

**From:** Jon Mathis  
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Good afternoon,

Attached is my written statement that I read during the live hearing on June 9. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to present feedback.

Jon Mathis

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*Pronouns: he / him / his*

**Title IX OCR public comment statement**  
**Jon Mathis, Title IX Coordinator**  
**Chemeketa Community College**  
**June 9, 2021**

Good afternoon, my name is Jon Mathis and I serve as the Title IX Coordinator for Chemeketa Community College in Salem, Oregon. I am speaking to you from the land originally inhabited by the Kalapuya who are today represented by the confederated tribes of the Grand Ronde and Siletz Indians, whose relationship to this land continues today.

To begin, I want to affirm the shared desire between our educational institutions and the federal government to create an equitable process for all parties involved in sexual misconduct cases. Sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender discrimination are traumatic and require colleges and universities to have a fair and equitable process to support those involved. As a proud representative for community colleges, I would like to offer four suggestions for improvement to the current Title IX regulations.

First, I strongly recommend that any additional changes to Title IX should center the lived experiences of historically marginalized student populations and be written collaboratively with authors who have been trained in trauma-informed approaches to ensure equitable educational environments. Since these populations are disproportionately impacted by sexual harassment and sexual violence, their voices must inform the regulations designed to protect them.

Second, I suggest that we discontinue the use of the term “complainant” when referring to someone who brings forward a report of sexual harassment or sexual violence. The term is closely associated with the word “complain”, leaving those reporting incidents of sexual misconduct with the assumption that they are “complaining” to their institution. I would suggest that we instead use the term adopted by the state of Oregon: “reporting party”.

Third, I strongly recommend discontinuing the requirement for live hearings to adjudicate Title IX cases. The possibility of hearings often creates a chilling effect; in addition, requiring the hearing to be both live and “verbal” may unfairly impact students, staff, and faculty who experience auditory or verbal disabilities.

Finally, I recommend that the Title IX rule be amended to be more inclusive than is currently written. In order for a person to be able to qualify for Title IX-related services, the misconduct must clear the thresholds of being severe AND pervasive AND objectively offensive and must occur within the United States on campus owned property or occur during a school sponsored activity. This leaves out many instances of sexual misconduct that still deserve to be addressed, but may go unreported. As colleges and universities, we need to assure students and their families that we want to know about sexual misconduct within our communities and will work with them to resolve the reported concern and restore equitable access to their education.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am grateful for your service to our country and to making our educational institutions a safe place to learn and grow.