

## **Information for Complainants**

**We are neutral.** OIE does not take sides. We are committed to providing a fair and unbiased review, and our investigations are focused on evidence. We also help Complainants and Respondents by providing information about support and advocacy services.

**We help Complainants find the right process.** The University has processes that provide prompt and effective review of discrimination and harassment complaints. OIE addresses some of these concerns directly, but if OIE is not best suited to address the concerns (e.g., some complaints against students), OIE will assist the Complainant in determining the appropriate office and provide contact information for that office.

**Support person.** Complainants may bring a support person with them to any meetings with OIE. We request that Complainants please let us know in advance if they will be doing so.

**Understanding the complaint.** The first step OIE takes in an investigation is to gather information about the complaint. This usually involves interviewing the Complainant and gathering all evidence the Complainant has, including documentation and names of witnesses, if any. Complainants are strongly encouraged to share all information they have regarding the matter.

**Anonymity.** Complainants frequently want to know if the Respondent will be told they raised concerns. Respondents are provided enough information about the allegations to allow them a fair opportunity to respond, and the level of detail necessary to do that varies depending on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

**Interviewing the Respondent.** After OIE understands the nature and scope of the complaint, the Respondent is asked about the allegations and given a full and fair opportunity to respond. The Respondent is also asked to provide any documentation and identify witnesses relevant to the complaint. The Complainant is not present during the Respondent's interview and vice versa.

**Gathering other evidence.** OIE interviews witnesses and reviews documentation that it believes is relevant to the situation. OIE may also contact Complainant and Respondent with additional questions or to request additional information.

**Review.** If OIE determines it will produce a written investigation report, the Complainant and Respondent, if participating in the investigation, will typically be provided with a written summary of the statement of each person interviewed (Complainant, Respondent and other witnesses) and documentation or other evidence reviewed by OIE. To ensure accuracy, the Complainant and Respondent are given the opportunity to provide clarifying comments on the summary. OIE reviews the comments submitted by the parties, if any, and determines whether the report should be modified. All comments from the parties are considered in reaching a determination on the matter.

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**Decision and follow up.** After receiving the Complainant's and Respondent's comments, OIE analyzes the evidence and reaches a conclusion. If an investigation report is produced, Complainant and Respondent receive a copy and it is submitted to relevant administrators for follow up. If OIE determines that inappropriate behavior or discrimination or harassment has occurred, the relevant administrators will follow up with corrective action aimed at addressing the offending behavior. Because personnel matters are confidential, the Complainant is not told the specific steps that are taken, but is asked to contact OIE immediately if the behavior occurs again.

**Retaliation.** The University has a strong policy against retaliation. Complainants who feel they are being subjected to retaliatory behavior are strongly encouraged to contact OIE immediately.

**More information.** If you have any other questions about the investigation or investigation process, please do not hesitate to contact the staff member investigating your case at 734/763-0235.

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