

# Title IX Investigations & Hearings

## Standards of Conduct

**EWU Policy 402-07**

**Authority: EWU Board of Trustees**

**Effective: June 26, 2026**

**Proponent: Vice President for People & Culture**

**Purpose:** This policy describes the university’s grievance procedures for responding to formal Title IX complaints against EWU employees. Standards of conduct and Title IX responsibilities are outlined in EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities).

**History:** This policy is new. It was adopted on an emergency basis as a result of changes in Title IX regulations on March 17, 2025. The Board of Trustees approved permanent changes on June 26, 2025.

**Applicability:** This policy applies to formal Title IX complaints against EWU employees. Title IX complaints against EWU students are handled under WAC 172-125 (Discrimination & Title IX Violations by Students). Title IX issues that do not meet the definition of a formal Title IX complaint are handled under EWU Policy 402-05 (Discrimination Investigations & Resolutions).

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## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

### 1-1. Title IX & VAWA

Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in Eastern Washington University’s programs or activities. EWU is committed to complying with Title IX and will not tolerate any form of discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual misconduct and interpersonal violence. EWU will respond to complaints of sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence in a prompt and equitable manner.

This policy is solely for the purpose of outlining EWU’s investigatory and hearing process for responding to Formal Title IX Complaints against an employee for sexual misconduct and interpersonal violence. This policy supplements EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities). Title IX complaints against student employees are addressed under WAC 172-125 (Discrimination & Title IX Violations by Students). Complaints of sexual misconduct and interpersonal violence that do not meet the definition of a formal Title IX complaint and are not covered by WAC 172-125 are handled under EWU Policy 402-05 (Discrimination Investigations & Resolutions).

As the procedures outlined in this policy are required either by Title IX, 34 C.F.R. section 106.3, or the Clery Act/Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA), 34 C.F.R. section 668.46, to the extent this policy conflicts with other EWU policies, employment contracts, or collective bargaining agreements, this policy takes precedence.

### 1-2. Formal Title IX Complaints

This policy only applies to the procedures used to respond to Formal Title IX Complaints against EWU employees. Other complaints involving sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, or discrimination are covered by are covered by EWU Policy 402-02 (Diversity & Nondiscrimination) and EWU Policy 402-05 (Discrimination Investigations & Resolutions).

#### A “Formal Title IX Complaint” is defined as:

- a. A formal signed complaint filed by a complainant who is a current student, employee, applicant, or person participating or seeking to participate in a university program or activity, or by the Title IX Coordinator;
- b. Alleging sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking as defined below; and,
- c. That occurred on EWU premises, during a university program or activity within the United States, or at a building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the university.

If a complaint meets all of the criteria above, it is considered a formal Title IX complaint and subject to the grievance procedures outlined in this policy. If it does not meet all of these criteria or if the Title IX allegations are dismissed, it will be evaluated as a potential violation of other university policies (including the non-Title IX portions of EWU Policy 402-01), collective bargaining agreements,

or performance expectations and may be investigated under EWU's investigative guidelines or EWU Policy 402-05 (Discrimination Investigations & Resolutions).

### 1-3. Definitions

**Civil Rights Office:** includes the Director of Civil Rights Investigations and Accessibility, and Associate Director of Civil Rights Investigations & Mediation Services.

**Complainant:** the person who files a complaint. A complaint may be filed by making a request to EWU's Civil Rights Office to initiate an investigation. The complainant must be the impacted party or the Title IX Coordinator.

**Dating violence:** please refer to EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities).

**Domestic violence:** please refer to EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities) for the definition of domestic violence. Allegations of conduct that may constitute domestic violence are only considered a Formal Title IX Complaint if the conduct occurs between intimate partners. All other forms of domestic violence will be addressed under EWU Policy 402-02.

**Impacted party:** this is the person who experienced the sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence.

**Informal resolution officer:** university employee who is designated to facilitate an informal resolution process.

**Interpersonal violence:** this is a general term used to refer to domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. These terms are defined in EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities).

**Investigator:** person designated by the university to review and, if appropriate, investigate allegations of discrimination.

**Reporting party:** this is the person who reported potential discrimination to EWU's Civil Rights Office.

**Respondent:** the person who is alleged to have violated a university policy.

**Sexual harassment:** for Formal Title IX Complaints, sexual harassment is defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- a. **Quid Pro Quo:** an employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the university on the complainant's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; or
- b. **Hostile Environment:** unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies

the complainant equal access to the university's programs or activities.

**Sexual assault:** please refer to EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities) for the definition of sexual assault.

**Sexual misconduct:** this is a general term used to refer to sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual misconduct as defined in EWU Policy 402-01.

**Stalking:** please refer to EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities) for the definition of stalking. Allegations of conduct that may constitute stalking are only considered a Formal Title IX Complaint if the conduct is sex-based. All other forms of stalking will be addressed under EWU Policy 402-02.

