

Smith College

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Bias Response Team

As stated in its [Notice of Nondiscrimination \(/about-smith/smith-glance/notice-nondiscrimination\)](#), Smith College is committed to maintaining a diverse community in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences.

The purpose of the Bias Response Team is to support the college's efforts to maintain an inclusive campus climate by establishing a mechanism by which it responds to bias incidents. The Bias Response Team is not a mechanism for investigative or disciplinary action. However, it enables the college to track bias incidents, collect aggregate data, identify educational responses, and connect individuals affected by bias incidents with supportive resources.

Bias Incidents

Bias incidents covered under the Bias Response Team mechanism include an act of bigotry, harassment or intimidation based on age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, gender expression, race, religion, nation/ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation or veteran status committed on campus **for which the respondent cannot be identified.**

This includes, but is not limited to, slurs, graffiti, written messages, or images that harass or intimidate individuals or groups because of their membership in the above listed protected classes.

Cases where the respondent can be identified complainants may use:

- The [Discriminatory Harassment Policy \(https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equity-inclusion/policies/discriminatory-harassment\)](https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equity-inclusion/policies/discriminatory-harassment) (where both parties are students)
- The [Equal Educational Opportunity Policy \(https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equal-education\)](https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equal-education) (where the complainant is a student and the respondent is a faculty or staff member)
- The [Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy \(https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equal-education\)](https://www.smith.edu/about-smith/equal-education) (where both parties are employees)

Reporting a Bias Incident

Regardless of whether the respondent is known or not known, those who have experienced or observed a bias incident may report it by doing one of the following:

Online

[Report the incident using EthicsPoint \(/about-smith/reporting\).](#)

By phone or in person

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413-585-2200

Julianne Ohotnicky

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413-585-4940

Bill Peterson

Associate Provost

College Hall 206

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Bias Incident Reporting

Bias incident reports may be filed anonymously. If identified, the reporting individual will be contacted and informed about supportive resources available to them. If the reported incident alleges a violation of college policy or applicable federal, state or local law, the reporting party (if identified) will be informed of additional resources and procedures.

Response to Bias Incident Reports

The college's response to a bias incident report will depend on various factors, including the nature and severity of the complaint, whether the respondent is known or not known, the reporting individual's wishes, the effect on the campus community, and the college's obligations under the law.

Bias Response Team: Cases in which no respondent can be identified

The Bias Response Team acts as the college's first response team in addressing reported bias incidents in which no respondent can be identified. All reported bias incidents will be referred to the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion who, in consultation with the Director of Equal Opportunity, will make an initial determination of whether the matter should be referred to the entire Bias Response Team for review. In making this determination, the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion may also consult with the Dean of Students, the Associate Provost, the School of Social Work designee, or the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, depending on the nature of the bias incident and the involved parties. Should the Vice President decide not to refer the incident to the entire Bias Response Team, the Vice President may take, in consultation with the Equal Opportunity Director, any action that the Bias Response Team may perform, as stated below.

The Bias Response Team will meet in response to receiving a bias incident report referral from the Vice President. The Bias Incident Response team shall consider and undertake the appropriate measures to address the incident. Such measures, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may include:

- Supporting the affected person(s) through referrals to appropriate resources;
- Engaging community members to maintain a living, learning and working environment free from acts of bigotry, harassment, and intimidation;
- Assessing the circumstances of the incident as thoroughly and as quickly as possible;
- Making referrals to appropriate campus officials so that action can be taken;
- Identifying and assisting in implementing an appropriate educational response and community outreach; and
- Notifying the community, as appropriate.

The following individuals will serve on the college's Bias Response Team:

- Director of Equal Opportunity and Compliance;

- Dean of Students, or designee
 - Associate Vice President of Human Resources or designee
 - Associate Provost or designee
 - Vice President for Public Affairs or designee
 - A representative from Campus Safety
 - Two student representatives appointed by the SGA; and
 - Vice President for Equity and Inclusion
 - *School of Social Work*: One appointed administrator and up to two SSW students
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Records of Bias Incidents

The Office of Equity and Inclusion will maintain a record of reported bias incidents and will provide a yearly summary of reported incidents by total number of reported incidents, the type of bias incident, the number of incidents related to each protected class, and the general locations of the reported incidents. Records of reported incidents will be maintained to identify patterns of reported bias on campus.