



Bias Reporting & Response Guidelines

Purpose & Goals

At UIC, we believe our diversity is our strength and we are committed to building a campus where all students, faculty and staff can thrive. An important part of that commitment is addressing incidents of bias when they arise. Numerous studies have documented the harm that bias, when left unchecked, can have on individuals of a range of intersectional identities on a college campus (e.g. Boysen, 2012; Nadal, Wong, Griffin, Davidoff & Sriken, 2014; Pittman, 2012; Woodford, Joslin, Pitcher & Renn, 2017). As acknowledged in [UIC's Diversity Strategic Plan](#), we cannot take meaningful action towards building an inclusive climate without also addressing the biases and prejudices that may be present in our community. This includes providing a space for students, faculty and staff to report incidents of bias and have their concerns heard, and opportunities for education both for those who may have engaged in biased behavior and for the campus community at large. The Bias Reporting and Response processes are an integral part of this effort.

The goals of the Bias Reporting Response process are as follows:

- Provide an easily accessible and usable system for the campus community to report bias incidents.
- Support members of the UIC community who have been impacted by bias incidents.
- Center the concerns and hopes of those who report bias incidents in the response process. Including, if at all possible, letting them play a role in how the bias incident is addressed.
- Collect data and review trends of bias incidents in order to better understand the complex needs and challenges facing the campus, and guide recommendations to university leadership who can then create appropriate policies, education and programs.

Responsible units

The Bias Response Tool and processes are a collaborative effort between the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), the [Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity](#) and the [Office for Access and Equity](#). The Tool is housed and managed by the Office of the Dean of Students.

Use of the tool

The tool is designed to be used by all members of the UIC community, including students, faculty and staff.

Definition of bias

For the purposes of this tool, a bias is defined as behavior that is an expression of hostility against a member of the University community because of their real or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, legal status, order of protection status, genetic information, marital status, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, unfavorable discharge from the military or status as a protected veteran (this list is adapted from [UIC's Nondiscrimination Policy](#)).

Bias incidents can include, but are not limited to, offensive language (verbal or written), harmful social media posts, bullying, and graffiti.

The Bias Response Team

The Bias Response Team is composed of members of the UIC community who are committed to addressing and responding to bias on our campus. The Team meets regularly to review themes that arise, and discuss ways to engage the campus community in bias prevention and response.

The Team is chaired by a staff member in the Office of the Dean of Students.

Reporting and response process

The Bias Response Team uses a seven-step process to respond to bias incidents.

- 1) **Report:** The Chair of the Bias Response Team receives a report of a bias incident.

- 2) **Review:** All reports are reviewed by the Chair of the Bias Response Team and copies of the report are shared with members of the Bias Response Team in the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity and the Office for Access and Equity. The Chair may consult with a subset of the Bias Response Team and review the report with them to decide how to proceed.
- 3) **Connect:** If the person reporting bias provides their contact information and wishes to be contacted, a member of the Bias Response Team will get in touch with the reporting party to gather any relevant additional information, offer support and resources, and discuss options for follow-up. If the incident is referred to another campus unit, such as the Office for Access and Equity or Community Standards, that office will coordinate response and follow-up through their own processes.
- 4) **Evaluate:** The Chair of the Bias Response Team in collaboration with members of the Bias Response Team in the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity and the Office for Access and Equity evaluates the incident and considers possible responses based on the nature of the incident and the individuals involved.
- 5) **Address:** The Chair of the Bias Response Team in collaboration with members of the Bias Response Team in the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity plans a response, and if the reporting party wishes, the reporting party can be notified of the response. Should the reporting party oppose the response plan, members of the Team will meet with the reporting party to review additional options if they are available.

Possible follow-up includes, but is not limited to:

- The Bias Response Team may consult and/or coordinate with other units including the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office for Access and Equity, the Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity and/or other University offices regarding bias complaints
- Documenting instances of bias
- Educating the individual responsible for a bias incident so they can know about the harm a particular action caused and offering advisement on avoiding harmful behavior in the future
- Offering support and connecting impacted parties to relevant University resources
- A referral to the student conduct process
- A referral to the Office for Access and Equity
- Coordination of spaces for community support and healing

- Facilitated dialogue
 - Training relevant members of the UIC community to create awareness and encourage bystander intervention
 - Removal of offensive materials, such as graffiti or flyers
- 6) **Review:** The Bias Response Team will review trends in bias reports to determine if more systematic or targeted action needs to be taken.
- 7) **Document:** All reports and the response process are documented and are maintained in the Maxient database held in the Office of the Dean of Students.

Anonymous reporting

Reports through the Bias Response Tool can be submitted anonymously.

Required information to report

The only required questions in order to submit a report are: 1) Location of incident, 2) Date of incident and 3) Do you want us to contact you?

Investigations & discipline

Investigations and discipline are *not* a part of the bias response process. Nor is the Bias Response Team a judiciary body. The purpose of the Bias Response Tool is to collect information on issues impacting our campus community, to provide support to those affected by bias and to help develop informed bias response strategies and interventions for the campus.

Individual reports may be referred to the Community Standards area within the Office of the Dean of Students or the Office for Access and Equity. Both of those units do conduct investigations.

Formal complaints of discrimination and harassment can be made to the Office for Access and Equity at oe@uic.edu or 312-996-8670.

Retaliation

A reporter cannot be retaliated against for their use of the tool. Use of the tool is protected under [UIC's Retaliation Policy](#). UIC prohibits and will not tolerate Retaliation against any employee or student who brought a claim of discrimination, participated in

an employment investigation in the Office for Access and Equity (OAE), proceeding or hearing concerning a claim of discrimination, or who in good faith has opposed a practice he or she reasonably believes constitutes prohibited discrimination. The Office for Access and Equity has the authority to conduct investigations to determine when there have been violations of this policy and then make recommendations in accordance with the relevant University policies prohibiting discrimination and harassment.

Students involved in retaliatory behavior are subject to the [Student Disciplinary Policy](#).

References

- Boysen, G. A. (2012). Teacher and student perceptions of microaggressions in college classrooms. *College Teaching*, 60(3), 122-129.
- Nadal, K.L., Wong, Y., Griffin, K.E., Davidoff, K., & Sriken, J. (2014). The adverse impact of racial microaggressions on college students' self-esteem. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(5), 461-474.
- Pittman, C. T. (2012). Racial microaggressions: The narratives of African American faculty at a predominantly white university. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 81(1), 82-92.
- Woodford, M. R., Joslin, J. Y., Pitcher, E. N., & Renn, K. (2017). A mixed-methods inquiry into trans environmental microaggressions on college campuses: experiences and outcomes. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*, 95-111.