

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for The University of Virginia Department of Environmental Sciences

This is what was found by the UVA-Environmental Sciences Pod at the University of Virginia Department of Environmental Sciences 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:

Organization, Company, University Policies:

There are four relevant reporting resources at UVA, Just Report it (JRI), Respect@UVA, the PADHR complaint form, and Report a Barrier, which are summarized by the [Office of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights \(EOCR\)](#).

The UVA online system, [Just Report It \(JRI\)](#), supports the reporting of *incidents* of: [sexual and gender-based harassment and violence](#); [bias, discrimination, and harassment](#); hazing; Clery Act Compliance; interference with speech rights; youth protection; and preventing and addressing threats of acts of violence. Bias incidents encompass discrimination and harassment because of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, political affiliation, disability, and LGBT status.

The UVA Human Resources (UVAHR) has an online system, [Respect@UVA](#), specifically for reporting *incidents* and *complaints* of disrespectful workplace behavior and retaliation.

Reports of *complaints* can be made through the EOCR's PADHR (Preventing and Addressing Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation) [complaint form](#). Complaints can be made because of discrimination based on age, race, color, national/ethnic origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family medical and genetic information, disability, political affiliation, veteran status, or because of retaliation. Complaints of retaliation

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

can also be submitted to Human Resources Consulting Services (HRCS) at 434.982.0123 or through the Respect@UVA.

The UVA reporting tool, [Report a Barrier](#), facilitates reporting of access barriers such blocked access ramps, need for a curb cuts, inaccessible websites, inoperative elevators, and lack of access to events or programs.

Department, Lab, Division, Advisor or Supervisor Policies:

Reporting at the University of Virginia is centralized, with department-level complaints directed to JRI, Respect@UVA, the PADHR complaint form, and Report a Barrier. The Department of Environmental Sciences no longer has a dedicated HR representative, as UVA has centralized HR services. Currently, the Environmental Sciences departmental website does not link to university-level reporting tools.

UVA instructors (inc. faculty, instructors, and teaching assistants) have the option of enabling the Collab anonymous reporting tool for their individual classes. These anonymous reports may cover any topic and are received only by the instructor. Instructors are Responsible Employees and may therefore be required to submit a report through JRI.

Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?

University policies are periodically reviewed for clarity, implementation issues, and contradiction or duplication with other policies by the [Policy Review Committee](#). The frequency of policy review is not given on the Policy Review Committee website, but the next review period is stated on documentation for each policy.

Revisions to Title IX are reported as announcements on the [EOCR mainpage](#).

Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?

The EOCR publishes statistics annually on reporting on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, political affiliation, disability, and LGBT status. The EOCR reports statistics on Title IX reporting, processing, and outcomes, also annually. These reports are reported as announcements on the [EOCR mainpage](#). Reporting statistics specific to Respect@UVA or Report a Barrier were not found.

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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

Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?

JRI reports can be filed by all students and employees, including witnesses, bystanders, and confidants. The report can be made anonymously by downloading the form and submitting it using a restricted email address or phone number, rather than filling out the online form.

Department members, including faculty, staff, and student employees, are designated [Responsible Employees](#) for Title IX issues, and they are required to report incidents, whether learned of directly or indirectly. There are some exceptions depending on how and/or in what capacity the information was shared. When a Responsible Employee is uncertain about whether an incident should be reported, they can ask the Title IX Office (434-297-7988, titleixcoordinator@virginia.edu).

All UVA students and employees are eligible to submit complaints to Respect@UVA. UVAHR encourages non-anonymous complaints, as they typically cannot be investigated, and is committed to safeguarding reporters from retaliation. That said, Respect@UVA will accept, log, and accumulate anonymous complaints.

All UVA students and employees are able to submit complaints through the PADHR complaint form.

All UVA community members and visitors may report an access barrier to Report a Barrier, either non-anonymously or anonymously. A report does not constitute a formal complaint, grievance, or request for academic or workplace accommodation.

Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?

If a Title IX complaint reaches an [Evaluation Panel for Prohibited Conduct](#), the Evaluation Panel will involve, at a minimum: the Title IX Coordinator, a representative of the University Police Department (UPD), and a representative from the Division of Student Affairs. Representatives from UVAHR and the Office of the Provost may also be present.

The UPD may be contacted in response to a JRI report of bias. However, when/why the UPD becomes involved was not found online.

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?

Follow-up by supervisor, training (bias, etc.), disciplinary action, termination. Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process? Are reports tracked? How are they tracked? By whom? Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?

When a report of bias is submitted, it is reviewed by a staff member in the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) or Office of African-American Affairs (OAAA), who is serving as the dean-on-call, and a staff member in the EOCR. The dean-on-call communicates with the reporter. In instances where the reported is identified and a policy violation is established, available sanctions may include educational, restorative, rehabilitative, and punitive components. If the reported individual is a student, they may face disciplinary referral to the [University Judiciary Committee](#), which may lead to sanctions such as admonition, restitution, no-contact directives, counseling and educational programs, community service, suspension, or expulsion. If the reported individual is an employee, they may face sanctions including informal and formal counseling, transfer of position, removal of administrative appointment, demotion, suspension, or termination of employment. Additional actions may also include: increased monitoring, supervision, and/or security at locations or activities where the reported conduct occurred or is likely to reoccur; targeted or broad-based educational programming or training for relevant individuals or groups; academic and/or university housing modifications; workplace modifications for student employees; and other restorative measures.

