URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for University/Organization

This is what was found by Geosciences, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences (SoMAS), and Ecology & Evolution department pod at Stony Brook University 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:
  - Stony Brook University Policies:
    - Office of Equity and Access “ReportIT” ([https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oea-equity/reporting](https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oea-equity/reporting))
    - Ombudsman Office ([https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/ombuds/index.php](https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/ombuds/index.php)).
  - Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies: At the moment these policies do not exist at the department level.
  - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy? This information is not available.
  - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)? This information is not available.

- What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?
  - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents? Office of Institutional Diversity and Equity

Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports? Marjolie Leonard, Director, Title IX and ADA Coordinator. It is unclear if other individuals have access to the reports.

Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization? Police involvement is case dependent.

What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?

- **Student specific Sanctions** that may be imposed: written warning, restitution (violations against University property), special restriction or loss of privileges, residential probation, university probation, university or residential services & educational projects and programs, suspension from resident halls/apartments, expulsion from residence halls/apartments, suspension from university, expulsion from university, restriction from personal contact (https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oea-sexual-misconduct/sexual_misconduct_policy_and_procedure.php).

- **Interim Measures** concerning the interaction of the parties involved in the investigation: temporary restriction from personal contact, interim suspension, alternate academic scheduling, campus restrictions, technological restrictions, housing restrictions, employment restrictions (e.g., restricting the dates/times/locations/hours permitted to work) (#4 https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oea-sexual-misconduct/sexual_misconduct_policy_and_procedure.php).

- **State Employees**
  - Disciplinary action might be recommended after counseling has proved ineffective and is usually referred by the supervisor to the Labor Relations department (https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/employee-labor-relations/counseling/disciplinary.php).

- **Research Foundation Employees** (https://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Procedures/per_implementing-progressive-discipline_guid.htm)
Voluntary and involuntary termination of employment (https://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Policies/per_termination-employment_pol.htm).

Progressive discipline: verbal counseling, written warning, performance improvement plan, termination (https://www.rfsuny.org/media/RFSUNY/Procedures/per_implementing-progressive-discipline_guid.htm)

- Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?
  - Hearing Officer from Title IX office
  - Review Panel (composed of faculty and staff members) is present at hearings and recommend sanctions to the Vice President of Student Affairs or designee (#9m https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/oea-sexual-misconduct/sexual_misconduct_policy_and_procedure.php)

- Are reports tracked? Since this information is not publicly available, we are unaware of any report tracking.
- Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process? This information is not available for repeated complaints.

- What resources are available for individuals reporting?
  - Stony Brook University Resources:
    - Survivor Advocate: Samantha August
    - Center for Prevention and Outreach
    - Counseling and Psychological Services
    - SANE Center (sexual assault nurse examiner) in the Stony Brook University Hospital Emergency room
    - Student Health Services
  - Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations. This information is not available.
  - Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment. The Office of Equity and Access states in the Student Bill of Rights that students have the right to be protected from retaliation by the university, any student, the accused/respondent, and/or their friends, family, and acquaintances within the jurisdiction of the University. Details are not available.
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?: Stony Brook University hosts Town Hall meetings every semester that deal with the Diversity Plan and answer any questions from community members (https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/cdo/plan/townhall).

- Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy. Stony Brook University Diversity Advisory Group works to advance the plan for equity, inclusion, and diversity (https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/cdo/plan/advisory-group)

- Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents. There is a feedback page specific to the Diversity plan (https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/cdo/plan/feedback). Climate Surveys are done every other year by the State University of New York (https://www.suny.edu/climatesurvey/)

- Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve. Information not available.

Recommendations and Ideas from the URGE SBU Pod:

- Department Level Policies
  - We recommend establishing liaison roles within a department that would provide information on institutional policies and procedures to any individual that is looking to submit a complaint or report improper behavior and occurrences. The liaison is only responsible for guiding individuals throughout the processes and providing support with confidentiality.
  - Existing liaisons (e.g., undergraduate, graduate liaisons) should be trained on the existing institutional policies and procedures for reporting harassment and discrimination. This way, an individual can communicate with a person they may already know and trust, who can guide them through the process.
  - Departmental liaisons trained to support those going through the reporting process should be individuals that represent distinct groups, i.e., on the undergraduate student, graduate student, and faculty/staff level. This will
avoid any apparent or actual conflict of interests or lack of trust in the departmental person who fills this role.

- We should further evaluate the amount of time necessary to adequately perform the liaison role. If we find that the commitment is substantially larger than typical student service roles in the department, we recommend additional financial compensation when available.

- Accountability
  - We recommend that department leadership with future liaisons and, if already established, the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committees commit with the Stony Brook University Office of Equity and Access to establish a plan to address “lower level” (e.g., unintentional microaggressions) occurrences of discrimination that would otherwise not be addressed by institutional processes.
  - Accountability plans within departments must be created with the institutional leadership and relevant unions to assure protection of student, faculty, and staff rights.
  - Examples of lower level accountability processes that were discussed are: attendance of training and seminars on microaggressions and recommended readings of anti-racist literature.