

# The Politics of Protecting the Great Barrier Reef

LA 119 Spring 2023

Unique No: 30729  
Course Delivery: In person only.  
Meeting Dates: Wednesdays, 3-4pm  
Classroom: MEZ 1.216  
Professor: Rhonda Evans, J.D., Ph.D. (she/her/hers)  
Email: [revans@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:revans@austin.utexas.edu)  
Office Hours: Via zoom 5-6pm, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays. Appointment required  
Through Bookings, which will send you an email with a zoom link. 15-minute slots only.

## Professor Bio

Dr. Rhonda Evans directs the Edward A. Clark Center for Australian and New Zealand Studies and is an Associate Professor of Instruction in the Department of Government. She was previously an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at East Carolina University. Dr. Evans holds a Ph.D. in Government from UT-Austin, a J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh, and a B.A. in Political Science from Kent State University's Honors College, graduating *phi beta kappa*. As a lawyer licensed to practice in her home state of Ohio, she served as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Tuscarawas County and as a Staff Attorney with Southeastern Ohio Legal Services. Her research is interdisciplinary in nature and reflects her training in law and political science. Dr. Evans is working on a book on the Australian Human Rights Commission. She is co-author of *Legislating Equality: The Politics of Antidiscrimination Policy in Europe* with Oxford University Press (2014). For a more personal bio, see Canvas.

## Course Description

Comprised of 900 islands that stretch over 1,600 miles, the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) is roughly half the size of Texas. It is the only living organism that is visible from space. Despite its status as an Australian icon and UNESCO World Heritage Site, the GBR's very existence is under threat. In 2016, it experienced the worst episode of coral bleaching in recorded history—around 90 percent of corals in Far North Queensland died. This led *Outside* magazine to publish an [obituary](#) for the GBR. As with Mark Twain, reports of the GBR's death were an exaggeration, but the Reef indeed faces numerous and formidable challenges—coastal development, agricultural run-off, ocean acidification, coral bleaching, damage from shipping traffic, overfishing, and global warming, among others. How could such a beloved environmental treasure be in such a beleaguered state? This course takes students to Townsville, Australia—home to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority—to unravel that puzzle.

Doing so requires a level of engagement that transcends glossy tourist brochures and sensationalist news headlines. Students will learn firsthand the complex political, economic, and societal contexts within which the GBR exists. The Reef is located in Queensland, a state that is roughly two-and-a-half times the size of Texas. Like Texas, Queensland is known for having a conservative political culture, and agricultural and energy industries play important roles in its economy. The GBR lies in close proximity to important farming and mining regions. Large ports, like the one in Townsville, enable Australia's agricultural and mineral commodities to enter the stream of global commerce. Bound mainly for Asia, large container ships ferry their cargo through the GBR's fragile ecosystems. And, of course, the GBR is, itself, a tourist magnet—more than two million visitors each year inject roughly AU\$6 billion into Queensland's economy. In addition, over 70 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owner groups maintain longstanding and continuing relationships with the GBR region. These various interests complicate policymaking processes with respect to protecting the Reef.

In examining these processes, this course addresses the following questions: What, according to the most rigorous scientific studies, is the current state of the GBR's ecosystems? What policies are in place to manage and protect the GBR, and what levels of government are responsible for implementing those policies? What explains the adoption of those policies—in other words, what are their political and economic foundations? How well are existing policies working? Are there better policy options? And, if so, what are the political prospects for their adoption? In sum, to what extent is GBR policy driven by scientific evidence versus political imperatives? In answering these questions, the course considers the role of political institutions, party politics, economic interests, societal values, activists, and experts in shaping policy outcomes.

It does so through a combination of classroom learning and on-site investigation at the GBR, itself. The latter entails visiting the GBR and seeing firsthand the difference between healthy and unhealthy coral reefs; learning from leading GBR researchers about the threats to the GBR; and meeting with representatives from various political, economic, and societal sectors with interests in the GBR. The course will combine regular classroom meetings with group-based active learning. Individually, students will assume the role of researchers charged with ascertaining the state of the GBR, evaluating the effectiveness of current policies, and assessing the GBR's future prospects. Within those parameters, they will be free to focus on a specific issue of their choice.

