

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for NOAA's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory

This is what was found by the GFDL Pod at NOAA's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes.

At this point, the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) **does not** have its own set of specific policies regarding complaints and reporting. However, all employees at GFDL are bound to the policies defined by NOAA's Office of Oceanic & Atmospheric Research (OAR) Equal Employment Opportunity/Diversity Program: <https://eeo.oar.noaa.gov/>. A number of employees at GFDL are associated with Princeton University and the Cooperative Institute for Modeling the Earth System (CIMES), a collaboration between Princeton and GFDL, and are bound by Princeton's policies. We've summarized information we gathered for policies for both Princeton and NOAA. Information regarding the Princeton policies was collected in collaboration with the Princeton GEO/AOS Pod at Princeton University.

The links to the reporting policy for NOAA OAR can be found here:

Reporting policies for discrimination / harassment are found on NOAA's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program Office website:

<https://eeo.oar.noaa.gov/EEOPolicy.html>

Reporting policy for sexual harassment:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/inclusion-and-civil-rights/sexual-harassment>

Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? No.

What is the process for changing policy? Process is determined at the OAR level.

Are the rates of reporting made publicly available? No.

The links to the reporting policy for Princeton University can be found here:

[Link](#) to Princeton University "Policy on Discrimination and/or Harassment" and associated [FAQ](#) page (Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity)

The [Ombuds office](#) provides advice and guidance on university policy, particularly concerning conflicts and issues.

[Link](#) - Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies

WHAT MECHANISMS ARE AVAILABLE FOR REPORTING COMPLAINTS, BIAS, MICROAGGRESSIONS, HARASSMENT, AND OVERT RACISM?

NOAA POLICIES:

Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?

The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) provides a “quick reference” chart that outlines a chain of command for addressing employment-related issues, concerns, and /or disputes: <https://osec.doc.gov/ocr/CivilRights/Publications/WorkIssues.pdf>

Employees filing complaints regarding issues / concerns of bullying or harassment should immediately bring the behavior to the attention of their manager or supervisor. If the complaint is about an employee’s management/supervisor, the employee should report the behavior to the next level in the supervisory chain or the servicing human resources office.

Any manager or supervisor who receives an allegation from an employee is required to immediately report the allegation in writing to NOAA’s Office of Human Capital Services (OHCS) Employee & Labor Relations Branch (ELRB)

Employees filing complaints regarding issues / concerns of discrimination, harassment and retaliation should contact their agency’s EEO / Civil Rights Office. NOAA employees who are victims of discrimination can contact an EEO counselor and file a formal complaint **within 45 days** of the incident:

*“Employees, NOAA Corps Officers, or applicants for employment with NOAA who believe that they have been discriminated or retaliated against may contact an EEO Counselor. The Counselor will attempt to resolve the matter and furnish information about filing a complaint of discrimination. To preserve your rights under the law, you must contact an EEO Counselor within **45 CALENDAR DAYS** of the date of alleged discrimination.”*

Employees may also directly report incidents of harassment, including sexual harassment, to OHCS ELRB. This is referred to as the “955 Process” and provides employees with a way to report harassment through a process separate from the EEO complaint process.

Can reports be made online?

No, the complainant must first contact an EEO officer or EEO counselor as a prerequisite to filing a formal complaint. This process can be initiated by mail, phone, email, or fax:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/inclusion-and-civil-rights/eo-counseling-complaints>

If using the “955-Process”, the complainant can report harassment directly to OHCS ELRB using the following email address dedicated to receiving harassment allegations: DAO-955.OHCS@noaa.gov

Anonymously?

The details and rules on how the complaints are processed are outlined here:

https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/daos/dao215_9.html

According to this order, the initial contact of the EEO office is **not anonymous**. However, at the initial counseling session the EEO Counselor “*shall advise complainant, verbally and in writing, of his or her rights and responsibilities, including the right to anonymity during the informal process...*”.

“The EEO Counselor shall not reveal the identity of a complainant who has consulted with the EEO Counselor unless authorized to do so by the complainant, or until the complainant files a formal complaint of discrimination involving the matter(s) discussed”.

Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?

