

Press Release

Patty Crawford Receives Notice of Historic Title IX Investigation Findings Against Baylor University

December 16, 2024 – Patty Crawford, former Title IX Coordinator for Baylor University, was notified by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) on December 12, 2024, of the conclusion of an extensive eight-year investigation into Baylor University's handling of Title IX complaints. The findings confirmed that the University had been in gross non-compliance with Title IX regulations during Ms. Crawford's tenure as Title IX Coordinator (November 2014 - October 2016) and continued its non-compliance for years after her resignation.

Baylor University's failure to adequately respond to complaints of sexual harassment, particularly involving student-athletes, has been thoroughly documented by the OCR. The investigation found that the University consistently violated Title IX regulations, including the improper involvement of the Athletics Department in Title IX investigations and delays in the resolution of complaints. These practices compromised the integrity of the University's investigations and resulted in significant harm to victims of sexual harassment and assault.

As a result of these violations, Baylor University entered into a resolution agreement with the Department of Education, signed by Baylor's president, Dr. Linda Livingstone, on December 4, 2024. The five-page agreement includes extensive requirements to overhaul Baylor's Title IX procedures, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that the Title IX Coordinator has the necessary authority and independence to coordinate the University's response to sexual harassment complaints. The agreement mandates sweeping changes to improve accountability, transparency, and fairness in Baylor's handling of sexual assault cases.

"This report confirms what I have been saying for years – Baylor University failed to comply with Title IX, jeopardizing the safety and rights of students, and retaliated against me for my efforts to do my job in ensuring compliance," said Patty Crawford. "The findings validate my concerns and those of many others who have spoken out about the University's mishandling of sexual harassment cases, especially when athletes were involved."

The OCR's investigation covered the period from 2014 to 2020 and revealed significant issues, including improper interference by the Athletics Department in Title IX investigations, failure to provide a timely and equitable process for complainants and respondents, and a pattern of discouraging or silencing complainants. In particular, the investigation uncovered a troubling trend where Baylor administrators discouraged students from pursuing complaints, leading to a substantial number of cases being closed without investigation.

Despite efforts by the University to address these issues through external audits and changes to its policies, the OCR's findings underscore a continuing pattern of failure to meet federal Title IX standards. Among the key findings were violations involving improper suspension of athletes without due process and the failure to centralize Title IX records, which hindered the ability of the Title IX Coordinator to respond effectively to complaints.

The resolution agreement signed by Dr. Livingstone represents a critical step toward ensuring Baylor's compliance with Title IX moving forward. However, the extensive timeline of non-compliance highlighted in the OCR's findings reveals the long-lasting impact of the University's systemic failures.

"While this resolution agreement is a necessary step, it cannot erase the harm caused by Baylor's failures over the years. The University's actions have undermined the trust of students and the public," Crawford said. "I am hopeful that with this agreement, the University will finally be held accountable, and that future students will have the resources and protections they deserve."

For the official Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Resolution Agreement letter document and investigative summary letter to complainant, Patty Crawford visit www.pattycrawfordconsulting.com

About Patty Crawford:

Patty Crawford served as Baylor University's first Title IX Coordinator from November 2014 to October 2016. During her tenure, she raised concerns regarding the University's mishandling of sexual harassment cases, particularly those involving student-athletes. In September 2014, she filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, which ultimately led to the investigation and findings shared today.