FY24 REPORTING BIAS SYSTEM ANNUAL REPORT

Summary of Activity July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

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. Under Cornell's specific definition, a bias incident is action 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 membership in a protected class, as defined in Policy 6.4 (Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Related Misconduct). Bias activity within the purview of this system does not rise to the level of 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.

Reporting Bias, Discrimination & Harassment

What is Tracked and Why?

Cornell University collects and tracks all reported bias activity occurring in our education programs and activities that could potentially impact our commitment to diversity and inclusion – including all reports made by faculty, staff, students, and visitors to the Ithaca, Geneva, and Cornell Tech campuses. Bias reports involving employees are routed to the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX (OIETIX), and bias reports involving only students are routed to BART.[1]

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/campus-watch/annual-security-report/.

The OIETIX compiles data on reports of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as well as prohibited discrimination and protected-status harassment. The Office publishes an annual statistical summary, which is 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:

- Submit an incident report online at https://cornell.guardianconduct.com/incident-reporting
- Contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX (OIETIX) at equity@cornell.edu
- Contact the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD) at (607) 255-1111 or 911 for emergency assistance.

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[1] Bias reports arising out of conduct occurring at Weill Cornell Medicine are reported to the Weill Cornell Medicine Office of Institutional Equity.

To facilitate the assessment of bias incidents, reported incidents involving only students are routed to BART – the coordinating hub of a network of campus liaisons from across the university. BART may refer reports to the appropriate university unit – such as the Cornell University Police Department, the OIETIX, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (OSCCS), or a campus partner who may be more appropriate to address the matter. Cases that include components of bias, but may also violate the Student Code of Conduct or are incidents of sexual misconduct are referred to the appropriate office to address.

For all reports containing contact information, a member of the OIETIX team (for bias reports involving staff and/or faculty) or a member of BART (for bias reports involving students only) will contact the reporter to confirm receipt and offer the opportunity to discuss the incident further and/or provide additional support or referral to resources. For bias reports in which the reporter chooses to remain anonymous, the incident will be documented and used to consider future community education and programming. The accused may be contacted depending on the nature and extent of information provided in the report.

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.

FY24 Snapshot[2]

Classifications and Definitions

All reports made via the Reporting Bias System are initially assessed to determine whether the alleged conduct, as reported, constitutes a potential Policy 6.4 violation or potential violation of another University policy.[3] If reported conduct does not rise to the level of a Policy 6.4 violation, it is then classified into the primary categories of Bias Motivated Speech, Bias Motivated Expression, and Bias Motivated Conduct.[4] A fourth category, non-bias incidents, refers to reports of inappropriate speech, expression, and/or conduct that are not based upon an identity or personal characteristic included in the definition of bias activity, along with reports that are unrelated to bias, discrimination, or harassment. Reports of alleged violations of Policy 6.4 (Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Related Misconduct) are assessed by the Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX (OIETIX), and as warranted, investigated under the applicable procedures or forwarded to another appropriate office, such as Human Resources, for resolution. These incidents are not included in this report.

In FY22 the OIETIX and Bias Assessment and Review (BART) Teams partnered to make procedural changes in the classification of bias incidents – specifically updating the sub-categories within each primary category.[5] As a result of that partnership, the following definitions of types of bias were adopted:

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) and includes the following behaviors:
- Verbal attacks
- Language or speech that perpetuates a stereotype
- Use of slur/epithet (in one of the above forms)
- Microaggression[6] (also can be used to capture micro-assaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations)
- Other

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[2] FY24 refers to the period of time from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

[3] Incidents that are potentially violations of other University policies are referred to the appropriate office. For instance, reports concerning research misconduct are referred to the Office of Research Integrity.

[4] Some reports are classified as two or more types of bias, e.g., Bias Motivated Speech and Bias Motivated Conduct.

[5] These changes included adding "microaggression (which includes micro-assaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations)" as a sub-category of bias motivated speech, bias motivated expression, and bias motivated conduct; adding sub-categories of "physical assault" and "physical attack" to bias motivated conduct, while removing sub-categories "use of derogatory symbol or image," damage/destruction of property," and "perpetuates stereotype" as forms of bias motivated conduct (these were, however, maintained as subcategories of bias motivated expression and bias motivated speech); removing the sub-category "unfair treatment" from bias motivated speech and bias motivated expression; and combining the sub-categories "use of derogatory symbol or Image," "damage/destruction of property," and "graffiti" into the sub-category "vandalism" within bias motivated expression.

