

# 2026 REPORT



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
SYSTEM

---

TITLE IX



# CONTENTS

---

## Introduction

Our Mission .....	6
Our History .....	6
Our Model .....	8

## Our Work

Compliance and Evaluation .....	9
Policies and Procedures .....	10
Mandatory Reporter Training .....	11

## Our Team

Title IX Team .....	13
---------------------	----

An electronic version of this report  
can be accessed online:

[titleix.tennessee.edu](http://titleix.tennessee.edu)

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

*“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”*

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

Since establishing a systemwide Title IX Office in 2017, the University of Tennessee has continued to strengthen and sustain its commitment to fostering safe, respectful, and nondiscriminatory learning, living, and working environments across all UT campuses and institutes.

Over the past decade, the Office of Title IX has worked in close partnership with campus Title IX officials to develop and refine policy, evaluate program effectiveness, expand education and prevention initiatives, and support consistent implementation across the UT System. The office also continues to monitor legal and regulatory developments, identify emerging best practices, and coordinate annual reporting efforts.

The Office of Title IX publishes this annual report to provide a transparent overview of our collective work, increase awareness of prevention, education, and support initiatives, recognize the dedicated efforts of campus professionals and community partners, and reinforce accountability to the students, faculty, staff, and communities we serve.



As a statewide system, the University of Tennessee continues to benefit from collaboration among campuses and institutes in support of Title IX efforts. Through shared resources, regular engagement, and ongoing partnership among campus Title IX Coordinators and system leadership, we remain committed to promoting consistent practices and fostering safe and respectful learning, living, and working environments across the UT System.

Respectfully,

**Ashley Blamey, Title IX Compliance Coordinator**

# INTRODUCTION

---

## Our Mission

Our mission is to serve the University of Tennessee community through our comprehensive Title IX Commitment by ensuring access to education programs and activities free of sex-based discrimination.

## Our History

Since Title IX's enactment in 1972, the University of Tennessee has worked to ensure institutional compliance with its federal requirements. Each campus and institute has established systems, policies, and processes that have evolved over time, in accordance with revised federal guidance and court rulings. Additionally, as expectations for how institutions of higher education address, respond to, and remedy instances of sex-based harassment have grown, the University has worked both proactively and responsively to meet those expectations.

- In September 2016, then UT President Joe DiPietro appointed an independent commission to review and address Title IX compliance across the UT System. The commission released observations and recommendations in June of 2017 for university review.
- In November of 2018, the Department of Education published proposed Title IX regulations.
- The final Title IX regulations went into effect on August 14, 2020. In preparation for complying with the new regulations, the UT Office of Title IX worked collaboratively with campuses to incorporate the regulatory requirements into existing campus policy while responding to both campus needs and community expectations for compliance.

- The System developed a templated Policy on Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking for use by all campuses, which produced shared definitions and a common framework while also allowing for customization and localization by each campus and institute as required by its own resources and jurisdiction.
- The 2020 regulation, in addition to the independent commission's report, served to guide the Office of Title IX's strategic plan to enhance Title IX compliance across the UT System. Enhancements include:
  - *Creation of a UT System Office of Title IX in 2017 to provide a system-wide Title IX coordinating presence and support cross-system Title IX compliance*
  - *Campus Title IX staffing and resource enhancements*
  - *Policy, grievance procedure, and Student Code of Conduct updates and modifications*
  - *Case management and care and support enhancements*
  - *Enhanced education, prevention, and training*
  - *System-wide Title IX employee training*
  - *System-wide guidance and support for conducting federally-compliant Title IX Hearings*
- In 2024, following the rule making process, new Title IX regulations were published with an implementation date of August 1, 2024. The Office of Title IX worked with our systemwide partners to develop a timeline and draft policy and prevention materials. A federal court issued a preliminary injunction on June 17, 2024.

- In 2025, a federal judge vacated the 2024 regulations, and the Department of Education confirmed the 2020 regulations were the governing rules.
- The University of Tennessee has remained compliant with the 2020 regulations since implementation.

## Our Model

Utilizing the commission’s report, national benchmarking, and current research, the University of Tennessee has identified our Title IX commitment. Grounded in the Social-Ecological Model, the University’s Title IX commitment emphasizes five key areas:



**Policy:** Our foundation is in the policy and procedures we follow.

**Prevention & Education:** Our goal is to prevent sexual misconduct, relationship violence, stalking, and retaliation before they happen.

