

GARDEN STATE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE

Campus Safety  
&  
Security Reporting Manual

## **Campus Awareness**

The purpose of this Document is to aid all staff, prospective students, and current students in the understanding and awareness of the prevention of crime and the surroundings issues of personal security. Garden State Science and Technology Institute (GSSTI) regularly reviews and posts an annual security and fire safety report highlighting all crime and fire statistics, policies, and practices of the institution concerning campus security and Fire Safety on the Institutions web site. A written copy of this report will be provided upon request and is available the Career Services Office or from any member of the Education Department's officials.

## **Campus Geography**

The campus address is 591 Summit Avenue, Suite 705, Jersey City, NJ 07306.

## **Campus Crime Statistics**

Crime statistics are collected and reported within the geographical setting for the purpose of disclosing those statistics in the annual security report and the annual web-based data collection system. The office that maintains all crimes reported is the Career Services Office.

## **Campus Security Authorities (CSA)**

Campus Security Authorities are the designated officials responsible for the reporting of all campus crimes that occur within the campus geographical setting. If you fall victim to a crime, observe a crime or suspicious activity, or witness an emergency in progress, immediately notify one of the Campus Security Authorities listed below, and/or the local police department. The Jersey City Police Department may also be contacted by phone at 201-547-5477.

### **Campus Security Authorities**

- School Director- Pankaj Patel
- School Assistant Director – Walter Garcia
- Director of Financial Aid – Patricia Okorodudu
- Student Service – Erika Leon

All Campus Security Authorities are required to complete incident reports for all crimes or suspicious activities that take place on campus. All reports and an annual local police report containing records of arrests are collected, reviewed yearly, and disclosed in GSSTI's annual security report by October 1.

## **Statistics from Local Law Enforcement Agencies**

Statistics utilized in the annual security report are not based solely on the records collected and reported by the campus authorities. Crime statistics collected by the local police department are requested and supplemented in the report to assure that all crimes committed in the geographical setting of the campus are reported for the disclosure of the annual security report.

## **Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures**

Emergency planning is critical to the health and welfare of members of the GSSTI community. Its purpose is to provide a response to threats. This plan outlines the general areas of responsibility for responding to emergencies. Detailed emergency procedures are contained in

The GSSTI Emergency Action Plan and individual department emergency response plans, which will be executed, as appropriate, during emergency situations.

Anyone who becomes aware of a life-threatening emergency on campus should call 911 and report the situation to local authorities and then ensure a GSSTI employee is informed of the distress.

Administrative decisions that relate to confirming emergency or dangerous situations, such that would call for a decision to initiate emergency response procedures are made by the School Director or Assistant School Director.

*Confirmation Process and Initiation Procedures of an emergency or dangerous situation*

1. Anyone on or off campus who becomes alerted to a dangerous or life-threatening situation should report the incident to any member of the GSSTI staff.
2. GSSTI staff members will assess the emergency for information and a determination of the nature of the threat to inform a Campus Security Authority.
3. The threat assessment will then be forwarded immediately to the School Director or Assistant School Director to determine what segments of the campus community that should be notified for an emergency response.
4. Once there is confirmation of an emergency, content of the notification response, and segment to be notified is established, the Campus Security Authorities will alert the campus community for emergency response procedures.

At this time the school will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the campus community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

If the School Director or Assistant School Director determines the emergency information needs to be communicated to the Larger Community that person will contact the local authorities and/or media outlets as needed.

At a minimum, the GSSTI Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures Program will be tested annually. This test may be announced or unannounced based on the type of event the school is trying to simulate. GSSTI also maintains an open line of communication with the Local police department to help further develop insight into situations that may warrant an emergency response.

**Timely Warnings**

In a case where any reportable *Clery Act* crime has occurred, the campus community will be alerted by the Campus Security Authorities, School Director, or Assistant School Director. GSSTI will email staff, faculty and student of crime that pose an immediate threat and require an emergency response.

*Note: GSSTI also maintains an open line of communication with the Local police department to help further develop insight into situations that may warrant a timely warning.*

**The GSSTI Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Misconduct Policy**

**(also known as ACT-16 for New Jersey)**

### **Scope of This Policy**

The Federal mandates established by Title IX and Act 16 reaffirm that students, employees, and third parties have the right to be free from discrimination based on their gender, sex, sexual orientation, and gender appearance/expression. All procedures regarding such incidences can be found herein.

This policy applies to all GSSTI active students, employees, and third-parties both on and off campus, as well as in cyberspace.

Any questions regarding this policy from employees/students of the GSSTI Community should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator;

Pankaj Patel (Director).