The course will have a regular classroom schedule, but its defining feature will be its access to the GBR and various persons with special knowledge and interests in the GBR. Small groups of roughly five students each will be assembled based on student responses to a pre-trip survey. During their four weeks in the field, students will engage with one another in their groups as they pursue their individual research projects. Group work will consist of preparing for their meetings and excursions, which will entail: (1) researching the people with whom they will meet and the places they will visit; (2) identifying what they wish to learn from their meetings and excursions; and, (3) drafting specific questions to ask in their meetings and excursions.

Air travel to Australia has a significant carbon footprint. As a means of offsetting some of that, students will assist traditional landowners at Mungalla Station in restoration activities, and they will assist with reef restoration on Magnetic Island through a program operated by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority Reef Headquarters. Additional opportunities will be identified for those students who wish to do more.

## **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have an equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>.

While it's true that Professors can see your SSD accommodations letters in the faculty portal, you are nevertheless **required to meet with me to discuss your accommodations within the two weeks of the course** or shortly after your accommodations have been approved if that occurs **mid-semester** so that we can be sure to meet your accommodations needs and facilitate your learning experience in the class. Accommodations will not be provided until you have met with me. Of course, you are not required to disclose any information about your disability. Your SSD information will be kept confidential. Help us help you.

## How to Know What's Going on (Email/Canvas Policy)

Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence. We will email you at your officially registered email address, **and** notifications will be sent to that address via the Announcements function in Canvas. You are responsible for reading your email for University and course-related information and announcements. It is your responsibility to keep the University informed about changes to your e-mail address. You can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating your e-mail address [here](#).

You should check your e-mail regularly and frequently—we recommend daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with University-related communications, some of which may be time-critical.

Before emailing questions about some aspect of how the course operates, **review this syllabus and the Canvas page**. They will likely contain the answer that you seek. Substantive questions about the course material will be answered at office hours **not via email and especially not at the eleventh hour before an exam or assignment is due. Come and talk to us, or raise your hand in the classroom. I enthusiastically welcome such questions in class.**

**When emailing the Professor, specify the course that you're in. I am teaching three courses this semester.**

## Required Learning Assessments

**I have a zero-tolerance policy on cheating. If you cheat, you don't go to Australia. Period.** This course employs a variety of mechanisms to assess student learning. All of the following requirements must be met in order to receive a passing grade for the course, i.e., you don't submit one of them, you fail the entire course.

Assignments	Points available	Example	Due dates
One one-on-one office hours visit (required)	2	2	Within first six weeks of semester
Participation	30	15	All semester! May miss two class meetings without penalty.
Reflection paper 1	10	10	Friday, January 20 by 11:59pm
Exam 1	20	20	Wednesday, March 1 (in class)
Draft policy memo	28	20	As assigned between March 8 and April 19
Reflection paper 2	10	10	Wednesday, April 19 by 3:00pm
Total score	100	77	

### Exam:

An exam will consist of some combination of T/F, multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short-answer, and/or essay questions. It will test your knowledge from the book, *The Coral Battleground*. You do not need a bluebook.

### Writing Assignments:

Performance will be assessed in terms of the substantive quality of your papers (i.e., did you do what you were supposed to do, and did you do it well?) and in terms of the quality of the writing. Yes, the quality of your writing counts (either for you or against you) just like it will in your postgraduate lives. We encourage you to make use of the [University Writing Center](#). I mean, why not? You're paying for it.

Because writing assignments are **meant to test your individual knowledge** rather than constitute a group effort, you may use your notes (content that you created), but **you may not use group-generated documents**. See *Sec. 11-402 Academic Dishonesty*. Use of group-generated documents for individual assignments will be treated as acts of academic dishonesty and treated accordingly.

## How the Course Works

### Learning Guides:

The learning guides (located in the modules on Canvas) are designed to help you read in a more targeted and instrumental fashion. Use the learning objectives, key concepts (for those learning guides that contain them), and learning questions to help you identify and skim those sections of the material that do not relate directly to the course and meaningfully engage those sections of the material that do.