### 1-4. Positions with Authority to Institute Corrective Actions

For purposes of formal Title IX complaints and in accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 106.30(a), EWU identifies the following positions as those who have the authority to institute corrective actions on behalf of EWU: President, vice presidents, academic deans, Chief of Staff, Dean of Students, Title IX Coordinator, Director of Student Rights & Responsibilities, Director of Civil Rights Investigations, and Associate Director of Civil Rights Investigations.

### 1-5. Conflicts of Interest

Individuals who play a role in investigating, presiding over, and making decisions pertaining to complaints under this policy, including, but not limited to, the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, presiding officer, hearing board, and appeal authority, shall not have any conflict of interest in the process or a bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. This includes, but is not limited to, being a witness to the alleged misconduct or being a close family member or friend of the complainant, respondent, or a witness.

If a complainant or respondent believes one of these individuals has a conflict of interest or bias, they should immediately notify the Title IX Coordinator. If the Title IX Coordinator is the person alleged to have a conflict of interest or bias, they should immediately notify the Chief of Staff. The Title IX Coordinator or Chief of Staff shall determine whether a conflict of interest exists and take appropriate action.

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## CHAPTER 2 – REPORTING & COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

### 2-1. Reporting

Formal Title IX complaints may be filed with the Civil Rights Office in any of the following ways:

Online: [www.ewu.edu/titleix](http://www.ewu.edu/titleix)  
Email: [titleix@ewu.edu](mailto:titleix@ewu.edu)  
Phone: (509) 359-6312  
By mail or in person:  
 Title IX Coordinator  
 Eastern Washington University  
 117 Showalter Hall  
 Cheney, WA 99004

Any employee who receives a Title IX report or complaint, except for confidential counselors within Counseling and Wellness Services, must forward the report or complaint to the Title IX Coordinator within 24 hours.

## 2-2. Timely Warning

If the report involves conduct that may constitute a serious or continuing threat to the health and safety of the EWU community, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the Associate Vice President of Public Safety for the purposes of evaluating whether a timely warning should be issued to campus in accordance with EWU Policy 603-01 (Campus Safety, Security, and Crime Prevention).

## 2-3. Initial Outreach

After receiving a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly reach out to the impacted party/complainant to provide information about EWU's Title IX process, their rights, reporting options, and available resources and supportive measures regardless of whether a complaint is filed.

This will include information about:

**(a) Reporting Options:** EWU encourages people to report incidents of sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence. However, complainants are not required to file a complaint with EWU or law enforcement. People can file a complaint, with the help of the Civil Rights Office upon request, with EWU or with local law enforcement, or both, using one of the following options:

- (1) EWU process: complaints may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator as outlined in section 2-1. This includes complaints against EWU students, employees, contractors, vendors, volunteers, and visitors.
- (2) Criminal: criminal complaints can be filed with the EWU Police Department or outside law enforcement agency.
- (3) Both: a complainant may report an incident to both EWU and law enforcement.

### **(b) Resources (as relevant):**

- (1) A list of resources for obtaining protective, no contact, restraining, or similar orders, if relevant;
- (2) How to seek medical treatment, the importance of preserving evidence relevant to the alleged conduct or that may be helpful in obtaining a protective order and procedures to follow to preserve such evidence;
- (3) A list of existing on and off campus counseling, health care services, mental health services, victim advocacy, financial aid, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance, and other services for complainants and respondents; and,
- (4) Information about available supportive measures as outlined in section 2-4.

**(c) Overview of EWU's Title IX Process:** Information will also be provided about EWU's process for responding to Formal Title IX complaints, including:

- (1) Importance of preserving evidence that may assist in investigation of the incident or that may be helpful in obtaining a protection order;
- (2) EWU's policies regarding the confidentiality of discrimination and Title IX complaints as outlined in section 2-5;
- (3) How to request supportive measures as outlined in section 2-4;
- (4) Options for informal resolution;
- (5) EWU's investigative and hearing process, including who will receive a copy of the investigative report; and,
- (6) EWU's prohibition against retaliation and how to report retaliation.

## 2-4. Supportive Measures

After receiving a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will review the complaint and determine whether or not supportive measures or interim restrictions are needed. Supportive measures are available regardless of whether someone wants to file a complaint. Requests for supportive measures may be directed to Student Accommodation and Support Services, the investigator, or Title IX Coordinator. Supportive measures may be in place before a complaint is filed, during the investigation and hearing process, and/or after the final determination of responsibility. Supportive measures are also available for both complainants and respondents.

Supportive measures are provided by EWU free of charge and may include, but are not limited to, safety planning with EWU, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, academic or workplace modifications, leaves of absence, increased security, counseling options on campus or through the Employee Assistance Program, or campus

housing modifications. The purpose of a supportive measure is to provide an equitable process for both the complainant and respondent that minimizes the possibility of a hostile environment on campus. Supportive measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to EWU's educational programs or activities without unreasonably burdening either party, including protecting the safety of all parties and EWU's educational environment, or deterring discrimination, sexual misconduct, or interpersonal violence.