[ppatel@gssti.edu](mailto:ppatel@gssti.edu)

Direct dial – (201) 963-1500

591 Summit Avenue, Suite 705

Jersey City, NJ 07306

## **SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT MISCONDUCT POLICY**

### **Summary**

The term “sexual misconduct” is a broad term used to refer to all the prohibited sexual violence and sexual harassment behaviors under this policy. As used in this policy, sexual misconduct may also encompass criminal conduct under New Jersey and/or federal law. Additionally, sexual misconduct under this policy may result in civil and/or administrative legal consequences.

Definitions of Covered Conduct and Important Terms:

**Complainant:** The individual who experienced the alleged sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct. In certain instances, such as where there is a danger to the GSSTI community and the individual who experienced the alleged conduct is unable or unwilling to file a complaint, GSSTI reserves the right to proceed with the complaint based on the relevant details of the situation even if the reporting party does not want to continue.

**Consent:** A knowing and voluntary agreement to engage in specific sexual activity at the time of the activity. To be valid, consent must be knowing, voluntary, active, present and ongoing. Consent is not present when an individual is incapacitated due to alcohol, drugs, or sleep, or otherwise without capacity to provide consent due to intellectual or other disability or other condition.

When alcohol is involved, incapacitation is a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication. When drug use is involved, incapacitation is a state beyond being under the influence of or impaired by the use of the drug. Alcohol and other drugs impact each individual differently. Determining whether an individual is incapacitated requires an individualized determination. When determining whether a person has the capacity to provide consent, GSSTI will consider whether a sober, reasonable person in the same position knew or should have known that the other

party could or could not consent to the sexual activity. When determining whether consent has been provided, all the circumstances of the relationship between the parties will be considered.

**Coercion:** Coercion is direct or implied threat of danger, hardship, or retribution sufficient to persuade a reasonable person to engage in sexual activity in which they otherwise would not engage or to which they otherwise would not submit. Coercion is different from seductive behavior based on the type of pressure someone uses to get another to engage in sexual activity. A person's words or conduct cannot amount to coercion unless they wrongfully impair the other's free will and ability to choose whether or not to engage in sexual activity. Coercion can include unreasonable and sustained pressure for sexual activity. When someone makes clear that they do not want sex, that they want to stop, or that they do not want to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, continued pressure beyond that point can be coercive.

**Intimate-Partner Violence** – An act of violence or threatened act of violence by or against one person who is, or has been, involved in a sexual, dating, domestic, or other intimate relationship with another person. This includes:

1. Dating Violence – Violence, including but not limited to sexual or physical abuse, or the threat of such violence, committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the person. The existence of such a relationship will be determined based on the reporting party's statement and other relevant information, taking into consideration the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
2. Domestic Violence – Violence, including but not limited to sexual or physical abuse, or the threat of such violence, committed by a current or former spouse, or sexual or intimate partner; a person who is living as a spouse or who lived as a spouse; parents and children; other persons related by blood or marriage; or by someone with whom the person shares a child in common. Under the criminal laws of Pennsylvania certain offenses, including but not limited to, rape, aggravated assault, and stalking, can be deemed domestic violence depending on the relationship of the parties involved.

**Incapacitation:** A person may be unable to give consent due to incapacitation as a result of drug or alcohol use, use of medication, or disability status (for example, a person may be unable to communicate due to a mental or physical condition). A person who is passed out, asleep or unconscious is incapacitated and cannot consent to sexual activity. In evaluating whether a complainant was incapacitated due to the consumption of alcohol, Pennco Tech will consider the totality of the circumstances, including factors such as the presence of slurred speech, an unsteady gait/stumbling, unfocused eyes, and impaired memory.

**Inducing Incapacitation:** To provide alcohol or drugs to an individual, with or without that individual's knowledge, for the purpose of causing impairment or intoxication or taking advantage of that individual's impairment or incapacitation.

**Intimidation:** To unlawfully place another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm using threatening words and/or other conduct but without displaying a weapon or subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

**Respondent:** The individual accused of the alleged sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct.

**Retaliation:** Adverse conduct of which the institution is aware, where there is evidence of a causal connection between the conduct and a protected activity such as filing a Title IX complaint, participating in a Title IX investigation, or otherwise asserting rights under Title IX. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, ostracizing the person, pressuring the person to drop or not support the complaint or to provide false or misleading information, engaging in conduct that may reasonably be perceived to affect adversely that person's educational, living or work environment, threatening, intimidating or coercing the person, or otherwise discriminating against any person for exercising their rights or responsibilities under this policy.

