

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for University of Massachusetts Amherst Department of Geosciences

This is what was found by the University of Massachusetts Amherst Geosciences URGE pod on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. Some of the reporting policies included here are through the Title IX office, but it must be noted that the scope of Title IX is sexual harassment, sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and other forms of sexual misconduct. It does NOT include acts of racism or non-sex-based discrimination.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
 - *Reporting policy links*
 - [UMass complaints process outline](#)
 - [Geosciences department complaints process](#) (links to grad student handbook; see p. 18)
 - Graduate Student Union (for graduate student employees): GEO informal and formal grievance procedure (GEO Handbook, pg 33)
 - **URGE action item:** our URGE pod is working on designing an anonymous reporting system internal to the Department of Geosciences
 - *Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?*
 - The graduate student handbook is regularly updated, however it is unclear how frequently the policies themselves are reviewed. Faculty meet to discuss policies, and new ideas can be proposed at department-wide Town Hall meetings. We are in the process of planning a Town Hall meeting to discuss our action item (see above).
 - *Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?*
 - [Pending cases published by the U.S. Department of Education](#)
 - [UMass police department reports](#)
 - Department specific incidences are not reported.
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
 - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
 - Title IX Responsible Employees in the department ([full list here](#))
 - Department Head: (Stephen Burns)

- Geoscience Graduate Program Director: (Michele Cooke)
 - Geography Graduate Program Director: (Qian Yu)
 - Geography - GIST Program Director: (Forrest Bowlick)
 - Geography Program Heads: (Eve Vogel and Forrest Bowlick)
 - Geology Undergraduate Advisor: (Mark Leckie)
 - Geography Undergraduate Advisor: (Toby Applegate)
- Reports can be made in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, to the Title IX Coordinator.
 - Link to Reporting Options: [To Whom Should I Report? | Title IX at UMass Amherst](#)
 - Current contact information for reporting a Title IX complaint is:
 - William D. Brady, Interim Title IX Coordinator:
Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer
330 Whitmore Building
181 Presidents Drive
Amherst, Massachusetts 01003
413-545-6124
TitleIXCoordinator@umass.edu
 - General Title IX Inquiry and Reporting:
413-545-3464
TitleIXCoordinator@umass.edu
 - There is no way to anonymously report, at any level, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Can reports be made anonymously?
 - Not at the department level
 - At the university level you can send emails to the various offices/departments (equal opportunity, deans, department chairs) but there is no anonymity in this option. The “Report a concern” button on equal opportunity site just opens an email to their address.
- Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
 - There is no clear way to know who the report goes to, besides the direct person you report it to. You can ask the person you report to who they will tell, but there is no formal structure that makes this clear.
 - There is no way to know who sees the reports unless you ask the person you report to.
- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?
 - This depends on the nature of the complaint, and the preference of the complainant.
 - If someone reports that an individual may hurt themselves or someone else, or perpetuate a future crime then mandatory reporters may get the police involved.

claims of unfair treatment or erroneous procedure, listens, advises, and makes recommendations.

- [Dean of Students Office](#): can assist with class/schedule changes, moving residence halls, discussion with professors, etc. Individuals do not have to have filed a formal complaint in order to access these services.
- [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#): provides resources, general and crisis information, and directs inquiries related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. A private but not confidential report can be made using the “Report a Climate Incident” button on the homepage, which is then reviewed and routed to the appropriate office within 2 business days.
- [UMass Amherst Police Department](#): a non-confidential entity for students/faculty/community members to report incidents and open a criminal investigation.
- [Center for Women and Community](#): a free, confidential center for people of all gender identities providing crisis services, counselling, and support groups to members of the UMass and greater Amherst community
- [Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success](#): provides support for first generation, students of color, multiracial students, and low income students.
- [Center for Counseling and Psychological Health](#): provides confidential supportive mental health services including crisis intervention, short-term therapy, support and therapy groups, consultation, and education.
- [Faculty and Staff Assistance Program](#): a free, confidential service assisting with work-related and workplace concerns through confidential assessment, counselling, consultation, and referrals.
- [Stonewall Center](#): provides cultural and educational programming, LGBTQIA+ allyship training sessions, a DVD and book library, information and referrals, support for individuals who experience harassment and discrimination, advocacy for LGBTQIA+ students at UMass Amherst; and community outreach.
- [Disability Services](#): provides direct services to students for all types of disability, as well as accessibility and referral information, guest accommodations, and university training.
- [International Programs Office](#): provides support to international students and their families.
- [Workplace Accommodations](#): provides workplace accommodations to faculty and staff.
- [Student Legal Services](#): provides confidential advice, counsel, referrals, and community legal education for students.
- [Human Resources](#): provides employment-related information to employees and campus departments.
- [Residential Education](#): offers support services to students residing on campus, including connecting students to other campus offices/resources and facilitating room assignment changes or temporary moves.

- Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
 - https://www.umass.edu/honesty/sites/default/files/academic_grievance_guide.pdf - this is a separate complaint
- Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
 - “The Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination Policy of the University of Massachusetts Amherst (www.umass.edu/eod/aapolicy.html) prohibits the harassment of students and employees, i.e. racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination.” (from the GEO contract, Article 19)
- **What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**
 - In many ways groups with issues and ideas for changes can be far more effective than individuals because they come from a place of aggregate experiences. The group’s message is more likely to be heard than an individual complaint that might focus on particulars of their experience. Petitions of # signatures trigger a town hall, meeting with organizational leadership, or policy change. An outstanding question is- what is the follow-up process for town halls and meetings?
 - Groups can approach the department leadership, College of Natural Science, Office of Equity and Inclusion and other administrators as appropriate (e.g., grad union, faculty union, staff union, dean of students). The UMass Equal Opportunity Employment office has a great resource page on the different offices on campus that receive complaints: <https://www.umass.edu/equalopportunity/civil-rights-sexual-misconduct-resources>
 - Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
 - Department Committee for Diversity Equity and Inclusion (CDEI)
 - UMass Graduate Employees Union (GEO)
 - Faculty committees?
 - Cultural surveys
 - Campus Climate Survey
 - Diversity Strategic plan