

MAY 12, 2021

INAUGURAL REPORT ON SEXUAL RESPECT AT CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

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A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

This report includes several terms that may be new to some readers. The following definitions may be helpful.

complainant—a person bringing forth a formal complaint, in this case relating to sexual misconduct of any kind

reporting party—a person filing a report of alleged misconduct for official review

respondent—a person formally asked to respond to, and who may be held responsible for, an allegation of misconduct; this party is often the person accused of committing the alleged misconduct

sexual respect—the concept of honoring and dignifying each person's sexuality, sexual self-determination, and sexual autonomy

Title IX—part of the federal Education Amendments of 1972; bans sex-based discrimination, including sexual harassment, in educational programs and activities that receive financial assistance from the federal government

DEAR CALARTIANS,

As a community, we seek to hold ourselves accountable to our values. Improving our practice on this takes honesty, vulnerability, and openness.

In that spirit, I introduce this report on the community's efforts to strengthen our climate of sexual respect and the prevention of harassment.

I'm proud of work to which we have committed to promote an inclusive environment that strives to be free of sexual harassment and any other form of sexual misconduct, and of our willingness to acknowledge that we still have important work to do. Our forthcoming review of sexual respect practices and policies, as well as the sexual respect survey planned for the fall, will build on this momentum.

This report is the first in what will become a yearly chronicle of our work in this area, and will include a look ahead to next steps. Importantly, it represents CalArts' pledge to openness, to accountability and to care for one another.

Thank you to each of you for your commitment to our community of artists—one that seeks to transform ourselves, and each other, together.

**MANY THANKS,
RAVI RAJAN**

President

TO THE CALARTS COMMUNITY:

Over the past several years, California Institute of the Arts has recommitted itself to the essential work of preventing sexual misconduct. We've engaged the community, rewritten policies, reinforced prevention practices such as training, and made survivor resources more readily accessible.

Still, we have much more to do as we continue to build a culture of sexual respect throughout CalArts. For this work to be as effective and enduring as possible—and to help advance Institute accountability—leaders must be fully open and clear about the steps the Institute has taken, and will take as we continue this work.

That transparency is the fundamental idea underpinning this report, which I will present each year. In the pages that follow, you will find a chronicle of CalArts' recent and ongoing efforts to reinforce sexual respect; to prevent misconduct; to strengthen avenues for reporting, education and training; and to support those impacted by sexual misconduct.

My goal is to engage the community and regularize conversations around this crucial subject, to make these discussions and reflections a constant part of our community fabric. We all must communicate thoroughly, honestly, and regularly about our shared commitment to, and our actions to support, sexual respect. Importantly, the Institute must continue to clarify community expectations, resources, support, and the process of reporting misconduct.

As I share this report with you, CalArts is undertaking concrete measures to identify areas where we can strengthen all this work together. These endeavors include an expert-led review of our internal policies and practices around sexual respect that will take shape over the summer months. In addition, a community-wide survey of sexual respect will be distributed in the Fall 2021 semester.

It's my privilege to be chosen to lead this new collaboration of CalArtians who are helping to steer these measures. Committee members will review findings and help develop any practice and policy recommendations that may be necessary. In the CalArts spirit of shared decision-making, President Ravi Rajan has charged our representative bodies—those representing faculty, students, staff, and alumna—with identifying individual CalArtians to serve on this committee.

Higher education's record on sexual respect is not strong. At CalArts, we believe we can do better. As CalArts continues to move forward to a climate of prevention and respect, we understand necessary progress will be possible only by engaging every corner of the community.

Advancements we've made in recent years include [Institute policies](#) introduced in August 2020 that encompass community feedback, as well as federal and state requirements, to foster a climate of the highest ethical standards—and clear accountability to those standards.

A safe, secure, and inclusive culture is an essential foundation for everything else that happens at CalArts. Safeguarding every member of our community, and every visitor, is a responsibility that belongs to each of us.

With that in mind, I share with you our inaugural report on sexual respect. Let this mark our momentum toward fuller transparency, our advancements to date, and our commitment to do better still. Thank you for your dedication to one another and to the CalArts community.