**Sexual Assault** – This includes the following:

1. Sexual Penetration Without Consent - Any penetration of the mouth, sex organs, or anus of another person, however slight by an object or any part of the body, when consent is not present. This includes performing oral sex on another person when consent is not present.
2. Sexual Contact Without Consent - Knowingly touching or fondling a person's genitals, breasts, buttocks, or anus, or knowingly touching a person with one's own genitals or breasts, when consent is not present. This includes contact done directly or indirectly through clothing, bodily fluids, or with an object. It also includes causing or inducing a person, when consent is not present, to similarly touch or fondles oneself or someone else.
3. Statutory Sexual Assault – The age of consent for sexual activity in New Jersey is 16. Minors under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. Minors aged 13-15 years old cannot consent to sexual activity with anyone who is 4 or more years older than they are at the time of the activity. Minors aged 16 years of age or older can legally consent to sexual activity with anyone they choose, as long as the other person does not have authority over them as defined in New Jersey institutional sexual assault statutes.

**Sex Discrimination:** Sex discrimination occurs when persons are excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, any GSSTI program or activity because of their sex. Sex discrimination can include adverse treatment based on one's sex, as well as conduct that meets the definitions of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and sexual violence, as set forth in this document. Sex discrimination also includes discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and failure to conform to stereotypical notions of femininity and masculinity (i.e., gender stereotyping).

**Sexual Exploitation:** Taking sexual advantage of another person or violating the sexual privacy of another when consent is not present. This includes, but is not limited to, the following actions (including when they are done via electronic means, methods or devices):

- Sexual voyeurism or permitting others to witness or observe the sexual or intimate activity of another person without that person's consent;
- Indecent exposure or inducing others to expose themselves when consent is not present;
- Recording or distributing information, images or recordings of any person engaged in sexual or intimate activity in a private space without that person's consent.
- Prostituting another individual;
- Knowingly exposing another individual to a sexually transmitted disease or virus without that individual's knowledge; and

- Inducing incapacitation for the purpose of making another person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity.

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature where either or both of the following are present:

- Quid pro quo: Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a person's employment or education, including participation in any GSSTI program and/or activity; or
- Hostile Environment: Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with, limits, or deprives an individual from participating in or benefitting from GSSTI's education or employment programs and/or activities. The existence of a hostile environment is to be judged both objectively, meaning a reasonable person would find the environment hostile and subjectively meaning the impacted individual felt the environment was hostile.

A single, isolated incident of sexual harassment alone may create a hostile environment if the incident is sufficiently severe. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to create a hostile environment, particularly if the harassment is physical.

**Sexual Misconduct:** This is an umbrella term that covers the types of conduct covered by this policy, including sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, dating and domestic violence, and stalking.

**Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence is a particularly severe form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol. An individual may also be unable to give consent due to an intellectual or other disability.

Sexual violence includes acts such as rape, sexual assault (forcible and non-forcible), sexual battery and sexual coercion.

**Stalking:** Engaging in a course of conduct or repeatedly communicating and/or committing acts toward another person under circumstances that demonstrate or communicate intent:

- to place the other person in reasonable fear of bodily injury; or
- to cause substantial emotional distress to the other person.

A course of conduct is when a person engages in two or more acts that include, but are not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveys, threatens, or communicates to or about a person in a prohibited way, or interferes with a person's property.

Stalking includes the concept of cyberstalking, in which electronic media such as the Internet, social networks, blogs, cell phones, texts, or other similar devices or forms of contact are used to pursue, harass, or to make unwelcome contact with another person in an unsolicited fashion.

## **Policy**

## **A. Title IX, VAWA and Nondiscrimination Statement**

GSSTI prohibits any form of discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, marital or family status, medical condition, genetic information, veteran status, or disability in any decision regarding admissions, employment, or participation in a GSSTI program or activity in accordance with the letter and spirit of federal, state, and local non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws, such as Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Age Discrimination in Employment Act, The Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendments Act, The Equal Pay Act, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act.

GSSTI also complies with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crimes Statistics Act, as amended by the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Title IX prohibits retaliation for asserting or otherwise participating in claims of sex discrimination. VAWA imposes additional duties on universities and colleges to investigate and respond to reports of sexual assault, stalking, and dating or domestic violence, and to publish policies and procedures related to the way these reports are handled. GSSTI has designated the Title IX Coordinators, the Assistant Director of Campus and School Director, to coordinate GSSTI's compliance with Title IX and VAWA and to respond to reports of violations. GSSTI has directed its School Directors to coordinate GSSTI's compliance with the Clery reporting related VAWA requirements. GSSTI will promptly and equitably respond to all reports of sexual misconduct in order to eliminate the misconduct, prevent its recurrence, and redress its effects on any individual or the community.

## **B. Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to all on-campus and off-campus conduct that is likely to have a substantial adverse effect on any member of the GSSTI community. There is no time limit for reporting allegations of sexual misconduct; however, GSSTI strongly encourages the prompt reporting of sexual misconduct to allow GSSTI to respond promptly and effectively. If the reported respondent is not a member of the GSSTI community or is no longer associated with GSSTI at the time of the report or at the time a resolution process is initiated, GSSTI may be unable to conduct an investigation or take disciplinary action.

