



Huntington University Title IX Policy

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Introduction

Huntington University 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 its education program or activity, the University has developed this policy to provide a prompt, fair, and impartial process for those involved in an allegation of sexual harassment and discrimination. Whenever offenses occurs, trust and the sense of Christian community the university seeks to develop are violated. Such violations not only impact those directly involved in the incident, but also, subcommunities of the university that affect the broader community as a whole.

Huntington University 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.

1. Jurisdiction of Huntington University

This policy applies to the education program and activities of the University. It applies to conduct that takes place on the campus or on property owned or controlled by the University, at University-sponsored events, or in buildings owned or controlled by the University's recognized student organizations. The Respondent must be a member of the University 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 the University's educational program. The University may also extend jurisdiction to off-campus and/or to online conduct when the Title IX Coordinator determines that the conduct affects a substantial interest of the University.

A substantial Huntington University interest includes:

1. 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
2. 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;
3. 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
4. Any situation that is detrimental to the educational interests or mission of the University.

The University will address notice/complaints to determine whether the conduct occurred in the context of its employment or educational program or activity.

If the Respondent is unknown or is not a member of the University community, the Title IX Coordinator 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 community, supportive measures, remedies, and resources may be accessible to the Complainant by contacting the Title IX Coordinator. The University may take other actions as appropriate to protect the Complainant against third parties, such as barring individuals from University property and/or events.

All vendors serving the University community through third-party contracts are subject to the policies and procedures of their employers.

The Title IX Coordinator may be able to assist and support a student or employee Complainant who experiences discrimination in an externship, study abroad program, or other environment external to the University, or where the Respondent is enrolled in or employed by another institution, where sexual harassment or nondiscrimination policies and procedures of the other institution or facilitating or host organization may give recourse to the Complainant.

2. Glossary of Title IX Process Terms

- *Advisor* means a person chosen by a party or appointed by the University 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.
- *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 submitted or 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 Huntington University investigate the allegation.
- *Directly Related Evidence* is evidence connected to the complaint, but is neither inculpatory (tending to prove a violation) nor exculpatory (tending to disprove a violation) and will not be relied upon by the investigation report.
- *Education program or activity* means locations, events, or circumstances where Huntington University 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 Huntington University.
- *Final Determination* means conclusion by Huntington University that the alleged conduct did or did not violate policy.
- *Finding* means a conclusion by Huntington University that the conduct did or did not occur as alleged (as in a “finding of fact”).

- *Formal Grievance Process* means a method of formal resolution designated by Huntington University to address conduct that falls within the policies included below, and which complies with the requirements of the Title IX regulations (34 CFR §106.45).
- *Grievance Process Pool or 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).
- *Hearing Decision-maker or Panel* refers to those who have decision-making and sanctioning authority within Huntington University's Formal Grievance process.
- *HU or University* means Huntington University.
- *Investigator* means a person or persons charged by Huntington University 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 Huntington University who is obligated by policy to share knowledge, notice, and/or reports of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation with the Title IX Coordinator and/or their supervisor.¹
- *Official with Authority (OWA)* means an employee of Huntington University explicitly vested with the responsibility to implement corrective measures for harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation on behalf of Huntington University.
- *Parties* include the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s), collectively.
- *Process A* means the Formal Grievance Process detailed below.
- *Process B* means the administrative resolution procedures detailed in Appendix A that apply only when Process A does not, as determined by the Title IX Coordinator.
- *Relevant Evidence* is evidence that tends to prove or disprove an issue in the complaint.
- *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.

¹ Not to be confused with those mandated by state law to report child abuse, elder abuse, and/or abuse of individuals with disabilities to appropriate officials, though these responsibilities may overlap with those who have mandated reporting responsibility in this Policy.

- *Resolution* means the result of an informal or Formal Grievance Process.
- *Sanction* means a consequence imposed by Huntington University 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 3 for greater detail.
- *Title IX Coordinator* is the official designated by Huntington University to ensure compliance with Title IX and Huntington University Title IX program. References to the Coordinator throughout this policy may also encompass a designee of the Coordinator for specific tasks.

