

Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity

# Annual Report of Bias

2018 – 2019



**BROWN**

Office of Institutional  
Equity and Diversity



# Annual Report of Bias

2018 - 2019

Brown established its online Bias Reporting System and Bias Review Team (BRT) in January 2019. It was developed as an acknowledgment that, while the University is committed to “sustaining a campus culture in which each individual’s humanity and dignity are acknowledged<sup>1</sup>,” bias incidents can and do occur with varying levels of frequency and impact on university campuses. The bias reporting system is intended as a campus resource for reporting, documenting and educating around issues of bias. The purpose of sharing statistics of reported incidents is to increase awareness, promote transparency and identify any patterns of behavior that might compel intervention by leaders of the appropriate academic or administrative units.

This annual report compiles statistics about incidents reported from October 2018 to June 2019, including referrals to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) prior to the formal January 2019 launch of the University’s online reporting form. The report details the development of the Bias Review Team, the reporting and referral process, as well as engagement efforts with the broader campus community to develop the reporting system. The report also documents a total of 23 individual reports, some of which were regarding the same incident. There was a total of 18 incidents during the reporting timeframe.

## Terminology and Process Development

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### Definition of Bias Incidents, Discrimination and Harassment

At Brown, a bias incident is defined as “any hurtful, discriminatory or harassing act that targets individuals or groups based on perceived or actual identity. To be considered a bias incident, the act is not required to be a crime under any federal, state or local statutes, nor does it have to violate University policy<sup>2</sup>” The types of bias incidents reported to Brown’s Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) and outlined in this report include, but are not limited to, refusing to use a person’s gender pronouns, ridiculing a person’s language or accent, and using a racial, ethnic or another slur in a joke or to identify someone.

As stated in Brown’s discrimination and harassment policy, “discrimination is defined by federal and/or state statutes to include unfavorable or unfair treatment of a person or class of persons because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Harassment refers to or is based upon the protected status of the person or persons being harassed, as defined by relevant federal and/or state statutes<sup>3</sup>”

<sup>1</sup> Brown University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), 2016

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/incident-reporting>

<sup>3</sup> Brown University Diversity Discrimination and Harassment Policy, 2016

Factors to be considered in determining whether and the extent to which behavior(s) could be construed as discrimination or harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Frequency
- Severity and pervasiveness of the conduct
- Whether it is physically threatening
- Degree to which the conduct interfered with an employee’s work performance or a student’s academic performance and/or full enjoyment of the academic/campus programs and services
- The relationship between the alleged harasser and the subject or subjects of the harassment

The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity oversees Brown’s compliance with University policies and laws pertaining to discrimination and harassment (Title VI, VII, IX) and appeals under ADA/Section 504. Bias incident reports may also be forwarded to the Department of Public Safety when criminal activity is suspected and/or safety concerns arise. The Department of Public Safety is the University’s police department and is charged with protecting the University community. Its responsibilities include crime deterrence, crime investigation, dignitary protection, emergency response and handling routine calls for service<sup>4</sup>.

## Bias Review Team

Brown’s Bias Review Team (BRT) uses trauma-informed practices to ensure that members of the Brown community who have been affected by bias incidents have access to reporting mechanisms, resources and support. The BRT does not investigate reports, adjudicate alleged violations of University policy, or replace other Brown procedures or services. Its purpose is to review submitted reports and connect those who may have experienced bias or witnessed such acts to appropriate resources. Each member of the team participated in five hours of training and two hours of literature review prior to assuming their role. BRT members also engage in continuing education throughout the year.

The BRT consists of representatives from the following campus communities: undergraduate students, graduate students, medical students, OIED, faculty, staff, Office of the Dean of the Faculty (ex officio), Office of Student Conduct (ex officio), Warren Alpert Medical School (ex officio) and University Human Resources (ex officio). The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is consulted when necessary to share information in instances where a potential crime may have occurred and/or safety concerns arise.

***A bias incident is defined as “any hurtful, discriminatory or harassing act that targets individuals or groups based on perceived or actual identity.”***

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/public-safety/>

# Communication and Outreach

## Outreach

In preparation for the creation and launch of the bias incident reporting system, the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED) conducted a significant amount of outreach to the community. OIED hosted three information sessions open to the campus community prior to the launch of the system. In addition, the office hosted sessions within meetings of the Undergraduate Council of Students (UCS), the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and the executive board of the Medical School Senate (MSS). OIED staff also met with key contacts in the Office of Residential Life, Office of Student Conduct, Facilities Management and Student Support Services. Staff also participated in question-and-answer sessions hosted by the Brown Center for Students of Color (BCSC) and the Office of Residential Life, including a session for residential peer leaders (RPL).

Over the course of the year, OIED staff met with several senior leadership teams. Information on the reporting process, in-the-moment strategies of working with a report and examples of bias incidents were covered in sessions with department chairs and directors, the President’s Executive Committee, as well as senior leaders from the College, Graduate School and the Office of the Dean of the Faculty.

## Materials

OIED produced two handouts (below) as part of its engagement efforts. Materials outlined the bias review process, the role of the bias review team and available campus resources. These materials were and will continue to be used in outreach efforts to ensure members of the Brown community are aware of the bias reporting process.