[6] A microaggression is a verbal, behavioral or environmental slight, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicates hostile, derogatory, or negative attitudes toward a person, because of that person's membership in a protected class.

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, use of costumes, cultural or ethnic-based visual expressions, and includes the following behaviors:

- Use of slur/epithet (in one of the above forms)
- An expression that perpetuates a stereotype
- Vandalism (destruction of property or graffiti)
- Microaggression (also can be used to capture micro-assaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations)
- Other

Bias Motivated Conduct is defined as physical acts or behaviors with components of bias speech or expression (violent behavior, aggressive or persistent interactions) and includes the following behaviors:

- Intimidation
- Verbal attack
- Physical assault
- Physical attack
- Microaggression (also can be used to capture micro-assaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations)
- Other

Non-Bias Incident refers to reports of inappropriate speech, expression, and/or conduct that were not based upon an identity or personal characteristic included in the definition of bias activity along with reports wholly unrelated to bias, discrimination, and/or harassment.

Data

During FY24, a total of 421 reports were submitted via the Reporting Bias System pertaining to incidents that took place between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024. Seven incidents prior to July 1, 2023 were also reported. While all seven reports were addressed by the appropriate review team in FY24, they have been excluded from the primary *numerical* analysis, and are detailed separately in an appendix to this report.

Of the 421 total reports made, 129 reports, referencing 116 unique incidents occurring in FY24, were determined to be non-bias incidents. Some of these were re-classified as potential [Student Code of Conduct](#) violations.[7] Others did not meet the definition of bias, because the incident reported was not based upon an actual or perceived aspect of diversity. A few incidents were related to events at other institutions with no reports of any impact on the Cornell community. Lastly, several reports were wholly unrelated to bias or diversity and appeared to be spam messages.

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[7] For instance, reports of physical threats made by students based on the protected status of their potential victims are typically handled through the Student Code of Conduct and related [Procedures](#).

Of the 421 reports made, 293 reports were determined to reference 216 unique bias incidents.[8] This represents a 69% increase in incidents from FY23, and more than a 90% increase from FY22, FY21, and FY20.[9]

Of the 216 unique bias incidents, 97 involved only students and were handled by BART. The remaining 119 unique bias incidents involved employees and were handled by OIETIX.

Table 1 shows the percentage increase/decrease in reports of bias incidents over each of the past five fiscal years. **Chart 1** shows the number of bias incidents per fiscal year beginning in FY20.

Table 1: Percentage Increase/Decrease in Unique Bias Incidents Per Fiscal Year

	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Number of unique bias incidents	109	112	104	128	216
Percentage increase or decrease from previous year		+2.7%	-7.1%	**+23.1%**	**+68.8%**

Chart 1: Numerical Increase in FY24 Unique Bias Incidents as Compared with Prior Years

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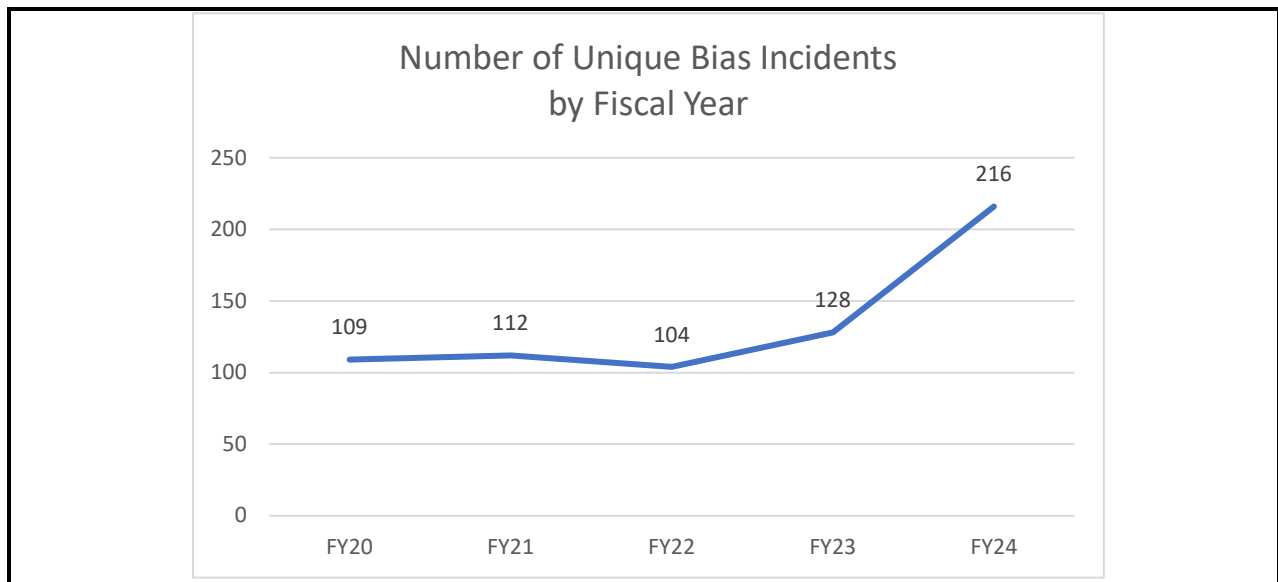
[8] More than 25% of the 293 reports (a total of 77 reports) were duplicate reports of one singular incident. One incident was reported 23 times. Two incidents were reported 8 times; 1 incident was reported 7 times; 1 incident was reported 6 times; 2 incidents were reported 5 times; 2 incidents were reported 3 times; and 18 incidents were reported twice.

