

## Title IX Sexual Harassment Hearing

### Rules of Decorum

The college's Title IX sexual harassment hearings are part of the college's disciplinary process; they do not adjudicate civil or criminal liability. While the current Title IX regulations require live hearings with an opportunity for questioning of parties and other witnesses, these are not courtroom trials. To promote civility and respect and minimize the traumatic impact of answering questions about sexual harassment, hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules of decorum, which apply equally to all participants without respect to their role in the process and regardless of their sex, gender, or other protected class.

1. The hearing officer shall enforce the rules of decorum evenhandedly and conduct the hearing in a fair, impartial, and respectful manner.
2. At any point, the hearing officer may ask questions of any witness.
3. The hearing officer must approve all questions posed by an advisor before the party or other witness responds. Only relevant questions asked in a respectful, non-abusive manner will be allowed.
4. Advisors may not object to questions, argue points of relevance, engage in arguments with the other advisors or the hearing officer, or challenge the decisions or instructions of the hearing officer. All claims of bias or procedural error shall be reserved for appeal.
5. The hearing officer will provide a brief explanation of any decision to disallow a question at the hearing and may send the parties after the hearing any revisions to the explanation that was provided during the hearing.
6. Questioning is intended to probe a party's narrative, not to humiliate or berate a witness. Questions that are argumentative, repetitive, cumulative, irrelevant, or accusatory shall not be permitted.
7. Participants are prohibited from:
  - a. interrupting other participants;
  - b. directing profanity toward another participant;
  - c. making objectively offensive or aggressive gestures;
  - d. harassing another participant;
  - e. yelling, screaming, badgering; and
  - f. taking any action that a reasonable person would conclude is intended to disrupt or delay the proceedings, intimidate a participant, or meaningfully modify someone's participation in the process.
8. Hearing participants shall use other participants' stated names, pronouns, and genders or refer to them by their role in the proceeding (for example complainant or respondent).
9. While parties may request a brief pause or break in the hearing, the hearing officer has the sole discretion to pause the process or interrupt participants. All participants shall comply with the hearing officer's directions and instructions. If a hearing participant

violates the rules of decorum, or proceedings otherwise become disorderly, the hearing officer may recess or adjourn proceedings to address the behavior or restore order.

10. If a party or advisor violates these rules during a hearing, the college may respond in accordance with its codes of conduct. If a party's advisor refuses to comply with these rules, the college may exclude that advisor and at its discretion either allow the party to select a replacement advisor or provide another advisor to ask questions on behalf of that party. Reasonable delays, including the temporary adjournment of the hearing, may be necessary if an advisor is removed. Parties cannot serve as their own advisor.