3. 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 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 Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and the State of Indiana regard Sexual Harassment, a specific form of discriminatory harassment, as an unlawful discriminatory practice. The sections below describe the specific forms of legally prohibited harassment that are also prohibited under University policy. When speech or conduct is protected by academic freedom or the First Amendment, it will not be considered a violation University policy, though supportive measures will be offered to those impacted. All policies encompass actual and/or attempted offenses.

The University has adopted the following definition of Sexual Harassment in order to address the unique environment of an academic community.

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

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

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/gender or that is sexual that satisfies one or more of the following:

- **Dating Violence**

Defined as: Violence, on the basis of sex, committed by a person who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the Complainant.

- 1) 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:
 - a. Dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.
 - b. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

- **Domestic Violence**

Defined as: Violence, on the basis of sex, committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the Complainant, by a person with whom the Complainant shares a child in common, or by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the Complainant as a spouse or intimate partner, or by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the Complainant under the domestic or family violence laws of Indiana, or 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 Indiana.

- **Sexual Assault**

Defined as: Any sexual act directed against another person without the consent of Complainant, including instances in which Complainant is incapable of giving consent, and including the following sex offenses rape, sodomy, sexual assault with an object, fondling, incest, and statutory rape.

- 2) Rape (except Statutory Rape): Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the Complainant.
- 3) Sodomy: Oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, forcibly, and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), 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.
- 4) Sexual Assault with an Object: The use of an object or instrument to penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, forcibly, and/or against that person's will (non-consensually), 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.
- 5) Fondling: The touching of the private body parts of another person (buttocks, groin, breasts), for the purpose of sexual gratification, forcibly, and/or against that person's will

(non-consensually), 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.

- 6) Incest: Non-forcible sexual intercourse, between persons who are related to each other, within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by Indiana law.
- 7) Statutory Rape: Non-forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent of Indiana.

- **Sexual Harassment**

Defined as: Conduct on the basis of sex/gender or that is sexual that satisfies one or more of the following:

- 1) An employee of the University conditioning (either implicitly or explicitly) the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
- 2) Unwelcome conduct, determined by a reasonable person, to be so severe, and pervasive, and objectively offensive, that it effectively denies a person equal access to the HU's education program or activity.

- **Stalking**

Defined as: Engaging in a course of conduct, on the basis of sex, directed at a specific person, that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety, or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress. For the purposes of this definition, "course of conduct" means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by an action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property. A "reasonable person" means a person under similar circumstances and with similar identifies to the Complainant. "Substantial emotional distress" means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

- **Force, Coercion, Consent, and Incapacitation**

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 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.

Consent: Consent is knowing, and voluntary, and with clear permission by word or action to engage in sexual activity.

It is the responsibility of each party to determine that the other has consented before engaging in the activity.

If consent is not clearly provided prior to engaging in the activity, consent may be ratified by word or action at some point during the interaction or thereafter. Clear communication from the outset is strongly encouraged.

For consent to be valid, there must be a clear expression in words or actions that the other individual consented to that specific sexual conduct. Reasonable reciprocation can be implied. For example, if someone kisses you, you can kiss them back (if you want to) without the need to explicitly obtain their consent to being kissed back.

Consent can also be withdrawn once given, as long as the withdrawal is reasonably and clearly communicated. If consent is withdrawn, then sexual activity should cease.

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.

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 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.

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 that 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.

4. Reporting a Situation of Sexual Harassment or Retaliation

For purposes of reporting a situation of sexual harassment or retaliation under this policy:

- 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.
- Filing or making a complaint or Formal Complaint means a document submitted or signed by the Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging a policy violation by a Respondent and requesting that the University investigate the allegation(s).

A person desiring to file a complaint or give notice sexual harassment against a student, employee², or any other individual (including third-party vendors or visitors), or file a complaint or give notice of retaliation, should contact the Title IX Coordinator or one of the Officials with Authority listed below who have authority accept notice or complaints on behalf of the University.

Any complaint filing or notice may be made in person, by phone, by mail, or by email to:

Title IX Coordinator:

Brian Jaworski, Ph.D.
Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator
Office of Student Life, HUB 111
(260) 359-4028
bjaworski@huntington.edu

Dr. Brian Jaworski serves as the Title IX Coordinator and oversees implementation of Huntington University Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity plan, and the University's policy on equal opportunity, harassment, and nondiscrimination. The Title IX Coordinator has the primary responsibility for coordinating Huntington University 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.

