

SOUTH SEATTLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BIAS INCIDENT RESPONSE/SUPPORT TEAM (BIRST)

2009-2010

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING BIAS MOTIVATED INCIDENTS IN WHICH THERE IS NO KNOWN OFFENDER

INTRODUCTION

The Bias Incident Response/Support Team (BIRST) addresses campus climate and advocacy for persons affected by bias motivated incidents at South Seattle Community College. BIRST consists of a team of campus employees who are standing members or appointed by campus employees and trained in identifying, addressing, and documenting incidences of bias on campus. In cases where an offender can be identified, there are existing campus procedures to follow (as outlined in this document); however, instances in which the offender is unknown, the BIRST acts as the primary point of contact and advocate. BIRST works closely with other campus departments to ensure the appropriate documentation and reporting of all bias incidences.

The following procedures provide a proactive measure to adequately serve students, faculty, and staff affected by bias motivated incidents.

DISTRICT POLICY

These procedures fit under the auspices of the following SCCD policies:

- Student Conduct
<http://sccdweb.sccd.ctc.edu/studentrules.aspx>
- Hostile Work Environment Policy
<http://www.seattlecolleges.edu/custom.aspx?page=policies&pagec=documentdisplay&policyID=pol451>

DEFINITIONS

A **Bias Motivated Incident** is an action in which a person or group is intentionally targeted and subjected to harassment because of their actual or perceived **disability; race, ethnicity, or national origin; religion; sexual orientation**, and, for the purposes of this plan, **sex, gender, gender identity, and gender expression**, but the offense does not rise to the level of a crime.

Examples:

- A student continually encounters messages denigrating her ethnic background written on the classroom chalkboard or posted in the campus restrooms. There is no actual crime committed. Remarks are easily erased or removed, no property is damaged, and the student is never assaulted.
- Flyers posted on campus announcing an LGBT event are defaced or continually ripped down. There is no clear perpetrator, but these incidences have an affect on the comfort level of students who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.

While not a hate crime, these occurrences are clear cases of bias motivated incidents. To report a bias incident, sufficient objective facts must be present to lead a reasonable and prudent person to conclude that the offender's actions are motivated by bias toward the status of a targeted individual or a group.

Person affected – the person or persons affected is the target of a bias motivated incident.

PROCEDURES IN REPORTING BIAS MOTIVATED INCIDENTS (UNKNOWN OFFENDER)

South Seattle Community College's highest concern is for the emotional and physical well being of persons affected by a bias motivated incident. The person affected shall have access to all appropriate campus services that can help the individual maintain her or his emotional and psychological well being and provide for the safety of the person affected. A member of the **Bias Incident Response/Support Team (BIRST)** will be the first official point of contact, other than campus security, for facilitating access to all needed services. Other departments, if contacted first, will make a referral to a BIRST member.

BIRST is responsible for carrying out procedures in incidents in which the *offender is unknown*; however, all alleged bias motivated incidents should be reported to a BIRST member for documentation.

- If a person is seeking refuge due to an *immediate physical threat*, the person should be directed immediately to Campus Safety & Security Office (See Page 3). Within 24 hours, a BIRST member must be contacted to determine whether the incident is motivated by bias and to follow documenting and reporting procedures.
- In the instance where there is *no clear offender in a bias motivated incident and no immediate physical threat*, report the incident directly to a BIRST member. A BIRST member will determine whether the incident is motivated by bias and assist the person affected in completing the Alleged Bias Incident Report Form (Appendix A) to document the incident.

PROCEDURES IN REPORTING BIAS MOTIVATED INCIDENTS (KNOWN OFFENDER)

There are procedures in place for students and employees dealing with incidences (bias motivated or not) in which the offender or offenders can be identified; in these cases a BIRST member may act as a point of referral.

CAMPUS PROCEDURES - FLOWCHARTS

Please refer to the Bias Incident Response/Support Flowcharts (Appendix A) for more information on reporting a bias incident on campus.

SAFETY & SECURITY CONTACT

South Campus: James Lewis – Manager, (206) 763-5157, jlewis@sccd.ctc.edu, Robert Smith Building, Room 50

Bias Incident Response/Support Team (BIRST):

BIRST membership is based on position or a selection process described below. All members are required to receive training regarding the identifying, addressing, and documenting of incidents of bias on the college campus, including the appropriate Response/Support to persons affected by bias related incidents. Members will meet once per quarter and on an as needed basis.

South Seattle Community College Standing Members:

- Vice President of Student Services/Designee (Mark Mitsui)
- Director of Human Relations (Kathy Vedvick)

- Manager of Safety & Security (James Lewis)
- Director of Diversity and Retention (Ricardo Leyva-Puebla)
- Dean of Diversity, Retention and Student Life (Cessa Heard-Johnson)

South Seattle Community College Selected Members:

- Faculty nominations by the President’s Committee on Diversity & Retention and selection by the Faculty Senate (Currently Academic: Teri Eguchi, BTS: Dorrienne Chinn, Professional Technical: Allen Stowers)
- Classified Staff Representative (Jennifer Lowe)
- United Student Association Student Advocate Position

With the exception of the student representative serving a one-year term, all selected members will serve a two-year term.

ROLE OF THE BIAS INCIDENT RESPONSE/SUPPORT TEAM

The Bias Incident Response/Support Team (BIRST) will neither investigate nor adjudicate complaints relating to an alleged bias motivated incident. In the event of a bias incident complaint, the BIRST ensures appropriate services are made available and follows documenting and reporting procedures. Duties may include, but are not limited to:

- Making every effort to contact person affected within 24 hours and, while respecting whatever decision they have made, encourage them to pursue some type of assistance.
- Providing advice on the college's discrimination complaint procedures, disciplinary action (if alleged offender is known), and academic assistance.
- Providing advocacy for the person affected in other proceedings.
- Providing appropriate counseling referral to the person affected.
- Providing appropriate medical referral.
- As a team, reviewing documentation and determining whether or not an incident was motivated by bias.

BIRST coordinates the process of documenting and reporting incidents by:

- Encouraging person(s) affected to report the occurrence to Safety & Security for investigation and/or prosecution if there is a known offender.
- If there is no known offender, a member of the BIRST will assist the person(s) affected in completing an Alleged Bias Incident Report Form and keep this confidential information under lock and key.
- Notifying the following offices (or others as appropriate) with the consent of the person(s) affected:
 - Office for the Vice President for Student Services (if the alleged offender is a student)
 - Office of Human Resources (if the alleged offender is an employee)
 - Counseling Office (if the person(s) affected needs counseling support).
 - Academic Advising (if the person(s) affected is a student and needs to alter his or her course schedule).
- BIRST maintains and disseminates appropriate statistical information by:
 - Maintaining generic statistical information and providing data to Safety & Security as required under the Clery Act¹.
 - Disseminating generic statistical information through campus media sources as deemed appropriate.

Other duties of the Bias Incident Response/Support Team include:

- Working closely with campus resources, such as the President’s Committee on Diversity & Retention for educational efforts regarding bias motivated incidents on campus.

¹ The Jeanne Clery disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act - for information go to www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus.html