

2023–24 Title IX and DHR Annual Report Survey

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO



Your voice. Your rights. Our commitment.



California State University Chico
Equal Opportunity and
Dispute Resolution

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WHAT YOU DO TODAY DECIDES
WHAT YOU GET TOMORROW

Support Resources

The topics covered in this report may be difficult to read about. In addition to our office, additional resources and support can be found on our website: www.csuchico.edu/title-ix/

A Message from Chico State's Title IX Coordinator/ DHR Administrator

Dear Wildcats:

On behalf of the Office of Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution (EODR), I share with you our annual data by way of this report. I recognize the 2023–24 academic year was a challenging year with staffing changes and restructuring of our office, including several interim Title IX coordinators. I thank you for your patience and understanding as we implement changes with care and thoughtfulness to better serve you, our campus community.

My name is Erika Romo, and I have been serving as your Title IX coordinator at Chico State since January 31, 2024. We have made great strides in implementing recommendations from the Cozen O'Connor assessment (read more on pages 7 and 8), and also following through on suggestions from in-person restorative circles, in-person feedback sessions, an online feedback form, our partners on the Implementation Team, feedback from people engaged in our processes, and our office's own assessment of our procedures and practices. I'm honored to work with such an impassioned team who work every day to enhance our campus and support its students and employees.

For the upcoming year, our goals include: **1)** Relocate from Kendall Hall to the Student Services Center to provide a safe, accessible, confidential and trauma-informed space where all our campus community members feel welcomed; **2)** Update the content of our website and more prominently reflect reporting and care options. **3)** Further develop and deliver trainings so that we are transparent about our procedures, and **4)** Continue to work with our partners in Student Affairs to expand our prevention efforts. In this report, you will see some of the accomplishments the office has made in the 2023–24 academic year. I welcome the opportunity to learn from you about your experiences at Chico State and hear thoughts and ideas on how we can continue to foster a welcoming and nurturing campus environment where all community members are safe, supported, and empowered.

Sincerely,

Erika Romo

Title IX Coordinator and DHR Administrator



Department Overview



Our Team



Erika Romo

Assistant Vice President of Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution (EODR), Title IX Coordinator/DHR Administrator

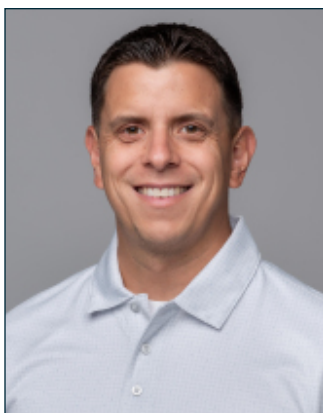
Erika was born and raised in Butte County. She double majored in Chicana/o Studies and International Relations at University of California, Davis. After college, Erika worked for a Latino nonprofit in Washington, DC. She then went on to receive her JD from UC Law San Francisco and has been an attorney for over 13 years. Erika previously coached mock trial at Las Plumas High School in Oroville. Outside of work, you can find Erika chasing her toddler and playing on a kickball team.



Holly Aiello

EEO/DHR/Title IX Investigator

Holly is an attorney with background in employment litigation. Holly litigated complex issues including but not limited to discrimination, sexual harassment, wrongful termination, retaliation, workers' compensation, and wage and hour violations for large and small companies throughout California. Holly received her undergraduate degree in agricultural business from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, and her JD from California Western School of Law. In her free time, Holly enjoys listening to music, singing, and spending time with friends, family, and her dog.



Alex Duenas

EEO/DHR/Title IX Investigator

Prior to joining Chico State in 2024, Alex spent 12 years working as a deputy probation officer for Butte County. He supervised high-risk caseloads, represented the probation department in court, prepared sentencing reports, and helped offenders choose a better lifestyle. He was also part of providing overall wellness and mental health support to his law enforcement colleagues. Alex earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Chico State. Outside of work, he enjoys spending time with his family, being active in Bidwell Park, and serving others and making his community safe.



