

# Campus Response to Sexual Assault, Intimate Partner Violence, and Stalking: A Survey of Title IX Coordinators in Texas

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Over the past few years, attention to issues of gender-based violence on college campuses, particularly sexual assault, has increased. Media attention, student activism, presidential proclamation, and requirements from the federal government have led to increased scrutiny of institutions of higher education in regards to their response in cases of gender-based violence and expectations of prevention programming. Researchers estimate that 20% of women (Fisher et al., 2000) and 6.1% of men (Krebs et al., 2007) experience sexual assault during their college career.

The federal government has three mandates for colleges regulating response, prevention, and reporting of gender-based violence: Title IX, Clery Act, and Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE). Title IX has been the focus of much of the recent scrutiny and will be the center of this discussion. Title IX prohibits gender-based discrimination in educational programs or activities and applies to institutions receiving federal funding, including K-12 education and colleges/universities. Title IX applies to sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, hate crimes, pregnancy discrimination, and multiple other types of gender-based discrimination and covers students, employees, and visitors in these educational settings. Title IX also requires schools to investigate an incident of gender-based discrimination independent from the criminal justice system and to respond within 60 days.

Under Title IX, educational institutions are required to have a Title IX Coordinator, as well as a Title IX policy. Reasonable accommodations after an incident are also expected under Title IX provisions; for example, this could involve moving residence halls of the victim or offender, changing class schedules, and allowing course extensions. It is also expected that school officials addressing cases of gender-based violence are properly trained.

Title IX provides schools flexibility in determining the structure and policies that best fit the culture and organization of the institution. As a result, there are numerous ways in which Title IX is being enacted across the country. This report presents information about Title IX as applied by college and universities in Texas and attempts to increase understanding of policies and procedures related to Title IX and the campus response to cases of gender-based violence.

## Sample

For this study, 50 higher education institutions in Texas were randomly selected to participate (from a total population of 147 colleges and universities in the state). The population of institutions includes colleges, universities, community/junior colleges, and technical colleges. The Title IX Coordinator at each institution was contacted via letter, phone, and email about participating in a phone or online survey. A total of 26 Title IX Coordinators completed the survey, for a response rate of 52%. While the number of respondents for this study was small, nearly one-fifth of Texas institutions of higher education (17.7%) were represented.

The Title IX Coordinators who participated ranged in age from 26 to 76 years old and had a mean age of 48.6. The majority of the

respondents were female (69.2%). Over two-thirds of the respondents were Caucasian (66.7%), 20.8% were Hispanic, 8.3% were African-American, and 4.2% were Native American or Alaskan Native.

## Campus Characteristics

The majority of Title IX Coordinators surveyed worked at a community/junior college (57.7%), while 23.1% worked at a four year public college/university, 7.7% at a four year private college/university, and 3.8% at an engineering or technical college. Fewer than half of respondents (38.5%) reported working on a campus of 5,000 or less students, 34.6% worked at a campus with 5,001-10,000 students, 11.5% were on a campus with 10,001-20,000 students, and 15.4% were on a campus with more than 20,000 students (see Table 1).

Table 1. Campus Characteristics	
Type of College/University Campus	
4-year Public College/University	23.1%
4-year Private College/University	7.7%
Community/Junior College	57.7%
Engineering/Technical College	3.8%
Other	7.7%
Number of Students on Campus	
Less than 5,000 students	38.5%
5,001 to 10,000 students	34.6%
10,001 to 20,000 students	11.5%
More than 20,000 students	15.4%
Number of Title IX Coordinators on Campus	
One	73.1%
Two	26.9%
Number of Deputy Title IX Coordinators on Campus	
None	53.8%
One	11.5%
Two	19.2%
Three	3.8%
Four	3.8%
Five or More	3.8%
Don't Know	3.8%
Number of Title IX Investigators on Campus	
None	38.5%
One	11.5%
Two	7.7%
Three	15.5%
Four or More	23.1%
Estimated Annual Reports of Sexual Assaults to Title IX Coordinator	
None	29.2%
1-5	45.8%
6-10	8.3%
11-20	4.2%
21 or More	12.5%

Campuses are required to have a Title IX Coordinator; however, the person in this position, as well as the number of Coordinators, can be determined by the individual school. Similarly, some institutions also have Deputy Title IX Coordinators and Title IX Investigators. The majority of respondents' institutions (73.1%) had one Title IX Coordinator, and 26.9% had two Coordinators. Fewer than half of respondents' institutions (42.3%) had a Deputy Title IX Coordinator; among those, the majority of schools had one (11.5%) or two (19.2%) Deputy positions. More than half of the campuses had Title IX Investigators at their institution, and nearly one-fourth of schools (23.1%) reported four or more Investigators.

