

Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) Newsletter

www.wku.edu/institutionalequity



Photo of Ena Demir

A Message from the Assistant Provost for Institutional Equity, Compliance, and Accessibility and Title IX Coordinator

Dear Campus Community,

Welcome to a new academic year! As we begin another year of learning, teaching, and engagement, I am pleased to share the latest updates and resources from the Office of Institutional Equity.

The Office of Institutional Equity is committed to fostering a campus environment where all members of our community have equitable access to educational and employment opportunities. Through our work related to civil rights compliance, accessibility, training and education, and resolution processes, we strive to support a campus environment where everyone can learn, work, and belong.

Creating and maintaining a safe and respectful campus is a shared responsibility. Faculty and staff are often the first to witness or hear about incidents that may impact our students, faculty, staff, and community members. Your awareness, engagement, and understanding of reporting obligations play a critical role in helping the Office of Institutional Equity address incidents and concerns appropriately.

In this issue, you will find information about reporting resources, opportunities to engage with OIE through training and education, guidance regarding processes, and an introduction to the newest member of our team.

Thank you for your commitment to our campus community. We look forward to partnering with you throughout the year.

Sincerely,
Ena Demir

In this issue:

- Training Opportunities
- Compliance Updates
- Religious Accommodations
- Pregnancy Accommodation Requests
- Accessibility News
- Meet the OIE Team

Meet Our New Investigator

Kyle Davis is a civil rights compliance professional with nearly two decades of experience in higher education, conducting investigations, serving as a Title IX administrator, and leading campus safety operations for Campbellsville University. As of June 2026, he serves as a Civil Rights Investigator in the Office of Institutional Equity at Western Kentucky University.

A native of Greensburg, Kentucky, Mr. Davis is a double graduate of Campbellsville University, where he earned both a Bachelor of Science in Sociology and a Master of Science in Justice Studies. In addition, he holds several professional certifications in civil rights compliance from the Association of Title IX Administrators (ATIXA), including the ATIXA Title IX Decision-Making for Higher Education and the ATIXA Title IX Coordinator Certification. He is also certified as a Title IX Investigator through Institutional Compliance Solutions (ICS). His professional involvement also includes memberships in the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA), reflecting his longstanding commitment to excellence in compliance, investigations, and campus safety leadership. He also served as President of the Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities (AIKCU) Campus Safety Directors Committee.



Photo of Kyle Davis

Training Opportunities: Stay Informed and Engaged

The Office of Institutional Equity, in collaboration with campus partners, is offering a variety of training opportunities this fall designed to promote awareness, accessibility, and compliance. The goal of these training sessions is for faculty and staff to understand their rights, responsibilities, and available resources.

Wednesday, September 9, 1:00pm: *OIE and HR Investigations: Understanding Roles, Responsibilities, and Reporting*

Thursday, September 10, 10:00am: *Title IX Disclosures: What Faculty and Staff Need to Know*

Wednesday, September 16, 9:00am: *Understanding Workplace Accommodations and Accessibility*

Wednesday, September 16, 2:00pm: *Title IX Disclosures: What Faculty and Staff Need to Know*

Monday, September 21, 9:10am: *Understanding Student Disability Accommodations: A Faculty Guide*

Wednesday, September 23, 9:00am: *Workplace Accommodations and Accessibility: A Supervisor's Guide*

Thursday, September 24, 11:10am: *Understanding Student Disability Accommodations: A Faculty Guide*

Tuesday, September 29, 2:30pm: *Creating a Respectful Learning and Working Environment: Race, National Origin, and Your Role*

Registration and Zoom information can be found on [OIE's website](#) and [CITL's website](#).

Online Training Available Through Catharsis

We highly encourage all faculty and staff to complete the [online Title IX training](#) through Catharsis Productions. These self-paced modules provide education on topics such as Title IX, sexual misconduct prevention, bystander intervention, and related compliance topics.

Did You Know?

Looking for training tailored to your department, division, or campus group? OIE can customize presentations and workshops to meet your needs. Topics may include Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, harassment and discrimination prevention, ADA accommodations, accessibility, reporting obligations, and more. To schedule a training, please complete the [Training Request Form](#).

Need to File A Report?

- Please scan the QR code or use this [form](#) to report incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, protected class discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.



QR Code to Reporting Form

- Once a report is submitted, OIE will review the information and reach out, when appropriate, to discuss available resources, supportive measures, and next steps. OIE will provide information about any applicable grievance procedures, resolution processes, and investigative options so individuals can make informed decisions moving forward.

COMPLIANCE UPDATES + RESOURCES

NEW Religious Accommodation Request Form and Guidance

To support WKU's commitment to respecting and accommodating sincerely held religious beliefs and practices, OIE has launched new religious accommodation request forms and guidance for faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are encouraged to review these resources and become familiar with the accommodation process. Scan the QR code to access the forms and visit [Religious Rights and Accommodations website](#) for additional information and guidance.



QR Code to Forms



QR Code to Information

Need ADA Workplace Accommodations?

