

Annual Report 2020-2021

From the Title IX Coordinator

This past year had its challenges, but in the world of TIX, there was the added task of completely revising our TIX Policy and related procedures to remain compliant with the federal regulations. This meant that *everything* we had required revisions. But in true Michigan Tech fashion and with the help of many across campus, we met the August 2020 deadline and adapted to the new policy. These new regulations also required we grow our (mostly) volunteer staff to include investigators, decision-makers, advisors, informal resolution facilitators, appellate officers, and advisors. This list now includes more than 30 people who are annually trained and ready to assist with the TIX Formal Grievance Process.

Title IX Accomplishments

Sponsored Events | Despite the restrictions and limitations on events, TIX assisted with the following sexual violence prevention related events this year in collaboration with the Sexual Assault and Violence Education (SAVE) student organization and the Society of African American Men (SAAM).

Keith Edwards Sexual Assault Prevention Speaker presented virtually to a variety of student and staff groups.

Walk a Mile in Her Shoes— Students participated in a walk across campus with some of the men wearing high-heeled shoes to actively confront gender stereotypes and expectations. This event is meant to raise awareness about the serious causes, effects, and remediations to men’s sexualized violence.

Annual TIX Training | Beginning in April, all university employees are now required to complete a TIX online training course, which ensures that all employees are continuously up to date on the prohibited conduct under TIX, the reporting requirements and process, and the resources available. Training Completed Summer 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021

1405 Undergraduate students completed an online Title IX related course

366 Graduate students completed an online Title IX related course

1007 Employees completed a Title IX/Harassment prevention related course

Reporting Options

Public Safety & Police Services906-487-2216

Title IX Coordinator.....titleix@mtu.edu | 906-487-3310

Report a Concern www.mtu.edu/concern

2020-2021 Title IX Staff

Title IX CoordinatorKirsti Arko, PhD

Director Title IXBeth Lunde-Stockero

Deputy CoordinatorSusan Sullivan

Gender Equity in Athletics Suzanne Sanregret, PhD

Title IX InvestigatorsJoe Cooper EdD, Adam Rajala, Susan Sullivan, Beth Lunde-Stockero, Jill Hodges, Abbi Halkola

Sexual Misconduct Prevention Educator. Kaylee Kapatos

Other TIX Roles... Decision-Makers, Informal Resolution Facilitators, Appellate Officers, Advisors

TIX Staffing Updates for 2021-2022

New TIX Director | Kirsti Arko will now serve as the Associate Director of Institutional Equity, Lead Investigator, and Director of Title IX. This is a new position within the department which will act in the absence of the Executive Director, serve as investigator for both Title IX and Institutional Equity cases, and manage cases for Institutional Equity.

Interim TIX Coordinator | Laura Putwen has been named Interim Title IX Coordinator with responsibility for the strategic planning, policy oversight, training, prevention programming, reporting, grievance procedure, and case management relative to Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). She will continue to serve as the Director of Community Conduct during this time. Institutional Equity will be hiring for this position.

TIX Partner | Rhys Edwards, Assistant Athletics Director/ Compliance and Student Athlete Success, has volunteered to serve as a Title IX Partner in addition to his current position. If individuals prefer to meet with someone who identifies as male, he will be available to serve as an initial contact and/or resource.

Institutional Equity strengthens Michigan Tech’s commitment to a just and respectful community that is accessible to all individuals and free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct.

Important Updates for Title IX Federal Regulations



Notice of Interpretation | The US Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights issued a Notice of Interpretation for Title IX. Title IX’s prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex will now include discrimination based on sexual orientation and discrimination based on gender identity. This is part of the recent Executive Order on Guaranteeing an Educational Environment Free from Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, including Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity and the Executive Order Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation.

New Q and A | The US Department of Education has also recently released an updated Q&A on Title IX Regulations on Sexual Harassment. This document includes clarification on how OCR interprets school’s existing obligations under the Department’s 2020 amendments to the TIX regulations. It is a supplemental document that provides examples and additional insight, plus identification of the areas that allow for a school’s discretion.

Comparing the Data 2018—2021

2018-2019 63 cases
 2019-2020 51 cases
 2020-2021 33 cases

“Me Too” was first tweeted on October 15, 2017
 Students moved to remote in March 2020
 Health and Safety Levels limited students and employees on campus

Sexual Misconduct Allegations

Overall, there were 33 total cases reported to the Title IX Coordinator during the Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 semesters.

The chart on the right shows the number of cases in each category where either a student or employee was involved. The categories represent how the incident was initially reported to the Title IX office.

There were 39 total allegations, as some cases include more than one allegation.

The University Policies prohibiting sexual harassment and discrimination apply to Respondents who are either employees or students at Michigan Tech during the time of the alleged incident. If an incident involves a Respondent who is not affiliated with our institution, we will continue to offer supportive measures to the Complainant, in addition to taking additional steps such as providing criminal resources, campus bans, and other interim measures that will ensure the safety of the party and the greater university community.

Case Allegations Reported May 2020—May 2021

11	Sexual Harassment	4	Stalking
12	Sexual Assault	7	Other Sexual Misconduct
5	Dating/Domestic Violence	33	Total Cases

Comparing Case Loads

With students and employees working remotely for the majority of the 2020-2021 school year, there was a noticeable drop in reported sexual misconduct allegations, but this was to be expected and not unlike other university’s reports. While we work to prevent discrimination and harassment on our campus, typically a drop in reporting is not a positive data point; rather, it can indicate a trend in non-reporting. This year’s decline was most likely connected to the pandemic and the remote school and work statuses, but moving forward, we will continue to encourage our campus to report all incidents of sexual misconduct and ensure there are no barriers that may be contributing.

*One of the cases reported was a Mock Case with Undergraduate Student Government. USG collaborated with TIX to go through the process and provide recommendations based on the students’ experiences who participated as parties and witnesses.