Supportive measures are confidential and will only be shared with those people who need to know such information to enable EWU to provide the supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator or designee is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

All supportive measures should be documented and retained for seven years.

## **2-5. Confidentiality**

Information gathered during the investigation and adjudication of a Title IX complaint will be maintained in a confidential manner to the extent permitted by law. During an investigation, complaint information will be disseminated only on a need-to-know basis. However, EWU cannot ensure confidentiality, as its legal and contractual obligations may require disclosure of complainant, witness, or respondent names. In the case of a public records request, the names and personally identifiable information of the complainant and witnesses, along with identifying information, will be redacted consistent with the Public Records Act, RCW 42.56, unless the complainant or witness request to have their names disclosed.

If a complainant wishes to remain anonymous, EWU will take reasonable steps to gather information about the complaint but may not be able to investigate the complaint due to a lack of information or witnesses. If the complainant wishes to remain anonymous, the university shall inform them that its ability to investigate and respond to the allegation will be limited and that any type of retaliation is prohibited. The university will inform the complainant of EWU's commitment to respond to complaints of retaliation. If a complainant wishes to remain anonymous, the Title IX Coordinator must determine whether and to what extent the university can investigate the complaint. Reports of crimes to the campus community, timely warnings, and EWU's annual security report shall not include the names of the complainants or victims.

EWU will not require a complainant or respondent to abide by a nondisclosure agreement that would prevent the redisclosure of information related to an investigation or disciplinary action under this policy.

## **2-6. Interim Restrictions & Administrative Leave**

The Title IX Coordinator or designee, in conjunction with the relevant appointing authority, will review the information provided in the complaint and any supplementary information provided by the complainant, witnesses, EWU police department, or other entities, to determine whether the employee should be placed on administrative leave and any conditions of such leave.

Additionally, the Title IX Coordinator and appointing authority should determine whether or not, in addition to administrative leave, any interim restrictions on the respondent's ability to utilize campus resources or be on campus are needed.

Student employees can be restricted from participating in university programs or activities on an interim basis in accordance with WAC 172-125.

## **2-7. Complaint Review and Dismissal/Referral**

### **(a) Identification of Formal Title IX Complaints:**

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will review the complaint to determine if it meets the definition of a Formal Title IX Complaint as defined above. If the complaint does not meet all of the elements of a Formal Title IX Complaint, the complaint may be investigated and addressed under other university policies, but it will not be considered a Formal Title IX Complaint. If a complaint involves sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence, but does not fall under the scope of this policy, the Title IX Coordinator will simultaneously inform the complainant and respondent that the complaint is not considered a Formal Title IX Complaint and the reasons it does not fit within the required elements of a formal Title IX complaint. This decision may be appealed under paragraph 2-7(c).

If the complainant or respondent has requested informal resolution, the Title IX Coordinator will determine whether or not informal resolution is appropriate and, if so, refer the matter to the person designated to handle informal resolutions. If the complaint falls within the scope of this policy and the complainant is not interested in informal resolution or informal resolution is not appropriate, the complaint will be assigned to an investigator as identified below in section 4-1.

**(b) Discretionary Dismissal:** Even if a complaint meets all of the required elements for a Formal Title IX Complaint, EWU may choose, at its sole discretion, not to move forward with an investigation or hearing if the complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or if specific circumstances prevent EWU from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding the allegations. If the complainant is a student, EWU will proceed with an investigation regardless of whether the respondent is currently employed at EWU.

unless the complainant wishes not to move forward. If EWU chooses to not move forward with an investigation or hearing under this paragraph, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will simultaneously inform the complainant and respondent of the dismissal and reasons for the dismissal. This decision may be appealed under paragraph 2-7(c).

**(c) Appeal of Dismissal of Title IX Complaint:** If a complainant or respondent does not agree with the Title IX Coordinator's determination that a complaint does not meet the definition of a Formal Title IX Complaint or discretionary dismissal of the complaint, the party can appeal the Title IX Coordinator's decision by filing an appeal within three (3) calendar days with the Chief of Staff. If an appeal is filed, the Chief of Staff will provide the other party with a copy of the appeal and give the other party three (3) calendar days to respond to the appeal. The Chief of Staff or designee will then review the information presented by the parties along with the information reviewed by the Title IX Coordinator in determining the appeal. The Chief of Staff or designee can affirm, reverse, or remand the Title IX Coordinator's decision. The Chief of Staff's decision must be communicated in writing simultaneously to the parties.

## **2-8. Extensions & Timelines**

EWU must respond to Title IX complaints in a prompt and equitable manner. To assist the university in achieving this goal, this policy identifies timelines for each part of the grievance process. If the university, complainant, or respondent, wishes to temporarily delay the grievance process or extend a timeline, the person seeking the extension must file a written request with the Title IX Coordinator. The request must identify the reason for the delay. The Title IX Coordinator or designee may extend the timeframes for good cause. Good cause includes situations such as the absence of a party, party's advisor, or witness at a hearing; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodations. If the respondent requests a delay because of a related criminal proceeding, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will engage in a balancing process based on the particular circumstances of the case consistent with state law. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will issue a written response to the request and state the reasons for why the request has been granted, modified, or denied. A copy of this decision will be provided to the complainant and respondent.