**GRATEFULLY,
DIONNE SIMMONS**

**Title IX Coordinator and
Director of Community Rights and Responsibilities**

MOMENTUM: ADVANCEMENTS IN PERSONNEL, PRACTICES, AND POLICY

SUMMARY

Established as a community that would unite artists across disciplines, California Institute of the Arts prides itself on bringing people together. An inclusive, secure, and welcoming environment for all is essential to realizing this mission and its execution.

As societal awareness and understanding of sexual misconduct have grown in recent years, CalArts, too, has made meaningful strides to ensure the Institute is taking every step within its capacity to foster a climate of sexual respect; a culture of prevention, transparency, and accountability; and solid support for survivors.

The Institute recognizes this work must be ongoing. It can never cease. Building and reinforcing an inclusive, safe environment requires constant attention, conversation, and improvement.

This report to the community is intended to become an annual chronicle of CalArts' recent and continuing work to encourage sexual respect and a culture that prevents harassment and other sexual misconduct. It is intended, in part, to strengthen the Institute's transparency and accountability in these efforts. Additionally, it will provide an important historical record and a look ahead to forthcoming work in this area.

The following pages include an overview of the critical investments—in staffing, training, policies, and prevention practices—that CalArts has made over the last several years. Also noted are several highlights of early results tied to this work, along with details about upcoming steps to amplify this momentum.

A DEDICATION TO RESOURCES

Since the 2014-15 academic year, CalArts has made it a priority to examine and improve Institute policies and practices around sexual respect, defined as a commitment to treating all parties with dignity, empathy, and respect around matters of sexual identity and practice. At CalArts, sexual respect centers largely on building awareness and understanding around the cultural and societal realities of sexual misconduct; on preventing such misconduct; and on supporting survivors. CalArts is committed to ensuring that individuals affected by discrimination, harassment, or any form of sexual misconduct—as a complainant, as a respondent or as a third party—will have equal access to support and counseling services through the Institute.

Below are the key advancements made by CalArts over the last several years to make sure the Institute is deliberately living up to its principles of sexual respect:

Throughout the 2014-15 academic year, an internal task force reviewed institutional policies and practices to improve support systems and reporting structures for misconduct, and to focus on sexual assault and rape education and prevention tailored for the CalArts community. The task force comprised trustees, administrators, students, faculty, and staff.

In December 2014, the task force identified several short- and long-term goals that led to sustained work to strengthen training and education, including prevention and bystander intervention; support and reporting options; the clarity of policies; and staffing and communication. The task force re-convened in the 2015-16 academic year as CalArts recognized the need for continued work in order to improve.

In September 2016, CalArts acted on its commitment to improve staffing in the area of diversity and inclusion, including work on sexual respect, by appointing Eva Graham as the Institute Diversity Officer. She was also named the Institute's Title IX Coordinator shortly thereafter, a role that focuses on institutional adherence to the federal civil rights law that guards against sex- and gender-based discrimination and harassment in educational programs that receive federal financial support. While this designation was not a long-term solution, Eva helped start and streamline our Title IX compliance efforts in their infancy, and today remains a cornerstone of CalArts' inclusivity work as Institute Diversity Officer.

The following year, in 2017, CalArts hired Dionne Simmons who, after serving as Director of Campus Life and Deputy Title IX Coordinator, has since taken on dual roles as both the Institute Title IX Coordinator and Director of Community Rights and Responsibilities. She and Eva are part of the Equity and Diversity Committee, which fosters open dialogue among CalArts students, faculty and staff on issues of equity and diversity on campus and beyond. Its goal is to identify and address internal barriers to student and employee success as those barriers relate to diversity, access, equity, and inclusion, bolstering its Institute infrastructure promoting sexual respect, including misconduct prevention.

With the support and guidance of Dionne and Eva, CalArts has taken specific actions around training, prevention and collaboration. Among those actions:

The introduction of mandatory online prevention and awareness training for students.

Detailed in this [frequently-asked-questions document](#), the effort uses the "Not Anymore" online platform to educate students in the prevention of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. It also covers consent and bystander intervention, plus alcohol and drug abuse and prevention. While state and federal rules require this type of education, the CalArts approach makes the lessons exceptionally accessible and thorough. CalArts worked with its Student Union in the selection of this platform.

