URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for University/Organization - Example Deliverable

This is what was found by BU E&E Pod 1 at Boston University on policies for handling complaints, the reporting process, resources, and possible outcomes. Only some information was public.

- **The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
  - Sexual Misconduct BU Reporting Policy - [Link](#)
  - Discrimination based on disability BU Reporting Policy - [Link](#)
  - Other instances of discrimination or harassment BU Reporting policy - [Link](#)
  - BU Earth & Environment policies (just repeat of university policies) - [Link](#)

Here we focus on “Other instances of discrimination or harassment”:

- Are reporting policies regularly reviewed? What is the process for changing policy?
  - The policies were last updated June 2015
  - There is no information on the frequency of review or how to change policies
- Are the rates of reporting made publicly available (e.g. # of reports each year)?
  - Not that we could find.

- **What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
  - Who are the designated individuals/positions for reporting incidents?
  - Complaints by Students:
    - Students may initiate a complaint by speaking to the Dean’s office of the student’s School or College or by contacting the Equal Opportunity Office or the Dean of Students Office. Students living in University residences may also speak to a member of the Residence Life staff.
  - Complaints by Members of the Faculty or Staff:
    - Faculty or staff may initiate a complaint by contacting the Equal Opportunity Office or Human Resources. Employees in academic units may also initiate a complaint with the Dean’s office of the applicable School or College. Employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement may have additional options under that agreement for addressing complaints.
Complaints from applicants for employment or admission, visitors, or other nonaffiliated individuals:

- These complaints may be initiated in the Equal Opportunity Office. Complaints from students, faculty, or staff at off-site locations. Any individual at an off-site location, such as Washington, D.C., overseas programs, etc., may bring a complaint to any of the above offices as appropriate, to the Study Abroad office, or to the on-site director of the program.


- It is not clear whether complaints can be made online. We are provided only with the addresses of the offices where one would file a complaint.

- There is no mention of anonymous reporting, but the guidelines do say that confidentiality of all parties cannot be guaranteed.

- Who do in-person and online reports go to? Who has access to see reports?
  - Not publicly listed
  - “The University has designated specific offices and individuals to investigate complaints of unlawful discrimination. Depending upon whether the individual accused of engaging in discrimination is a student, a faculty member, or a staff member, the investigation will be conducted by the designated office or individual with the appropriate expertise and jurisdiction to do so.”
  - “In any particular case, the University Provost may designate the office or individual to investigate a complaint. The University will ensure that no person who is the subject of a complaint will be assigned to investigate that complaint. The Equal Opportunity Office, if it is not conducting the investigation, will provide advice or assistance to the investigation process.”

- Are police included in the process? When and how? Are individuals accompanied by an advocate or someone from the organization?
  - No information is provided about this.

- What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?
  - Follow-up by supervisor, training (bias, etc.), disciplinary action, termination?
    - Decided on a case-by-case basis.
  - Who decides the outcomes/consequences? What is the process?
    - Complaints against students go to the Dean of Students. “The Dean of Students will take any action that might be appropriate based on the results of the investigation, consistent with the applicable provisions in the Code of Student Responsibilities.”
    - Complaints against faculty members: “The person who receives a complaint against a member of the faculty will refer the matter to the Executive Director of Equal Opportunity, who will inform the Dean of the faculty member’s School or College. The complaint will be investigated by the Executive Director of Equal Opportunity in consultation with the Dean...
or the Dean’s designee. If the complaint also involves academic matters such as grades, curriculum, etc., the investigator will ensure that those matters are addressed by the appropriate officials within the School or College. The Dean of the School or College will be informed in writing of the findings of the investigation and will determine whether further action is appropriate. Any action involving faculty will be consistent with the procedures outlined in the Faculty Handbook."

- Complaints against staff: “The person who receives a complaint against a member of the staff will refer the matter for investigation to the Equal Opportunity Office. That office will inform the appropriate Dean or administrative head and Human Resources. The Executive Director of the Equal Opportunity Office will designate a member of the Equal Opportunity Office staff to investigate the complaint. The investigator will provide findings, in writing, to the Dean or administrative head, who will determine what action, if any, is appropriate. Action involving staff will be consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement and University policies”
- A decision should be reached for the investigation within 60 days.
  - Are reports tracked? **Yes** How are they tracked? By who?
    - “A confidential record of all complaints, including their disposition, will be maintained by the investigating unit. The Equal Opportunity Office will be informed and maintain a confidential record of all complaints of discrimination against faculty and staff investigated by other units. Records of complaints against students will be maintained by Judicial Affairs.”
  - Are repeated complaints escalated to a disciplinary board? What is the process?
    - **There is no mention of what is done about repeated complaints.**

- **What resources are available for individuals reporting?**
  - BU website: (https://www.bu.edu/diversity/our-communities/safety-and-ethics-reporting/)
  - For students reporting bias ---> contact the D&I team member for your school or college (if there isn't one, then contact the dean)
  - For staff reporting bias ---> talking to their manager, reaching out to the Ombuds, going to HR, reporting a serious incident through a confidential reporting platform called Ethics Point, and if the bias has become discrimination, talk to the Equal Opportunity Office
  - All BU affiliated people can go to Behavioral Medecine, BUPD, the BU Title IX Team, Compliance Services Office, Dean of Students Office, Equal Opportunity Office, Ethics and Compliance hotline, Faculty and Staff Assistance Office, Human Resources, Judicial Affairs Office, Office of the Ombuds, Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center
- The Earth and Environment DEI Resources website: (https://www.bu.edu/earth/about/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-inclusion-resources/)
- Staff and students can read the statement on DEI
- The Title IX and BU policies are listed
- Section III, "What to do When Harassment Occurs", lays out the proper channels for Title IX reporting and resources both on and off campus, confidential and not confidential
- There are many community groups listed below that

**What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**
- **There is no publicly available information on this.**
- In the past, student groups (e.g. GWISE) have requested meetings with deans and provosts and brought petitions with signatures to their attention
- Changes can be made during collective bargaining for unionized employees