

Transcript Notations Regarding Student Sexual Misconduct: Do You Know What to Do?

By Jay Wilgus and Joan Tabachnick

Over the last few years, there has been growing interest in the practice of transcript notations for matters involving student sexual misconduct. At present, only two states (NY and VA) require institutions to make a notation on the student's academic transcript if a student is found responsible for sexual misconduct on a campus within the state. In other states, some schools have voluntarily adopted this practice, consistent with guidance from some national organizations, such as the Association for Student Conduct Administration which has issued [guidelines](#) about this practice. A recent study showed that nearly one-quarter of the schools who responded have accepted a student with a notation on their transcript for sexual misconduct.

Do you know what to do if a student applies to, or is accepted at, your institution with a notation on their transcript for a violation of the sexual misconduct policy at their prior institution? If you wanted to know more about the situation in order to make a more informed decision about whether to grant their admission or how to work with the student post-admission, do you know what questions you can ask? Here are a few preliminary questions to consider¹:

- When was the violation and what did it involve?
- Did the student participate in a specialized education or treatment program (e.g. for the sexual misconduct or related issues, such as alcohol abuse) designed to reduce the likelihood of future problematic sexual behavior? If so, are you aware of any recommendations from the treatment program or provider?
- Is the student willing to work with you to create an appropriate safety plan?
- Is there a way to make the student's admission and enrollment contingent upon creating and maintaining an agreed upon safety plan²?
- Who will be responsible for creating and maintaining a safety plan with the student on your campus if they are admitted?
- What resources are available on your campus or in your community to help support the student's successful (re)integration into your campus community? For example, is there a clinician available for consultation who has specialized training in managing problematic sexual behavior among college students?³
- What does the student think is necessary to help ensure their safety and the safety of others?

All decision-making and planning regarding students who have engaged in problematic sexual behavior should be individualized to account for the unique risks and needs of the student, as well as applicable protective factors.

¹ This document is intended for educational purposes only and should not be understood as legal advice. Please consult with appropriate legal counsel regarding the appropriateness of questions you may want to ask or requirements you may want to create regarding admission or enrollment.

² See Campus Safety Planning for Respondents available at www.klancystreet.com

³ To find a local provider with expertise working with students with problematic sexual behaviors, contact the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (www.atsa.com) or the Safer Society Foundation (www.ssf.org).