Officials with Authority

Name		
Sherilyn Emberton, Ed.D.	President	Becker Hall 1 st Floor (260) 359-4050 semberton@huntington.edu
Luke Fetters, Ed.D.	Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty	Becker Hall A-100 (260) 359-4008 lfetters@huntington.edu
Russ Degitz, Ed.D.	Chief Operations Officer	Becker Hall 1 st Floor (260) 359-4002 rdegitz@huntington.edu
Ron L. Coffey, PhD	Vice President for Student Life	Vice President for Student Life Office of Student Life, HUB 112 (260) 359-4029 rcoffey@huntington.edu
Stephen Weingart	Vice President for University Advancement	Annex upper level (260) 359-4067 sweingart@huntington.edu
Daniel Solms	Vice President for Enrollment Management & Marketing	Welcome Center – MCA (260) 359-4016 dsolms@huntington.edu
Connie Bonner	Vice President for Finance and Treasurer	Becker Hall - A110 (260) 359-4006 cbonner@huntington.edu
Jeff Berggren	Director of Arizona Operations	8385 W Mariners Way, Peoria, AZ 85382 (480) 939-5004 jberggren@huntington.edu
Ruth Ford, Ed.D.	Associate Professor, OTD Program Director	1819 Carew St, Fort Wayne, IN 46805 (260) 702-9630 jsowers@huntington.edu

Confidential Resources for Reporting

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

Name	University role	Contact information
Rev. Arthur Wilson	Vice President for Spiritual Formation Center for Spiritual Formation & Intercultural Enrichment	260-359-4031; awilson@huntington.edu
Mark Vincenti	Campus Pastor	260-359-4286; mvincenti@huntington.edu
Martha Smith	Licensed Mental Health Counselor	260-359-4040; msmith@huntington.edu

All of the above-listed individuals will maintain confidentiality when acting under the scope of their pastoral or counseling positions unless the Complainant grants permission to share, except in extreme cases of immediacy of threat or danger or abuse of a minor or individual with a disability, or when required to disclose by law or court order.

Mandated Reporters

The University has also classified all employees, with the exception of those acting in their capacity as Confidential Resources as noted above, as Mandated Reporters of any knowledge they have that a member of the University community is experiencing harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation.

Supportive Measures

The Title IX Coordinator will promptly make supportive measures available to the parties upon receiving notice or a complaint. The Title IX Coordinator will work 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 will maintain the privacy of the supportive measures, provided that privacy does not impair the University's ability to provide the supportive measures. The University will act to ensure as minimal an academic/occupational 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 institutional 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
- 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

Privacy

Every effort is made by the University to preserve the privacy of reports. 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 University employees who “need to know” in order to assist in the assessment, investigation, and resolution of the report. The privacy of student education records will also be protected in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”). The privacy of employee records will be protected in accordance with University human resources policies.

Confidentiality exists where the law creates a privilege in certain relationships (e.g between a person and their health or mental health care providers, attorneys, and clergy). As noted above, the University has designated individuals who have the ability to have privileged communications as Confidential Resources.

The University will not share the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sexual harassment 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 FERPA; or as required by law; or to carry out the purposes of Title IX, including the conducting of any investigation, hearing, or grievance proceeding arising under these policies and procedures.

The University reserves the right to determine which University officials have a legitimate educational interest in being informed about incidents that fall within this policy, pursuant to FERPA.

Amnesty for Parties and Witnesses.

Sometimes Complainants or witnesses are hesitant to report to a university official 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.

To encourage reporting and participation in the process, the University 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 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.

