

# Campus Bias Prevention & Response Training Tools

Resources to Create Inclusive,  
Community-Minded Campuses of Care



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## PREVENTION

# Recognizing an Incident of Bias HANDOUT

An incident of bias can greatly disrupt your campus, and the lives of those impacted. Having a clear idea of what bias incidents may look like can help you head them off at the pass or, at least, possibly minimize their impact.

An incident of bias may look like...

- Hosting a theme or Halloween party that encourages people to wear costumes and act in ways that reinforce stereotypes, or engage in cultural appropriation, thus creating a hostile campus climate
- A harassing comment in the workplace, such as a sexual comment, joke or gesture, or the display of pictures and items that convey sexually inappropriate messages
- A professor making contemptuous, disapproving comments about a protected class of people, such as from a certain religion, females, racial minority groups, the LGBTQIA+ population, people with disabilities, etc.
- A student being harassed, teased or imitated because they sometimes speak with a stutter
- Calling someone by a racial, ethnic or other slur or epithet
- Making fun of someone's name, asking, "Where are you *really* from?"
- Having a classmate regularly make anti-Semitic comments
- Posting derogatory graffiti or hate symbols
- Making a "joke" that is demeaning to a group of people based on their actual or perceived race, sex, gender identity or expression, disability or other category protected by law
- Hosting a "date" or "slave" auction
- Using blackface or other ethnic group makeup/props in a skit, video or other presentation

### **Bias Incident**

"A bias incident is conduct that discriminates, stereotypes, excludes, harasses or harms anyone in our community based on their identity (such as race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, or religion).

Bias occurs whether the act is:

- intentional or unintentional
- directed toward an individual or a group

A bias-based incident is one which has a negative effect on an individual or group and is based on or motivated by bias against race, color, creed, nationality, sexual orientation, gender, physical or mental disability, political or religious ideology, age, or any other distinguishing characteristic.

The incident is experienced as hurtful by one or many and may involve harassment, the creation of a hostile environment, property damage, verbal threats of violence, or physical violence. The incident may or may not involve breaches of University policies or state or federal law."

**Source:** Clarkson University Bias Prevention and Awareness, Diversity and Inclusion, Clarkson.edu



## PREVENTION

### Recognizing an Incident of Bias HANDOUT *(continued)*

- Hosting a tokenizing culturally-themed party
- Posting something to social media or on flyers/graffiti that contains demeaning or insensitive language or images

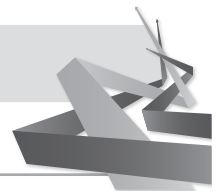
**Sources:** Davidson College, Bias Education and Response, davidson.edu; Goucher College, Campus Climate Education Team, goucher.edu; St. Norbert College, Bias Incidents, snb.edu; “Identifying and Responding to Bias Incidents,” SPLC Learning for Justice, learningforjustice.org; Roger Williams University, Bias Incident Response, rwu.edu

**#1:** “**A bias incident** is conduct, speech or expression motivated, in whole or in part, by bias or prejudice. It differs from a hate crime in that no criminal activity is involved.”

**#2:** “**All hate crimes** are bias incidents, but not all bias incidents are hate crimes.”

**Sources:** For #1: “Identifying and Responding to Bias Incidents,” SPLC Learning for Justice, learningforjustice.org; For #2: Goucher College, Campus Climate Education Team, goucher.edu

SAMPLE



## PREVENTION

# Promoting Bystander and Upstander Behaviors HANDOUT

“When someone witnesses and ignores a prejudiced attack, whether through choice or ignorance of the discriminatory nature of the situation, they can appear to be condoning or reinforcing the offender’s behavior and add to the alienation of the targeted individual,” according to the American Psychological Association (APA). “These individuals are referred to as ‘**bystanders.**’ Violence and aggression, whether macro or micro, perpetuate discrimination based on any characteristic, including age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, some combination of these, or something else. By finding ways to inform and encourage individuals to respond to prejudiced behavior and speak out against discriminatory words or actions in the moment they occur, we can motivate a society of **Upstanders** who will make anti-discriminatory behavior the social norm, and create a safer, more inclusive society.”

**“To remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all.”**

- Elie Wiesel

### So, to break it down...

A **Bystander** is someone who witnesses a discriminatory or violent situation, the APA explained, and has an opportunity to “condone, intervene, or do nothing.”

An **Upstander** is someone who recognizes an act or vocalization of injustice, the APA said, and takes a stand “by interrupting and challenging situations that normalize discrimination and potential violence.”

Situations where someone might be a bystander or upstander could include...

