

# URGE

## Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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### URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy

This is what was found by **Earth System Research Center/ Ocean Processing Analysis Lab** in the **Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS)** at **The University of New Hampshire** 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.

In general, our discussion suggested that there was a lack of clarity on where and how to find information. We hope that by comparing our findings to those of the other UNH URGE Pods we will be able to provide leverage at the University System level towards improving information availability, clarity, and dissemination. There is particularly little information regarding the process by which investigations are conducted. We have little recourse for understanding more about how decisions were made with respect to the recent resignation of a UNH faculty member following the surfacing of hateful and disparaging commentary shared through social media in the Fall of 2020. Institutional policy is in the process of being updated, and we will re-review the revised policies when available using the same template in the Spring of 2021.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
  - [Link](#) - Organization, Company, University Policies
  - <http://reportit.unh.edu/>
    - [Link](#) - Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies
  - <https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/48734/index.html> , UNH ethics and compliance reporting hotline
    - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
  - ◇ [No current policies in EOS. New policies are underway by UNH AA/EO office to be implemented late Spring 2021.](#)
    - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
  - ◇ [Data related to reports are available for the University community to review as Bias and Hate Incident Reports stored on Box, updated three times a year. However, these data are not available to non-university members.](#)
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
  - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
  - ◇ [Reportit, UNH Police, Affirmative action and equity office, SHARPP, The Beauregard Center, Community Standards, Psychological and Counseling Services, Student Accessibility Services, Academic Department Chair or School Dean, Human Resources,](#)



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Office of International Students and Scholars, Housing, Residential life, Associate Vice President for Community, Equity, and Diversity.

- Can reports be made online? Where? Yes/No, Link Anonymously? Yes/No
- ◇ Yes online reporting: <http://reportit.unh.edu/reportform.htm> or [affirmaction.equity@unh.edu](mailto:affirmaction.equity@unh.edu)
  - Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports? Names and/or positions or “Not publicly listed/Unknown”
- ◇ From the Bias Report Protocol, the first responders to a Report It form: Director & Title IX Coordinator (Donna Marie Sorrentino)  
Affirmative Action and Equity Office (generic email: [affirmative.action@unh.edu](mailto:affirmative.action@unh.edu); Matt Keegan Director of Community Standards
  - Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?
- ◇ Police are among the first people who have access to the reports from the Report It form. Incidents can be reported directly to the UNH Police or Durham Police. Police will conduct a threat assessment (possibly), and evaluate the incident to see if it meets the Clery Act Timely Warning protocol, which requires a public notice of the event if it is deemed a threat to public safety.
- ◇ People who file a report non-anonymously are theoretically redirected to a relevant support organization on campus (PACS, SHARPP, Health and Wellness, EAP, etc?). It is unclear whether a generic list of resources is sent out following via the confirmation email or whether the provided resources are tailored to each specific report.
- ◇ From the USNH affirmative action website: “A support person who is a UNH employee or student (not an attorney) may accompany the complainant and the respondent in any of the complaint processes described. The support person should not be someone who may have a direct or indirect role in investigating a complaint, or in implementing or monitoring any proposed solution to the complaint. For example, a co-worker might be appropriate, but not a supervisor if the complainant or respondent is in that supervisor’s reporting chain.”
- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**
  - ◇ Follow-up by supervisor, training (bias, etc.), disciplinary action, termination.
  - ◇ No follow-up policies: UNH policies are not clear, the process is handled on a case by case basis.
  - ◇ Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?
- Affirmative Action and Equity Office (AAEO) “consults with appropriate offices” “consults / disseminates to relevant Affiliates” (see list above). Investigations are coordinated



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through the AAEO's Title IX Coordinator and the Director of Community Standards, and involve University Police or Human Resources where deemed appropriate.

- “Pursue disciplinary action or investigation by the Affirmative Action and Equity Office, the Director of Community Standards, or Human Resources.” – From the Policy,
  - ◇ Are reports tracked? Yes/No      How are they tracked? By who?
  - ◇ Reports are Tracked by AAEO. Statistics for the number and types of complaints are received; however, the selected outcomes of investigations are NOT tracked. These reports are prepared trimesterly, available on UNH BOX and are only available to UNH staff, faculty, and students.
  
