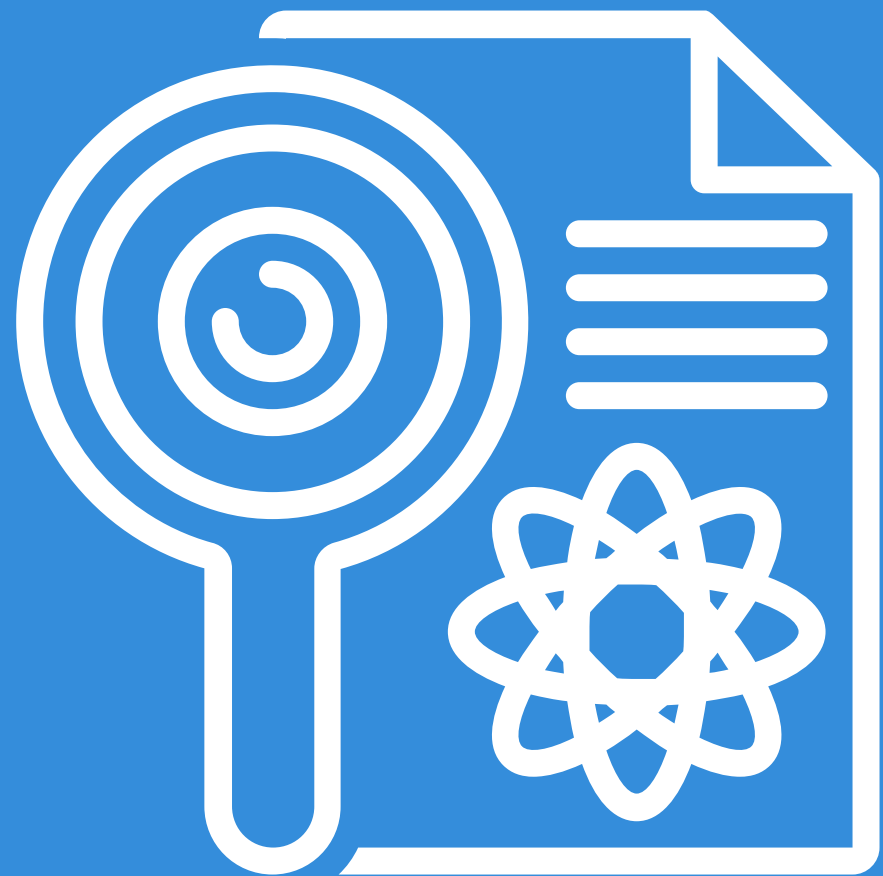


# Investigations



UConn  
Summer 2022

# GET COMFORTABLE AND CENTERED

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What do you need to be fully present here this afternoon?

What is one thing you can commit to do to keep yourself in this conversation today?



## What Guides Your Work?

Through the implementation of an ethic of care and concern that promotes the fair, transparent, and compassionate application of published institutional standards and expectations, OCS aims to thoroughly investigate and resolve allegations of student behavioral harm to the UConn community in an educational and restorative manner.

How do you demonstrate an ethic of care and concern?

How do you demonstrate fairness and transparency?

How do you demonstrate compassion?

# TODAY'S DISCUSSION

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What Makes a Great Investigator  
Practice Investigation Planning (and re-planning)  
The Interview In Depth  
Writing the Investigative Report

TOPICS  
TO COVER





# Great Investigators

## Personal Characteristics

Planning & project management

Ability to establish rapport

Professionalism/respect

Objectivity

Analytical problem solving

Courage

Excellent listening, speaking & writing skills

Can discuss difficult topics without awkwardness and with compassion.