Personal Safety and Preservation of Evidence

A student who has experienced either sexual assault or harassment should follow these steps:

1. Get to a safe place and call 911 if in immediate danger. Seek support from a trusted person.
2. Seek medical attention
 - Parkview Hospital: 2001 Stults Rd., Huntington, IN 46750; 260-355-3000
 - Emergency response numbers:
 - Emergency: 911
 - Campus Police: Lower Wright Hall; 260-224-1412
 - City of Huntington Police: 300 Cherry St, Huntington, IN 46750; 260-358-2308
3. Preserve evidence by not washing, or cleaning, one's body or clothing in any fashion. This includes not eating or drinking, and if at all possible not using the bathroom. Evidence to be saved in a clean paper bag.
4. Do not delete any digital evidence (such as text messages, voice mails, pictures, or any social media posting).
5. Contact the Title IX Coordinator.

5. Timeline on Reporting and Promptness

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'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 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.

All allegations are acted upon promptly by the University once it has received notice or a formal complaint. Complaints can take 30-60 days to resolve. There are always exceptions and extenuating circumstances that can cause a resolution to take longer, but the University will avoid all undue delays within its control.

Any time the general timeframes for resolution outlined in the University's procedures will be delayed, and 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.

6. Emergency Removal

The University reserves the right to remove a student(s) Respondent entirely or partially from its education program or activities on an emergency basis when it is determined that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individuals justifies removal.

In all cases in which an emergency removal is imposed, the student will be given notice of the action and the option to request to meet with the Title IX Coordinator 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 in a timely manner, objections to the emergency removal will be deemed waived. 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 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.

As determined by the Title IX Coordinator, emergency removal 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.

Where the Respondent is an employee, existing provisions for interim action are applicable.

7. Procedures for a Formal Investigation

The University will act on any formal or informal notice/complaint of violation of this policy that is received by the Title IX Coordinator 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.

Upon receipt of a complaint or notice to the Title IX Coordinator of an alleged violation of this policy, the Title IX Coordinator initiates a prompt initial assessment to determine the next steps the University needs to take.

The Title IX Coordinator will initiate at least one of three responses:

- 1) Offering supportive measures because the Complainant does not want to file a formal complaint;
- 2) An informal resolution (upon submission of a formal complaint); and/or
- 3) A Formal Grievance Process including an investigation and a hearing (upon submission of a formal complaint).

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 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 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 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'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 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, though this does not extend to the provision of evidence or testimony.

Note that the University's ability to remedy and respond to notice may be limited if the Complainant does not want the University 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's obligation to protect its community.

In cases in which the Complainant requests confidentiality/no formal action and the circumstances allow the University to honor that request, the University 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, and to have the incidents investigated and properly resolved through these procedures. Please consider that delays may cause limitations on access to evidence, or present issues with respect to the status of the parties.

Initial Assessment

Following receipt of notice or a complaint of an alleged violation of this Policy, the Title IX Coordinator engages in an initial assessment, typically within one to five business days. 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, assesses the request, and implements accordingly. 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 solely a procedural requirement under Title IX, and does not limit the University’s authority to address a complaint with an appropriate process and remedies.

Dismissal of Complaint

The University 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 above, even if proved;
2. The conduct did not occur in an educational program or activity controlled by the University (including buildings or property controlled by recognized student organizations), and/or the University does not have control of the Respondent;
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 the University.

The University 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;
2. The Respondent is no longer enrolled in or employed by the University; or
3. Specific circumstances prevent the University from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Upon any dismissal, the University 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.

Right to an Advisor

The parties may each have an Advisor of their choice present with them for all meetings, interviews, and hearings 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).

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 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, the Advisor will be trained by the University and be familiar with the university's resolution process.

If the parties choose an Advisor from outside the pool of those identified by the University, the Advisor may not have been trained by the University and may not be familiar with its 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. Advisor's Role in Meetings and Interviews

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 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 is not obligated to provide an attorney.

c. Advisors in Hearings/Huntington University-Appointed Advisor

Under U.S. Department of Education regulations under Title IX, a form of indirect questioning is required during the hearing but must be conducted by the parties' Advisors. The parties are not permitted to directly question each other or any witnesses. If a party does not have an Advisor for a hearing, the University will appoint a trained Advisor for the limited purpose of conducting any questioning of the other party and witnesses.

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 questioning, the University 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.

e. 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 the University policies and procedures.

f. Advisor Violations of Huntington University Policy

All Advisors are subject to the same the University policies and procedures. Advisors are expected to advise their advisees without disrupting proceedings.

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.

