



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

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REGION III
DELAWARE
KENTUCKY
MARYLAND
PENNSYLVANIA
WEST VIRGINIA

August 12, 2024

Via Email / president@ncfm.org

Mr. Harry Crouch
President
National Coalition for Men

Re: OCR Complaint Number 03-18-2364

Dear President Jameson:

This is to notify you that we are dismissing the complaint you filed with the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR), against the University of Pennsylvania (the University). OCR initiated an investigation of the complaint on April 8, 2020. You (the Complainant) alleged that the University discriminates against male students on the basis of sex by operating or supporting the following scholarships, programs, activities, and initiatives:

1. Penn Girls in Engineering, Math and Science Camp;
2. FOCUS on Health and Leadership for Women and its Section for Women Residents;
3. Penn Association of Alumnae;
4. Penn Forum for Women Faculty;
5. Penn Graduate Women's Support;
6. OwnItUPenn;
7. Penn Graduate Women in Science and Engineering;
8. UPenn Association for Women in Mathematics;
9. UPenn Women in Computer Science;
10. PennDesign Women in Architecture;
11. Women in Physics at the University of Pennsylvania;
12. UPenn Advancing Women in Engineering;
13. Penn Society of Women Engineers;
14. Forte Fellowships;
15. Wharton Women in Business;
16. Trustees' Council of Penn Women;
17. Women Effect;
18. Women of Color at Penn;
19. Penn Association for Gender Equity;
20. TCPW Beacon Award;
21. TCPW Faculty Research Grants;
22. Voices of Change;
23. Women's Visit Day; and,
24. Penn Center for Women's Behavioral Wellness.

The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

OCR enforces Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX). Title IX prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity operated by a recipient of Federal financial assistance. Because the University receives Federal financial assistance from the Department, it is subject to Title IX and its implementing regulations.

By letter dated April 12, 2023, OCR advised you that we were closing allegations 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, and 24 as resolved pursuant to Section 110(d) of OCR’s Case Processing Manual. This letter addresses the remaining allegations - allegations 5, 6, 9, 11-15, 18-19, 23.

Under Section 110(d) of the Case Processing Manual (CPM), OCR will dismiss an allegation when it obtains credible information that the allegation has been resolved.

With regard to allegations 5, 6, 9, 11-15, 18-19, and 23, during OCR’s investigation, the University either eliminated the program and/or fellowship or changed its website to remove any sex preference or restriction from the criteria for the program and/or fellowship. OCR reviewed the University’s website with regard to these allegations most recently on August 8, 2024. A more detailed description of each program and/or fellowship follows:

Allegation 5 – Penn Graduate Women’s Support

The University informed OCR that it no longer operates this program and all references have been removed from the University’s website. Further, the University told OCR that it does not intend to offer this program at any time in the future. OCR’s review of the University’s website confirms that this program has been removed from the University’s website and OCR identified no other information that the program is being offered by the University.

Allegation 6 – OwnItUPenn

The University informed OCR that this program is open to all students, regardless of gender identity, which is reflected in the program summary on the University’s [website](#): “OWN IT UPenn is a series of events, summits, and opportunities to motivate and connect young women *and their allies* everywhere (emphasis added).” The University told OCR that it plans to ensure that this program remains inclusive of all gender identities moving forward.

Allegation 9 – UPenn Women in Computer Science

According to the University’s website, the University of Pennsylvania [Women in Computer Science](#) (WiCS) is a student organization that “aims to foster a community for Penn students who support the advancement of women in tech.” The University informed OCR that this program is open to all students, regardless of gender identity, as reflected in the program summary on the University’s website: “WiCS is open to all students, regardless of gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, who support the mission of WiCS.”

Allegation 11 – Women in Physics at the University of Pennsylvania

According to the University’s website, [Women in Physics](#) (WiP) “aims to support undergraduate students of marginalized genders who are underrepresented in physics.” The University

maintains that this program is open to all genders, as reflected in the program summary on the University’s website, which states: “WiP invites students of all gender identities who support the advancement of women in physics to join,” which is also restated on the WiP’s Penn [Club](#) page.