**Supportive Measures:** Our promise is to provide support and appropriate supportive measures to individuals involved in the Title IX process.

**Investigation & Resolution:** Our commitments to due process, campus safety, and encouraging reporting guide how we investigate and resolve reports.

**Patterns & Trends:** Our responsibility is to use the best available research, evidence-based practices, and our own campus and institute trends in our prevention and response efforts.

## OUR WORK

### Compliance and Evaluation

The University is engaged in an ongoing effort to strengthen and improve Title IX compliance activities across the UT System. The System Title IX Compliance Coordinator implements a collaborative and proactive approach to continuous improvement and supports the utilization of best practices throughout the system. Key 2025 system-focused projects and initiatives included:

- Drafted annual updates to the Policy on Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating and Domestic Violence, and Stalking for all campuses and institutes, including Chancellor/President memoranda and administrative notifications to ensure consistent system-wide communication.
- Planned and hosted the annual system-wide Title IX training required by federal regulations in collaboration with Melissa Carleton, JD (Partner, Bricker Graydon) on August 5, 2025. The training included participation from Title IX coordinators, investigators, and adjudicators across the UT System, and all required training materials were posted to the system website in accordance with federal regulations.
- Developed and submitted the annually-required systemwide State Comptroller Title IX Plan.
- Developed and published the systemwide Annual Title IX Report.
- Facilitated annual mandatory Title IX training for UTSA through K@TE modules, achieving a 100% completion rate.
- Hosted regular meetings with system-wide Title IX Coordinators and the Office of General Counsel to support collaboration, consistency, and the sharing of best practices.
- Collaborated with the Executive Director of Institutional Compliance to develop a mission statement and restructure the UTK Institutional Compliance Committee to enhance institutional coordination and effectiveness.

---

In the spring of 2019, UT developed a standard format for reporting and tracking Title IX-related data across the System. The University updated its recordkeeping systems to comply with the terms and definitions under revised Title IX policies. The information collected by each campus is published in a campus Annual Title IX Report. Campus Title IX annual reports can be accessed online via the following campus links:

[UT CHATTANOOGA](#)

[UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER](#)

[UT KNOXVILLE](#)

[UT MARTIN](#)

[UT SOUTHERN](#)

## Policies and Procedures

[University of Tennessee at Chattanooga](#)

[University of Tennessee Health Science Center](#)

[University of Tennessee Knoxville/Institute of Agriculture/Institute for Public Service/UT System](#)

[University of Tennessee at Martin](#)

[University of Tennessee Southern](#)

