



Cornell University

FY19 REPORTING BIAS SYSTEM ANNUAL REPORT

Summary of Activity July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

Executive Summary

Commitment to Inclusion

A diverse community includes everyone and is the foundation for the meaningful exploration and exchange of ideas. Since its founding, Cornell University has encouraged a culture that provides for the full participation of all members of our campus community—this keeps us at the leading edge in education and in our fields and practices. Cornell University is a place where intercultural skills are developed and enacted among diverse campus constituencies, with community partners, and within the classroom and workplace.

The University remains committed to implementing strategies and systems to appropriately address bias on campus. Throughout the fiscal year, the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity engages those involved in the bias reporting process—including the Bias Assessment and Review Team (BART) members and the constituent assemblies—to gather feedback, to propose structural and procedural changes to the Reporting Bias System, and to make recommendations on programs, policies, and ongoing educational interventions.

Under Cornell's specific definition, a bias incident is action taken that one could reasonably and prudently conclude is motivated, in whole or in part, by the alleged offender's bias against an actual or perceived aspect of diversity, including, but not limited to age, ancestry or ethnicity, color, creed, disability, gender, gender identity or expression, height, immigration or citizenship status, marital status, race, religion, religious practice, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or weight. Bias activity within the purview of this system does not constitute discrimination or harassment as those terms are defined in Policy 6.4. Cornell utilizes its Reporting Bias System to track and address – on a case by case basis depending on the unique information provided by a reporter – bias incidents in which the persons are known, unknown, or may not be readily identifiable.

FY19 Snapshot

FY19 refers to the period of time from July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. During FY19, we continued a thoughtful and thorough review of the processes, definitions, terminology, and categorizations used in our approach to handling bias incident reports -- a process we initiated in FY18 in response to the recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on Campus Climate. As a result of this internal review, we have made extensive changes in order to refine and improve the reporting function. FY19 data is more detailed, specific, and uniformly categorized than in past years. Although this recategorization limits the ways in which we can compare FY19 data to that of years past, it will enable us, moving forward, to offer a more precise means of tracking trends in bias reporting over time.

Beginning in FY19, all bias reports were first classified into the primary categories of bias motivated speech, bias motivated expression, and bias motivated conduct¹. A fourth category, non-bias incidents, refers to reports of inappropriate speech, expression, and/or conduct which were not based upon an identity or personal characteristic included in the definition of bias activity. Reports of alleged violations of Policy 6.4 (Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Related Misconduct) were forwarded to the appropriate office for intake, assessment, and investigation as warranted. As a result of reorganization of responsibilities that occurred during the relevant time period, such reports were referred to either the Office of Title IX or Workforce Policy and Labor Relations. These incidents are not included in this report.

- **Bias Motivated Speech** is defined as verbal/orally communicated ideas that can be reasonably understood as biased (words said in person, in conversation, in digital form, printed). This includes, but is not limited to: verbal attacks; language or speech that perpetuates a stereotype; or use of a slur/epithet.
- **Bias Motivated Expression** is defined as the use of signs, symbols or artifacts that communicate bias. This may include, but is not limited to, drawings, graffiti, words written in permanent or temporary form, use of costumes, cultural or ethnic based visual expressions. Bias motivated expression includes, but is not limited to: use of a slur/epithet (in one of the above forms); expression that perpetuates a stereotype; vandalism; destruction of property; or graffiti.
- **Bias Motivated Conduct** is defined as physical acts or behaviors with components of bias speech or expression (violent behavior, aggressive or persistent interactions). This includes, but is not limited to: intimidation; verbal attack; physical assault; physical attack; or retaliation.

During FY19, 136 reports of bias were received, referencing 123 unique incidents. Both the number of reports and unique incidents are lower than in FY18, when there were 186 reports referencing 178 unique incidents. Because of the revised definitions referenced above, it is not possible to compare FY18 and FY19 reporting figures with complete accuracy. Beginning in FY20, and referencing the FY19 data, we will be able to more accurately track changes and patterns in numbers of reports and numbers of unique incidents.

Fifty-four incidents were recorded as bias motivated speech. Forty-four of these involved the use of slur/epithet, and 40 involved the perpetuation of a stereotype². Forty-seven incidents were recorded as bias motivated conduct, with the majority of these (28) involving unfair treatment. Eighteen incidents were recorded as bias motivated expression, of which 14

¹ Some reports were classified as two or more types of bias, e.g. Bias Motivated Speech and Bias Motivated Conduct.

