



## Dr Wood - Conversation #1

1 message

Tim Hewitt [REDACTED]

To: Timothy Hewitt [REDACTED]

Tue, Apr 25, 2023

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Tim Hewitt [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Follow-up to Parent Connect  
**Date:** March 14, 2023 at 10:29:52 AM GMT+7  
**To:** "Wood, Jon" [REDACTED]

Dr. Wood,

Thank you for your response. I hear and appreciate your appeal.

More than anything at this point, I want to accept it, assure my children in the same way and move forward.

Yet, it is too difficult to resolve the dissonance between their experiences and interactions on campus with your assurances.

I fully agree and have told my kids that our vantage points do not include all of the relevant information, and that is why I have come to you.

But, rather than helping to broaden that perspective and give details as to how the Title IX policies are enforced, you're simply telling us to believe something different than what we see happening.

I understand that you cannot / will not respond further, but in good conscience, I cannot just let this go.

There has to be a place for dialogue and conversation about the larger issue, without the University seemingly stepping behind the shield of privacy to avoid difficult discussions, not specific to an individual case, but rather how the published and enforceable policies are carried out.

I will prayerfully and respectfully consider my next course of action.

Tim

On Mar 14, 2023, at 3:45 AM, Wood, Jon [REDACTED] wrote:

Tim,

Thank you for your kind words. I hope you are doing well. I have been in prayer for your ministry and family.

I appeal to you to recognize that quality policies, processes, and people are in place that all combine to foster a community where student concerns are taken seriously and addressed professionally. At no fault to anyone, I am confident your vantage point cannot include all the relevant information, and I cannot convey further information. This limitation is not unique to me, so there is no other person to refer you to for further dialogue. The University prioritizes our students' care, safety, and well-being and will continue to do so for all students. With appreciation for you, I am concluding our dialogue on these matters.

I hope you have a good week.

Indebted,

**Jon Wood**

*Vice President of Student Life & Christian Ministries*

**Cedarville University**

o: 937-766-7871



On Mon, Mar 13, 2023 at 6:31 AM Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Wood,

I hope you had a nice spring break week - hopefully you got some time out of the office!

I wanted to circle back with you about this to see if there is any space for further dialogue on this issue?

Thank you,  
Tim

On Feb 28, 2023, at 1:09 PM, Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Wood,

I wanted to follow up with you.

Do you consider our conversation complete at this point?

As I responded on the 20th of February, I still have serious concerns that I do not feel that we have satisfactorily addressed.

If you are not able to engage further, is there another forum or another person to which I can connect?

These are sensitive and important matters, and that is why I don't want to just simply cease communication on what seems to me to be an unresolved discussion.

Thank you,  
Tim Hewitt

On Feb 20, 2023, at 9:25 AM, Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Wood,

I appreciate your desire to ensure confidentiality, but my concern goes well beyond the specific case of [REDACTED] to the larger question of the general safety of my daughter and every other young woman at Cedarville.

What my wife and I are trying to reconcile is the reality that my daughter has a list of several young men on campus of whom she's been warned directly by her classmates to be careful of, to stay away from. 'They have multiple Title IX complaints against them, they're not safe, they're dangerous' are the warnings she has received. ([REDACTED] happens to be one of the names on that list.)

As a father, concerned for my daughter's safety and well being within the Cedarville community, I am trying to determine whether these warnings are simply hyperbole or whether they are reality. Is it just a coincidence that [REDACTED]' name is on my daughter's list of young men to avoid, and stay away from?

The experience of my kids on campus seems to say that this is in fact a reality.

I'm not questioning the specifics or the legitimacy of how individual Title IX complaint(s) have been handled in accordance to current policies.

My deep concern is the reality that repeat Title IX offenders are allowed to remain within the campus community with the seemingly toothless sanctions of: 'warning, reprimand, educational interventions, counseling, community service, restitution, probation, no contact order...'

Yes, dismissal is included at the end of this list, but from the perception of my kids and the wider campus community, dismissal is rarely used for repeat offenders.

Dr. White public referenced a discipline issue on Monday, in reference to the dismissal of [REDACTED].

I fully support the alcohol prohibition in the handbook, but what I struggle to understand is the equity in dismissing a student like [REDACTED] for drinking when young men who repeatedly sexually harass or stalk their fellow students receive only warnings, or do not contact orders, or counseling or... instead of being removed from the campus community for the safety and well being of every female student.

