HUSCH BLACKWELL



Kristine M. Zayko

SENIOR COUNSEL

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OVERVIEW

Kristine concentrates her practice on advising public and private educational institutions in a wide array of matters to support their educational missions. She practices from Wilmington, North Carolina as a member of our virtual office, The Link.

Serving for 20 years as in-house counsel for a major, public research institution, Kristine has significant experience working with governing boards, senior leaders, academic administrators, and multi-constituent academic governance groups on challenging legal and policy issues, including the following:

- Faculty employment and tenure matters
- Student and Greek Life Issues
- Investigations
- Athletics
- Title IX and VAWA
- Title VII
- Americans with Disabilities Act/Section 504 & Fair Housing Act
- Threat assessment teams

Industry

Education

Services

Collegiate Athletics
Higher Education
Labor & Employment
Title IX

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- Youth protection policies
- Public records requests
- Policy development
- First Amendment

Kristine also has extensive experience with agency proceedings, including U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and state civil rights agencies.

Before joining Husch Blackwell, Kristine served as in-house counsel at Michigan State University where she was Deputy General Counsel for ten years and most recently Acting Vice President for Legal Affairs & General Counsel. Prior to working in higher education, Kristine was a labor and employment attorney in private practice in Lansing, Michigan and with an AmLaw 100 firm in Chicago, Illinois.

Kristine is a frequent presenter on significant legal issues affecting higher education.

Michigan-area clients can contact Kristine at **517.318.0062.**

Experience

ACADEMIC PERSONNEL MATTERS

- Advised and represented colleges and universities in internal procedures addressing potential dismissal of tenured faculty members. Also provided counsel and representation to administrators in various phases of internal disciplinary and grievance proceedings. Successfully resolved numerous complex personnel matters involving tenured faculty and senior administrators.
- Drafted and revised numerous faculty handbooks and academic personnel policies to incorporate best practices within the higher education community. Worked closely with academic governance and faculty committees to update and revise policies.

ADA/SECTION 504

- Counseled numerous educational institutions in developing policies, procedures and training regarding compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

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Experience

- Guided several institutions in responding to U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaints.
- Drafted and revised numerous policies regarding service and emotional support animals on campus.
- Drafted and revised numerous policies regarding involuntary medical withdrawal and threat assessment.
- Counseled clients on complex student and employee accommodation issues, including those within the health profession and clinical context.

TITLE IX

- Guided institutions in preventing and responding to allegations of sex discrimination in their programs and activities.
- Conducted investigations, reviewed appeals and drafted reports on behalf of institutions.
- Guided numerous institutions in responding to U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights complaints.
- Conducted legal compliance audits surrounding discrimination prevention response systems at a range of institutions.
- Currently serves as neutral hearing administrator for public university in Michigan.

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Education

- J.D., University of Michigan
  - *cum laude*
  - *Journal of Law Reform*, contributing editor
- B.A., Michigan State University
  - *summa cum laude*
  - Phi Beta Kappa

Admissions

- Illinois
- Michigan
- North Carolina
- U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois
- U.S. District Court, Western District of Michigan
- U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Michigan
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Sixth Circuit

Community Leadership

- Ele's Place, Governing Board Member, 2020-2022
- Capital Area United Way, Board Member, 2013-2019; Executive Committee Member 2015-2019; Human Resources Committee Member 2015-2021 (Chairperson 2015-2018; Vice-Chair 2018-2019)
- MSU Federal Credit Union, Supervisory Committee Member, 2014-2019; Chair 2016-2019

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*Kristine works remotely and is licensed in North Carolina, practicing in Wilmington, NC. Contact Kristine via email or phone for in-person/virtual meetings. Use the Chicago office address for mail/deliveries only.

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