



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
SOUTHERN

**SEXUAL
MISCONDUCT,
RELATIONSHIP
VIOLENCE,
STALKING, AND
RETALIATION
2021 ANNUAL REPORT**

JULY 1, 2021 - DECEMBER 31, 2021

OFFICE OF TITLE IX

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN
433 WEST MADISON STREET
PULASKI, TENNESSEE 38478

utsouthern.edu/about/title-ix



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SOUTHERN

THE OFFICE OF TITLE IX

March 17, 2022

Dear UT Southern community and colleagues,

July 1, 2021, was an historic day for our campus, our community, and our state as Martin Methodist College officially became the newest campus in the University of Tennessee System – UT Southern. While many things changed, from colors and mascots to policies and procedures, our campus's commitment to Title IX remained the same.

Perhaps one of the greatest advantages of the merger with the University of Tennessee System has been the wisdom and wealth of resources available in the area of Title IX. We have been inspired by the prevention programs in Knoxville, the advocacy resources in Chattanooga, the efficiency of a similarly small Title IX office in Martin, and the thoughtfulness and professionalism of the responses in Memphis and Tullahoma. Additionally, the team here at UT Southern has worked closely with our System colleagues and experts to ensure that, in the creation and adoption of a new Title IX policy, we are able to continue to meet our regulatory obligations while prioritizing our responsibility to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory learning, living, and working environment.

Our community is one that prioritizes a culture of respect. We care for one another here, and I am proud to say that our values are reflected in the report on the following pages. In the six months since the creation of UT Southern, we had no reported incidents of misconduct in relation to sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking, and retaliation as of this date.

The information provided in this report reflects the period of July through December 2021. On the following pages, a brief overview of campus Title IX efforts is provided that includes staffing, training, and education efforts. As we move forward, we will continue to evaluate our Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Relationship Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation ("Policy"), procedures, and service to the campus. Our policies and procedures are reflective of the ever changing Title IX regulations.

If you have any questions or concerns about UT Southern's Title IX compliance or about Title IX in general after reading this report, please contact me. Thank you for your commitment to making our campus a safe and discrimination-free environment.

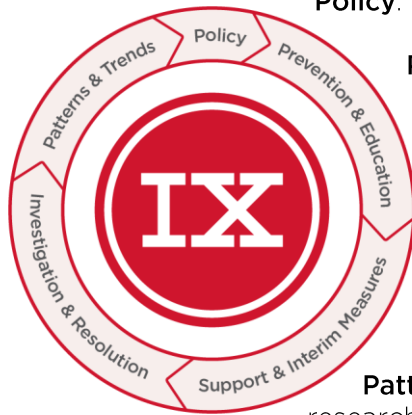
Sincerely,

Sarah Catherine Richardson
Title IX Coordinator for Complaints of Sexual Discrimination & Harassment
University of Tennessee Southern
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MISSION & MODEL

The Office of Title IX at the University of Tennessee Southern seeks to provide a working, learning, and living environment free of sexual harassment.

Grounded in the social ecological model, our Title IX commitment emphasizes five key areas:



Policy. Our foundation is in the policy and procedures we follow.

Prevention. Our goal is to prevent sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking, and retaliation before they happen.

Supportive measures. Our promise is to provide appropriate supportive measures to individuals involved in the Title IX process.

Investigation and resolution. Our commitments to due process, campus safety, and encouraging reporting guide how we investigate and resolve reports.

Patterns and trends. Our responsibility is to utilize the best available research, evidence-based practice, and our own campus trends in our prevention and response efforts.

POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT, SEXUAL ASSAULT, DATING AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, AND STALKING

The primary purposes of the Policy are to:

- Define, eliminate, prevent, and remedy the effects of Prohibited Conduct
- Identify care, support, and reporting options for students and employees
- Explain the obligations of employees to report Prohibited Conduct to the University
- Identify the grievance procedures the University will follow to thoroughly, equitably, and promptly investigate and resolve reports of Prohibited Conduct

The updated policy is accessible at utsouthern.edu/about/title-ix along with additional information about campus procedures, training, and prevention programs related to prohibited conduct. The University will continue to review and update the policy annually to best serve our students, faculty, and staff.

