

**HIGHLAND COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**
Highland, Kansas

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR CIVIL
RIGHTS EQUITY GRIEVANCE
RESOLUTION FOR ALL FACULTY,
STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES**

Approved: (May 27, 2015)

POLICY AND PROCEDURES: Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination

Highland Community College affirms its commitment to promote the goals of fairness and equity in all aspects of the educational enterprise. All policies below are subject to resolution using the College's Equity Grievance Process, as detailed below. The Equity Grievance Process is applicable regardless of the status of the parties involved, who may be members or non-members of the campus community, students, student organizations, faculty, administrators and/or staff. The College reserves the right to act on incidents occurring on-campus or off-campus, when the off-campus conduct could have an on-campus impact or impact on the educational mission of the College.

The Human Resource Manager serves as the employee Title IX Coordinator and the Vice President for Student Services serves as the student Title IX Coordinator. Both positions oversee implementation of the College's Equal Opportunity plan, disability compliance, and the College's policy on equal opportunity, harassment and nondiscrimination. Reports of discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation should be made to the appropriate coordinator promptly, but there is no time limitation on the filing of grievances¹, as long as the accused individual remains subject to the College's jurisdiction. All reports are acted upon promptly while every effort is made by the College to preserve the privacy of reports. Anonymous reports may also be filed online, using the reporting form posted at www.highlandcc.edu. Reporting is addressed more specifically in Section 7, below (pg. 12). Reports of discrimination by either Title IX Coordinator should be reported to the College President, Highland Community College, 606 West Main, Highland, KS 66035 or by calling the President's office at 785-442-6000

This policy applies to behaviors that take place on the campus, at college-sponsored events and may also apply off-campus and to actions online when the Title IX Coordinator(s) determines that the off-campus conduct affects a substantial College interest. A substantial College interest is defined to include:

- a) Any action that constitutes criminal offense as defined by federal or Kansas state law. This includes, but is not limited to, single or repeat violations of any local, state or federal law committed in the municipality where the College is located;
- b) Any situation where it appears that the accused individual may present a danger or threat to the health or safety of self or others;

¹ Alternatively, the terminology of "complaint" may be used in lieu of grievance.

- c) Any situation that significantly impinges upon the rights, property or achievements of self or others or significantly breaches the peace and/or causes social disorder; and/or
- d) Any situation that is detrimental to the educational interests of the College.

Any online postings or other electronic communication by students, including cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, cyber-harassment, etc. occurring completely outside of the College's control (e.g. not on College networks, websites or between College email accounts) will only be subject to this policy when those online behaviors can be shown to cause a substantial on-campus disruption. Otherwise, such communications are considered speech protected by the 1st Amendment.

Off-campus discriminatory or harassing speech by employees may be regulated by the College only when such speech is made in an employee's official or work-related capacity.

Inquiries about this policy and procedure may be made internally to:

Eileen Gronniger
Employee Title IX Coordinator,
Office of Human Resources
Highland Community College, 606 West Main, Highland, KS 66035
785-442-6010
egronniger@highlandcc.edu

Dr. Cheryl Rasmussen
Student Title IX Coordinator
Vice President for Student Services
Highland Community College, 606 West Main, Highland, KS 66035
785-442-6020
crasmussen@highlandcc.edu

Inquiries may be made externally to:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
Customer Service Hotline #: (800) 421-3481
Facsimile: (202) 453-6012
TDD#: (877) 521-2172
Email: OCR@ed.gov
Web: <http://www.ed.gov/ocr>

Office for Civil Rights,
Kansas City Office
U.S. Department of Education
One Petticoat Lane
1010 Walnut Street, Suite 320
Kansas City, MO 64106
Telephone: (816) 268-0550
Facsimile: (816) 268-0559
Email: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
Contact: <http://www.eeoc.gov/contact/>

1. Highland Community College Policy on Nondiscrimination

Highland Community College adheres to all federal and state civil rights laws banning discrimination in public institutions of higher education. Highland Community College will not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, student or applicant for admission on the basis of [race, religion, hearing status, personal appearance, color, sex, pregnancy, political affiliation, source of income, place of business, residence, religion, creed, ethnicity, national origin (including ancestry), citizenship status, physical or mental disability, age, marital status, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, veteran or military status (including special disabled veteran, Vietnam-era veteran, or recently separated veteran), predisposing genetic characteristics, domestic violence victim status] or any other protected category under applicable local, state or federal law, including protections for those opposing discrimination or participating in any grievance process on campus or within the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or other human rights agencies.

This policy covers nondiscrimination in employment and in access to educational opportunities. Therefore, any member of the campus community, guest or visitor who acts to deny, deprive or limit the educational, employment, residential and/or social access, benefits and/or opportunities of any member of the campus community on the basis of their actual or perceived membership in the protected classes listed above is in violation of the College policy on nondiscrimination. When brought to the attention of the College, any such discrimination will be appropriately remedied by the College according to the procedures below.

2. Highland Community College Policy on Accommodation of Disabilities

Highland Community College is committed to full compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of

1973, which prohibit discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities, as well as other federal and state laws pertaining to individuals with disabilities. Under the ADA and its amendments, a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. The ADA also protects individuals who have a record of a substantially limiting impairment or who are regarded as disabled by the institution whether qualified or not. A substantial impairment is one that significantly limits or restricts a major life activity such as hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, performing manual tasks, walking or caring for oneself.

The Human Resources Manager and the Coordinator of Disabilities have been designated as the ADA/504 persons responsible for coordinating efforts to comply with these disability laws, including investigation of any grievance alleging noncompliance.

a. Students with Disabilities

Highland Community College is committed to providing qualified students with disabilities with reasonable accommodations and support needed to ensure equal access to the academic programs and activities of the College.

All accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. A student requesting any accommodation should first contact the Coordinator of Disability Services who coordinates services for students with disabilities. The director reviews documentation provided by the student and, in consultation with the student, determines which accommodations are appropriate to the student's particular needs and academic programs.

b. Employees with Disabilities

Pursuant to the ADA, Highland Community College will provide reasonable accommodation(s) to all qualified employees with known disabilities, where their disability affects the performance of their essential job functions, except where doing so would be unduly disruptive or would result in undue hardship.

