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University of Colorado **Boulder**

# Civil Rights in Education Part II: Protected-Class Harassment and the Role of OIEC

Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance  
(OIEC)

# Agenda

- Brief overview of policy & OIEC
- Case studies and discussion
- Campus culture and creating inclusion
- Q&A

# Policies Addressed by OIEC

- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Protected-Class Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Conflict of Interest in Cases Amorous Relationships Policy

# Role of OIEC

- **Case Resolution**
  - Neutral fact finders
  - Informal and formal resolution process
- **Safety and Support Measures**
  - Independent of resolution process
  - Immediate and long-term measures to ensure safety and support
- **Education and Assessment**
  - Skill-based and policy education for faculty, staff and students
  - Assessment of campus culture to diagnose areas for improvement

# Who is a “responsible employee”?

- Faculty and Instructors
- Athletic Trainers and Coaches
- Managers and Supervisors
- Teaching Assistants (undergrad and grad)
- Residential Staff (Hall Directors, RA’s, CA’s)
- Academic Advisors

# Case Studies

How might you respond?

# Case Study 1

James works in lab on campus and he is one of only a few students of color in the department. One evening as he's leaving the building, he passes a group of students coming in through the doors and accidentally bumps into one of them. Someone in the group turns to him and says, "Hey, watch it. Are you even allowed to be in this building?" James talks to a staff member in the department the next day about what happened to him.



# Case Study 2

Alisha is in a working group for a class project. She's the only woman and only person of color in the group and has been frustrated all semester. Shortly before the project due date she goes to her professor to talk about the difficulty she has had. She has felt that every idea she puts forward is challenged and one guy in particular has made her experience miserable. He has attacked her ideas and has gotten in a couple of heated arguments with her claiming that her perspective isn't even valid.

# Case Study 3

Sam comes to you to talk about comments that have been happening in the computer lab. He tells you that a group of students have been saying things like “being gay is evil” and how the whole idea of someone being transgender is simply “wrong”. Sam doesn’t think that they know he his gay and none of the comments have been directed at him, but it’s starting to affect his sense of safety.

# Improving Campus Culture

Creating an inclusive campus community

# Bias Can Lead to Discrimination

Stereotype (oversimplification)



Unconscious Bias (stealthily operating)



Pre-judging (attitude is formed)



Behavior (statement or action occurs)

# Behaviors Impacting Campus Culture

- Incivility – low-intensity, rude and discourteous behaviors, displaying lack of regard for others
- Social undermining
  - Rumors, disruptive behaviors, disparaging remarks, isolation
- Interactional aggression or micro aggressions
- Bullying, abusive supervision, or abuse of authority
- Harassment – hostile environment where identity may be an underlying factor

# Benefits of Social Diversity

- Research shows that socially diverse work groups are more innovative, diligent, and better at finding solutions.
- Working with people from different backgrounds motivates us to prepare better, to anticipate views different from our own, and to put more effort into solving problems.
- Having a sense of belonging is the best predictor of a student staying at CU.

# Educational Strategies

- Skills for intervening as bystanders
- Skills for supporting students and colleagues who are impacted
- Skills for addressing problems in the classroom and workplace
- Implementing practices that reduce unconscious bias
- Improve awareness of resources for support and reporting options
- Collaborative campus response - CCRT

# Campus Climate Response Team (CCRT)

- Advise on creating a comprehensive campus response to allegations of protected class discrimination or harassment when the person or people who committed the act(s) against students, faculty, staff, or visitors are unknown.
- Discuss insights, concerns, possible committee actions, and request additional information, as needed, in order to collaborate on a comprehensive response.



# Offices Represented on CCRT

- Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC)
- CU Police Department (CUPD)
- Office of Victim Assistance (OVA)
- Student Affairs Departments
- Human Resources
- ODECE
- Strategic Relations

# Possible CCRT Actions

- Discuss outreach as appropriate and determine which office will take the lead
- Develop communication initiatives
- Recommend training
- Identify emerging trends and patterns
- Track vandalism
- Coordinate discussion and training on freedom of expression rights guaranteed by the First Amendment

# Questions?