Refinement of mandatory training for faculty and staff. These trainings are held throughout the year for faculty and staff, and sessions are tailored specifically to reflect individual employees' respective roles and requirements to report misconduct. Training sessions include instruction tailored to resident advisors, as well. Specifically, the training helps faculty and staff members to recognize the signs of trouble; to approach and to listen effectively; and to follow Institute standards and expectations for reporting allegations of misconduct and for offering resources to those affected.

Deepening of prevention models. With enhanced training in effect, the CalArts Office of Community Rights and Responsibilities has begun to reinforce the prevention-oriented components of its community education around sexual respect. Much of this work has focused on collecting feedback, meeting with constituents, and developing a sense of the knowledge gaps and confusion in the community—including around when and how to report misconduct. Efforts in this area are ongoing.

Reinforcement of reporting awareness. As part of their CalArts orientation, students receive detailed information about how to report sexual misconduct and the process that unfolds when they do. [An enhanced, easier-to-access presence](#) through the Support and Advocacy section of the CalArts website details the reporting procedure and how reporters can remain anonymous if they choose to do so. A student advocate is available to talk through the procedure with would-be complainants and other reporters before they decide to file a report.

Stronger collaboration and partnerships with external resources. In addition to offering on-campus confidential resources for students through the student advocate, the counseling office (which includes teletherapy options) and the Student Health Center, CalArts has formed partnerships with off-campus confidential resources for students, faculty, and staff. These off-campus partners—to which CalArts community members may be referred for support—include the Rape Treatment Center at the UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica and, for staff and faculty, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through Anthem Insurance Companies. The EAP provides professional counseling, information, and referral services to eligible employees and their spouses, domestic partners, and/or dependent children. Further, CalArts has been growing its collaborations with other Title IX coordinators in the region. A more complete list of partners in providing confidential resources, including Strength United in Santa Clarita and the Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network, is easily accessible [through the CalArts website](#).

Reinforced policies that go beyond federal minimums. CalArts amended its Title IX policies in 2020 to follow new regulations that took effect at the federal level under then-President Donald Trump. While the new rules are generally prescriptive—narrowing the definition of sexual harassment under federal standards—the Institute has developed its own

policy provisions to ensure all complaints involving sexual and interpersonal misconduct will be investigated, even if they don't fall under the auspices of Title IX.

The Institute strengthened faculty, staff, and student training around these new Institute efforts and around campus expectations. [The CalArts Sexual Misconduct Policy of August 2020](#) addresses misconduct that falls outside Title IX regulations; its provisions include a ban on faculty, staff, and administrators engaging in or pursuing amorous relationships with students with whom they have, or may have, professional responsibilities such as instruction and mentorship. [The CalArts Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy of August 2020](#) details the Institute's compliance with Title IX standards.

PROMISING INDICATORS

While many of the efforts described above remain in early stages, early indicators signal movement in a positive direction.

For instance, the Institute has documented an increase in reports of misconduct, suggesting that community members better understand how to make use of the increasingly robust reporting resources. Likewise, the Institute has documented growing use of the enhanced support resources, including a 24/7, on-call system through the Campus Safety Department at 661-222-2702.

MECHANISMS OF HELP

AN OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES AND PROCESSES

CalArts is committed to maintaining a living, learning, and working environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including prohibited discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. [Institute policies that are publicly available](#) detail how the Institute responds to allegations of prohibited discrimination, harassment, and misconduct, as well as the rights and responsibilities of those accused.

For those who choose to make a report, the Title IX Coordinator and Director of Community Rights and Responsibilities is available to receive concerns about prohibited sex discrimination. That includes sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, dating, and domestic violence and stalking. The Director also can discuss questions or concerns relating to the investigation of complaints; reporting and complaint procedures; and education and training opportunities across campus. The Director can be reached at dsimmons@calarts.edu and titleix@calarts.edu, at 661-291-3019 and Chouinard 113.

