URGE Complaints and Reporting Processes  
UMN Department of Soil, Water, and Climate

1.0 Department Level

1.1 Land and Atmospheric Science

Graduate Student Handbook - Grievances Section

- Grievances related to graduate study are limited to non-academic matters (i.e., decisions or judgements concerning a student’s scholastic performance are not considered grievable).
- Information on the procedures in filing a grievance can be obtained by contacting the Departmental Grievance Officer.
- To initiate formal grievance procedures, graduate students should contact the thesis advisor, the head of the Departmental Grievance committee, the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Head, whichever is more appropriate.
- If the issue cannot be resolved informally through this mechanism, the student should contact the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action or the Graduate School Grievance Committee.

2.0 CFANS Level

2.1 Diversity & Inclusion:

The CFANS Diversity & Inclusion level uses the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Reporting (EOAA), and Bias Response Referral Network (BRRN). Both of these are offered at the University level and discussed in more detail in section 3.0 below.

2.2 Environmental Science, Policy & Management (CFANS-level Undergraduate Major):

- ESPM Coordinator: Professor Joe Knight, jknight@umn.edu, 612-625-5354
  - If a student wants to report an incident, then the complaint would go to the faculty member’s department (i.e. SWAC Grievances Committee).
- Improving Campus Climate: Has general information and links for EOAA, BRNN, Office for Community Standards, Office for Conflict Resolution

- ESPM does not have a formal grievances process and relevant information is not available on the website but there is a diversity statement
3.0 University Level

3.1 Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Reporting (EOAA)

- EOAA addresses reports of discrimination, harassment, nepotism, sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking and relationship violence) and related retaliation through:
  - Investigation
  - Informal problem-solving
  - Consultation
  - Education

- Handles Title IX complaints
  - Protected identities include the following: race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, public assistance status, membership or activity in a local commission created for the purpose of dealing with discrimination, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression; sexual misconduct; nepotism; and related retaliation.

- Use the "Report Online" button, or contact EOAA at: (612) 624-9547 or eoaa@umn.edu.

- This seems to be fairly frequently used. They opened 663 cases in 2019. Their annual report is useful with data on the breakdown of forms of discrimination, harassment, nepotism, sexual misconduct reported and addressed. However, the information is fairly broad. [https://eoaa.umn.edu/about/data](https://eoaa.umn.edu/about/data)

3.2 Bias Response Referral Network (BRRN)

- The Bias Response and Referral Network (BRRN) responds to reports of bias incidents on the Twin Cities campus. The BRRN provides support resources to impacted parties, promotes education and dialogue, and affirms the University's commitment to equity and diversity, free speech, and academic freedom.

- Collects anonymous incident reports. This is a good avenue to consider to report incidents such as microaggressions or objectionable graffiti by unknown persons.

- This body does not conduct investigations or take disciplinary action. Rather, it refers reporters to other offices that can take further action, gathers data on trends, and provides education on bias to the campus community.

- This seems to be fairly frequently used. In 2018-2019 they handed over 100 reported incidents in parts of Twin Cities campus life ranging from graffiti to campus events. They have a fairly helpful annual report which contains a breakdown of what type of incidents they handled in a given year.

3.3 Student Conflict Resource Center and Office of the Ombudsman

- The Student Conflict Resolution Center offers informal conflict resolution services to resolve students' university-based problems and concerns. Provides confidential, impartial, and informal options.
- Despite the name, this is a resource for all university employees and students
  - Not a formal grievance reporting body and don’t do investigations.
- This seems like a good resource for someone who is
  - not sure where to take their grievance
  - wants to talk to a third party
  - does not want to begin a formal complaint or investigation process
  - wants to address the issue directly.
- There are some learning resources through The Dignity Project, which seeks to reduce academic incivility, that relate directly to bias issues. The resources are geared towards faculty and research staff.