Please see the **Reporting Sexual Misconduct** section below to make a report of misconduct, discrimination and/or harassment, or to file a complaint.

## **C. Statement on Privacy and Confidentiality**

GSSTI is committed to protecting the privacy of all individuals involved in a report of sexual misconduct. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy interests of all individuals involved. Privacy, confidentiality, and privilege have distinct meanings under this policy.

Privacy generally means that information related to a report of sexual misconduct will only be shared with a limited circle of individuals, including individuals who "need to know" to assist in the review, investigation, or resolution of the report or to deliver resources or support services. While not bound by confidentiality or privilege, these individuals will be discreet and respect



the privacy of all individuals involved in the process. All participants in an investigation of sexual misconduct, including advisors and witnesses, will be informed that privacy helps enhance the integrity of the investigation and protect the privacy interests of the parties and will be asked to keep any information learned in an investigation meeting or hearing confidential, to the extent consistent with applicable law, except in very limited situations, such as when failure to disclose the information would result in imminent danger to the individual or to others or as otherwise required by law.

GSSTI will respect the reporting party's expectations of privacy **to the extent permissible by law** while still ensuring compliance with other reporting obligations. For example, complaints involving minors are subject to mandatory reporting requirements.

GSSTI will generally respect a complainant's choice whether to report an incident to local law enforcement or initiate GSSTI's sexual misconduct resolution process, unless GSSTI determines that there is an overriding interest with respect to the safety or welfare of the GSSTI community. Where a report involves suspected abuse of a child (an individual under the age of 18 at the time of the incident(s) as reported), all GSSTI employees and volunteers are required to notify the Director of Campus and the ChildLine run by the New Jersey Department of Human Services. All other members of the GSSTI community are strongly encouraged to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement or the ChildLine.

Confidentiality has a different meaning than privacy. Individuals who wish to speak with someone in confidence about an experience of sexual misconduct may contact one of the following off-campus resources. GSSTI does not employ practicing licensed counselors or pastoral counselors, and therefore, does not have any confidential reporting resources on campus.

Non-Campus Resources available for confidentiality are:

- Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network: [www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- Love is Respect: 1-866-331-9474; text "loveis" to 22522
- NJ-Coalition Against Sexual Assault HOTLINE: 1-800-601-7200

All GSSTI proceedings are conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Clery Act, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), state and local law, and GSSTI policy. No information will be released from such proceedings, except as required or permitted by law and GSSTI policy.

GSSTI may share non-identifying information about reports received in aggregate form, including data about outcomes and sanctions.

#### **D. Prohibited Conduct**

GSSTI prohibits the following forms of conduct:

1. Sexual Assault including Sexual Penetration Without Consent, Sexual Contact Without Consent and Statutory Sexual Assault
2. Sexual Harassment
3. Sexual Exploitation
4. Intimate-Partner Violence, including Dating Violence and Domestic Violence
5. Stalking
6. Retaliation

This prohibited conduct can affect all genders, gender identities and sexual orientations. Some of these prohibited forms of conduct may also be crimes under Pennsylvania or federal law.

#### **E. Free Expression and Academic Freedom**

GSSTI is firmly committed to free expression and academic freedom and to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy, and harassment-free environment for all members of its community. Sexual misconduct, including retaliation, against members of GSSTI are not protected expression nor the proper exercise of academic freedom. GSSTI will consider principles of free expression and academic freedom in the investigation of reports of sexual misconduct or retaliation that involve an individual's statements or speech.

#### **F. Alcohol and Drug Use Amnesty**

The health and safety of every student and employee at GSSTI is of utmost importance. GSSTI recognizes that students/employees who have been drinking and/or using drugs (whether such use is voluntary or involuntary) at the time sexual misconduct occurs may be hesitant to report such incidents due to fear of potential consequences for their own conduct. GSSTI strongly encourages students/employees to report incidents of sexual misconduct. A witness to or individual who experience sexual misconduct, acting in good faith, who discloses any incident of sexual misconduct to GSSTI officials or law enforcement will not be sanctioned under GSSTI's code of conduct for violations of alcohol and/or drug use policies occurring at or near the time of the incident(s) of sexual harassment or sexual violence GSSTI may request the individual attend an approved alcohol or drug education program and without assessing any charges for such program. This amnesty provision also applies to student groups making a report of sexual misconduct. Amnesty does not preclude or prevent action by police or other legal authorities pursuant to relevant state or federal criminal statutes.

### **III. Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

#### **A. Reporting Options**

Any individual, including a third party, may make a report concerning of sexual misconduct. Complainants and third-parties are encouraged to report sexual misconduct as soon as possible to allow GSSTI to respond promptly and effectively.

