

Stephen J. Vaughan

Principal



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Industries

- Higher Education

Practices

- Labor, Employment & Higher Education
- Employment Law
- Employment Litigation & Class Actions
- Higher Education
- Investigations & White Collar Defense
- Business Litigation
- Franchise & Distribution

Education

- The Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law, J.D., 1998, *Catholic University Law Review*, member; National Trial Team, member
- Ohio University, *summa cum laude*, 1995

Bar Admissions

- District of Columbia
- Maryland

Court Admissions

- U.S. Supreme Court

Stephen Vaughan advises colleges and universities on a variety of legal and compliance issues that are specific to higher education institutions, including Title IX, the Clery Act, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), student rights and discipline, faculty matters, and employment law.

Stephen has extensive experience conducting compliance audits and investigations, drafting policies and procedures, and advising higher education clients, including their counsel, Title IX coordinators and teams, investigators, adjudicators, hearing panels, appeal officers, administrators, and others, on all matters pertaining to the sexual misconduct process, along with educational programming and prevention. He frequently assists faith-based institutions in their efforts to maintain compliance while adhering to mission. And, through **trainED**, Stephen regularly provides training mandated by federal and state law and other specialized training to institutions nationwide.

Stephen's higher education experience extends to the courtroom as well, where he defends higher education institutions in Title IX lawsuits, particularly those related to the institutions' investigations and adjudications of and determinations made in misconduct proceedings.

Stephen also counsels clients on a wide range of employment law issues, including terminations, employment and severance agreements, employment-related claims, worker classification, post-termination covenants against competition, breach of contract, breach of fiduciary and other duties, fraud, tortious interference, and trademark infringement. He has successfully argued motions for preliminary injunctive relief and dispositive motions in a variety of contexts, and he has served as first chair and co-chair in federal and state courts trials on behalf of the firm's clients.

In addition, Stephen has significant investigation experience, including conducting internal investigations and defending corporations, individuals, and higher education institutions in investigations conducted by Congress, the Department of Justice, United States attorneys and attorneys general of numerous states, and other state and federal agencies.

Experience

Stephen has represented employers in a wide range of matters involving litigation and investigations, including:

- Conducted numerous investigations of allegations of sexual misconduct, discrimination, and harassment involving students, employees, faculty, public safety officers, and vendors at higher education institutions
- Conducted numerous hazing investigations involving college students and college organizations, including those involving athletic teams, club sports, Greek life, performing arts groups, and other community groups
- Conducted investigations of faculty, administrators, students, employees, and others for violations of handbooks, codes of conduct, and other policies

- U.S. Court of Appeals Third and Eleventh Circuits District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court District of Columbia
- U.S. District Court District of Maryland
- U.S. District Court Eastern District of Michigan

- Drafted harassment and sexual misconduct policies, student codes of conduct, and handbooks
- Counseled higher education institutions on retaliation, speech rights, academic freedom, and religious freedom
- Defended and counseled institutions in lawsuits claiming violations of Title IX, negligence, defamation, breach of contract, tortious interference, and due process
- Represented higher education institution in connection with a two-year investigation conducted by the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee with no material adverse findings against the institution

Honors / Activities

Professional Activities

- The District of Columbia Bar Association
- American Bar Association
- Maryland State Bar Association
- National Association of College and University Attorneys

Honors and Distinctions

- “Washington, DC Super Lawyer,” *Super Lawyers*, 2013-2016
- *The International Who’s Who of Lawyers*, 2016-2018