

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for University/Organization

NOTE: We reached out to our newly established Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI), which has just reached the one-year mark of existence at UMBC. The Executive Director, Candace Dodgson-Reed is also the Chief of Staff to the President of UMBC. Both Candace and the OEI director, Ariana Arnold, joined our most recent Pod meeting and briefed us on the work they have done over the past year, and the work moving forward. We invited them to continue to participate in Pod meetings, and they welcomed the invitation and will join from time-to-time.

This is what was found by GES-ICARE at UMBC 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:**

<http://oei.umbc.edu>- Organization, Company, University Policies

UMBC's Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) is responsible for promoting and coordinating the University's core values of inclusive excellence and equity, and has primary responsibility for managing UMBC's efforts related to Title IX as well as other civil rights issues, including discrimination, harassment, hate and bias. The office's mission is to ensure compliance with sexual misconduct and non-discrimination laws, regulations, and policies through prompt, fair investigations, education and training, and outreach and engagement.

- Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies – we don't yet have a set of compiled policies for our Pod that exist at this scale. In many cases for departments within our Pod, these don't exist. Rather UMBC is trying to have the process for reporting and for policies streamlined across the university.
- Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy? OEI is a new entity on campus (just had its first year anniversary), but they said they are regularly reviewing their process and gathering feedback from different entities across campus.
- Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?

These are summarized in the annual report of OEI. Available here.

<https://oei.umbc.edu/2020-annual-update/>

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



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- Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents? – Two individuals within the OEI office receive the reports and review them. These are the Title IX coordinator and the Director of OEI. Anyone can file a report from our community. We also have responsible employee training, and are aware of expectations of filing reports on Title IX in particular.
- Can reports be made online? Where? **Yes**, [Link](#) Anonymously? **Yes**
- Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports? **Ariana Arnold, Esq., Director of OEI & Mikhel Kishner, Esq., Title IX Coordinator**
- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization? Police are included in the process when/if there is a situation of reported child abuse, or if there is an imminent danger or situation where police surveillance video might be relevant to the case. Otherwise, the situation is first assessed by these two contacts, and then additional counseling, police involvement, or support is sourced depending on the concerns of the informant.
- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**
 - Our OEI contacts said they observe trends in the reports (often anonymous) to see if any individual faculty or departments might need some outreach, intervention, or follow-up. At times a department chair would be notified, in other instances, there would be direct discussion with a faculty member in the case of an incident in class, etc. We did not discuss what would trigger termination, but that is detailed in training information.
 - Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?
 - Are reports tracked? **Yes** How are they tracked? By who? These are tracked by the OEI team (5 full-time staff), and any trends are documented and highlighted for follow-up to see if training or small group discussions would be helpful.
 - Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
 - We did not cover this explicitly in our meeting. There is an “Inclusion Council” that acts as a board for the Office of Equity & Inclusion.
- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
 - Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
 - Available to students through existing campus resources
 - Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
 - Yes – this was indicated as something that involved follow-up and support to students.



Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

- Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
 - Yes, this was also indicated.
- **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?
 - Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
 - Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents.
 - Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve.

The OEI has an inclusion council (like a board) that also hosts a series of faculty working groups on various topics. These working groups are expected to make recommendations on ways to move forward with specific priorities. The Pod leader, for example, participates in the Land Acknowledgement working group. The OEI also circulates surveys to assess ways that different populations on campus think they could move forward.

The top priority of the OEI in terms of training in the next year is to set up a mandatory training on hate, discrimination, and bias, similar to what is required for faculty/staff/students on Title IX.