



Compliance Community

*System Compliance Program
Office of Audits & Analysis*

Community Spotlight



Yvonne Realivasquez, SRSU Title IX Coordinator

Yvonne Realivasquez is the Director of Administration and serves as Title IX Coordinator at Sul Ross State University. Yvonne has a 21-year connection with SRSU, spanning from her time as a student to her current position. She began her career at SRSU as a lecturer in Political Science and Mexican American Studies. She later transitioned from faculty to administration, working in the Gear Up grant program where she served underrepresented students from area schools by introducing them to college preparation activities. Following a brief stint out of state, she returned to Sul Ross in 2010, and began working in the Office of the President in 2011.

Yvonne holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and Master of Arts degree in Public Administration from SRSU. Yvonne was awarded the Texas State University

System Foundation's *Grow Your Own Scholarship* to work toward a doctoral degree in Higher Education Leadership at Hardin-Simmons University, and began her studies in the fall of 2015. She is married to fellow Sul Ross alumnus Rafael Realivasquez.

As the Title IX Coordinator, Yvonne spends the beginning of each semester training students, staff, and faculty on Title IX laws and System regulations. She attends workshops and conferences to stay abreast of changes in Title IX requirements, and distributes that information to other university employees. She works closely with the staff in the Human Resources Office to engage employees in training sessions and workshops related to understanding how Title IX laws impact the university. In addition, she provides support and guidance throughout Title IX investigations. In facilitating training sessions for students, she reminds them to make smart choices and to focus on ways to live up to their potential.

Nine Things to Know (About Title IX)

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: *No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.*

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions that receive federal funding. In addition to requirements outlined in statute, additional guidance has periodically been issued by the United States Department of Education (DOE) through a series of statements of policy and guidance via *Dear Colleague Letters* and *Questions and Answers* documents. Schools receiving federal funds must identify a Title IX coordinator, publish a nondiscrimination policy, adopt grievance procedures, and promptly investigate complaints.

In September 2017, the DOE announced rescission of the U.S. Office of Civil Right's 2011 *Dear Colleague Letter* and 2014 *Questions & Answers* guidance. Those documents imposed mandates related to the procedures by which educational institutions investigate, adjudicate, and resolve allegations of student-on-student sexual misconduct. While recognizing those documents "*may have been well-*

intentioned,” the DOE opined that the documents were not vetted through a formal rule-making process.

Simultaneous with the rescission, the DOE reaffirmed guidance in the *Dear Colleague Letter on Sexual Harassment* issued January 25, 2006, and issued a *Questions & Answers on Campus Sexual Misconduct* document. The DOE also stated it would continue relying on its Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance issued in 2001, while initiating formal rulemaking proceedings on Title IX responsibilities concerning complaints of sexual misconduct. Title IX is still currently the law, which means schools must still promptly and equitably investigate complaints of sexual harassment and assault. Interim guidance has been issued by the DOE and can be found [here](#).

As the landscape surrounding Title IX continues to change, it is important to keep the following nine elements in mind:

1. Title IX prohibits gender discrimination in education programs that receive federal funding.
2. Title IX does not apply to female students only. Title IX applies to and protects all students, faculty, and staff.
3. Schools must be proactive in ensuring that the campus is free of sex discrimination.
4. Schools must have an established procedure for handling complaints of sexual harassment, discrimination, or violence.
5. Schools should ensure that a victim does not have to share spaces, such as dorms, classes, or campus jobs, with his or her assailant.
6. Schools may not retaliate against someone filing a complaint and must keep a complainant safe from other retaliatory harassment or behavior.
7. Schools can issue a no-contact directive to prevent the accused student from approaching the complainant.
8. In cases of sexual violence, schools are prohibited from encouraging or allowing mediation (rather than a formal hearing) of the complaint.
9. Schools cannot discourage a complainant from continuing his or her education.

Each TSUS institution has a designated Title IX coordinator who handles Title IX related issues and reports. Incidents can be reported online through each TSUS institution’s website. The Texas State University System Sexual Misconduct Policy can be found [here](#).

Compliance Hotline

The Texas State University System maintains a reporting hotline through a private contractor, EthicsPoint, to provide a confidential avenue for reporting concerns about potential waste, fraud, and abuse of resources, the lack of compliance with laws and regulations, or violations of the System's Code of Ethics. A detailed description and the opportunity to make a report can be accessed [here](#).

Subscribe

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others who may be interested or who may benefit from the information. The goal is to expand readership to offer this ongoing resource to as many members of the TSUS community as possible. New readers can subscribe by using the link below.

Subscribe

The Texas State University System is committed to complying with all applicable laws, regulations and policies. The System compliance program advises and collaborates with components to develop effective ways to mitigate compliance risks on TSUS campuses. Serving to advance the goals of the System and its institutions, the Compliance Office offers resources, education, information and guidance while promoting a culture of responsibility and accountability.

Feedback regarding the System compliance program or the Compliance Community newsletter is welcome. Please contact [Kelly Wintemute](#) with suggestions.

November 2017