

Role of an Advisor in the Title IX Investigation Process

Any student or employee who is involved as a complainant or respondent in the investigation of an alleged violation of University Policy has the right to have an individual accompany them to meetings with the Title IX Office. This person serves as an advisor.

It is important that students or employees electing to have an advisor present at the investigation meetings understand the role that the advisor has in the process. The following are important things to know:

An advisor is a single individual that the student or employee chooses to accompany them to meetings with Title IX during the investigation process. This individual can be a friend, parent, family member, attorney, or any other person the student or employee chooses. If the student or employee does not know of an individual he/she/they would select the University can provide an advisor.

**Students will need to sign an Authorization and Release form for the advisor to be present at any meeting as required by FERPA. The form allows staff to speak freely about the case when the advisor is present. The student can revoke the release form in writing if they choose to no longer have the individual serve as their advisor or have access to their disciplinary matter.

The advisor serves as a support person for the student or employee, but cannot advocate for the student or employee at a meeting during investigation meetings. In cases that result in a hearing, the advisor will be required to cross examine all parties on behalf of the student or employee. If a student or employee elects to change advisors that is her/his/their right but the Title IX office must be notified of the change in writing at least 14 days prior to the hearing date. If the student or employee does not have an advisor to conduct cross examination at the hearing, the university is required to appoint one.

The student or employee is solely responsible for presenting their case and speaking with Title IX directly regarding their case during the investigation. Although the advisor cannot speak for the student or employee, the advisor can ask questions they may have about the investigation process. Title IX staff working with the student or employee will attempt to answer any questions the advisor may have as appropriate. The role of the advisor changes at the hearing stage of any Title IX complaint. The Office of Community Standards will provide information at that stage to all parties. The appropriate administrator for employees will provide information about the role of the advisor.

If the advisor is directly related to the case, Title IX staff may gather relevant information from the advisor before meeting with the student or employee. Advisors may be dismissed from any proceedings if they disrupt the process. A goal of Title IX is to be educational in all aspects of the investigation process. When an advisor impedes the process by being disruptive, it takes this away from the student's or employee's experience. Because the advisor serves to assist the student or employee through the process, the student or employee can choose to change their advisor, or choose to proceed without an advisor of choice in the process, except for the hearing where an advisor is required for both parties. Parties may have an advisor of choice, or if they do not, the university is required to appoint one. If the student or employee's advisor is an attorney, then Title IX may also be accompanied by an attorney throughout any stage of the process. An advisor is required during all hearings and if the student or employee does not select one the university will appoint an advisor.

For students, the role of the advisor changes during meetings with the Office of Community Standards or in a hearing. The Office of Community Standards will provide information to advisors and the student or employee at that stage. For employees, the role of advisor also changes at hearings and the appropriate administrator for employees will provide information related to the process.

If you have any questions regarding the role of an advisor or the Title IX investigation process, please contact titleix@uta.edu or <https://www.uta.edu/eos-title-ix/title-ix>.