

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for Rider University

This is what was found by GEMS URGE at Rider University 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:**
 - **University Policies**
 - [Student Complaint Procedures](#) link
 - [Bias Incident Response Protocol](#) link
 - **Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies**
 - Report to the Bias Incident Reporting in order to remain anonymous (very small departments make it difficult to allow for this at Rider)
 - No specific policies found, there is a [GEMS handbook](#) that we could potentially modify to include a policy and a [BIO/BNS handbook](#) (that is very out of date)
 - We want to discuss adding language to course syllabi to inform students how to report any Bias Incidents
 - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
 - Policy is reviewed and updated annually by the Title IX Coordinator. Rider University reserves the right to make changes to this document as necessary, and once those changes are posted online, they are in effect. (from the doc linked at the very bottom of the page)
 - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
 - No, they are not shared
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
 - [Bias Incident Response Protocol](#) link
 - Because Rider is a small campus, all incidents are reported to this centralized location
- Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
 - General reporting of any bias incidents → overseen by all listed below

- Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to report a bias-related incident or hate crime IMMEDIATELY by calling or visiting one of the following offices:
 - Department of Public Safety which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Public Safety can be contacted by phone at 609-896-5029 and is located at West House at the south entrance to campus.
 - Robert Stoto, Title IX Coordinator/Vice President for Human Resources & Affirmative Action; Moore Library, Room 108; 609-895-5683, rstoto@rider.edu
 - Tom Johnson, Title IX Compliance Officer, Bart Luedeke Center, Room 113, 609-896-5000 ext. 7309, tjohnson@rider.edu
 - Cindy Threatt, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, Bart Luedeke Center, Room 110, 609-896-5101, cthreatt@rider.edu.
 - Can reports be made online? Where?
 - **Yes**, using the Discrimination and Harassment Reporting Form
 - Anonymously?
 - **Yes** you can but they explicitly state “Anonymous reporting may limit the university's ability to follow up on a report. If you wish to receive a copy of the report you must supply a valid email address.”
 - Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
 - “The information provided in these forms is typically shared with the Title IX Coordinator, the Title IX Compliance Officer, and members of the Department of Public Safety. It may be shared with additional administrators as needed, while taking into “consideration the privacy rights of all individuals involved, to appropriately address the situation.”
 - Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?
 - Nothing explicitly stated about contacting police or an organizational advocate was found
- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**
 - Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process? Follow-up by supervisor, training (bias, etc.), disciplinary action, termination?
 - “Following receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator, or designee, engages in an initial assessment as soon as possible. The Title IX Coordinator, or designee, will determine, in consultation with other University officials as necessary, whether the report should be referred for further investigation and/or adjudication to the appropriate office/body as a violation of the Anti-Harassment and Non-Discrimination policy, the Student Code of Social Conduct, or other policies (e.g. related to employment matters).
 - Where the responsible individual is not a member of the Rider community and therefore not subject to university policies, a decision may be made to identify the individual as a Persona Non Grata (PNG). This means that

the individual may not come to campus for any reason without express advance permission.

- Whether or not a reported incident involves a policy violation, the University may take other educational or supportive actions in response. These can include counter-messaging, condemnations and targeted education, dialogue and support.
 - The Title IX Coordinator or designee will circle back to the individual filing a report to let them know of the action taken by the University in response while also respecting the confidentiality and privacy of those involved.
 - [Bias Incident Response Protocol](#)
- Are reports tracked? How are they tracked? By who?
 - Yes, they are tracked by the Title IX Compliance Officer, Title IX Coordinator, Public Safety
 - Tracked annually each summer → reviewed by a committee including public safety officers, etc.
 - Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
 - Counselors or advocates, especially those of the same race, ethnicity, and gender.
 - No mention of same race/ethnicity/gender availability of resource, but they do provide A LOT of resources and variety in type (Rider as well as community, hospital and “other” which include things like hotlines)
 - Reporting [Resources](#) link
 - Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
 - Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
 - This was vague on the university website, it simply says we won't tolerate it and then goes on to define terms but it does not appear to discuss the concerns of retaliation further, it merely addresses generally prohibited conduct/terminology
 - [Prohibited Conduct and Definitions](#)
 - BUT we found this [Annual Security and Safety Report](#) and it discusses in further p.74
 - **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.

- Nothing is explicitly set up on the Rider campus currently → we were encouraged to engage with offices below for support
- Anti-Racism in the Academy
- AAUP (<https://www.rideraaup.net/grievances.html>) but this is faculty specific, not for students
- Committees like student retention task force
- Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) - SafeZone trainings for LGBTQ+, one for faculty and one for staff
- Training Request Form from the CDI
- CDI also has goals involving more campus climate surveys- Goal 6 – In conjunction with the Leadership Team, explore available external campus climate survey tools for students, faculty, and staff that more directly consider the extent to which campus climate supports diversity, equity, and inclusion
- SGA
- Good places are tripartite committees that have a mix of faculty/staff/students to address institutional change (ex LGBTQ+ committee)
- Inclusive Excellence Plan - reviewed annually (with progress report) to ensure action steps are being met

Miscellaneous links that may be useful:


- [Student Code of Social Conduct](#)
- [Public Safety Report](#)


Part 2 of deliverable, departmental policy on complaints


Suggestion to be implemented-


1. Currently the Canvas (LMS) template for Rider university includes sections that are regularly updated by the university regarding policies such as academic honesty and resources like the academic success center (see screenshot). We propose that the university add a section explicitly stating its commitment to respect all individuals in the classroom regardless of gender/religion/race/ethnicity/sexual orientation and provide resources on how to file a complaint if a student feels that their professors and peers are not upholding these values.

Institutional Policies & Procedures

▸  Academic Accommodations

▸  Academic Success Center (Tutoring)

▸  Commit to Academic Integrity

▸  Online Communication Guidelines

✔ For additional University information & academic policies, please visit the [Policies](#) section of the [Academic Catalog](#).

2. We would also encourage all professors in our departments to include not only their diversity statement in their syllabi, but additionally, a clause that states “If you feel like at any point these standards are not being upheld either by your instructor or peers you may file a complaint via the [Rider Bias Incident reporting system](#) here.