

# Bias Incident Policy & Reporting

Honor Code

[Home \(https://wheatoncollege.edu/\)](https://wheatoncollege.edu/) » [About Wheaton \(https://wheatoncollege.edu/about-wheaton-college/\)](https://wheatoncollege.edu/about-wheaton-college/) » [Honor Code \(https://wheatoncollege.edu/about-wheaton-college/honor-code/\)](https://wheatoncollege.edu/about-wheaton-college/honor-code/) » *Bias Incident Policy & Reporting*

On this page

- I. [Introduction](#)
- II. [Definitions](#)
- III. [Reporting](#)
- IV. [Response Protocol](#)
- V. [Assessment](#)

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## Academic Year 2024-2025

### I. Introduction

Wheaton College values diversity, equity, and inclusion and is committed to maintaining an environment free from discriminatory conduct, including conduct that impedes the academic freedom, security, or well-being of any member of the Wheaton community. Wheaton's Bias Incident Response Policy (the "Policy") provides information about how to report a Bias Incident and outlines the protocols followed by Wheaton in response to reported incidents.

The Policy shall be interpreted and implemented in a manner consistent with Wheaton's commitment to academic freedom.

### II. Definitions

**Alleged Perpetrator.** Individual(s) or group(s) who are alleged to have engaged in a Bias Incident.

**Bias Incident.** An act, whether intentional or unintentional, consisting of conduct, speech, or expression, that is motivated by bias and personally directed against an individual or group based on perceived or actual characteristics such as race, color, mental or physical disability, genetic information, national origin or ancestry, citizenship, age, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, veteran or military status, membership in the Uniformed Services. For purposes of this Policy, the term



Scroll to Top

Bias Incident is inclusive of conduct constituting a Hate Crime. While a bias incident can occur anywhere on and around campus, including the classroom, speech or expression that is consistent with the principles of academic freedom does not constitute a Bias Incident.

**Bias Incident Prevention and Response Team (the “BIPR Team”)**<sup>[1]</sup>. A team of incident response staff charged with advising and supporting the College in Bias Incident Response. The response team also serves as a liaison to campus partners in education and programming offices. As part of its charge, the BIPR Team monitors and identifies trends pertaining to campus cultural climate and provides broader recommendations for accomplishing institutional, cultural, and structural equity.

**Designated Official.** A College official with authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the College. Designated Officials include staff in the Office of the Dean of Students, the Office of the Provost, and Human resources.

**Hate Crime.** Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 22C § 32 (<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter22C/Section32>), “any criminal act coupled with overt actions motivated by bigotry and bias including, but not limited to, a threatened, attempted or completed overt act motivated at least in part by racial, religious, ethnic, handicap, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation prejudice, or which otherwise deprives another person of his constitutional rights by threats, intimidation or coercion, or which seek to interfere with or disrupt a person’s exercise of constitutional rights through harassment or intimidation.”<sup>[2]</sup>

**Recipient(s).** Individuals or groups who experience a Bias Incident.

## III. Reporting

Wheaton community members and visitors who may have experienced, witnessed, or have information regarding a Bias Incident are encouraged to immediately report it. Mechanisms for reporting are outlined below. If a Bias Incident is disclosed to a staff or faculty member informally and outside of the mechanisms outlined below, those staff and faculty members receiving the disclosure may choose to report the disclosure to College administrators but are not required to do so unless the disclosure is made by an employee whom the staff or faculty member supervises.

1. Emergency Situations. In emergency situations, contact Campus Safety at [508-286-3333](tel:508-286-3333) ();
2. **Bias Incident Report Form** ([https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WheatonCollegeMA&layout\\_id=4](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WheatonCollegeMA&layout_id=4)). In non-emergency situations, you may report by completing the online Bias Incident Report Form.<sup>[3]</sup> Community members can also access the form via the LiveSafe App or by clicking on Community Reporting Options under the Campus Life tab on the College’s InsideWheaton page. Reports can be made anonymously through the report form or the LiveSafe App. Intake of Bias Incident Report Forms is conducted by the Bias Incident Response Officer or designee.; or
3. Reporting to an Administrator. In non-emergency situations, you may report directly to the administrators listed below. Reports should include a detailed account of the incident, including the date, time, and location and the names of the individuals involved including any witnesses.