The “pre-complaint” reports go directly to an EEO Officer or Counselor:

“EEO Counselors may be employees of the Office of Civil Rights or bureau EEO Offices, other Department employees serving as EEO Counselors as a collateral duty, or contractors providing services under the direction of the Office of Civil Rights or bureau EEO Offices.”

Reports submitted via the “955-Process” go directly to OHCS ELRB.

Are police included in the process?

It does not appear that police are included in the process.

Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?

Individuals are accompanied through the process by an EEO counselor.

“The Counselor will try to help the complainant and management find a way to resolve the issues in the complaint.”

PRINCETON POLICIES:

Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?

Complaints against a faculty or staff member

(<https://inclusive.princeton.edu/addressing-concerns/policies/policy-discrimination-and-or-harassment#Policy-Complaint-Faculty&Staff>): Individuals may make a complaint to the Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity or use the online complaint form. Individuals can also make complaint to any of the administrators listed below:

Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of the Provost

Senior Human Resources Managers or the Director of Client Services in the Office of Human Resources

Associate Deans in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students
Associate Deans in the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School
Associate Deans in the Office of the Dean of the Faculty
Executive Director of Human Resources in the Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

Complaints against students

(<https://inclusive.princeton.edu/addressing-concerns/policies/policy-discrimination-and-harassment#Policy-Complaint-Students>): Individuals may make a complaint to the Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity or use the complaint form. Alternately, the individual may make a complaint at the Office of the Dean of the Undergraduate Students (if the respondent is an undergraduate student) or at the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School (if the accused is a graduate student).

Can reports be made online? Yes.

Option 1: [Named report](#)

- The linked report "triggers the University's internal investigative process"

Option 2: [Anonymous report via the EthicsPoint hotline](#)

- Because the individual reporting maintains anonymity, the extent to which an investigation can be conducted is limited

Anonymously? Yes. An anonymous report can be submitted through the University's EthicsPoint Hotline:

<https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/27291/index.html>

Reports of bias, discrimination and/or harassment submitted anonymously to the EthicsPoint Hotline will be referred to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity. The University may not be able to conduct a full investigation of anonymous reports due to limited information or access to the individual who submitted the report.

Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?

Depending on reporting method, the reports regarding complaints against faculty or staff go to the Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity or one of the administrators listed above. During the investigation, the requisite fact finding is conducted by the office that has responsibility for the accused. It is not stated who has direct access to see the reports, but we assume that the Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity or any other administrator involved can view the report.

In the case of reports against students, the reports may go to the Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity or the Dean of Undergraduate Students or the Dean of the Graduate School. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Associate Dean or the Director of Student Life or the Residential College Disciplinary Board ("RCDB") will be involved.

Any online reports are sent directly to the Princeton University [Office of the Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity](#).

Are police included in the process?

No, the complaints and investigations are handled internally though reporting a criminal incident (eg. hate crime) will involve contacting the [Department of Public Safety](#) .

Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?

The individuals are not accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization, however they are given the ability to consult with a Confidential Resource who is trained to understand issues of discrimination and/or harassment and is knowledgeable about the University's policies and procedures. If the individual decides to file a complaint after consultation, the Confidential Resource will assist in making the connections with the appropriate administrator to do so.

The University has an Ombuds office that can additionally provide advice:

Wokie Nwabueze, Ombuds Officer
179 Nassau Street - Suite D
Princeton, NJ 08544
609-258-1775
ombuds@princeton.edu

WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES OR CONSEQUENCES FOR REPORTED INDIVIDUALS?

NOAA:

Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?

After consulting with an EEO Counselor, an individual may elect to go through the **Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program** to address the issue rather than filing a formal complaint:

<https://www.noaa.gov/organization/administration/nao-202-715-noaa-alternate-dispute-resolution-program>.

“The purpose of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program is to help employees and managers at NOAA reduce unproductive conflict as much as possible and resolve conflicts quickly so the mission of the agency can be accomplished as effectively and efficiently as possible. Early resolution of grievances is cost effective and beneficial to both employees and management. It is NOAA’s policy to encourage use of Alternative Dispute Resolution whenever appropriate.”

