INTRODUCTION

At the University of Washington, we value and honor diverse experiences and perspectives, strive to create welcoming and respectful learning environments and promote access and opportunity. At the same time, our institutional commitment to freedom of expression encourages members of our University community to hold and express views that are sometimes unpopular or troubling to others.

To help us fulfill our commitment to addressing bias at the individual, institutional and systemic levels, in the fall of 2016, the Bias Incident Advisory Committee was established in partnership with the Office of Student Life and the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity. The committee is charged with collecting data regarding bias incidents occurring in our university community to reveal a clearer picture of what our students, staff and academic personnel are experiencing; and providing information to members of the community regarding support resources (e.g., Counseling Center, Ethnic Cultural Center, Q Center, Ombud) as well as options for reporting to an investigative body (e.g., UWPD or other law enforcement, Community Standards & Student Conduct, the University Complaint Investigation & Resolution Office). Additionally, when the reported incident is something that has an effect on the entire UW community, the committee collaborates with campus partners to help develop and implement opportunities for broader community support, healing and learning.

The Bias Incident Advisory Committee launched an online reporting tool on November 1, 2016. This report covers the dates July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMITTEE AND THE REPORTING TOOL, PLEASE VISIT REPORT.BIAS.WASHINGTON.EDU
REPORTING PROCESS

It is of important note that the Bias Incident Report Form does not trigger an emergency response. A member of the committee reviews reports received through the Bias Incident Report Form within two business days. Individuals who have provided contact information and agreed to be contacted will receive outreach from a member of the committee via email within two to four business days to thank them for submitting the information and to provide them with referral or follow up suggestions such as an administrator specific to the reporter’s department, UWPD, UCIRO, or Student Conduct:

In addition, depending on the nature of the reported incident, the committee may:

- Offer the reporting individual consultation, support and information regarding available resources;
- Ensure the report is properly routed for investigation and resolution in accordance with applicable University policy and principles of free expression;
- Inform and consult with the Vice President for Student Life and the Vice President for Minority Affairs and Diversity regarding possible institutional response;
- Assess avenues for minimizing or eliminating possible future incidents of bias.

The institution may:

- Send notice to the community regarding the incident;
- Engage in individual outreach to affected party;
- Offer support and assistance to affected individuals/communities (typically in form of counseling);
- Provide educational workshops or seminars;
- Remove graffiti or fliers;
- Connect affected parties to relevant resources;
- Catalogue incident(s) and/or;
- Initiate proceedings under the student conduct code, general campus conduct code, or other UW policies.

METHODOLOGY

In this report, we present an exploratory analysis of data collected from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. There are several areas we are interested in further investigating from a qualitative perspective.

REPORTING TRENDS

From July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, we received 223 reports. Of these, 62 (27%) were submitted anonymously. This feature is important, as some students, academic personnel, or staff may feel nervous about identifying themselves in a report. While anonymous reports may reduce administration’s ability to address the matter, the information is invaluable in tracking trends and partnering with departments across campus to develop programs to address trends we identify.

Of the 223 reports, 59 (26%) were filed under the topic “Discrimination,” meaning that the person was reporting either witnessing or experiencing discrimination based on a protected category. Each report was categorized under a bias “topic” based on categories as defined by the reporter of the incident.
Upon further investigation of the 59 discrimination reports, we discovered that 32 of the 59 (54%) may or may not rise to the level of discrimination in a legal sense, but the reports described incidents in which individuals or groups allegedly experienced micro-aggressions.

Finally, 98 (44%) unique reports were filed over the course of the year, meaning that the other 125 were reports filed by different people about the same bias incident. Checking for unique reports revealed an interesting trend, that white supremacy and Islamophobia (specifically posters, graffiti, and people picketing in front of buildings) were reported multiple months across the year. White supremacy, in some form, was reported every month of the year. Islamophobia was reported four months out of the year.

**REPORTS RECEIVED**

We generally receive reports at a somewhat steady but slow pace. We see upticks in reports received when one or two incidents capture the attention of members of the university community. The graphs here illustrate number of reports received on a weekly basis between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

**REPORTS RECEIVED ON A WEEKLY BASIS BETWEEN 7/1/2017 AND 6/30/2018**

Of the total 223 reports, the following were the “primary concerns” in order of prevalence:

![Graph showing the number of reports for different types of incidents](image)

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SITE TRAFFIC

We regularly assess engagement metrics related to utilization of our website and track the avenues through which users are accessing it. The primary measure, called a “session,” represents a unique user actively engaging with our site. Examples of engagement activities include reading the landing page, clicking on the link to the report form, etc.

Traffic to the website has remained steady over 2017-2018, with the exception of a couple of spikes, one in July 2017 and again in February 2018. We are acquiring more users through direct links and organic searches (such as Google or Bing), suggesting that users are specifically looking for us rather than arriving via a link from another page. In addition, they are spending more time on our pages and they are more likely to submit a report.

The following charts show the individual users, the new users vs. returning users, and the amount of time spent on the site.
TRAFFIC CHANNELS

Most of our traffic is directly channeled, which means that the user knew the link and typed it directly into their browser. Further, the majority of direct traffic are new users to the site. Our belief is that this is largely due to the increased awareness generated through posters displayed around campus, word of mouth, etc.

• Our second largest traffic channel is from referral sources within other UW webpages;
• Our third largest channel is made up of referral links from other websites. The number one referral source for this time being the UW Daily;
• Our fourth largest channel is made up of social media referrals such as Facebook.

THE USER EXPERIENCE

Individuals who complete reports often just want us to know about an incident. We’ve heard from good Samaritans who’ve observed verbal harassment and want to promote a more caring community, academic personnel and staff who want to ensure that graffiti is removed in a timely manner, and students who want guidance in providing feedback to an instructor whose choice of language may be out of step with current usage.

Committee members have consulted with academic departments in responding to student concerns about climate and we have referred many individuals to campus resources to address their situation: the Ombud, University Complaint Investigation & Resolution Office (UCIRO), or Community Standards & Student Conduct (CSSC). Often, the most important outcome is that the reporting individual feels heard and understood; the reporting tool has provided an avenue for students and others to “let the university know” what they are experiencing and many have told us this enabled them to more quickly shift their focus back to their studies or research.

However, it is important to note, that we have also heard feedback and skepticism about this process and tool in that it does not have “any teeth.” We have heard from students who feel as if the university is simply “extracting” more information from them without giving much in return.

Some have voiced concerns about how that information might be used against them in the future; e.g., could this information be used in a tenure process to deny me tenure? Could this information be used in a student conduct process as evidence of prior bad behavior? Could a department use this information to sanction or otherwise punish me? These concerns must be taken seriously as we move into conversations as a committee this next year.

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GOALS FOR THE COMING MONTHS

Our goals for the remainder of the academic year are the following:

• Distribute posters and increase awareness of reporting tool;
• Replace current reporting tool with one that is sustainable over time and without the support of a dedicated IT personnel;
• Engage in committee discussions and make recommendations regarding changes to the reporting tool (if any) that can mitigate any possible concerns regarding privacy, public records requests, tenure processes, etc.;
• Collaborate with campus partners in centering of social justice in wellness issues, and particularly how micro-aggressions and discrimination negatively impact wellbeing and mental health;
• Reorganize and rewrite some parts of the website in order to clarify for the campus community the boundaries of our work.

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