An employee with a disability is responsible for requesting an accommodation in writing to the Human Resource Manager and provide appropriate documentation. The Human Resource Manager will work with the employee's supervisor to identify which essential functions of the position are affected by the employee's disability and what reasonable accommodations could enable the employee to perform those duties.

3. Highland Community College Policy on Discriminatory Harassment

Students, staff, administrators, and faculty are entitled to a working environment and educational environment free of discriminatory harassment. Highland Community College's

harassment policy is not meant to inhibit or prohibit educational content or discussions inside or outside of the classroom that include germane, but controversial or sensitive subject matters protected by academic freedom, or the first amendment. The sections below describe the specific forms of legally prohibited harassment that are also prohibited under College policy.

a. Discriminatory and Bias-Related Harassment

Harassment constitutes a form of discrimination that is prohibited by law. Highland Community College will seek to remedy all forms of harassment when reported, whether or not the harassment rises to the level of creating a hostile environment. When harassment rises to the level of creating a hostile environment, the College may, to the extent we have the authority to do so, also impose sanctions on the harasser. Highland Community College's harassment policy explicitly prohibits any form of harassment, defined as unwelcome conduct on the basis of actual or perceived membership in a protected class, by any member or group of the community.

A hostile environment may be created by oral, written, graphic, or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent/pervasive and objectively offensive that it interferes with, limits or denies the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities or employment access, benefits or opportunities.²

Offensive conduct and/or harassment that does not rise to the level of discrimination or that is of a generic nature not on the basis of a protected status may not result in the imposition of discipline under College policy, but may be addressed through civil confrontation, remedial actions, education and/or effective conflict resolution mechanisms. For assistance with conflict resolution techniques, employees should contact the Manager of Human Resources and students should contact the Director of Student Conduct.

Highland Community College condemns and will not tolerate discriminatory harassment against any employee, student, visitor or guest on the basis of any status protected by college policy or law.

b. Sexual Harassment

Both the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the State of Kansas regard sexual harassment as a form of sex/gender discrimination and, therefore, as an unlawful discriminatory practice. Highland Community College has adopted the following definition

² This definition of hostile environment is based on Federal Register / Vol. 59, No. 47 / Thursday, March 10, 1994: Department Of Education Office For Civil Rights, Racial Incidents And Harassment Against Students At Educational Institutions Investigative Guidance. The document is available at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/race394.html>.

of sexual harassment, in order to address the special environment of an academic community, which consists not only of employer and employees, but of students as well.³

Sexual harassment is:

- unwelcome, sexual or gender-based verbal, written, online and/or physical conduct.⁴

Anyone experiencing sexual harassment in any College program is encouraged to report it immediately to the appropriate College Title IX Coordinator.

Sexual harassment creates a hostile environment, and may be disciplined when it is:

- sufficiently severe, persistent/pervasive and objectively offensive that it,
 - has the effect of unreasonably interfering with, denying or limiting employment opportunities or the ability to participate in or benefit from the college's educational, social and/or residential program, and is
 - based on power differentials (*quid pro quo*), the creation of a hostile environment or retaliation.

POLICY EXPECTATIONS WITH RESPECT TO CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIPS⁵

³ Also of relevance is the Office of Civil Rights 2001 statement on sexual harassment, "Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment Of Students By School Employees, Other Students, Or Third Parties, Title IX," which can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/other/2001-1/011901b.html>, as well as the April, 2011 Dear Colleague Letter on Campus Sexual Violence, which can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/dear_colleague_sexual_violence.pdf

⁴ Some examples of possible Sexual Harassment include:

- A professor insists that a student have sex with him/her in exchange for a good grade. This is harassment regardless of whether the student accedes to the request.
- A student repeatedly sends sexually oriented jokes around on an email list s/he created, even when asked to stop, causing one recipient to avoid the sender on campus and in the residence hall in which they both live.
- Explicit sexual pictures are displayed in a professor's office or on the exterior of a residence hall door
- Two supervisors frequently 'rate' several employees' bodies and sex appeal, commenting suggestively about their clothing and appearance.
- A professor engages students in her class in discussions about their past sexual experiences, yet the conversation is not in any way germane to the subject matter of the class. She probes for explicit details, and demands that students answer her, though they are clearly uncomfortable and hesitant.
- An ex-girlfriend widely spreads false stories about her sex life with her former boyfriend to the clear discomfort of the boyfriend, turning him into a social pariah on campus
- Male students take to calling a particular brunette student "Monica" because of her resemblance to Monica Lewinsky. Soon, everyone adopts this nickname for her, and she is the target of relentless remarks about cigars, the president, "sexual relations" and Weight Watchers.
- A student grabbed another student by the hair, then grabbed her breast and put his mouth on it. While this is sexual harassment, it is also a form of sexual violence.

⁵ This section is offered as an optional inclusion, as some campuses prefer to include this policy elsewhere, such as a faculty handbook or employee manual. We include it here to inform students, not just employees, of our expectations.

There are inherent risks in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals in unequal positions (such as faculty and student, supervisor and employee). These relationships may be less consensual than perceived by the individual whose position confers power. The relationship also may be viewed in different ways by each of the parties, particularly in retrospect. Furthermore, circumstances may change, and conduct that was previously welcome may become unwelcome. Even when both parties have consented at the outset to a romantic or sexual involvement, this past consent may not remove grounds for a later charge of a violation of applicable sections of this policy. The College does not wish to interfere with private choices regarding personal relationships when these relationships do not interfere with the goals and policies of the College. For the personal protection of members of this community, relationships in which power differentials are inherent (faculty-student, staff-student, administrator-student) are generally discouraged.

