



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
SOUTHERN

# **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE, STALKING, AND RETALIATION**

## 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 1, 2024 - DECEMBER 31, 2024

OFFICE OF TITLE IX

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

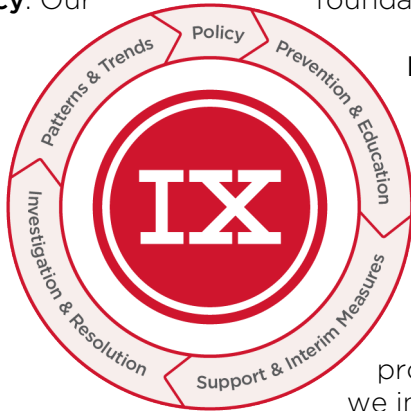
[utsouthern.edu/about/title-ix](https://utsouthern.edu/about/title-ix)

## 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.

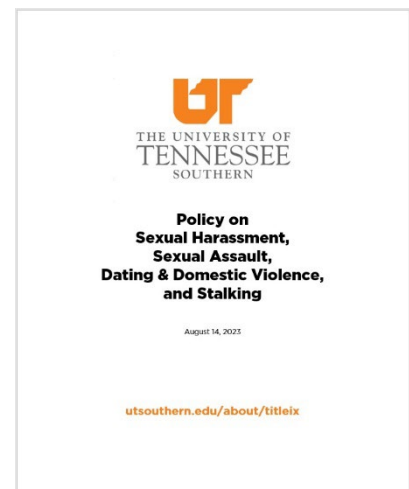
**Patterns and trends.** Our responsibility is to utilize the best available research, evidence-based practice, and our own campus trends in our prevention and response efforts.

## 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](https://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](mailto:scrich@utsouthern.edu) or via 931-424-4073.

## PREVENTION, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

### Mandatory Reporters

Mandatory reporters are employees who are required to report information about known or suspected Prohibited Conduct to the Office of Title IX. Mandatory Reporters include both faculty and staff personnel from every department on campus, and all are trained each year.

#### Faculty & Staff

In addition to all regulatory requirements for this annual training, the 2024 training also included information on the changing landscape of Title IX, reemphasizing our campus's commitment to a learning and working environment free from sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment.

**100%**

**FACULTY &  
STAFF  
TRAINED**

#### Students

Student leaders on campus were trained to be resources for their peers regarding Prohibited Conduct and were educated on their own roles as Mandatory Reporters where applicable.

### Student Trainings

Working closely with the University's First-Year Experience (FYE) program, students were educated on consent, reporting, and active bystander interventions before their first day of classes during Welcome Week in August 2024, in addition to a presentation on consent (see *Events*.) FYE also hosted Center of Hope (a prevention specialist from Center of Hope) during class sessions in both January and November 2024 for Bystander Intervention.

**456**

**STUDENTS  
TRAINED**

### Events

**The Yellow Dress** - This one-woman-play follows the story of an abusive relationship, designed to help students recognize the early signs of dating violence, learn about the abuse cycle, understand why victims stay in relationships, and provide techniques for both safely ending abusive relationships and for intervening as a bystander.

**Hike the Hill** - UT Southern hosted its third annual Hike the Hill event, a walk "up the hill" from our campus green to the gym. The walk included signs regarding sexual assault statistics, trends in college student data, and information on the impact of drugs and alcohol in sexual harassment. Over 120 students, faculty, staff, and community members joined, and enjoyed lunch as a community with both Center of Hope and UT Southern counselors present for debriefing and support.

**Taco Bout Consent** - Students visited a Chipotle bar to assemble tacos and bowls where each ingredient represented a different aspect of consent. Students also got sexual assault prevention month bracelets and free stickers promoting consent.



**The C Word: Consent** - 138 first-year students and their peer mentors participated in an interactive presentation on consent, the impact of alcohol, and healthy relationships.

**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 August to provide education, resources, and support.

**633**

**STUDENTS  
ENGAGED IN  
PREVENTION  
PROGRAMMING**

## DEFINITIONS + REPORTS OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT

- **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.

To protect anonymity, we do not publish the actual number of reports when there are less than 5 unique reports.