a student prior to graduation.

- *Organizational Sanctions*: Deactivation, loss of recognition, loss of some or all privileges (including University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma registration), for a specified period of time.
- *Other Actions:* In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

#### b. Employee Sanctions

Responsive actions for an employee who has engaged in harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation include:

- *Warning – Verbal or Written*
- *Performance Improvement/Management Process*
- *Required Counseling*
- *Required Training or Education*
- *Probation*
- *Loss of Annual Pay Increase*
- *Loss of Oversight or Supervisory Responsibility*
- *Demotion*
- *Suspension with pay*
- *Suspension without pay*
- *Termination*
- *Other Actions:* In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

## 10. Withdrawal or Resignation While Charges are Pending

Students: The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma does not permit a student to withdraw if that student has an allegation pending for violation of the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Nondiscrimination. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma may place a hold, bar access to an official transcript, and/or prohibit graduation as necessary to permit the resolution process to be completed.

Employees: Should an employee resign with unresolved allegations pending, the records of the Title IX Coordinator will reflect that status, and any University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma responses to future inquiries regarding employment references for that individual will include the former employee's unresolved status.

## 11. Appeals

All requests for appeal consideration must be submitted in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within 5 business days of the delivery of the written finding of the Title IX Coordinator or Decision-maker. Any party may appeal the findings only under the grounds described below.

A three-member appeals panel OR Appeal Decision-maker chosen from the Pool will be designated by the Title IX Coordinator from those who have not been involved in the process previously. One member

of the Appeal Panel will be designated as the Chair. Any party may appeal, but appeals are limited to the following grounds:

- A procedural error or omission occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g., substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures).
- To consider new evidence, unknown or unavailable during the investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.

When any party requests an appeal, the Title IX Coordinator will share the appeal request with the other party(ies) or other appropriate persons such as the Investigator(s), who may file a response within three (3) business days. The other party may also bring their own appeal on separate grounds.

If new grounds are raised, the original appealing party will be permitted to submit a written response to these new grounds within 7 business days. These responses or appeal requests will be shared with each party. The Appeal Chair/Panel will review the appeal request(s) within 10 business days of completing the pre-appeal exchange of materials. If grounds are not sufficient for an appeal, or the appeal is not timely, the appeal Chair/Panel dismisses the appeal.

When the appeal Chair/panel finds that at least one of the grounds is met by at least one party, additional principles governing the review of appeals include the following:

- Decisions by the Appeal Chair/Panel are to be deferential to the original decision, making changes to the finding only when there is clear error and to the sanction(s)/responsive action(s) only if there is compelling justification to do so.
- Appeals are not intended to be full re-hearings (de novo) of the allegation(s). In most cases, appeals are confined to a review of the written documentation or record of the investigation and pertinent documentation regarding the grounds for appeal.
- An appeal is not an opportunity for the Appeal Chair/Panel to substitute their judgment for that of the original Investigator(s) or Title IX Coordinator/Decision-maker merely because they disagree with the finding and/or sanction(s).
- Appeals granted based on new evidence should normally be remanded to the Investigator(s) for reconsideration. Other appeals should be remanded at the discretion of the Appeal Chair/Panel.
- Sanctions imposed as the result of Administrative Resolution are implemented immediately unless the Title IX Coordinator stays their implementation in extraordinary circumstances, pending the outcome of the appeal.
    - For students: Graduation, study abroad, internships/ externships, etc., do NOT in and of themselves constitute exigent circumstances, and students may not be able to participate in those activities during their appeal.
- All parties will be informed in writing within 10 business days of the outcome of the appeal without significant time delay between notifications, and in accordance with the standards for Notice of Outcome as defined above.
- Once an appeal is decided, the outcome is final; further appeals are not permitted, even if a decision or sanction is changed on remand. When appeals result in no change to the finding or sanction, that decision is final. When an appeal results in a new finding or sanction, that finding or sanction can be appealed one final time on the grounds listed above, and in accordance with these procedures.
- In rare cases when a procedural or substantive error cannot be cured by the original Investigator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinator/Decision-maker (as in cases of bias), the Appeal Chair/Panel may recommend a new investigation and/or Administrative Resolution process, including a new resolution administrator.