TITLE IX COORDINATOR

Sarah Catherine Richardson is the University's Title IX Coordinator and oversees the University's response to reports of Prohibited Conduct, including investigations, supportive measures, and hearing procedures. The Title IX Coordinator also leads the University's educational and prevention efforts regarding Prohibited Conduct. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached at scrich@utsouthern.edu or via 931-424-4073.



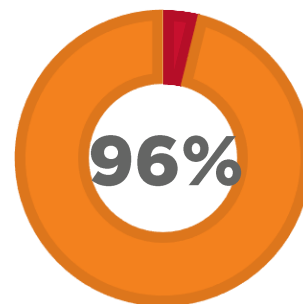
PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

When we merged with the University of Tennessee System in July 2021, the new UT Southern implemented a new Title IX policy.

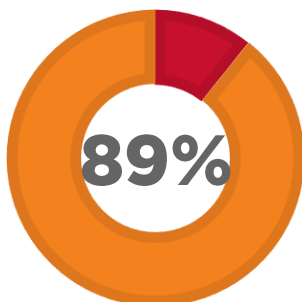
In the months after the merger (July-December 2021), the Title IX Coordinator worked in conjunction with other University Departments and offices in providing programs on the University's Sexual Misconduct Policy. These programs were presented to various students, faculty, and staff groups.

Faculty

Faculty members were trained both via live presentations and via K@TE (an online platform through the UT System). Thanks to the support from Dr. Judy Cheatham, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Title IX was included in faculty's mandatory training on August 18, 2021. This presentation served as a "highlights" training on the basics of the new Policy, Mandatory Reporting, Prohibited Conduct, and how to access the full compliance training via K@TE.



76 FACULTY TRAINED*



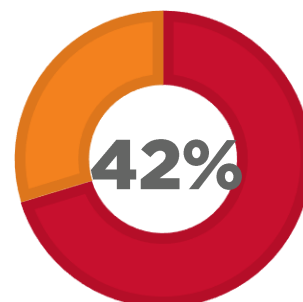
91 STAFF TRAINED*

Staff

Staff members from all areas of the University also completed Title IX Mandatory Reporter training via K@TE. Mandatory reporters are employees who are required to report information about known or suspected Prohibited Conduct to the Office of Title IX. At UT Southern, that includes personnel from every department on campus, including all coaches and trainers from our Athletic Department.

Students

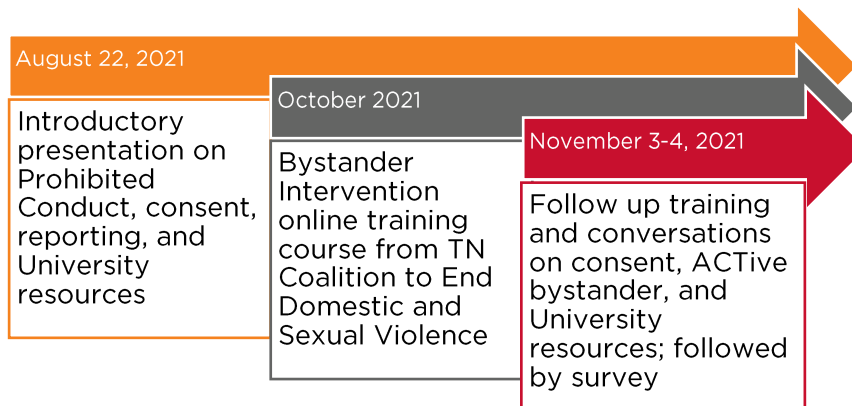
Student leaders on campus were trained to be resources for their peers regarding Prohibited Conduct, and students organized as Students of Title IX (STIX), a registered student organization created to (a) increase student awareness about University Title IX policies, procedures, and resources; (b) increase student awareness about Prohibited Conduct and intersecting concepts, i.e. consent, alcohol and drug use, etc.; (c) connect students with University and community resources.