Allegation 12 – UPenn Advancing Women in Engineering

According to the University’s website, the University of Pennsylvania [Advancing Women in Engineering](#) is a program “dedicated to recruiting, retaining and promoting women in Penn Engineering.” The University maintains that this program is open to all genders, as reflected in the program summary on the University’s website that states that the program “is open to all engineering students who support the advancement of women in engineering.”

Allegation 13 - Penn Society of Women Engineers

According to the University’s website, the [Society of Women Engineers](#) is a “non-profit service organization aimed at informing the community of the qualifications and achievements of women engineers.” The University maintains that this program is open to all genders, as reflected in the program summary on the University’s website which states, “The Society of Women Engineers membership is open to students of all gender identities who support its mission.” The website also states that the Society of Women Engineers consists of three committees, which all welcome “women engineers and their allies.”

Allegation 14 – Forté Fellowships

According to the Forté Foundation [website](#), the Forté fellowships are “prestigious, competitive awards that are recognized within the business school community and beyond.” The foundation website also states that students of all nationalities and gender identities are eligible for consideration. The description on the University’s Wharton School [website](#) of the Forté fellowships also states that the fellowship is for students who “exhibit exemplary leadership, represent diverse backgrounds and have a demonstrated track record and commitment to advancing women in business.” In addition, the description of the fellowships on the University’s website does not contain any restriction based on sex.

Allegation 15 – Wharton Women in Business

According to the University’s website, the Mission of [Wharton Women in Business](#) (WWiB) is to represent “female students and their allies within the Wharton MBA program, and to further develop the voices of Wharton women and their allies to set the standard for strong leadership.” The University also directed OCR to the “[Who We Are](#)” page for WWiB that expressly states that “WWiB is open to all students, regardless of gender, who support the WWiB mission.”

Allegation 18 – Women of Color at Penn

According to the University’s website, the [Women of Color](#) at Penn (WOCAP) is an African-American resource center which consists of a “community of remarkable volunteers who come together to celebrate and promote causes that impact women.” The University maintains that the WOCAP is inclusive to all, as reflected in the program summary on its website where it states,

“[a]ll individuals who support women of color, regardless of their sex, gender, race, or other status, are invited and encouraged to join the WOCAP community.”

Allegation 19 – Penn Association for Gender Equity

According to the University’s website, the [Penn Association for Gender Equity](#) (PAGE) is “a student group that promotes gender and social justice and serves as the umbrella group for a diverse range of constituent groups. PAGE hosts bi-weekly meetings, events on gender equity and an educational discussion group.” The University maintains that the program is open to students of all gender identities, as there is nothing on the program website that restricts participation in the student group on the basis of sex. Further, the University directed OCR to the PennGenEq [Pre-Orientation Program webpage](#), hosted by the Penn Association for Gender Equity, “for first-year undergraduate students interested in the topics of gender equity and social justice.” The website states that the program is for “students of all gender identities who would like to learn about gender equity and social justice.”

Allegation 23 – Women’s Visit Day

The University told OCR that this program no longer exists as of September 25, 2023. In its stead, the University hosts the [On-Campus Visit Day: Women and Allies](#) which is open to all prospective students, regardless of gender identity. Further, the program website states, “[w]ith the goal of fostering an environment of openness and inclusivity, this event welcomes all applicants, irrespective of background, orientation, or identity.” The University also told OCR that it does not intend to host any future Women’s Visit Days, and all future Women and Allies Visit Days will remain open to prospective students of all gender identities.

In addition to reviewing information publicly available on the University’s website and information provided by the University, OCR also contacted the Complainant, who indicated he could not identify any individuals to OCR who were excluded from the above listed University programs or scholarship on the basis of sex. Based on the actions taken by the University, as described above, OCR finds that the complaint allegations have been resolved and we are dismissing the complaint in accordance with Section 110(d) of the CPM.

This letter sets forth OCR’s determination in an individual OCR case. This letter is not a formal statement of OCR policy and should not be relied upon, cited, or construed as such. OCR’s formal policy statements are approved by a duly authorized OCR official and made available to the public. The Complainant may have the right to file a private suit in federal court whether or not OCR finds a violation.

Please be advised that the University 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, the Complainant 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, we 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.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Michael Wesley, the OCR investigator assigned to this complaint, at 202-219-2208, or michael.wesley@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chr M Haviland" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christina M. Haviland
Supervisory Attorney
Philadelphia Office