Formal complaints of sexual misconduct may be used to pursue an informal resolution process or a formal resolution, which includes an investigation, a decision, and an appeal. The decision-making process includes a live hearing. Remedies are determined and monitored by the Director of Community Rights and Responsibilities.

For those who are not prepared to make a report but are seeking information and support, there are several statutorily protected confidential resources available. These resources will not share information with the Institute unless the individual so wishes. [The CalArts website](#) features specifics about these on-campus resources, which include the student advocate, a role filled by David Braverman, the Interim Director of Care and Well-Being; the counseling office; and the Student Health Center. [An online reporting form](#) is available, as well.

Off-campus confidential resources for students, faculty and staff include the National Domestic Violence Hotline; the Rape Treatment Center at the UCLA Medical Center in Santa Monica; the Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network; and Strength United. Additionally, faculty and staff have access to an EAP through Anthem Insurance Companies.

An assistance phone line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Campus Safety Department at 661-222-2702. [The CalArts website includes guidance](#) for those who have experienced a sexual assault.

LEANING FORWARD

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION

For as much progress as CalArts has made, more work remains.

Among the improvements the Institute seeks to pursue is better awareness of the resources available to community members affected by sexual misconduct. While those resources are covered during the student-orientation process, students are covering significant amounts of information. Ongoing work should include a focus on improving resource awareness that happens throughout the year.

Significant steps coming in 2021 include a review of the Institute's sexual respect policies to be led by external peer reviewer La Shonda Coleman, the Title IX Coordinator at Pepperdine University. This assessment will center on how the Institute is fostering an inclusive climate and preventing sexual harassment and related misconduct, and on how CalArts can continue to improve. Work will begin over the summer of 2021.

A working committee of CalArtians, including student, staff, faculty, and alumna representation will help inform and guide the review. This committee will play a key role, too, in a community-wide survey of sexual respect that the Institute will conduct in Fall 2021. The survey will engage CalArtians to evaluate the prevalence of and learn about the collective and individual experiences of sexual misconduct, including harassment, in the community.

The CalArts Title IX Coordinator will lead the committee. When the review and survey are complete and generate recommendations, committee members will help design and carry forth any actions that the community may need to take. Those outcomes will be covered in the Institute's next annual report on sexual respect, to be distributed in May 2022. More immediate updates for the community will be distributed on an ongoing basis.

In the meantime, community members can reach the committee at sexualrespect@calarts.edu. The email address is meant to allow the community to contribute ideas, share thoughts, and communicate during this process. In addition, the Office of Community Rights and Responsibilities intends to launch in Summer 2021 a website to include a streamlined overview of policies, reporting resources and support mechanisms. This electronic hub will put key information within easy reach and make it actionable in clear, precise terms that are useful to everyone in the community. Among its features, the site will explain the duties of faculty and staff members; the guidance available to complainants, respondents, and third parties; and how CalArts handles complaints of misconduct. These vital specifics, and many others, will be more readily accessible to the entire community through this improved resource.

Off campus, CalArts will raise its collective voice in 2021 as the federal government seeks input for another round of revisions to Title IX.

Each of these steps represents the Institute's sustained commitment to reinforce its culture of prevention and sexual respect. For the well-being of the entire CalArts community, it's essential that the Institute continue to bring consistent, deliberate, and proactive attention to this work. As CalArts sets a goal of being a model for prevention, the community can and should be a force for positive change not only here but also for other communities of higher learning.

APPENDIX

LINKS TO KEY RESOURCES

[CalArts Sexual Misconduct Policy of August 2020](#)

[CalArts Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy of August 2020](#)

[CalArts Prohibited Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)

[Details on the “Not Anymore” prevention and awareness training for students](#)

[How to report sexual misconduct](#)

KEY CONTACTS

Dionne Simmons

CalArts Title IX Coordinator and Director of Community Rights and Responsibilities

dsimmons@calarts.edu, 661-291-3019 and Chouinard 113

Eva Graham

CalArts Institute Diversity Officer

egramham@calarts.edu, 661-222-2785 and room F300

sexualrespect@calarts.edu reaches the 2021 working committee on sexual respect

To report a Title IX related matter, please use the reporting resources found on [the website](#).