A person who has experienced sexual misconduct under this policy, or a person who witnesses sexual misconduct under this policy, has the right to simultaneously file a complaint with GSSTI and to pursue a criminal complaint with law enforcement. Victims and witnesses of sexual misconduct have the right to be assisted by GSSTI in notifying law enforcement authorities of

sexual misconduct or they can decline to notify such authorities. GSSTI may, however, have a statutory reporting obligation when it becomes aware of certain factual allegations. Parties may also have options to file civil actions in court or with administrative agencies.

GSSTI has designated the Title IX Coordinator to oversee complaints of sexual misconduct at GSSTI. An individual who has experienced sexual misconduct has the right to choose whether to report the incident to GSSTI's Director of Campus for investigation. These officials are trained to work with individuals who report sexual misconduct and have knowledge about resources and services, both on and off campus, including the availability of supportive measures.

Please call or email GSST's Title IX Coordinator to set up a meeting if you have a complaint involving sexual misconduct. You can also call for general information.

The Title IX Coordinator/designee, in consultation with others (as necessary), will conduct an initial assessment of the conduct, the reporting party's desired course of action, and the necessity for any supportive or interim measures to protect the safety of the complainant or the community. The goal is to eliminate any hostile environment. If a report of misconduct discloses a serious or immediate threat to the campus community, GSSTI will issue a timely notification to the community to protect the health or safety of the community. The timely notification will not include any identifying information about the complainant.

Please Note: Title IX Coordinators are not a confidential source of support. While they will address your complaint with sensitivity and will keep your information as private as possible, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. For more information regarding confidential resources, please contact the Director of campus at: [ppatel@gssti.edu](mailto:ppatel@gssti.edu)

**Please Also Note:** Making a report is different from filing a complaint. A report is defined as notification of an incident of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator/designee by any responsible employee or reporting person. A report may be accompanied by a request for (1) supportive or interim measures; (2) no further action; (3) a request to initiate an informal resolution process; and/or (4) the initiation of the formal complaint process. Filing a complaint initiates the GSSTI formal disciplinary processes see Sexual Misconduct Resolution Process on page 18.

## **B. Electronic and Anonymous Reporting**

You may also file a complaint about sexual misconduct using the appropriate links below. While anonymous complaints are accepted GSSTI's ability to address misconduct reported anonymously is significantly limited.

Individuals may also file a report electronically by email to: [ppatel@gssti.edu](mailto:ppatel@gssti.edu).

An immediate auto-response email with information about resources and options will be sent in response to reports filed by email.

## **C. Other GSSTI Reporting Options:**

GSSTI does NOT use any third-party service for reporting complaints, including anonymous complaints, by phone or online.

#### **D. Criminal Reporting Options**

GSSTI does NOT employ its own Campus Police. You should immediately report any sexual misconduct that also constitutes criminal conduct to the civil authorities for the Campus you attend listed below regardless of whether the individual who is making the report chooses to pursue criminal charges.

Local law enforcement information: Always call 911 for an immediate response

Jersey City Police Department 201-547-57477

A complainant may seek resolution through GSSTI's informal or formal resolution process. A complainant may also seek to initiate a criminal complaint, independent of or parallel with any resolution process of GSSTI. GSSTI's policy, definitions, and burden of proof may differ from New Jersey criminal law. Neither law enforcement's decision whether to prosecute, nor the outcome of any criminal prosecution, is determinative of whether sexual misconduct has occurred under this policy. In cases where there is a simultaneous law enforcement investigation, there may be circumstances when GSSTI may need to temporarily delay its investigation while law enforcement gathers evidence. However, GSSTI will generally proceed with its investigation and resolution of a complaint even during the time of a pending law enforcement investigation.

#### **E. External Reporting Options**

A person may also file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html> or calling 1-800- 421-3481 or emailing [OCR.Philadelphia@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Philadelphia@ed.gov)

A person from New Jersey may also file a complaint with the New Jersey Human Relations Council in Trenton, NJ by calling 609-292-4925 or by visiting <https://nj.gov/oag/dcj/hrc/>

Employees may also file a charge with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regarding an alleged violation of Title VII by calling 1-800-669-4000 or visiting <https://www.eeoc.gov/employees/howtofile.cfm>

#### **F. Reporting Obligations of GSSTI**

GSSTI Tech officials, employees (including student employees), and volunteers are considered "responsible employees" under Title IX and are obligated to report incidents of sexual misconduct of which they become aware to the Title IX Coordinator/designee, unless they serve in a role that makes such reports privileged.

#### **G. Assessment and Timely Warnings**

The Title IX Coordinator/designee in consultation with the Title IX assessment team and others (as necessary) will conduct an initial assessment of the conduct, the reporting party's desired course of action, and the necessity for any interim measures or services to protect the safety of the complainant or the community. The goal is to eliminate any hostile environment. If a report of misconduct discloses a serious or immediate threat to the campus community, GSSTI will issue a timely notification to the community to protect the health or safety of the community. The timely notification will not include any identifying information about the complainant.

