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Reporting of Campus Bias, Insensitivity, and Discrimination Incidents

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Insensitivity, bias, and discrimination incidents work contrary to the inclusiveness that forms the foundation of our educational community, and so we take any reports of them seriously. The goal of these protocols is to help support a culture of open exchange in the spirit of mutual respect. These protocols operate within the context of the College's values of community responsibility and the commitment to free inquiry.

[REPORT AN INCIDENT](#)

Definitions

BIAS INCIDENTS

Bias incidents are any act, conduct, or communication that reasonably is understood to demean, degrade, threaten, or harass an individual or group based on an actual or perceived identity characteristic such as race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, genetics, physical or mental disability, and veteran/military service status or other protected status. Bias can occur whether intentional or unintentional and may not violate college policy or state or federal law to be defined as a bias incident. In a bias

incident the actor/perpetrator may be known or unknown. Whether an incident meets this definition or not The College is committed to responding to bias/insensitivity incidents by addressing accountability, providing support to those impacted and by creating educational moments for community engagement. Whenever appropriate the College will investigate reported incidents and hold community members accountable for actions that violate college policies or the law.

Note that there are broader categories utilized here than what appears in the College’s Statement of Nondiscrimination. The Statement of Nondiscrimination only focuses on categories that are protected by law, while the College’s bias incident definition covers categories that are not covered by law, but that are covered under College policies.

Hostile or hateful speech or other discriminatory behavior may be considered a bias incident, but under certain conditions may also be a hate crime.

HATE CRIME



TARGETED INDIVIDUAL



Reporting Protocols

The goal of these protocols is to help support a culture of open exchange in the spirit of mutual respect. These protocols operate within the context of the College’s values of community responsibility and the commitment to free inquiry.

Please note that these protocols apply when students and/or their campus guests are the targets of a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime. Faculty and staff who have been the target of a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime should consult with the Associate Dean of Faculty and/or the dean of faculty. Staff who have been the target of a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime should consult with the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and/or the director of human resources accordingly.

If a student reports a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime, they can expect that their concerns will be treated with respect and sensitivity and that each case will be taken seriously. However, it is important to remember that incidents of bias, insensitivity and hate crimes are very complex and may not be immediately recognizable as belonging to one of these three categories. The protocols laid out below should be considered a work in progress.

Reporting Incidents of Bias, Insensitivity and Discrimination

The Bias Education & Support Team (BEST) is the coordinated system for addressing the impacts of bias and insensitivity by tracking and communicating to the College Community, as appropriate, and by creating moments for community accountability and learning. It is important to note that the work of BEST does not replace or supersede any process dictated by administrative rule or criminal law. BEST will ensure that processes to address bias and insensitive incidences are done timely and consistently while offering support to the parties that have been directly or indirectly impacted. Through tracking and documentation of incidents BEST will also increase awareness on critical issues and create opportunities for engagement and learning within a restorative justice framework.

Mount Holyoke will act on reports of incidents of bias, insensitivity and discrimination received through the [on-line reporting form](#) or reports received through intake with the [Associate Dean of Students](#), the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion or their designees. When receiving reports, every effort is made to preserve the privacy of reports and to respect an individual's desire for confidentiality; however, the College may be legally required to take action depending on the nature of the complaint. The reporter party will be informed if, in the course of satisfying this obligation, the College may be unable to comply with a request for confidentiality. Reports can be made anonymously with the on-line form and while anonymous reporting

can help the College monitor campus climate and inform potential program planning it can be difficult for the BEST members to follow up on a specific incident without knowing the parties involved.

Additional Reporting Protocols for Students

Students may go to the following offices/departments to seek help with bias incidents/hate crimes and fill out a Community Insensitivity form:

- Public Safety & Service
- Office of Residential Life
- Division of Student Life
- Counseling Service
- Health Services
- Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Most of these offices have 24-hour on-call capacity.

The Division of Student Life and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work closely to address student-to-student bias/insensitivities and hate crimes reported on campus.

The Division of Student Life also collaborates with the Title IX Coordinator and the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to facilitate the student-to-student process, based on the reported behavior.

Below are a list of off-campus resources that are available to provide support and information around bias incidents and hate crimes:

- Northwestern District Attorney's Office
- Office for Civil Rights
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Anti-Defamation League

Additional Reporting Protocols for Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff who have been the target of a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime should consult with the Associate Dean of Faculty and/or the Dean of Faculty. Staff who have been the target of a bias incident, insensitive incident or hate crime should consult with the Director of Staff Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives and/or the director of human resources accordingly.