## Institutional Characteristics

Buy-in from leadership

Clear policies and processes

A community well trained on behavioral expectations

Professional development

# Developing a Plan

- Define the investigation's scope
- Identify preliminary timeline of events according to the original complaint or allegation
- Identify testimony and other evidence that may confirm or rebut the complaint
- Initial witness list
- Order in which to interview

## What "items" can you gather?

- Applicable written policies and procedures
- Security videotapes
- Photos or videos from other sources, such as cellphones
- Voice mail messages, text messages, or recordings of calls to campus police or the security office
- Entry/exit logs for the residence hall, social spaces, or other campus buildings involved

# PLANNING STAGES



## INITIAL PLAN

Formal Complaint Signed

## REVISE AND REPEAT

Add witnesses and associated questions to the plan as you learn from interviews

## SHARE AND REVISE AGAIN

As witnesses and parties review their statements they inspire more witnesses (and questions)



# Practice Planning







# THE INTERVIEW

---



# SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS



Make the Time



Review the  
Plan and  
Materials



Personal Check  
In



# CREATING THE CLIMATE

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A man in a dark uniform, possibly a police officer, stands on the left side of the frame, holding a baton. He is looking down at a man sitting at a table on the right. The man at the table has his hands on his head, suggesting distress or fear. The scene is dimly lit, with a spotlight effect on the table and the man sitting at it. The background is dark.

INTERVIEW



INTERROGATION

# Setting Interviewee Up for Success

## Recognizing and Attending to Needs

Bathroom & Breaks

Tissues & Water

Advisor & Support Person

Supportive resources

Rights (non-retaliation, privacy not confidentiality-  
information they provide will be shared w/others)



# Setting Interviewee Up for Success

## Orienting to process

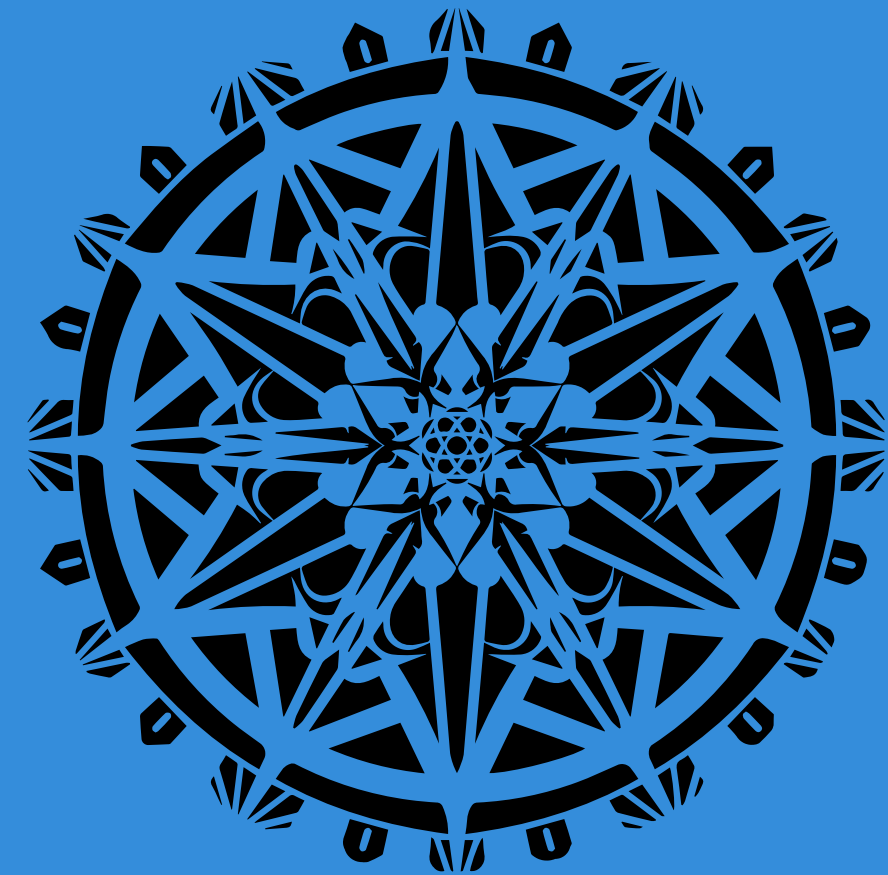
How long will they be there w/you?

