



Dominican University of California Bias & Discriminatory Incident Reporting Process

Reporting incidents of bias and discrimination requires the active participation of a community committed to fundamental human dignity and equality. Please alert the University by using this [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#)

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The goal of the reporting system is to capture incidents of bias and discrimination that occur within our campus community, to address them in a timely fashion according to established policies and procedures, and to respond to University community members' concerns about campus climate. We seek to promote understanding and belonging within our community so that all members can identify, comprehend, and avoid bias, stereotypes, and prejudices. Dominican is committed to providing support and resources for students, faculty, and staff to foster a welcoming campus.

UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY

Bias is defined as behavior that constitutes an expression of hostility against a person or property because of the targeted person (group)'s real or perceived identity as based on a protected category (see below). While not always easy to recognize, bias can be present in the classroom, workplace, and media, and often stems from fear, misunderstanding, stereotypes, and hatred. Even when offenders are not aware (unconscious bias) or do not intend to offend, bias may be revealed that is worthy of a response and can serve as an opportunity for education.

Bias Incident is characterized as a behavior or act – verbal, nonverbal, written, or physical – that is personally directed against or targeted at an individual or group based on real or perceived protected category (see below). While abhorrent and intolerable, bias incidents may not rise to the level of a criminal offense but they can rise to the level of violating University policy. Depending on the nature of the incident, not all bias incidents require disciplinary action – but all should be reported so that the University can respond accordingly.

Discrimination is harassment on the basis of a protected category (see below). Harassment in education programs and activities includes harassing conduct (e.g., physical, verbal, graphic, or written) on the basis of a protected category that is so sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with – or limit the ability of – a student to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the University. Please see Dominican's [Title IX: Sexual Misconduct; and Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy](#) for additional information. Please note that for the purposes of this document, these types of incidents will be referred to as “**T-IX/DHR**” (Title-IX / Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation).

Hate Crimes are bias-related incidents of crime that manifest evidence that the victim was chosen based on a protected category. California law (Penal Code 422.55 PC) defines a hate crime as a criminal act committed in whole or in part because of the victim's actual or perceived disability, gender, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Hate crimes are motivated by bias, but they include a definable crime, such as: threats of violence, property damage, personal injury, or other illegal conduct. A hate crime is an infraction of the law and will be addressed accordingly. Students wanting guidance/support in filing a report with law enforcement should contact the Executive Director of the Office of Community and Belonging or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Protected Category includes the following:

- Age
- Ancestry
- Color
- Creed
- Disability (physical or mental)
- Ethnicity
- Gender (including sexual harassment, gender identification, gender expression, transgender status)
- Genetic information
- Marital Status (including registered domestic partner status)
- Medical Condition
- Military and Veteran Status
- Name (lawful change of)
- National Origin
- Race (including hair texture and protective hairstyles)
- Religion (including religious dress and grooming practices)
- Sex*
- Sexual Orientation
- Social Security Number or federal employment authorization document
- Receipt of Medi-Cal coverage
- California driver's license with a "federal limits apply" notation
- Any other characteristic protected by local, state or federal law.

**Discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex includes harassment or discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, breastfeeding, and conditions related to breastfeeding. Harassment on the basis of sex is also prohibited by the [Title IX, Sexual Misconduct, and Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy](#) (TIX/DHR). The definitions and procedures in those policies will be followed.*

Which is it - Bias or Discrimination?

It is important to understand that ALL instances of discrimination are considered bias incidents, but not all reported bias incidents rise to the level of a T-IX/DHR complaint. Where there are reported incidents of any kind, trained university responders will review these reports and determine the most appropriate next steps. In all cases, the University seeks to provide support to those affected by the behavior, and to determine how to best address the incident with those responsible for the behavior.

Examples of Bias and/or Discrimination:

- Making comments about someone's disability, ethnicity, race, national origin, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, or political affiliations/beliefs in a biased manner
- Ridiculing a person's language or accent
- Insulting a person's traditional manner of dress
- Telling jokes based on a stereotype
- Using a racial, ethnic, or other slur in a joke or to identify someone
- Imitating someone with any kind of disability, or imitating someone's cultural norm or practice (including costumes)
- Language and imagery objectifying women
- Defacement and vandalism
- Language and/or imagery disparaging gender-diverse individuals
- Racial epithets written on personal or campus property; includes derogatory graffiti, images, drawings
- Racially themed parties
- Destruction of personal property, harassment, threats or threatening communications (including, but not limited to; emails, phone calls, text messages, social media posts)
- Hate messages and symbols

REPORTING TO THE UNIVERSITY & UNIVERSITY RESPONSE

(see the [Bias and Discriminatory Incident Reporting & Routing map](#) the end of this document)

Submitting a Report

Reporting an act of bias allows the University to do an initial inquiry into the matter and determine if there is cause for further investigation. Moreover, these reports are critical to understanding the types of incidents occurring, the biases that exist within the community, and the need to address potential trends that may be seen on our campus. Reporting these incidents allows the University to respond accordingly and to provide support, intervention, and education.