In engaging the learning questions, be sure to write out answers *in your own words*—don't just copy sentences from the material verbatim. Otherwise, it's highly likely that you won't actually understand the material fully and won't be able to perform well on the tests and assignments, particularly when test questions or assignments ask you to apply the material. For the key concepts (for those learning guides that contain them), you should be able to define and state the significance of each. Significance generally lies in a concept's relationship to something else, its wider implications, or both

The reading should be done in a timely fashion, i.e., *before* you attend class or watch the lecture recording. Doing so will ensure that you are primed for the lecture material, and it will enhance your ability to take high quality notes. Because learning is an iterative process, this is the model that I propose you follow in this course. Read over the learning guide. Then, do the reading. Answer the learning questions and be sure that you understand the key concepts. Attend class and/or watch the lecture recordings and take notes. Periodically review your notes throughout the semester and try to understand how the material from past classes relates to the current material. Identify points that you don't fully understand and ask the TA questions at office hours in order to clarify these points.

Why not try to maximize the value that you get for your educational dollar? Do you ever pay money for something and demand less than what you paid for? No? Then, why do it with your education?

### Can I use my laptop, tablet, or miscellaneous electronic device in the classroom?

No, not unless laptop use is recognized as an official SSD accommodation or you have a laptop-related accommodation pending.

### Class Participation:

I take attendance and require class participation, which can take various forms depending on the particular day. Being "prepared for class" means that you completed the reading before class. **You may miss no more than two classes without incurring a penalty.**

### Course Materials

All course materials are freely available to you through Canvas or online through the PCL library. Materials for each class meeting are specified below. If you have difficulty opening a URL link in Canvas, simply click the blue box labelled "Open Site in New Window."

You're not required to purchase the book *Doing Honest Work in College: How to Prepare Citations, Avoid Plagiarism, and Achieve Real Academic Success*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. By Charles Lipson (University Chicago Press, 2018), but I highly recommend it. It's available on campus ([here](#)), and a used copy can be purchased from our [Amazon](#) overlords for about \$10. A couple of chapters are available to you in the Student Resources module in Canvas.

## **Class Meetings & Course Schedule**

### **WEEK 1**

**01/11: Introduction to the professor, teaching assistant, and course.**

**Assignment: Reflection essay 1 due by Friday, January 20 at 11:59pm.**

### **WEEK 2**

**01/18: Mining and the Great Barrier Reef plus a pre-departure orientation.**

Julia Pfeiffer of Texas Global will join the class for a 30-monute pre-departure orientation.

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. pp. xi-xxvi; 1-26.

### **WEEK 3**

**01/25: Oil-drilling and the Great Barrier Reef.**

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. 27-55.

### **WEEK 4**

**02/01: Federalism and the Great Barrier Reef.**

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. 56-93.

### **WEEK 5**

**02/08: The fight gets more complicated.**

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. 94-133.

### **WEEK 6**

**02/15: Media, social mobilization, and federalism.**

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. 134-161.

### **WEEK 7**

**02/22: Towards the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (Cth)*.**

Reading: *The Coral Battleground*, pp. 162-196.

### **WEEK 8**

**03/01: In-class exam 1.**

### **WEEK 9**

**03/08: Peer review policy memo workshop.**

### **WEEK 10**

**03/15: No class. Spring Break – Rejoice!**

### **WEEK 11**

**03/22: Peer review policy memo workshop.**

### **WEEK 12**

**03/29: Peer review policy memo workshop.**

### **WEEK 13**

**04/05: Peer review policy memo workshop.**

### **WEEK 14**

**04/12: Peer review policy memo workshop.**

### **WEEK 15**

**04/19: Peer review policy memo workshop and course evaluations.**

**Assignment: Reflection essay 2 due by Friday, April 19 by 3:0pm.**

**See you in Australia!!!!!!**

## **Disability and Access Accommodations**

I strive to create a supportive learning environment for all students and to ensure that all students enjoy equal access and opportunity in the course of their educational experiences at UT-Austin. Some students require accommodations in order to achieve these objectives. Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

While it's true that the professor can see your SSD accommodations letters in the faculty portal, you are nevertheless **required to meet with the TA to discuss your accommodations within the two weeks of the course** or shortly after your accommodations have been approved if that occurs **mid-semester** so that we can be sure to meet your accommodations needs and facilitate your learning experience in the class.

Accommodations will not be provided until you have met with the TA. Of course, you are not required to disclose any information about your disability. Your SSD information will be kept confidential. Help us help you.