[9] Note that 47 unique incidents filed in FY24 specifically referenced antisemitism. Two of these incidents occurred between July 1 and October 6, 2023. The remaining 45 occurred between October 7, 2023 and June 30, 2024. An additional 9 unique incidents referenced Islamophobia. All 9 of these incidents occurred between October 7, 2023 and June 30, 2024.

Classification of Unique Bias Incidents in FY24

Table 2 provides a breakdown of FY24 incidents by classification of bias. Incidents are further subdivided based upon whether the report was routed to BART or OIETIX.

Table 2: FY24 Breakdown of Unique Incidents by Classification of Bias*

Classification of Bias	Number of Incidents Reported to BART	Number of Incidents Reported to OIETIX	Total Number of Incidents Reported
Bias Motivated Speech Total	**68**	**65**	**133**
Microaggression	15	29	44
Verbal Attack	25	12	37
Language or Speech that Perpetuates a Stereotype	11	17	28
Use of Slur/Epithet	16	7	23
Other	3	0	3
Bias Motivated Expression Total	**12**	**26**	**38**
Vandalism (Destruction of Property or Graffiti)	9	8	17
Expression that Perpetuates Stereotype	3	11	14
Microaggression	0	4	4
Use of Slur/Epithet	0	3	3
Bias Motivated Conduct Total	**22**	**29**	**51**
Microaggression	6	17	23
Intimidation	0	10	10
Verbal Attack	6	1	7
Physical attack	2	1	3
Physical Assault	1	0	1
Other	7	0	7

*Incidents are not mutually exclusive, and one report may contain more than one classification of bias. Therefore, the number of reports (column totals) is sometimes smaller than the sum of the incident types contained within.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of incidents by classification for each of the past five fiscal years. In FY24, the category of Bias Motivated Speech shows an increase in number of cases compared to the previous four years and continues to trend upward. Within this category, there is a notable increase in incidents classified as verbal attacks. Within the category Bias Motivated Expression, there is an increase in cases in the subcategory vandalism, and within the category Bias Motivated Conduct, there is an increase in cases in the subcategory intimidation.

Table 3: Breakdown of Unique Bias Incidents by Classification FY20 through FY24[10]

Classification of Bias	FY20 Number of Incidents*	FY21 Number of Incidents*	FY22 Number of Incidents*	FY23 Number of Incidents*	FY24 Number of Incidents*
Bias Motivated Speech	**76**	**82**	**75**	**92**	**133**
Microaggression	N/A	N/A	14	53	44
Verbal Attack	1	2	8	10	37
Language or Speech that Perpetuates Stereotype	31	48	43	18	28
Use of Slur/Epithet	27	21	6	19	23
Other Bias Motivated Speech	15	10	4	0	3
Bias Motivated Expression	**25**	**14**	**22**	**19**	**38**
Vandalism (Destruction of Property or Graffiti)	N/A	N/A	4	4	17
Expression that Perpetuates Stereotype	4	6	10	6	14
Microaggression	N/A	N/A	5	7	4
Use of Slur/Epithet	4	1	3	4	3
Graffiti	7	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Damage/Destruction of Property	5	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vandalism	0	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	4	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Bias Motivated Expression	1	0	0	0	0
Bias Motivated Conduct	**38**	**42**	**15**	**26**	**51**
Microaggression	N/A	N/A	7	17	23
Intimidation	0	2	0	0	10
Verbal Attack	3	5	1	7	7
Physical Attack	N/A	N/A	0	1	3
Physical Assault	N/A	N/A	2	1	1
Unfair Treatment	8	12	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vandalism	0	5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Perpetuates Stereotype	6	5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Use of Slur/Epithet	2	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Damage or Destruction of Property	1	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Use of Derogatory Symbol or Image	0	3	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graffiti	3	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Bias Motivated Conduct	15	4	5	0	7

*Incidents are not mutually exclusive.

