

BIAS REPORTING

The Bias Response Protocol (B.R.P.) provides the College with wide-ranging means for addressing incidents of bias that fall below the status of hate crime or violation of MCLA policy. In an effort to continue to create a safe and welcoming environment for all, the Chief Diversity Officer, and the Special Assistant to the VP of Student Affairs and Interim IX Coordinator monitor any trends related to bias incidents, and develops strategies to inform and educate the campus.

FAQS

What is a Target? - Refers to any person or persons negatively impacted by a bias incident.

What is a Witness? - Refers to any person or persons that see or overhear a bias incident occurring.

What is a Hate or Bias Incident? - A hate or bias incident occurs when behaviors (verbal or non-verbal) by an individual or group are perceived to be malicious (hate) or discriminatory (bias) toward another individual or group based on actual or perceived characteristics such as race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, marital status, parental status, veteran status, or any situation in which inter-group tensions exist based on such group characteristics.

Hate and bias acts may be violations of criminal law, such as hate crimes. All hate crimes are considered bias incidents, but not all bias incidents are considered hate crimes.

What is Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment? – Discrimination is an intentional or unintentional act that adversely affects employment and/or educational opportunities because of a person's membership in a protected class or association with a member(s) of a protected class. Discriminatory harassment is a form of discrimination which includes verbal and/or physical conduct based on legally protected characteristics. Please refer to the College's Equal Opportunity, Diversity, and Affirmative Action Plan for more detailed information about discrimination and discriminatory harassment.

What is the process after a bias report is submitted?

All reports of bias will be directed to **Dean for Title IX, Equal Opportunity, and Student Wellness, Patrick Connelly** as well as **Christopher MacDonald-Dennis, Chief Diversity Officer**.

They will make a decision whether to involve other individuals and/or offices, using the following questions, for example, as guidance:

- Does the bias incident involve actual or potential violence, or a significant actual or potential disruption to the College?
- Does the bias incident involve multiple people and/or actions that affect multiple people directly?
- Are there individuals that require immediate emotional support?
- Is there continuous and on-going bias behavior occurring?
- Do other circumstances exist that would compel others to be involved and to convene?

Bias incidents that do not require immediate notification will be forwarded to the team for informational purposes with the possibility for follow up, if necessary.

Information presented to any individual and/or office will be handled confidentially, to the greatest extent possible, and to the extent permitted by law.

They will focus on two primary areas, **Individual Response** and **Community Response**, both of which may occur separately or in combination with one another.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE

In the event an incident is reported that does not involve the filing of a formal complaint against another party or parties (i.e. anonymous and isolated incident of graffiti) outreach to the reporting parties will occur related to safety, counseling, student life support and/or academic support. As appropriate or possible, parties will also be informed of the provisions of the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan (EO Plan) along with other appropriate resources.

In the event of an incident that does involve a formal or informal complaint against another party or parties, all parties will be directed to the Special Assistant to the VP of Student Affairs and Interim IX Coordinator in order to resolve the issue under the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan Investigation and Resolution Procedures.

COMMUNITY RESPONSE

A community response, if appropriate, will occur after an assessment of the bias incident. The Chief Diversity Officer and the Special Assistant to the VP of Student Affairs and Interim IX Coordinator will make a recommendation to appropriate individuals or offices for the development of a timely action plan designed to provide information, education, and support to the community. This may include the following:

- Provide additional support for those directly affected by the bias incident
- Student/campus forum
- Campus notices and fact sharing as appropriate (e.g. campus newspaper article, e-mail alerts, text notification, fliers, website updates, etc.)
- Educational programming
- Response to the media, if appropriate
- Personal counseling for students
Town hall meetings
- Speaker rallies
- Policy revision recommendations

**In case of an emergency, please call Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts Public Safety:
413-662-5100.**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this report. MCLA is committed to addressing incidents of bias, both on and off campus, and we appreciate your help in bringing these incidents to our attention. This form can be completed by either targets of bias-related incidents or witnesses to them. Please include as much information as possible. All reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible. You also have the option to file anonymously. If you wish to be contacted, please include your name and contact information at the end of this form.

Submissions through this form will be received by the **Chief Diversity Officer, Christopher MacDonald-Dennis**, and the **Dean for Title IX, Equal Opportunity, and Student Wellness, Patrick Connelly**.



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