A Resource Guide for the Title IX Responding Party

As the Responding Party in an alleged Title IX issue, you might be confused or worried about the process. However, the Title IX office at USM ensures that each party receives fair treatment. In order to guarantee that you have all of the resources that you need, we have put together a guide that gives more information about the Title IX office, resources that are available to you, and what you might expect during this process. The resources mentioned in this guide can be helpful during the investigative process, and we encourage you to utilize them as needed.
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

* Indicates that often times, the Coordinators are at the Hattiesburg location. They come to the Gulf Park campus weekly or by appointment. Please call the Hattiesburg campus first if you would like to find out more about when they will be at the Gulf Park campus or to set up a meeting with them at that location.

Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Rebecca Malley
Hattiesburg campus: 601-266-6804
Gulf Park campus: 228-214-3363 *
rebecca.malley@usm.edu
Hattiesburg campus: Cook Library 129
Gulf Park campus: Hardy Hall 332 *
Dr. Malley is responsible for coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX. She oversees and coordinates investigations and resolutions of all complaints involving sex discrimination and sexual misconduct.

Deputy Title IX Coordinator
Dr. Lenore Schaffer
Hattiesburg campus: 601-266-4466
Gulf Park campus: 228-214-3363 *
Hattiesburg Campus: Cook Library 129
Gulf Park campus: Hardy Hall 332 *
lenore.schaffer@usm.edu
Dr. Schaffer assists the coordinator and can also assist with any questions and concerns throughout the process.

University Police Department (UPD)
601-266-4986 (for Hattiesburg and Gulf Park campuses)
Bond Hall ground floor
UPD is a full police department on campus that handles security and safety concerns for the USM community. They assist with local Hattiesburg police on any investigations or criminal issues dealing with the campus community.

**Student Counseling Services**
601-266-4829
Bond Hall East (behind the parking garage)
The counseling services offered here are free to all students. Counselors are well trained and equipped to help students.
For after hour issues students should call 601-606-4357 to speak with the counselor on-call.

**Moffitt Health Center at USM**
601-266-5390
Scott Hall (Century Park South)
The Moffitt Health Center is an on-campus clinic. This clinic houses both doctors and nurse practitioners. There is also a pharmacy conveniently located inside the clinic. The clinic accepts both walk-ins and appointments.

**GULF PARK RESOURCES**

**Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence**
800-800-1396
Website: [http://gcwcfn.org/wordpress/](http://gcwcfn.org/wordpress/)
The Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence offers a 24-hour crisis line, has an emergency domestic violence shelter, responds to rape crisis situations in hospitals, offers free legal services, as well as housing assistance. There are no costs to utilize these resources.

**Memorial Hospital at Gulfport**
228-867-4000
4500 13th St, Gulfport, MS 39501
Memorial Hospital at Gulfport offers SANE services (Sexual Assault Nurse Examination), also known as “rape kits.” There is no fee for this service.
For a comprehensive list of resources, go to https://www.usm.edu/sexual-misconduct and click on “Resources and Help” in the left-side menu.
WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT

When the Title IX office receives a complaint, either the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator will assess whether the complaint might have violated the university’s sexual misconduct policy. If they decide that this could be the case, then they will proceed with either an informal or formal investigation.

An informal investigation cannot take place if there are allegations of sexual assault, violence, or student-employee sexual harassment. Additionally, both parties (the Reporting Party and the Responding Party) must agree to an informal resolution. The Title IX Coordinator will facilitate an informal resolution by getting both parties to sign a written agreement to which both parties agree.

If it is determined by the Title IX Coordinator that a formal investigation needs to take place, there are several things that will follow:

1. After meeting with the Reporting Party, the Title IX Coordinator will send you a notice that will include: a description of the allegation being made, the Reporting Party’s statement, a copy of the policies that have been allegedly violated, a short description about the investigative process, and important dates.
2. The Title IX Coordinator will select three individuals affiliated with the university to conduct the investigation. These individuals have been trained to conduct fair, thorough, and reliable investigations. Both you and the Reporting Party will have a chance to approve of these members before the investigation.
3. Before the investigation, you should give any documents relevant to the case to the Title IX Coordinator. This may include copies of text messages, emails, or notes. In order to ensure fairness, you will receive a copy of all of the documents and statements that the Reporting Party submits, and the Reporting Party will receive a copy of all documents and statements that you submit as well.
4. During the investigation, the investigators will interview you, the Reporting Party, and any relevant witnesses. You will have a chance to provide a list of witnesses to the investigative team; however, the team does not have to speak to all witnesses provided and can choose to ask witnesses not listed to come in.

5. After the investigation, the investigative team will write a summary of all of the evidence; you will have 5 business days to respond to any statements made in the evidence if you wish to do so.

6. Next, the investigative team will vote on whether the policy was likely violated or not. They will forward this information to the Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator will then forward these finding to you. If it is found that the policy was violated, the Title IX Coordinator will forward the finding to the Sanctioning Office, and they will determine the proper sanction.

   Examples of sanctions include:
   o Community service
   o Educational intervention (e.g. writing a paper)
   o Warning
   o Campus ban
   o No contact order
   o Suspension
   o Expulsion or termination

**Both the Reporting Party and the Responding Party are entitled to the same rights throughout the entire investigation.**
WHO HELPS ME THROUGH THIS PROCESS?

Both parties are allowed the same resource as this process can be emotionally taxing.

- You will receive an advisor at the beginning of this process. The advisor is a trained investigator and understands the process very well. They will be able to help you prepare for any interviews as well as answer any questions you might have. They will not be part of the investigation. They are provided simply to help you understand the process so that you can feel as prepared as possible. We encourage you to utilize this resource.

- You are also allowed, and encouraged, to bring a support person with you to any interviews or meetings. The support person is not allowed to say anything during the meeting on your behalf. They are simply there to provide you support, as this process can be difficult. This person can be anyone of your choosing.

- Additionally, you can feel free to utilize any of the resources listed in the “University Resources” section above. You are always welcome to voice any questions or concerns to anyone in the Title IX Office. If you need any additional resources not listed above, feel free to contact someone in our office so we can assist you.

- If you have any medical concerns regarding STDs, STIs, or pregnancy, feel free to contact the Moffitt Health Center at USM. Their number is 601-266-5390. They accept both walk-ins and appointments. They can also answer any questions you have about insurance coverage.
o If you have any **mental health concerns**, we strongly encourage you to go to make an appointment with the Student Counseling Services on campus (contact information listed above in the “University Resources” section). This process can be difficult, and it can have a negative impact on your mental health. If you need any assistance with getting an appointment, feel free to contact the Title IX Office.

o If you need any **academic support**, feel free to contact the Title IX Office so that we can coordinate any accommodations that need to be made.
FINAL SUGGESTIONS

- You may find it helpful to write down everything that happened so that you do not forget any details or get anything mixed up. Try to write every detail down that you remember.

- Utilize the resources that are available to you.

- Ask questions about the process; especially if you are confused about anything. It is important that you understand what the investigative process is like in order to be adequately prepared.

- Provide any and all evidence (e.g. text messages, notes, emails) to the Title IX Coordinator.

- Communicate with the Title IX Coordinator in a prompt manner. This will help the investigation to run a lot more smoothly.

- Review all evidence that the Title IX Coordinator gives to you in order to be as prepared as possible for interviews.

- If you need assistance with anything (e.g. medical assistance, counseling, academic assistance), let someone know as soon as possible.