Consensual romantic or sexual relationships in which one party maintains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party are unethical. Therefore, persons with direct supervisory or evaluative responsibilities who are involved in such relationships must bring those relationships to the timely attention of their supervisor, and will likely result in the necessity to remove the employee from the supervisory or evaluative responsibilities, or shift a party out of being supervised or evaluated by someone with whom they have established a consensual relationship. This includes RAs and students over whom they have direct responsibility. While no relationships are prohibited by this policy, failure to self-report such relationships to a supervisor as required can result in disciplinary action for an employee.

c. Sexual Misconduct

State law defines various violent and/or non-consensual sexual acts as crimes. Additionally, Highland Community College has defined categories of sexual misconduct, as stated below, for which action under this policy may be imposed. Generally speaking, Highland Community College considers Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse violations to be the most serious, and therefore typically imposes the most severe sanctions, including suspension or expulsion for students and termination for employees. However, Highland Community College reserves the right to impose any level of sanction, ranging from a reprimand up to and including suspension or expulsion/termination, for any act of sexual misconduct or other gender-based offenses, including intimate partner or relationship (dating and/or domestic) violence, non-consensual sexual contact and stalking based on the facts and circumstances of the particular grievance. Acts of sexual misconduct may be committed by any person upon any other person, regardless of the sex, gender, sexual orientation and/or gender identity of those involved. Violations include:

- i. Sexual Harassment (as defined in section b above)**
- ii. Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse**

Defined as:

- any sexual penetration or intercourse (anal, oral or vaginal)
- however slight
- with any object
- by a person upon another person
- that is without consent and/or by force

Sexual penetration includes vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, tongue, finger or object, or oral copulation by mouth to genital contact or genital to mouth contact.

iii. Non-Consensual Sexual Contact⁶

Defined as:

- any intentional sexual touching
- however slight
- with any object
- by a person upon another person
- that is without consent and/or by force

Sexual touching includes any bodily contact with the breasts, groin, genitals, mouth or other bodily orifice of another individual, or any other bodily contact in a sexual manner.

⁶The Kansas state definition of sexual battery, which is applicable to criminal prosecutions for sexual battery in Kansas, may differ from the definition used on campus to address policy violations. See K.S.A. 21-5505.

iv. Sexual Exploitation

Sexual Exploitation refers to a situation in which a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another, and situations in which the conduct does not fall within the definitions of Sexual Harassment, Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse or Non-Consensual Sexual Contact. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual voyeurism (such as watching a person undressing, using the bathroom or engaged in sexual acts without the consent of the person observed)
- Taking pictures or video or audio recording another in a sexual act, or in any other private activity without the consent of all involved in the activity, or exceeding the boundaries of consent (such as allowing another person to hide in a closet and observe sexual activity, or disseminating sexual pictures without the photographed person's consent)
- Prostitution
- Sexual exploitation also includes engaging in sexual activity with another person while knowingly infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or other sexually transmitted disease (STD) and without informing the other person of the infection, and further includes administering alcohol or drugs (such as "date rape" drugs) to another person without his or her knowledge or consent

v. Consent⁷

Consent is knowing, voluntary and clear permission by word or action, to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Since individuals may experience the same interaction in different ways, it is the responsibility of each party to make certain that the other has consented before engaging in the activity. 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.

A person cannot consent if he or she is unable to understand what is happening or is disoriented, helpless, asleep or unconscious for any reason, including due to alcohol or other drugs. An individual who engages in sexual activity when the individual

⁷ Presumably because such is a generally understood term, Kansas does not statutorily define "consent" as used in the criminal code. However, Kansas does, in the statutes defining rape (K.S.A. 21-5503) and sodomy (K.S.A. 21-5504) indicate what does not constitute consent. These definitions are applicable to criminal prosecutions for sex offenses and may differ from the definition used on campus to address policy violations.

knows, or should know, that the other person is physically or mentally incapacitated has violated this policy.

It is not an excuse that the individual responding party of sexual misconduct was intoxicated and, therefore, did not realize the incapacity of the other.

Incapacitation is defined as a state where someone cannot make rational, reasonable decisions because they lack the capacity to give knowing consent (e.g., to understand the “who, what, when, where, why or how” of their sexual interaction). This policy also covers a person whose incapacity results from mental disability, involuntary physical restraint and/or from the taking of incapacitating drugs.

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 dating relationship is not sufficient to constitute consent. The existence of consent is based on the totality of the circumstances, including the context in which the alleged incident occurred and any similar previous patterns that may be evidenced. Silence or the absence of resistance alone is not consent. A person can withdraw consent at any time during sexual activity by expressing in words or actions that he or she no longer wants the act to continue, and, if that happens, the other person must stop immediately.

In Kansas, a minor (meaning a person under the age of 16 years) cannot consent to sexual activity. This means that sexual contact by an adult with a person younger than 16 years old, consenting and unconsenting, is a crime.

4. Other Civil Rights Offenses,

- Threatening or causing physical harm, extreme verbal abuse or other conduct which threatens or endangers the health or safety of any person
- Discrimination, defined as actions that deprive other members of the community of educational or employment access, benefits or opportunities.
- Intimidation, defined as implied threats or acts that cause an unreasonable fear of harm in another.
- Hazing, defined as acts likely to cause physical or psychological harm or social ostracism to any person within the College community, when related to the admission, initiation, pledging, joining, or any other group-affiliation activity (as defined further in the hazing policy). Hazing is also illegal under Kansas law and prohibited by College policy
- Bullying, defined as repeated and/or severe aggressive behavior likely to intimidate or intentionally hurt, control or diminish another person, physically or mentally.

- Violence between those in an intimate relationship to each other (this includes romantic relationships, dating, domestic⁸ and/or relationship violence)⁹
- Stalking¹⁰, defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that is unwelcome and would cause a reasonable person to feel fear¹¹
- Any other College rules, when a violation is motivated by the actual or perceived membership of the victim, may be pursued using this policy and process.

Sanctions for the above-listed “Other Civil Rights Behaviors” behaviors range from reprimand up through and including expulsion (students) or termination of employment.

