



## 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 staff from the three responsible units from the tool. Members of the Bias Response Team review and respond to all reports received through the Bias Reporting Tool.

Bias Response Team members include:

- Dr. Jessica Joslin, Director of UIC Dialogue Initiative and Diversity Education, Office of the Dean of Students
- Dr. Michelle Manno, Assistant Vice Provost for Diversity Initiatives, Office of the Vice Provost for Diversity
- Donald Kamm, Director and Title IX Coordinator, Office for Access and Equity
- Samantha Smith, Director of Prevention and Culture Change, Office for Access and Equity

## The Bias Response and Prevention Advisory Board

The Bias Response Prevention and Advisory Board is composed of members of the UIC community who are committed to preventing, addressing and responding to bias on our campus. The Team reviews themes that arise through the tool and discusses ways to engage the campus community in bias prevention and response.

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

### Reporting and response process

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

- 1) **Report & Review:** The Bias Response Team receives a report of a bias incident, reviews the report and decides how to proceed.
- 2) **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 within the Office of the Dean of Students, that office will coordinate response and follow-up through their own processes.
- 3) **Evaluate:** The Bias Response Team evaluates the incident and considers possible responses based on the nature of the incident, any information received from speaking with the reporter and the individuals involved.
- 4) **Address:** The Bias Response Team 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
- 5) **Review:** The Bias Response Team will review trends in bias reports to determine if more systematic or targeted action needs to be taken.
- 6) **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 [oea@uic.edu](mailto:oea@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.