

Procedures for Reporting Bias-Related Incidents

How to Report

At SUNY Geneseo, we are committed to helping every member of our community reach their full potential by fostering an environment that allows everyone to feel affirmed, regardless of identity or background. As expressed in our [Community Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#), bias-related incidents challenge and contradict this commitment.

In the event that you experience or witness an incident that may be rooted in bias, you may choose to report it through the [bias-related incident reporting form](#). Anyone can use this form and it is recommended that you file as soon as possible after the incident. You may report an incident even if you are not sure that it was motivated by bias. We take all complaints seriously and investigate them fully. If immediate attention is needed, please contact University Police at [\(585-245-5222\)](tel:585-245-5222).

When Filing a Report

Bias Prevention and Response Team FAQs

Restricting the speech of a group or individual jeopardizes everyone's rights. The same laws used to silence **hate** can also be used to silence **love**.

The First Amendment protects the right to say hateful things, but as a campus, SUNY Geneseo strives to be a community where no one chooses to express hate.

What is a Bias-Related Incident?

An incident motivated by the offender's bias against a targeted person or group. (Ex. Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, etc.)

STOP THE HATE

What is a Hate Crime?

A criminal offense committed against a person or property, motivated by the offender's bias against a targeted person or group.

What is Freedom of Speech?

The right to articulate an opinion or idea without interference or retaliation from the government. ("Speech" also includes what a person wears, reads, performs, protests, symbols, etc.)

The First Amendment

Provides protections in political advocacy — rhetoric meant to inspire action against unjust laws or policies — which is essential to democracy.

Exceptions NOT Protected:

- True Threat** speech that a person would perceive as an immediate threat to their physical safety.
- Incitement of Illegal Activity** speech that provokes others to break the law.
- Harassment** speech aimed at an individual on the basis of a protected characteristic that is pervasive and severe, is a direct or implied threat, or creates an intimidating, hostile, and demeaning atmosphere.

The Supreme Court

- Has held that if a public university voluntarily funds student activities it cannot selectively withhold them from particular student publications simply because they advocate a controversial point of view.
- Has held that the government cannot prevent speech on the ground that it is likely to provoke a hostile response — this is called the rule against a "heckler's veto."
- Has held that the government cannot punish inflammatory speech unless it intentionally and effectively provokes a crowd to immediately carry out violent and unlawful action.

Information source: ADLU Speech on Campus <https://www.adlu.org/other/speech-campus>



as possible and thoroughly describing the incident where prompted.

- Use the third person and past tense when describing the incident.
- You may share your name or remain anonymous. Remember that our follow-up and investigation will be more limited if your contact information is not provided.
- You will be contacted within 24-48 hours after submitting a report.
- If you would like to file a complaint in person, please visit the Office of Multicultural Affairs or the Office of Diversity and Equity.

Bias Prevention and Response Team (BPRT)

The BPRT is comprised of committed faculty, and staff members who work to prevent bias-related incidents and support our campus community when these incidents occur. Specifically, this team will be charged with:

- Monitoring the needs of the campus, based on trends in bias, and counsel groups to create opportunities for educational initiatives on the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Mediating restorative justice conversations between parties involved in bias-related incidents.
- Drafting and advising communication sent to campus community members when incidents occur.



inform the future of the team.

Questions?

Contact the Co-Chairs of the Bias
Prevention and Response Team:

Sarah Frank; frank@geneseo.edu; Director
of Residence Life

Clifton Harcum; charcum@geneseo.edu;
Director of Multicultural Affairs

Rodmon King; rking@geneseo.edu; Chief
Diversity Officer

Genevieve Labe; glabe@geneseo.edu;
Assistant Director of Multicultural Affairs
for LGBTQ+ Life

SUNY Geneseo How To Report a Bias Related Incident



What behaviors create a non-inclusive campus climate?

A non-inclusive campus climate results from the combined effect of a number of behaviors/practices which cumulatively create an environment that is not open and welcoming to a person or group based on their age, ancestry, color, disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, race, religion, religious practices, sexual orientation, marital status, veteran status, or military status. Offenders often remain anonymous.

What happens after I report an incident?

All reports are reviewed promptly by the co-chairs of the Bias Prevention and Response Team (BPRT) in order to determine the level of urgency and identify appropriate plan for follow-up. Follow up with the reporting individual (if identified and willing to be contacted) will occur within two business days. Reports are simultaneously received by the Dean of Students and Assistant Dean of Students for Student Conduct & Community Standards, who will determine if there is a potential violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

If the reporting individual has identified themselves in the report and has indicated that they are willing to be contacted, a member of the BPRT will reach out to them directly to offer support and to learn more about what occurred. If other individuals are listed in the report (i.e., witnessed, accused, etc.), they may also be contacted as part of the information-gathering process.

Will I find out what happened to the accused party?

We understand why the individual reporting would want to know how the incident was resolved after they reported it. Federal privacy law, FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) prohibits anyone employed by the College from sharing any information about a specific student. The BPRT will, however, reach out to the reporting individual (if known and if they have indicated that they are willing to be contacted) and share all of the details legally allowed.



Individuals dissatisfied with the outcome of the process may file a complaint with one or more state and federal agencies. Our Special Assistant to the Chief Diversity Officer, robbie routenberg, can provide information about these agencies.

What is the process for addressing bias-related incidents?

Geneseo is committed to providing an equitable and welcoming climate for all students. Some bias-related incidents and non-inclusive climate behaviors are criminal and will be investigated by the University Police Department, and/or violate Geneseo's [Student Code of Conduct](#) and thus may be addressed in a student conduct proceeding. In the case of Code violations, disciplinary actions may be imposed and are listed under "Article V-Sanctions" in the Code of Conduct.

When an incident is reported that has been determined to not be illegal or a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, it is still important to recognize the negative impact that it has had on member(s) of our community. When the parties are known, attempts will be made to provide resources and support to those impacted and to provide education to those who caused harm. If all parties are willing, members of the Bias Prevention and Response Team will facilitate a Restorative Justice dialogue with the goal of developing a mutual understanding and repairing any harm that has occurred. Restorative Justice emphasizes repairing the harm caused by negative, inequitable, hurtful behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that allow all willing involved or impacted individuals to meet, have a dialogue about the harm, and discover a resolution together. The restorative justice process can lead to the transformation of people, relationships, and communities.



1 College Circle, Geneseo, NY, 14454
585-245-5000 | web@geneseo.edu

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