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## UBURGE DELIVERABLE 2: COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING POLICY FOR UB GEOLOGY

This is what was found by the UB Geology URGE pod at SUNY University at Buffalo on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. Some information was public; answers that were only found through follow up with contacts are noted.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
  - [Link](#) - Organization, Company, University Policies
  - The UB Geology Department **does not** currently have any official departmental reporting policies in place. Informally, complaints can be made to the Director of Graduate Studies. As of March 2022, [Christopher Lowry](#) holds this position.
  - [Link](#) - Graduate Student Handbook
  - There are no current official guidelines for changing policies at the university or departmental level. However, informal communication suggests there may be willingness to adapt new policies at the departmental level.
  - The only reporting rates made publicly available are cases that go through the University Police Department, and are required to be reported under law. Otherwise there are no reports available to the public.
  
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
  - At the departmental level, the Director of Graduate Studies seems to be the informal person who will deal with complaints, however, there are no departmental level official guidelines in place.
  - At the university level, the Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Office or the Office of Student Affairs are tasked with handling discrimination that falls under Title IX, or can be considered a hate crime.  
[Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Office \(EDI\)](#)  
406 Capen Hall  
(716) 645-2266
  - Can reports be made online? **Yes**, [Link](#) Anonymously? **Yes**
  - Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?  
**Reports go to the EDI office**

- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?

The University Police is contacted when any bias-related incidents are reported.

- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**

The EDI Office outlines the following steps of the [investigatory process](#) below. *Please be aware that in cases deemed severe by the EDI officer, they may need to proceed forward with the investigation regardless of the complainant's willingness to proceed.*

- When contacting the Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Office, the officer will attempt an informal resolution by talking with the alleged offender's supervisor. After this a meeting may be arranged to include the alleged offender, their supervisor, and the complainant. In this situation the EDI officer will act as a mediator in an attempt to resolve the issue.
- If there is no resolution after the mediation attempt a formal grievance can be filed with (1) The University through the EDI office (2) New York State Division of Human Rights, 65 Court Street, Buffalo, NY 14202, 716-847-7632 (3) Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 6 Fountain Plaza, Suite 350, Buffalo, NY 14202, 716-551-4441 (4) Office of Civil Rights, Federal Building, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY 10276
- Who decides the outcomes/consequences?
  - The EDI office and the complaint procedure above is **NOT** a disciplinary procedure. The role of the EDI office is to ensure that the University is not permitting or tolerating actions that violate applicable discrimination laws, regulations, and policies.
- Are reports tracked? **No**
- Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
  - There is **no** disciplinary board or any written procedures for discipline at the department or university level.

- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**

- Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
  - The university does not disclose any resources beyond what may be covered by a student's insurance or offered through the student health center
- Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
  - The university states that retaliation is not permitted but there are **no explicit guidelines or procedures outlined at the departmental or university level on the specifics of how individuals will be protected from retaliation.**
- Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
  - Again, there are no clear guidelines or procedures that outline how individuals will realistically be protected, nor are there stated consequences for retaliation. Importantly, the university nor the department have any clear measures that seek to actively protect students from such retaliation. The burden of reporting retaliation is clearly on the victim which would presumably need to go through the

same process of lodging another complaint with the EDI office. However, again, the EDI office is NOT a disciplinary body, therefore it is not clear how the perpetrator would be held accountable for retaliation.

- **What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**
  - There are currently no clear guidelines or resources available outlining the procedure to raise issues or propose changes at either the departmental or university level.