- Hearing someone make a racially biased joke
- Overhearing someone make a sexist comment
- Witnessing an LGBTQIA+ student be bullied by another student
- Observing a marginalized student being targeted with microaggressive behaviors

### How to Intervene Using the 5D’s

An effective bystander intervention approach uses the 5 D’s, according to RightToBe.org (formerly known as Hollaback!)...

1. **Distract:** Indirectly diffuse the situation by interrupting the harasser and the target (e.g. commotion, small talk, etc.).
2. **Delegate:** Ask a third party for assistance in intervening, preferably an individual in a position of authority.
3. **Document:** If it is safe to do so and someone is already helping the target, write notes or take a video of the discriminatory situation (permission to share the situation belongs to the target).
4. **Delay:** Check in with the person who was discriminated/harassed (e.g. support, offer assistance, etc.).
5. **Direct:** If everyone is physically safe, speak firmly and clearly against the harassment/discrimination taking place (prioritize assisting the target over debating the harasser).”

**Source:** RightToBe.org (formerly known as Hollaback!), as shared via the American Psychological Association, [apa.org](http://apa.org)



## PREVENTION

# Promoting Bystander and Upstander Behaviors

HANDOUT *(continued)*

## Five Steps to Becoming an Upstander

Bystanders can become upstanders when they develop the ability and confidence to confront prejudiced words and behaviors. How? The APA shared these five steps...

1. “Notice a discriminatory/emergency situation and interpret it.
2. Evaluate the incident’s problematic nature and decide if it requires intervention.
3. Assume responsibility for intervening.
4. Know and decide how to approach the situation.
5. Choose to take action.”

What can prevent someone from moving from a bystander to an upstander? Barriers might include...

- A lack of confidence
- Fear of retribution
- Not fully knowing what a discriminatory or biased situation looks like
- Not having social relations with victims of discrimination or bias
- Being conflict adverse
- Feeling their knowledge and actions are inefficient to effectively intervene

**Sources:** Rodenhizer-Stämpfli, K. A., Eckstein, R. P., & Edwards, K. M. (2018). Bystander action. In R.J.R. Levesque, *Encyclopedia of Adolescence* (2nd ed.). Springer Science+Business Media; Nelson, J. K., Dunn, K. M., & Paradies, Y. (2011). Bystander anti-racism: A review of the literature. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy*, 11(1), 263-284. Both as used within the American Psychological Association’s “Bystander Intervention Tip Sheet,” [apa.org](http://apa.org)



*PREVENTION*

## What People Will Look for on Your Bias Response Website CHECKLIST

To be transparent and engender trust among your campus community members, you can effectively use your campus bias response website to be clear about a variety of questions and concerns. They may include...

- Your institution’s commitment to an inclusive, respectful community
- What constitutes a bias incident
- Other definitions (hate crimes, etc.)
- Reporting options
- What happens after a report is submitted/response process
- Timelines
- Reasons to report
- How reports will be used
- Supports and advocacy available
- Confidentiality/privacy concerns
- Who is a member of your campus climate concerns/ bias response team and how to contact them
- What this team does
- Bias incidents data
- Statement regarding freedom of expression
- Possible bias incident resolutions/sanctions
- Offices and initiatives that support bias prevention programming

### Categories of Bias-Related Incidents and How They Impact Response

#### Localized Bias Incident = Localized Response

These types of incidents are described by Student Life at Roger Williams University (RWU) as, “Incidents that are localized or contained within a limited area of campus and seen or heard by a limited number of people (i.e., occurring within a limited area of campus, such as a residence hall bathroom).”

And it impacts the response like this: “For a localized bias-related incident the administrator closest to the incident will address the issue, and in consultation with the Director of Student Conduct, VP or AVP/Dean for Student Life (or other appropriate administrator), facilitate a response that resonates with the student or group of students involved, and issue a community statement if appropriate.”

#### Community Bias Incident = Community Response

RWU’s Bias Incident Response site said, “Incidents that are widely known and/or violate policy will be processed by a Bias Response Team assembled based on the nature and location of the incident.”

And it impacts the response like this: “For a community bias-related incident, the Bias Response Team will determine if the incident can be considered a crime and whether a message from university administration is appropriate. This Bias Response Team will be called together if determined appropriate by the VP for Student Life (or designee) and the VP & Chief Diversity Officer (or designee).”

**Source:** Roger Williams University, Student Life, Bias Incident Response, <https://bit.ly/42FmavU>



## PREVENTION

# What People Will Look for on Your Bias Response Website CHECKLIST *(continued)*

### Take Action

**Action #1:** Put a check mark next to each component on the previous page that is currently available through your bias response site.

**Action #2:** Circle those you believe would be helpful to include.

**Action #3:** Now, list two action steps you can take to explore the addition of those new components to your campus site.

