



Bridges Christian College Title IX Handbook

1. Introduction

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. This handbook outlines Bridges Christian College's commitment to upholding Title IX, ensuring a safe environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

2. Title IX Policy Statement

Bridges Christian College prohibits sexual harassment, including sexual violence, discrimination, stalking, domestic violence, dating violence, and will not be tolerated.

As a religious institution, Bridges Christian College is exempt from certain provisions and retains the right to make legitimate employment, admission, and educational decisions on the basis of religious tenets, consistent with applicable laws (Title IX, First Amendment, and Religious Freedom Restoration Act).

3. Key Definitions

- **Sexual Harassment:** For purposes of this Policy is conduct on the basis of sex that constitutes Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking.
- **Sexual Assault:** Any non-consensual sexual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent.
- **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim.
- **Domestic Violence:** Crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner, or a person with whom the victim shares a child, or cohabitating partner.

- Stalking: Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or suffer substantial emotional distress.
- Complainant: An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- Respondent: An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
- Title IX Coordinator: The designated official responsible for coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX.

4. Reporting and Response Procedures

A. Reporting an Incident

Any person may report sexual harassment, whether or not the person reporting is the alleged victim. Reports may be made in person, by mail, telephone, or email, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

The institution supports and recognizes the individual's right to report the incident to the local police authorities.

B. Title IX Coordinator Contact Information

Dr. Justus Freeman

drfreeman@bcc.edu

C. Initial Response

Upon receiving a report, the Title IX Coordinator will:

1. Promptly contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures.
2. Explain the process for filing a formal complaint.
3. Offer supportive measures regardless of whether a formal complaint is filed.

D. Formal Complaint Process

A formal complaint initiates the Title IX grievance process which includes:

1. Written Notice: To all parties including allegations and procedures.
2. Investigation: A trained investigator gathers evidence and interviews involved parties and witnesses.
3. Hearing: Conducted by a decision-maker other than the investigator. The hearing will be conducted live on Zoom.
4. Determination: A decision-maker issues a written determination regarding responsibility.
5. Appeals: Parties may appeal based on procedural irregularity, new evidence, or conflict of interest.

E. Informal Resolution

Available only if both parties voluntarily agree and the institution deems it appropriate. Both parties must submit this request in writing. Not available in cases involving an employee sexually harassing a student.

F. Potential Discipline

If the Title IX decision-maker, assigned to the case by the Title IX coordinator, decides disciplinary action is warranted, then a student may be expelled from the institution.

5. Supportive Measures

These are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered to restore or preserve access to the institution's programs or activities without unreasonably burdening the other party. Examples include:

- Counseling
- Academic accommodations
- Mutual no-contact orders
- Modifications of class schedules

6. Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any individual who reports Title IX violations, participates in an investigation, or assists in proceedings is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

7. Religious Exemption

Under Title IX, an institution that is controlled by a religious organization may claim an exemption from specific provisions of Title IX that conflict with the organization's religious tenets.

Bridges Christian College's Statement

Bridges Christian College has claimed a religious exemption under Title IX based on its sincerely held religious beliefs. This exemption applies where Title IX conflicts with the institution's Biblical standards of faith and conduct. Because of its affiliation with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Bridges Christian College & Seminary qualifies for a religious exemption under 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(3) and 34 C.F.R. § 106.12.

8. Training and Education

Bridges Christian College is committed to providing ongoing education and training to students and staff, including:

- Annual training for Title IX personnel
- Awareness and prevention programming
- Informational sessions during orientation

9. Recordkeeping

The institution will maintain records of each Title IX complaint, supportive measures, investigations, hearings, and training materials for at least seven years.

10. Policy Review

This handbook and related policies are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with federal regulations and best practices.