In the ADR process, a **mediator** serves as a neutral third party trained in dispute resolution and assists parties in reaching resolutions to the complaint. If successful, a Settlement Agreement will be drafted to the Office of General Counsel for clearance or revision and then signed by all parties. Agreements are reviewed and signed by the servicing Client Service Office Division Director, the Office of General Counsel, and the Civil Rights Office (for EEO cases).

If it becomes apparent that the issue cannot be resolved via mediation, the process will be terminated.

When a **formal complaint** is filed with the Office of Civil Rights the department is required to conduct a complete and fair investigation within 180 days of the filing of the complaint. After the investigation, the Office of Civil Rights will provide the complainant with a copy of the final investigative file. The complainant can then either request a hearing before an **EEOC Administrative Judge** or request an immediate final decision from the Office of Civil Rights.

If a hearing is requested for the formal complaint, the Administrative Judge decides the outcomes / consequences. The Administrative Judge shall issue a decision on the complaint and order remedies and relief when discrimination is found within 180 days of the receipt of the formal complaint.

Outcomes / consequences / disciplinary actions:

In the case of the ADR process:

The outcomes, consequences, and disciplinary actions are agreed upon by all parties in the Settlement Agreement and signed by the servicing Client Service Office Division Director, the Office of General Counsel, and the Civil Rights Office (for EEO cases).

In the case of the formal complaint process:

Some possible outcomes / consequences / disciplinary actions are summarized in Section 6: Remedies and Relief of the Processing Complaints of Discrimination order: https://www.osec.doc.gov/opog/dmp/daos/dao215_9.html

Examples given include payment by the department where the discrimination took place to the identified victim for any loss of earnings that the individual may have suffered as a result of the discrimination and orders to eliminate any discriminatory practices.

There however were no concrete examples of possible disciplinary actions for the individual who was reported such as required training or removal from their position. Remedies are tailored to the particular circumstances.

Are reports tracked? Yes/No How are they tracked? By who?

The NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights (OICR) has done an assessment of its EEO complaints and Alternative Dispute Resolution, along with its Affirmative Employment Program, Diversity & Inclusion, and FEVS Inclusion Index, from FY 2014-present. ([Last available document is from FY2019](#)).

Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?

There are no stated policies or guidance on how repeated complaints are dealt with. ‘

PRINCETON:

What is the process? Who decides the outcomes/consequences?

The process is dependent on whether or not the complaint was filed against a faculty/staff member or against a student:

- All reports are sent to the Office of Equality and Diversity
- The Office of Equality and Diversity will acknowledge the report and will send a list of additional resources available on campus
- They will do a preliminary assessment and determine if other Princeton University offices should be involved in the assessment.
- If the report indicates a potential violation of University policy, the incident will be referred to the appropriate office(s) for review under existing discipline processes. Not every incident is referred to a disciplinary process.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will prepare a written report. The report will explain the scope of the investigation and whether any allegations in the complaint were substantiated. The written report will be submitted to the appropriate Dean (in most instances the Dean of the Faculty) or Vice President (in most instances the Vice President for Human Resources) and to the Provost's Office.
- If the report indicates that University policy has been violated then "corrective actions" will be determined by the appropriate dean/VP in consultation with the manager or department head. Examples of possible "corrective actions" can be found [here](#).
- The above steps are summarized from [the Inclusive Princeton website](#)

Are reports tracked?

- Yes. The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity maintains a record of reports.

Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?

- If [retaliatory behavior](#) occurs after the issuance of the determination, either party may bring a complaint under this Policy.
 - Dean/VP/Provost may [implement measures](#) to ensure that the person who filed the complaint is not subjected to further discrimination or harassment, and to remedy the effects of any discrimination or harassment that may have occurred (e.g., counseling or training, separation of the parties, and/or discipline of the accused, including a written warning, financial penalty, suspension, demotion or termination).
- **[Additional note:](#)** Prior to the conclusion of an investigation and findings, a complaint of discrimination or harassment does not constitute proof of prohibited conduct. As such, the complaint shall not be taken into account during reappointment, tenure, promotion, merit or other evaluation or review until a determination has been made that the University's Policy has been violated.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE FOR INDIVIDUALS REPORTING?