**Step #1:**

**Step #2:**

### Campus Examples

Here are some ways that various institutions list different components on their campus bias response sites...

- **Marquette University**, Division of Student Affairs, Bias Incidents page: [www.marquette.edu/student-affairs/bias-incidents.php](http://www.marquette.edu/student-affairs/bias-incidents.php)
- **Oregon State University**, Institutional Diversity, Bias Incident Response page: <https://diversity.oregonstate.edu/bias-incident-response-process>
- **Washington College**, Intercultural Affairs, Identifying and Reporting Bias Incidents page: <https://bit.ly/3nl3CkB>
- **Mount Holyoke College**, Reporting of Campus Bias, Insensitivity, and Discrimination Incidents: <https://bit.ly/3ZdWUKI>

### Keeping the Campus Community Informed

The University of Utah offers an at-a-glance “Incidents & Updates” page that outlines reported bias incidents and their status. Users can then click on each thumbnail to learn more about each incident. Options include:

- In-Review
- Monitoring
- Resolved

For instance, a Resolved issue from Feb. 21, 2023 involved a “Class of 2026 Snapchat Group Message” described as “Several University of Utah students in a Snapchat community reported a student member who posted two images they felt were biased in nature, one a racist image.”

A Monitoring issue from Feb. 7, 2023 involved “Sexualized gender based language on door decorations in resident hall” described as “Resident Advisor reported that they found an offensive and sexualizing term about women displayed on a resident’s door.”

Take a look for yourself at: <https://diversity.utah.edu/initiatives/rbirt/updates/>.



## RESPONSE

### A Quick, Thorough Response DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Despite your best prevention efforts, an incident of bias may still occur. It's critical to respond in a quick, thorough manner. According to United Educators (UE) – a company that helps educational institutions identify, prevent, respond to and recover from adversity and risks – this type of response by the administration can help:

- “Prevent escalation of the incident.
- Get survivors support and protection quickly.
- Deter additional incidents or crimes from the original offender or from others who may follow their lead.
- Create and maintain a diverse, inclusive culture.
- Uphold your institution’s mission and commitment to its community.”

#### For Discussion

- How might you balance supporting students’ sense of agency while also providing nurturing, empathetic support after an incident of bias?
- Why is regaining control so important for people who’ve been subjected to bias?
- Where does a sense of safety and protection come into play?
- How might belonging factor into bias situations?
- What type of response might you have to a student who follows their own path rather than pursuing a “typical” campus support resource?

#### Prioritizing Victim Outreach

UE emphasized that “your institution’s initial response protocols should prioritize outreach to victims to assure their safety and offer support.” This can be through:

- The counseling center
- Cultural centers
- Student services
- Religious/spiritual centers
- Campus safety
- Wellness resources
- And more





## RESPONSE

### A Quick, Thorough Response DISCUSSION PROMPTS

(continued)

#### Support Their Agency

“Give victims full control over what supportive resources they may want or need,” UE stressed. Students who have been subjected to incidents of bias may be experiencing a multitude of emotions, from anger to safety concerns to a lack of control.

You can support their sense of agency – where *they* can control their environment after what they’ve been through – in various ways, such as...

- Providing them with possible support resources and letting them choose which one they’d like to pursue rather than telling them where they *should* turn
- Giving them the choice of where to sit when you’re meeting to discuss a situation – or encouraging them to pace or stand or whatever makes them most comfortable
- Asking them if they give permission for any video of a bias incident to be shared
- Showing them ways they can advocate for themselves and their needs
- Keeping an open door so they can check in with you when needed

#### A Sense of Agency

Having agency over your life means that it’s in your control. Show students how to advocate for themselves and their needs so they can gain that agency in a variety of areas.



## Preparing a Verbal or Written Statement WORKSHEET

“What we say and how we say it both make a difference,” according to the Anti-Defamation League’s (ADL) *Hate/Uncycled: Understanding Bias and Hate on Campus* guide. “Statements from leadership set the tone for the community.”

The ADL recommends keeping the following qualities in mind when drafting a statement after a bias incident in order to build a sense of trust...

- **“Empathy** conveys genuine concern.
- **Transparency** has a calming effect and defuses tension.
- **Specificity and accuracy** demonstrate your attention to people and matters at hand.
- **Using thoughtful and inclusive language, choosing identity terms that respect the preferences of the affected communities,** conveys respect and shows that you are listening.
- **Naming the hate** helps impacted communities to feel acknowledged and encourages education.
- **Impact matters** most in times of hate incidents. For example, characterizing hate speech as a joke or simply misinformation makes the target feel invalidated and minimizes the impact to the entire community.
- **Giving credit** to staff, faculty, and others for their efforts shows that you value community and teamwork.
- **Action plans** show commitment to taking the incident seriously as well as to improving the future of a campus with less bias and hate.”

