

Bruce Harreld: Title IX — Integrity and Transparency

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening and thank you all for coming. I want to thank Tom Vaughn for inviting me to speak to the Faculty Senate today. You know, we have a lot going for us at the University of Iowa. We have loyalty, passion, and enthusiasm. Every one of you in this room shares those traits. That's what makes the University a treasure. Not only to our students, but to the people of Iowa.

Today, I'd like to share a few of my thoughts about the University's response to the visitors we had on campus in April. Many of you expressed concern over these matters. So, I think it's a very important issue to address. Today, I'll be talking about Title Nine and the University's commitment to building and promoting gender equity.

To be honest, when I first learned that the Department of Education was coming here to investigate Title Nine complaints, my instinctual, gut-level reaction, was as a parent. I'm the parent of daughters. And I'm sure many of you in this room have daughters too.

My wife, Mary, and I have four children: Sara, Kelly, Christopher, and Natalie. I'm proud to say that each of our four children not only earned a college degree but went on to earn an advanced degree as well. Some of their college years were spent at Big Ten schools. On top of that, as many of you know, I'm a huge Hawkeye football fan.

So, as a parent, when I hear that the University of Iowa – a University that we are loyal to and proud of – is facing allegations of inequity and unfairness, I'm concerned. I think that it's reasonable and wise to be concerned. As a parent, I take those allegations to heart. I think about my own daughters, and their experiences in a Big Ten school. Like you, I want the best for my children. I hope to have them educated in an environment where they can excel and grow. As the 21st president of the University of Iowa, I get to play a big part in helping to shape the experiences for thousands of students. Undoubtedly, Title Nine is essential to ensuring that all our students receive a quality education.

So, what exactly is Title Nine? Title Nine relates to the University's mission and is overseen by the U.S. Department of Education. It is a 1972 federal law requiring gender equity in educational programs that receive federal funding. This law bars sexual discrimination in any educational

Bruce Harreld: Title IX — Integrity and Transparency

programs that receive federal aid. Specifically, Title Nine ensures gender equity in every aspect of the University, including the athletics department.

Here at the University of Iowa and as the President of this institution, it is in our best interest to remain transparent about the ongoing investigation. Back in April, we had some visitors from U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. These allegations of discrimination – including unequal pay to members of the opposite sex in similar roles and discrimination against a student – go against everything we as an institution stand for. Rest assured; action has been taken to guarantee that nothing of this sort will happen again. Additionally, I expect this institution to maintain our integrity and fully cooperate with the Department of Education now and in the future regarding this investigation.

In times like these, I think it is important to focus on our character and the foundation that makes up that character. It is our integrity and loyalty to our students that I feel we must uphold to the best of our ability. Whether we are talking about gender equity or the transparency of university decisions, we are here to provide the best environment for learning.

We uphold this character through:

- Our diversity training of staff and students
- Open door policy in reporting issues
- Holding open forums
- Supporting survivors of assault

By focusing on these four categories, we not only want to uphold Title Nine, but we also want to make sure that students and staff are heard. Thousands of people around the world call themselves Hawkeyes with pride. I want to make sure that Hawkeye pride continues to grow, so our students can always count on the University of Iowa being a home away from home. Gender equity is not an easy feat. Achieving it will take time, education, and change. This change can only happen with the support of one another in reaching our goals. It is absolutely necessary that we encourage one another to uphold these goals on a personal level. Both as parents, and as faculty members. We will continue to work on our training, transparency, and follow through.

Bruce Harreld: Title IX — Integrity and Transparency

We will strive toward making the University of Iowa the best possible educational experience it can be, for **all** of our students and staff.

In being completely transparent with you, I want you to know that I am going to need your support in fully cooperating with the United States Department of Education during their on-going investigation. I promise you I am dedicated to providing the leadership our university needs during this challenging time and that means listening to the people that make this university what it is today. Together, we can resolve this issue and continue working towards ensuring gender equity for all at the University of Iowa.

With your loyalty, we can fortify the future of this university and protect everyone from sex-based discrimination, harassment and violence. I am relying on your help to ensure we never host one of these investigations again. I invite all of you to join me in making our university's community an even better learning environment by working with me to strengthen our gender equity.

As always, I welcome you to come up to me directly and discuss any concerns you may have. My door is always open. Thank you so much for allowing me to have this opportunity to talk with you about this important topic. With your support, I believe we can and will make a positive change here at the University of Iowa.

*Practice Sample. No affiliation to Bruce Harreld. Produced by Arlinda Fasliu and 3 others on the writers' team.