What is your role?

Why are they there?

What else may they be asked to do?

- review their statement
- attend hearing
- provide evidence referenced in interview



# Throughout The Conversation

## **Be Intentional about Your Non-Verbals**

Posture can communicate your engagement or disengagement

Gestures can be interpreted differently by people of different cultural backgrounds

Para-language (speed, pitch, intonation, volume) communicates much more than the words said.

## **Actively Listen**

(paraphrase, ask open ended questions, short verbal affirmations  
display empathy-recognize their emotions and feelings)





# Starting The Conversation

## Witnesses

Tell me why you think you are here?

Tell me how you are connected to this issue?

Do you recall an encounter on this date and  
time?

## Parties

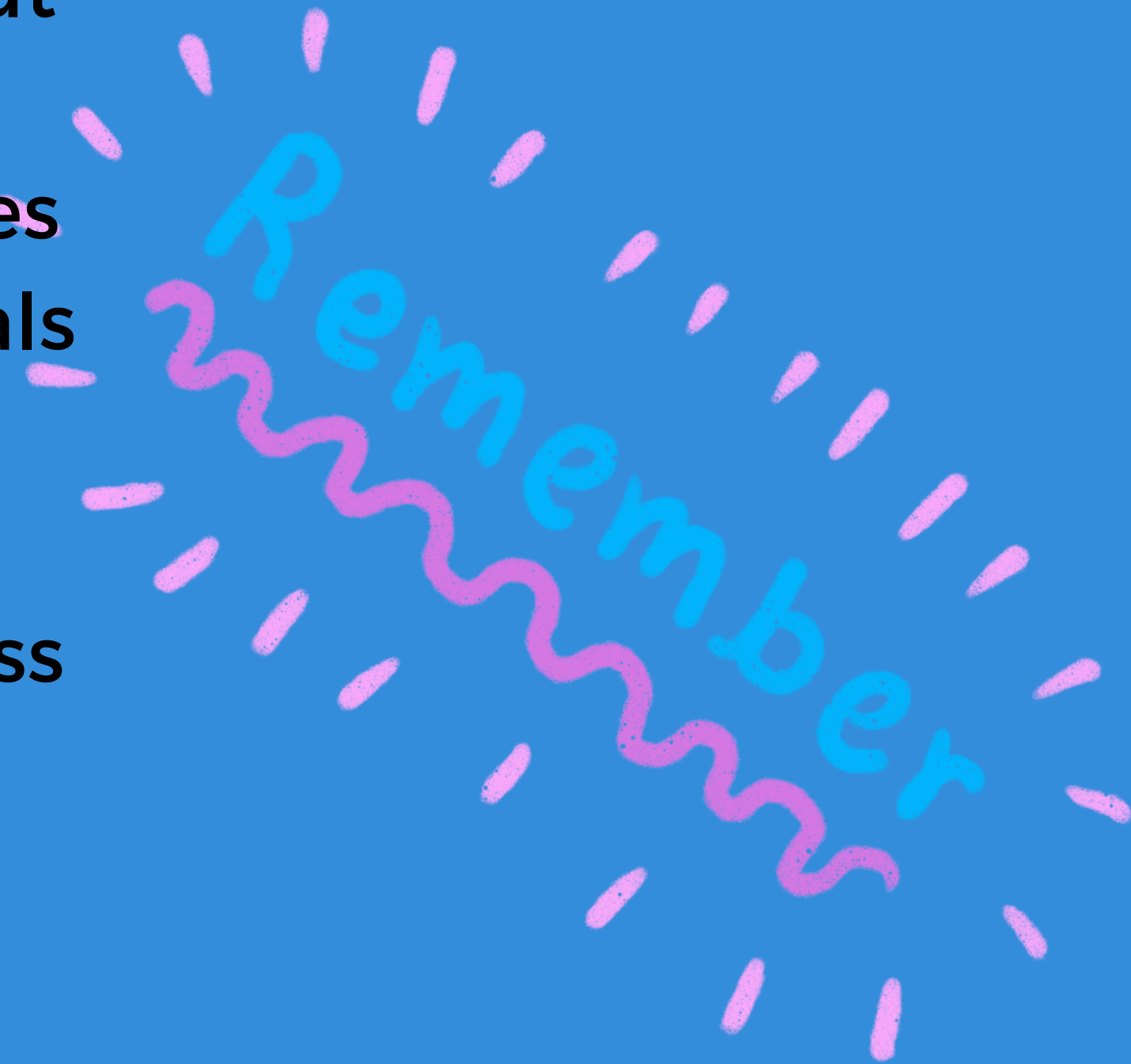
Complainant: I have read your Formal Complaint and I have some questions...