#### **IV. Sexual Misconduct Resolution Process**

##### **A. Participant Roles**

1. A **complainant** is the person who has been impacted by an alleged policy violation and has chosen to participate in the resolution process.
2. A **respondent** is the person who is alleged to have violated GSSTI policy.
3. **Parties** is a term that refers to the complainant and the respondent collectively.
4. A **witness** is a person who has knowledge related to specific aspects of a case and may have reported such aspects to the institution.
5. An **advisor** is a support person who may be present to provide support to a complainant or respondent throughout an investigation and/or hearing provided the choice of advisor does not unduly delay the process. Advisors may not speak, write, or otherwise communicate with investigators, conduct administrators, hearing panel members, or appeal reviewers on behalf of the party being advised. Each party is responsible for coordinating and scheduling with their choice of advisor.

All participants have the responsibility to be truthful with the information they share at all stages of the process. Any individual who knowingly or intentionally provides false information as part of a report or investigation under this policy may be subject to discipline. This provision does not apply to a good faith report that is not substantiated or proven by a preponderance of the evidence.

##### **B. Conflict of Interest**

Parties have the opportunity to raise the issue of a potential conflict of interest within two (2) days of being advised of the identity of the investigator, panel member, or appeal reviewer. The Title IX Coordinator/designee will determine whether a conflict of interest exists. No investigator, panelist, or appeal reviewer will make findings or determinations in a case in which they have a conflict of interest.

##### **C. Burden of Proof**

The burden of proof refers to who has the responsibility of showing a violation has occurred. It is always the responsibility of GSSTI to satisfy the burden of proof. The respondent does not have the burden to prove that a violation did not occur. Respondents may decide not to share their side of the story or may decide not to participate in an investigation or hearing. This does not shift the burden of proof away from GSSTI and does not indicate responsibility. Additionally, the fact-finding committee shall not make an adverse inference against a

respondent for the respondent's refusal to participate in an investigation or hearing, nor will respondent's refusal to participate result in increased sanctions if the respondent is found responsible for the accusations.

#### **D. Standard of Proof**

GSSTI uses the preponderance of the evidence standard in investigations of complaints alleging sexual misconduct and any related violations. This means that the investigation determines whether it is more likely than not that a violation of the policy occurred.

#### **E. Timeline for Resolution**

GSSTI will resolve all cases in a prompt and timely manner, however, the timeline will vary based on the circumstances of the case, including breaks in the academic calendar, availability of the parties and witnesses, scope of the investigation, need for interim actions, and unforeseen or exigent circumstances. The parties will be periodically updated on the status of their case.

#### **F. Title IX Outreach**

Upon receipt of a report of sexual misconduct, the Title IX coordinator/designee will provide resources and support information by contacting the potential complainant and offering an initial meeting between the reporting party and the Title IX coordinator/designee. The initial meeting is optional and the reporting party may decline. The purpose of the initial meeting is for the Title IX/designee to gain a basic understanding of the nature and circumstances of the report and provided information about resources, supportive measures, and resolution options to the reporting party.

#### **G. Initial Inquiry**

GSSTI will conduct a preliminary inquiry to determine if the allegations, if true, would rise to the level of a violation of GSSTI policy. The possible next steps include the following: (1) A decision to close the case when insufficient evidence exists to move forward or because the allegation, even if proven, would not violate GSSTI policy; (2) Informal Action (see below); or (3) Formal Resolution (see below).

#### **H. Interim and Supportive Measures**

When GSSTI becomes aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct and the complainant or other affected parties, including the respondent, request interim or supportive measures, GSSTI will take appropriate supportive and interim measures to protect affected parties, to assist the parties, and to protect against retaliation. GSSTI may also take interim measures to protect the GSSTI community at large.

1. Supportive Measures. The following are examples, but not an exhaustive list, of supportive measures:
  - a) Making appropriate changes to academic programs, including changes in class schedule, accommodations to permit the affected party to take an incomplete or drop a course or courses without penalty, permitting the affected party to attend a

- class via skype or other alternative means, providing an academic tutor, or extending deadlines for assignments;
- b) Changing an employee's work assignment or schedule;
  - c) Providing the affected party with an escort to and from class or campus work location;
  - d) Arranging appropriate transportation services to ensure safety;
  - e) Providing information on available counseling services through the counseling center or other appropriate office, or referral to an off-campus agency;
  - f) Assisting the affected party in obtaining medical and other services, including access to rape crisis centers;
  - g) Assistance with filing a criminal complaint and/or seeking an order of protection; and/or
  - h) Enforcing a protection from abuse order.