² Each incident may include one or more types of bias motivated speech, conduct, and/or expression – for example, one unique incident could include both use of a slur and the perpetuation of a stereotype (two types of bias motivated speech) as well as verbal attack (bias motivated conduct).

involved the use of a derogatory symbol or image; and 26 were categorized as non-bias incidents. **Table 1** provides a breakdown of FY19 reports by type of bias.

In FY19, the most frequently reported basis of bias was ethnicity, mentioned in 86 incidents.³ The second most frequently reported basis of bias was race/color, mentioned in 60 incidents. Other frequently reported bases of bias included gender/gender identity/gender expression (mentioned in 32 incidents); religion (mentioned in 19 incidents); and national origin (mentioned in 18 incidents). **Table 2** provides a breakdown of FY19 reports by basis of bias.

Table 3 shows the detailed breakdown of FY19 reports by both type of bias and basis of bias.

Table 1: Breakdown of All Reports by Type of Bias

Type of Bias	Number of Incidents*
Bias Motivated Speech	
Use of Slur/Epithet	44
Perpetuates Stereotype	40
Other Bias Motivated Speech	11
Bias Motivated Conduct	
Unfair Treatment	28
Perpetuates Stereotype	17
Verbal Attack	13
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	4
Damage or Destruction of Property	4
Graffiti	3
Other Bias Motivated Conduct	24
Bias Motivated Expression	
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	14
Graffiti	8
Use of Slur/Epithet	6
Perpetuates Stereotype	4
Other Bias Motivated Expression	1
Non-Bias Incident	26

*incidents are not mutually exclusive

³ Each unique incident may include one or more factors as the basis of bias.

Table 2: Breakdown of All Reports by Basis of Bias:

Basis of Bias	Number of Incidents*
Based on Ethnicity	86
Based on Race/Color	60
Based on Gender	29
Based on Religion	19
Based on National Origin	18
Based on Sexual Orientation	11
Based on Gender Identity or Expression	3
Based on Age	2
Based on Disability	1
Based on Other	2

*incidents are not mutually exclusive

Table 3: Detail of Reports by Type of Bias and Basis of Bias

	Based on Age	Based on Disability	Based on Ethnicity	Based on Gender	Based on Gender Identity or Expression	Based on National Origin	Based on Race/Color	Based on Religion/Creed	Based on Sexual Orientation	Based on General Climate	Based on Other	Subtotal
Bias Motivated Speech												
Perpetuates Stereotype	0	0	13	7	1	5	11	1	1	0	1	40
Use of Slur/Epithet	0	0	24	4	0	6	18	1	6	1	0	42
Other Bias Motivated Speech	0	0	4	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	11
Subtotal	0	0	41	13	2	11	31	3	8	1	1	
Bias Motivated Conduct												
Damage or Destruction of Property	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	4
Graffiti	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3
Perpetuates Stereotype	1	0	4	5	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	17
Unfair Treatment	1	0	11	3	0	1	10	1	0	1	0	28
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
Verbal Attack	0	0	4	1	0	2	4	0	1	1	0	13
Other Bias Motivated Conduct	0	1	8	4	0	1	4	3	0	2	1	22
Subtotal	2	1	31	14	1	7	22	7	3	4	1	
Bias Motivated Expression												
Graffiti	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	8
Perpetuates Stereotype	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	0	0	6	0	0	0	1	6	0	1	0	14
Use of Slur/Epithet	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	6
Other Bias Motivated Expression	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Subtotal	0	0	14	2	0	0	7	9	0	1	0	

Table 4 compares the basis of bias in reported in FY19 with FY18⁴. The total number of incidents based on Ethnicity and Race/Color is similar in both years, with 146 incidents reported in FY19 and 144 incidents reported in FY18. More gender-based incidents were reported in FY19 (29) than in FY18 (18), while fewer religion-based incidents (19) were reported in FY19 (19) than in FY18 (31).

Table 4: Comparison of Basis of Bias FY19 and FY18

Basis of Bias	Number of Incidents FY19	Number of Incidents FY18
Based on Ethnicity	86	66
Based on Race/Color	60	78
Based on Gender	29	18
Based on Religion	19	31
Based on National Origin	18	25
Based on Sexual Orientation	11	12
Based on Gender Identity or Expression	3	9
Based on Age	2	4
Based on Disability	1	12
Based on Other	1	6

Because of the reclassification of types of biases in FY19, it is not possible to compare reports by type of bias across the two fiscal years.