---

## OUR WORK

### Mandatory Reporter Training

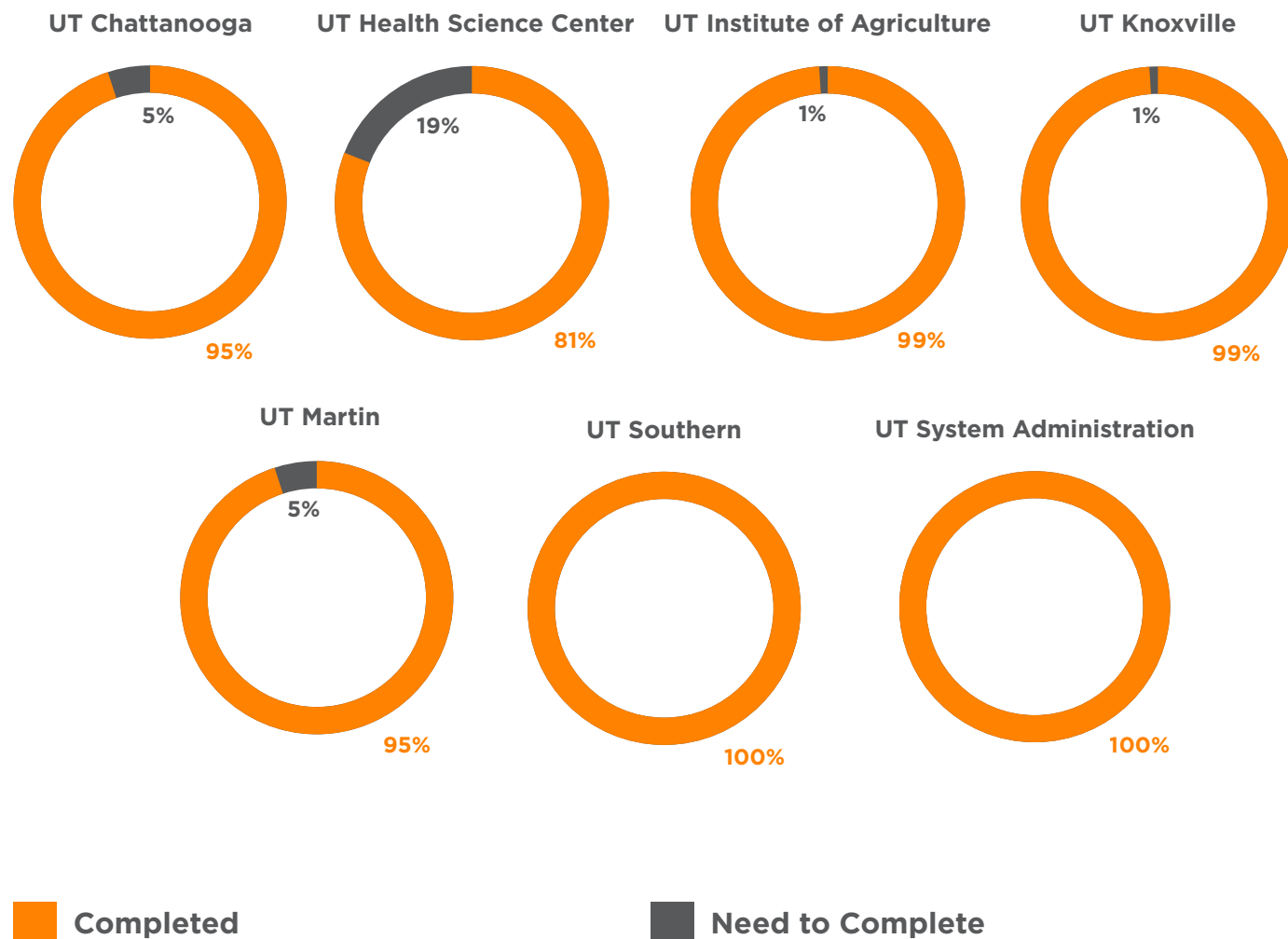
Federal law requires UT System campuses to designate employees with the authority to respond to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence. Under UT policy, these individuals are referred to as “Mandatory Reporters,” and nearly all campus employees who interact with students—excluding certain confidential employees defined by licensure and policy—serve in this role.

Mandatory Reporters are required to share reports or information regarding potential sexual harassment or sexual violence with the campus Title IX Coordinator for review. These referrals allow Title IX offices to provide timely outreach regarding supportive resources, safety measures, reporting options, and available university processes, while also helping institutions identify patterns, assess campus climate concerns, and respond consistently across the university.

Because Mandatory Reporters are often the first university employees to receive disclosures or concerns, institutionalized annual training remains a critical component of effective Title IX compliance efforts. Consistent training helps employees understand their responsibilities, recognize situations that may require reporting, respond appropriately to individuals seeking assistance, and support a coordinated institutional response grounded in consistency and compliance.

Effectively addressing sexual harassment in an educational environment requires a culture that treats concerns seriously and responds consistently. Institutionalized training helps build a shared understanding of the issue, increases awareness of employee reporting obligations, and reinforces the role employees play in connecting students, faculty, and staff with appropriate resources and support. When members of the campus community trust that concerns will be handled fairly and appropriately, institutions are better positioned to encourage reporting, deter misconduct, and maintain safe and respectful learning, living, and working environments.

Training completion rates across the UT System continue to demonstrate strong institutional engagement and year-over-year commitment to these efforts, reflecting the importance of consistent education and shared accountability in supporting effective Title IX compliance practices.



## OUR TEAM



### Ashley Blamey

**TITLE IX COMPLIANCE COORDINATOR**  
**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION**  
**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE**

[ashleyblamey@utk.edu](mailto:ashleyblamey@utk.edu)

Ashley Blamey serves in a dual role as Title IX coordinator for the UT System and UT Knoxville. Serving in both capacities, Blamey facilitates critical communication between officials with the UT System and all UT campuses. Enhanced communication and interaction across the University system enables more informed decision making and evaluation of practices by all UT campuses.

As system-level coordinator, Blamey is responsible for tracking best practices and legal developments; collaborating with other UT Title IX officials in policy evaluation and development; measuring program effectiveness; identifying optimal training, prevention and awareness building efforts and resources for implementation; and overseeing annual reporting on the frequency and nature of incidents and complaints.