Respondents also estimated the number of sexual assaults generally reported to the Title IX Coordinator annually. Nearly half of respondents (45.8%) indicated that one to five cases were reported per year, and 29.2% of respondents indicated that no sexual assault cases were generally reported.

### Experience of Title IX Coordinators

Most respondents to this survey were relatively new to the position of Title IX Coordinator. The majority (42.3%) had been in the position one to two years. The vast majority of individuals surveyed (88.5%) had a position in addition to being the Title IX Coordinator, with nearly half of those (47.8%) working in human resources. Similarly, the majority (42.3%) of their Title IX offices were housed in a department of human resources.

Respondents who had another position on campus in addition to being the Title IX Coordinator were spending a small percentage of their time on Title IX. When asked about the amount of time they spent on responsibilities as a Title IX Coordinator, over half (56.5%) spent less than 15% of their time on Title IX, and 21.7% spent between 16 and 30% of their time on Title IX responsibilities.

Title IX Coordinators generally initiate a case or investigation as a means of starting the formal Title IX process of response to an incident of gender-based discrimination. The majority of coordinators in this study had responded to few disclosures of sexual assault and had even fewer situations in which they opened an investigation or case, for all types of gender-based discrimination (see Figure 1). The majority of respondents (41.7%) reported having heard one to five disclosures of sexual harassment, and about 20% had heard six to ten disclosures. As previously mentioned, respondents also had limited experience with opening an investigation or case. Slightly more than half of respondents (54.2%) had opened an investigation or case for one to five incidents, and 16.7% had opened an investigation for six to ten incidents. Some respondents (12.5%) indicated that had never received a disclosure or opened an investigation in their position.

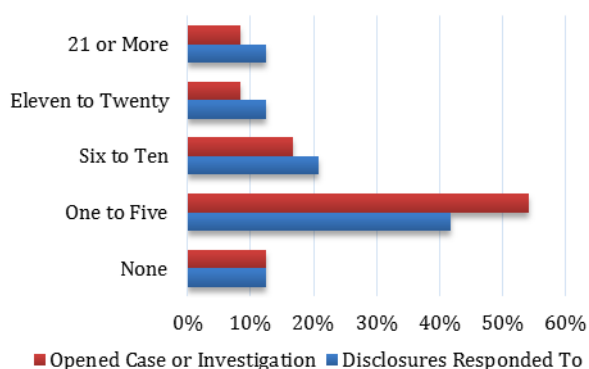


Figure 1: Number of disclosures and opened cases or investigations

Respondents were more likely to have initiated an investigation or opened a case in an incident of sexual assault than other forms of gender-based harassment. When respondents were asked about their involvement with specific types of Title IX cases, nearly half (47.8%) had experience with one to five sexual assault cases, 4.3%

six to ten cases, and 4.3% had opened or initiated an investigation in 21 or more cases. Only 47.8% had opened a case or initiated an investigation in a situation of domestic or dating violence, all of which had experience with one to five cases. Even fewer of the respondents (37.5%), had opened a case or initiated an investigation in a situation of stalking, all of which had experience with one to five cases (see Figure 2).

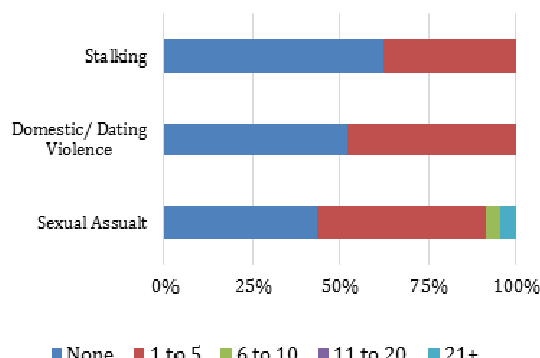


Figure 2: Number of Opened Cases or Investigations Initiated by

### Specialized Training

The respondents were also asked about any specialized training they had received related to their position as a Title IX Coordinator (see Figure 3). The majority (88%) had participated in trainings on sexual assault, while only 48% had been trained on stalking or intimate partner violence.

