

Introduction

As a community, the faculty, employees, and students of Virginia Tech have defined their collective values based on mutual respect and understanding and have pledged to: a) affirm the inherent dignity and value of every person; b) create and maintain a respectful and welcoming environment for all; c) foster and sustain an increasingly diverse and inclusive community of learners; d) develop an appreciation for and understanding of the benefits of multicultural perspectives; and e) establish a set of policies, programs, practices, and resources necessary to achieve excellence, equity, and effectiveness in the research, teaching and learning, and outreach activities of the university.

Creating and facilitating a culture of respect, equity, justice, responsibility, and safety is paramount for developing a learning community where all community members can: commit to unwavering **curiosity**; pursue **self-understanding and integrity**; practice **civility**; prepare for a life of **courageous leadership**; and ultimately embrace **Ut Prosim** (That I May Serve) as a way of life. As such, the Bias Intervention and Response Team (BIRT) will be formed to meet bi-weekly (or more if necessary). The team's charge is to assure that Virginia Tech's *Bias-Related Incident Protocol* is implemented in a manner that is both proactive and responsive to the continuing challenges presented in a community where inclusion and dissent (Inazu, 2016) exist in a way that often results in marginalization, isolation, and loneliness.

Free Speech

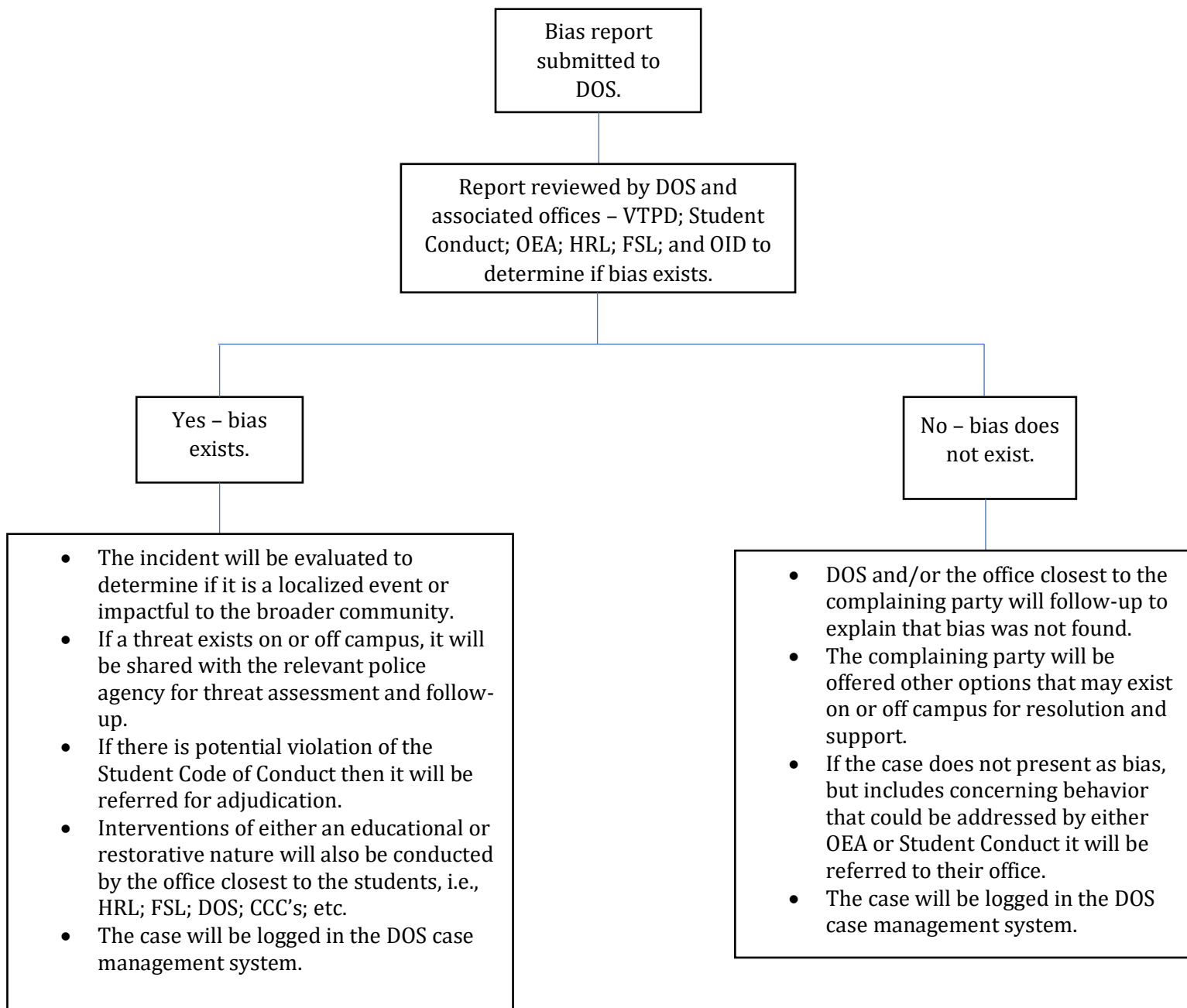
Virginia Tech is a community where the free and civil exchange of ideas is valued and every person's perspective is important. Freedom of speech in the United States is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and by many state constitutions and state and federal laws. Free speech provisions protect many forms of intolerant statements, expressions, and conduct.

