

Best Practices for Implementing Your Role as a Mandated Reporter of Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking

I. Inform students of your role as a mandated reporter

As detailed in Executive Order 1095, all University employees *except* physicians, licensed counselors, and sexual assault counselors and advocates, and their staff members, must report to the Title IX Coordinator all relevant details about any Sexual Misconduct incidents of which they become aware. The University will need to determine what happened – and will need to know the names of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s), any witnesses, and any other relevant facts, including the date, time and specific location of the incident. To the extent possible, information reported to the Title IX Coordinator or other University employees will be shared only with individuals responsible for handling the University’s response to the incident.

Do your best to ensure that the student knows that you are a mandated reporter before they disclose an incident that you must report.

When necessary, interrupt students to inform them of your role. You might say, “I’m sorry to interrupt you, but I want you to be informed about your choices regarding what you tell and to whom this information is reported. There are a number of situations where I am required to report what you tell me to the campus Title IX Coordinator. I’m happy to talk with you, but if you’d like to first explore options for confidential counseling support, accommodations and accountability with someone who can keep your information confidential, here’s a list of numbers you can call.”

II. When a Student Chooses to Talk with You about Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, or Stalking

A. Remember your role

Although we all want to help, please remember that counseling and investigating must be performed by trained professionals employed by the campus to perform those roles. Please do not engage in investigating, analyzing, counseling or other activities. You are a bridge to connect the student with the appropriate person, who will provide the survivor with options for support, accommodations and accountability. We also encourage you to provide the student with immediate information about Student Health and Counseling Services on campus, which offers confidential service during working hours (760-750-4915), as well as the Center for Community Solutions, which offers 24-hour confidential resources for support (888-385-4657). Please see page 3 for further information on resources available to students.

B. Keep the victim’s needs and feelings at the center of the process

Do listen respectfully and believe the student. Very few people lie about sexual assault or rape. In fact, there is severe under-reporting of these crimes. Consider how difficult it is to recount, and by extension, often re-live trauma by talking about an experience of sexual violence. Your ability to listen and respond in nonjudgmental ways can help to change the culture of silence that exists around sexualized violence.

Do let the victim know that you care, using a calm and compassionate tone.

Do say something like, “I’m so sorry that you have to go through this.”

Don’t overly express your own feelings about what happened to them.

Don’t say, “It’s outrageous that you’ve had to experience this!”

Remember: If we react with shock and outrage we may silence victims. They will often shift away from identifying and discussing their own needs to responding to our reaction. If met with an overly emotional response, victims may feel like they have to take care of us.

Do acknowledge your non-verbal expressions, when appropriate: If a strong emotion flickers across your face as you listen, e.g., if you know that anger passed over your face, do acknowledge it.

Do say (in a calm voice) something like, “If you saw anger on my face I just want you to know that I wasn’t angry at you; I felt anger at the fact that someone would choose to harm you.”

Don’t define their experience for them.

Don’t say, “Well, it sounds to me like you were raped!”

Do use the words the victim uses to describe their experience. If they say rape, don’t interrogate them about what they mean. If they say “taken advantage of” or “violated” use those words, or other general terms such as “harm.”

Do validate that what happened to them was not ok. Do say something like, “I am so sorry that person harmed you.”

Remember: None of us have the magic words that will support victims in all contexts. Even from the best of intentions we might say something hurtful. If you see that what you said caused the victim to become upset, acknowledge this. You might say something like, “I think what I said just made this harder for you.”

C. Establish clear boundaries and be a bridge to forms of support

Offer forms of support that are appropriate for your role: Let the victim know what you can realistically offer to support them. For support that is needed beyond your role, serve as a bridge to campus and community support and resources.

Do say: “We have campus and community resources to help support you. Here’s a resource sheet”

Don’t say: “I’ll be there for you in whatever way you need.”

III. If a Student discloses committing an act of violence

Call the Title IX Coordinator to let them know that you have reason to believe a student has committed an act of violence. **Do not** let the student know you are reporting this, as this could interfere with the investigation and/or could result in retaliation.

IV. After fulfilling your obligation to report to the Title IX Coordinator, keep the student’s information private

If the topic of a student victim’s performance or success in the major comes up in department meetings, provide the minimum information you can in order to support the student.

Do say: She is in the midst of a significant crisis.

Don’t say: Since she was raped she’s been struggling in my class.

If you need to talk about the impact on you of hearing about a student’s trauma, please call Student Health and Counseling Services for support, rather than speaking to colleagues. Those employees who do not have a legitimate reason to know about the incident should not be told, in order to protect the privacy of the victim.

V. Title IX Coordinator

CSUSM Title IX Coordinator: Bridget Blanshan, Associate Vice President for Student Development Services
Address: Craven Hall 3600 (moving soon to Craven Hall 3200)
Email: bblansha@csusm.edu

Phone (760) 750-6020
Monday - Friday 8am to 5pm, Closed during campus closure days

VI. Confidential Resources

Options for students to talk with someone confidentially include the following people and organizations:

On Campus Medical & Counseling Services

Student Health and Counseling Services

Sexual Violence Advocate and Educator, Christa Wencil

Address: Bldg. 21, (located adjacent to the parking structure, across from the University Student Union)

Phone: (760) 750-4915 (ext. 7 for Christa Wencil)

Office Hours: 8:00 AM -5:00 PM Monday-Friday; Closed during campus closure days

Website: <http://www.csusm.edu/shcs>

<http://www.csusm.edu/shcs/advocate>

Off-Campus Services

Center for Community Solutions (CCS)

Address: 210 S. Juniper St., Escondido, CA 92025

Phone: (760) 747-6282; 24-Hour Crisis Hotline: (888) 385-4657 (Bilingual)

Office Hours: 8:30 AM -5:30 PM Monday-Friday, but advocates are available 24/7 by calling the crisis line.

Website: <http://www.ccssd.org>

Women's Resource Center

Address: 1963 Apple St., Oceanside, CA 92054

Phone: (760) 547-8800; 24-Hour Hotline: (760) 757-3500

Office Hours: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM Monday-Friday

Website: <http://www.wrcsd.org>

VII. Reporting to University Police

If a student, employee or third party reports to local or University Police about Sexual Violence, the police are required to notify the victim that their name will become a matter of public record ***unless confidentiality is requested***. If the victim requests that their identity be kept confidential, their name will not become a matter of public record and the police will not report their identity to anyone else at the University, including the Title IX Coordinator. University Police will, however, report the facts of the incident itself to the Title IX Coordinator being sure not to reveal to the Title IX Coordinator their name/identity.

University Police (call 911 in case of emergency):

Address: 425 La Moree Road

Phone: (760) 750-4567

Local Police: San Diego County Sheriff San Marcos

Address: 182 Santar Place, San Marcos, 92069

Phone: (760) 510-5200