[10] Each unique incident may include one or more types of bias.

Basis of Bias

In FY24 the most frequently reported basis of bias was ethnic and national origin, mentioned in 67 incidents.[11] Religion was mentioned in 65 incidents, and race was mentioned 62 incidents. Other frequently reported bases of bias included sex/gender (mentioned in 29 incidents); actual or perceived disability (mentioned in 18 incidents); gender identity or expression (mentioned in 13 incidents); and sexual orientation (mentioned in 11 incidents). **Table 4** provides a breakdown of FY24 reports by basis of bias, and **Table 5** compares incidents with those from FY20, FY21, FY22, and FY23.

Table 4: FY24 Breakdown of All Unique Incidents by Basis of Bias

Basis of Bias*	FY24 Number of Incidents Reported to BART	FY24 Number of Incidents Reported to OIETIX	FY24 Total Number of Incidents Reported
Ethnic and National Origin	39	28	67
Religion/Creed	37	28	65
Race/Color	30	32	62
Sex/Gender	11	18	29
Actual or Perceived Disability	9	9	18
Gender Identity or Expression	9	4	13
Sexual Orientation	6	5	11
Age	1	4	5
Socioeconomic Status	1	1	2
Immigration or Citizenship Status	0	1	1
Weight	0	0	0
Military or Veteran Status	0	0	0
Familial Status	0	0	0
Pregnancy or Pregnancy Related Conditions	0	0	0

*Incidents are not mutually exclusive.

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[11] Each unique incident may include one or more factors as the basis of bias.

Table 5: Breakdown of Bias Incidents by Basis of Bias FY20 – FY24

Basis of Bias	FY20 Number of Incidents*	FY21 Number of Incidents*	FY22 Number of Incidents*	FY23 Number of Incidents*	FY24 Number of Incidents*
Ethnic and National Origin	N/A	N/A	N/A	30**	67
Ethnicity	54	26	18**	N/A	N/A**
National Origin	5	1	12**	N/A	N/A**
Religion/Creed	13	14	13	17	65
Race/Color	63	71	49	40	62
Sex/Gender	12	15	17	30	29
Actual or Perceived Disability	4	5	3	16	18
Gender Identity or Expression	4	6	9	2	13
Sexual Orientation	11	3	6	18	11
Age	0	0	1	1	5
Socioeconomic Status	2	2	2	2	2
Immigration or Citizenship Status	1	0	1	11	1
Weight	0	1	1	3	0
Military or Veteran Status	0	1	0	2	0
Marital Status/Family Status	0	0	1	2	0
Pregnancy or Pregnancy Relation Conditions	0	0	0	1	0
Other/Unknown	1	3	7	0	0

*Incidents are not mutually exclusive.
** In FY23, the categories of Ethnicity and National Origin were combined into one category, Ethnic and National Origin.

Incidents of bias based on ethnic and national origin, race/color, and religion/creed were all notably higher in FY24 than in FY23. While higher than in FY22 and FY23, the number of incidents based on race/color is comparable to those in FY20 and FY21. However, the number of incidents based on ethnicity and national origin is more than double that of each of the four previous years, and the number of incidents based on religion/creed is four to five times higher than in FY20 – FY22, and more than three times higher than in FY23. Some individuals with a shared religious background may also have a shared ethnic or national origin and may choose to report incidents of bias under religion, ethnic or national origin, or both. Therefore, this report contains a small level of imprecision in the number of incidents definitively based on religion and the number of incidents definitively based on ethnic and national origin. **Chart 2** (next page) illustrates the fluctuation in number of bias incidents within each of these three categories.

