

## Lamont URGE Deliverable 2: Complaints and Reporting Policy

### URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for the Lamont community

This is what was found by URGE Lamont 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.

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

The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:

- [EOAA, Ombuds office](#) (confidential), [Discrimination, Harassment and Gender-Based Misconduct, Compliance Hotline](#) - Columbia University, LDEO
- LDEO's Title IX reporters are Kuheli Dutt, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs and Diversity, and Victoria Nazario, Manager of Finance at LDEO, Earth Institute.
  - Faculty, staff, and students who have TAed are designated mandatory Title IX reporters <https://diversity.ldeo.columbia.edu/titleix>
- University Policies
  - [Gender-based misconduct and interim title IX policies and procedures for students](#)
  - [Equal opportunity and affirmative action policies and procedures](#)
- Columbia Postdocs and Associate Research Scientists can also report concerns to the Columbia Postdoctoral Workers Union (CPW-UAW) <https://columbiapostdocunion.org/contact-us/cpw-uaw-workplace-issue-form/>
- If the nature of the complaint is that a person in a marginalized position feels that their ideas or work is being appropriated without them being given credit, that might be plagiarism, which can be brought to the [Committee on Research Misconduct](#). Research Misconduct complaints are investigated very seriously.
- The rates of reporting for Columbia University as a whole are made publicly available (ie; [FY19 report](#)), however these are specifically gender-based misconduct reports and are not Lamont specific as Lamont is grouped into the greater Morningside campus.

#### DEI Task Force Reports from 2021 have reviewed Lamont's existing guidelines and have suggested multiple changes to current policy/lack thereof.

- Formal processes for changing reporting policies is a major undertaking. As the LDEI task force discusses in their report, significant resources are needed to address this issue and others, such as a means for reporting complaints that do not rise to the level of legal action.
  - Suggestions in the LDEI Final Report include *"the development and implementation of an informal reporting structure to allow complainants to come forward more comfortably"* along with exit interviews for everyone, anonymous surveys on workplace discrimination/harrassment/miconduct, and forming another task force to handle complaints
  - The proposed online reporting form for Lamont-specific offenses could be used to enforce the [Lamont code of conduct](#)

- Once developed, we recommend that the LDEO Directorate include the informal reporting form in weekly emails to improve knowledge of where to report and to show that the Directorate encourages reporting.

**Additional barriers to effective reporting:** The multi-institutional bureaucracy associated with the Lamont campus has been identified as a barrier to effective reporting and we recommend developing a simple chart identifying, for each department and division represented on the Lamont campus, who is responsible for ensuring an individual's safety with respect to harassment.

- We recommend a workshop/training session to show how to report. This information should also be included in regular onboarding processes.
- We recommend this information be posted widely across campus, for example in bathrooms stalls (analogous to current procedures for sexual harassment)
- We recommend the installment of an anti-racist training session similar to sexual harassment training and that it be made mandatory with consequences applied to failure to attend or adhere to anti-racist policies

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

- Outcomes or consequences for reported individuals are generally unknown to the community - so the implementation of justice following harassment reports is unclear
- EOAA adjudicates all cases, process found on [p.28 of EOAA handbook](#)
  - Lamont may track through personnel files, but this is not public knowledge
- Recommendations
  - First time offenders receive follow-up from their supervisor, training, etc...
  - Repeat offenders should experience professional consequences such as reduced sabbatical leave, discretionary funding, grad student assignments, further disciplinary action and ultimately termination
  - Harassment and informal reporting complaints should be considered in career advancement decisions
  - Greater transparency in the structure and implementation of these procedures

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

- The Office of Academic Affairs and Diversity (for LDEO community members)
- LDEO, IRI, and CIESIN have each recently produced anti-racism action plans and reports detailing many of the DEI issues on campus and proposed changes. These reports can be a resource going forward.
- LDEO community members can raise issues and changes can be proposed to the Executive Committee via representatives within each department.
- Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve.
- Systemic or policy problems (as opposed to individual requests for redress) could be addressed by the University Senate [Commission on Diversity](#) or the University Senate [Commission on the Status of Women](#).