

Scenario 1

The Dean's office receives two reports, months apart, of a faculty member who, without consent, touched a colleague in one instance and a graduate student in another. The details of each report are very similar. The unwanted touching occurred when the faculty member was alone with a person in a work-related setting. Both incidents are reported to OIE as required under mandatory reporting rules. But neither claimant wanted to move forward with a formal investigation due to concerns about the experience of a full investigation. The Dean's office and the Chair both are concerned about retaliation.

You learn, subsequently, that the faculty member will be supervising a research assistant and working closely with the RA in situations where they will be isolated and unsupervised. You are concerned that having the faculty member and the student work together may provide opportunities for the faculty member to repeat the reported behaviors.

Scenario 2

Professor learns that a postdoc is pregnant and will be out on maternity leave for a period of time. Professor calls postdoc in and has a conversation about her career path, what work she will be able to do, and expresses concern about completing grant-related work because she will not be available to do her work. She reports the discussion to OIE. The investigation concludes no violation.

Scenario 3

Students are arbitrarily placed into small groups. Approximately once a year, a student will notify an administrator that they feel "uncomfortable" with a member of their group, and want to be removed from the group. The College has a policy on professionalism, which applies to all students.

If the student is "uncomfortable" due to issues relating to the RVSM policy, those concerns are immediately reported to OIE. In some cases, students have pursued a formal investigation, which is lengthy. In other cases, the student doesn't wish to pursue a formal complaint, but expects that College to address the concerns.

Scenario 4

An allegation of harassment was raised by a student who is off campus and wanted to be separated from the accused. A report was filed with OIE. There are competing concerns about the due process rights of the respondent and the safety of the claimant. The College has broader concerns regarding patient safety and professional standards. The College has a policy governing student's rights and responsibilities.

Scenario 5

A staff member complained to a colleague that they were being bullied by their boss. The colleague then reported this to OIE. However, the staff member became angry at the colleague for reporting it, claiming the colleague needed her permission to report what was said. The colleague did inform the staff member of the mandatory reporting, but the staff member claimed they had the right to prevent that, putting the colleague in a difficult position. The staff person has since asked OIE to not follow-up, but this has also created friction among co-workers.