Employees seeking workplace accommodations due to a disability may submit an accommodation request using the QR code or [online request form](#). For more information, you can access the [Employee's Guide to ADA Accommodations](#)



QR Code to Request Form

ADA Guidance for Supervisors

Supervisors play an important role in supporting workplace accessibility. Visit the [Supervisor's Guide: Implementing ADA Accommodations in the Workplace](#) for information on responsibilities, best practices, and accommodation implementation.

Questions? Contact the ADA Coordinator, Chantel Gillenwater, at chantel.gillenwater@wku.edu.

Digital Accessibility

Creating accessible digital content helps ensure that all members of our campus community can access information, resources, and services.

Accessibility Tips for Faculty and Staff

When creating and sharing digital content:

- Use meaningful link text (avoid "click here").
- Add alternative text (alt text) to images.
- Ensure sufficient color contrast between text and backgrounds.
- Use accessible document templates and heading structures rather than manual formatting.
- Ensure PDFs and uploaded documents are accessible before posting.
- Avoid sharing important information only through images or graphics.
- Caption videos and multimedia content when possible.
- Review blackboard content using Ally.
- Consider accessibility when posting on websites and social media platforms.

Need Assistance? If you are experiencing accessibility challenges or have questions regarding digital accessibility requirements, please contact Ena Demir at ena.demir@wku.edu or Chantel Gillenwater at chantel.gillenwater@wku.edu.

For assistance with accessible course content and instructional materials, contact [CITL](#).

Learn More? Visit [Digital Accessibility](#).

SARC News

What's New?

SARC is excited to welcome **Chase Varner, MSW** as our new **Student Accessibility Services Coordinator**. Since joining SARC in June, Chase has quickly become an integral member of our team, supporting students, coordinating accommodations, expanding outreach efforts, and helping enhance office processes. Chase is a two-time WKU Alum, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology, minoring in Clinical and Community Behavioral Health and a Master of Social Work. If you see Chase around campus, please help us welcome him to the SARC team!



Photo of Chase Varner

SARC Reminders

As the Fall semester begins, faculty may receive Faculty Notification Letters (FNLs) from students registered with SARC. These letters communicate approved accommodations and help facilitate conversations between students and instructors.

Faculty with questions regarding accommodations or accessibility are encouraged to contact [SARC](#) for assistance at sarc.connect@wku.edu or 270-745-5004.

Meet the SARC Team



Photo of Chase Varner , Sharon Windham, Veronica Willis-Oldham, Dr. Peggy Crowe (Director)



Photo of Peggy Bonner

Chase Varner (Coordinator), Sharon Windham (Office Coordinator), Veronica Willis-Oldham (Associate Director), Dr. Peggy Crowe (Director), Peggy Bonner (Deaf & Hard of Hearing Captionist).

Pregnancy or Pregnancy-Related Accommodations

WKU is committed to supporting employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions. Employees who may need workplace accommodations are encouraged to submit an [Employee Pregnancy Accommodation Request Form](#).

Questions? Contact Cindy Smith at cindy.smith@wku.edu or 270-745-5121.



QR Code to Pregnancy Form

Faculty Reminder: Students affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions may also be eligible for reasonable modifications and supportive measures under Title IX. Faculty should refer students to the OIE [Pregnancy Accommodation Request Form](#) for assistance and guidance. For additional information please visit the [Office of Institutional Equity](#).

Parental Leave: Employees seeking parental leave should follow the procedures outlined in [WKU's Paid Parental Leave Policy, Nos. 1.1400 and 4.6310](#) or contact [Human Resources](#) for assistance.

MEET THE TEAM



Photo of Ena Demir

Ena Demir

Assistant Provost for Institutional Equity, Compliance, and Accessibility and Title IX Coordinator

Ena leads the Office of Institutional Equity and oversees university efforts related to civil rights compliance, accessibility, accommodations, investigations, education and training, and equal employment opportunity matters. As Title IX Coordinator, she helps ensure WKU’s compliance with Title IX and coordinates the university’s response to reports of sex discrimination.

Email: ena.demir@wku.edu

Phone: 270-745-6867

Kyle Davis

Investigator

Kyle is responsible for conducting impartial investigations pertaining to allegations of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in accordance with WKU policies and applicable federal and state laws.

Email: kyle.davis@wku.edu

Phone: 270-745-4515



Photo of Kyle Davis



Photo of Cindy Smith

Cindy Smith

Institutional Equity Administrative Specialist and Compliance Assistant

Cindy supports a wide range of OIE functions, including oversight of WKU’s OFCCP Affirmative Action Plan, coordination of pregnancy accommodation requests, administrative support for investigations and ADA services, and budget management.

Email: cindy.smith@wku.edu

Phone: 270-745-5121

Chantel Gillenwater

Institutional Equity Specialist and ADA Coordinator

As ADA Coordinator, Chantel works with employees and visitors to facilitate disability accommodations and address accessibility concerns. She also manages OIE case records and databases, supports training initiatives, and oversees OIE’s websites, forms, and communication materials.

Email: chantel.gillenwater@wku.edu

Phone: 270-745-5462



Photo of Chantel Gillenwater