3.4 One Stop Student Services
- **Webpage** lists general UMN information for reporting grievances
- **Form submission** for those who do not know where to take a complaint

3.5 UReport and the University Compliance Program
- **UReport** University-level anonymous reporting of “misconduct”. “Report violations of rules, regulations and policies by phone at 1-866-294-8680 or online. Reports can be made anonymously.
  - UReports are received by the Office of Institutional Compliance (OIC) and shared with the UReport Consultative Team (UCT). They assign it “to the most appropriate existing process or position in the University for review”
- Any University community member can report a situation or conduct they believe violates a law, regulation or University policy.
  - Examples of issues to report include, but are not limited to, theft; wage, benefit, or hours abuses; discrimination or sexual harassment; misuse of University property or equipment; violation of safety rules; OSHA or environmental abuse concerns; conflicts of interest; NCAA violations; intentional misuse of the University’s network or computers; and bribery or corruption

3.6 Disability Resource Center (DRC)
- Students are expected to contact the DRC as soon as possible if reasonable accommodations are not being implemented in an effective or timely way
- The DRC will contact the instructor, teaching assistant, housing staff, facilities management or other relevant party to attempt to resolve the issue.
- If the DRC is not able to remedy the situation by communicating with these parties, the DRC will contact the appropriate department administrators to discuss implementation of the DRC-approved accommodations.
- If a student believes that they are being discriminated against because of their disability, the student is referred to the University of Minnesota Office of EOAA
4.0 Faculty Grievance Information/Process

- **CFANS Human Resources**
  - SWAC’s HR Consultant is Kate Niederer (kniedere@umn.edu) and the HR Director is Yvonne Lind (lind1652@umn.edu).
- The **Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action** handles cases of discrimination and harassment based on protected classes.
- The **Office of Conflict Resolution** is where you would go to handle all formal grievance resolution that is not based on discrimination (*Conflict Resolution for Faculty, P&A, Civil Service, and Student Workers*).
  - For example, if a faculty member receives discipline and would like to formally dispute the discipline, it would go through the Office of Conflict Resolution.
- The **Office of the General Counsel** also provides information and support.

5.0 Summary of actions you can take:

- **Option one:** talk with your supervisor or your unit’s human resources consultant or equal opportunity officer.
- **Option two:** contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (612-624-9547; 274 McNamara Alumni Center). EOAA can guide you through the process.

6.0 Examples of what Other Departments are Doing

6.1 Forest Resources

- **Anonymous form** on intranet
- Responses are delivered to the Department of Forest Resources frweb@umn.edu email inbox, which is monitored by Ben Findlay, Amber Grupe, and Colleen O'Connor. Most questions and feedback about the department will be answered directly, considered in department meetings, or directed to individual staff and faculty members.
- Reports of microaggressions will be directed to Department Head Mike Kilgore and the University of Minnesota’s Office of Human Resources. Reports of criminal behavior or offenses with Title IX mandatory reporting requirements will be directed to the University of Minnesota’s Office of Human Resources and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EOAA).

6.2 Food Science & Nutrition

- Website only addresses academic issues and student employment
7.0 Next Steps for SWAC

This document will be shared with the SWAC DEI Committee. We suggest they take the following actions:

- Post this document to the website as a resource for department students, faculty, and staff.
  - Include visuals and/or examples to highlight the options, processes, and potential outcomes of different situations
- Create an internal department guide for how mandatory reporters should alert others in the case of a potential sexual harassment/assault disclosure.
  - Initiate a process to train department members
  - Develop a plan to revise/review the guide based on ongoing conversations with department members.
- Develop a robust grievance process within the department
  - Short term: create an anonymous form for people to report grievances. Responses are directed to an unique email address which someone on the DEI committee checks regularly.
  - Medium term: identify people in the department who volunteer to help others navigate grievance reporting.
  - Long term: articulate what a departmental grievance committee would be able to address, how it would intersect with college- and university-level processes, the framework used to address grievances, who is on the committee, any additional training committee members should undertake, etc.