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### How Do I Report?

Brown University is committed to “sustaining a campus culture in which each individual’s humanity and dignity are acknowledged and equal standing is assured.”

**What is a Bias Incident?**  
A bias incident is any hurtful, discriminatory or harassing act that targets individuals or groups based on perceived or actual identity. To be considered a bias incident, the act is not required to be a crime under any federal, state or local statutes, nor does it have to violate University policy.

**Who can report?**  
All Brown University faculty, students and staff can confidentially report using the online form. If you are unsure if you experienced or witnessed a bias incident, you are still encouraged to report it.

**How do I report and learn about next steps?**  
Online at [reportbias.brown.edu](http://reportbias.brown.edu)

**Resources**  
Self care is important. Campus Life has a number of resources for students. Visit [brown.edu/go/campus-resources](http://brown.edu/go/campus-resources) for more information. Employees can contact the Faculty/Staff Assistance Program at 800-828-6025 or [www.helloe4.com](http://www.helloe4.com).

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### BIAS Review Team (BRT)

The Bias Review Team is committed to furthering Brown University’s goal of sustaining a campus culture in which each individual’s humanity and dignity are acknowledged and equal standing is assured.

**What we DO:**

- Collect reports on incidents of bias
- Assist in connecting those who report a bias incident with support services
- Raise awareness and suggest programming that will empower bystanders to assist in building a bias-free community
- Synthesize data and make recommendations based on trends and findings

**What we DO NOT do:**

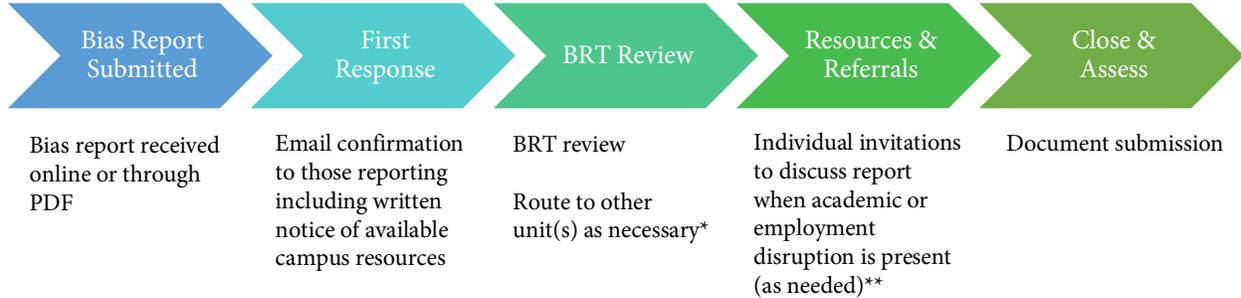
- Infringe on First Amendment Rights
- Limit academic freedom
- Conduct investigations

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# Reporting Process

The reporting process is accessible to members of the Brown community and individuals not affiliated with Brown who have been affected by a bias incident. The bias review process is initiated by the submission of a report through the online system or by the completion of the [PDF reporting form](#) found on OIED’s website. Individuals reporting incidents receive an email confirmation that includes written notice of available campus resources. After its review, the Bias Review Team forwards reports and/or new information to the appropriate departments and/or University unit(s) for additional review, as appropriate. As previously noted, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) may be consulted to share information in instances where a potential crime may have occurred and/or safety concerns arise. Individuals who have submitted a report may request a meeting with the chair of the BRT if the bias incident negatively impacts work, research, on-campus living conditions and/or academic progress. As a result of this meeting, individuals may be connected to specific resources to assist them.

## Overview of the Reporting Process



\* As appropriate, the BRT will forward reports and/or new information to the relevant departments/university unit(s) for additional review, which may include a formal memo with recommendations to a senior leader of a division or unit.

\*\* If the bias incident negatively impacts work, research, living conditions and/or academic progress, a meeting with the chair of the Bias Review Team can be requested.

## Bias Review Team Recommendations

The purpose of the bias reporting system is to collect data, identify patterns and ensure community members have access to resources. Each report is reviewed by the Bias Review Team and logged into the database to track patterns and develop initiatives and education to improve campus climate. Those reporting may not receive an individual follow-up after the BRT's review. In some instances, the BRT will provide recommendations via a written memo to senior leaders and managers that oversee units where bias incidents have been reported. Those individuals may consult with the Vice President of Institutional Equity and Diversity to ensure responses to alleged incidents are consistent and respond to the needs of community members.

# Summary of Referrals and Reports to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity

The prevalence of bias incidents continues to rise on campuses nationwide. The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity considers the receipt of bias incident reports to be a positive indicator that community members are aware of the available reporting mechanism and resources. (Note: For the purpose of this document, “report” means any information submitted to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity via the reporting process outlined earlier in this document.) The data contained in this Annual Report includes conduct of individuals affiliated and unaffiliated with the University but that occurred on campus and/or during University-sponsored activities or programs.