### Campus Examples

Here are some ways that certain campuses have addressed bias incidents...

- **Syracuse University** (NY) addresses reported bias incident at men’s soccer game where individual was overheard yelling “you should speak English” to opposing team members: <https://bit.ly/40A1Kmf>
- **Michigan State University** president addresses disturbing display at campus gift shop featuring African American figures hanging from trees: <https://bit.ly/3LVybaH>
- **Williams College** (MA) president reports on outcome of investigation into monument defaced with graffiti: <https://bit.ly/40swXrA>

**Source:** *Hate/Uncycled: Understanding Bias and Hate on Campus*, Anti-Defamation League, [www.adl.org/hateuncycled](http://www.adl.org/hateuncycled)



*RESPONSE*

## Preparing a Verbal or Written Statement WORKSHEET

(continued)

### A Practice Statement

Using the ADL's recommendations about drafting a statement to build trust in the wake of a bias incident, try a practice run here.

**The Incident:** Racist flyers were posted in several residence halls throughout campus, touting the virtues of "the great replacement theory." Multiple students have come to your staff members, saying they feel threatened, unsafe and angry as a result. Some family members have also begun to call, wondering what your institution is going to do to keep their students safe.

How might you draft a statement that incorporates these qualities recommended by the ADL (see previous page)...

- Empathy:
  
- Transparency:
  
- Specificity and Accuracy:
  
- Thoughtful and Inclusive Language:
  
- Naming the Hate:
  
- How Impact Matters:
  
- Giving Credit to Others:
  
  
- Action Plans That Show Commitment to Taking the Incident Seriously:

### Replacement Theory, Explained

What is "the great replacement theory," as mentioned in the case study incident to the left?

- Encyclopedia Britannica: [www.britannica.com/topic/replacement-theory](http://www.britannica.com/topic/replacement-theory)
- National Immigration Forum: <https://bit.ly/3LSoAkZ>
- The Conversation: <https://bit.ly/3TJXv5q>
- National Public Radio: <https://bit.ly/40yoFhQ>



## The Making WAVES Project at UMass Lowell

Much can be gleaned from an anti-bias project like Making WAVES (Women Academics Valued and Engaged in STEM) at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Women in STEM are the focus of this National Science Foundation initiative. Interventions designed to promote an academic environment that supports STEM women include...

**Disrupting Subtle Biases and Microaggressions.** This is done through:

- A Microaggressions Awareness Blog, which can be found at: <https://blogs.uml.edu/itooamstem/>
- Bystander Training, which trains faculty “to become better equipped to notice and intervene when microaggressions occur,” can be found at: [www.uml.edu/research/advance/initiatives/bystander-training/](http://www.uml.edu/research/advance/initiatives/bystander-training/)
- Using Survey Feedback on Campus Climate

**Promoting Alternative Support Networks.** This type of mentoring is done through:

- The IDEA Leadership Initiative, which “supports innovate research, scholarly and interdisciplinary collaboration”
- The 50/50 Mentoring Series, where faculty host notable scientists giving 50/50 lectures featuring “half of the speaker’s time is allotted to his/her technical, educational and research interests, and the other half is devoted to his/her career path, detailing, for example, challenges overcome or the influence of mentors”

**Addressing Organizational Policies and Practices That Can Breed Bias.** This promotion of equity and accountability is done through:

- A Foggy Climate Initiative, which describes a “foggy climate” as “one where expectations and criteria for success are not clear,” with the goals “to reduce ambiguity around workload expectations and high stakes decisions that affect faculty lives”
- An Accountability Initiative, which engages departments in a process of self-assessment, goal setting, action planning and annual progress as a means of “reducing microaggressions and other forms of bias as well as for increasing supports for greater diversity inclusion”

Links to these various initiatives can be found at: [www.uml.edu/research/advance/initiatives/](http://www.uml.edu/research/advance/initiatives/).

### Getting “A (collective) GRIP” on Microaggressions

Assessment  
Goals  
Relationships  
Institutional Context  
Power Arrangements

### How Microaggressions are Like Mosquito Bites

“Like a mosquito bite, one microaggression may not be a big deal,” according to the WAVES initiative bystander training page. “But imagine being bitten multiple times a week, year round. This is how the culture is for some people at UMass Lowell and most other universities. Be part of the effort to change it!”

A quick video puts this simple mosquito bite analogy in context: <https://bit.ly/3JwjTL5>.

As the video says, “So, next time you think someone’s overreacting, just remember, some people experience mosquito bites all the time. And by mosquito bites, we mean microaggressions.”