In some instances, a student has not gone through the formal process of documenting their disability with the University. If you find yourself in this situation, visit this [website \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

If you require note-taking accommodations, notes can be collected from a student in the class and provided to you. The TA will coordinate this. The TA is your primary point of contact regarding notes.

## **Grading Policies**

Final course grades will be calculated according to the University's +/- system. Do we round up? It depends. To illustrate, a 93.5 (for example) would be rounded up to an A, whereas a 93.4 would be an A-. Expect ten points to be deducted for every day that an assignment is late.

90-93 A-  
87-89 B+  
84-86 B

80-83 B-  
77-79 C+  
74-76 C  
70-73 C-  
67-69 D+  
64-66 D  
60-63 D-  
59 and below F

## **How might I get feedback on my performance in the course?**

Glad you asked! We highly recommend that you seek out feedback on your assignments. The TA is responsible for grading. Here's what to do.

We ask that you first invest some time in evaluating your work. Our own writing can read quite differently a day or more after it was written. [That's why it's a great idea to get an early start on writing assignments.] So, for writing assignments, before meeting with the TA we ask that you take some time to re-read and self-assess your work against the general feedback provided to the class on Canvas. Consider the paper's strengths and weaknesses. Think about how you would characterize your paper. What parts of it are excellent, very good, just good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory? Which of those terms would you use to characterize its overall quality? You can share this self-assessment with the TA in an email. Your assessment will be used to inform your discussion with the TA.

Why do this? We learn by reviewing our own work in a meaningful way. This process is meant to facilitate your own active role in your educational experience. By critically assessing your own work, you are better prepared to engage in a more substantive conversation with the TA. This process is not meant to be an onerous burden or obstacle to getting feedback. Rather, it is meant to help you learn how to improve your analysis and writing skills.

## **What if I want to contest my grade?**

The TA will grade exams and writing assignments according to a key generated by the Professor and will consult with the Professor during the grading process.

Before lodging a grade complaint for a writing assignment, we ask that you first follow the process described in the previous section, entitled "How Do I Get Feedback on my Work?" Before lodging a grade complaint for an exam, you must first meet with the TA to review your exam. In either case, contact the TA via email within seven days of grades being posted to Canvas. The TA will meet with you and may exercise discretion to alter the grade.

If you thereafter remain dissatisfied with your exam or writing assignment grade, you may lodge a formal grade complaint in writing by emailing the Professor within three days of meeting with the TA. Understand that the Professor will re-grade the writing assignment/exam in its entirety and may assign a higher **or** lower overall grade than that originally assigned by the TA. Students who remain dissatisfied with a final course grade may elect to pursue action at the College-level. More on that [here](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)).

## **Do you offer extra credit or make-up work?**

No. Work hard. There will be none, nada, zilch. This is my line in the sand. Understand that when you ask a professor to offer you extra credit or make-up work you are asking *them* to do *extra work* to help you, someone who clearly didn't do the requisite work or who failed to achieve a particular grade.

**But, what if I need a particular grade in this course in order to graduate, get into law school, or maintain my scholarship, my academic standing, or my parents' love or financial support?**

The burden is on you (not us) to hit that mark. Your best strategy is to work hard, make use of the TA's office hours, get feedback on your work, etc. from the beginning of the course in order to maximize your performance throughout the course. *Your* grade is entirely up to *you*. Apprising us of your plight at or near the semester's end, pleading for special treatment, and attempting to lay a guilt trip on us will not work. The Professor has zero patience for this sort of entitled, manipulative, and unprofessional behavior.

**What if I'm really struggling in the course or with life more generally?**

We've all been in a tough spot a time or two in our lives, so we get it. We really do. First step, let us know you're struggling. We don't need all the details. Just reach out for help. The Professor and TA are here to help you. Visit our online office hours as soon as you experience difficulty. Do not delay! Come by and discuss the material with us. Solicit feedback on drafts of your assignments. Request feedback on assignments on which you performed poorly. We want to see you succeed. Help us help you in a timely fashion!

If you experience a personal or family emergency (e.g., COVID-19 issues, death in the family, protracted sickness, serious mental health issues, etc.) that prevents you from participating in the course, contact [Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students \(Links to an external site.\)](#). They will work with you to communicate with your professors (including me) and let them know of your situation. Taking this step makes it easier for professors to accommodate students in distress. If you do not have off-campus access to a computer and/or Wi-Fi, please contact [Student Emergency Services \(Links to an external site.\)](#) for support.