Depending on the circumstances, a bias-related incident may not be a crime. In certain contexts, courts have found hate speech to be protected even though many in the university community find it repugnant. If these expressions are inconsistent with the aims of a learning community and our *Principles of Community*, they may present an educational opportunity for better understanding protected speech and the role of inclusion in a pluralistic campus community.

BIRT will examine and review each complaint through the lens of free and protected speech. Some bias-related incidents may violate the Student Code of Conduct and may be adjudicated through the student conduct process. Virginia Tech cannot adjudicate matters that are deemed protected speech. Behavior that is discriminatory or otherwise hurtful to members of the community is addressed through educational interventions.

Regardless of whether incidents violate policy or are insensitive, it is crucial that response occurs in a timely and consistent manner. All community members involved – those who report such incidents as well as those accused – will be treated with respect, consideration, concern, and care.

Process



Summary Data (2020 – 2021)

The data contained in this report refers to reports submitted via the online [Bias Incident Reporting Form](#). It is important to note that the reporting form was updated at the start of the Spring 2021 semester to better document each reported incident in our case management system. The following data is broken down by each semester; with the Fall 2020 semester being July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020, and the Spring 2021 semester being January 1, 2021 – June 30, 2021.

2.1 How many reports of bias-related incidents were submitted?

Bias-Related Incident Reports	Unique Incidents*	Reports Submitted
Fall 2020	58	66
Spring 2021	47	63
Total # of Reports Submitted	105	129

**Unique incidents may have resulted in more than one report submitted.*

2.2 Who submitted the incident reports?

Reporter	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Faculty/Staff	10	10	20
Graduate Student	2	2	4
HRL Staff	28	21	49
Non-VT Affiliate	1	4	5
Undergraduate	19	14	33
Unknown/Anonymous	1	11	12
VTPD	5	1	6
Total # of Reports Submitted	66	63	129

2.3 Who is the alleged in the incident reports?

Alleged	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Faculty/Staff	2	7	9
Graduate Student	0	1	1
HRL Staff	3	0	3
Non-VT Affiliate	1	5	6
Other	1	14	15
Undergraduate	28	18	46
Undergraduate (s)	0	8	8
Unknown	31	10	41

2.4 Who is the complainant in the incident reports?

Victim	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Class	4	1	5
General Public	18	23	41
Graduate Student	0	1	1
HRL Staff	4	2	6
Organization	8	2	10
Other	9	1	10
Self	7	13	20
Undergraduate	16	20	36

2.5 What types of bias are alleged in these reports?

Type of Bias*	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Age	0	3	3
Disability	4	9	13
Gender Expression	4	7	11
National or Ethnic Origin	16	13	29
Race	33	23	56
Sexual Orientation	4	14	18
Color	11	10	21
Gender	9	14	23
Gender Identity	5	12	17
Political Affiliation	12	6	18
Religion, Faith, Meaning-making	6	7	13
Veteran Status	0	0	0
Other	3	17	20

**Individual reports that were submitted may have indicated more than one type of bias*

2.6 Where do these incidents occur?

Location of Incident	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Residential Housing	26	20	46
Campus Grounds	5	3	8
Off-campus	3	12	15
Email	3	2	5
Social Media	16	19	35
Zoom	13	7	20

2.7 What happened with these reports once they were submitted?

Action(s)* Taken	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Total
Referred to Fraternity and Sorority Life	0	3	3
Referred to Housing and Residence Life	14	6	20
Referred to Virginia Tech Police Department	3	5	8
Referred to Title IX	2	7	9
Referred to Equity & Accessibility	2	8	10
Referred to Student Conduct	13	21	34
Referred to Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets	0	4	4
Referred to Dean of Students	38	28	66
Responded to Reporter	2	15	17
No Further Action	7	3	10
Other	2	2	4

**Individual reports that were submitted may have had more than one type of response or action*