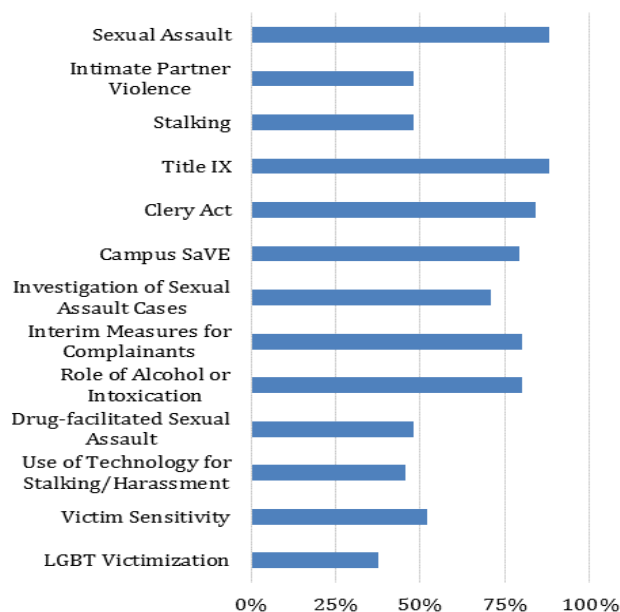


Figure 3: Types of Specialized Training Received

Coordinators may also attend training on a number of topics related to gender-based violence and harassment and their role as a Title IX Coordinator. The most common type of training received was on Title IX (88%), followed by the Clery Act (84%), and Campus SaVE Act (79.2%). Most respondents had also participated in specific trainings related to Title IX. Specifically, 70.8% had undergone training on the investigation of sexual assault cases, and 80% had received training on interim measures to protect and support complainants.

Fewer respondents had participated in trainings on more general issues that may arise in cases of gender-based harassment. The majority of respondents (80%) had participated in training on the role of alcohol and/or intoxication in sexual assault, yet only 48% had undergone training on drug-facilitated sexual assaults. Similarly, only 45.8% had been trained on the use of technology for stalking and/or harassment, 52.2% on victim sensitivity, and 37.5% on the victimization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals.

### Policies and Procedures

The types of policies and procedures related to Title IX cases may vary by institution. The majority of coordinators in this study reported that the institutions had relatively new policies, with 20% being in place less than one year, 40% for one to two years, 16% for three to five years, 12% for five to ten years, and only 4% in place for more than ten years. Most campuses (83.3%) were also currently in the process of updating their Title IX policy.

Nearly all of the Title IX policies (88%) covered sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking, while 4% had a separate policy for each of these types of harassment, and 8% of coordinators were unsure of their policy coverage. The majority of campuses (84%) had one Title IX policy that covers students, staff, and faculty, and the other respondents' institutions (16%) had two policies; one for students, and a second for faculty and staff.

### Standard of Evidence

Title IX also addresses the standard or proof to be used by institutions in investigating cases. The law specifies that the standard of evidence to be used in these cases is a preponderance of the evidence, meaning evidence shows that the accused is more likely than not guilty. A majority of respondents (88%) indicated that their institution uses the preponderance of evidence standard, and 12% indicated a standard of clear and convincing evidence.

### Responsible Employees

The Department of Education Office for Civil Rights defines responsible employees as any employee who has the authority to take action to redress the harassment, who has the duty to report to appropriate school officials sexual harassment or any other misconduct by students or employees, or an individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility (U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights). Coordinators who participated in the current survey were asked about the policies and procedures regarding responsible employees on their campus. The vast majority of coordinators (91.7%) reported that responsible employees are defined in the campus Title IX policy. Nearly half of those policies (42.3%) identified all staff and faculty as responsible employees. The majority of the campuses (79.2%) had notified the responsible employees on their campus of their role, and two-thirds (66.7%) had provided the responsible employees with information about how to make a Title IX report. More than half of the campuses (54.2%) have training available for their responsible employees, and for most campuses (84.6%) that training is mandatory. Online training (53.8%) and in-person training (30.8%) were the most common forms of education.

### Collaborative Efforts

The recent initiative from the White House on issues of gender-based violence on college campuses, Not Alone, encourages collaboration, specifically between campuses and law enforcement bodies and community victim service agencies. Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) are often a setting communities use to collaborate and improve response in sexual assault cases. Table 2 illustrates the collaborative involvement in the campus communities represented in the current study.