5. Retaliation

Retaliation is defined as any adverse action taken against a person participating in a protected activity because of their participation in that protected activity. Retaliation against an individual for alleging harassment, supporting a party bringing a grievance or for assisting in providing information relevant to a claim of harassment is a serious violation of College policy and will be treated as another possible instance of harassment or discrimination. Acts of alleged retaliation should be reported immediately to the appropriate Title IX Coordinator and will be promptly investigated. Highland Community College is prepared to take appropriate steps to protect individuals who fear that they may be subjected to retaliation.

6. Remedial Action

Highland Community College to the extent it has the authority to do so, will implement initial remedial and responsive and/or protective actions upon notice of alleged harassment, retaliation and/or discrimination. Such actions could include but are not limited to: no

⁸ The state definition of domestic battery in Kansas, which is applicable to criminal prosecutions for domestic battery in Kansas, may differ from the definition used on campus to address policy violations. K.S.A. 21-5414

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- Employee A has been in an intimate relationship with Employee B for over a year; Employee A punches Employee B in the face during an argument (Dating Violence).
- Student A has been in an intimate relationship with Student B for over a year; Students A & B live together. During an argument, Student A shoves Student B to the ground (Domestic Violence).

¹⁰ The state definition of stalking in Kansas, which is applicable to criminal prosecutions for stalking in Kansas, may differ from the definition used on campus to address policy violations. See. K.S.A. 21-5427

¹¹

- Employee A recently ended an intimate relationship with Employee B. For the past three weeks, B has been sending A 100 text messages per day and waits by A’s car at the end of each day to beg and plead with her to take him back. When she refuses, he loses control, makes threatening gestures, and tells her she will regret this. Employee A indicates she is fearful of what B might do to her (Stalking).
- Mark is a student on campus who has always been fascinated by women who dye their hair. One day, he notices MaryLou, whose hair is dyed a very bright purple. He follows her home to see where she lives, and begins to track her history, actions and movements online. His fascination increases to the point where he follows her frequently on campus, takes pictures of her without her permission, and spies through her window at night with a long-range camera lens. He wants to have her beautiful purple hair for his own, so that he can stroke it whenever he wants.

contact orders, providing counseling and/or medial services, academic support, living arrangement adjustments, providing a campus escort, academic or work schedule and assignment accommodations, safety planning, referral to campus and community support resources.

Highland Community College will take additional prompt remedial and/or disciplinary action with respect to any member of the College community, guest or visitor who has been found to engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior or retaliation. Procedures for handling reported incidents are fully described below. Deliberately false and/or malicious accusations of harassment, as opposed to grievances which, even if erroneous, are made in good faith, are just as serious an offense as harassment and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

7. Confidentiality and Reporting of Offenses Under This Policy

Highland Community College officials, depending on their roles at the College, have varying reporting responsibilities and abilities to maintain confidentiality. In order to make informed choices, one should be aware of confidentiality and mandatory reporting requirements when consulting campus resources. On campus, some resources may maintain confidentiality, offering options and advice without any obligation to inform an outside agency or individual unless you have requested information to be shared. Other resources exist for you to report crimes and policy violations and these resources will take action when you report victimization to them. Under Kansas Law, if either party is under 18 and has been reported being physically, mentally, or sexually abused, college authorities are mandated to report the alleged abuse to law enforcement. For persons 18 and older, there are options for the report to be confidential, private, or formal. The following describes the three reporting options at Highland Community College:

a. Confidential Reporting

If a reporting party would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, the reporting party may speak with the campus counselor, off-campus local rape crisis counselors, domestic violence resources, local or state assistance agencies, off-campus members of the clergy/chaplains who will maintain confidentiality except in extreme cases of immediacy of threat or danger or abuse of a minor. The campus counselor is available to help free of charge and can be seen on an emergency basis during normal business hours. These employees will submit anonymous statistical information for Clery Act purposes unless they believe it would be harmful to their client, patient or parishioner.

b. Private Reporting

Those seeking to report misconduct may seek advice from certain resources who are not required to initially tell anyone else your private, personally identifiable information unless there is a pattern of abuse, cause for fear for your safety or the safety of others, or either

party is under 18 years of age. These resources include employees without supervisory responsibility or remedial authority to address discrimination, harassment, retaliation and/or sexual misconduct, such as admissions officers, Student Support Services staff (transfer, retention,), full time front desk personnel in all regional centers and the Wellness Center on the Highland campus. If a reporting party is unsure of someone's duties and ability to maintain privacy, ask them before talking to them. They will be able to explain and help a reporting party to make decisions about who is in the best position to help. All these resources, are instructed to share incident reports with their supervisors, but they do not share any personally identifiable information about the report unless the reporting party gives permission or they are under 18, except in the rare event that the incident reveals a need to protect the reporting party and/or other members of the community. If personally identifiable information is shared, it will be shared with as few people as possible and all efforts will be made to protect privacy to the greatest possible extent.

c. Formal Reporting Options

Party bringing a grievance¹² is encouraged to speak to College officials, such as the appropriate Title IX Coordinator, EGP (Equity Grievance Panel) members Director of Student Housing, Director of Student Conduct, Campus Security, to make formal reports of incidents of sexual misconduct. Party bringing a grievance has the right, and can expect, to have grievances taken seriously by the College when formally reported, and to have those incidents investigated and properly resolved through these procedures. Formal reporting still affords privacy to the reporter, and only a small group of officials who need to know will be told. Information will be shared as necessary with investigators, witnesses and the responding party. The circle of people with this knowledge will be kept as tight as possible to preserve a party bringing a grievance's rights and privacy. Additionally safe and anonymous reports, which do not trigger investigations, can be made by victims and/or third parties using the online reporting form posted at www.highlandcc.edu.

8. Federal Timely Warning Obligations

Victims of sexual misconduct should be aware that College administrators must issue timely warnings for incidents reported to them that pose a substantial threat of bodily harm or danger to members of the campus community. The College will make every effort to ensure that a victim's name and other identifying information is not disclosed, while still providing enough information for community members to make safety decisions in light of the potential danger.