- The results of a new Administrative Resolution process can be appealed once, on any of the three applicable grounds for appeals.
- In cases in which the appeal results in Respondent's reinstatement to the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma or resumption of privileges, all reasonable attempts will be made to restore the Respondent to their prior status, recognizing that some opportunities lost may be irreparable in the short term.

## 12. Long-Term Remedies/Actions

Following the conclusion of the resolution process, and in addition to any sanctions implemented, the Title IX Coordinator may implement long-term remedies or actions with respect to the parties and/or the campus community to stop the harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation; remedy its effects; and prevent its reoccurrence.

These remedies/actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Referral to counseling and health services
- Education to the community
- Permanent alteration of housing assignments
- Permanent alteration of work arrangements for employees
- Provision of campus safety escorts
- Climate surveys
- Policy modification
- Provision of transportation accommodations
- Implementation of long-term contact limitations between the parties
- Implementation of adjustments to academic deadlines, course schedules, etc.

At the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator, long-term remedies may also be provided to the Complainant even if no policy violation is found.

When no policy violation is found, the Title IX Coordinator will address any remedial requirements owed by the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma to the Respondent.

## 13. Failure to Complete Sanctions/Comply with Interim and Long-term Remedies/Responsive Actions

All Respondents are expected to comply with conduct sanctions, responsive actions, and corrective actions within the timeframe specified by the Title IX Coordinator.

Failure to abide by the sanction(s)/action(s) imposed by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or any other reason, may result in additional sanction(s)/responsive/corrective action(s), including suspension, expulsion, and/or termination from the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma and may be noted on a student's official transcript.

A suspension will only be lifted when compliance is achieved to the satisfaction of the Title IX Coordinator.

## 14. Recordkeeping

In implementing this policy, records of all allegations, investigations, resolutions, and hearings will be kept indefinitely, or as required by state or federal law or institutional policy, by the Title IX Coordinator in the Title IX case database.

## 15. Statement of the Rights of the Parties (see Appendix B)

## 16. Disabilities Accommodation in the Resolution Process

The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and support to qualified students, employees, or others with disabilities to ensure equal access to the resolution process at University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. Anyone needing such accommodations or support should contact the Coordinator for Student Wellness & Accommodations, who will review the request and, in consultation with the person requesting the accommodation, and the Title IX Coordinator, determine which accommodations are appropriate and necessary for full participation in the process.

## 17. Revision

These policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX Coordinator. The University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma reserves the right to make changes to this document as necessary and once those changes are posted online, they are in effect.

The Title IX Coordinator may make minor modifications to these procedures that do not materially jeopardize the fairness owed to any party, such as to accommodate summer schedules.

The Title IX Coordinator may also vary procedures materially with notice (on the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma website, with the appropriate effective date identified) upon determining that changes to law or regulation require policy or procedural alterations not reflected in this policy and procedure.

Procedures in effect at the time of the resolution will apply to resolution of incidents, regardless of when the incident occurred.

Policy in effect at the time of the offense will apply even if the policy is changed subsequently but prior to resolution, unless the parties consent to be bound by the current policy.

If government regulations change in a way that impacts this document, this document will be construed to comply with the most recent government regulations.

This document does not create legally enforceable protections beyond the protection of the background state and federal laws which frame such policies and codes, generally.

This policy and procedure was implemented on August 14, 2020.

Updated August 3, 2022
Updated September 18, 2023
Updated February 14, 2025

## Approval and Revision History

| Version | Date | Approved By | Summary of Changes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | August 14, 2020 | PLT | Policy and procedures implemented |
| 1.1 | August 3, 2022 | PLT | Updated |
| 1.2 | September 18, 2023 | PLT | Updated |

| Version | Date | Approved By | Summary of Changes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.3 | February 14, 2025 | PLT | |
| 1.4 | November 10, 2026 | Policies and Procedures Committee | Reformatted into the USAO Policy Template; reviewed November 6, 2026; contact information, titles, cross-references, and typographical errors corrected. No substantive policy changes. |