

CAL MESSAGE

To: Faculty; Staff; Students

Subject: Resolution agreement reached with Office for Civil Rights regarding campus Title IX process

Dear campus community,

We are pleased to announce that UC Berkeley has entered into a Resolution Agreement with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR). For the last four years, OCR has been reviewing the campus's handling of sexual violence and sexual harassment cases. This agreement brings the investigation to a close.

OCR opened its investigation after receiving a group complaint from UC Berkeley students and other individuals. Many students at universities across the country were voicing similar concerns at that time; their activism helped put a national spotlight on sexual harassment and violence. That national discussion has since grown beyond the university setting to include discussions of sexual misconduct in other institutions, workplaces and environments.

We want to thank the brave students who came forward years ago, told their painful stories and advocated for change. UC Berkeley students were some of the first voices heard in this worldwide movement. They had a major impact on our campus.

The OCR report outlines concerns about previous practices, and noted that the campus has begun addressing most of those issues. In addition, they provided constructive new recommendations that we will follow under a Resolution Agreement that includes a two-year monitoring period. The university will change or clarify certain policies and will strive to ensure that all cases are handled in a reasonably prompt amount of time.

This effort is in line with our ongoing work. Since 2012, the campus has enacted new policies and procedures, and we continue to explore ways to improve our efforts on the prevention and response fronts. We are committed to ensuring that our campus provides a safe and welcoming environment for all students, staff and faculty.

Over the last several years, we have expanded support services for the frontline offices whose staff address sexual violence and sexual harassment. This includes the PATH to Care Center, the Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (Title IX), University Health Services, and the Center for Student Conduct. We have also strengthened our prevention and education efforts for faculty, staff and students.

Improvements to the adjudication processes for students, faculty and staff cases have also been made, as we seek to ensure fairness for all parties and consistency in case outcomes. In addition, the new position of Special Faculty Adviser to the Chancellor on Sexual Violence/Sexual Harassment was created to support campuswide sexual misconduct prevention and response efforts.

In addition, campus professionals continue to work closely with federal, state and other agencies to assess and improve our policies, processes and services around sexual misconduct prevention and response. For more information on the Office for Civil Rights report, including access to report documents, go to compliance.response.berkeley.edu.

We would like to thank those professional staff members who spent countless hours assisting OCR in their review of our documents and their understanding of our processes and procedures. To those same professionals — as well as other staff, faculty and students — we also extend our deepest gratitude for their work creating and implementing new policies for this campus. That work continues.

Sincerely,
Carol Christ
Chancellor

Sharon Inkelas
Special Faculty Adviser to the Chancellor on Sexual Violence/Sexual Harassment