Chart 2: Fluctuation in the Number of Bias Incidents Based on Ethnic and National Origin, Race, and Religion FY20 – FY24
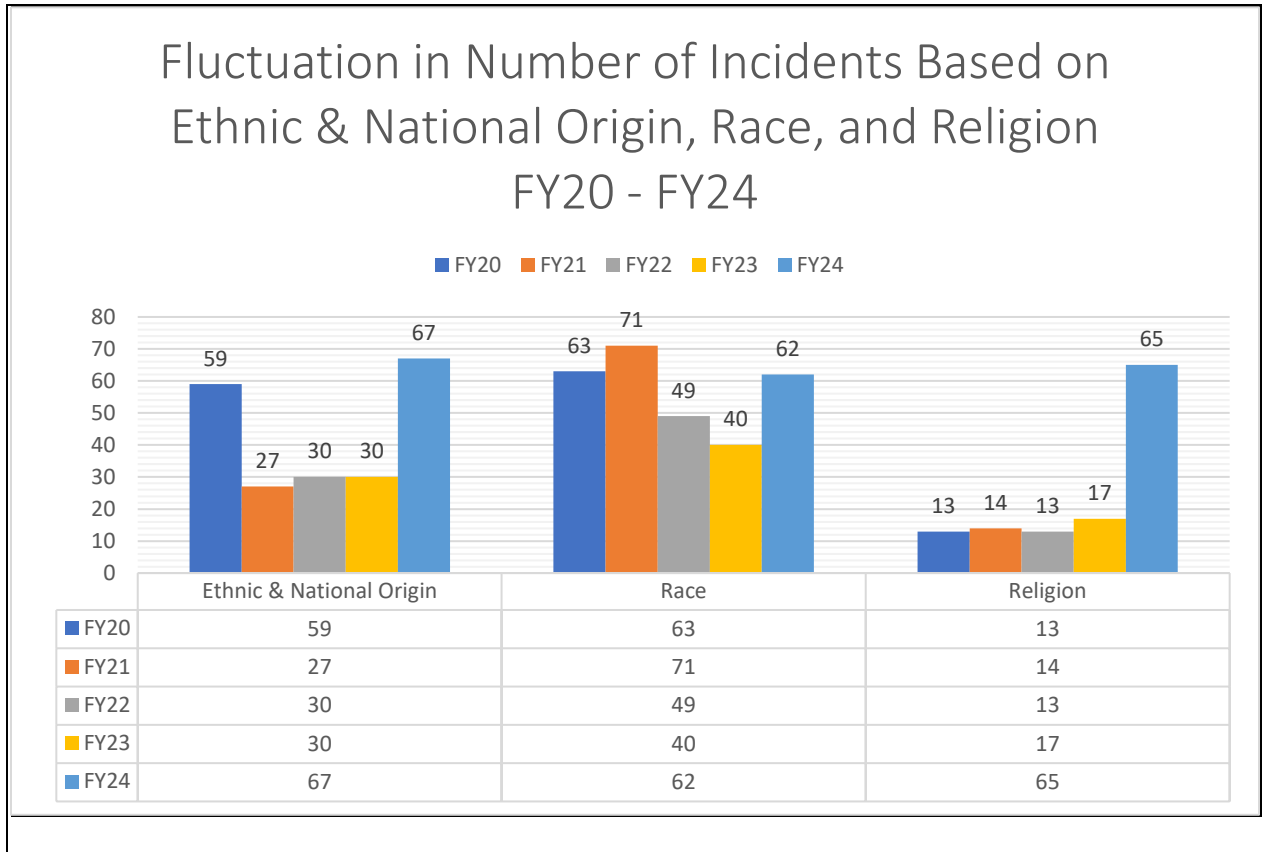
Fluctuation in Number of Incidents Based on Ethnic & National Origin, Race, and Religion FY20 - FY24

Legend: ■ FY20 ■ FY21 ■ FY22 ■ FY23 ■ FY24

	Ethnic & National Origin	Race	Religion
■ FY20	59	63	13
■ FY21	27	71	14
■ FY22	30	49	13
■ FY23	30	40	17
■ FY24	67	62	65

Table 6 shows the detailed breakdown of FY24 reports by both categories of bias and basis of bias. <u>Row and column totals in Table 6 are sometimes greater than the total for each classification of bias presented in Table 2 and the total for each basis of bias presented in Table 4. Because events are not mutually exclusive, one incident of bias may have more than one basis, and/or one incident of bias may be made up of more than one classification of bias.</u> For example, one incident of Bias Motivated Speech/Perpetuates Stereotype may be based on both gender and race, or one incident of Bias Based on Race may include both the use of a stereotype and a slur.