296 STUDENTS TRAINED*

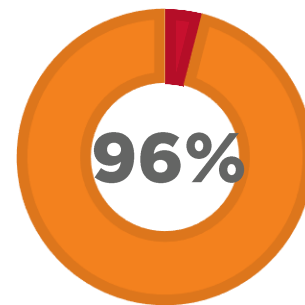
**Training totals and percentages reflect training completed as of the date of this report: March 17, 2022*

A special focus in this first semester as UT Southern was on first-year students and providing first-year students with information regarding consent, reporting, and active bystander interventions.

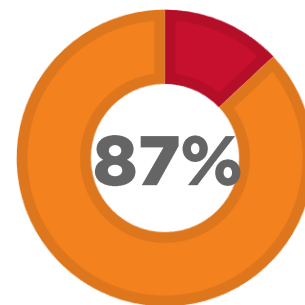


Working closely with the University’s First-Year Experience (FYE) program, the Title IX Coordinator was able to present an introductory presentation to new students before their first day of classes.

Also through FYE, students completed an online Bystander Intervention Course and participated in a live training with the Title IX Coordinator via Teams. Topics included an overview of the University’s policy on sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking; the University’s prohibition of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking; the scope of the University’s policy; the definition of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking; the definition of consent; the Title IX coordinator’s contact information; bystander intervention; consent; healthy relationships; and resources available to students.

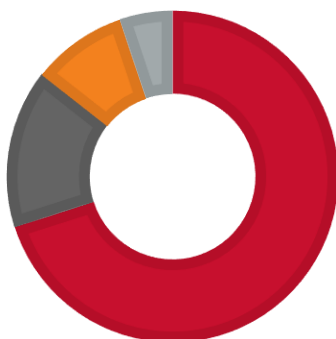


First-year students report knowing where to report sexual misconduct or relationship violence.



First-year students report believing they are a powerful ally in ending sexual violence.

181 First-year students pledged to take steps to prevent sexual violence in our community



- **continue to learn** about intervening in dangerous situations
- **call out jokes or comments** that perpetuate rape culture & victim blaming
- **talk to my partner** about consent and expectations
- **make a plan** with friends before drinking

Events

Activity Fair - Representatives from Center of Hope, Tennessee Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence, and Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services all graciously visited campus for our annual Activity Fair in late August to provide education, resources, and support.



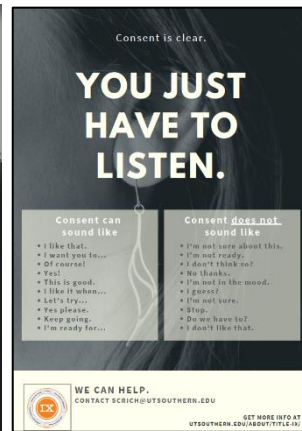
Above: Staff and support dog Treble from Center of Hope present information at the Activity Fair

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Event - Center of Hope also partnered with the Office of Title IX to mark Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. In a tabling event on October 13, community members were invited to sign a pledge to prevent domestic violence, paint one fingernail to show solidarity with survivors, and make a sign about the #1thing they will do to prevent domestic violence in our community. 66 students, plus a variety of faculty and staff members, visited the table.



Passive Education

16 versions of educational posters were hung in each bathroom across campus in September, focusing primarily on consent and including Title IX website and Title IX Coordinator contact information.



Above: Students participate in Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Left: Examples of consent education posters

DEFINITIONS OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- **Prohibited Conduct** – Sexual Harassment (including Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking), Sexual Exploitation, and Retaliation
- **Sexual Harassment** – conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: (1) An employee of the University conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the University on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the University's education program or activity; or (3) Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and/or Stalking.
 - **Sexual Assault** – an umbrella term for any sexual act directed against another person, without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Sexual Assault includes Rape, Fondling, Incest, and Statutory Rape.
 - **Rape** – the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus, with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.
 - **Fondling** – the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.
 - **Incest** – sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
 - **Statutory Rape** – sexual intercourse with a person under the statutory age of consent.
 - **Dating Violence** – violence committed by a person (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors: (i) The length of the relationship, (ii) The type of relationship, (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
 - **Domestic Violence** – felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurs, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurs.
 - **Stalking** – engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to— (A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or (B) suffer substantial emotional distress.
- **Retaliation** – to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by this Policy, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.