Supportive measures will be individualized and appropriate based on the information available, making every effort to avoid depriving any student of their education or impacting employment. The measures needed by each party may change over time, and parties should communicate with GSSTI throughout the resolution process to ensure the supportive measures are effective.

## 2. Interim Measures

- a) No Contact Orders - When respondent is a student, employee or volunteer of the institution, the complainant has the right to request GSSTI -issued "no contact order" under which continued intentional contact with the complainant would violate this policy. No contact orders may be issued for both the complainant and the respondent, as well as other individuals as appropriate.
- b) Interim Suspension - In exceptional circumstances where it is determined that a respondent is a continuing threat to the health and safety of the community, GSSTI may seek an emergency interim suspension of a student or take similar emergency measures against an employee, consistent with applicable GSSTI policy. For students who are given an interim suspension, GSSTI will convene a hearing within 10 working days, unless extenuating circumstances warrant an extension, in which case a hearing shall be provided at the earliest possible date.
- c) Orders of protection: If a party has obtained an ex parte order of protection, full order of protection, or any other restraining order or no contact order against another from a criminal, civil or tribal court, the order should be provided to the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, or designee. GSSTI will take all reasonable and legal action to implement such an order. If an order is violated, local law enforcement can also be contacted for assistance.

## 3. Process for Review of Interim Measures

- a) For students who are given an interim suspension, GSSTI will convene a hearing within 10 working days, unless extenuating circumstances warrant an extension, in which case a hearing shall be provided at the earliest possible date.

- b) For interim measures involving employees, GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy.

GSSTI will maintain as confidential any interim measures provided, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair GSSTI's ability to implement the measures.

### **I. Informal Resolution**

Informal resolution involves a mutual agreement by the parties to resolve the matter by mutual agreement. Informal resolution may not be used when formal resolution is desired by a reporting party or where the Title IX Coordinator/designee has determined that GSSTI needs to proceed with an investigation. Informal resolution may take place at any time prior to a decision being issued in a hearing or a respondent taking responsibility. The informal resolution process will be conducted by the Title IX Coordinator/designee. Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to end the informal resolution process at any time. Any informal resolution must be acceptable to the complainant, the respondent, and the Title IX Coordinator/designee.

If a resolution is reached, the complainant and the respondent shall be notified in writing, and the Title IX Coordinator/designee will confer with appropriate parties to memorialize the agreed upon resolution and any consequences for non-compliance in a memorandum. This memorandum will be included in the respondent's student record. If no agreement is reached within a reasonable time, the Title IX Coordinator /designee shall proceed with the formal resolution process.

Informal resolution does not result in findings related to responsibility.

### **J. Formal Resolution**

1. Notification to Respondent - If a case is referred for formal resolution, the respondent will be notified of the alleged misconduct and given an opportunity to respond. The notification will include the allegations, identities of the parties involved, the specific section(s) of GSSTI policy allegedly violated, the precise conduct allegedly constituting the potential violation, and the date and location of the incident (if known). This notice will be given before any initial interview. GSSTI may modify the list of policies allegedly violated based on additional information learned during investigation.
2. Acceptance of Responsibility - Prior to the conclusion of a sexual misconduct investigation, the respondent may elect to take responsibility for the prohibited conduct by contacting the Title IX Coordinator/designee in writing. The Title IX Coordinator/designee will issue a brief outcome determination summarizing the allegations and stating the respondent has accepted responsibility and refer the matter to the appropriate office for sanctioning. Following the determination of sanctions, parties may appeal the sanctions but not the finding(s) of responsibility.
3. Investigation - For investigations of respondents who are employees of GSSTI, GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in its policy. For investigations of respondents who are students GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy.



4. Hearing - For hearings for respondents who are employees GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy. For hearings for respondents who are students GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy.
5. Sanctioning - For sanctions for respondents who are employees GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy. For sanctions for respondents who are students GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy.

## **K. Appeal**

The complainant or respondent may appeal the hearing outcome and/or sanction(s).

For appeals by parties who are employees GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy. For appeals by parties who are students GSSTI will follow applicable requirements in GSSTI policy.

In the event sanctions were imposed, it shall be in the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator/designee and the sanctioning office whether the sanctions shall be implemented or stayed pending resolution of an appeal.

The limited grounds for appeal are as follows:

- New information that could affect the outcome of the matter and was not reasonably available through the exercise of due diligence at the time of the hearing below;
- A deviation from GSSTI policy or procedures that materially affected the hearing outcome or sanctions; and
- The sanction is too harsh or too lenient.