  - ◇ Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
  - ◇ Responders are charged to receive and provide an initial review of reports of bias incidents that come in via the Reportit! website (which are received by the Affirmative Action and Equity Office) or that come directly to any of them; determine if there is evidence of any criminal activity or activity that would trigger response under prevailing federal or state statutes, agency regulations and guidelines, or the UNH Code of Conduct or UNH Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment Policy; expeditiously follow up with the person filing the report; consult with appropriate offices about action steps; devise response strategies when appropriate or collaborate with offices to respond; and report out the findings and responses as appropriate.  
Responders are the Director and Title IX Coordinator, Affirmative Action and Equity Office; the Dean of Students and a representative of the UNH Police Department.
- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
  - ◇ Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
    - 2-3 PACS staff mention diversity, cultural considerations, and trauma in their bios and there is some diversity of staff members; The Beauregard Center for Equity, Freedom and Justice offers support services and advocacy
  - ◇ **From <https://www.usnh.edu/policy/unh/v-personnel-policies/b-affirmative-action-and-equity#unhvb5>: Section 5.6.2 Support Resources.** Members of the UNH community who believe they are being subjected to discriminatory practices or discriminatory harassment may want to seek advice and support from certain on-campus resources. These individuals/departments can provide complainants with information on the many options available. UNH may provide information and support whether or not a complainant chooses to seek formal or informal resolution. Any University community member, whether student, faculty, or staff, may always contact the Director of the Affirmative Action and Equity Office with a discrimination



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or harassment complaint, including sexual harassment. The Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program ([SHARPP](#)) offers assistance and confidential support 24 hours a day. Complainants are encouraged to seek support where they feel most comfortable. Other resources include:

- [Academic Department Chair, or any College/School Dean or Associate Dean](#)
- [Chief Diversity Officer/Community, Equity, Diversity](#)
- [Community Standards Office](#)
- Directors of Academic Counseling
  - ☞ [UNH Durham](#)
  - ☞ [UNH Manchester](#)
  - ☞ [UNH Franklin Pierce School of Law](#)
- [Human Resources](#)
- [International Students and Scholars Office](#)
- [Psychological and Counseling Services \(PACS\)](#)
- [Student Accessibility Services \(support services for students with disabilities\)](#)
- [The Beaugard Center \(working closely with underrepresented and ally students\)](#)
- [University Police](#)

The Director of the Affirmative Action and Equity Office will offer supportive measures to both complainants and respondents. Supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint<sup>3</sup> or Title IX Formal Complaint or where no formal complaint or Title IX Formal Complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the university's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the university's educational environment, or deter discriminatory harassment.

- ◇ Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
- ◇ There doesn't appear to be written policies regarding this, so it may be up to discussion with the Chair/Dean.
- ◇ Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
- ◇ **Section 5.11.3** Process. The university will pursue administrative action against both those found to have retaliated against any individual participating in the complaint process, and those who have made a false complaint or presented false statements or evidence.



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- **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?
    - ◇ Few, if any resources are clearly available to groups raising issues, seeking more detailed information, or proposing changes, particularly without prior institutional knowledge.
  - ◇ Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
    - ◇ “Progress toward meeting [affirmative action] goals is measured periodically through discussions with appropriate management personnel, and through annual analysis of results. The institutional Affirmative Action officer is responsible for decisions regarding deviation from and/or approval of exceptions to the normal recruiting protocol.” p14 2018-2019 Affirmative Action Plan of the University System of New Hampshire. URL: <https://www.usnh.edu/sites/www.usnh.edu/files/hr/resources/pdf/affirmative-action-plan.pdf>
    - ◇ The ESRC-OPAL URGE Pod is one of several URGE Pods across the UNH Durham campus, which are connected through shared representatives to a larger University DEI Committee. The ESRC-OPAL URGE Pod hopes to provide new resources and actions for EOS policy makers.
  - ◇ 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.
    - ◇ Leadership are interested in making improvements, but struggle to dedicate sufficient time and resources to collecting relevant data and creating and implementing policies. Despite this, many leaders volunteer their time to take on DEI work and would like to implement changes to improve their organizations and the University overall.