

Department of Music – Student Complaint Resources

Students in the Department of Music at the University of Connecticut have a robust framework and protocol for voicing complaints and receiving guidance and support toward their rectification. The term “complaint” – and by extension any policy intended to address them – covers a wide range of student concerns from serious issues of bias, harassment, and academic integrity and fairness to more “localized” matters (e.g., instrument locker assignments, sound-bleed in the practice rooms, and so forth).

The Office of the Dean of Students (hereafter DoS) serves as a well-organized resource dealing with issues of a relatively serious nature for music students as well as students across all departments and colleges within the University. As an example, bias represents one of the most serious and pervasive issues potentially encountered by students. The protocol for handling reports of bias is outlined on the DoS website at: <https://dos.uconn.edu/bias-reporting/>. The following excerpts are reproduced directly from their website:

Definition, causes, and types of bias. A bias-related incident is an incident that negatively targets, intimidates, or threatens an individual or group due to race, ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, physical, mental, and intellectual disabilities, as well as past/present history of mental disorders.

This includes, but is not limited to, graffiti or images that harass or intimidate individuals or groups due to the above characteristics.

Reporting protocol. The goal of the Bias Incident/Graffiti/Image Protocol reporting structure is to assure that there are designated places to report incidents.

Anyone can **report** bias incidents/graffiti/images. When a student reports an act of bias to a designated office, the incident will be shared with one or more of the following offices.

- Dean of Students Office
- UConn Police Department or the State Police
- Community Standards
- Office of Institutional Equity
- Office for Diversity and Inclusion
- Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs (AVPSA), via other relevant staff members.
- Incidents may also be reported to Residential Life, Cultural Centers, or student organization advisors. Staff in these areas should report the incident to their supervisors.

Education. Bias incidents/graffiti/images may indicate a need for education in our community in order to remedy harm done, and to provide opportunities for reflection and growth. Such educational efforts are not part of the investigation process and are not intended to be punitive.

Appropriate staff and faculty will work with students to plan timely, educational opportunities that are reflective of diverse learning styles, and address relevant issues from multiple perspectives.

In addition to bias, other serious student challenges handled by DoS include:

- Questions about transitioning to college life
- Missing classes/significantly behind in coursework
- Injury or Illness which is impacting classes
- Experiencing a personal/family issue and need to leave campus
- Experiencing depression, anxiety, panic and/or other general mental health concerns
- Experiencing a racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, and/or macroaggressions
- Financial struggles/homelessness/food insecurity
- Victim of a physical/sexual assault or harassing behavior
- Relationship challenges/domestic violence
- Victim of bullying
- Need to access multiple campus resources
- Not sure where to access help

Finally, the DoS program Protect Our Pack trains student “Pack Leaders” to reach out and listen to fellow students in dealing with serious concerns. The Pack Leaders are described below:

Pack Leaders

The UConn Pack Leaders are volunteer trained students who provide educational programs to their peers on intervening in problem situations, particularly in issues of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking. They also provide intervention strategies in bias related incidents, hazing, depression and suicidality, and problematic substance usage. To become a Pack Leader, students submit an application and are interviewed and screened by the Assistant Dean of Students for Victim Support Services and Bystander Initiatives and the graduate student for the program.

Pack Leaders are required to attend training as well as monthly meetings and to commit to two semesters of participation. Pack Leaders are not expected to be experts on all related topics, but to have an understanding of the concerns facing students and a desire to help others realize they can make a difference by stepping in when problems arise.

For more “localized” issues relating specifically to music students, there are both administrative and student resources for reporting and addressing complaints. Administratively, the Department Head has a scheduled “Department Head Forum” once per semester for students to voice their concerns freely. In some instances, these concerns are rectified immediately; with others, the Department Head works with appropriate faculty, department committees (including the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee), and in some instances the Dean of the School of Fine Arts in seeking solutions. The Music Department has an elected Music Student Advisory Council that as part of its purview provides a peer outlet for student complaints or concerns.

Members of the Music Student Advisory Council for the 2021-2022 academic year are:

Michael Baril, Class of 2022, Music Education and Jazz Studies

Sofia DiNatale, Class of 2023, Instrumental Performance

Vivian Hudson, Class of 2024, Music and Psychology

Max Hurtubise, Class of 2023, Composition

Sarah Marze, Class of 2023, Vocal Performance and Composition

Christina Sack, Class of 2022, Music Education

Elizabeth Stassen, Class of 2024, Music and Math