Erin A. Tarabini
Clery Director & Compliance Investigator

Erin is a Chico native and has worked on campus for more than a decade, focusing on campus safety, student affairs, and support services. Prior to her employment at Chico State, Erin enjoyed a career with the California Superior Court system, and spent several years working in the private sector, implementing court-related programming. She is currently a member of the campus CARE team, the Transgender Task Force, and the LGBTQ+ Faculty & Staff

Association, and she is a Safe Zone Ally Training instructor. Outside of work, Erin enjoys time spent with her son and their two cats, trips to the farmers market, sunrise walks through her neighborhood, and in local and regional theatre.



Julia Lape
Equal Opportunity & Dispute Resolution Compliance Coordinator

Julia is originally from Santa Cruz. She graduated from Chico State with a bachelor's in psychology. Prior to working in EODR, she worked as a member of the COVID-19 Hotline on campus for two years. She started working in the EODR office in 2023. Julia enjoys spending time with her loved ones and traveling, having recently explored Spain and Italy. Outside of work, you can find Julia at the gym or on hikes.

Policies

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in federally funded education programs and activities.

The California State University (CSU) system implemented the CSU Nondiscrimination Policy, which sets forth the grievance procedures for the resolution of complaints made by students, employees, designated officials, or other individuals who are participating or attempting to participate in its education programs, activities, or employment and allege Discrimination and Harassment based on protected status, Retaliation, Prohibited Consensual Relationships, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking.


Chico State's Title IX Coordinator and Discrimination, Prohibited Consensual Relationships, Harassment, and Retaliation (DHR) Administrator implements this policy and coordinates prompt and equitable grievance procedures for students, employees, and third parties. EODR provides an accessible and neutral avenue to report concerns on conduct prohibited under the CSU Nondiscrimination Policy and to have those concerns addressed.

Campus Response to Reports

Over the past year, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Dispute Resolution unit responded in some fashion to every report that was received. Our general outreach procedure for all reports received includes:

- Confirmation that the University has received a report of conduct which may be prohibited by the Nondiscrimination Policy.
- A description of the role of the Title IX Coordinator/DHR Administrator.
- Rights and options available to the parties involved, including on- and off-campus resources for support and other supportive measures that may be available to them.
- An opportunity to meet with a representative from EODR to further discuss the referral and related procedures.

Impacted individuals are not required to meet with EODR but will always be given the opportunity to do so, if they feel comfortable. There is no timeline or deadline for reporting or engaging with EODR, however, impacted individuals are always informed that the University's ability to interview witnesses and otherwise investigate or act might be limited by the passage of time, fading witness memories, and/or preservation of evidence. Nonetheless, EODR is always available to discuss supportive measures with an impacted individual, regardless of how much time has passed since the incident described in the report.



In 2023–24, not only did we implement an online reporting tool to increase the accessibility of reporting, and enhanced that tool in fall 2024 to permit anonymous reporting. The University's ability to respond is often impacted by the level of detail in reports (e.g., vague reports, no identifiable complainant, no identifiable respondent) or the complainant's choice not to respond to outreach.

Complainants have several resolution options, and not all complainants request a campus investigation. Additionally, some reports do not fall under the scope of the Nondiscrimination Policy. Beyond the formal investigation process, one avenue for the resolution of reports is Informal Resolution. This is a voluntary and mutually agreed process and has a general timeline of 60 working days. Informal Resolution essentially pauses work on an investigation while the parties pursue a resolution with the help of a facilitator specifically trained in restorative justice and not

the investigator assigned to the investigation. Informal Resolution is never forced and has to be agreed to by both parties and the Title IX Coordinator/DHR Administrator for appropriateness, as Informal Resolution is not appropriate in all cases.

To strengthen our awareness and prevention efforts, we continue to collaborate closely with our partners in Student Affairs to send a clear message that Chico State will not tolerate any form of sexual violence, discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. We stand firmly behind our campus mantra: “Your Voice. Your Rights. Our Commitment.”