Responding to a Bias Incident

Harassment and discrimination should NOT be dismissed.

Speak out when jokes or comments are made that are hateful or demean others because of perceived age, color, creed, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity/presentation, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, social class, veteran status, or any combination of these or related factors.

Ask yourself if you use derogatory, degrading, or offensive terms in describing others and if you avoid people who are different from you.

Educate yourself.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU OR YOUR GUEST WERE THE TARGET AND/OR WITNESS OF A BIAS INCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE ON CAMPUS

The following tips apply regardless of whether you or a guest are the target of the incident and whether the person involved in the bias incident is a member of the Mount Holyoke Community or not.

- Preserve any evidence (graffiti, phone call recording, email message, letter, etc.)
- Report incidents immediately to Public Safety and Service by calling x2304 (or 1-911 in an emergency).

- Mount Holyoke encourages the reporting of all such situations. Typically the Office of Public Safety and Service should be the first point of contact. Bias Incidents can also be reported to an office in the Bias Response Network (Dean of Students, Residential Life, Counseling Center, Health Center, and Ombudsperson) or online.

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU WERE THE TARGET AND/OR WITNESS OF A BIAS INCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE OFF CAMPUS

- Preserve any evidence (graffiti, phone call recording, email message, letter, etc.)
- Report incidents immediately to Mount Holyoke College Public Safety and Service by calling 538-2304 (or 1-911 in an emergency). Public Safety and Service will discuss your options with you.
- Mount Holyoke encourages the reporting of all such situations either to Public Safety and Service or to an office in the Bias Response Network (Dean of Students, Residential Life, Counseling Service, Health Center, and Ombudsperson). Any of these offices can work to support you in connecting to appropriate support services.
- Mount Holyoke takes all incidents seriously and wants to support targets, but our responses may be limited to our jurisdiction: the MHC campus.

WHAT PUBLIC SAFETY AND SERVICE WILL DO

- Gather and preserve evidence (if applicable). Note: Public Safety and Service may photograph damage, vandalism, etc if preservation is not possible.
- Investigate cases in which an alleged crime has occurred, and work with you if you wish to develop a criminal case.
- Follow-up concerning the status of the investigation

OPTIONS AND RESOURCES FOR TARGETS OF BIAS INCIDENTS

- **Bias Response Network**
The Bias Response Network is made up of the following offices/departments Public Safety and Service, Residential Life, the Dean of Students office, the Counseling Center, and Health Services. Each of these offices can assist students with reporting a bias incident, understanding their options, getting connected to a campus advocate, and receiving additional support. If you need assistance after hours, contact Public Safety and Service and they can assist you or connect you to the Professional On Call.
- **Student Counseling Service**
Targets of hate crimes and/or bias incidents often need assistance in working through complex emotional and psychological consequences. Others in the community may also experience the hate crime or bias incident as a personal attack. Anyone affected by such acts is encouraged to contact Counseling Service at 538-2037. Counseling Services can offer caring support and help in working through difficult issues.
- **Bias Advocacy Team**
Campus Advocates are volunteer-trained faculty and staff members who can work with a student on an individual basis and help them navigate the college process. Advocates will reach out to the affected student to offer support, answer questions related to the process, relay concerns to the appropriate campus representative(s), and reinforce other support systems available to the student. Their primary role is to make sure that student needs are being met within the system.
- **Ombuds Office**
- **Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Outcomes

Any reported hate crime that occurred on campus will appear in the Public Safety and Service log with minimal information in order to protect the anonymity of the reporting party.

- The range of outcomes depends on the outcomes of the investigation into the case and which courses of action the target chooses to pursue (i.e. none, informal grievance, formal grievance, Council on Student Affairs, Student Disciplinary Process through the Dean of Students Office, legal remedies). Outcomes may include, but are not limited to: a letter of reprimand, mandatory educational project, social probation, suspension, required withdrawal, and inconclusive findings.
- Grievance procedures
- Council on Student Affairs procedures
- Standards of Social Conduct

Related Policies

[Gender-Based and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#)



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NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mount Holyoke College is a women's college that is gender diverse. The College is committed to providing equal access and opportunity in employment and education to all employees and students. In compliance with state and federal law,

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