URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for NAGT Geoscience Education Research Division

This is what was found by the Geoscience Education Research Pod at NAGT on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. Some information was public; other answers were found through our NAGT liaison (and pod member) Kim Hannula.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
  - NAGT Code of Conduct: [https://nagt.org/nagt/about/code_of_conduct.html](https://nagt.org/nagt/about/code_of_conduct.html);
  - NAGT Complaint Procedure: [https://nagt.org/nagt/about/ethics_procedures.html](https://nagt.org/nagt/about/ethics_procedures.html)
  - NAGT GER Division Policies: none
  - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
    - Revisions to the policy get proposed to the NAGT Executive Committee, but the process is uncertain as is the regularity as to which the policies are reviewed.
  - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
    - No information available publicly

- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
  - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
    - According to NAGT policy, a panel of NAGT’s Past President, current President, and the Executive Director
  - Can reports be made online? Where? Yes, email to ethics@nagt.org
    - Anonymously? No
    - **POD POLICY RECOMMENDATION:** Consider adding an informal complaint report process that would allow for anonymous complaints. Several anonymous reports that could be shown to represent a pattern could be used to initiate a formal investigation.
  - Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
    - According to NAGT policy, a panel of NAGT’s Past President, current President, and the Executive Director
    - If any of these three individuals are involved in the allegation or otherwise have a conflict of interest, the NAGT Executive Committee will appoint a replacement(s) from the Executive Committee membership.
POD POLICY RECOMMENDATION: Consider forming an ad hoc committee to review the complaints rather than having people in leadership positions review the complaints.

Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization? **Anyone experiencing or witnessing behavior that constitutes an immediate or serious threat to public safety, or a criminal act is expected to contact 911.**

What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?

As per NAGT Policy, if the panel finds that misconduct has occurred, they will decide the action to be taken. Appropriate actions may include (as listed below), correction of the publication record, and/or recommendations for education or training. Where appropriate, the duration that actions will be in effect will be noted. Actions may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Written reprimand or warning
2. Removal from NAGT volunteer position
3. Removal from NAGT leadership position
4. Publication of "errata" notices
5. Withdrawal/retraction of presentations, publication, or posters
6. Notification to non-NAGT journals
7. Suspension from publishing in or reviewing for NAGT publications or online forums for a specific period, including permanently
8. Suspension from making presentations at NAGT sponsored meeting(s) for a specific period, including permanently
9. Suspension of membership
10. Permanent expulsion from NAGT
11. Denial or revocation of honors and awards

The panel may request that the Executive Committee approve the actions. As per NAGT bylaws, any suspension of NAGT membership or permanent expulsion from NAGT must be approved by the Executive Committee. Following the finding, the panel will notify each party in writing. Each party will be allowed 15 days to appeal the finding, in writing, to the NAGT Executive Committee, who will consider the appeal at their next virtual or in-person meeting. The NAGT President will notify each party in writing of the decision for the appeal.
When an NAGT member is sanctioned by another organization for misconduct or convicted of criminal activity, the panel may review and consider its own actions related to membership, attendance at NAGT programs, and publishing with NAGT.

- Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?
  - Formal Complete allegations will be heard, either as an in-person meeting or a virtual meeting, by a panel of NAGT’s Past President, current President, and the Executive Director. If any of these three individuals are involved in the allegation or otherwise have a conflict of interest, the NAGT Executive Committee will appoint a replacement(s) from the Executive Committee membership. If there is a change in panel membership, the Executive Committee may approve the continuation of the previous committee members for any ongoing proceedings. The person(s) submitting the allegation and the person(s) alleged to have committed the misconduct shall/will be given at least 15 days written notice of the hearing and the reasons for it. Each party will be entitled to be heard, orally or in writing, at the hearing.

- If the panel finds that misconduct has occurred, they will decide the action to be taken. Appropriate actions may include (as listed below), correction of the publication record, and/or recommendations for education or training.

- Are reports tracked? Yes/No/Not sure How are they tracked? By who? Uncertain
- Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process? No policy definitions are provided regarding repeat complaints

- What resources are available for individuals reporting? None outlined in policy documents
  - Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
  - Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
  - Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
  - **POD POLICY RECOMMENDATION:** Consider restorative justice staff (similar to a NAGT ombudsman?)
What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?

- Petitions of # signatures trigger a town hall, meeting with organizational leadership, or policy change. What is the follow-up process for town halls and meetings? **No formal process outlined in the existing policies**
- **POD POLICY RECOMMENDATION:** As we consider a town hall for our membership this summer (perhaps at the EER), make sure that we have follow-up processes determined so that there is action taken on the issues that arise at the gathering.
- Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
  - NAGT Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
    - [https://nagt.org/nagt/about/committees.html](https://nagt.org/nagt/about/committees.html)
  - GER division has a liaison to NAGT Executive Committee (Kim Hannula currently serving in that role)
- Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents.
  - **Our pod plans to discuss this with the DEI committee of NAGT. Past surveys have dealt a little with the culture of the organization.**
- Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve.
  - **There have been past surveys of the membership on similar topics. Not sure how regularly these occur.**

Our Pod Leader (Scott Werts) for this session gathered example policies from similar organizations on which we may be able to draw ideas:

- [https://www.geosociety.org/documents/gsa/about/ethics/ethical-violations-policy.pdf](https://www.geosociety.org/documents/gsa/about/ethics/ethical-violations-policy.pdf)
- [https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/About/Ethics/GSA/About/ethics/updates/20190513-ethics-program-update.aspx](https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/About/Ethics/GSA/About/ethics/updates/20190513-ethics-program-update.aspx)
- [https://serc.carleton.edu/serc/misconduct_policy.html](https://serc.carleton.edu/serc/misconduct_policy.html)
- [https://www.apaonline.org/page/discrim_complaint](https://www.apaonline.org/page/discrim_complaint)