Appeals must be made to the Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator and be filed within 7 calendar days of the date that written notice of the outcome was provided. GSSTI will decide the appeal promptly but generally within 30 calendar days and provide the respondent and complainant with concurrent/simultaneous written notice of the final determination within 7 calendar days of making the final determination, including any changes to the previous determination and/or the sanctions imposed. The appeal decision is final and not subject to further appeal

## **V. Rights/Responsibilities**

- A. Reports and complaints have different meanings. An individual has a right to make a report of sexual misconduct to GSSTI, which may be accompanied by request for supportive measures. An individual also has a right to make a complaint of sexual misconduct, which is a request to initiate GSSTI's informal resolution process or a formal disciplinary process, which includes an investigation and may proceed to a formal hearing.
- B. Prior to the conclusion of a sexual misconduct investigation, the reporting party may request to withdraw the complaint by contacting the Title IX Coordinator/designee in writing. He or she will determine whether to close the case or conclude the investigation without the complainant's continued participation.

- C. An individual also has the right to report sexual misconduct to law enforcement, separate and apart from any report or complaint made to GSSTI.
- D. At the time a report is made, the reporting party does not have to decide whether to file a complaint or make a report of sexual misconduct to law enforcement.
- E. An affected party has the right to request supportive measures from GSSTI, which may include interim contact restrictions.
- F. The reporting party has the right to seek medical treatment to address physical and mental health and to preserve evidence.
- G. A report may become a formal complaint, either initiated by the reporting party or Pennco Tech depending on the outcome of the Title IX assessment. To file a complaint, please contact the Title IX Coordinator/designee.

## **VI. Prevention and Awareness Programs**

GSSTI is committed to having in place sexual misconduct, including dating violence, domestic violence and stalking, prevention and awareness programs for students and employees. GSSTI implements prevention and awareness programming during new student and new employee orientation. Informational prevention and awareness materials are available on an on-going basis.

## **VII. Prohibition against Retaliation**

Retaliation in any form (including acts of intimidation or harassment) against any person who makes a Title IX report, witnesses or experiences harassment, or asserts rights under Title IX will also not be tolerated. Reports of retaliatory conduct should be made to the Title IX Coordinator and/or Deputy Title IX Coordinator using the contact information set forth above.

## **VIII. False Reporting**

Allegations of discrimination and harassment are extremely serious and must be made honestly and in good faith. Knowingly providing false information to a school official may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for employees, and suspension or termination for students.

## **X. Revision History:**

Original Document July 2018

Revised Document June 2020 – to meet new PA DOE requirements  
Revised Document August 2020 – to meet new US DOE requirements

**End of:**

**The GSSTI Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Misconduct Policy  
(also known as ACT-16 for New Jersey)**

## **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**

The Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) provides federal leadership in developing the national capacity to reduce violence against women and administer justice for and strengthen services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

You can learn more about the Office on Violence Against Women Act by visiting the United States Department of Justice web site at: <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/about-office>

## **Information on Registered Sex Offenders**

Access to information about **Sex Offenders**, classified as sexually violent predators must be available to the public over the Internet under Megan's Law. Although you can get sex offenders list information directly from almost all state government web sites, you'll probably find it easier to do a free search of the **National Alert Registry** [www.nationalalertregistry.com](http://www.nationalalertregistry.com) where

All you need to do is enter a zip code to receive a listing for a particular area.

## **Fire Safety**

### **Evacuation Procedures**

In the event that a fire has been detected, all staff and students should exit the building. Inside of all offices and classrooms is an evacuation path to the nearest exit. Evacuation procedures are rehearsed during drills.

### **Reporting a Campus Fire to the Campus Community**

In the event that fire has taken place, the Campus Community will be alerted through email.

### **Reporting a Fire for the Purpose of Collecting Fire Statistics**

For the purpose of collecting fire statistics, anyone of the following Campus Security Authorities can be responsible for assuring the fire incident will be properly documented and filed for further review and analysis for updating the Fire statistics records in the annual fire safety report. *Campus Security Authorities-Contact # 215-785-0111(Front Office)*

1. School Director - Pankaj Patel
2. Assistant Director – Walter Garcia
3. Director of Financial Aid – Patricia Okordudu
4. Student Service – Erika Leon

### **Fire Safety Log**

GSSTI maintains a fire log that contains the date and time of a fire and when it was reported, the nature of that fire, and location of the fire. The Director of Campus maintains the log, and will update the log within two business days in the event of a fire. The log can be made available to the public upon request.

### **Fire Safety Education and Training Programs**

A formal training program shall be maintained that will ensure all employees, and students are aware of the school's emergency procedures. The design and oversight of this program shall be the joint responsibility of the Assistant Director and the School Director. Every department head is charged with ensuring that the individuals they supervise participate in all prescribed safety training. Tabletop drills shall also be used to train key personnel throughout the year.

New employees shall receive training in emergency procedures during New Employee Orientation and through on-going departmental in-service. Instructors will review fire safety and training as documented in all course syllabi with new students and returning students on the first day of each module.

**Future Improvements in Fire Safety**

This Fire Safety Policy will be reviewed as needed or immediately following a fire for any improvements that may be required.