¹² Alternatively, "alleging party" may be used in lieu of "party bringing a grievance."

EQUITY GRIEVANCE PROCESS FOR RESOLVING GRIEVANCES OF HARASSMENT, SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Highland Community College will, to the extent that it can, act on any formal or informal grievance or notice of violation of the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination, that is received by either Title IX Coordinator, the Equity Coordinator, a member of the Equity Grievance Panel who is not an advocate or a member of the administration.

The procedures described below will apply to all grievances involving students, staff or faculty members with the exception that unionized or other categorized employees will be subject to the terms of their respective collective bargaining agreements/employees' rights to the extent those agreements do not conflict with federal or state compliance obligations. Redress and requests for responsive actions for grievances brought involving non-members of the community are also covered by these procedures.

1. Equity Grievance Panel (EGP)

Members of the EGP are announced in an annual distribution of this policy to campus, prospective students, their parents and prospective employees. The list of members and a description of the panel can be found at www.highlandcc.edu. Members of the EGP are trained in all aspects of the grievance process, and can serve in any of the following roles, at the direction of the either Title IX Coordinator.

- To provide sensitive intake and initial counseling of grievances
- To serve in a mediation role in conflict resolution
- To investigate grievances
- To act as advisors to those involved in grievances
- To serve on hearing panels for grievances
- To serve on appeal panels for grievances

EGP members also recommend proactive policies, and serve in an educative role for the community. The President, in consultation with the Title IX Coordinators, appoints the panel, which reports to the Title IX Coordinators. EGP members receive annual training organized by the Title IX Coordinators, including a review of Highland Community College policies and procedures, so that they are able to provide accurate information to members of the community. All EGP members are required to attend this annual training.

The Equity Grievance Panel pool includes:

- At least 3-5 faculty members
- At least 5-10 administrative employees
- At least 2-5 representatives from Athletics

Panel members are generally expected to serve three-year terms. Appointments to the EGP should be made with attention to representation of groups protected by the harassment and non-discrimination policy. Individuals who are interested in serving on the EGP are encouraged to contact the either of the Title IX Coordinators.

2. Filing a grievance

Any member of the community, guest or visitor who believes that the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination has been violated should contact the either of the Title IX coordinators or a member of the EGP. It is also possible for employees to notify a supervisor, or for students to notify an administrative advisor or faculty member, or any member of the community may contact Campus Security. These individuals will in turn notify either of the Title IX Coordinators. The College website also includes a reporting form at www.highlandcc.edu which may serve to initiate a grievance.

All employees receiving reports of a potential violation of College policy are expected to promptly contact either Title IX Coordinator, within 24 hours of becoming aware of a report or incident. All initial contacts will be treated with the maximum possible privacy: specific information on any grievances received by any party will be reported to either Title IX Coordinator, but, subject to the College's obligation to redress violations, every effort will be made to maintain the privacy of those initiating a report of a grievance. In all cases, College will give consideration to the party bringing a grievance with respect to how the grievance is pursued, but reserves the right, when necessary to protect the community, to investigate and pursue a resolution when an alleged victim chooses not to initiate or participate in a formal grievance.

3. Grievance Intake

Following receipt of notice or a grievance, the Title IX Coordinator¹³ will, promptly assign an EGP panel member to work as advisor [advocate] to the person who reported the grievance [or party bringing a grievance may choose from the EGP pool (or choose a non-trained advisor from outside the pool, if preferred, or proceed without an advisor)]. Normally, within two business days, an initial determination is made whether a policy

¹³ If circumstances require, the President or Title IX/Equity Coordinator may designate another person to oversee the process below, should a grievance be made against the Coordinator or the Coordinator be otherwise unavailable or unable to fulfill their duties.

violation may have occurred and/or whether conflict resolution might be appropriate. If the grievance does not appear to allege a policy violation or if conflict resolution is desired by the party bringing a grievance, and appears appropriate given the nature of the alleged behavior, then the grievance does not proceed to investigation.

A full investigation will necessarily be pursued if there is evidence of a pattern of misconduct or a perceived threat of further harm to the community or any of its members. The College aims to complete all investigations within a 60 business day time period, which can be extended as necessary for appropriate cause by the Title IX/ Coordinator with notice to the parties.

4. Investigation

If a party bringing a grievance wishes to pursue a formal grievance or if the College, based on the alleged policy violation, wishes to pursue a formal grievance, then the Title IX Coordinator appoints EGP members to conduct the investigation, usually within two business days of determining that a grievance should proceed. Investigation of grievances brought directly by those alleging harm should be completed expeditiously, normally within 10 business days of notice to the Title IX Coordinator. Investigation may take longer when initial grievances fail to provide direct first-hand information. The College may undertake a short delay (3-10 days, to allow evidence collection) when criminal charges on the basis of the same behaviors that invoke this process are being investigated. College action will not be altered or precluded on the grounds that civil or criminal charges involving the same incident have been filed or that charges have been dismissed or reduced. All investigations will be thorough, reliable and impartial, and will entail interviews with all relevant parties and witnesses, obtaining available evidence and identifying sources of expert information, if necessary.

5. Interim Remedies

If, in the judgment of the Title IX/ Coordinator, the safety or well-being of any member(s) of the campus community may be jeopardized by the presence on-campus of the accused individual or the ongoing activity of a student organization whose behavior is in question, the Title IX/ Coordinator (or designee) may provide interim remedies intended to address the short-term effects of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation, i.e., to redress harm to the alleged victim and the community and to prevent further violations. These remedies may include referral to counseling and health services, education to the community, altering the housing situation of an accused student or resident employee (or the alleged victim, if desired), altering work arrangements for employees, providing campus escorts, implementing contact limitations between the parties, offering adjustments to academic deadlines, course schedules, etc.