For Title IX reports through JRI, there is a detailed process to evaluate complaints. EOCR employs a number of full-time Title IX investigators and a Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator. When Title IX investigations find the reported is Responsible, sanctions may include: placing a degree hold, limiting access to facilities or events, written reprimand, coaching and training by the Title IX staff, participation in substance abuse training, suspension, suspension in abeyance, and/or No Contact Directives.

Reports made through Respect@UVA will be investigated by a Respect@UVA Coordinator or designee and communicated to the UVA appropriate office and respective VP/Dean and Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer. While the website states that UVAHR will follow up to ensure the issue has been resolved, there is no mention of the range of outcomes for reported individuals or the identity of the arbiter.

Complaints to JRI are tracked by the EOCR. Complaints to Respect@UVA are tracked by UVAHR. The exact mechanism for tracking is not described.

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

What resources are available for individuals reporting?

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

The EOGR provides a list of [resources](#), both internal and external, for students and employees to help those experiencing discrimination and harassment. The [Maxine Platzer Lynn Women's Center](#) also provides counselling for both women and men.

For students, counselling and crisis management support are provided through [Counselling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#). The Office of the Dean of Students also provides 24-hour on-call crisis response services to students. Here, student life professionals assist students with counseling and adjustment issues, crisis intervention services, and adjudication options.

The [OAAA](#) runs a series of [programs](#) to support Black students throughout their time at UVA. This includes: a Peer Advisor Program which pairs entering Black students with upperclassmen to be resources throughout the academic year; the Gradstar program, which supports students' academic success; and Project RISE, which serves students who experience issues related to academic, personal, and social circumstances. These programs also provide support and counselling on a range of topics.

For university employees, UVAHR recommends university employees seek emotional support from the UVA [Faculty and Employee Assistance Program \(FEAP\)](#), which provides free, short-term, focused, and confidential counseling for university faculty and employees.

For all counseling services, except through the OAAA, websites do not mention the ability to request a counsellor of a particular race, ethnicity, or gender.

For conflicts in which individuals do not wish to file a report, there is the option to work with [University Ombuds](#). Brad Holland is UVA's dedicated Ombuds. The University Ombuds is an independent, confidential resource that provides services to faculty, staff, and students in resolving problems, complaints, and conflicts. The services of the Ombuds are independent of the University administration, confidential to the extent permitted by law, and does not constitute reporting (Ombuds is a Confidential Employee).

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

The UVA policy on [Preventing and Addressing Retaliation](#) does not specifically mention student grades or faculty/staff evaluations, but covers retaliation of any form.

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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

University students and employees can report issues of retaliation through either the EOOCR's PADHR complaint form or Respect@UVA. Reports of allegations of retaliation can also be reported to Human Resources Consulting Services (HRCS) at 434.982.0123. For reports of retaliation involving a UVA student, Responsible Employees are required to report retaliation to the Compliance Director for EOOCR or through JRI.

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.

Within the Department of Environmental Sciences, faculty and faculty committees have the ability to identify shortcomings in current policies. To the extent that these policies are departmental, decisions of faculty committees, the departmental chair, or as a result of faculty voting can lead to policy changes. Concerns can also be raised by researchers and students to the departmental chair directly, through the graduate student representative to the faculty meeting, or through conversations with any faculty member.

At the university level, UVA academic and general faculty, classified staff, university staff employees, and students with policy issuance responsibilities may [propose a new policy](#). The UVA policy on the Development and Approval of University Policies requires proposed policies follow a template and describes the series of steps in the process.

The UVA student council fields academic and educational concerns from students (a kind of reporting) and advises UVA administrators on academic policies.

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

Culture surveys are not regularly collected in the Department of Environmental Sciences. The department's Graduate Student Association (GSA) conducted a survey of graduate students following the murder of George Floyd and lack of departmental response. To our knowledge, no other recent culture survey has been conducted.

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

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

Departmental faculty meetings include a graduate student, who is also a member of the GSA, and postdoctoral representative. The department's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee includes undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral student representatives in addition to staff and faculty members.

Pod Members:

1. Elliott White Jr.
2. Angelique Demetillo
3. Ami Riscassi
4. Dat Ha
5. Laura Barry
6. Tara Illgner
7. Patricia Wiberg
8. Cora Baird
9. Hannah Mast
10. Kelsey Huelsman
11. Sally Pusede
12. Madeline Miles
13. Todd Scanlon
14. Sean Hardison
15. Claire G. Griffin
16. Kathleen Schiro
17. Andrew Jablonski
18. Ajay Limaye
19. Stephen Macko
20. Allison Lepp
21. Howard Epstein
22. Elizabeth Tatham