CLICK HERE: [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#)

Anonymity in Reporting

Bias-related incident reports may be completely anonymous unless the individual making the report wants to be contacted to follow up on the incident. In that case, a name and email address should be provided for follow-up.

Confidentiality in Reporting

The University will make reasonable efforts to share reports and related information only with those who need to know in order to respond to reports. However, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Reports such as those involving sexual misconduct, harassment, or criminal activity, must be shared with appropriate personnel in other University offices.

Upon completion of the online reporting form, an automatic acknowledgement of submission will be sent to the person filing the report (not applicable to anonymous reports). Those wishing to report but not wanting to use the online reporting form should contact the Executive Director of the Office of Community and Belonging for support and guidance.

Responding to Reports of Bias

All reports are sent to the University's Incident Response Team (IRT) to examine and determine the nature of the complaint. The membership of the IRT (and their respective responsibilities in the process) are as follows:

- Executive Director of the Office of Community and Belonging (bias incidents)
- Director of Human Resources (T-IX/DHR process coordination, complaints involving staff)
- Associate Dean of Students (student conduct & support)
- Director of Accessibility and Disability Services (ADA/504 complaints for students)
- Vice President for Academic Affairs & Dean of Faculty (complaints against faculty)
- Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students (T-IX/DHR process coordination)

The IRT will review the report (typically within 24-48 hours) and determine if there is cause for further inquiry and the appropriate next steps - including connecting with the individual(s) submitting the report to gather additional or clarifying information. From there, a member of the IRT will be tasked with serving as the primary point of contact and process coordinator.

Bias Incident Response

For bias incidents that do not rise to the level of T-IX/DHR complaint, the Executive Director of the Office of Community and Belonging will typically be responsible for investigating the complaint and determining the most appropriate follow-up action. It is expected that Dominican community members participate in any outcomes assigned by the Office of Community and Belonging and failure to do so may result in a referral for disciplinary/conduct action.

T-IX/DHR Incident Response

For any report that may rise to the level of a potential T-IX/DHR allegation, the University will follow the procedures outlined in the [Title IX; Sexual Misconduct; and Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy](#). Depending on the circumstances of the incident and impact on the campus community, there may be additional education or follow-up action.

Other Violation Response

For incidents that may constitute a violation of other University policies (ex: [Student Handbook](#) or the [Employee Handbook](#)), the University will determine the most appropriate course of action as related to the alleged violated policy/procedure. Depending on the circumstances of the incident and impact on the campus community, there may be additional education or follow-up action.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Can Bias be Eliminated?

Bias can be greatly reduced, if not eliminated, with the help of the campus community. When you recognize an act of bias, first and foremost, your safety is the priority. If a situation arises where you feel comfortable safely interjecting or intervening, the following strategies can help you to address the bias.

- Be Direct: Tell the person their behavior or language is concerning or hurtful
- Ask: Ask the person why they used that language or behavior
- Share: Describe how that language/behavior makes you feel
- Distract: Divert attention away from the problematic language to de-escalate a situation
- Group Support: Recruit other people or friends to intervene together
- Show Support: Let the impacted person know you are there for them
- Bring in Support: If things begin to feel consequential, contact emergency personnel like the Counseling Center or Campus Security
- Bias Education: Continue to educate yourself and others about identifying bias

Support Resources

Experiencing or witnessing an incident of bias can be a difficult experience. If you are in need of additional support or need someone to discuss your concerns, please feel free to reach out to the following individuals or resources:

Stacy Poe, Executive Director, Community and Belonging 415-485-3235
Counseling Services 415-485-3258

For further questions, please contact the Office of Community and Belonging at 415-485-3235 or belongingi@dominican.edu or stop by Edgehill Mansion, Room 310.

BIAS AND DISCRIMINATORY INCIDENT REPORTING & ROUTING MAP



Bias & Discriminatory Incident Reporting & Routing Map

