

## **Information for Respondents**

**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.

**Support person.** The Respondent may bring a support person with them to any meetings with OIE. We request that Respondents 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. The Respondent is not present during the Complainant's interview and vice versa.

**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. Respondents are strongly encouraged to share all information they have regarding the matter.

**Anonymity.** Respondents are provided enough information about the allegations to allow them a fair opportunity to respond. In some cases, it is not necessary to identify the Complainant in order to provide enough information for the Respondent to respond (e.g., comments made in front of a large group of people).

**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.

**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

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occurred, the relevant administrators will follow up with corrective action aimed at addressing the offending behavior.

**Corrective Action.** While OIE does not impose corrective action, the Respondent should be aware that the University takes all allegations of discrimination and harassment very seriously. After OIE conducts a fair, equitable and timely investigation, if corrective action is warranted, such action can include, but is not limited to, specialized training, time off without pay, and other actions up to and including termination. If a Respondent does not agree with the disciplinary action taken, the corrective action may be grieved using the applicable grievance procedure. OIE's finding, however, cannot be the subject of the grievance.

**Retaliation.** The University has a strong policy against retaliation. Respondents who engage in retaliatory behavior, either directly or through others, are subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

**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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