## **CHAPTER 3 – INFORMAL RESOLUTION**

### **3-1. Referral**

The Title IX Coordinator or investigator may refer Formal Title IX Complaints to the informal resolution process. A report/complaint may be referred to the informal resolution

process at any time prior to the completion of an investigation. The Title IX Coordinator may determine informal resolution is not appropriate, even if requested by both parties, if the alleged conduct could present a future risk of harm to others or other circumstances are present that make informal resolution inappropriate. This decision is not subject to appeal. Informal resolution may not be used for Formal Title IX Complaints filed by students against EWU employees.

### **3-2. Voluntary Participation**

Informal resolution processes may include a variety of voluntary processes that are structured to facilitate dialogue between impacted parties while balancing support and accountability. The various types of informal resolution options available at EWU and procedures for resolution are available on the EWU Civil Rights and Title IX websites. In all cases, the impacted parties must agree in writing to participate in the informal process and EWU will not require or pressure a party to participate in the informal process. A party is not required to waive the right to an investigation and/or hearing to participate in this process.

### **3-3. Informal Resolution Officer**

Informal resolutions will be handled by an EWU employee who is trained to facilitate such processes. In no case will the informal resolution officer be the same person as the investigator or any EWU employee who will make a decision regarding the complaint if informal resolution is not successful. The informal resolution officer must also not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

### **3-4. Written Information About the Process**

Before beginning the informal resolution process, EWU will provide both parties with the following information in writing:

- (a) Summary of the alleged conduct;
- (b) The requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which a party may be precluded from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations;
- (c) Notice that, prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and to initiate or resume the investigative process;
- (d) That the parties' agreement to a resolution at the conclusion of the informal resolution process will preclude the parties from initiating or resuming a formal complaint process arising from the same allegations;
- (e) The potential terms that may be requested or offered in an informal resolution agreement, including



notice that an informal resolution agreement is binding only on the parties; and

(f) What information EWU will maintain and whether and how EWU might use such information if the formal complaint process is initiated or resumed.

### 3-5. Options for Resolution

Potential terms that may be included in an informal resolution agreement include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Restrictions on contact;
- (b) Restrictions on the respondent's participation in university programs or activities or attendance at specific events;
- (c) Training; or
- (d) Any other terms the parties agree upon that the informal resolution officer deems appropriate.

### 3-6. Written Agreement

Any informal resolution agreement must be in writing and signed by the parties and the informal resolution officer. In the agreement, the parties must be advised in writing that:

- (a) The agreement is final, and they are waiving any right to a formal complaint process, including any right to appeal; and
- (b) If a party does not successfully complete all aspects of an agreement, they may be disciplined for failure to comply with the agreement, and/or any possible violation of university policy for the conduct that was the basis for the informal resolution.

### 3-7 Referral Back to the Formal Complaint Process

If any party decides to leave the informal resolution process or the informal resolution officer determines the process is no longer appropriate, then the matter shall be referred back to the Title IX Coordinator to determine the next steps under this policy.

## CHAPTER 4 – INVESTIGATION

### 4-1. Designation of an Investigator

If a complaint meets all of the requirements for a Formal Title IX complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will assign it to an investigator, which may be the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator must not have a conflict of interest or bias as set forth in section 1-5.

The complainant or respondent may request a different investigator by contacting the Title IX Coordinator within five (5) calendar days of receiving notice of the designation of the investigator. The request must identify the reason the person is seeking a different investigator. If the Title IX Coordinator is the investigator, the request should be

addressed to the Chief of Staff. A written decision will be provided to the requestor.

### 4-2. Notice of Investigation

The investigator shall provide the respondent and complainant with a written notice of investigation that includes:

- (a) A written list of the allegations with sufficient details of the allegations based on current information, including, if known, date and time of the incident, description of the conduct, and the specific sections of university policies or expectations allegedly violated;
- (b) Contact information for the investigator;
- (c) Parties' rights during the process, including:
  - Right to a fair and equitable process.
  - Right to have decision-makers that do not have a conflict of interest or bias against the parties.
  - Right to remain silent during the investigation.
  - Right to have an advisor of their choice, at their cost, during the investigation. The advisor may be, but is not required to be, an attorney or union representative. During the investigative process, the advisor may be present and advise the party, but may not answer questions on the party's behalf.
  - Right to an advisor provided by the university for the purposes of conducting cross-examination if they do not have an advisor.
  - Right to be presumed not responsible and that a conclusion of responsibility is not made until the conclusion of the investigative process.
  - Right to request an accommodation or interpreter for the process.
- (d) Notify both parties that complainants, respondents, and witnesses are prohibited from knowingly furnishing false information during the investigative and hearing process. A person will not be disciplined for making a false statement based solely on whether or not EWU determines a complaint under this policy is substantiated.
- (e) EWU's prohibition on retaliation and how to report acts of retaliation;
- (f) Information about how the parties will be provided an equal opportunity to access relevant information gathered during the investigation; and,
- (g) Information about supportive measures and resources available to both parties.

