URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for Texas A&M University

This is what was found by the Shamberger Lab at Texas A&M University on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. This information is all publicly available.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
  - Notice of Non-Discrimination Policy; University Policies
  - Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - TAMU College of Geosciences - description of short and long term goals for the College of Geosciences, including reporting goal information
    - **Short term Goals:**
      - Identify college wide ombuds person to serve as a primary point of contact.
      - Build multi-tier programming to increase awareness about incident reporting and provide timely follow up as incidents arise.
      - Provide faculty, staff, and students with training regarding how to report racial bias incidents and an understanding of the process once a report is filed.
    - **Medium term Goal:**
      - Develop mechanisms to report metrics on racial bias incidents annually.
      - “College of Geosciences sends information about college/university and national events and proactively seeks advice from staff/students for input on how to improve via server wide email to students within the college.”

**Texas A&M University Contacts:**
- **University Designated Official:**
  The University has designated Jennifer Smith, Assistant Vice President and Title IX Coordinator to receive all reports of discrimination, harassment, complicity and retaliation related to a protected class or status.
  **To file a report with the University, please contact:**
  Ms. Jennifer M. Smith, Assistant Vice President and Title IX Coordinator
  Medical Sciences Library
  202 Olsen Blvd., Suite 007
  College Station, TX 77843
  (979) 458-8407
civilrights@tamu.edu
College of Geosciences: Assistant Dean for Diversity and Climate
Ishara Connors
icc@tamu.edu
(979) 845-3651
Eller O&M 202

Resources:
- OMBUDS Officer
  - Informal, independent, neutral, and confidential resource for persons to discuss questions and concerns.
  - See link for information on specific role of Ombuds officer

Online reports can be made to:
- Tell Somebody Reporting
  - Can be anonymous
  - Reviewed by a team to determine necessary action (no specifics listed)
  - Reports are not guaranteed to be confidential - determined by State law
- Stop Hate
  - Can be anonymous
  - Reviewed by a team to determine necessary action (no specifics listed)
  - Reports are not guaranteed to be confidential - determined by State law
- Campus Community Incident Report (CCIR)
  - Can be anonymous
  - Report are reviewed based on stats of person engaging in alleged misconduct
    - Student misconduct: Student Conduct Office (SCO) or Department of Student Affairs in Qatar
    - Staff misconduct: Human Resources
    - Faculty misconduct: Dean of Faculties
  - Reports are confidential - SCO staff, accused student, and those with an educational need to know will view the report
  - Note: no action may be taken if incidents fall outside of university jurisdiction, do not involve a current student or employee, have a lack of evidence, or if the reporting party is unable to specifically identify the alleged offender(s)

Outcomes or consequences for reported individuals:
- For CCIR:
  - Further Investigation: Initial reports filed may require further follow up by university officials. The more detail-specific information supplied via the Campus Community Incident Report form will assist in a more timely resolution to the conflict outlined. If further investigation is necessary, the
individual submitting the report may be contacted by a university official to provide more information.

- Mediation: Some reports which reach the university involve possible violations of regulations, but clearly are the result of an unresolved, ongoing dispute between individuals. Other reports do not involve violations of regulations or fall outside University jurisdiction, but they too reflect disputes. In either of these situations, the students may be referred to mediation. Mediation is a voluntary process which utilizes an impartial, neutral third party who acts as a facilitator to help the parties reach a mutually acceptable accord. The university will provide a trained mediator to work with the parties involved.

- Charges Issued for students: Reports filed may lead to alleged violations of University Student Rules and charges will be issued to accused students. Accused students will be contacted and a student conduct hearing will be held to resolve the conflict.

**Notes from discussion with Oceanography Department Head and Assistant Heads:**

- We noted that the reporting policy at Texas A&M is confusing because there are several different types of reporting, modes of reporting, and people that can be reported to, but no centralized location/website to find this information. It therefore requires a significant effort on the individual to figure out how to report something.

- We also noted that the “Tell Somebody” online reporting system is well known on campus and is a great resource because these reports are reviewed by a team and followed up on. The newer “Stop Hate” online reporting system, however, is not well advertised on campus, several of us did not know it existed prior to this exercise, and it is unclear what kind of action is taken based on these reports.

- Within the College of Geosciences, it is currently not clear if there is someone that can be approached to discuss DEI concerns in a confidential manner. It is our understanding that the Assistant Dean for Diversity and Climate reports all incidents directly to the Dean of the college, which may discourage some people from seeking assistance and/or resources.