As UT Knoxville coordinator, Blamey is responsible for coordinating campus efforts to comply with and carry out Title IX responsibilities including promptly, thoroughly, and equitably investigating and resolving reports of prohibited conduct to eliminate prohibited conduct, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

Blamey has a bachelor's degree in special education from East Tennessee State University and both master's and doctoral degrees in social work from UT Knoxville. She joined UT Knoxville in 2008 as its inaugural student case management specialist. She has served the campus as the director for the Center for Health Education and Wellness and assistant vice chancellor for student life. Blamey is currently the University's representative on the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative to prevent sexual harassment in higher education. Under her leadership, UT Knoxville was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to develop best practices related to education about and prevention of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.



## Anitra Barrett

*DIRECTOR OF TITLE IX COMPLIANCE AND TITLE IX COORDINATOR  
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA*

[anitra-barrett@utc.edu](mailto:anitra-barrett@utc.edu)

Anitra Barrett is the Director of Title IX Compliance and the Title IX Coordinator for the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's (UTC) Office of Title IX Compliance. Barrett

began working at UTC in 2016 as the Manager of Communications and Clery Compliance at the UTC Police Department. She later joined UTC's Office of Equal Opportunity and Accessibility in December 2020.

Before joining UTC, Barrett served as the Civil Rights Investigator at the County of Riverside Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) in Riverside, California. Barrett earned her Juris Doctorate from North Carolina Central School of Law and Bachelor of Arts in English from North Carolina Central University in Durham, NC.



## Omar Malik

*INTERIM DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE  
INTERIM TITLE IX COORDINATOR  
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER*

[omalik1@uthsc.edu](mailto:omalik1@uthsc.edu)

Omar Malik, J.D., serves as the Interim Director of the Office of Compliance and Title IX Coordinator leading the Office of Compliance team at UT Health Science Center. Prior to his

current role, Omar served as Senior Compliance Resolution Officer at UT Health Science Center, an Assistant District Attorney with approximately 10 years of service, and an attorney at law in private practice in Shelby County, Tennessee.

Omar is an alumnus of the University of Tennessee, at Knoxville, where he earned a B.S. in Political Science with a minor in Business Administration. He also earned his Juris Doctorate from the University of Memphis Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law. Outside his professional role, Omar is active in the community in Memphis and has served as a Leo Bearman Sr. American Inn of Court Barrister, a Youth Court Attorney volunteer at the Shelby County Juvenile Court and is a graduate of the Memphis Bar Association Leadership Forum.



## Sarah Catherine Richardson

*DEAN OF STUDENTS AND TITLE IX COORDINATOR  
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN*

[scrich@utsouthern.edu](mailto:scrich@utsouthern.edu)

Sarah Catherine Richardson became Title IX Coordinator at the former Martin Methodist College in October 2019, and, upon the creation of UT Southern, continued in that role

beginning in July 2022. Richardson also serves UT Southern as the Dean of Students.

Before joining UT Southern, Richardson worked at Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire, and Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts. Originally from Mississippi, she earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Boston College before relocating back down south.



## Dominique Ross

*DIRECTOR OF ACCESS, COMPLIANCE, AND TITLE IX  
TITLE IX COORDINATOR  
UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE MARTIN*

[dcrock12@utm.edu](mailto:dcrock12@utm.edu)

Dominique Ross began her service as UT Martin's (UTM) Director of Access, Compliance, and Title IX in February of 2022.

Before joining UTM, Ross served as the Assurance Officer at the UT Health Science Center (UTHSC), and several years in governmental health administration for the Louisiana Department of Health. Ross earned a bachelor's degree from Southern University and A&M College and a master's from Louisiana State University.

---

Campus Title IX annual reports can be accessed online via the following campus links:

[University of Tennessee at Chattanooga](#)

[University of Tennessee Health Science Center](#)

[University of Tennessee, Knoxville](#)

[University of Tennessee at Martin](#)

[University of Tennessee Southern](#)



To learn more or become involved with our work visit:  
[titleix.tennessee.edu](http://titleix.tennessee.edu) or contact Title IX Compliance Coordinator  
Ashley Blamey at [ashleyblamey@tennessee.edu](mailto:ashleyblamey@tennessee.edu).



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
TENNESSEE  
SYSTEM

<https://titleix.tennessee.edu>