The University also provides resources to help if you experience a mental health crisis (e.g., depression, anxiety, etc.). Call the confidential [Counseling and Mental Health Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#) Crisis line at 512-471-CALL (2255). Call from wherever you are even if you aren't sure you're in a full-blown crisis but sincerely need help. Staff are there to help you. You're paying for these services. Please use them if you need them.

## **Important (Must-Read) Administrative Policies**

### **Academic Integrity:**

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at UT; therefore, we will not tolerate acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize, or falsify with regard to exams or the writing assignment. Should we determine that an academic integrity violation has taken place, we will follow the University's formal process for dealing with such matters. You are expected to be familiar with the UT Honor Code: <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/>. We refer you specifically to *Subchapter 11-400. Prohibited Conduct* in its entirety. Also consult the section on **sharing course materials and intellectual property policies** that appear in the final, **must-read** section of the syllabus. **I define plagiarism to include using text written by a generation system as one's own (e.g., entering a prompt into an artificial intelligence tool and using the output in a paper).**

### **GroupMe, etc.:**

Why is it that nearly all students despise "group-work" but are only too eager to collaborate on compiling group documents? Because I understand that group discussions among students can facilitate the learning process, I do not discourage those. I do, however, prohibit the construction of group documents related to graded assignments. This is a distinction *with* a difference. I will be happy to discuss it with you. Use of GroupMe or other similar mechanisms for the compilation of group work to be used by individuals for their graded assignments will result in failure of the course. **I am a former Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for the State of Ohio. Do not give me a reason to slip back into prosecutorial mode. Note that failure to know and understand the policy (i.e., ignorance) is no defense.**

**Accommodations for Religious Holidays and Students with Disabilities:**

The TA will manage all accommodations. By UT Austin policy, you must notify us of your pending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, (512) 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

**Intellectual Property Policy:**

This course was created by Dr. Evans, and as such, it is her intellectual property. Students are, therefore, not permitted to disseminate by any means any of the course content created by Dr. Evans, including lecture recordings, power point presentations and slides, or other learning materials. Students who do so without permission will face legal action in a court of law.

**Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:**

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (exams or writing assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course."

**The Professional Environment:**

Unless instructed otherwise, you should address professors as either "Dr." or "Professor," which would make me either "Dr. Evans" or "Professor Evans."

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the professor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center

(<http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>). We will strive to honor **your request** to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and we will strive to address you by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they, etc.). **Bear in mind that there are roughly 100 students in this class (which is one of three courses that I'm teaching this semester).** Please advise us of any changes early in the semester so that we may make appropriate updates to our records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns>.

**Email Policy:**

See also the policy at the start of the syllabus. The text of your email should clearly state the nature of your inquiry, the name of the course, and either your name as it appears on the course roster or the preferred name that you provided to us. All email correspondence from us to you will be automatically sent to your official UT email address. Therefore, you should know your official UT email address, and as a matter of practice, you should check your account regularly. I have endeavored to make this syllabus as thorough and clear as possible. Before emailing questions about the course, review the syllabus. It just may contain the answer that you seek. Substantive questions about the course material that require lengthy explanations or discussion will

only be answered in class (where they are especially welcomed) or during office hours. I will not respond to these types of questions by email.

### **Classroom Behavior:**

This applies with equal force in the online world. It's important that we have a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, and we all share the responsibility for creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Here are some guidelines for classroom behavior: (1) pay attention during class; (2) classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing; and, (3) any discussion from class that continues on any listserv or class discussion list should adhere to these same rules and expectations. It is a good rule to let professors know at the start of class if you will need to "leave" early.

### **Safety Matters:**

Occupants of buildings on the UT-Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their professor in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class professors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, the UT-Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency). The Office of Campus Safety and Security can be reached at 512-471-5767, <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/>, and the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL) can be reached at 512-232-5050.

### **Title IX Reporting and Texas SB212:**

Reporting Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Beginning 1 January 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 **requires all employees of Texas universities**, including faculty, to **report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking** that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported.

**We are Responsible Employees and MUST (we are legally required to) report any Title IX related incidents that are disclosed to us in writing, discussion, emails, or one-on-one exchanges. Before talking with us, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee.**

If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu). For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including the types of conduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.