In FY19, 61 unique incidents involved only students and 62 involved Cornell faculty and/or staff⁵. The percentage of FY19 incidents involving faculty and/or staff (50%) was slightly lower than the percentage of FY18 incidents involving faculty and/or staff (56%); however, some or all of this difference may be the result of limiting reports to bias activity and excluding alleged violations of Policy 6.4 – all of which were forwarded to the appropriate offices – from the FY19 bias report.

Fifty-eight percent of incidents (72 unique incidents) occurred on campus; 12% (15 incidents) took place off campus; and 17% (21 incidents) took place via phone call, text, email, or social media. The location of eight incidents is recorded as Other, meaning the incident was reported as having occurred in multiple locations or with a non-specific location such as “bus stop” or “sidewalk,” etc. The location of an additional seven incidents is recorded as Unknown.

⁴ Incidents are not mutually exclusive; in both FY18 and FY19 incident totals are greater than report totals because reports may include more than one basis of bias.

⁵ Reports involving only students are forwarded to the Bias Assessment and Review Team (BART); all other reports are forwarded to the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity (DIWD).

Table 5 presents an overview of Bias Incidents by Location.

Table 5: Overview of Bias Incidents by Location

Location	Number of Incidents	Percentage of Incidents
Academic Building	37	30%
Residence Hall	24	20%
Computer -- Physical Location Unknown	16	13%
Off Campus	13	11%
Campus -- Other	11	9%
Phone Based	5	4%
Off Campus Cornell Workplace	2	2%
Other	8	6%
Unknown	7	5%
TOTAL	123	100%

Reporting Bias, Discrimination & Harassment

What is Tracked and Why?

The Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity is responsible for collecting and tracking all reported bias activity occurring at Cornell University that could potentially impact our commitment to diversity and inclusion – including all reports made by faculty, staff, students, and visitors to the Ithaca, Geneva, Weill Cornell Medicine, and Cornell Tech campuses – to the Department of Inclusion and Workforce Diversity (DIWD) and the Bias Assessment and Review Team (BART).

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) requires universities to annually disclose crime statistics, including bias-related hate crimes. This information can be found in the Annual Security Report: <https://www.cupolice.cornell.edu/>.

The Cornell Office of the Title IX Coordinator compiles data on reports of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. The Office publishes an annual statistical summary, which are anonymized consistent with applicable privacy provisions. This summary and other information is available at <http://titleix.cornell.edu/statistics/> and is not included in this report.

Reporting an Incident

Reporting bias and the resulting efforts to understand and prevent bias activity are a matter of taking part in a caring community. Anyone who directly witnesses or experiences bias activity on the Cornell campus or in an area that impacts the Cornell community should intervene in the moment as appropriate (e.g., contact Cornell Police at 911, if a crime is in progress, or interrupt the behavior in as much as the observer feels skilled and safe), and be sure to also report the incident as soon as possible.

To report an incident, individuals can use one of the following methods:

- By submitting an incident report online at <https://www.biasconcerns.cornell.edu/>
- By contacting the Department of Inclusion & Workforce Diversity at (607) 255-3976
- By consulting with a Discrimination & Harassment Advisor at <https://www.hr.cornell.edu/diversity/reporting/>
- By contacting the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD) at (607) 255-1111 or 911 for emergency assistance.

Please note that all activity reported may not rise to the level of a bias-related hate crime, a violation of Policy 6.4 or other actionable event. Reports are reviewed and referred to the most appropriate office for follow up. The University does, however, take appropriate steps that are available given the nature and content of the information provided to address reports received, including, when able and appropriate, anonymous reports.

At times, cases that include components of bias but may also violate the Code of Conduct or are incidents of sexual misconduct are documented as bias incidents and referred to the appropriate office for adjudication.

Bias Assessment & Review Team (BART)

To facilitate the assessment of bias incidents, reported incidents involving only students are routed to the Bias Assessment & Review Team (BART) – the coordinating hub of a network of campus liaisons from across the university. The BART team may refer reports to the appropriate university unit – such as Cornell University Police Department, Title IX, the Judicial Administrator, or a campus partner who may be more appropriate to address the matter.

For questions or additional information, contact us:

Department of Inclusion & Workforce Diversity

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(607) 255-3976

<https://diversity.cornell.edu/department-inclusion-and-workforce-diversity>

<https://www.diversity.cornell.edu>

Division of Human Resources

<https://www.hr.cornell.edu>