Can you help me understand why some actions like drinking can lead to immediate dismissal, but repeated sexual harassment is not considered a significant enough breach of the student handbook to warrant dismissal?

What does this communicate to every young woman on campus regarding their worth and value?

My kids are both quite disillusioned with the current climate on campus. I am very proud of both of my kids who were part of the small group of students who bravely and peacefully walked out of Chapel last Monday, only to be jeered and mocked by their peers and publicly reprimanded by Dr. White from the stage.

Dr. White in essence shut down any conversation about this by telling the students to stop filling in gaps with rumor. He referenced the stabbing simply as 'last week' without even a call to prayer [REDACTED]. He talked about confidentiality, complexities and such, but then just gave assurance that everything is handled correctly and with good intention, and in doing so, he closed any space for conversation.

My kids are accused by the administration, faculty, staff and their classmates of gossip when they are simply trying to have a discussion. There is something toxic and dangerous about an environment where genuine and open discussion cannot occur without spiritual bullying & spiritual manipulation shutting down the conversation from the start.

I have written and deleted and written and deleted this email so many times since I received your response on my Saturday night. I am working very hard to control my emotion in my written responses, and please forgive me, I feel that emotion has seeped more heavily into this response, but I have a growing despair regarding this situation and I don't know what to do.

Rather than reducing my concerns, our exchange over the past couple of weeks, especially in light of Dr. White's comments on the situation last Monday has only led to an even greater concern for the safety of my daughter within the Cedarville campus community.

With an extremely troubled heart,  
Tim

On Feb 18, 2023, at 9:05 PM, Wood, Jon [REDACTED] wrote:

Tim,

I have engaged this to the extent of which I am able at this time. While you have reframed the question, the reality is our dialogue is in the context of particular students. I will necessarily defer to ensuring privacy in matters that are currently in process not only institutionally, but also in the civic justice system. Thank you for your understanding.

Jon Wood

*Vice President of Student Life & Christian Ministries*

**Cedarville University**

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On Thu, Feb 16, 2023 at 5:08 PM Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Wood,

Thank you for your assurances that Title IX cases have been handled appropriately.

I know that in an earlier email, I said this assurance is what I mostly wanted, but after receiving these assurances, my heart (and my wife's) is still very unsettled. I have very serious concerns about the safety of my daughter within the Cedarville campus community.

Will you please respond to this question?

Does the Title IX office allow young men with multiple Title IX complaints against them to remain within the campus community?

Thank you,  
Tim

On Feb 16, 2023, at 10:31 PM, Wood, Jon [REDACTED] wrote:

Tim,

Thank you for your helpful feedback and admonitions. I receive these with a spirit of both self evaluation and institutional evaluation as we seek to strive toward excellence. Based on the current facts, I remain confident reports to the Title IX Office have been handled appropriately. To affirm your feedback about the broader student perspective, the Title IX Coordinator and I have discussed fresh ways we can serve. Our desire is to serve our students well and we will keep striving toward clarity and trust.

**Jon Wood**

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On Wed, Feb 15, 2023 at 11:27 PM Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Dr. Wood,

I hope your week is going well. I just wanted to follow up with you on this.

Thank you,  
Tim

On Feb 11, 2023, at 7:16 PM, Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

Dr. Wood,

Thank you again for your response.

I will encourage my son to come and speak with you. I know that he will be hesitant, feeling that it will not accomplish much, but I am hopeful that after discussing the issue with you he will gain a fuller picture of what your team does, what you can and cannot do in response to Title IX complaints, and that he will see your heart for mitigating as many of these situations as possible. I certainly do not doubt that!

There are a few questions/comments that I have after your most recent response:

#1 - You say that outcomes from Title IX complaints can include disciplinary actions, up to dismissal when appropriate. How do you define appropriate? How many complaints have to be filed before a young man is removed from the campus community? Is there a matrix for the difficult decision to dismiss a student, or is it subjective? I understand that different situations require different responses, but I've literally been hearing stories for the past two and a half years, ever since my son moved on campus, about young men with multiple Title IX complaints remaining on campus. Are these stories just exaggerated or made up?

Does the Title IX office allow young men with multiple complaints against them to remain within the campus community?

This is a general question not specific to [REDACTED] - so I am hopeful you can directly answer this important question.