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.

g. Sharing Information with the Advisor

The University expects that the parties may wish to have the University 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 also provides a consent form that authorizes the University 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 is able to share records with an Advisor.

h. 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 the University. The University 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's privacy expectations.

i. Expectations of an Advisor

The University generally expects an Advisor to adjust their schedule to allow them to attend the University 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.

j. 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.

8. Formal Grievance Process: Notice of Investigation and Allegations (NOIA)

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 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'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's Policy prohibits knowingly making false statements, including knowingly submitting false information during the resolution process,

- 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 either mail (to campus mailbox) or emailed to the individuals university email-issued email or designated accounts. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

9. Resolution Timeline

The University will make a good faith effort to complete the resolution process within a thirty to sixty (30-60) 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 a 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 pool members to conduct the investigation, usually within two (2) business days of determining that an investigation should proceed.

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 or against a party generally, or for or against 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 university President.

The Formal Grievance Process involves an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence obtained, including evidence that supports that the Respondent engaged in a policy violation and evidence that 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 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 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 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 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 will promptly resume its investigation and resolution process as soon as feasible. During such a delay, the University will implement supportive measures as deemed appropriate.

The University's action(s) or processes 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) to 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,
- 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 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 10 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 Investigators 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 are expected to cooperate with and participate in 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.

Although 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 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. The University may elect to audio and/or video record interviews with Investigators. All involved parties will be made aware of audio and/or video recordings.

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, or (2) 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.

Within the boundaries stated above, the investigation can consider character evidence generally, if offered, but that evidence is unlikely to be relevant unless it is fact evidence or relates to a pattern of conduct.

18. Hearing Decision-maker Composition

The University will designate a single Decision-maker or a four-member Decision-maker panel from the Pool, at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator. The single Decision-maker will also Chair the hearing or, with a panel, one of the four members will be appointed as Chair of the panel 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 hearing 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.

19. 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) 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.

Within the boundaries stated above, the hearing can consider character evidence generally, if offered, but that evidence is unlikely to be relevant unless it is fact evidence or relates to a pattern of conduct. Previous disciplinary action of any kind involving the Respondent may be considered in determining an appropriate sanction upon a determination of responsibility. This information is only considered at the sanction stage of the process and is not shared until then.

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 Respondant violated the Policy as alleged.

20. Notice of Hearing

No less than 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 five (5) 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 and that the hearing may be held in their absence. 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 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.
- 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.
- No mobile phones (or other recording devices) are allowed during a 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 and remain within the thirty to sixty (30-60) day goal for resolution.

21. 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 the Chair at least three (3) 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 the Chair know at least three (3) business days prior to the hearing so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

22. Pre-hearing Preparation

The Chair or hearing facilitator 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), 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 may 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 ten (10) 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 (2) 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 three (3) 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.

23. 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 a question for the first time at the hearing or from asking for a reconsideration based on any new information or testimony offered at the hearing. The Chair must document and share with each party their rationale for any exclusion or inclusion at a 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) maybe recorded.

24. 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 may include the Chair, any additional panelists, the Investigator(s) who conducted the investigation, the parties, Advisors to the parties, any called witnesses, the Title IX Coordinator, a hearing facilitator, and anyone providing authorized accommodations or assistive services.

The Chair will answer all questions of procedure. Anyone appearing at the hearing to provide information may 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 the witnesses will then be excused.

25. 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.

26. 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 will review and decide the challenge.

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.

27. 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.

28. 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 may 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 if agreed to by all parties and the Chair), the proceeding will pause to allow the Chair to consider it (and state it if it has not been stated aloud), and the Chair will determine whether the question will be permitted, disallowed, or rephrased.

The Chair may invite explanations or persuasive statements 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. 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.

29. Refusal to Submit to Cross-examination and Inferences

If deemed reliable and relevant by the Decision-maker, and not otherwise subject to exclusion under this Policy, the Decision-maker may consider the statements of persons who were not present at the hearing, or persons who were present at the hearing but who nevertheless were not subject to cross-examination. This includes, but is not limited to, opinions and statements in police reports or other official reports, medical records, court records and filings, investigation notes of interviews, emails, written statements, affidavits, text messages, social media postings, and the like. Evidence provided that is something other than a statement by the party or witness may be considered. The Decision-maker(s) cannot draw an inference about the determination regarding responsibility based solely on a party's or witness's absence from the live hearing or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

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.

