

WOW Pod deliverable - Session 2 - Complaints and Reporting

This is what was found by Women of Watson (WOW) at WHOI and the MIT-WHOI Joint Program 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:**

- Graduate student resources (MIT-WHOI)
 - [Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response Office](#) (MIT)
 - Options for both informal and formal complaints
 - One can contact the office to look into options without taking any formal actions
 - The website also posts formal training information, and this information was last updated at least 2020, hence is maintained and updated regularly
 - The 2019-2020 Annual Report is [here](#), which contains statistics about the different types of reports that were filed in that year, their nature, and the positions of the people who initiated them (student, faculty, etc.). Reports for other years are also available
- This [pamphlet](#), which is also made available in bathrooms and other office locations on the WHOI campus, describes options available to Joint Program students, including:
 - At sea, in the field, or at conferences:
 - Supervisor/chief scientist, captain/chief mate, or WHOI EEO Officer: eeo@whoi.edu
 - Title IX Coordinator: titleix@whoi.edu
 - At WHOI:
 - WHOI EEO officer
 - Title IX Coordinator
 - Employee and Student Assistance Program
 - Academic Programs
 - Marine Personnel
 - SSSG Manager
 - WHOI EthicsPoint Hotline
 - At MIT:
 - The MIT Ombuds Office
 - MIT Medical
 - The MIT-WHOI Academic Programs Office
 - The Title IX Coordinator at MIT
 - This [website](#) provides a flow chart for reporting and resources available at MIT.

- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**

- Graduate Student mechanisms (MIT-WHOI)
 - The Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response Office (IDHR) website has options specifically for dealing with allegations against [professors](#) and [students](#)

- To file a formal complaint with this office, you must be willing to disclose your identity as the complainant
- The police may ultimately be involved, but the website urges you to contact the MIT Police first if you are in immediate danger or somehow threatened
- For confidential allegations, the [Ombuds Office](#) serves all members of the community at MIT
 - This resource states that it is available at any time for any reason to help resolve complaints from interpersonal relationships to academic misconduct to safety concerns
 - This is not necessarily the right final step (perhaps it is a first step) for reporting very serious misconduct
- The [WHOI Pamphlet](#) gives guidance for who to talk to if you have a concern (which it follows might then eventually be escalated with some office at WHOI)
- WHOI provides employees with a way to anonymously and confidentially report harassment through the WHOI Hotline, hosted by a third party provider, EthicsPoint. It is possible to file an anonymous and confidential report online at www.who.ethicspoint.com or by calling EthicsPoint at 1-866-868-0920.
- WHOI employees/postdocs
 - Similar resources to above
 - [Anonymous reporting can be done here.](#)

● **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**

- Graduate student outcomes (MIT-WHOI)
 - The [IDHR](#) will start a formal process with a case manager once a complaint is filed
 - For most IDHR complaints, the course of action is non-punitive, and involves [educational resources](#)
 - There is nothing mentioned about faculty suspension on the basis of an IDHR report, but it is mentioned that allegations against students can result in suspension from academic programs and extracurricular activities hosted by MIT
 - Complaints are recorded and yearly summaries are published
- For postdocs, this is likely case-by-case. Following an issue, supervisors, chairs, and HR would likely get involved.
- The MIT Police or MIT Medical have anonymous resources for reporting cases such as sexual assault which will only be pursued after consultation with the victim (it is totally anonymous)

● **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**

- Office of Graduate Education (OGE) is there as a resource to provide emotional support during reporting as well as assist in referrals for a variety of issues
- MIT Mental Health and Counseling serves as another resource for support. In the event of needing support after hours, there is a 24/7 nurse on call to be there for guidance and support.
- If you are an undergraduate student, there is always a Dean on Call as well as dorm Graduate Resident Advisors and Heads of House to help support students during reporting.

- MIT Chaplains are also available to provide confidential support.
- [WHOI mental health support](#)

● **What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**

- Individual department chairs, supervisors, or program leads (e.g., Academic program). But no formal process.
- WHOI Town Halls, Postdoc meetings (annual and monthly), annual reviews
- DEI working groups (led by individuals)
- The EAPS Student Advisory Committee creates space for students to create groups. For example, a reading group was recently created called TIDE ([Towards Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity](#)).
- [WHOI CDEI](#) has built the infrastructure for and has the institutional knowledge of how to effectively coordinate efforts to improve the culture at WHOI. This is an important resource for groups to propose changes, plan events, and attend monthly meetings to bring issues to the CDEI.

Noted places for improvement (derived from discussions, results from reviewing current policies and protocols).

1. *Waiting period after reporting anonymously could be revised.* Suggestions:
 - Immediate follow-up to ensure the reporting individual has resources for their own mental health and/or resources to reach out to potential allies
2. *Reporting statistics:* Transparency in examples of what happens after reporting would be an improvement. Suggestions:
 - Anonymous surveys to gain information on how the WHOI community perceives “reporting incidences of harassment”
 - Questions and discussion during student and postdoc exit interviews that are followed up on.
 - Published workflows of what happens after a report is filed - more specific examples/scenarios of what would happen if an incident occurred in the field, overseas, or locally.
3. [WHOI harassment policy](#) updates. Suggestions:
 - While these policies are available campus wide and online, regular updates to them (e.g., at least annually) would be an improvement
4. *Training that emphasizes examples.* Suggestions:
 - Training on avoidance or how to report incidents is currently required by all, but even more resources on “what is a reportable incident” would be helpful.
5. *MIT EAPS.* Suggestions:
 - Public workflow to demonstrate how reporting happens
 - More comprehensive field work guidelines and best practices.