

Ways to voice a concern, file a complaint or report and get action, make suggestions and offer solutions:

We, the students, staff, and faculty of the UW Department of Dance, aspire to create a community built on respect, equity, collaboration, and belonging. We recognize that diversity is essential to the existence and prolificacy of dance, and critical to the creation of a more just and inclusive dance field. By striving to promote an environment welcoming to people of all cultures, races, sexes, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities and/or expressions, ages, religions, and economic statuses, we believe creativity, critical thinking, and self-expression can thrive. We humbly acknowledge our fallibility as we work together and strive to make essential changes to our department, university, and larger field of dance.

If you have an experience in a course, with a professor or adviser, staff member, or peer in this department that does not reflect our departmental goal of respect, equity, collaboration and belonging, we encourage you to share your experience. After hearing your concerns, we will strive to respond by making structural, institutional and behavioral changes that help us work towards a safer and more inclusive environment.

We realize that there are many types of concerns, complaints and suggestions that occur in our department. We hope this document will help guide you toward the right channel for the appropriate action. It is a living document which we will update as new information comes to us, or as situations arise. If you are unsure which avenue to take, discuss this with the advisor, a representative/officer from one of the student associations, (Arts Diversity Council, or Dance Student Association), the Departmental Diversity Committee which consists of faculty, staff, grad and undergraduate students, or the chair of the department.

**Below are suggestions for the best way to voice departmental claims regarding the following:**

*Complaints and concerns within the classroom/studio, or involving a class you are enrolled in (Examples: course content, implicit bias, discrimination, something that came up in discussion that was not handled well or was left unresolved in a way that could be damaging to someone, lack of respect by anyone in the room).*

- If you are comfortable doing so, first contact your instructor. Most instructors want to know when something has occurred and want to make sure that avenues for communication are open.
- If you schedule a time to meet with the instructor, you should feel free to bring someone with you as support.
- If you are not comfortable with contacting your professor, or you spoke to them but they did not act on a situation, or you were unsatisfied with the results or lack thereof, make an appointment with the chair of the department. The chair will

listen, take notes, and discuss what might be the best course of action. The chair will speak with the instructor, regardless of the situation, unless you do not want them to. The chair will then report back to you.

- If you schedule a time to meet with the chair, you should feel free to bring someone with you as support.
- If you are not comfortable with either of these options, you should contact a representative/officer from either student group, the Arts Diversity Council, or the Dance Student Association, or the Departmental Diversity Committee. They will take the complaint to the chair and be a liaison for you.

*You have witnessed or experienced discrimination, bias, in the department, in the halls, in conversation with peers, in rehearsals, or in conversations with instructors, graduate students, staff.*

Follow the same protocols as above. It is understandable if you do not want to call this person out in the moment. Reach out through the channel you are most comfortable with above.

If you do feel comfortable calling someone in in the moment, here is one strategy for how you might practice this:

**Opening The Front Door:**

- Observe – describe clearly and succinctly what you see happening
- Think – state what you think about it
- Feel – express your feelings about the situation
- Desire – assert what you would like to happen

*(Developed by Ganote, Cheung and Souza (2015):*

*<https://www.unomaha.edu/faculty-support/teaching-excellence/microaggressions-handout.pdf>*

**Example:** You are in a dance class and you hear the teacher tell another student “wow, you just looked bad doing that dance!”

**Here is what you could try:** (**O**bserve) When you told that dancer that they looked bad (**T**hink) that made me think that you are judging their body negatively. (**F**eel) It makes me feel uncomfortable to think that you are judging my body or other bodies in the space as “good” or “bad,” (**D**esire) and I wish you could have chosen a different or more nuanced word to more helpfully describe what you were trying to communicate.

**Example:** You are in the hallway in Meany and you hear another student say “that’s so gay.”

**Here is what you could try:** (**O**bserve) When you used the word “gay” as a negative descriptor (**T**hink) it makes me think that you don’t have respect for LGBTQIA+ people. (**F**eel) This makes me feel uncomfortable and unsafe, (**D**esire) and I wish that you would think more carefully about your choice of words.

It is important that you know you have every right to file complaints and should not be discouraged from doing so. The following organizations on campus are there for you. The chair can help look these over with you if you are unsure:

Resources:

**Reporting Sexual Assault/misconduct:**

<http://www.washington.edu/sexualassault/>

This website provides victims of sexual violence with important online resources that reflect the UW’s commitment to preventing and responding to sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, relationship violence, domestic violence, stalking and sexual harassment.

Here you will find ways to get confidential support, how to address safety concerns, where to receive medical care and counseling and information on reporting sexual assault.

**Facilitated conversations:**

<https://www.washington.edu/ombud/>

The Ombud serves the entire University of Washington community by providing a collaborative and confidential environment to discuss your situation, consider options, and develop a plan for the future.

**Formal complaints regarding discrimination and retaliation:**

<https://www.washington.edu/compliance/uciro/>

The University Complaint Investigation and Resolution Office (UCIRO) investigates complaints that a University employee has violated the University’s non-discrimination and/or non-retaliation policies.

**Reporting system for incidences of bias:**

<https://www.washington.edu/bias/>

The University of Washington values and honors diverse experiences and perspectives, strives to create welcoming and respectful learning environments and promotes access and opportunity.

The UW is committed to freedom of expression, and with that commitment comes the recognition that members of our community might hold and express sometimes-unpopular views. UW President Ana Mari Cauce has affirmed our steadfast commitment to these values in a [blog post](#) and [comments](#) to the campus community.

If you encounter or suspect incidents of bias, you are encouraged to file a report, which will be reviewed by the UW's Bias Incident Advisory Committee. Whenever possible, bias reports will be reviewed within two to four business days.

**Best ways to make a suggestion to the department:**

Have a suggestion or a solution? We want to hear it! You can drop the suggestion in our suggestion box in the hallway, to the left of the chalk board. You can also give the suggestion to a member of the ADC or DSA, or a member of the Departmental Diversity Council.

Contacts:

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Arts Diversity Council  
Dance Student Association

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