



SAMPLE
Conversation with Student Who Makes Disclosure

“Faculty [and staff] are uniquely positioned to assist students experiencing sexual violence, as they often see the warning signs – absence from class, decreased productivity, lower grades, social withdrawal – before others. In addition, as a trusted authority figure, students may turn to you when in crisis and disclose that they have been victims of sexual violence. You may be one of the first people a student confides in, so it is important to know how to handle a disclosure.”

--National Sexual Violence Resource Center

Scenario: When a student does not want to further disclose to you

Student: Can I talk to you about something that happened to me this past weekend? It has to do with someone (partner/girlfriend/boyfriend/spouse/roommate) I've been dating/met online/in our class.

Faculty/Staff: Of course. I do want to let you know that as an employee here at Cal Poly Pomona, I will need to share any information about sexual misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator. Her name is Dawnita Franklin, and she can discuss with you, your options to access on and off campus resources to take care of your physical and emotional well-being. We care about your safety and Cal Poly has created this reporting requirement because sexual misconduct in all its forms is unacceptable. If you want, I can help you make a phone call to her office or I can even walk you there. Dawnita will likely reach out to you by email following the information I give her, and while I encourage you to discuss with her your rights and options, please know that it is entirely your choice to respond or not respond. You will not be forced to share information – your level of involvement is your choice.

If you are comfortable with that, I am here to listen to what you are able to tell me. I will only share your information with individuals like Dawnita who absolutely need to know; we will all strive to protect your privacy to the fullest extent. However, if you feel this is something that you would prefer to keep confidential, I encourage you to speak with our campus survivor advocate and I also have a list of both campus and community resources I would be happy to share with you. We can review those resources together if you'd like.

Student: Yes, I think I would prefer to keep it confidential. Could you give me those resources?

Faculty/Staff: Of course. Here you go [**brochure; pamphlet; wallet card; website: www.cpp.edu/officeofequity**]. The survivor advocate on campus is a confidential resource and located in the Counseling Center. (Would you like me walk you over or call together?) If you change your mind and decide that you want to report the incident, please know. I am here to listen and help.

✓ **Contact Title IX Coordinator to report and ask questions**

- You are not expected to know everything! When the disclosing student is with you or after they leave, you may find that you have questions. Use your resources so that you can provide the best response possible to the student. Additionally, as a “responsible employee,” under [CSU E.O. 1097](http://www.csu.edu/1097), you have an obligation to report information about the incident, including identities of those involved, to the Title IX Coordinator – even if they ask to be anonymous.

- After speaking with the student, please fill out and submit an online Title IX report at: <https://www.cpp.edu/~officeofequity/titleix/report-an-incident/shtml>

You may also call the OEC at (909)-869-4646 to make a report.

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Student: I would like to talk to you about it if that's ok.

Faculty/Staff: Of course, and is it alright if I close the door to keep this conversation as private as possible?

Student: Yes, I prefer that, thanks.

Faculty/Staff: Thank you for having the courage to share this with me today. It sounds like you are going through something quite difficult. I am here to offer you support and also serve as a bridge to the many helpful resources available to you. [If the student has made self-blaming comments, you can say: Many people blame themselves for the behavior and choices made by another person. Please remember that it is not your fault and you are not alone.] Here are some resources [**brochure; pamphlet; wallet card; website:** www.cpp.edu/officeofequity]

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What if someone is about to disclose, but I have another obligation to tend to?

Be honest with the person. If you get the sense that someone is about to disclose to you and you have an obligation to be somewhere else or you are otherwise unable to provide the person with your full attention or have an impending deadline, let the student know. It is very obvious if you are distracted, watching the clock, fidgeting, etc. and while you may be well-intentioned, you are doing far more damage by not being present at a time they need you most. You can say something like:

"I get the sense that you are about to share something very important with me. I want to be fully present for you, and in this moment I know I cannot give you that as I need to (pick my child up from school, give an exam, make it to my next meeting, etc.). Is there a time later today that we could talk? And if not, can I connect you with someone on campus whom you can speak with more immediately?"

They may say they would rather wait and talk to you when you are available over the next couple of days. You want to honor their wishes, and when sexual violence is involved, time can be a factor, particularly for medical services. If possible, it's important to do your best to speak with them that same day, or at minimum, let them know of their options, including the right to receive a forensic exam.

-- Adapted from Culture of Respect

Provide support

Consider the surroundings:

- Does the student feel safe right now? What would help the student feel more comfortable?
- Is this area private?
- Does the student want a support person there with them? A glass of water? A closed or open door?
- Turn your full attention to the student, ignoring any distractions such as cell phones.
- Sit on the same level as the student with open body language, avoid barriers (e.g. desk)
- Avoid touching or hugging the student, even if you are close with them.

Things you can say

- "Thanks for coming to see me (or telling me or calling)."
- "Take your time."
- "What is your biggest concern right now?"
- "What's on your mind?"
- "What can I do to make you feel safer?"
- "What would help you the most today?"
- "You have support at Cal Poly."
- "No one should have to face something like this alone."
- "How are you feeling right now?"
- "You did what you needed to do to make it through."
- "Feel free to say whatever is on your mind."
- "You're not burdening me, I'm here to help."
- "We don't have to figure everything out at once. Let's take it one step at a time."
- Sometimes nothing. Be comfortable with some silence and pauses.

-- Adapted from The Respect Program at Emory University