Implementation Team Spotlight

The California State University voluntarily engaged Cozen O’Connor’s Institutional Response Group (Cozen) in 2022 and 2023 to conduct a systemwide assessment of Title IX and Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation (DHR) programs. The purpose of engaging Cozen for an assessment was to strengthen the CSU’s systems of care and compliance. The assessment concluded in July 2023 and resulted in a public report for the system as well as separate reports for each campus including one for Chico State. The reports identify core observations and recommendations for improvements at both the system and University levels.

To implement Cozen’s recommendations, the University created a campus Implementation Team to develop and carry forward a plan. Each subcommittee helped develop an implementation plan that is organized into phases, with Phases 1 and 2 taking place during 2023–24.

Key Accomplishments for 2023–24

Strengthening Internal Protocols

- Created a multi-disciplinary team model for assessing new reports, and referrals.
- Developed a common case management system for EODR, Faculty Affairs, Human Resources, and Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- Formalized the post-Title IX disciplinary process.
- Mapped case resolution process from reporting and intake to investigation and resolution.
- Evaluated barriers to reporting and engagement.
- Restructured the EODR office to separate support services from investigations.
- Reviewed and revised tone and content of all forms and written communications from EODR.



Communications

- Developed and launched an annual Title IX communications plan.
- Audited campus website and initiated redesign of the website.
- Gathered campus feedback and maintained consistent transparent updates on recommendation implementations.
- Initiated new marketing materials and finalized and launched new tagline.

Other Conduct of Concern

- Developed and finalized Community Agreements for Chico State in a collaborative, transparent process.
- Built and implemented a plan to educate and train Chico State community in conflict resolution and restorative justice.

Prevention and Education

- Conducted resource inventory and identified opportunities for engagement.
- Researched other CSU and national programming in practice.
- Started working group for curriculum and program development.
- Began process to hire a Director of Prevention and Education.
- Created an in-person Title IX training for employees.

Infrastructure and Resources

- Identified staffing needs for EODR and DHR.
- Assessed physical location of EODR office and submitted a request for relocation based on feedback received by campus.
- Began to identify training needs for Executive Leadership & TIX/DHR staff.
- Ensured routine cadence of supervision of AVP of EODR.
- Initiated training to executive leadership, deans, MPPs, and new staff and faculty hires.

The continued effort and support of this community—from employees to students—are vital to our commitment to creating the best possible experience for everyone, now and in the future. EODR has now taken over the completion of the remaining phases of the implementation plan and will continue to update campus as the final recommendations are complete.





Training At a Glance

Our office is responsible for implementing and monitoring completion of Title IX compliance trainings for students and employees. This is an annual requirement and under the federal regulations, there is no option for individuals to be exempted from the training requirement. However, we do recognize that the content of this course can be activating or triggering for some individuals. In these instances, students and employees can meet with an EODR staff member or Safe Place for an alternative training session.

Aside from the online compliance trainings, our office has completely revised our in-person training materials, offered in-person trainings to multiple student and employee groups across campus, integrated a Request a Training button on our webpage to facilitate training requests, and created a training dashboard to showcase our training efforts. This year, we also worked closely with Safe Place and other prevention partners in Student Affairs on an awareness campaign in April for Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

Title IX Case Statistics

For the 2023–2024 year, the CSU Chancellor’s Office refined the categories of data gathered to ensure accuracy and facilitate a more precise analysis and identification of patterns and trends. Additionally, the CSU Chancellor’s Office created online dashboards for the annual data for the [CSU](#) and for each campus including [Chico State](#). When reading the statistics on the dashboard, it is important to keep in mind that we are capturing data in a new and more detailed way. Going forward, we are exploring ways to continue to accurately reflect the affiliations of parties to athletics, clubs, organizations, fraternities and sororities.

We value transparency in showing how our campus addresses reports, but also every effort is made to ensure the privacy of the individuals involved; therefore, this report does not fully convey the complexity and circumstances associated with cases.

2023-24 REPORTS MADE TO TITLE IX

210*

Total Number of Reports

*An additional 59 concerns were reported. Concerns are conduct which does not fall within the scope of the Nondiscrimination Policy.

