

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for Vanderbilt University, Earth and Environmental Sciences Department

This is what was found by **Vanderbilt AWG Pod** at Vanderbilt University EES 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:**

- <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/diversity/critical-incident-response/> - description of how University will respond to reported incidents (VU login protected) also has links for reporting & lists 'critical incident messages'

Sexual misconduct policy:

<https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/docs/SexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>

- https://www.vanderbilt.edu/eoa/other_services/grievances.php – Vanderbilt Faculty/Staff Grievances
 - <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student-access/grievances.php> - Vanderbilt Student Grievances (Title IX office)
 - https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/university-policies-and-regulations/#complaint-and-grievance-procedures - Vanderbilt Student Handbook Complaint and Grievance Process (For non-harassment/ discrimination complaints)
 - https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/student-discrimination/ (more information from Student Handbook including investigation process & anonymous reporting/3rd party reporting)
 - Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
 - Unknown
 - Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
 - Yes : <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/docs/AggregateData2020.pdf>
 - This was found through a follow-up email rather than an accessible link online.
- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism? (Breakout 3)**
 - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents? **Within the VU EES Department complaints can be made to the graduate student director or student advisor. This may be problematic, in part, because of the hierarchical nature of academia. We discussed the possible departmental policy changes to make below.**



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- Can reports be made online? Where? **Yes**, Anonymously? **No**
- https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?VanderbiltUniv&layout_id=3
 - “Do not use this form to report a student of concern, Honor Code violations, or acts of hazing that may violate University policy and/or Tennessee state law. For a student of concern, please make a report using the [Student of Concern Reporting Form](#). For Honor Code violations, please make a report using the [Undergraduate Honor Code Incident Reporting Form](#). For acts of hazing that may violate University policy and/or Tennessee state law, please make a report using the [Hazing Incident Reporting Form](#). These forms can also be found on the [Office of Student Accountability web page](#).”
 - <https://vanderbilt.i-sight.com/external/case/new> - Equal Opportunity and Access Reporting Form
- Students may report **anonymously** to the Community Standards hotline at 615-343-7867
 - For Faculty/Staff – call 615-343-9336
 - or email – eeoinfo@vanderbilt.edu
- Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
“Not publicly listed/Unknown”
- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization? **At least in some cases, yes:**
[e.g.:https://www.vanderbilt.edu/diversity/2019/12/17/offensive-graffiti/](https://www.vanderbilt.edu/diversity/2019/12/17/offensive-graffiti/)
- **What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?**
 - This is determined by the Title IX office.
 - <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/faculty-manual/part-iv-disciplinary-actions-and-grievances/ch1-disciplinary-actions/>
 - Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process? **The Title IX office determines the consequences (or sometimes Chancellor if non-Title IX grievance).**
 - Are reports tracked? **Yes** How are they tracked? By who? **This appears to be within the black box of Title IX.**
 - Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
Generally there is not much transparency or clarity in some of the processes, which is a challenge for accountability
- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
 - Flow chart for Graduate Student concern resource pathways:
https://gradschool.vanderbilt.edu/students/concern_flowchart.php



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- Director of Undergraduate Studies (Department specific), Directors of Graduate Studies (Department specific), counselors, or identity advocate organizations -- especially those of the same race, ethnicity, gender, orientation .
- “Cultural & Identity Resources:”
 - <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/studentcarenetwork/category/cultural-and-identity/>
 - University counseling center: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/ucc/>
 - Vanderbilt Project Safe (Support against sexual violence): <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/projectsafe/>
 - Black Cultural Center: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/bcc/>
 - Margaret Cuninggim Women’s Center: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/womenscenter/>
 - The Office of LGBTQ+ Life at Vanderbilt: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/>
 - Student Care Center - Confidential Resources: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/studentcarenetwork/tag/confidential/>
 - ACLU - American Civil Liberties Union: <https://www.aclu.org/>
 - Link to file a complaint: <https://action.aclu.org/legal-intake/id-file-complaint>
- List of resources related to Title IX: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/docs/Resources_2020_2021.pdf

University-Based (Office for Equal Access):

1. Equal Opportunity and Access: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/eoa/>
 - a. **File a complaint here:** <https://vanderbilt.i-sight.com/external/case/new>
 - i. **Three Options:**
 1. **Complaint/Incident**
 - a. For discrimination, harassment, or retaliation
 - i. Witnessed or Experienced First Hand
 2. **Medical Accommodation**
 3. **Religious Accommodation**
 - b. **What They Do:**
 1. Equal opportunity and affirmative action for all persons
 2. Recruitment and retention of qualified people from diverse backgrounds
 3. Religious accommodations and reasonable accommodations to qualified persons with disabilities
 4. Unbiased reviews of discrimination and harassment complaints



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2. Student Access (Equal Access) Office: <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/student-access/>
 - Advocating for student disability services and student accommodations
3. Title IX Office:
 - a. List of resources related to Title IX:
https://www.vanderbilt.edu/title-ix/docs/Resources_2020_2021.pdf

Post-Reporting Follow Ups:

- Automatic or requested investigation of potential impact on grades or evaluations.
 - **Unknown**
University-Based Reporting:
 1. **Equal Opportunity and Access Office:**
 - Vanderbilt prohibits retaliation against students, faculty, or staff members who utilize the EOA in good faith to make complaints of harassing or discriminatory conduct.
 2. **Title IX:**
 - **Unknown**
- Protection against retaliation or repercussions, accommodations for continuing work/courses, option for pass/fail or outside assessment.
 - **Unknown**
University-Based Reporting:
 1. **Equal Opportunity and Access Office:**
 - Vanderbilt prohibits retaliation against students, faculty, or staff members who utilize the EOA in good faith to make complaints of harassing or discriminatory conduct.
 2. **Title IX:**
 - **Unknown**
- **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?
 - **Unknown**
 - Working groups or committees with power to change or propose changes to policy.
 - **Unknown**
 - Cultural surveys, regular or only after wide-spread reports or high-profile incidents.
 - **Unknown**
 - Leadership proactively asks students and/or staff for input on how to improve.



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- Unknown

- **Ideas for policy changes going forward**

- Apply vuceptor to other contexts (e.g., grad studies). This is like the Grad Life Coach at Vanderbilt (Stacey Satchell).
- Having something on the EES website with regard to reporting and an anonymous reporting link. Q: Who handles this information and how are we accountable for it.
- Standard info in courses (e.g., BrightSpace) regarding reporting.
- Additional TA training on complaints and support for students. How do we support TAs in doing this? Note: Folks don't remember everything from orientation.
- Formal training for the department every year or two years (incentivize with food or dinner).