### 4-3. Investigative Process

The investigator has discretion in determining the formality, scope, and process of the investigation. If additional allegations are discovered during the course of the investigation, the investigator shall issue an updated notice of investigation. Before scheduling an interview with a complainant or respondent, the investigator must provide the party with written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all meetings with sufficient time for the party to prepare. The investigative process must include:

(a) Contacting the complainant to review the complaint, gather more information, and to identify relevant witnesses and relevant evidence (e-mails, social media posts, photos, etc.). If necessary, the investigator may contact the complainant on more than one occasion during the course of the investigation to obtain additional information and clarification.

(b) Contacting the respondent to review the complaint, gather more information, and to identify relevant witnesses and relevant evidence (e-mails, social media posts, photos, etc.). The respondent may choose to respond verbally, in writing, or not at all.

(c) Conducting interviews with witnesses who have knowledge of the alleged behavior and gathering relevant evidence.

(d) Parties and witnesses may be contacted once or numerous times as necessary to gather the relevant information.

(e) Parties may identify fact witnesses, expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence. If a party wishes to provide information from an expert witness, the party is responsible for any costs associated with the expert witness.

(f) The investigator must have the ability to question parties and witnesses to assess their credibility to the extent credibility is both in dispute and relevant. The investigator may ask questions during individual meetings with a party or witness.

If the investigator is not able to obtain sufficient information or if the complainant withdraws the complaint during the investigative process, the investigator may refer the complaint back to the Title IX Coordinator to determine whether or not dismissal is appropriate.

After gathering the relevant evidence, the investigator must provide both parties and their advisors an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint, including evidence that the university may not intend to rely on. This

includes inculpatory or exculpatory evidence regardless of whether it was gathered from a party or witness.

The investigator will inform the parties that they have ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response to the evidence to the investigator. The investigator will consider the written responses before finalizing an investigative report.

The investigator must create an investigative report that fairly summarizes all relevant evidence. Information that is not relevant to the allegations does not need to be included in the report. The investigative report will not include conclusions as to whether or not the respondent engaged in sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence.

The investigator will provide a copy of the investigative report to both parties and their advisors for their review and written response. Any written response to the investigative report must be provided to the investigator within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the investigative report.

The investigator will provide a copy of the investigative report, evidence directly related to the complaint, and the parties' written responses to the investigative report to Human Resources and the Title IX Coordinator for purposes of convening a hearing board.

### 4-4. Advisors

Parties have the right to have an advisor of their choice, at their cost, during the investigative and hearing processes. The advisor may be, but is not required to be, an attorney or union representative. During the investigative process, the advisor may be present and advise the party, but may not answer questions on the party's behalf. During the hearing process, the advisor may ask questions of witnesses and parties. Opening and closing statements are not permitted.

If a complainant or respondent does not have an advisor, the party should contact the Title IX Coordinator to request an advisor. The university will provide an advisor for purposes of conducting cross-examination of witnesses and parties.

### 4-5. Limits on Evidence

During both the investigation and hearing process, the university cannot access, consider, disclose or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in their professional capacity that would be privileged under the law that were made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to a party, unless the university obtains the party's voluntary, written consent to gather and disclose such information.

The investigator, hearing board, and appellate authority may not gather or consider evidence about the

complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, unless the evidence is relevant to demonstrate that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or the evidence concerns specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and is relevant to the question of consent.

## CHAPTER 5 – HEARING PROCESS

### 5-1. Hearing Board

After the investigative process is complete, the Director of Labor Relations or designee shall convene a hearing board. The hearing board shall be comprised of three current EWU employees. One of the three members shall serve as the presiding officer.

Members of the hearing board must have completed training on issues relating to sexual misconduct and interpersonal violence, Title IX, and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act. Members must be free of conflict or bias as set forth in section 1-5. Members cannot include the investigator or Title IX Coordinator.

### 5-2. Notice of Hearing

The Director of Labor Relations is responsible for scheduling the hearing. The hearing must take place at least ten (10) calendar days after the investigative report is completed and no more than thirty (30) calendar days after completion of the report, absent extenuating circumstances. The Director of Labor Relations may coordinate scheduling with the parties, but is not required to do so. After the date and time is established, the Director of Labor Relations shall send out a notice of hearing to both parties. The notice of hearing must include:

- Time, date, and location of the hearing;
- Names of people who have been selected to serve on the board and the process for requesting alternative board members on the basis of a conflict of interest or bias;
- A written list of the allegations with sufficient details of the allegations based on current information, including, if known, date and time of the incident, description of the conduct, and the specific sections of university policies or expectations allegedly violated;
- Information about how to request accommodations or an interpreter;
- Right to have an advisor or union representative present at the hearing and who they should contact if they need the university to provide them with an advisor;

- Overview of the purpose of the hearing, brief explanation of the hearing process, and limits on what types of evidence may be presented; and,
- Explanation that if the party fails to appear at the hearing, the board will make its decision without consideration of their testimony or statements previously provided.

