

Title IX Advocate Information

The university expects everyone within our community — students, faculty and staff — to treat others equally and does not tolerate hostile behavior toward others.

We recognize that sex and gender discrimination, as well as sexual harassment and violence, are important issues, and we consider it our responsibility to attend to these concerns within our community. As a member of our community, you should expect St. Edward's University to not only comply with federal regulations as they apply to Title IX, but also to remain aligned with our Holy Cross values of community, diversity, social justice and service.

Our goal is to assist those affected by sex and gender discrimination, harassment and violence. Whether you are a survivor, the accused or a bystander of a Title IX incident, we as a community are here to guide you through the process of resolution. We strive to be sensitive to the unique needs of different populations within our community.

Being informed is an important step in finding resolution, either for yourself, a friend, or others in our community. Through empathy and compassion, we may more readily address concerns of discrimination and violence surrounding sex and gender. Thank you for taking a step toward service to others. Together, we can bring about a better time for our community.

WHAT IS AN ADVOCATE?

A well-trained, trauma-sensitive professional staff person who will serve students either impacted by interpersonal violence or accused of perpetrating interpersonal violence

A confidential resource to help students:

- Discuss legal and on-campus reporting options, resources for medical and mental health, accommodation options
- Support them in their decision-making processes
- Assist them in navigating an on-campus Title IX complaint process or connect them to resources in the community for making off-campus law enforcement reports (such as Safe Place or Austin Police Department)

WHAT DOES CONFIDENTIAL MEAN?

Anything a student talks about with their Advocate is not reported to anyone else, unless it contains a threat to their safety (e.g. thoughts of suicide)

- Trained Advocates routinely meet with one another and the Director of Student Advocate Programs to ensure best services are provided but those conversations are also confidential.
- The Director of Student Advocate Program also shares anonymous, aggregated information with the individual who compiles St. Edward's Annual Security Report.



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WHEN WOULD I NEED/WANT AN ADVOCATE?

If impacted by:

- Sexual assault
- Interpersonal violence
- Stalking
- Sexual harassment
- Hate crime based in gender/gender identity
- When a student makes a request for welfare assessment

DO ADVOCATES SERVE ONLY SURVIVORS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE?

No. Advocates also serve students accused of any of the above categories recognizing that navigating the necessary systems involved can be very stressful on the accused student, despite being quite different. At no time would the same Advocate serve a survivor and the accused student in the situation simultaneously, and we will go to great lengths to ensure that services to both parties do not jeopardize the health and well-being of the other in any way.

HOW CAN I CONNECT TO AN ADVOCATE?

Advocates will be available throughout typical business hours on campus and can be contacted directly or through the Advocate Coordinator, Dr. Vanessa Avina-Pena at the HCC, Johnson Hall, (512) 448-8538 or email vavinape@stedwards.edu

- When filing or responding to a complaint of interpersonal violence, either through a Title IX Investigator or law enforcement
- After hours, contact University Police Department 512-448-8444

WHO ARE OUR ADVOCATES CURRENTLY?

- **Andy Lemons**, Director of RecWell, UFCU Alumni Gym, 108, (512) 233-1458
- **Krupa Shah**, Assistant Director of RecWell, UFCU Alumni Gym, 108 (512) 428-1322
- **Tabbitha Ashford**, Assistant Director of RecWell, UFCU Alumni Gym, 108 (512) 428-1378
- **Joi Torres**, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Ragsdale Center 304, (512) 233-1665
- **Carey Mays**, Director of Student Activities, Ragsdale Center 305, (512) 464-8822
- **James Puglisi**, Associate Director of Campus Ministry, Campus Ministry Building 119, (512) 233-1693

WHY ARE ADVOCATES IMPORTANT?

A 2006 study found that when survivors receive advocate-assisted services following assaults, they:

- Receive more helpful information, referrals, and services
- Experience less secondary trauma or re-victimization by medical and legal systems

When advocates are present in the legal and medical proceedings following rape, survivors:

- Fare better in both the short-and long-term
- Experience less psychological distress, physical health struggles, sexual risk-taking behaviors, self-blame, guilt, and depression

Rape survivors with advocates were 59% more likely to have police reports taken than survivors without advocates, whose reports were only taken 41% of the time.