CARLETON COLLEGE SEXUAL MISCONDUCT SUPPORT (SMS) ADVISERS

Overview

SMS Advisers help students navigate the sexual misconduct resolution process. Their role is to
- provide information about policies, procedures and the resolution process
- provide support, advice and guidance throughout the resolution process
- follow up after the resolution and refer to available resources as needed

A student (whether complainant or respondent) may select either an available SMS Adviser from the pool of trained professionals, or an adviser from outside the pool, including someone outside the campus community (e.g., a friend, mentor, family member, or attorney). Outside advisers are not eligible for training by the College, so they may lack the depth of insight and knowledge the trained SMS Advisers have about the process. The College cannot guarantee equal advisory rights: if one party selects an adviser who is an attorney, but the other party does not (say, for financial reasons), the College is not obligated to provide an attorney.

Once the Title IX Coordinator officially assigns an SMS Adviser to a complainant or respondent, information the student shares with the SMS Adviser will remain confidential. This means that College reporting obligations are suspended, unless the SMS Adviser believes the student presents a harm to self or others.

What Students Can Expect of SMS Advisers

SMS Advisers Provide Information About Policies, Procedures, and the Resolution Process
Students are entitled to be accompanied by their adviser in all required meetings, including informational meetings, investigative interviews, resolution meetings, and appeals. Advisers can help their advisees prepare for each meeting and are expected to advise ethically, with integrity and in good faith.

SMS Advisers
- discuss the role of the SMS Adviser
- answer questions related to Carleton’s sexual misconduct policy and resolution procedures
- provide information about the process by going through the first-conversation checklist (if the Adviser meets with the student prior to the student’s meeting with the Title IX Coordinator)
- notify the Title IX Coordinator and Investigator of the (potential) complaint

SMS Advisers Provide Support, Advice, and Guidance Throughout the Resolution Process
Students can expect SMS Advisers to
- offer compassionate support while refraining from negative talk about other complainants or respondents
- check in with them throughout the process
- keep them aware of SMS Adviser availability to meet as needed
- attend informational meetings, investigation interviews, meeting with board chair, resolution meeting, and appeals-related meetings

SMS Advisers Follow Up After the Resolution Process and Refer Students to Available Resources
Students can expect SMS Advisers to
- check in with them promptly following the resolution, and additional times as appropriate, depending on the needs and demeanor of the student
- provide information about counseling services at SHAC and/or other resources, as appropriate

In addition, SMS Advisers provide important feedback to members of the Title IX Lead Team about students’ experiences, areas of concern, and recommendations for change to the resolution process.
What the College Expects of Advisers

All advisers are subject to the same campus resolution process expectations, including
- consulting with the Title IX coordinator, as needed, about any process related questions or to clarify the role the adviser is expected to take prior to interviews and the resolution meeting
- refraining from interference with the College investigation and resolution process
- maintaining the privacy of records and information shared with them (see Carleton College’s Adviser Policy for additional information)

Adviser Dos and Don’ts
- Advisers must refrain from addressing campus officials during interviews and the resolution meeting, because Carleton’s process expects complainants and respondents to speak for themselves
- Advisers may not prepare remarks, statements, or other materials on behalf of their advisees
- Advisers may confer quietly with their advisees as necessary during interviews, meetings and the hearing, as long as they do not disrupt the process (for longer discussions, the student/complainant or respondent or their adviser should request a break to allow time for private conversation)
- Advisers may not share any information from complainants/respondents with the Title IX Coordinator without the explicit permission of the complainants/respondents

SMS Qualifications

SMS Advisers are professional staff or faculty members at Carleton College. SMS Advisers must be knowledgeable about Carleton’s resolution process and support resources so they can confidently and appropriately assist and guide students. Advisers must also understand their role vis-à-vis the entire Sexual Misconduct Support & Response Team. For these reasons, regular attendance at training is required.

SMS Training & Time Commitment

SMS Advisers must be able to attend regularly scheduled CBSM/SMSA training sessions, which provide detailed information about Carleton’s sexual misconduct policies, procedures, and resolution process. At these trainings, SMS Advisers will also learn about available resources at Carleton and in Northfield, how to best support complainants and respondents, and how to address common issues and concerns of those involved.

Potential SMS Advisers should take into consideration that
- regularly scheduled trainings take place each term, typically on Wednesdays from 4:00-5:15 p.m., during 2nd through 6th week
- they must be available for meetings with assigned students and resolution hearings, which are usually scheduled for Wednesday evenings

Estimating the amount of time SMS Advisers spend on this role is difficult, since it can vary from week to week and student to student. Most weeks, SMS Advisers will have only the training meeting. No advising time is required during weeks when there are no training workshops and Advisers are not assigned a student. However, the time commitment greatly increases when an Adviser is assigned a student. Some students may want to meet every day; others may want to meet once a week, while others may prefer to have electronic contact.