The Director of Labor Relations or designee shall provide their contact information to the parties and answer questions they might have about the hearing process. Members of the hearing board should not communicate with the parties prior to the hearing about matters under this policy. Parties should not communicate with the hearing board.

### 5-3. Discovery & Subpoenas

**(a) Discovery:** Discovery is not permitted in this process.

**(b) Subpoenas:** Subpoenas may be issued by the presiding officer or an attorney consistent with RCW 34.05.446. However, for the protection of both parties, a party cannot subpoena the other party. A party may request an exemption from this rule by filing a written request with the presiding officer at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing. The presiding officer will provide a copy of the request to the other party and give them three (3) days to respond. The presiding officer will then decide whether or not sufficient cause exists to grant an exemption to this rule and will inform the parties of the decision.

Any subpoena issued must conform to EWU's subpoena form and must identify the party issuing the subpoena, the title of the proceeding, and directions for the person to whom it is directed to attend and give testimony. Subpoenas may be served by any suitable person over eighteen years of age, by exhibiting and reading it to the witness, or by giving him or her a copy thereof, or by leaving such copy at the place of his or her abode. When service is made by any other person than an officer authorized to serve process, proof of service shall be made by affidavit or declaration under penalty of perjury.

The presiding officer, upon request of a party witness, or at their own discretion, may quash or modify a subpoena if it is unreasonable or oppressive. Subpoenas may not be used to threaten or intimidate parties or witnesses.

### 5-4. Motions

Motions for summary judgement and motions to dismiss are not permitted under this process.

### 5-5. Evidence & Witnesses

**(a) Evidence:** The hearing board will be provided a copy of the investigative report prior to the hearing and the investigative report will be admitted into evidence. At the



hearing, the hearing board shall consider evidence presented by the complainant, respondent, and the investigator. Evidence, including hearsay evidence, is admissible, if in the judgment of the presiding officer it is the kind of evidence on which reasonably prudent persons are accustomed to rely upon in the conduct of their affairs. Evidence may be excluded when necessary to comply with applicable state and/or federal laws. The presiding officer shall exclude evidence that is excludable on constitutional or statutory grounds or that is excluded under section 4-5 of this policy. The presiding officer may exclude irrelevant material. If not inconsistent with this section or Title IX, the presiding officer may refer to the Washington State rules of evidence as guidelines for evidentiary rulings.

All witnesses and parties must testify under oath or affirmation. An interpreter must be prescribed the oath set forth in WAC 10-08-160.

**(b) Questioning:** Any member of the hearing board may ask questions of the investigator, witnesses or parties. Advisors may also ask questions of the investigator, witnesses, and parties. The investigator may ask questions of the witnesses and parties. For cross-examination of parties, a complainant's advisor may ask questions of the respondent and a respondent's advisor may ask questions of the complainant. If a party does not have an advisor, the university will provide the party with an advisor aligned with that party for the purposes of conducting cross-examination as long as the party requests an advisor in writing from the Title IX Coordinator at least five (5) calendar days in advance of the hearing.

The presiding officer may preclude any questions the officer considers irrelevant and must make such determination before an answer is given. The decision to exclude any questions must be made before the question is answered and must be explained on the record. The presiding officer must also exclude and the board shall not consider, any questions or evidence pertaining to the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The presiding officer will explain to the parties the reason for rejecting any questions and will maintain a record of the questions submitted and rulings made.

**(c) Physical Evidence:** If a party has physical evidence they want the board to consider, such as videos, text messages, or social media posts, the party should provide the evidence at least two (2) calendar days prior to the hearing to the Director of Labor Relations. The Director

of Labor Relations will make sure either paper or electronic copies of the physical evidence are available to both parties and the hearing board.

The parties have the right to view all material presented during the course of the hearing, except a respondent's previous corrective/constructive or disciplinary history which shall be used solely for the purpose of determining the appropriate level of corrective/constructive or disciplinary action.

**(d) Order of Hearing:** The hearing shall proceed in the following manner:

(1) The parties and the investigator may provide a brief (up to 5 minutes) opening statement to the board at the beginning of the proceeding. The statement may be made verbally or in writing. Advisors are not permitted to make opening statements. The presiding officer may place the parties or investigator under oath before receiving the opening statement. The investigator's opening statement shall include a summary of the steps taken during the investigation, evidence gathered, and the portions of the policy the respondent is alleged to have violated.

(2) After the investigator's opening statement, the board and parties' advisors may ask questions of the investigator. The investigator's report is automatically admitted into evidence.

(3) If there is a law enforcement investigation or report, a representative from the applicable law enforcement agency may provide a summary of the process followed, people interviewed, and evidence collected. The officer shall answer questions asked by the board and the advisors. The police report will be admitted into evidence.

