

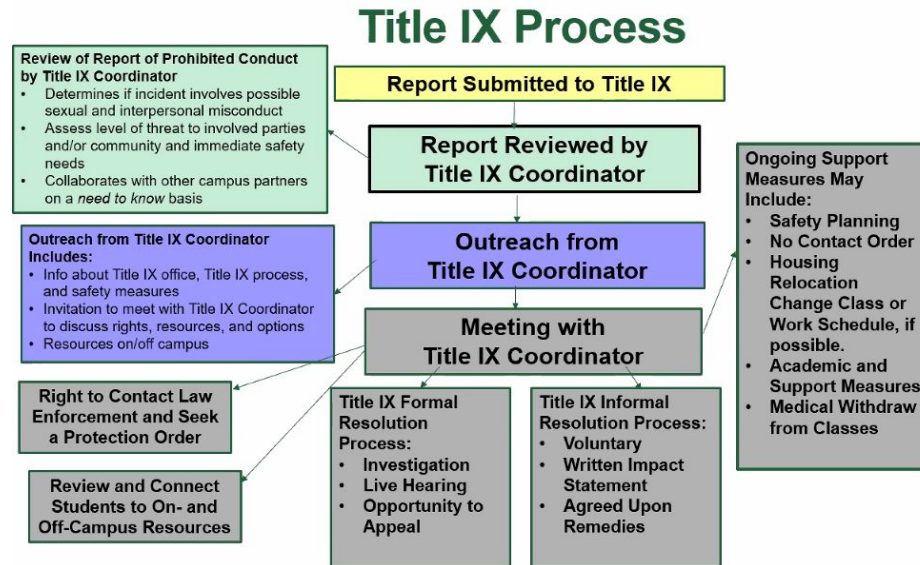
# GAPSA General Assembly

## November 30, 2020

### Meeting Notes

- NAGPS Vote
  - See discussion from last meeting:  
<https://gapsa.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/November-2020.pdf>  
(scroll to middle of the second page)
  - **Final Vote (22 attendees): 6 Yea, 9 Nay, 2 Abstain, 2 Non-Votes, 3 Ineligible —> We will no longer be a paying member of the NAGPS.**
- Guest: Angela Nastase, Title IX Coordinator for Compliance, Diversity, and Ethics
  - University [Policy 1202](#) addresses sexual assault, interpersonal violence, sexual or gender-based harassment, sexual exploitation, complicity, and retaliation
    - If you're unsure about what falls within this umbrella, feel free to still reach out, and Angela will redirect you if needed
  - University [Policy 1204](#) addresses consensual relationships between employees and/or students at Mason
  - We have a new Title IX policy with updates on:
    - Single procedure for handling allegations of sexual misconduct in both student and employee cases.
    - The policy continues to apply to misconduct that occurs on campus, or during a University educational program, activity, or employment.
    - It also applies to off-campus misconduct involving members of the GMU community when the conduct has a continuing adverse effect or creates a hostile environment on campus or in a University educational program, activity, or employment.
    - Individuals may still obtain supportive measures (such as No Contact Orders, academic support, safety planning, or housing changes) through the Title IX Coordinator regardless of whether they initiate or participate in a formal or informal resolution process.
    - Conduct of a sexual nature that previously constituted a violation of University policy will continue to constitute a violation of policy.
    - A complaining party has the option to request a formal resolution process. The formal resolution process includes an investigation and a live hearing with the opportunity to cross examine (conducted by parties' advisers).
    - Parties who do not wish to participate in the University's formal resolution process may have an option to participate in a voluntary informal resolution process.
    - The preponderance of the evidence standard (more likely than not) continues to apply in student and employee matters. Under this standard in order to be found responsible, *the evidence must show that it is more likely than not that the alleged violation occurred.*
  - Our office also has a Confidential Employee option to provide confidential, trauma-informed counseling or support. There is a similar Employee Assistance Program for full-time GMU employees.
    - Please note that most employees are Non-Confidential Employees and thus must report to the Title IX Coordinator. This includes students serving as Resident Assistants, GTAs, and other student-employees.

