

On Wednesday night, the U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education withdrew its May 2016 joint guidance, which stated that Title IX regulations encompassed discrimination based on gender identity, including discrimination based on individual identification as transgender. This recent withdrawal means that federal protections for transgender students, which allowed students to use bathrooms and facilities corresponding with their gender identity, were rescinded.

We wanted to take this opportunity to let you know, that regardless of the federal government's recent ruling, BVU believes in the dignity of all persons and is committed to ensuring that all persons are provided an inclusive, supportive, safe and nondiscriminatory campus environment.

Last May, a Transgender Task Force convened and created a comprehensive list of recommendations designed to ensure an inclusive environment for all persons, regardless of their gender identity. A copy of the Transgender Task Force Report was distributed to the BVU Community in October of 2016. The President approved these recommendations and members of the Task Force have been working to implement the changes listed in the short-term time frame. Please be assured that the recent ruling has not changed BVU's stance or belief in the importance of all persons and we will continue to follow through with the recommendations as set forth by the Task Force.

Due to this recent ruling, many of the LGBTQ+ community and its allies may be confused, anxious, or worried as to what the future may hold. Please know that we appreciate your feelings and should anyone have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Emily Gallagher, Title IX Coordinator, at gallagher@bvu.edu or 749-2165.

BVU is dedicated to the value that all persons deserve an open and inclusive environment where everyone is treated with respect. We intend to stay true to the belief that the health and well-being of every student is of paramount importance.