(3) Witnesses may then be presented by the complainant and respondent. Parties are responsible for making sure their witnesses are available and present at the hearing. Hearings will not be rescheduled because a party's witness fails to attend.

(4) The complainant will then be provided with an opportunity to testify. The complainant may be asked questions by the board, investigator, complainant's advisor, and the respondent's advisor.

(5) The respondent will then be provided with an opportunity to testify. The respondent may be asked questions by the board, investigator, complainant's advisor, and the respondent's advisor.

(6) The hearing board can also call any witnesses to testify.

(7) Closing statements are not permitted as the focus of the hearing is on gathering and evaluating evidence.

After all witnesses and parties have testified, the hearing will be closed.

**e. Decorum & Presence of Witnesses:** The presiding officer may exclude witnesses from the hearing room when they are not testifying. The presiding officer may decline to allow a witness to testify if the information provided by the witness will be irrelevant and must explain a decision to exclude a witness on the record. The complainant and respondent have a right to hear all testimony provided during the hearing.

All participants in the hearing are required to act in a professional manner. The presiding officer may set standards for decorum and professional behavior during the hearing. Anyone who fails to abide by these standards may be excluded from the hearing room. For example, if a complainant's advisor repeatedly disrupts the hearing process, the presiding officer may remove the advisor from the hearing.

**f. Official Notice:** The board may take official notice of (i) any easily verifiable facts such as dates or weather conditions, (ii) technical or scientific facts within EWU's specialized knowledge, such as enrollment status, class or work schedules, or information contained within an employee's personnel record, and (iii) codes or standards adopted by a government agency or by a nationally recognized organization or association. Parties shall be notified either before or during hearing, or by reference in preliminary reports or otherwise, of the material so noticed and the sources thereof and they shall be afforded an opportunity to contest the facts and material so noticed. A party proposing that official notice be taken may be required to produce a copy of the material to be noticed.

#### 5-6. Remote Appearance

Upon request, a witness or party may request the opportunity to appear remotely by contacting the Director of Labor Relations or designee at least three (3) calendar days in advance of the hearing. The presiding officer may permit any person to appear by a method that allows the person to be seen and heard by the hearing board.

#### 5-7. Recording

Hearings must be recorded by the university. Parties and witnesses are not permitted to record the hearing. Upon request, a recording of the hearing must be provided to the parties for inspection and review.

#### 5-8. Closed to the Public

The presiding officer shall issue a protective order closing the hearing to the public to protect the confidentiality of the parties and witnesses consistent with 34 C.F.R. § 106.71.

## CHAPTER 6 – HEARING BOARD DECISION

### 6-1. Standard of Proof & Presumptions

The hearing board must make findings of facts and conclusions as to whether or not the respondent violated a university policy or engaged in misconduct based on a preponderance of the evidence. A preponderance means that it is more likely than not (50+%) that something did or did not occur.

Neither the complainant nor the respondent has the burden of proof. This means the respondent is presumed to be not responsible and does not have to prove they are not responsible. Rather, the university has the burden of collecting evidence to establish whether or not the respondent is responsible based on a preponderance of the evidence. This burden is fulfilled through the investigative process.

### 6-2. Deliberations

Following the testimony of all witnesses and the parties, the hearing board shall meet to objectively review all relevant evidence presented during the hearing or contained in the investigative report in a closed session. This meeting may take place on a subsequent date. After reviewing all of the evidence admitted, the hearing board must determine, based on a majority vote, whether or not the respondent violated a university policy or expectation based on a preponderance of the evidence.

If a party fails to appear, the hearing board shall make the decision based on the information available. The hearing board cannot draw an inference regarding responsibility based solely on a party or witness's absence from the hearing or refusal to answer cross-examination or other questions.

The hearing board may need to make a credibility determination. Such credibility determinations must be explained in the hearing decision and may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

The hearing board will make findings of fact only on allegations that fall within the scope of a Formal Title IX Complaint. The hearing board will determine whether or not the respondent violated the Formal Title IX portions of EWU Policy 402-01 and what discipline or corrective/constructive action to impose and remedies to award. Disciplinary decisions must be made in conformance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement, if any. The hearing board may review the respondent's previous disciplinary and performance history solely for purposes of determining the appropriate level of discipline. The hearing board will not make any determinations as to whether the other policies, collective bargaining agreements, or performance expectations have been violated.

For alleged violations of other policies, collective bargaining agreements, performance expectations, or general misconduct, including but not limited to violations of EWU Policy 402-02 (Diversity & Nondiscrimination), EWU Policy 901-03 (Fraternalization & Consensual Relationships), and EWU Policy 402-01 (Sexual Misconduct, Interpersonal Violence & Title IX Responsibilities), the investigator will complete a separate investigative report in accordance with EWU's investigative guidelines following the hearing.

