

Investigation of FSU for Title IX violations begins

BY ALLISON STALBERG
STAFF WRITER

Another sexual assault case has risen to national media attention, but this time a college might be involved.

A first-year student at Florida State University accused redshirt first-year Heisman Trophy winner Jameis Winston of sexual assault on December 7, 2012.

Deadspin.com reported that FSU officials met with Winston in January 2013 to discuss the incident but did not openly act until January 2014. The university might have violated federal law by postponing its investigation and meeting with Winston in private.

"Athletes are very protected by their schools," said junior Kristy Lapenta. "They are valuable assets

to the school, and they don't want negative publicity."

The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights is investigating whether FSU met its obligations as a Title IX funding recipient.

Title IX is a law that prohibits sexual discrimination, such as acts of sexual violence in universities that receive federal financial assistance.

Dean of Students and Vice President for Student Affairs Aaron Fetrow said, in terms of Title IX, all you have to do to make a report is talk to a college official: a coach, a teacher or somebody in campus life or residence life.

"At Guilford, any time a student comes forward — unless to a counselor which is protected — we do everything we can to funnel that person to the judicial process so we

can take statements ... (and) start investigating any complaints of harassment or sexual violence.

"I hope, and assume, that all colleges in America run their operations in a respectful manner."

But in FSU's case, things may not be running the way others may hope.

The main concern was the school's lack of timeliness in response to the event.

"One thing that we see nationwide is that a lot of these incidents aren't reported, period," said Director of Public Safety Ron Stowe. "A lot of them are reported a long time after the fact, which doesn't change what happened."

"The fact that it is reported a long time after makes it more difficult to investigate and makes it more difficult to reach a determination."

In terms of consequences for violating Title IX, multiple things can happen to FSU if found guilty.

"If the school messed up, then OCR will hold them accountable," said Stowe. "It will probably not be pretty because they have some pretty significant sanctions that they can impose."

Consequences can include cuts from federal funds, or the OCR may hand the case over to the U.S. Department of Justice if FSU refuses to negotiate a resolution with OCR.

"It's not like the law then says, 'they get no funding now,'" said Bob Malekoff, associate professor of sport studies. "For them to be significantly damaged as an institution, it would have to be shown that they tried to protect somebody who did something that they shouldn't have done."

While it seems Winston will continue to play football with no criminal charges, the case goes on into investigating the school's involvement with Winston, and whether FSU defended him due to his high status as an athlete or not.

"I think if someone gets accused of sexual assault here (at Guilford), they just get suspended straight off the bat, regardless of whether you are a student-athlete or not," said Lapenta.

Little can be predicted on how long the investigation will take and whether or not the school will be found guilty.

While thinking of Guilford, Malekoff concluded, "We are the local parents while you're away here."

"To me, in a case like this, we want to make sure people are okay. If they are a victim, you do everything in your power to make sure they are okay."



A fellow Florida State University student accused Jameis Winston of sexual assault.

Athletes must use social media wisely

BY REBECCA DOU
STAFF WRITER

During games, athletes already have the spotlight on them. Now with social media, the spotlight shines on their personal lives too.

Everyone, from friends and family to future employers and coaches, can view tweets on Twitter and posts on Facebook.

While that leaves student athletes with a great venue to promote themselves and their team, it can lead to disastrous results if the wrong people get a hold of inappropriate pictures or information.

"I feel as if social media can be a good resume source in terms of allowing athletes to post and share their highlights within their community," said senior baseball player Chad Wagoner in an email interview. "However, do not be stupid."

"One embarrassing post that takes two seconds to type can stick with you for a lifetime."

Those embarrassing posts include harsh messages to the opposing team.

"I don't think it ever works out well," said head women's soccer coach Michael Shenigo. "If the other team sees it, now it is a motivation for them to come back and really get after things."

Other student athletes and sports faculty at Guilford College advise avoiding misleading images that could reflect poorly on that person's character.

That being said, there are many ways student athletes use social media positively.