16%

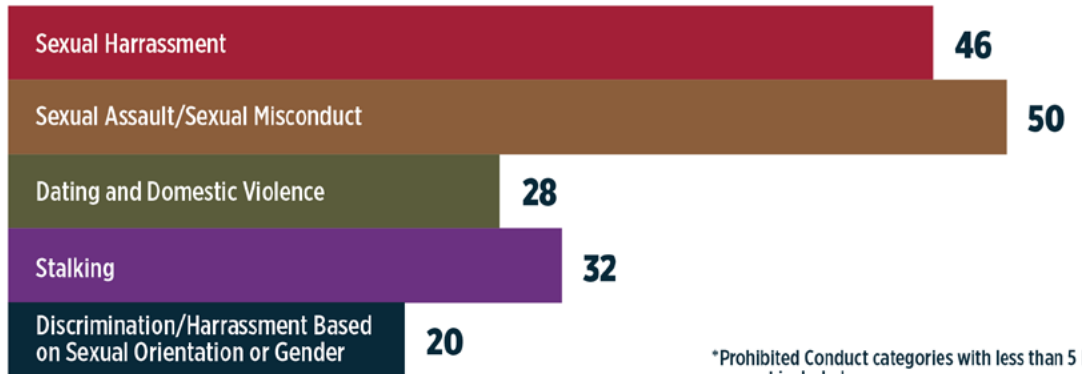
of Complainants Requested Supportive Measures Only

60%

of Complainants did not Respond to Outreach from EODR

WHAT

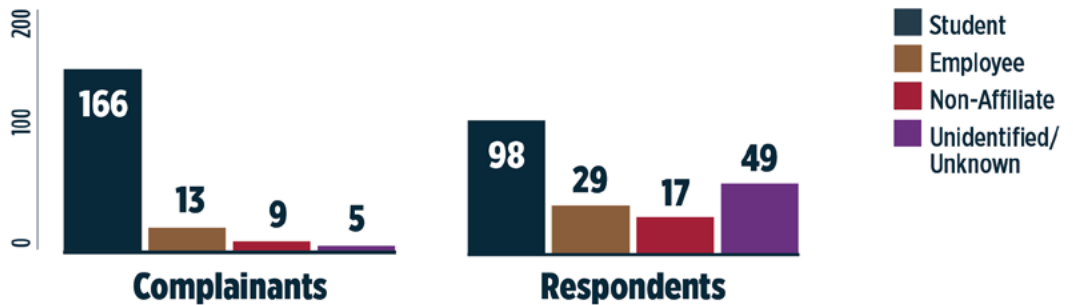
Types of Reports Were Made?



*Prohibited Conduct categories with less than 5 Reports are not included.

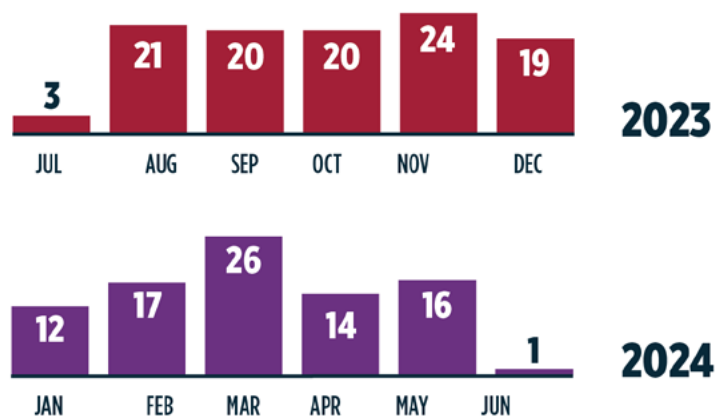
WHO

Were Involved in the Reports?



WHEN

Were the Reports Made?



2023-24 TITLE IX INVESTIGATIONS

INVESTIGATIONS

12¹



¹For the Reporting Period

DURATION

Average Time to Complete an Investigation

138²

Number of working days until the Final Investigation Report



²This does not include cases where the Complainant withdrew the Complaint or where the Complaint was resolved through Informal Resolution.