NOAA:

Counseling services:

Employee Assistance Program Federal employees and their immediate family members may also contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for counseling services. The EAP is administered by the Federal Occupational Health (FOH), a component of the U.S. Public Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, and is a professional counseling and referral resource that is available to help resolve life challenges, large or small. Through the EAP, you are offered, at no charge three (3) telephonic counseling sessions to help identify and resolve specific issues of concern and a host of other services and resources. All EAP consultations are confidential. EAP records and conversations between counselors and employees are private in accordance with both state and federal laws, including the Privacy Act of 1974 and applicable Confidentiality Regulations (42 CFR, Part 2).

However, as required by law, counselors must report life-threatening situations, such as child or elder abuse and threats of serious harm to oneself or others.

-Please click here to access EAP services on the OHCS Intranet: [EAP](#) or [WorkLife4You](#)

-Contact EAP directly at <http://www.foh4you.com/>

Phone 24/7 toll free at 1-800-222-0364 (for individuals with hearing impairments, TTY 1-800-262-7848) to take advantage of their services

Alternative Dispute Resolution Coaching and consultation, No matter how much you have learned or how much practice you have had successfully or unsuccessfully dealing with disputes or conflict situations, it is almost always useful to have someone to work with you through the process. Let us help you work through your situation by helping you strategize, explore your interests and the possible interests of the other side, develop options, gather information, etc. We can also refer you to other good sources for information and help. If you wish to request ADR services, please contact Dee Dee Beltz.

-Email: Delores.E.Beltz@noaa.gov

-Phone: 816-426-7819

-Fax: 757-664-3491

PRINCETON:

Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.

- [The Carl A. Field Center for Equality and Cultural Understanding](#)
 - [Page with information on reporting](#) harassment or bias
- UHS [counselors](#) filtered by “professional interest in diversity and inclusion” - **confidential**
- PU DEI Staff [contact information](#)

- [Ombuds Office](#) -- “a **confidential** place to discuss academic concerns, administrative issues, workplace issues, explanation and interpretation of policies and procedures, and many other issues and concerns. You can speak freely to us because the University Ombuds Office offers a place where you can talk with a confidential, impartial resource about a complaint, conflict or problem and we are not part of any formal University process.”
 - They can offer confidential counseling before/during the reporting process
 - However, they **will not engage** in any situation that may cause a conflict of interest
- [The LGBT Center](#) also offers assistance finding someone to speak to about harassment -- contact Eric Anglero (eanjero@princeton.edu), the program coordinator

Support for individuals looking for community

- Carl A. Fields Center -- [PU Mentoring Program \(PUMP\)](#) (undergrad) pairs first-year students of color with sophomore to senior mentors, as well as an alumnus of color to help them navigate and adjust to campus life.
- Carl A. Fields Center -- [Student Cultural Groups](#)
- University [Affinity Groups](#) / grad SoC [Groups](#)

Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.

- Could not find anything regarding **automatic** investigation into academic standing linked to the harassment/bias reporting procedure
- [Formal appeals by undergraduates on academic matters](#) “may be presented to the Faculty Committee on Examinations and Standing. A grade change can be submitted by the faculty member in charge of the course if circumstances warrant such an action. *Rules and Procedures of the Faculty* provides that the Faculty Advisory Committee on Policy may hear appeals from decisions of faculty committees made on academic grounds that directly affect a student's academic standing and for which appeal is not otherwise provided.”
- Graduate students with concerns regarding academic standing should follow the “Graduate Student Grievances” procedure outlined in [Section 2.6.7 of the Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities](#).
 - Graduate students can “consult the **deputy, associate, or assistant dean of the Graduate School for academic affairs** for further review” if the complaint cannot be resolved at the departmental level

- **Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.**

- The [Policy on Discrimination and/or Harassment](#) (VIII) prohibits that **any form of retaliatory action** against someone who “(1) files a report, complaint or grievance under this policy (or with an external entity); (2) opposes in a reasonable manner an action or policy believed to constitute a violation of this policy; or (3) participates in University investigations, compliance reviews, or discipline proceedings under this policy.”

