

The CAER Model

Conduct Awareness & Equity Response

Developed by **Dr. Freda D. Grant, Ph.D.** · Civil Rights Compliance Strategist · contact@caerequity.com

Framework Overview

Dr. Freda D. Grant developed the **CAER Model (Conduct Awareness & Equity Response)**, a structured psychoeducational intervention framework designed to help institutions respond to bias-related incidents, harmful language, retaliation, and conduct concerns through **education rather than punishment alone**. The model supports participants in recognizing impact, understanding policy expectations, and developing strategies for behavioral alignment within campus civil rights environments.

The CAER Model is applicable to cases involving **sexual misconduct** and **bias-related harassment**, and is designed to complement — not replace — institutional disciplinary processes. It positions accountability as an educational process grounded in equity, community responsibility, and the lived realities of those most affected by harmful conduct.

The Four Pillars of CAER

C

Conduct Awareness

Participants examine the specific conduct at issue — its nature, context, and impact on those affected. This pillar moves beyond surface-level acknowledgment toward a substantive understanding of **how harmful conduct operates** within institutional environments, including the role of power, position, and community norms in shaping behavior and its consequences.

A

Accountability

Accountability in the CAER Model is understood as an **active, ongoing process** — not a single moment of admission. Participants engage with what it means to be accountable to those harmed, to the institutional community, and to the broader civil rights framework that governs campus life. This pillar addresses the difference between compliance and genuine responsibility.

E

Equity

The equity pillar situates conduct within the structural and historical conditions that shape who is harmed, how harm is reported, and what institutional responses look like. Participants examine **disparate impact**, the experiences of marginalized communities in compliance systems, and the ways that equity-centered thinking must inform both individual behavior and institutional policy.

R

Response

The final pillar focuses on **forward-looking behavioral change**. Participants develop concrete strategies for aligning their conduct with institutional policy expectations and community standards. This includes understanding retaliation prohibitions, navigating campus civil rights environments, and building the capacity for ongoing self-reflection and accountability beyond the intervention itself.

Use Cases

Sexual Misconduct Cases

Designed for use with students, staff, or faculty found responsible for sexual misconduct following a formal grievance process. Supplements institutional sanctions with structured educational engagement focused on impact recognition, policy alignment, and community accountability.

Bias-Related Harassment

When harmful language, symbols, or conduct creates a hostile environment based on race, gender, religion, national origin, or other protected characteristics, the CAER Model provides a structured pathway for respondents to engage meaningfully with the harm caused and develop strategies for behavioral change.

Retaliation Concerns

In cases where retaliation has occurred or is at risk, CAER Model sessions address the civil rights dimensions of retaliatory conduct, the experiences of those targeted, and the institutional and legal consequences of continued behavior.

Institutional Climate Initiatives

Beyond individual cases, the CAER Model can be adapted for group-based programming as part of broader campus climate initiatives, new employee orientation, or leadership development focused on equity and civil rights responsibility.

Delivery Formats

- ▶ **Individual Sessions** — One-on-one psychoeducational sessions with the respondent, typically 2–4 hours across multiple meetings.
- ▶ **Small Group Format** — Structured group sessions for 3–8 participants with shared conduct concerns, facilitated by Dr. Grant.
- ▶ **Virtual Delivery** — All formats available via secure video conferencing for remote or hybrid institutional contexts.
- ▶ **Institutional Integration** — CAER Model components can be embedded into existing conduct office programming, new student orientation, or staff training.

Participant Outcomes

Upon completing a CAER Model intervention, participants are expected to demonstrate:

- ◆ Recognition of the impact of their conduct on affected parties and the broader campus community
- ◆ Understanding of the institutional policies and civil rights frameworks that govern campus conduct
- ◆ Ability to articulate the difference between intent and impact in the context of harmful behavior
- ◆ Concrete strategies for behavioral alignment with institutional expectations going forward
- ◆ Awareness of retaliation prohibitions and the civil rights implications of continued harmful conduct

About the Developer

Dr. Freda D. Grant holds a Ph.D. in Public Policy and Social Change and has served in civil rights compliance roles at Yale University's SHARE Center and in higher education administration. She is the creator of the "We Stayed Enrolled" framework and the author of peer-reviewed scholarship on gender entrapment theory, Black women's experiences in compliance systems, and structural barriers in higher education. Her CAER Model draws directly from her practitioner experience developing psychoeducational programming for students found responsible for sexual misconduct.

"The people most harmed by institutional failures are often the most qualified to diagnose them."

To inquire about CAER Model implementation at your institution, contact Dr. Grant at contact@caerequity.com or visit grantequityconsulting.com