TYPES of Investigations

- 3** Sexual Harrassment
- 2** Sexual Assault/Misconduct
- 1** Dating/Domestic Violence
- 1** Retaliation
- 1** Prohibited Consensual Relationships
- 2** Discrimination/Harrassment Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender
- 0** Sexual Exploitation
- 1** Stalking

*Some Investigations can allege more than one type of prohibited conduct.

INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES



*Investigations often allege more than one from of prohibited conduct.

Supportive Measures

Chico State wants all students and employees to feel safe and supported throughout their education or employment. EODR recognizes that not all individuals are at a place where they want to pursue an investigation and that is understandable. Additionally, EODR recognizes that investigations are difficult for all parties involved. But individuals do not have to bear the burden alone. EODR offers supportive measures and connections to on- and off-campus resources for students and employees who may have been impacted by prohibited conduct.

Supportive measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Counseling
- Extensions of deadlines or other course or work-related adjustments
- Modifications of work or class schedules
- Campus escorts
- No-Contact Directives
- Changes in work or housing locations
- Leaves of Absence
- Increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus

Supportive measures are offered as appropriate and when reasonably available—even if a party does not want to move forward with an investigation. However, supportive measures are also available during formal or informal resolution processes. Supportive measures remain confidential to the greatest extent possible.

If you feel that you need support, but you are not sure what might make sense for you, EODR is always here to help. If you do not see a support option listed above, that does not mean EODR cannot help. We are committed to making your educational or employment environment safe and comfortable. We also recognize that you may be more interested in exploring help through other campus or community resources.

We can get you connected to medical, mental health, confidential advocacy, legal support, or any additional services you may need on or off campus, including outside the Chico area.



Appendix—Policies and Definitions

Policies

The following CSU policy was in effect during the Reporting Period:

- [CSU Policy Prohibiting Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Exploitation, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Retaliation \(Nondiscrimination Policy\)](#)²

Definitions

For purposes of the report and in accordance with the Nondiscrimination Policy, the following **term** definitions are applicable:

- **Reporting Period** means July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.
- **Student** means an applicant for admission to the CSU, an admitted CSU Student, an enrolled CSU Student, a CSU extended education Student, a CSU Student between academic terms, a CSU graduate awaiting conferral of a degree, a CSU student currently serving a suspension or interim suspension, and a CSU Student who withdraws from the university while a disciplinary matter (including investigation) is pending.
- **Employee** means a person legally holding a position in the CSU. This includes full-time, part-time, permanent, tenured, probationary, temporary, intermittent, casual, and per-diem positions. This term does not include auxiliary or foundation Employees or other Third Parties.
- **Third Party** means a person other than an Employee or a Student. Examples include employees of auxiliary organizations, unpaid interns, volunteers, independent contractors, vendors, and their employees, and visitors.
- **Complainant** means an individual who is eligible to file a Complaint or to report a violation of the Nondiscrimination Policy. It includes any person who is reported to have experienced a violation of the Nondiscrimination Policy in cases where some other person has made a report on that person's behalf. A Complainant may also be referred to as the Party to the Complaint.
- **Respondent** means the CSU, a CSU Employee, a Student, or a Third Party who is alleged to have violated the Nondiscrimination Policy.
- **Protected Status** includes Age, Disability (physical or mental), Gender (or sex), Genetic Information, Gender Identity (including transgender), Gender Expression, Marital Status, Medical Condition, Nationality, Race or Ethnicity (including color, caste, or ancestry), Religion or Religious Creed, Sexual Orientation, and Veteran or Military Status.



- **Title IX Conduct** includes Discrimination and/or Harassment (based on Sex, Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Stalking, and Sexual Exploitation).
- **DHR Conduct** refers to Discrimination and/or Harassment on any Protected Status, except for Title IX Conduct (Sex, Gender, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sexual Orientation.) DHR Conduct also includes Retaliation.

For purposes of the report and in accordance with the Nondiscrimination Policy, **prohibited conduct** definitions can be found [here](#).

