

Michelle Rizk
Acting President

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UA Community,

In response to new federal Title IX guidelines, the Board of Regents today approved significant revisions to Regents' policy, and I have signed the enabling regulations regarding sex and gender based discrimination. The changes detail new specific procedures that all universities must follow in cases of sexual harassment and assault on campuses in accordance with the new federal rule, and become effective August 14, 2020.

The board also approved minor revisions to employee and student conduct policies. Those changes mean that misconduct that no longer falls within the scope of Title IX will be addressed through alternative processes. These changes were shared with student, faculty, and staff governance, as well as with the chancellors and university leadership, to gather feedback.

Federal Rule Changes

The federal rule changes are extensive and alter some key policies that have governed the university's Title IX processes to date. For example:

- The required definitions for the terms sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking have changed, and while these definitions differ from the current model, the same sexual offenses remain prohibited.
- The new guidelines focus on the due process rights of individuals accused of sexual assault or harassment, and require a more formal complaint process including the opportunity for cross-examination by a party's advisor during a live hearing.
- It is possible to participate in the live hearing through video conference.
- If a party does not have an advisor to perform cross-examination during the hearing, the university will provide a qualified representative at no cost.
- The guidelines also offer options for alternative processes that would allow parties to come to an informal resolution that does not require a live hearing in some cases.

Please continue to report any occurrence of misconduct to your Title IX Coordinator. If a reported instance doesn't fall within the newly defined Title IX policy and regulations, it will still be addressed under nondiscrimination, student conduct or human resources policies as appropriate. All reports are important and will be handled with the best interest of the parties at the center of any actions. UA will ensure that complaints are investigated timely and thoroughly, and will provide fair and effective resolutions, as well as supportive measures.

Updated student and new employee training modules are being developed to provide a thorough overview of the new changes to Title IX policy and regulations. This training will be available to employees and students beginning September 1, and must be completed by students by October 31, and all employees by September 30.

As is our practice, your Title IX Coordinator will reach out and talk directly with complainants, offer supportive measures, and provide regular updates on the process.

The university remains committed to your safety and well being, as well as a culture that fosters respect.

Sincerely,
Michelle Rizk
Acting President