Almost half of respondents (44%) were aware of a SART in their local area. Of those who were familiar with a local SART, 72.7% of their institutions participated, and about one-third (36.4%) of the Title IX

<b>Existence of SART in Local Community</b>	
Yes	44.0%
No	32.0%
Unsure	24.0%
<b>Campus Participation in Local SART</b>	
Yes	72.7%
No	27.3%
<b>Title IX Coordinator Participation in Local SART</b>	
Yes	36.4%
No	63.6%
<b>Existence of Group on Campus to Improve Response to Cases of Gender-based Violence</b>	
Yes	52.0%
No	48.0%
<b>Title IX Coordinator Participation in Campus Group</b>	
Yes	92.3%
No	7.7%
<b>Frequency of Meetings for Campus Group</b>	
Once per Month or More	50.0%
Every 1-2 Months	25.0%
Quarterly	0.0%
Semi-annually	25.0%
Annually	0.0%

Coordinators themselves participated in the local SART. The respondents were also asked about existing groups on campus designed to improve response to incidents of gender-based violence. About half of their respective campuses (52%) had a group of this nature. Of those campuses, the majority of respondents (85.7%) participated in the group. These groups most commonly met once a month or more frequently (50%), while other campuses met once every one to two months (25%) or semi-annually (25%).

### Resources

Respondents were asked what resources they provide to victims after an incident is reported. Figure 4 displays the resources to victims. Most campuses were providing resources about the campus' response, with 92% providing information about the campus Title IX procedures and 87% providing an explanation of how the Title IX

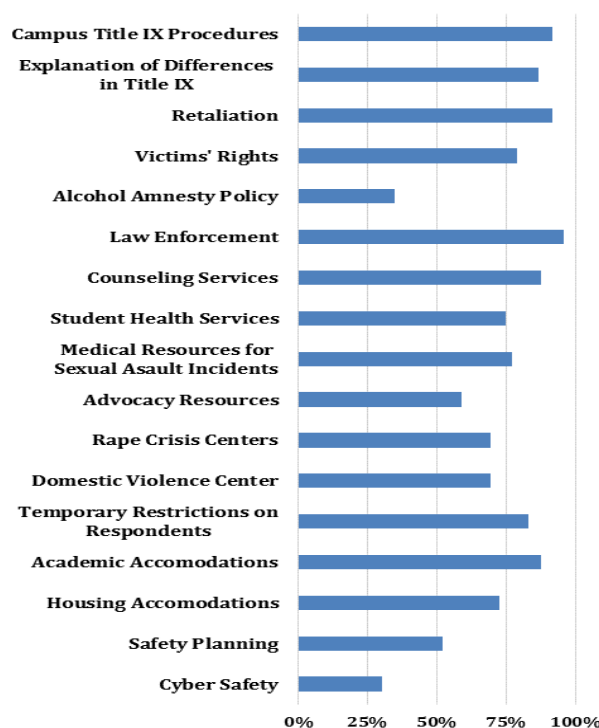


Figure 4: Percentage of Resources Provided to Victims

process is different than the criminal process. The majority of campuses also provided information on retaliation (91.7%) and victims' rights (79.2%), while few provided resources on an alcohol amnesty policy (34.8%).

The majority of campuses were also providing resources within the community to victims: law enforcement (95.8%), counseling services (87.5), student health services (75%), medical resources for sexual assault incidents (77.3%), advocacy resources (59.1%), rape crisis centers (69.6%), and domestic violence centers (69.6%) were commonly reported.

Most campuses were also providing information specific to the victims' safety while on campus. The majority (83.3%) provided information on temporary restrictions on the respondent while the investigation is pending, 87.5% provided information on academic accommodations, and 72.7% on housing accommodations. Fewer campuses provided more general information related to victims' safety, with around half (52.2%) providing resources on safety planning and 30.4% on cyber safety.

### Conclusion

With high rates of sexual assault victimization on college campuses, as well as the number of colleges and universities currently under investigation for their response to cases of gender-based violence, it is important for relevant agencies and professionals to understand how Title IX is being implemented, as well as begin considering best practices in Title IX. This research brief provides a first look at the application of Title IX across colleges and universities in Texas.

Numerous conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this research. One of the most important findings from this survey pertains to gaps in training among the Title IX Coordinators who

responded. While most had training on sexual assault, the majority lacked training on stalking and intimate partner violence, as well as drug-facilitated sexual assaults and LGBT victimization. To effectively identify, investigate, and respond to cases of intimate partner violence, stalking, and LGBT victimization, it is important that Title IX Coordinators have training in these individual areas. These types of victimization are each unique, and training is essential to understand the dynamics of the abuse, as well as the impact of these crimes on victims and reasons for recanting and non-reporting. Also, it is not uncommon for situations of intimate partner violence and stalking in particular to have risks of lethality. Without training, it cannot be expected that Title IX Coordinators would optimally respond to these cases.

The findings from this survey are an initial step in understanding the implementation of Title IX on campuses, as well as the training and background of Title IX Coordinators. The results presented here can be used as a point of reference on training needs of Title IX Coordinators and responsible employees, as well as gaps in collaborative efforts and resources provided to victims.

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