

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMPLAINT RESPONSE GUIDELINES

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion (“ODI”) is dedicated to helping create and maintain an environment where all members of the community are valued and can thrive. ODI’s mission is to advance Pitt’s efforts to embed diversity and inclusion as a transformational force in academic excellence and professional growth through education, the celebration of diversity and the fair and objective response to complaints and issues. These guidelines address the last part of the mission – the fair and objective response to complaints and issues.

GENERAL COMPLAINT RESPONSE PRACTICES

I. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT COMPLAINTS

All sexual misconduct complaints are handled pursuant to University Policy and Procedure 06-05-01 and the Title IX related guidelines and practices.

II. OTHER DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS

Individual or group complaints involving non-sex based discrimination or harassment are subject to University Policy and Procedure 07-01-03 and the related guidelines and practices.

III. INSTITUTIONAL COMPLAINTS

Complaints or issues are sometimes raised that impact the greater University community and are not subject to other University policies and procedures (e.g., concerns about the University’s commemoration of history that directly implicate its core mission and values). Such complaints can relate to, among other things, traditions, structures, images, honorifics, program and building names, and other emblems, all of which are powerful symbols of the institution’s history and values. Institutional concerns require thoughtful consideration and expertise, as well as provide an opportunity to examine our past, learn from it, and heal as a community. Grounded in its dedication to scholarship and academic excellence and institutional values of equity, diversity and inclusion, the University commits to analyzing these complex and important institutional concerns when they arise with a full and principled approach, as set forth below.

GUIDELINES FOR INSTITUTIONAL COMPLAINTS

I. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines provide a framework for the thoughtful, thorough and historically accurate exploration of institutional concerns. Please note that each institutional concern may be unique, requiring a tailored response; however, these guidelines are not exhaustive, and may be adapted. In instances where the University’s core values and principles are in conflict with a specific concern, it will be tasked with weighing them carefully.

When an institutional concern is raised that states sufficient grounds exists to demonstrate an issue or circumstance that may be inconsistent with the University's mission to create an inclusive, diverse and equitable environment, an ODI Review Committee will be formed. The committee will be chaired by the Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion and its members appointed by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement to represent the broad interests of the University community. Generally, some committee members will be selected based on their expertise in areas (e.g., historical interpretation, University history and/or relevant subject matter expertise), but others can be selected to serve as a representative from a specific department (e.g., the University or Health Sciences Library System – to aid with research, the Office of the Provost, Vice Chancellor of Communications, Vice Chancellor for Governmental Relations, etc.).

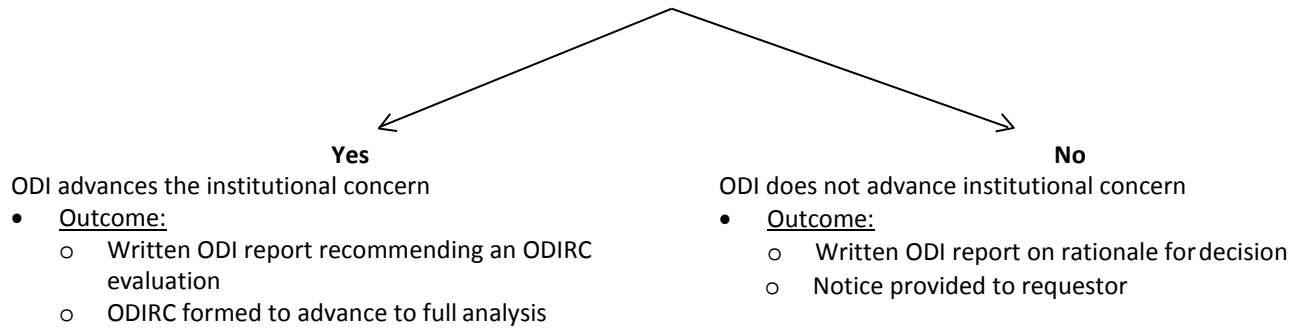
Student, staff and faculty representatives will be nominated by Senate Council, and additional members will be appointed as needed and on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement.

II. PROCESS

Step 1. Institutional Concern Submission

Concern submitted to ODI

- Any community member may submit a concern, cannot be anonymous
- Concern submission must include:
 - Narrative explaining basis for concern
 - Citation to references
 - Attachments to support concern and remedy sought
- ODI assesses whether the concern is institutional in nature and whether it is subject to another process. If:



Step 2. Full evaluation of Institutional concern by full ODIRC

Where a concern is moved forward: The ODIRC will fully analyze the institutional concern in light of the University's values and mission. Following research, debate, community engagement and analysis, but within 60 days, the ODIRC will take a vote on whether the concern is justified, and will draft a report and recommendation ("R&R"). The R&R must be on behalf of the majority of the Committee, and does not need to be unanimous.

- Outcome:
 - R&R sent to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement
 - Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement reviews the R&R
 - Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement may send the R&R back to ODIRC, seeking clarification, further review or research, etc.
 - Senior Vice Chancellor for Engagement, when review is complete, forwards the R&R to the Chancellor or Board of Trustees for a final decision.
 - Final R&R published

Step 3. Chancellor/Board decision

Actions: The Chancellor (or the Board of Trustees if required by the University Bylaws) reviews the R&R, and any dissenting opinions, as well as any related evidence or documentation. The Chancellor (or Board) may confer further with the ODIRC, subject matter experts, the Office of University Counsel and any others. The Chancellor (or Board) makes the final decision and may accept, reject or modify the R&R. Decision is publicized and effectuated.