Respondent: As you know I received a Formal Complaint and I have some  
questions...

# CULTURAL HUMILITY

Practicing cultural humility requires us to put aside our own beliefs, generalizations, and assumptions about other people and cultures and instead focus on learning how individuals identify themselves.

It requires us to step back and critically assess our own assumptions and values, then acknowledge how these factors affect our interactions with people of other cultures.



## CULTURAL HUMILITY

The practice of cultural humility requires humbleness along with high levels of self-reflection and critique.

Due to the dynamic nature of culture, cultural humility is a life-long process, not a goal to be accomplished. Instead, it is a practice that must be continued throughout life.



# Concluding The Conversation

- Request documentation (notes, calendars, social media posts, emails, phone messages, texts, etc.)
- Ask “What else should I have asked, but didn't?”
- Thank the individual.
- Invite the person to return to the investigator with any additional information they remember.
- Remind about their need to review the interview summary.



CONCEPTUAL DOCKET CALENDAR DAILY GOALS PRIORITIES  
REMINDER DELEGATE ORGANIZE SERVICES WEEKEND SCHEDULE  
MEETINGS SUCCESS FINISH REMINDER CHECK BOX WORK  
AGENDA TO BE DONE CALENDAR CROSS OFF EMAILS  
SCHEDULE DAILY GOALS MEETINGS PERFORM DAILY SUCCESS PHONE CALLS PROJECTS  
WORK CHECK BOX REMINDER SERVICES PRIORITIES  
PROJECTS PRACTICE REMINDER WORK  
PRIORITIES DOCKET TASKS  
COMPLETE To Do Lis ENNDAR  
PRACTICE PRIORITIES MOTIVATE GOALS  
PLANNER WORK CAREER REMINDER IE DAILY GOALS  
MANAGE LEADERSHIP MULTITASK PERSONAL FINISHED BUS ONE  
DOCKET EXPERTISE

# PRACTICE



# SUMMARY STATEMENTS

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NARRATIVE  
NOT  
DECLARATIVE

