

**Year 2 Public Description of Work for  
Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

**University of Washington**

**Informal and Anonymous Reporting**

**Relevant Rubric Area(s):** Response: a) anonymous and non-mandatory reporting resources; b) improved policies

**Description of Work:**

In May 2020 the Department of Education issued new federal Title IX regulations that eliminated prior guidance’s “responsible employee” framework and introduced a new framework based on the concept of “officials with authority.” The UW Title IX Steering Committee utilized this new framework to shape its work-in-progress to develop an employee reporting policy guided by the values of a) survivor choice and b) community safety. These values—and the UW “*Officials Required to Report*” policy that was implemented in August 2020—are in alignment with the findings and recommendations of the 2018 NASEM report which highlights the importance of honoring survivor choice by providing informal and anonymous reporting options.

To facilitate the option of informal or anonymous reporting and to prioritize survivor choice, the University of Washington has not identified every employee as a “mandatory reporter”—a decision that sets UW apart from many other institutions of higher education. Instead, a smaller band of senior leaders and key staff who work in human resources, academic personnel, compliance, and student conduct have been designated as *Title IX Officials Required to Report*. *Officials Required to Report* are the only University employees who, if they become aware of sexual misconduct, must contact the UW central response and support office—SafeCampus—and must share all the information they have when they call.

While most employees are not *required* to report, every UW employee is *strongly encouraged* to contact SafeCampus if they become aware of sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, domestic violence, or other sexual misconduct. All employees, those required to report and those strongly encouraged to report, are directed to SafeCampus with the same goal: provide resources and options to the person who experienced the harm. The key difference is that anyone who is not a *Title IX Official Required to Report* can contact SafeCampus anonymously or choose to not share the name of the individuals involved in order to protect their identity.

No matter who calls and regardless of how much information is provided, SafeCampus prioritizes safety planning, support resources, and options for the survivor. When they receive anonymous or limited-information calls, SafeCampus coordinates with the caller to provide resources and options in a safe and confidential way. For every call, SafeCampus:

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- Assesses for any immediate safety concerns and provides options to address the concerns
- Consults with the caller on their role and any next steps they need to take
- Discusses options to provide support to the person who experienced unwanted behavior or harm
- Connects the person who experienced unwanted behavior or harm with a [confidential advocate](#). Advocates provide free confidential support, discuss academic or employment concerns, and explain resources and reporting options
- Provides the [Know Your Rights and Resources Guide](#) which includes important information and options, including information on how to submit a formal complaint
- Provides support and referrals to additional resources as needed
- Shares the information received with the Title IX Coordinator who is responsible for assessing risk to the larger community, coordinating any necessary follow up, and identifying patterns and systemic issues related to Title IX

The option of contacting SafeCampus anonymously—and the additional option for direct outreach to a confidential advocate—allows survivors to access support services and consider their options without having to first submit a formal complaint and/or initiate or trigger their involvement in a University investigation. Furthermore, the centralized response and support mechanism ensures that expert, trauma-informed professionals (confidential advocates and SafeCampus) are available to all survivors and those who are supporting them.

### Website for further information (if applicable):

[UW faculty and staff resources](#)

[UW officials required to report](#)

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