

## **Sexual Misconduct and Title IX**

Meredith College is committed to providing a safe and positive living, learning and working environment. Members of the campus community are expected to treat others with integrity and respect and to take responsibility for their actions. Meredith College will not tolerate sexual misconduct that includes but is not limited to non-consensual sexual intercourse, non-consensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, sexual coercion, relationship violence, and stalking. Sexual misconduct can be committed by men or women, and it can occur between persons of the same or different gender. Acts of sexual misconduct are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by College policy and Title IX.

As a recipient of federal funds, Meredith College complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX provides: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

If you believe you or someone you know has been the victim of sexual misconduct, you should promptly report incidents to the Meredith Title IX Coordinator, Pam Davis, Director of Human Resources, at [davispam@meredith.edu](mailto:davispam@meredith.edu) or at 919-760-8760. For incidents involving students, you may also contact Ann Gleason, Dean of Students, at [gleasona@meredith.edu](mailto:gleasona@meredith.edu) or at 919-760-8521. As soon as Meredith College employees (including faculty, staff and residence life staff members) become aware of possible sexual misconduct, they must report to Pam Davis, Title IX Coordinator, or to Ann Gleason, Dean of Students. No employee is authorized to investigate or resolve complaints of sexual misconduct without the involvement of the Title IX Coordinator or the Dean of Students. If you are unsure about what constitutes sexual misconduct at Meredith College, please contact the Title IX Coordinator or the Dean of Students.

Instances of sexual misconduct may violate both the College’s sexual misconduct policy and the law. Meredith College strongly encourages victims to pursue their complaints through both the Meredith College reporting process for sexual misconduct and through the criminal justice system. Campus Police at Meredith College may be reached at 919-760-8888 to provide information for pursuing a criminal investigation of sexual misconduct. The off-campus criminal investigation is independent from any investigation that is reported to Meredith College officials under this policy. Regardless of whether a victim decides to pursue a criminal investigation, Meredith College will take immediate steps to investigate the complaint, protect the victim, and to ensure safety of the campus community. If a criminal complaint is filed in addition to a complaint reported to Meredith College, the College will continue implementing its procedures and protections regardless of the timeline or outcome of the criminal procedures.

While all persons receiving a report of sexual misconduct understand the desire to keep information confidential, maintaining confidentiality is not always possible. The only individuals at Meredith College permitted to guarantee confidentiality are licensed counselors in the Counseling Center (919-760-8427), the campus Chaplain (919-760-8346), and the medical and nursing staff in Meredith College Health Services (919-760-8535). These resources may be consulted at any time, including prior to making an official report to the College. To the extent possible, the College will respect a student’s request for confidentiality; however, the request for

confidentiality will be weighed against the College's obligation to act on information it has received in order to provide a safe campus environment.

Meredith College recognizes the importance of assisting a member of the Meredith College community who is a victim of sexual violence in regaining a sense of personal control. In this respect, several College departments coordinate efforts to offer services to a victim and others upon whom the sexual misconduct might have an impact. Meredith College strongly urges anyone who is the victim of sexual violence/misconduct to:

- **Seek immediate medical assistance:** If you are in Wake County, contact the Solace Center to receive a forensic evidence exam by a trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (within 120 hours or five days of the assault). This exam is free, and a Raleigh Police officer will respond to begin an investigation. If the victim is unsure about pressing charges, she/he can receive an anonymous exam, giving the victim up to one year to decide about next steps in the criminal justice process. If outside of Wake County, victims are encouraged to go to the nearest emergency room.

Immediate resources for support and response: Meredith College Campus Police, 919-760-8888; Solace Center, 919-828-3067; Interact's 24-hour Rape Crisis Line (919-828-3005); Meredith College Health Services, 919-760-8535.

- **Seek on-campus crisis support:** Call the Meredith College counselor on call through Campus Police at 919-760-8888. For confidential on-campus counseling, resources and information, contact the Counseling Center, Chaplain, or Health Services. These offices guarantee confidentiality.
- **Gather information** about campus policies, rights, reporting and resources: Contact the Title IX Coordinator, Pam Davis, or Dean of Students Ann Gleason.

If the person reporting sexual misconduct does not wish to pursue a hearing or requests that his/her complaint remain confidential, the College must investigate and take reasonable action in response to the complaint/report to prevent any recurrence of an incident or to remedy a hostile environment. Even if a person does not pursue submitting a report or complaint to the College, he/she may seek or request the following short-term, interim options. These interim options or actions ensure the safety of all individuals involved and the fairness of the investigation process; they are not decisions about responsibility. The Title IX Coordinator and/or the Dean of Students will consider ways to permit both persons to continue participation in campus classes and activities as appropriate while the complaint is being investigated and addressed through grievance procedures.

*Non-retaliation:* All members of the College community, including students, faculty and staff, who have a good faith concern regarding possible sexual misconduct are expected to report these concerns to the Title IX Coordinator or Dean of Students. The College prohibits retaliation, in any form, against any individual who reports, in good faith, an actual, potential, or suspected violation of the sexual misconduct policy. Anyone who engages in retaliation will be subject to

discipline in accordance with the College's Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy and Procedures.

*Wrongful allegation:* It is a violation of this policy to bring a knowingly false complaint under this policy. However, failure to prove a claim of sexual misconduct does not alone constitute proof of a false and /or malicious accusation. Individuals who make frivolous or false reports shall not be deemed to be acting in good faith.

Complaints regarding sexual misconduct will be adjudicated through grievance procedures outlined in the full Sexual Misconduct Policy found in the online *Student Handbook*. These procedures promptly and fairly address sexual misconduct complaints and allow rights for both the complainant the accused.

The full Sexual Misconduct Policy, found in the online *Student Handbook*, includes definitions of consent and acts of sexual misconduct, the role of the Title IX Coordinator and Dean of Students in investigating complaints of sexual misconduct, grievance procedures and appeal processes. Additional information about resources for victims of sexual violence and bystander intervention strategies is available on the Dean of Students web page. Questions about sexual misconduct, reporting, support, and grievance procedures may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator or Dean of Students.