The College may interim suspend a student, employee or organization pending the

completion of EGP investigation and procedures. In all cases in which an interim suspension is imposed, the student, employee or student organization will be given the opportunity to meet with the Title IX/Equity Coordinator prior to such suspension being imposed, or as soon thereafter as reasonably possible, to show cause why the suspension should not be implemented. The Title IX/Equity Coordinator has sole discretion to implement or stay an interim suspension under the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination, and to determine its conditions and duration. Violation of an interim suspension under this policy will be grounds for expulsion or termination.

During an interim suspension or administrative leave, a student or employee may be denied access to College housing and/or the College campus/facilities/events. As determined by the [appropriate administrative officer Title IX/Equity Coordinator or designee], this restriction includes classes and/or all other College activities or privileges for which the student might otherwise be eligible. At the discretion of the [appropriate administrative officer Title IX/Equity/ or designee], alternative coursework options may be pursued to ensure as minimal an impact as possible on the accused student.

6. Grievance Resolution

During or upon the completion of investigation, the investigators will meet with the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator. Based on that meeting, the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will make a decision on whether there is reasonable cause to proceed with the grievance. If the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator decides that no policy violation has occurred or that the preponderance of evidence (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the accused individual committed each alleged violation) does not support a finding of a policy violation, then the process will end unless the party bringing a grievance requests that the Title IX/Equity Coordinator makes an extraordinary determination to re-open the investigation or to forward the matter for a hearing. This decision lies in the sole discretion of the Title IX/Equity Coordinator. If there is reasonable cause, the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will direct the investigation to continue, or if there is a preponderance of evidence of a violation, then the Title IX/Equity Coordinator may recommend conflict resolution, a resolution without a hearing or a formal hearing, based on the below criteria.

a. Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution is often used for less serious, yet inappropriate, behaviors and is encouraged as an alternative to the formal hearing process to resolve conflicts. The Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will determine if conflict resolution is appropriate, based on the willingness of the parties, the nature of the conduct at issue and the susceptibility of the conduct to conflict resolution. In a conflict resolution meeting, an EGP member will facilitate a dialogue with the parties to an effective resolution, if possible. Sanctions are not possible as the result of a conflict resolution process, though the parties may agree to appropriate remedies. The Title IX/Equity Coordinator will keep records of any resolution

that is reached, and failure to abide by the accord can result in appropriate responsive actions.

Conflict resolution will not be the primary resolution mechanism used to address grievances of sexual misconduct or violent behavior of any kind or in other cases of serious violations of policy, though it may be made available after the formal process is completed should the parties and the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator believe that it could be beneficial. It is not necessary to pursue conflict resolution first in order to make a formal EGP grievance, and anyone participating in conflict resolution can stop that process at any time and request a formal hearing.

b. Resolution Without a Hearing

Resolution without a hearing can be pursued for any behavior that falls within the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination, at any time during the process. The Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will provide written notification of a grievance to any member of the College community who is accused of an offense of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation. The Title IX Coordinator [together with the investigator(s)] will meet with the responding individual to explain the finding(s) of the investigation. Once informed, the responding party may choose to admit responsibility for all or part of the alleged policy violations at any point in the process. If so, the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator / will render a finding that the individual is in violation of College policy for the admitted conduct, and will normally proceed to convene a formal hearing on any remaining disputed violations. For admitted violations, the appropriate member of the EGP will recommend an appropriate sanction or responsive action. If the sanction/responsive action is accepted by both the party bringing a grievance and responding party, the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will implement it, and act promptly and effectively to remedy the effects of the admitted conduct upon the victim and the community. If either party rejects the sanction/responsive action, an EGP hearing will be held on the sanction/responsive action only, according to the EGP procedures below, except in the case of at-will employees for whom findings and responsive actions will be determined by the Director of Human Resources based on the results of the investigation].

c. Formal Hearing

For any grievances that are not appropriate for conflict resolution and which are not resolved without a hearing, the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator will initiate a formal hearing, or for employees for whom no hearing process is available, will refer his/her findings to the Director of Human Resources for implementation.

7. Formal EGP Procedure This process diverts to the HCC Board of Trustees/Faculty Association Master Contract when the professional employee (as defined in the master

contract) brings the grievance. For student conduct processes that are not Title IX related, see the student conduct policy. Insert Student conduct (to be distributed at a later date).

a. Hearing Panels

The Title IX/Equity Coordinator will serve as chair of a three person hearing panel. If the respondent is a student, the student Title IX coordinator will chair the committee. If the respondent is an employee, the employee Title IX coordinator will chair the committee. The chair will appoint two people from the EGP none of whom have been previously involved with the grievance, to serve on the three-person panel with the chair. EGP members who served as investigators will be witnesses in the hearing of the grievance and therefore, may not serve as hearing panel members. Hearing panels may include both faculty and non-faculty employees with a least one faculty employee selected in a grievance involving a faculty member. No member of the panel may be a practicing attorney. The panel will meet at times determined by the Chair.

b. Notification of Charges

At least two days prior to the hearing, or as far in advance as is reasonably possible if an accelerated hearing is scheduled with the consent of the parties, the hearing panel chair will send a letter to the parties with the following information. Once mailed, emailed and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered. The letter will contain:

- A description of the alleged violation(s), 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. If any party does not appear at the scheduled hearing, the hearing will be held in their absence. For compelling reasons, the chair may reschedule the hearing.
- The parties may have the assistance of an EGP panel member, or other advisor at the hearing. Typically, advisors are members of the campus community, but the Title IX/Equity Coordinator may grant permission for an outside advisor upon request. The parties to the hearing are expected to ask and respond to questions on their own behalf, without representation by their advisor. The advisor may consult with the advisee quietly or in writing, or outside the hearing during breaks, but may not speak on behalf of the advisee to the panel.
- Hearings for possible violations that occur near or after the end of an academic term will be held immediately after the end of the term or during the summer, as needed, to meet the resolution timeline followed by the College and remain within the 60-day goal for resolution.

c. Hearing Procedures

Hearings will be convened, usually within one to two weeks of the completion of the investigation, and will be conducted in private. The hearing panel has the authority to hear all collateral misconduct, meaning that it hears all allegations of discrimination, harassment and retaliation, but also may hear any additional alleged policy violations that have occurred in concert with the discrimination, harassment or retaliation, even though those collateral allegations may not specifically fall within their jurisdiction. Accordingly, investigations should be conducted with as wide a scope as necessary.