- “Depending on the circumstances referenced above, retaliatory acts may include (but are not limited to):
 - Adverse employment action;
 - Adverse action relating to participation in an educational or working program;
 - Unreasonably interfering with the academic or professional career of another individual;
 - Engaging in conduct which constitutes stalking, harassment, or assault;
 - Engaging in efforts to have others engage in retaliatory behavior on one’s behalf.”
- [Retaliation FAQ Page](#)
 - [FAQ](#) response. See: “I feel that I’ve experienced bias, discrimination or harassment. What are my options?”
- [Section IV-2](#) states that the University may take steps to deter retaliation before or during the investigation process
- Those concerned about retaliation should **contact Cheri Burgess** (the Director for Institutional Equity and EEO) directly (clawson@princeton.edu) to discuss concerns before reporting or if they feel they are being retaliated against
- Here are [some resources](#) specific to **Online Harassment**
 - [General policy for protection against retaliation](#)

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE TO GROUPS RAISING ISSUES OR PROPOSING CHANGES?

NOAA:

Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve?

NOAA maintains a DEI suggestion box:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfC7BUw83Z48q6XcR7hfu4i04gwmRAawbD-o4C3WAI6Ao1EvQ/viewform?gxids=7628>

Individuals / groups can use the suggestion box to share experiences that you have had or observed regarding DEI within NOAA, share suggestions for ways NOAA can improve handling of DEI issues.

There are plans developed at GFDL in conjunction with GFDL’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) to establish regular listening sessions / maintain a virtual comment & suggestion box to be checked regularly.

Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policies: OAR Diversity and Inclusion Committee (ODIAC)

Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents?

Regular cultural surveys have been established at GFDL and there are plans within NOAA to perform a more extensive assessment as part of the NOAA Sexual Assault / Sexual Harassment (SASH) program: <https://noaasashhelpline.org/>.

PRINCETON:

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?

- University
 - CPUC: unclear how to get a meeting with CPUC beyond contacting Christine Gage (cgage@princeton.edu) or approaching the group's [appropriate representative](#). Could not find listed policy on follow-up processes for interactions with CPUC
 - USG:
 - GSG: Hold regularly scheduled and publicized general assemblies open to all grad student
- AOS:
 - Student-Faculty meeting: Happens every month, student rep consolidates concerns from students and reports to faculty
- GEO:
 -

Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy:

- University:
 - [The Council of the Princeton University Community \(CPUC\)](#)
 - [Undergraduate Student Government](#)
 - [The Graduate Student Government](#)
- AOS:
 - Student-Faculty meeting: includes 1 student rep, meets monthly
 - DEI Committee: includes 1 postdoc rep, 1 student rep and 3 faculty members
- GEO:
 - [Graduate Work Committee](#)
 - [The Princeton University Geosciences Society \(PUGS\)](#)
 - [The Diversity Committee](#)
 - Advisory Council - a group of people with no formal ties to the department, but who listen to feedback from students/postdocs and relay recommendations to the faculty. Meet once/twice a year, with a student representative.

Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents:

- University:
 - [FAQ on discrimination and harassment](#): The Director for Institutional Equity in the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity ([Cheri Burgess](#))

keeps and monitors records of complaints about individuals/departments/units. If a pattern that could indicate a hostile environment is identified, they may initiate a climate review, or other actions, to provide programming or remedial training.

- [University Services Employee Climate Survey](#): Done every 2 years, voluntary
- AOS:
- GEO:

Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve:

- University:
 - You can [apply](#) for up to \$1000 to sponsor events related to DEI “[conversation topics](#)”
 - Signature Event Programs can receive up to \$10,000 of funding
 - E.g. public lectures/workshops that are supported by a department
- AOS:
- GEO:
 - The Diversity Committee is accepting proposals requesting funds to support innovative initiatives to enhance DEI. The due dates are Jan 22nd and Apr 23rd this year.
 - Email address for raising issues to the University but including GEO: ideasforchange@princeton.edu. To remain anonymous, leave message here: <https://inclusive.princeton.edu/make-your-voice-heard>