October 8, 2015

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Western is committed to ensuring an environment free of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. We are required by federal law, including Title IX of the Patsy T. Mink Education Opportunity Act of 1972, to provide a coordinated effort to prevent and effectively respond to all forms of sexual harassment and violence, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking.

Unless you are a confidential counselor, professional survivor advocate, or health care provider, **if you have knowledge that a student has experienced sexual violence while a student at Western, you are required by Western's Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sex Discrimination, Including Sexual Misconduct to report the incident to Western's Title IX Coordinator**, Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, Vice Provost for Equal Opportunity, Old Main 345; (360) 650-3307; sue.guenter-schlesinger@wwu.edu. The Title IX Coordinator must be informed so that Western can connect survivors with resources and support they may desire, help them understand reporting options, and so we can identify patterns to prevent future similar violence.

If a student communicates to you that they have experienced sexual violence, please also do the following:

1. Avoid using language or asking questions that might suggest the survivor is to blame for what happened.
2. Tell the student that you are required to inform the Title IX Coordinator and that Western will respect a request for confidentiality to the greatest extent possible while also meeting its obligation to keep other students safe.
3. Tell the student that a number of resources and reporting options are available. CASAS (Consultation and Sexual Assault Support; 360-650-3700) provides confidential support for students affected by violence, including sexual violence. Confidential support can also be found in the Counseling Center (360-650-3164). Additionally, students may choose to report sexual violence to University Police (360-650-3911 or 3911 from a campus phone) or Bellingham Police (360-778-8800 or 911), the Title IX Coordinator (360-650-3307) in the Equal Opportunity Office, and/or the Dean of Students Office/Student Life (360-650-3706). You may wish to refer to or share this outline of options for our students.

Western also provides resources and reporting options for faculty and staff who are survivors of sexual violence. In addition to reporting to University or Bellingham Police and/or the Title IX Coordinator, employees may seek confidential support via the Employee Assistance Program (360-407-9490) and contact Human Resources (360-650-3774) to request leave related to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. DVSAS (Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services) in downtown Bellingham also provides a confidential 24-hour helpline at (360) 715-1563. PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center (360-734-5400) is another community resource.

The Equal Opportunity Office provides brochures and wallet cards about students’ and employees’ civil rights, resources, and reporting options. Please email eoo@wwu.edu if you would like materials for your office. Thank you for helping us to support our students and provide a positive equal opportunity climate for everyone at Western. Please don’t hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, Vice Provost, Equal Opportunity & Employment Diversity, Title IX & ADA Coordinator
Chyerl Wolfe-Lee, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources
Ted Pratt, Dean of Students

Active Minds Changing Lives