

# **2023 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

## **Olin College of Engineering Implementation of new Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct and Title IX Policy and Procedure**

### **This Action Applies to Rubric Item(s):**

- Response: Improved Policies
- Response: Providing Anonymous and Non-mandatory Reporting Resources and Tools
- Response: Improved Communication and Increased Transparency
- Remediation: Increased or Enhanced Confidential Resources and Support Services

### **Description of Work:**

To address the needs of our community and to comply with new Massachusetts state mandates, the College implemented a new Policy in August of 2022. The Policy, entitled the “Olin College Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct and Title IX Policy and Procedure”, made changes and updates to several of the college's former Policy. Of relevance to several response rubric areas and to the remediation rubric area on “Increased or Enhanced Confidential Resources and Support Services, ”, the new Policy was designed to explicitly include sexual misconduct that does not rise to the level of Title IX, generally make the language more accessible to a lay audience, the limitation of mandatory reporters, and the addition of the Confidential Resource Provider positions.

Firstly, the new Policy now addresses sexual misconduct that would not fall under Title IX otherwise. The Policy addresses these potential violations under the term of “Interpersonal Misconduct.” These potential violations include Non-Title IX Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Sexual Harassment, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Exploitation. While expanding the potential sexual misconduct violations that the Policy covers obviously addresses the Response section of the Rubric, we believe that these changes also lead to prevention as students, staff, and employees are now aware that more types of sexual misconduct is covered under the Policy.

Many of our community members expressed discomfort with the previous Policy's designation of mandatory reporters. It was felt that this discouraged survivors from coming forward knowing that their details would automatically be shared with the Title IX office, especially with regards to conversations with other students who were designated as mandatory reporters. Accordingly, the new Policy reduces the number of individuals designated as mandatory reporters. In particular our student workers are no longer designated as mandatory reporters but instead receive multiple trainings on the Title IX process and the positives that can come out of making reports. Additionally, the new Policy creates the position of Confidential Resource Provider.

This position is for a member of the college who does not have to report information regarding sexual misconduct to the Title IX coordinator. The role of the Confidential Resource Provider is

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To provide supportive measures, information about Olin-specific resources and external resources, and information about Olin's Sexual and Interpersonal Misconduct Policy. These changes address the rubric areas on "Providing Anonymous and Non-mandatory Reporting Resources and Tools" and "Increased or Enhanced Confidential Resources and Support Services".

The new Policy was also designed to be more accessible to those reading it. Often when individuals are involved with matters that concern the Title IX office, they are looking at the Policy for the first time. We designed the new Policy to be easier to understand. In addition we added several documents, including a process flow chart to assist with easier understanding of the Policy. With the implementation of the Policy we also updated our webpage to be more accessible and to contain more informational documents and links to help the lay person understand and navigate the process.

Lastly, in line with the new Policy, the College's Alcohol Amnesty Policy was updated to explicitly note that it extends to those reporting sexual or interpersonal misconduct in the Student Handbook. We believe that by removing this potential barrier to coming forward that it reflects important improvements to policies on sexual harassment, assault, and misconduct.

**Website for further information (if applicable):** [www.olin.edu/about/titleIX/policies](http://www.olin.edu/about/titleIX/policies)

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