### **Caraline Somerville**

Title IX Coordinator and Bias Incident Response Officer  
[somerville\\_caraline@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:somerville_caraline@wheatoncollege.edu)  
([mailto:moholland\\_caraline@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:moholland_caraline@wheatoncollege.edu))  
[508-286-3261](tel:508-286-3261)

### **Dr. Zachary Irish** (contact person for student concerns)

Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students  
[irish\\_zachary@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:irish_zachary@wheatoncollege.edu)

[mailto:irish\\_zachary@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:irish_zachary@wheatoncollege.edu)  
508-286-3447

**Avanti Seymour** (contact person for faculty concerns)  
Director of Faculty Affairs and Academic Operations  
[seymour\\_avanti@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:seymour_avanti@wheatoncollege.edu)  
([mailto:seymour\\_avanti@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:seymour_avanti@wheatoncollege.edu))  
508-286-3493

**Omaira Roy** (contact person for staff concerns)  
Associate Vice President, Human Resources  
[roy\\_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:roy_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu)  
([mailto:roy\\_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:roy_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu))  
508-286-3544

**Dr. Luis Paredes**  
Associate Vice President, Institutional Equity and Belonging  
[paredes\\_luis@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:paredes_luis@wheatoncollege.edu)  
([mailto:roy\\_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:roy_omaira@wheatoncollege.edu))  
508-286-3482

**Roy Mulcahy**  
Chief/Director, Campus Safety  
[mulcahy\\_roy@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:mulcahy_roy@wheatoncollege.edu)  
([mailto:mulcahy\\_roy@wheatoncollege.edu](mailto:mulcahy_roy@wheatoncollege.edu))  
508-286-3333

## IV. Response Protocol

Upon receiving a report of a Bias Incident, Wheaton will respond in a prompt, equitable, and effective manner by following the protocol outlined below:

- 1. Review and Initial Response.** The Bias Incident Response Officer will lead initial response, including timely review of the report and coordinating outreach to any identified recipient(s). Any person impacted by or otherwise involved in a bias incident is entitled to have an advisor or support person with them in any conversation related to incident response. Initial response measures may include but are not limited to: evaluating and responding to the immediate needs of the Recipient(s); connecting the Recipient(s) to appropriate offices for support; where appropriate, assisting in the development of any community-wide notice or response (in consultation with the Recipient(s) and appropriate administrators); and recommending preventative and responsive education and programming, where appropriate.
- 2. Consultation with BIPR Team Members.** When received through the reporting mechanisms outlined above, the Bias Incident Response Officer will also promptly contact the appropriate member(s) of the BIPR Team to coordinate next steps. BIPR Team members (listed above) include those in leadership positions from the offices of Student Affairs, the Provost, Human Resources, Institutional Equity and Belonging and Campus Safety.
- 3. Coordination with Disciplinary Offices and / or Local Law Enforcement.** Appropriate administrative offices will review Bias Incident Reports to determine whether the conduct reported could constitute a violation of College policy or law. For example, Bias Incident reports identifying a student as an Alleged Perpetrator that may implicate Wheaton's Honor Code or Community Standards will be reviewed by the Office of the Dean of Students and addressed through the Student Conduct process. Similarly, the College may coordinate with local law enforcement on any Bias Incident report which may violate Massachusetts law.
- 4. Educational Response.** Where a Bias Incident report does not violate Wheaton policy or the law, the College may address the report through an educational response that may include conflict resolution, where appropriate, and non-disciplinary approaches for addressing the Alleged Perpetrator's conduct and the Recipient's experience. Additionally, where a Bias Incident

does violate Wheaton Policy, the Disciplinary Offices adjudicating the violation may issue appropriate sanctions, including educational sanctions.

## V. Assessment

Information related to reported Bias Incidents and the College's response will be centrally tracked by the Bias Incident Response Officer for purposes of identifying trends and informing the College's prevention work and educational programming. General statistical information relating to reported Bias Incidents may be shared via reports to the community.

The College values the privacy of Recipient(s) and all individuals involved in the reporting, investigation, and / or resolution of Bias Incidents. As such, the outcome of any reported Bias Incident and the manner in which an outcome may be shared with members of the College community will take into account the privacy of the involved parties and will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and all other laws governing privacy.

[1] Current membership of the BIPR Team.

[2] Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 22C § 32

(<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter22C/Section32>),

Hate Crimes also include acts that constitute violations of M.G.L. c. 265 § 37

(<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter265/Section37>), M.G.L. c. 265 § 39

(<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter265/Section39>), M.G.L. c. 266 § 127A

(<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter266/Section127A>),

and M.G.L. c. 272

(<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter272>).

[3] Bias Incident Report Form ([https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WheatonCollegeMA&layout\\_id=4](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WheatonCollegeMA&layout_id=4))

## Bias Incident Prevention and Response Team Members

- Caraline Somerville, Title IX Coordinator and Bias Incident Response Officer
- Dr. Zachary Irish, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Avanti Seymour, Director of Faculty Affairs and Academic Operations
- Omaira Roy, Associate Vice President, Human Resources
- Dr. Luis Paredes, Associate Vice President, Institutional Equity and Belonging
- Roy Mulcahy, Chief/Director, Campus Safety

**[Bias Incident Response Process Flowchart](#)** 

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