"I use social media to pump up the team or let people know how proud I am of what my teams have done," said sophomore swimmer Jocelyn Gesner in an email interview. "For example, after we won our first conference game, I posted: 'Undefeated in conference like whaaaaatttt?! WOOP WOOP. Good game ladies!'"

Since the majority of student athletes use social media to mention upcoming events and encourage their teams, Guilford's monitoring is very loose.

"As far as I know, we do not have specific guidelines," said sophomore football player Hayden Read in an email interview. "Our coaches do remind us frequently not to post dumb things that will get us in trouble."

"They also follow everyone's account and monitor what they post."

Another reason for the loose monitoring is the lack of time.

"I don't have the opportunity to spend hours upon hours tracking down what all the students are posting on Facebook," said Sports Information Director and Assistant Athletic Director Dave Walters. "If something catches my eye I might notify the coach, but I don't spend a whole lot of time there."

Instead, Guilford's Sport Information Office will use the students as a tool to bring more traffic to the Guilford's athletic page. Tagging students in posts and pictures bring more attention to the page and its messages.

Social media provides a powerful tool for athletes to interact with fans and future employers, as long as they find the right balance.

"Do not tweet your life," said Walters. "Live it."

Masiello lied about getting degree from U. Kentucky

BASKETBALL COACH PUT ON LEAVE UNTIL DEGREE COMPLETED

BY JAKE DELAHANTY
STAFF WRITER

The NCAA tournament is a big deal. Coaches are arguably among the most important pieces in team success.

So before collegiate coaches are hired, background checks are thorough, right?

Well, maybe not.

On March 25, Manhattan College learned its head men's basketball coach, Steve Masiello, never received a bachelor's degree from the University of Kentucky, despite what his resume stated.

This discovery was made when the University of South Florida rejected Masiello for their head coaching position during the final stages of the hiring process.

"Through the verification process, it was determined (Masiello's) credentials could not be substantiated," said USF in a brief press statement. "Therefore, he did not meet the requirements for the position."

Interestingly, Manhattan might never have discovered the truth without South Florida's verification process. Masiello had been head coach for almost three years.

It's surprising he wasn't caught sooner.

Having a bachelor's degree is a requirement for all head coaches, so of course, this was a major problem.

Masiello was immediately sent on leave following this revelation. Over the next few days, the university decided his fate.

Should he be fired?

Hall of Fame coach Jim Calhoun weighed in on the situation.

"So, he's the same guy he was before," Calhoun told ESPNNewYork.com's. "He made an error on his resume, and he's going to have to fix that up and get his degree, I'm sure."

"But I would take him back in a heartbeat."

Manhattan agreed with Calhoun.

On April 7, Manhattan announced that Masiello would be retained as head coach under one condition — he will remain on permanent leave until completing an undergraduate degree.

"I made a mistake that could have cost me my job at an institution I love," Masiello said in the school's statement.

"Details matter.

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Steve Masiello

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Associate Professor of Sports Studies Bob Malekoff said he was glad Masiello is getting a second chance.

"On the other hand, I'm troubled by preferential treatment that might likely not be afforded to others," said Malekoff in an email interview.

Early College senior Anjali Kapil said the decision is up to the university, not the public.

"As long as he didn't do anything illegal, I think the coach is fine," said Kapil.

In light of all this, how thorough are background checks here at Guilford?

"The hiring process on campus is the same for all employees," said Assistant Director of Human Resources Deborah Craven in an email interview. "The background check includes Residency History Search, Nationwide Sexual Offenders Index Search and North Carolina Statewide Criminal Search."

Regardless, the controversy with Masiello doesn't sit right with me. All in all, he got off the hook easily and managed to keep his job.

I guess a precedent for lying on your resume with little to no consequences has been set.

"I made a mistake that could have cost me my job at an institution I love, details matter. Manhattan College has shown me a great deal of compassion and trust during this process, and I will do everything in my power to uphold that trust."

Steve Masiello