- Contact the Title IX office using:
  - Angela Nastase; [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu); 703-993-8730
  - Online Submission Form: <https://diversity.gmu.edu/title-ix/sexual-or-interpersonal-misconduct-report-form>
- A brief review of the Title IX Process:



- We provide lots of trainings on Title IX, both to students and to employees, with a variety of different topics. Contact our office if you'd like more information.
- Questions?
  - How are cases handled in terms of deciding whether to investigate or not?
    - The Title IX office will meet with the student and discuss options, and will document the student's decision. If the behavior discussed does not fall under our policy, they will discuss alternative options.
    - If an investigation begins, all parties must be formally notified.
    - There are also options for informal resolution processes.
    - Everything is documented and in writing. Please always reach out to the Title IX office and ask if you have questions - do not rely on rumors posted on social media!
  - Does Title IX provide resources to students who are experiencing abusive environments in other employment environments that is preventing the student from getting funding?
    - If it falls under Title IX umbrella, we can provide support to the student in terms of current academic support. If it's specific to funding, we can help brainstorm ideas but it wouldn't be a Title IX case.
    - But, for example, we have had students who were sexually assaulted at home. We can help these students with their academic coursework, but because the other party is not Mason-affiliated, we cannot issue a formal investigation.
  - What kind of support can we (as GTAs, or similar) provide to students who report an incident to us when we're non-confidential?

- Always be honest to state up front that you are a non-confidential employee and are required to report to the Title IX office. Phrase it as “I’m connecting you to a resource on campus” if they’re uncomfortable with the fact that you have to report. Unless it’s a situation with immediate threat of danger, Title IX will reach out to offer resources, but students aren’t required to respond or report.
  - Feel free to refer students to [Counseling and Psychological Services](#).
- Does Mason have a third investigator in addition to the two in office?
  - We have a case manager to provide student support, in addition to two investigators. We can also hire a third outside investigator for situations as needed.
- Are TAs and GAs trained by Title IX just like faculty are?
  - Yes.
- Do we still have the task force?
  - Yes, we meet monthly. If you have any questions or thoughts, feel free to contact the GAPSA President [Lili Deveneau](#), as she sits on that task force committee.
- Does training provide details on which specific behaviors fall under the umbrella of sexual abuse or harassment?
  - Yes, the student training especially focuses on specific examples. We do that in employee training as well.
  - We are also aware there are cultural nuances that need to be addressed, especially when training among international students.
- Side Note: The [Fairfax County Domestic and Sexual Violence Services](#) offers brief individual (8-10 sessions for free) counseling that is free for anyone who has experienced intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and/or stalking. This can be current or past as well. This applies to individuals living in Fairfax county or if Fairfax county is where the incident happened.
- Social Hour with Associate Deans
  - Associate Deans are very important in policies and procedures at each of the Mason schools, covering topics like enrollment, inclusivity, programming, curriculum, etc. We will have a social hour that allows you to stick around and get to know them, ask questions, etc.
- Questions?
  - Is conference travel still being funded? See here: <https://gstf.gmu.edu>
    - Yes, the Graduate Student Travel Fund (GSTF) is funding registrations for graduate students who are presenting at online conferences at this time.
    - From their [application site](#): “Due to the impact of COVID-19, at this time, the GSTF is only able to provide support for conference registration fees for students who are presenting at professional conferences. The maximum GSTF support for conference registration will be \$450. Proof of payment and attendance is required. Additionally, until further notice, all GSTF reimbursement requests and associated paperwork should be submitted via email to [gstf@gmu.edu](mailto:gstf@gmu.edu). Please be

sure to include a signed GSTF Reimbursement Request Form. Visit our [website](#) for more updates and information regarding our policies and procedures.”