

# VAWA

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT

## What is the Violence Against Women Act?

The Violence Against Women Act is legislature that was enacted in 2013 to amend what types of incidents colleges have to report on. It amended the already in place Clery Act to include domestic and dating violence, and stalking to its list of required reportable crimes. Since this legislation has been put into effect, Western Illinois University has created presentations and packets of information to educate our campus community in an effort to end sexual misconduct/violence.

## What is Title IX?

Title IX is legislature designed to protect students from sex based discrimination. It applies to all public educational facilities including WIU. Sexual misconduct, harassment, assault, stalking, and domestic partner violence are all considered discriminatory actions under Title IX.

## How can I help?

You can help by completing training, engaging in conversations about sexual misconduct, and by helping educate others who are not aware of the issues. These conversations can be intimidating at first, however, they are important to have in order to help eliminate sexual misconduct/violence. Feel free to reach out to the EOA office for tips/tricks.

## What is Sexual Misconduct/Violence?

Sexual misconduct/violence is an often misunderstood concept. Some examples include: sexual requests, unwanted sexual touching or kissing, sexual blackmail, coerced sex of any kind, and/or nonconsensual sexual penetration with any body part or object.

## Contact Information

### Stephanie Kinkaid

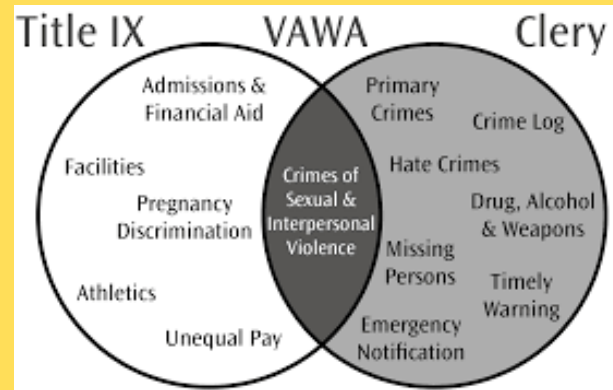
Director of EOA + Title IX Coordinator  
312 Sherman Hall  
309-298-1977  
SM-kinkaid@wiu.edu

### Tami McCoy

Assistant Director of EOA + Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
312 Sherman Hall  
309-298-1977  
TK-mccoy@wiu.edu

## What if I only Witnessed a Violation?

Sometimes you may not be sure what you witnessed is an act of sexual violence or you might not know if it is your place to tell anyone. In any case, even just a suspected one, the right thing to do is report the activity. Our Title IX Coordinator is available for third parties who wish to report a violation. Once a violation has been reported a preliminary investigation is started to gauge if the victim is willing to proceed with the Title IX process. WIU maintains a policy that all investigations are conducted adequately, reliably, and impartially.



## Can my Significant Other be my Attacker?

Unfortunately, yes they can. Dating and domestic violence is among the greatest concerns to the safety of college students and often one of the most deadly. A majority of sexual and violent crimes are committed by those that the victim knew or whom they have been in an intimate relation. It's important to remember that just by agreeing to be someone's partner, it does not give them the right to do anything to your body without your consent. Verbal or physical abuse, stalking or isolation from friends and family from a significant other are all signs that could escalate to potential serious injury. If you, or if you feel like someone you know is being victimized by intimate partner violence, it is always best to speak up and report your concerns to school officials.

## Why We Need the Violence Against Women Act

U.S. women who are victims of domestic violence:



1 in 4

U.S. women who reported being raped or sexually assaulted in 2009:

1.3 million

U.S. women who are murdered by their partners every day:



3

U.S. children who are exposed to domestic violence each year:

15 million

U.S. women who have survived attempted or completed sexual assault:



1 in 6

Source: National Task Force to End Sexual and Domestic Violence

## What is Consent?

Consent is **Clear, Coherent, Ongoing, and Willing**. This means that consent needs to be understood between all partners engaged in the sexual activity. It also cannot be a result of coercion or harassment, and it needs to be actively stated. Silence or lack of resistance is not consent. Furthermore, a person cannot give consent when they are incapacitated, or lack the ability to fully and knowingly choose to participate in sexual activity. Remember, consent can be withdrawn at any time. If you withdraw your consent and the sexual activity does not stop, an act of sexual violence has occurred.

## Does it Matter if I had Drugs or Alcohol? Will I be in Trouble with WIU?

The protection of our students from sexually violent acts is our primary concern at WIU. Therefore, students who have witnessed or were victims of sexual violence are encouraged to come forward and seek help regardless of the circumstances surrounding the incident. Amnesty is granted to witnesses and victims of sexual violence in an effort to encourage reporting of sexual misconduct on campus. It is the goal of Western Illinois University to have as much information as possible to fully investigate each case of sexual misconduct, as such, the university is not interested in punishing students for alcohol/drug use when reporting sexual misconduct.

## Where can I go for Help?

In an emergency your first source of help is the Office of Public Safety. There is one located at each of WIU's campuses (Macomb, Quad Cities); however, you may also want to contact Western Illinois Regional Council (WIRC Victim Services) to receive specialized support. This is a free service, and they can be reached at: 309-837-5555. WIRC can assist with legal orders of protection, connections to a SANE nurse/other medical assistance, and guidance throughout the process.



## Are there Additional Resources?

When an instance of sexual violence occurs, there are many people available to talk to. The important thing is to just reach out. If you live in university housing, your RA or Complex Director are great resources for reporting. They have the ability to contact other university officials that can begin the process for you. Additionally, Faculty and Staff at WIU are mandated reporters in regard to Title IX issues. You may also call local officials for support such as the Macomb police, McDonough District Hospital, etc. The EOA Office is here to support students as well and should be contacted in regard to these types of instances.

## Does this Actually Happen on College Campuses?

The short answer is yes. More and more we have seen news reports of sexual assault scandals throughout the nation. Now, more than ever, it is important that we learn how to identify what sexual assault is, and how we can work to prevent further misconduct.

## What should I do if I'm not Ready to Talk About my Experience?

If you think that you have been a victim of sexual violence, you should always talk to someone about your experience. This can be an intimidating and emotionally taxing time that no one should have to endure alone. If you wish to discuss your experience with a professional, but you don't want your story being told to anyone else, there are confidential advisors available to you. The University Counseling Center, the Psychology Clinic, and WIRC Victim Advocates can talk with you about your experience and the process without disclosing any information.

## So Remember...

It is important for all university community members to take advantage of the online trainings provided by WIU. There are services and departments dedicated to ending sexual misconduct/violence on our campus. Please lean on them for support/education.