Table 6: FY24 Detail of Reports by Categories of Bias and Basis of Bias

	Race/ Color	Ethnic and National Origin	Sex/ Gender	Sexual Orientation	Religion	Actual or Perceived Disability	Immigration or Citizenship Status	Gender Identity or Expression	Socio-Economic Status	Age	Subtotal
Bias Motivated Speech											
Microaggression	17	11	6	2	4	7	0	3	1	1	52
Use of Slur/Epithet	11	6	4	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	33
Perpetuates Stereotype	6	11	7	2	7	3	0	1	0	0	37
Verbal Attack	10	19	2	1	12	2	0	4	0	0	50
Other	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	6
Subtotal	44	48	20	9	31	15	0	8	1	2	
Bias Motivated Expression											
Microaggression	0	1	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	5
Perpetuates Stereotype	5	4	3	0	4	0	0	0	1	1	18
Use of Slur/Epithet	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	6
Vandalism	2	6	0	0	9	0	0	2	0	0	19
Subtotal	9	12	4	0	18	0	0	2	1	1	
Bias Motivated Conduct											
Microaggression	7	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	0	1	25
Verbal Attack	1	2	2	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	12
Physical Assault	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Physical Attack	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3
Intimidation	2	3	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	10
Other	3	2	0	1	4	1	0	0	1	0	12
Subtotal	13	11	6	3	18	5	1	3	1	2	

Location of Bias Incidents

In FY24, 118 bias incidents (55% of all incidents) were reported to have taken place in academic/other Cornell University buildings; 22 incidents took place in Cornell housing (including co-ops and Greek life housing); 17 incidents took place outdoors on the Cornell campus; 31 incidents took place via electronic communication; 10 incidents occurred outside of Cornell, either nationally (4) or internationally (6); 5 incidents took place via phone call/text; 3 incident took place at Cornell Tech; and 10 incidents are recorded as Other or Unknown, meaning the incident was reported as having occurred in multiple locations or with a non-specific location such as "bus stop," or was recorded as "unknown."

Table 7 provides a breakdown of incidents by location. Location of incidents are further subdivided based upon whether the report was investigated by BART or OIETIX. **Table 8** compares the percentage of incidents per location over the past five fiscal years.

Table 7: Bias Incidents by Location

Incident Location	Number of Incidents Reported to BART	Number of Incidents Reported to OIETIX	Total Number of Incidents Reported
Academic/Other Building	39	79	118
Electronic Communication	19	12	31
Cornell Housing	17	5	22
Campus Outdoor/Other	10	7	17
Off Campus	6	4	10
Phone	4	1	5
Cornell Tech	0	3	3
Other/Unknown	2	3	5
Unknown	0	5	5

Table 8: Overview of Bias Incidents by Location 5 Year Comparison

Location	FY20 Percentage of Incidents	FY21 Percentage of Incidents	FY22 Percentage of Incidents	FY23 Percentage of Incidents	FY24 Percentage of Incidents
Academic/Other Building	38%	14%*	31%	41%	55%
Electronic Communication	23%	60%*	34%	17%	14%
Cornell Housing	17%	15%	17%	23%	10%
Campus Outdoor/Other	4%	<1%	4%	0%	8%
Off Campus	11%	8%	7%	7%	5%
Phone/Text	<1%	<1%	2%	2%	2%
Cornell Tech	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Other/Unknown/Multiple Locations	6%	3%	5%	11%	5%

*In FY21 the percentage of incidents taking place in academic and other on-campus buildings dropped, and the percentage of incidents occurring via electronic communications surged, in large part due to the impact of COVID 19 on in person communication.

Appendix: Bias Incidents Reported in FY24 which Occurred Prior to FY24

Seven reports made in FY24 referenced bias incidents that occurred prior to FY24. One incident took place in FY88; one took place in FY02; one took place in FY09; one took place in FY18; and the remaining three took place in FY23. While these seven reports were addressed by the appropriate review team in FY24, they have been excluded from the primary *numerical* analysis this report.

Three of the seven reports were classified as non-bias incidents. Of the four reports classified as bias incidents, one involved only students while the remaining three involved Cornell employees and/or groups. Three of the four incidents occurring prior to FY24 involved bias motivated speech; one involved bias motivated conduct.

One of the four bias incidents occurring prior to FY24 was based on race; one was based on religion; and two were based on actual or perceived disabilities.

For questions or additional information, contact us:

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