



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS  
32 OLD SLIP, 26<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10005

TIMOTHY C. J. BLANCHARD  
DIRECTOR  
NEW YORK OFFICE

March 26, 2015

(b)(6),(b)(7)(C)

Re: Case No. 02-15-2085  
State University of New York – Buffalo State College

Dear (b)(6),(b)(7)(C)

On (b)(6),(b)(7)(C), the U.S. Department of Education, New York Office for Civil Rights (OCR) received the above-referenced complaint that you filed against the State University of New York (SUNY) – Buffalo State College (the College). You alleged that the College failed to respond promptly and equitably to the report of sexual assault that you made on (b)(6),(b)(7)(C), thereby subjecting you to a sexually hostile environment. OCR has determined that your allegation is appropriate for investigation.

OCR is responsible for enforcing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in programs and activities receiving financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education (the Department). The College is a recipient of financial assistance from the Department. Therefore, OCR has jurisdictional authority to investigate this complaint under Title IX.

Because OCR has determined that it has jurisdiction and that the complaint was filed in a timely manner, it is opening your allegation for investigation. Please note that opening the allegation for investigation in no way implies that OCR has made a determination with regard to its merit. During the investigation, OCR is a neutral fact-finder, collecting and analyzing relevant evidence from you, the recipient, and other sources, as appropriate. OCR will ensure that its investigation is legally sufficient and is dispositive of the allegation, in accordance with the provisions of Article III of OCR's *Case Processing Manual*.

OCR's goal is the prompt and appropriate resolution of the allegations contained in a complaint. OCR offers, when appropriate, an Early Complaint Resolution (ECR) process, similar to mediation, to facilitate the voluntary resolution of complaints by providing an early opportunity for the parties involved to resolve the allegation(s). Some information about the ECR process is



contained in the publication entitled, "OCR Complaint Processing Procedures," which was enclosed with OCR's previous letter to you acknowledging your complaint. This information is also on OCR's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrcpm.html#II>.

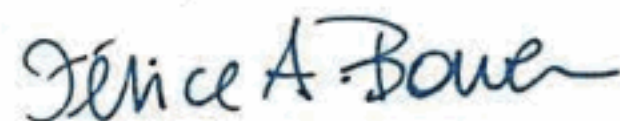
Also, when appropriate, a complaint may be resolved before the conclusion of an investigation after the recipient expresses an interest to OCR to resolve the complaint. In such cases, OCR obtains a resolution agreement signed by the recipient. This agreement must be aligned with the complaint allegations or the information obtained during the investigation, and it must be consistent with applicable regulations. Additional information about this voluntary resolution process may be found in the publication, "OCR Complaint Processing Procedures," which was enclosed with OCR's previous letter to you, acknowledging your complaint. This information is also on OCR's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrcpm.html#III>.

Please be advised that the College may not harass, coerce, intimidate, or discriminate against any individual because he or she has filed a complaint or participated in the complaint resolution process. If this happens, you may file another complaint alleging such treatment.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. In the event that OCR receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personally identifiable information, which, if released, could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

OCR will communicate with you periodically regarding the status of your complaint. If you are interested in resolving your complaint through OCR's ECR process or have any questions, please contact Letisha Morgan, Senior Compliance Team Investigator, at (646) 428-3827 or [letisha.morgan@ed.gov](mailto:letisha.morgan@ed.gov); or, Joy M. Purcell, Compliance Team Attorney, at (646) 428-3766 or [joy.purcell@ed.gov](mailto:joy.purcell@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Félice A. Bowen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Félice" and last name "Bowen" clearly legible.

Félice A. Bowen  
Compliance Team Leader