#2 - I understand the need for consistent reporting, but to lay the burden of the university not taking action against repeat and known predators because not enough young women are consistently reporting shifts the burden to the victim and frankly causes further trauma to the young women who are simply looking for protection.

I feel strongly that it is the responsibility of the administration that we as parents have entrusted our young adults to, to have a clear pulse on what is happening on campus - obviously not every detail - but the general ups and downs of the student body. From both of my students' perspective, the outcry from students about these matters falls on deaf ears.

#3 - I know that perspective is not fact - so the common perception of many young women that reporting to Title IX will result in nothing more than additional trauma for reporting is not true. Reporting is important, I fully agree with this, and my kids strongly advocate for young women to file a complaint.

But - if this is such a wide held perspective among the student body, there needs to be some hard questions asked why this is. It may not be true, but there is a reason why so many people feel this way. There must be some history, some level of truth, or at minimum a pattern of not being heard and taken seriously that perpetuates this perspective.

#4 - I do not doubt your statements that you handle everything in line with the institution's Title IX policies. So, ultimately this begs the question, why is this still such an issue? My understanding is that compliance to Title IX requirements is a bare minimum for institutional eligibility, and coverage from legal liability.

But, as a Cedarville family - an institution committed to the Gospel and living that out in a fallen world, we should be better, we should do more than the 'minimum required'. (Even as I write this, I want you to know that I do not belittle or dismiss the hard work of your Title IX team.) But - as we'd say in India - "What to do?"

What more can be done - a revamp to the code of conduct / community covenant? Tougher sanctions for repeat offenders? If the administration is not getting a full and proper read on the situation from the student body's perspective, perhaps there can be new student structures set in place to monitor, report and take action outside of, but in cooperation with the Title IX office?

Something serious needs to change, this is clear.

This is a key moment, I feel, for this current student body to be heard and understood by the administration.

I am praying for wisdom and grace for you all.

Tim Hewitt

On Feb 10, 2023, at 9:45 PM, Wood, Jon [REDACTED] wrote:

Tim,

I have continued gratitude for what you are sharing and your spirit as you convey your thoughts and concerns.

In short, the purpose of the Title IX office is to offer support to those who have experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence, and domestic/dating violence. This scope includes the range of supportive measures for individuals who are seeking support without pursuing participation in a judicial process, as well as implementing the judicial process outlined by the Department of Education in the Title IX regulations. The outcomes of Title IX complaints have consistently and foreseeably will continue to include disciplinary actions – including dismissal when appropriate – of individuals who violate the policy.

I assure you reports to Title IX have been handled appropriately according to the content of those reports and the policy. I likewise provide assurance that recently received and potential additional reports will be addressed in full according to the Title IX policy. This is not just a personal vantage point as an Administrator, but is also undergirded by the fact there are objective checks in the process to ensure appropriate functioning of the Title IX Office. In addition to the University's engagement with the matter, I think you wisely note the relevance of the investigation through the criminal justice system which, Lord willing, will clearly bear out justice.

As I noted below, I am aware of the student perspective and we have labored in recent years to engage this. My advocacy to any student is to always report. Both reporting to Title IX and reporting directly to law enforcement. We also make available independent resources to provide students an avenue for clarity and support through Greene County. I am not doubting the sincerity of any students. Yet, in dialogue with students, I do not find it uncommon that the extent of knowledge they have is assumed to be actionable without consistent reporting. I would rather ensure repeated and overwhelming frequency of reporting than risk there not being enough information available according to regulatory standards. We seek to encourage students to use their voice of advocacy through the "Speak Up" campaigns we do each semester on campus. Not reporting under the assumption nothing will be done may prevent the opportunity for actionable steps, so my appeal is to continue encouraging reporting.

Your advocacy for dialogue with students to foster trust and clarity continues to be well received, and I expect we will take renewed steps in that regard. On a personal level, I am happy to talk with your son individually, or with his friend group if helpful. I will leave that to your discernment if that is something to be pursued.

Thanks for your continued prayer and advocacy for all students along with the charity toward me you have articulated.

Indebted,

Jon Wood

*Vice President of Student Life & Christian Ministries*

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On Fri, Feb 10, 2023 at 1:59 AM Tim Hewitt [REDACTED] wrote:

| Dr. Wood,