

Case Study

Prairie State College

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89% faster with Case IQ

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Tiffany Brewer
Manager of Compliance and Effectiveness
and Title IX Coordinator



Project Overview

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Managing Title IX Investigations Faster Than Ever

The Challenge

Prairie State College didn't have an effective system to track, manage and report on student and employee complaints, investigations and compliance. There was no single repository for complaint information, and institutional knowledge left with departing employees.

The College had manual, time-consuming process for document retrieval, and there was no visibility into the effectiveness of workflow and processes, and no historical data to track trends.

The Solution

The team began looking for a case management solution that could be configured for use by different departments. They needed a system that could be used for student complaints and Title IX investigations as well as for human resources investigations and compliance. They needed a system that was easy to learn and use, configurable for multiple departments and workflows, and designed to provide a central source for case information. The system needed to include sending and receiving emails from within the platform, and capable of in-depth reporting on data to see risks and trends. Finally, the system needed to be secure, to ensure privacy for sensitive case information.

Manual Case Creation and Minimal Tracking Gets in the Way of Commitments to Diversity Equity and Inclusion

Prairie State College is a two-year community college in Chicago Heights, Illinois, offering degrees and certificates in more than 100 fields of study. Founded in 1957, Prairie State College has a PBI (Predominantly Black Institution) designation and prides itself on access and affordability. The college is committed to building and maintaining an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment on campus.

In order to keep these commitments, the college needs to manage issues quickly and effectively, but the compliance and investigation teams were using spreadsheets, Word documents and paper to manage student and faculty complaints and investigations. Word documents were simply generated as needed when issues arose and data was housed in multiple places. The complaints and investigations management process was slow and inadequate.

“We did not have a uniform and effective, consistent means of tracking anything, particularly student and employee concerns,” says Tiffany Brewer, the college’s Manager of Compliance and Effectiveness – overseeing compliance with federal mandates – and also the Title IX Coordinator. This inability to track and document issues was making reporting difficult for Brewer and her team.

“You can’t identify trends if you’re not tracking anything,” she says. “You’re approaching everything as if it’s the first time.” And while some staff may have insight into trends based on their experience, if they leave the organization, they take that knowledge with them.

“Our employee side and our student side realized that there’s a better way to do this. So that’s when we started looking for a case management system.”

-Tiffany Brewer, Manager of Compliance and Effectiveness and Title IX Coordinator

Case Management that Puts the Context Back in Case Management

“We had an Office of Civil Rights inquiry response that we needed to reply to and we didn’t have an easy or convenient way of retrieving any of the documents that they were asking for,” says Brewer. “So I had to manually compile a 600-page response.” This involved travelling to offices, retrieving emails from multiple places, making copies and putting them on flash drives. It was tedious, time-consuming and inefficient. “There wasn’t even a way to search by name. We were in the dark ages,” she says.

Concurrently, the HR department was conducting an employee investigation and also needed to retrieve historical data and documents from multiple locations with similar difficulties.

The team began looking for a case management solution that could be configured for use by different departments. They needed a system that could be used for student complaints and Title IX investigations as well as for human resources investigations and compliance.

Ease of use was critical so that everyone, no matter their level of comfort with advanced technology tools, could learn it quickly and use it effectively. And the capability to identify risks and trends would help the school to comply with reporting regulations as well as provide the tools to put prevention measures in place.

After identifying and assessing three possible solutions, the team at Prairie State College chose Case IQ case management software as their new platform for its ease of use and robust reporting capabilities.

“With the click of one button I can print out that entire history, all the case notes, all the fields. I can print out all the correspondence if that’s also been requested and necessary and I go to one place to do that. I don’t have to go to every person I think is tangentially related and ask them to print out emails.”

-Tiffany Brewer, Manager of Compliance and Effectiveness and Title IX Coordinator

Cases Take a Matter of Days to Close, Not Months

“Once we open up a case and put it in Case IQ, whenever there’s additional follow-up for that case I can just go right to Case IQ, put in the case number and the whole history of the case comes up for me,” says Brewer.

Case IQ also helps Prairie State College maintain compliance with regulators. “It gives us the opportunity to meet our federal mandates so that we can demonstrate to the powers-that-be that we are adhering to federal requirements,” says Brewer.

The value of Case IQ was demonstrated soon after implementation, when the same Office of Civil Rights case that initially prompted the search for a case management system resurfaced with an additional information inquiry. “I was able to go to the case and to the email I sent the professor, identify his response and send it right over to the attorney,” says Brewer.

Brewer appreciates the ability to send emails directly from Case IQ, and the fact that all correspondence becomes part of the case file. With all case-related information in one place and easily accessible, the time to respond to inquiries has dropped from days to minutes.

“I get an inquiry, I look up the case, I pull the information, I send it out and I’m done,” she says. “It literally saves me days, probably a week per month, if not two, depending on the complexity of what’s being asked. That’s not an exaggeration.”

Case IQ has reduced the amount of time spent on investigations dramatically. Since implementing Case IQ, the average time to close cases has dropped by 89 per cent. Before Case IQ the average case took 60 to 90 days to close. Today, it takes seven to 10 days.

“It was a 10-minute process, not a 10-day process, which it was before.”

-Tiffany Brewer, Manager of Compliance and Effectiveness and Title IX Coordinator

The Result

Case IQ's reporting tool has also drastically improved the effectiveness of Brewer's team. "Being able to identify trends, you are armed with the data to be able to change processes," she says. "Since we implemented Case IQ in 2017 we've revised our processes for student complaints three times to make it more smooth, run more effectively and better serve the students."

All of this has helped Brewer to improve her ability to perform institution-wide assessments and advocate for students in complaints and Title IX concerns. "I'm able to do more in less time and it makes me more efficient and it makes me more effective," she says.

Great case management tool

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-Tiffany Brewer, Manager of
Compliance and Effectiveness and
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