

Friday, January 23, 2026
8:30 – 11:45 a.m.
Education Law Committee
3.0 MCLE Credit Hours
Supreme Court Commission on CLE Course #: 260132
Room Location: 109-111

The Evolving Landscape of Civil Rights in Higher Ed: Title VI, Title IX, and Federal Policy Priorities

With Title VI increasingly in the national spotlight due to heightened federal enforcement, this presentation dives into what universities need to know now to build effective compliance programs. It will explore the legal and practical challenges of preventing and responding to discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in educational settings. The next session will analyze recent developments in the federal legal and regulatory landscape affecting colleges and universities, with a focus on executive actions, Title IX rulemaking, and the Department of Education's current enforcement posture. The presentation will explore how shifting political dynamics are influencing Title IX policy, civil rights enforcement, campus safety expectations, and institutional obligations under federal law. Finally we will have a panel discussion covering the various roles (investigators, advisors, and hearing officers) that attorneys perform in connection with Title IX complaints/administrative proceedings, and participants will share their experience practicing in this area.

Agenda

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| 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. | Developing a Title VI Program that Meets the Moment

Melissa Nichols
<i>Furman University</i>
<i>Greenville, SC</i> |
| 9:30 – 10:30 a.m. | Federal Compliance in Flux: Title IX, Executive Authority, and Department of Education's Evolving Enforcement Agenda

Sheila Abron
<i>Fisher Phillips LLP</i>
<i>Columbia, SC</i> |
| 10:30 – 10:45 a.m. | Break |

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. **Title IX Hearing & Complaints: The Various Roles of Counsel**

Patricia Ravenhorst
SC Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
Greenville, SC

Meliah Bowers Jefferson
Wyche, PA
Greenville, SC

Sheila Abron
Fisher Phillips LLP
Columbia, SC

Melissa Nichols
Furman University
Greenville, SC

Course Planner/Moderator: Warren Ganjehsani
S.C. Board for Technical & Comprehensive Education
Columbia, SC