The data in the following tables reflects referrals and reports made to the office by email, telephone communication and submission through the online bias reporting form between October 2018 and June 2019. The tables include notification of behaviors that occurred between 2017 and 2019 but were reported for the first time during the 2018-19 timeframe. The information came from individual reporters of bias incidents and third parties who witnessed or were concerned for another whom they believe were impacted by a bias incident. This means that, in some cases, some reports were regarding the same incident. The incidents are categorized, to the best of OIED’s ability, based on the information available.

Of the 18 incidents (23 total reports), one was referred to the Department of Public Safety, two were referred to other processes (Student Conduct and University Human Resources), and four memos were sent to divisional leaders with follow-up recommendations (*the decision to send a memo to a divisional leader is made in consultation with the Vice President for Institutional Equity & Diversity based on the severity of the incident and/or the volume of reports for a single incident*). All individuals who submit a report receive information regarding support resources.

## Reports Received by the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity October 2018 - June 2019

**Table 1. Summary of Bias Incident Reports by Type of Report**

Type of Report Received	Number of Reports Received
Reports/referrals submitted prior to the implementation of the online system	5
Online reports by individuals who experienced bias	7
Online reports by third party witness or individual concerned for another who experienced a bias incident	8
Reports forwarded to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity by the Department of Public Safety	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

Table 1 represents the total number of bias incident reports/referrals received by the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity (OIED). It does not represent the number of alleged bias incidents (18). This table includes behavior reported between October 2018 and June 2019; however, the reported incidents themselves occurred between 2017 and 2019. The total does not reflect reports submitted to the separate bias reporting system at the Warren Alpert Medical School; however, OIED and the medical school work closely to address incidents and streamline reporting.

**Table 2. University Affiliation of Reporters**

University Affiliation	Number of Reporters
Undergraduate student	6
Graduate student	5
Medical student*	0
Staff	6
Administrator	1
Faculty	1
Graduate intern	1
Alumni	2
More than one campus affiliation	1
Post-doctoral fellow, clinical intern/resident or campus visitors	0
Information not disclosed	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

\*Individuals affiliated with the Warren Alpert Medical School have access to a separate bias incident reporting system. Statistics from that system are not reflected in this report.

Table 2 represents the university affiliations of reporters of bias incidents. The total of 23 is not reflective of the total number of incidents.

**Table 3. University Affiliation of Individuals Reported**

University Affiliation	Number of Reports Received
Undergraduate student	1
Graduate student	0
Medical student *	0
Staff	1
Administrator	1
Faculty	6
Post-doctoral fellow, graduate intern, clinical intern/resident or alumni	0
More than one campus affiliation	1
Campus visitors	0
Software used by the institution	1
Information not disclosed	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

\*Individuals affiliated with the Warren Alpert Medical School have access to a separate bias incident reporting system. Statistics from that system are not reflected in this report.

Table 3 represents the university affiliations of individuals alleged to have committed acts of bias. Those reported represented 18 different affiliations. The total is less than 23 because some incidents involving a single individual were reported more than one time.

**Table 4. Reports by Month Received**

Month and Year of Report	Number of Reports
October 2018	1
November 2018	2
December 2018	0
January 2019	1
February 2019	1
March 2019	2
April 2019	11
May 2019	5
June 2019	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

Table 4 represents the number of bias incident reports received by OIED each month. This table includes reports received between October 2018 and June 2019; however, the reported incidents themselves occurred between 2017 and 2019.

**Table 5. Identity Affiliations Selected by Reporters**

Identity	Number of Reports
Gender	2
National Origin, Immigration, or Citizenship Status	1
Race or Ethnicity	7
Religion	3
Disability & race	1
National origin & race	1
Disability & economic status	1
Gender & race	1
Gender, language & national origin	1
Gender & gender identity	1
Language & national origin	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>

Table 5 represents the 20 identity affiliations reporters identified as the basis of the bias incident.

**Table 6. Types of Incidents Reported to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity**

Type of Bias Experiences	Number of Reports
Biased language	8
Biased language & conduct	5
Biased language, conduct & policy enforcement	1
Biased language, conduct & other conduct	1
Biased language, conduct, policy enforcement, bullying & intimidation	1
Biased conduct	0
Biased policy or policy enforcement	0
Biased policy & other conduct	1
Biased printed or digital materials	6
Other conduct	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

Table 6 represents the 23 types of incidents self-selected by reporters. The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity did not receive any reports indicating bullying, graffiti, intimidation or threat of violence, physical violence or theft/stolen property.

**Table 7. Location of Incidents**

Location	Number of Reports
Academic building	7
Online	5
Information not disclosed	2
Administrative building	1
Off-campus location on university affiliated business	1
Co-curricular building	1
Other	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

Table 7 represents the 18 locations identified in bias incident reports. The figures do not include reports made by individuals about the same incident. The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity did not receive any reports pertaining to incidents at the following locations: athletic buildings, dining halls, libraries, parking garages, residential halls or study abroad.

## Conclusion

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The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity is committed to ensuring Brown University continues to work toward “sustaining a campus culture in which each individual’s humanity and dignity are acknowledged.”<sup>5</sup> Data collected via the bias incidents reporting system will inform future initiatives and serve as a barometer for campus climate.

<sup>5</sup> Brown University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), 2016



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