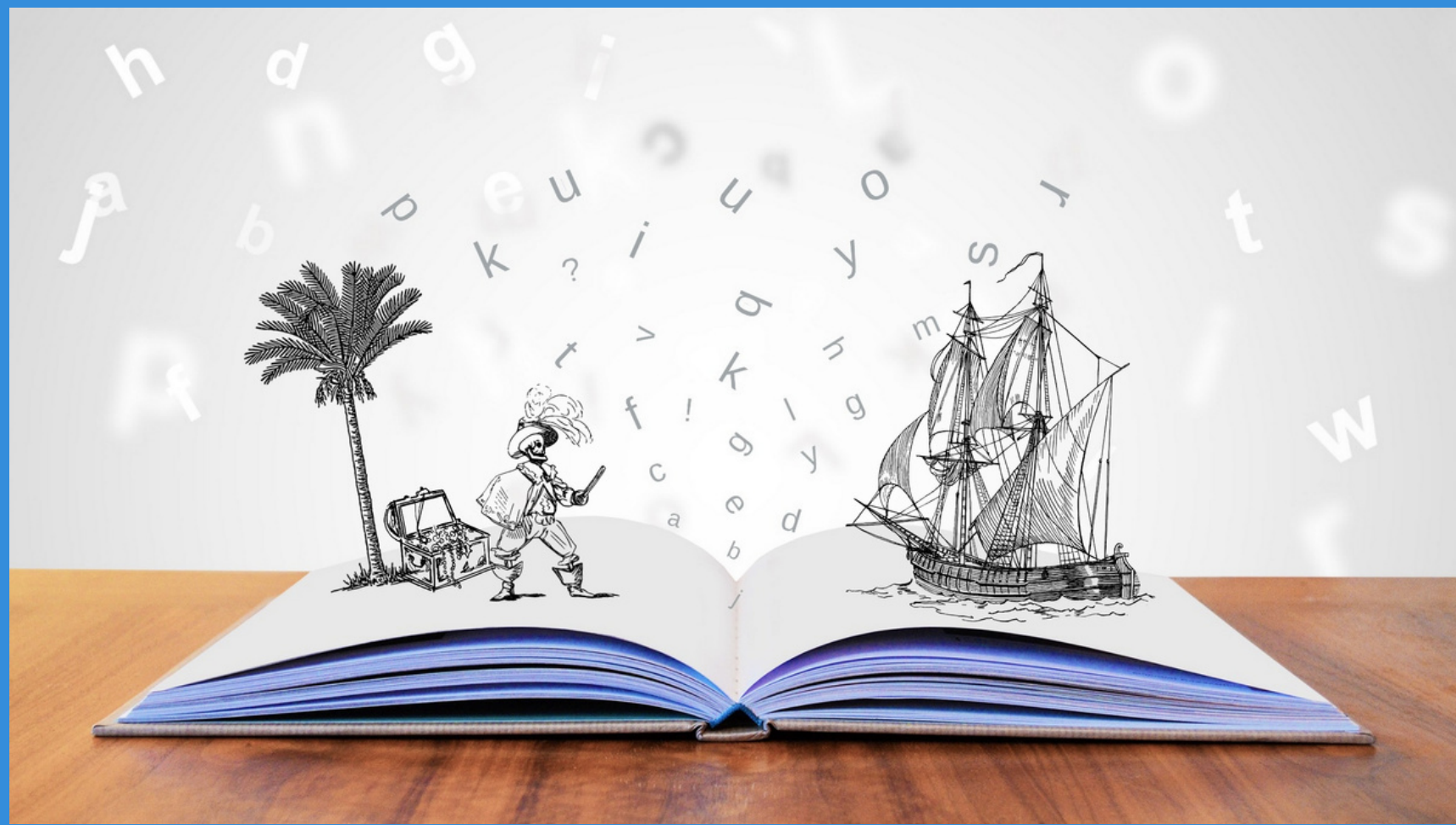
MAKE IT  
CLEAR WHAT  
QUESTIONS  
WERE ASKED

INCORPORATE  
INCONSISTENC  
Y



**Revise The Plan**

# **Writing the Report**













# Writing the Report

## CREATE HEADERS

Identifying the important time segments.

## TELL THE STORY

Introductory paragraph/facts in agreement and not in agreement.

From each parties' and witnesses perspective on what happened in each section.

## INCAPACITATION, CREDIBILITY, OTHER RELEVANT SECTIONS



# Writing Rules

- Omit needless words
- Keep average sentence length to about 20 words
- Keep subject, verb and object together (towards beginning of the sentence)
- Parallel phrasing for parallel ideas
- Active over Passive
- Avoid multiple negatives
- Avoid legalisms
- Minimize "is, are, was, and were" (use strong verbs instead)
- Turn "ion" words into verbs when you can

Garner, B., Legal Writing in Plain English, 2nd Ed. 2013

Struck, Jr., W., The Elements of Style, updated 1st Ed., 2021

**Practice**