Participants will include the three member panel, the investigator(s) who conducted the investigation on the grievance, the party bringing a grievance and responding party(ies) (or three organizational representatives in a case where an organization is charged), advisors to the parties and any called witnesses. The Chair will exchange the names of witnesses the College intends to call, all pertinent documentary evidence and any written findings from the investigators between the parties at least two business days prior to the hearing. In addition, the parties will be given a list of the names of each of the hearing panel members at least two business days in advance of the hearing. Should either (any) party object to any panelist, he/she must raise all objections, in writing, to the Chair immediately. Panel members will only be unseated if the Chair concludes that their bias precludes an impartial hearing of the grievance. Additionally, any panelist or Chair who feels he/she cannot make an objective determination must recuse himself or herself from the proceedings when notified of the identity of the parties and all witnesses in advance of the hearing.

The Chair, in consultation with the parties and investigators, may decide in advance of the hearing that certain witnesses do not need to be physically present if their testimony can be adequately summarized by the investigator(s) during the hearing. All parties will have ample opportunity to present facts and arguments in full and question all present witnesses during the hearing, though formal cross-examination is not used between the parties. If alternative questioning mechanisms are desired (screens, Skype, questions directed through the Chair, etc.), the parties should request them from the Chair at least two business days prior to the hearing.

Once the procedures are explained and the participants are introduced, the investigator will present the report of the investigation. Questions throughout the process will be directed to the chair, who will be responsible for paraphrasing, clarifying, responding, or asking for a response from other hearing participants, including the investigator. The investigator(s) will be present during the entire hearing process, but will only be present during deliberations at the request of the Chair. The findings of the investigation are not binding on the panel, though any undisputed conclusions of the investigation report will not be revisited, except as necessary to determine sanctions/responsive actions. Once the investigator(s) are questioned, the hearing panel will permit questioning of and by the parties, and of any present witness. Questions will be directed through the panel at the discretion of the Chair.

Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Any evidence that the panel believes is relevant and credible may be considered, including history and pattern evidence. The Chair will address any evidentiary concerns prior to and/or during the hearing, may exclude irrelevant or immaterial evidence and may ask the panel to disregard evidence lacking in credibility. The Chair will determine all questions of procedure and evidence. Anyone appearing at the hearing to provide information will respond to questions on his/her own behalf.

Unless the Chair determines it is appropriate, no one will present information or raise questions concerning: (1) incidents not directly related to the possible violation, unless they show a pattern, or (2) the sexual history of or the character of the victim/party bringing a grievance.

There will be no observers in the hearing. The Chair may allow witnesses who have relevant information to appear at a portion of the hearing in order to respond to specific questions from the panel or the parties involved. The panel does not hear from character witnesses, but will accept up to two letters supporting the character of the individuals involved.

In hearings involving more than one accused individual or in which two parties bringing a grievance have accused the same individual of substantially similar conduct, the standard procedure will be to hear the grievances jointly; however, the Title IX/Equity Coordinator may permit the hearing pertinent to each responding party to be conducted separately. In joint hearings, separate determinations of responsibility will be made for each responding party.

Proceedings are private. All persons present at any time during the hearing are expected to maintain the privacy of the proceedings, subject to College consequences for failure to do so. While the contents of the hearing are private, the parties have discretion to share their own experiences if they so choose, and should discuss doing so with their advisors.

Hearings are recorded for purposes of review in the event of an appeal. EGP members, the parties and/or the persons who initiated the action, and appropriate administrative officers of the College will be allowed to listen to the recording in a location determined by the Title IX/Equity Coordinator or designee. No person will be given or be allowed to make a copy of the recording without permission of the Title IX/Equity Coordinator. Persons given access to the recording will be required to sign an agreement confirming that they will protect the privacy of the information contained in the recording.

d. Decisions

The hearing panel will deliberate in closed session to determine whether the responding party is responsible or not responsible for the violation(s) in question. The panel will base

its determination on a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the accused individual committed each alleged violation). If an individual responding party or organization is found responsible by a majority of the panel, the panel will determine appropriate sanctions.

The Chair will prepare a written deliberation report detailing the finding, how each member voted, the information cited by the panel in support of its determination and any information the hearing panel excluded from its consideration and why. The report should conclude with the determined sanctions. This report should not exceed two pages in length and must be completed within two (2) days of the end of deliberations.

The Title IX/Equity Coordinator will inform the accused individual and the party bringing a grievance of the final determination within 2-3 business days of the hearing. 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 College records; or emailed to the parties' College-issued email account. Once mailed, emailed and/or received in-person, notice will be presumptively delivered.

e. Sanctions

Sanctions or responsive actions will be determined by the hearing panel. Factors considered when determining a sanction/responsive action may include:

- The nature, severity of, and circumstances surrounding the violation
- An individual's disciplinary history
- Previous grievances or allegations involving similar conduct
- Any other information deemed relevant by the hearing panel
- 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 victim and the community

f. Student Sanctions [Example]

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

- *Warning:* A formal statement that the behavior was unacceptable and a warning that further infractions of any College policy, procedure or directive will result in more severe sanctions/responsive actions.
- *Probation:* A written reprimand for violation of the Code of Student Conduct,

providing for more severe disciplinary sanctions in the event that the student or organization is found in violation of any College policy, procedure or directive within a specified period of time. Terms of the probation will be specified and may include denial of specified social privileges, exclusion from co-curricular activities, non-contact orders and/or other measures deemed appropriate.

