URGE Complaints and Reporting Policy for the University of South Carolina

This is what was found by GOEOE at the University of South Carolina 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 by being encompassed within *asterisks*.

**The link(s) to the reporting policy at our organization are here:**
- Report an Incident - Equal Opportunity Programs Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP), University of South Carolina
- Report an Incident - Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office of diversity, equity and inclusion, University of South Carolina
- The current special advisory committee for 2020-2021 covering harassment is the Title IX Policy committee Faculty and Special Advisory Committees - Office of the Provost. *Policies changes then go through the Board of Trustees.*
- In the policy, it is stated that every three years a student survey is conducted to gauge students’ policy familiarity, and that the results of these surveys will be used to improve the procedures and policies of the EOP and the Office of Student Affairs.
- The policy statement was last updated to comply with state law in 2013/2014. Policy statement: STAF 6.24 Student Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment Policy
- The clery report, an annual summary of Title IX violations, appears on the EOP website. The rates of overall reports does not seem to be available publicly.

**What mechanisms are available for reporting complaints, bias, microaggressions, harassment, and overt racism?**
- Students, employees, faculty, vendors, visitors, or anyone is welcome to report.
- Reports can be made online at:
  - Report an Incident - Equal Opportunity Programs Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP), University of South Carolina
  - Report an Incident - Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office of diversity, equity and inclusion, University of South Carolina
Additionally, victims and witnesses can report anonymously through the Counseling and Psychiatry Services (803) 777-5223, Student Health Services, and SAVIP (803) 777-8248.

*Reports made to the EOP, only a very small number of the EOP staff get to see the reports, their policy states “only those who need to know”.* For the anonymous reports, it states “Confidentiality will be maintained when reporting to any of these offices, except under very rare circumstances.”

Police (U of SC police department, campus security) get involved if the individuals involved in the reporting process feel their safety is at risk.

Furthermore, if the university deems there is an immediate threat to safety, health or welfare, they will escalate the emergency involving “appropriate law enforcement”.

Police are updated in lieu of policy changes.

What are the outcomes or consequences for reported individuals?

*Faculty and staff sanctions could range from warning, reprimand, education, probation, suspension, or termination. Student sanctions could range from warning, probation, education, suspension or expulsion.*

*The EOP takes the initial steps to evaluate the complaint, and if policies seem to be in violation, the complainant is given the option of an investigation. “Cause” finding means that the policy has been broken, “no cause” meaning that there was no policy broken. If a policy is broken, there is a recommended sanction by the EOP. However, the individual department human resources determines the final sanction for faculty/staff situations. For student situations, the situation will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct.*

Reports are tracked by the EOP. Records are kept for a minimum of five years, confidentially, within the EOP.

No note of escalation in the occurrence of repeated incidents were found under our investigation in the EOP policies.

The Office of Student Affairs has information regarding procedures for repeated incidents in their student code of conduct policy.

What resources are available for individuals reporting?

University counseling services are available to students.

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<th>CARE team: Student Care and Outreach Team (Care Team) - Student Affairs and Academic Support</th>
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University counseling services: Counseling & Psychiatry - Student Health Services

- Employee Assistance Program offers employees counseling through an outside counseling service; this is free to employees and completely confidential.*
- Supportive measures are offered to faculty, students, and staff who are involved with an incident including: relocation, counseling, academic support, and protections. It appears that the resources offered or possible through the EOP are on a case-to-case or individual-request basis.*
- For Title IX violations, both students and employees can counsel with or consult the Sexual Assault Prevention and Intervention Programs. Stop Sexual Assault - Stop Sexual Assault*
- The EOP has a ‘non-retaliation’ policy. Anyone who participates in the EOP process as a complainant, respondent, witness, or reporter are protected against retaliation.

**What resources are available to groups raising issues or proposing changes?**
- Unable to find petition guidelines for triggering a town hall.
- The current special advisory committee for 2020-2021 covering harassment is the Title IX Policy committee Faculty and Special Advisory Committees - Office of the Provost
- Every three years a student survey is conducted to gauge students’ policy familiarity, and that the results of these surveys will be used to improve the procedures and policies of the EOP and the Office of Student Affairs.
- Our department (SEOE) recently screened ‘Picture-A-Scientist’ in a seminar to encourage discussion on this topic. Several emails from the University president assure us the University is tackling this issue. However, there has not been significant outreach to the larger student body for input on this topic.