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

30. Recording Hearings

Hearings (but not deliberations) are recorded by the University 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 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.

31. 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 is used as the standard of proof.

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 Dean of Students office and will recommend the appropriate sanction(s) in consultation with other appropriate administrators are 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 not relied upon in its determination, credibility assessments, and any sanctions.

This report 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.

32. Notice of Outcome

Using the deliberation statement, the Title IX Coordinator will work with the Chair to prepare a Notice of Outcome, and maybe reviewed by the University's legal counsel. The Title IX Coordinator will then share the Notice of Outcome, including the final determination, rationale, and any applicable sanction(s) with the parties and their Advisors within three (3) 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 the University's records, or emailed to the parties' the University's issued email or otherwise approved account. Once mailed, emailed, and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

The Notice of Outcome will articulate 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 from the receipt of the misconduct report to the determination, including any and all notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, 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 is permitted to share such information under state or federal law; any sanctions issued which the University is permitted to share according to state or federal law; and any remedies provided to the Complainant designed to ensure access to the University's educational or employment program or activity, to the extent the University 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 the University to be final, any changes that occur prior to finalization, and the relevant procedures and basis for any available appeal options.

33. 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

The following are the usual sanctions 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 the University policy, procedure, or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- *Required Counseling:* A mandate to meet with and engage in either the University-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 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 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.
- *Expulsion:* Permanent termination of student status and revocation of rights to be on campus for any reason or to attend the University-sponsored events.
- *Withholding Diploma:* The University 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.
- *Other Actions:* In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the University may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

b. Employee Sanctions/Responsive Actions

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

- Warning – Verbal or Written
- Performance Improvement Plan/Management Process
- Enhanced supervision, observation, or review
- Required Counseling
- Required Training or Education
- Probation
- Denial of Pay Increase/Pay Grade
- Loss of Oversight or Supervisory Responsibility
- Demotion
- Transfer
- Reassignment
- Delay of tenure track progress
- Assignment to new supervisor
- Restriction of stipends, research, and/or professional development resources
- Suspension with pay
- Suspension without pay
- Termination
- Other Actions: In addition to or in place of the above sanctions/responsive actions, the University may assign any other responsive actions as deemed appropriate.

34. Withdrawal or Resignation While Charges Pending

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, the resolution process ends, as Huntington University no longer has disciplinary jurisdiction over the withdrawn student.

However, the University 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. Such exclusion applies to all campuses of Huntington University. Admissions will be notified that they cannot be readmitted. They may also be barred from all University 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 unless and until all sanctions have been satisfied.

Should an employee Respondent resign with unresolved allegations pending, the resolution process ends, as the University no longer has disciplinary jurisdiction over the resigned employee.

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

35. Appeals

Any party may file a Request for Appeal, but it must be submitted in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within five (5) days of the delivery of the Notice of Outcome.

A single Appeal Decision-maker chosen from the Pool will be designated by the Title IX Coordinator and will chair the appeal. No Appeal Decision-maker will have been involved in the process previously, including any dismissal appeal that may have been heard earlier in the process.

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:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. 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
3. 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 Appeal 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 five (5) 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 to determine if it meets the grounds in this Policy 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 three (3) 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 Chair and will render a decision in no more than five (5) business days, barring exigent circumstances. All decisions are determined based on a preponderance of evidence.

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, and the rationale supporting the essential findings to the extent the University 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-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, but pre-appeal, then emergency removal procedures (detailed above) for a hearing on the justification for doing so must be permitted within forty-eight (48) hours of implementation.

If the original sanctions include separation in any form, the University may place a hold on official transcripts, diplomas, graduations, and course registration pending the outcome of an appeal. The Respondent may request a stay of these holds from the Title IX Coordinator within two (2) business days of the notice of the sanctions. The request will be evaluated by the Title IX Coordinator or designee, whose determination is final.

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 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/Decision-maker(s) 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.

- 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 where a procedural 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 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 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.