- *Suspension*: Termination of student status for a definite period of time not to exceed two years, and/or until specific criteria are met. Students who return from suspension are automatically placed on probation through the remainder of their tenure at College.
- *Expulsion*: Permanent termination of student status, revocation of rights to be on campus for any reason or attend College-sponsored events.
- *Withholding Diploma*. The College may withhold a student's diploma for a specified period of time and/or deny a student participation in commencement activities if the student has a grievance pending, or as a sanction if the student is found responsible for an alleged violation.
- *Revocation of Degree*. The College reserves the right to revoke a degree awarded from the College for fraud, misrepresentation or other violation of College policies, procedures or directives in obtaining the degree.
- *Organizational Sanctions*. Deactivation, de-recognition, loss of all privileges (including College registration), for a specified period of time.
- *Other Actions*: In addition to or in place of the above sanctions, the College may assign any other sanctions as deemed appropriate.

ii. Employee Sanctions

Responsive actions for an employee who has engaged in harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation include warning, required counseling, suspension with pay, suspension without pay and termination.

g. Withdrawal or Resignation While Charges Pending

Students: The College does not permit a student to withdraw if that student has a grievance pending for violation of the policy on Equal Opportunity, Harassment and Nondiscrimination, or for charges under the Code of Student Conduct. Should a student decide to leave and not participate in the investigation and/or hearing, the process will nonetheless proceed in the student's absence to a reasonable resolution and that student will not be permitted to return to College unless all sanctions have been satisfied.

Employees: Should an employee resign while charges are pending, the records of the Title IX/Equity Coordinator will reflect that status, as will College responses to any future inquiries regarding employment references for that individual. The Title IX/Equity Coordinator will act to promptly and effectively remedy the effects of the conduct upon the

victim and the community.

h. Appeals

All requests for appeal considerations must be submitted in writing to the Title IX/Equity Coordinator within five business days of the delivery of the written finding of the hearing panel.

The Title IX/Equity Coordinator not previously involved in the grievance will consider all appeal requests. Any party may appeal, but appeals are limited to the following:

- A procedural error or omission occurred that significantly impacted the outcome of the hearing (e.g. substantiated bias, material deviation from established procedures, etc.).
- To consider new evidence, unknown or unavailable during the original hearing or investigation, that could substantially impact the original finding or sanction. A summary of this new evidence and its potential impact must be included.
- The sanctions imposed are substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation [or better: The sanctions fall outside the range of sanctions the College has designated for this offense].

The original finding and sanction/responsive actions will stand if the appeal is not timely or is not based on the grounds listed above, and such a decision is final. When any party requests an appeal, the other party (parties) will be notified and joined in the appeal. The party requesting appeal must show that the grounds for an appeal request have been met, and the other party or parties may show the grounds have not been met, or that additional grounds are met. The original finding and sanction are presumed to have been decided reasonably and appropriately.

When the appeals reviewer finds that at least one of the grounds is met two members of the EGP not previously associated with the grievance, along with the appeal reviewer will hear the appeal. Additional principles governing the hearing of appeals include the following:

- Appeals decisions by the appeal board are to be deferential to the original decision, making changes to the finding only where there is clear error and to the sanction/responsive action only if there is a compelling justification to do so.
- Appeals are not intended to be full re-hearings of the grievance. In most cases, appeals are confined to a review of the written documentation or record of the original hearing, and pertinent documentation regarding the grounds for appeal. Appeals granted based on new evidence should normally be remanded to the original hearing panel for reconsideration. Other appeals may be remanded at the discretion of the Title IX/Equity Coordinator or heard by the appeal board.
- Sanctions imposed are implemented immediately unless the Title IX/Equity Coordinator or designee stays their implementation in extraordinary circumstances, pending the outcome of

the appeal.

- The Title IX/Equity Coordinator will normally, after conferring with the appeal board, render a written decision on the appeal to all parties within 2-3 business days from hearing of the appeal.
- All parties should be informed of whether the grounds for an appeal are accepted and the results of the appeal decision.
- Once an appeal is decided, the outcome is final: further appeals are not permitted.

i. Failure to Complete Sanctions/Comply with Responsive Actions

All responding parties are expected to comply with conduct sanctions/responsive/corrective actions within the time frame specified by the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator. Failure to follow through on conduct sanctions/responsive/corrective actions by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect or any other reason, may result in additional sanctions/responsive/corrective actions and/or suspension, expulsion and/or termination from the College 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/Equity Coordinator.

j. Records

In implementing this policy, records of all grievances, resolutions, and hearings will be kept by the Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator indefinitely in the Title IX Coordinator database.

k. Statement of the Rights of a Party Bringing a Grievance

- To be treated with respect by College officials.
- To take advantage of campus support resources (such as Counseling community health services).
- To experience a safe living, educational and work environment.
- To have an advisor present during this process.
- To refuse to have an allegation resolved through conflict resolution procedures.
- To receive amnesty for minor student misconduct (such as alcohol or drug violations) that is ancillary to the incident.
- To be free from retaliation.
- To have grievances heard in substantial accordance with these procedures.
- To full participation of the injured party in any EGP process whether the injured party is serving as the party bringing a grievance or the College is serving as party bringing a grievance.
- To be informed in writing of the outcome/resolution of the grievance, sanctions where permissible and the rationale for the outcome where permissible.
- Refer to law enforcement and have assistance.
- Housing and living accommodations.

- No contacts.

I. Statement of the Rights of the Responding Party

- To be treated with respect by College officials.
- To take advantage of campus support resources (such as Counseling and other community health services).
- To have an advisor during this process.
- To refuse to have an allegation resolved through conflict resolution procedures.
- To have grievances heard in substantial accordance with these procedures.
- To be informed of the outcome/resolution of the grievance and the rationale for the outcome, in writing.

8. Revision

These policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX/Equity Team. The Title IX/Equity/ Coordinator may make minor modifications to procedure that do not materially jeopardize the fairness owed to any party. However, the Title IX/Equity Coordinator may also vary procedures materially with notice (on the institutional web site, with appropriate date of effect 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 its implementation will apply. Policy in effect at the time of the offense will apply even if the policy is changed subsequently, unless the parties consent to be bound by the current policy.

This policy and procedure was approved May 27, 2015.