



College of the Atlantic

FACULTY, STAFF AND TITLE IX WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE DISCLOSES TO YOU

Many faculty and staff find themselves in a position where students share information that may be a disclosure of an experience they may have had involving power-based personal violence, such as rape, sexual misconduct, stalking, domestic/dating violence or some sort sexual harassment. As a Responsible Employee, how should you respond?

SAY TO/ASK THEM:

1. "It sounds like you are about to share something really important with me and I want you to know that because of my responsibilities at COA, I can promise to keep the information private but I can't promise confidentiality. I may need to share it with the Title IX Coordinator." If they want to talk to someone confidentially, refer them to COA Counseling Services.
2. "How can I help you?"
3. "Are you safe right now? Do you need help contacting Public Safety or the Police?"

Provide them resources such as the contact information for COA's Counseling Services, the Title IX Coordinator, the Confidential Resource Advisor, a member of the Title IX Team, or local sexual assault services, all of which can be found at coa.edu/human-resources/title-ix/our-team-and-training. **Contact the Title IX Coordinator or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible (but certainly no later than the next business day) to make sure they are aware of the situation. If there is immediate danger, call the COA Emergency Line.** If a student discloses an experience as part of a written assignment, ask them if they meant for that to be treated as a disclosure to the College or not. If yes, notify the Title IX Coordinator. If not, refer them to resources if you can.

GET IN TOUCH WITH THE TITLE IX OFFICE

Office: 207.288.5015, ext. 5614
Email: pkaur@coa.edu

Emergency Line: 207.288.9001
Office Location: Turrets, 2nd Floor Annex

SAMPLE GENERAL RESPONSE LANGUAGE

- Be as supportive and non-judgemental as possible. Here are some specific phrases that are recommended:
 - “I believe you” or “It took a lot of courage for you to tell me this.” - It can be extremely difficult for a student to come forward and share their story. They may feel ashamed or afraid they won’t be believed. Leave any “why” questions or investigations to the Title IX Team. Your job is to support the student.
 - “You are not alone” or “I care about you and am here to help in any way that I can.” - Let the student know that you are there for them and willing to listen to their story if they are comfortable sharing.
 - “It’s not your fault” or “You didn’t do anything to deserve this.” - Many people blame themselves, especially if they know the perpetrator personally. Remind the student that they are not to blame.
 - “I’m sorry this happened” or “I’m so glad you are sharing this with me.” - Phrases like this acknowledge that this experience has affected their life and helps to communicate empathy.

SAMPLE CONFIDENTIALITY VS. PRIVACY LANGUAGE

- “I’m glad you want to talk to me about a concern and that you feel comfortable speaking with me about something that I can see may be difficult to talk about. I want to make sure you understand my role as a Responsible Employee of the college. I will do everything I can to protect your privacy but depending on what you tell me, I may need to inform an administrator at COA.”
- “I am happy to talk to you more about your concerns, however, if you would like to talk to someone who can assure you a higher level of confidentiality, I can provide you with these confidential resources.”
- “My main concern is your safety and well-being, so I want to ensure you understand what my role might be in the process. I am happy to listen more if you feel comfortable speaking with me further.”

ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS? PLEASE CONTACT A MEMBER OF THE TITLE IX TEAM. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU.

Title IX Team: Puranjot Kaur, *Title IX Coordinator*; Zach Soares, *Deputy Title IX Coordinator*, Pamela Gagnon da Silva, *Confidential Resource Advisor*, Nick Jenei, Karen Waldron, Carrie Graham, Dave Feldman, and Helen Hess