### 6-3. Written Decision

Within ten (10) calendar days of the hearing, the hearing board must issue a written decision. The written decision must include findings of fact and conclusions as to whether or not EWU Policy 402-01 has been violated. More specifically, the written decision must include:

- (a) Identification of the allegations;
- (b) A description of the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the hearing board decision, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with the parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather evidence, and hearings held;
- (c) Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- (d) Conclusions regarding whether or not the substantiated facts constitute a violation of the Formal Title IX components of EWU Policy 402-01;
- (e) Level of discipline or corrective/constructive actions imposed;
- (f) A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including determinations regarding responsibility and corrective/constructive or disciplinary actions;
- (g) Whether the university will provide the complainant with any remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to EWU's programs or activities; and,
- (h) The basis on which the decision may be appealed and how to follow and appeal.

The presiding officer or designee shall ensure that a copy of the written decision is provided simultaneously to the complainant, respondent, respondent's supervisor, and Title IX Coordinator. If neither party timely appeals as specified in chapter 7, the hearing board's decision becomes final either on the date the time for appeal has expired or, if an appeal is timely filed, when the appellate authority's decision is issued.

### 6-4. Discipline or Corrective/Constructive Action

The hearing board may issue appropriate disciplinary or corrective/constructive action in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement or university policy. This may include, but is not limited to, corrective/constructive action or discipline, including letters of expectation, letters of coaching and counseling, performance improvement plans, verbal or written reprimand/warning, temporary suspension, demotion, reassignment, mandatory training, and/or termination.

### 6-5. Remedies

In addition to imposing corrective/constructive action or discipline upon a respondent who is found responsible for sexual misconduct or interpersonal violence, the hearing board must also consider whether any remedies are needed. A remedy is designed to restore or preserve the complainant's equal access to the university's educational programs and activities. This may include long-term supportive measures, except a remedy may be disciplinary and burden a respondent. For example, one possible remedy is to permanently prohibit the respondent from contacting the complainant or restricting the respondent's ability to participate in a particular activity.

### 6-6. Personnel File

In accordance with RCW 28B.112, any substantiated findings of sexual misconduct must be included in the respondent's personnel file. Personally identifiable information that reveals the identity of the complainant and any witnesses is exempt from public disclosure. In accordance with RCW 28B.112, the university will disclose substantiated findings of sexual misconduct to any employer conducting reference or background checks on a current or former employee for the purposes of potential employment, even if the employer conducting the reference or background check does not specifically ask for such information.

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## CHAPTER 7 – APPEAL PROCESS

### 7-1. Filing an Appeal

The complainant or respondent may appeal the hearing board's decision by filing a written appeal within ten (10) calendar days of service of the hearing board's decision. The decision is served when it is emailed to the parties at their official university email address. To file an appeal, the complainant or respondent must email the Director of Labor Relations. The appeal must set forth why the person believes the hearing board's decision was incorrect, how it fits within the basis for appeal set forth in the next section, and the relief requested.

### 7-2. Basis for Appeal

A complainant or respondent may file an appeal from the decision to dismiss a Title IX complaint and/or from the hearing board's decision on the following bases:

- a. Procedural irregularity or failure to comply with a collective bargaining agreement that affected the outcome of the case;
- b. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the decision that could affect the outcome of the case; or,
- c. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator, or hearing board had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent and such bias/conflict affected the outcome of the case.

### 7-3. Response to Appeal

Upon receipt of an appeal from a complainant or respondent, the Director of Labor Relations shall notify the other party of the appeal, provide them with a copy of the appeal, and then give them an opportunity to respond. The responding party may submit a response to the appeal or a counter-appeal within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the appeal.

### 7-4. Appellate Authority

The university shall appoint a senior administrator to serve as the appellate authority. Typically, this will be the appointing authority for the division under which the respondent is employed. The appellate authority cannot be someone who served on the hearing board, the investigator, or the Title IX Coordinator. The appellate authority must have completed training on issues relating to sexual misconduct and interpersonal violence, Title IX, and the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and must be free of conflict or bias as set forth in section 1-5.

### 7-5. Decision on Appeal

The appellate authority shall review all of the evidence presented and admitted during the hearing, including a review of either the audio recording or transcript of the testimony and the documentary evidence. The appellate authority shall also review the appeal and the response from the responding party, if any. If issues are raised during the appeal regarding the procedures followed and such information was not contained in the hearing record, the appellate authority may ask the parties, the investigator, the presiding officer, or the Title IX Coordinator for additional information, but is not required to do so. If additional evidence is requested and obtained, a copy should be provided to both parties. With respect to findings of fact, the appellate authority must give due regard to the hearing board's opportunity to observe the witnesses.

The appellate authority may affirm, reverse or modify the hearing board's decision based on the grounds for appeal. The appellate authority may also remand the case back to the hearing board to take additional evidence or for a new hearing before a new board. The appellate authority must issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale of the result. A copy of the decision must be simultaneously provided to the respondent, complainant, respondent's supervisor, and Title IX Coordinator. The appeal decision must be issued within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the responding party's response to the notice of appeal.

The appellate authority's decision is the final decision of the university. Judicial review of such decision may be available under RCW 34.05. The decision is not subject to grievance or arbitration under a collective bargaining agreement.

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