36. 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,
- Permanent alteration of housing assignments,
- Implementation of long-term contact limitations between the parties, and/or
- 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.

37. 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, and/or expulsion from the University 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.

38. Recordkeeping

The University will maintain for a period of at least seven years records of:

1. Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility and transcripts 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'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. The University will make these training materials publicly available on the University's website; 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'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 will also maintain any and all records in accordance with state and federal laws.

39. Procedures for a Alternative Investigation Process

The University investigates any allegation of sexual harassment once it has received notice of an official allegation. In the event of an investigation that the alleged behavior exhibited by a Respondent does not constitute meet the criteria of sexual harassment as defined in this policy (even if proved), or does not occur on the campus or on property owned or controlled by HU, at HU-sponsored events, or in buildings owned or controlled by HU's recognized student organizations, or did not occur against a person in the United States, and should the complaint be dismissed from a Title IX process, the University and the Title IX Coordinator reserves the right to investigate and resolve the matter through an alternative process (either through Student Life or Human Resources) after providing the Complainant and Respondant written notification of the initial finding and communicate the alternative investigation and resolution process.

Formal Title IX complaints can be withdrawn at any point by the Complainant by notifying the Title IX Coordinator in writing. The University reserves the right to dismiss complaints if the Respondent is no longer enrolled at or employed by the University, or if there is not an ability to gather enough evidence to reach a determination regarding the allegations in a formal complaint. However, the University reserves the right to continue investigating an allegation to determine any pattern in behavior that could warrant the Title IX investigation continuing.

40. Grievance Process Pool Training

The Formal Grievance Process relies on the Title IX Coordinator, members of the Grievance Process Pool, and others to carry out the processes described herein. The Title IX Coordinator appoints the Pool, which acts with independence and impartiality.

The University ensures that the Title IX Coordinator and investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process receive training, based on their respective roles in the process, in accordance with 34 CFR 106.45 (b)(1)(iii).

41. 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 will take all appropriate and available steps to protect individuals who fear that they may be subjected to retaliation.

The University and any member of the University's community are prohibited from taking or attempting 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.

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.

42. Policy Status, Revisions, and Procedures

This policy and its procedures supersede any previous policy(ies) to the extent, and only to the extent, they address sexual harassment and discrimination, and/or retaliation under Title IX. These policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX Coordinator. The University 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 Huntington University 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.

If government 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 procedure was implemented November 9, 2021.

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APPENDIX A: Informal Resolution (PROCESS B)

Informal Resolution is typically used for less serious offenses and only when all parties agree to this alternative process known as Process B through written consent. An informal resolution must be requested to the Title IX Coordinator. This can also include a remedies-only response. The Title IX Coordinator, or his / her designee, will serve in an impartial third party role and does not have the responsibility to provide a decision of responsibility. Decisions of responsibility are reserved for a formal grievance (Process A). If the complainant feels as if a formal grievance process (Process A) would be more suited to fully understand the grievance, then the Title IX Coordinator must be notified.

An informal resolution process includes:

1. Complainant files a formal complaint listing the details of the grievance including the name of the respondent, date, time, and description of the alleged grievance. The complainant may also provide possible remedies to the Title IX Coordinator.
2. A meeting is conducted between the Title IX Coordinator and the respondent to share the formal complaint.
3. The complainant and respondent agree in writing to participate in the informal process.
4. The Title IX Coordinator, or his / her designee, provides mediation that could include conversations, written communications, or other forms of communication with the aim at resolving the grievance.
5. A resolved grievance could include an agreement between the complainant and respondent, a separation between the two parties, referral to counseling, or participation in an educational program. Request that the alleged behavior cease will most likely be included in this agreement.
6. Huntington University aims to have informal processes completed within 30 days from when the initial complaint is received.

The process described above is an informal process by which the parties mutually agree to resolve an allegation. It may be used for less serious, yet inappropriate, behaviors and is encouraged as an alternative to the formal process ("Process A" described above) to resolve conflicts. The parties must consent to the use of an Informal Resolution.

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

The Informal Process 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 Formal Grievance Process ("Process A") is completed should the parties and the Title IX Coordinator believe it could be beneficial. The results of an Informal Resolution are not appealable.

