Annual Report on Sexual Misconduct
August 2013 - August 2014

Prepared by Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives
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**Introduction**

On Sept. 2, 2014, President Lou Anna K. Simon issued a letter to the Michigan State University community and Spartans everywhere highlighting the problem of sexual violence on U.S. college campuses. President Simon reinforced MSU's challenge and asserted that all Spartans play a role in building a “culture of active respect” and providing support for each other. The Spartan community letter emphasized an important fact: “We will do what is necessary to respond effectively to sexual violence in accordance to not just the law but also with MSU’s core values. We will do whatever it takes to create a safe, respectful environment for learning and working."

The continued commitment President Simon wrote about included the restructuring of MSU’s [Policy on Sexual Harassment](#), which resulted in a new Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy. In addition, the refining of investigation processes and procedures is in its fourth year, overseen by MSU’s Title IX Coordinator and Director of the Office for Inclusion, Paulette Granberry Russell.

This report on MSU’s efforts to address sexual misconduct focuses on the period August 2013 through August 2014, with an overview of the period August 2011 through August 2014. It is being presented to the 2014 University Task Force on Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence to support its work to identify effective strategies to address campus sexual misconduct into the future. The report offers greater transparency about the frequency of reporting on sexual misconduct within our campus community and the ways in which we address it. The report is part of our ongoing efforts to promote awareness about MSU’s resources and robust educational initiatives, as well as encourage reporting of incidents of sexual misconduct. The current Policy on Sexual Harassment shapes our work to (1) investigate claims of sexual misconduct; (2) implement protocols for reporting sexual assault; (3) require participation in e-learning for employees on our policy, procedures and campus resources; (4) require all incoming students to participate in Sexual Assault First-Year Education (SAFE) and Sexual Assault Relationship Violence Prevention Program (SARV); and (5) develop campus-wide training modules that expand on the principles outlined in our policy and investigation procedures. None of this work could be done without the commitment of dedicated faculty, staff and students who believe in our values and desire to make MSU a safe community for all who live, learn and work here.

MSU has a longstanding commitment to maintaining a fair, responsible and humane educational and work environment. Sexual misconduct subverts the mission of the university and offends the integrity of our community. Through our continued campaign of *“No Excuse for Sexual Assault,”* increasing emphasis on bystander intervention and expanding the e-learning series to all MSU community members, we not only will increase reporting of sexual assault but also prevent behaviors that harm victims and all of us.

**MSU’s Title IX Coordinator**
Paulette Granberry Russell, J.D.
Senior Advisor to the President for Diversity and
Director, Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives

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1 The Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy is in its final stages of approval and officially will be implemented during the spring semester of 2015.
Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault

Michigan State University’s current policy discusses sexual harassment as a form of unlawful gender (sex) discrimination. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors or other unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature when such behavior is so severe, persistent or pervasive that a reasonable person would find that it interferes with work or educational experience. Sexual harassment may involve harassment of women by men, harassment of men by women and harassment between persons of the same sex. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Michigan’s Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976 make sexual harassment unlawful.

Sexual assault\(^2\) is a severe form of sexual harassment (hereinafter referred to as sexual misconduct), and therefore reported claims of sexual assault are evaluated to determine if MSU’s policy was violated. Examples of sexual misconduct include but are not limited to:

- Sexual violence, including sexual assault, rape, sexual battery and sexual coercion
- Threats or insinuations which lead the victim reasonably to believe that granting or denying sexual favors will affect her or his reputation, education, employment, advancement or standing within the university
- Sexual advances, sexual propositions or sexual demands that are not agreeable to the recipient
- Sexually explicit material sent by email, text message or other electronically transmitted communication
- Sexual misconduct such as stalking, cyber stalking, recording or transmitting sexual images, and voyeurism
- Unwelcome and persistent sexually explicit statements or stories that are not legitimately related to employment duties, course content, research or other university programs or activities
- Repeatedly using sexually degrading words or sounds to describe a person
- Unwanted and unnecessary touching, patting, hugging or other physical contact
- Recurring comments or questions about an individual’s sexual prowess, sexual deficiencies or sexual behavior

Behavior of a sexual nature that is not sexual misconduct may nonetheless be unprofessional in the workplace, disruptive in the classroom or violate other university policies and, like other behavior that is unprofessional, disruptive or violates policy, could warrant discipline.\(^3\)

\(^2\) The following definition is used by the Office for Inclusion when investigating complaints of sexual assault. “Sexual assault: Actual, attempted or threatened sexual contact with another person without that person’s consent. Sexual assault can be a violation of MSU’s Sexual Harassment Policy. It can also be a crime under the Michigan penal code.”

\(^3\) This policy shall not be interpreted to abridge First Amendment rights or to infringe academic freedom, as defined in the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy and the document entitled Student Rights and Responsibilities at Michigan State University. The protections of the First Amendment must be carefully considered in all complaints involving speech or expressive conduct. The fact that speech or a particular expression is offensive is not, standing alone, a legally sufficient basis to establish a violation of this policy. In order to violate this policy, speech or expressive conduct must constitute sexual harassment, as defined above. Speech or expressive conduct that constitutes sexual harassment is neither legally protected expression nor the proper exercise of academic freedom.
The university’s Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (I3), which is also the Office of the Title IX Coordinator and directed by Paulette Granberry Russell, is responsible for enforcing the policy and has primary responsibility for coordinating MSU’s efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title IX. The responsibilities of the office of the Title IX Coordinator include: (1) training for students, faculty and staff; (2) all investigations; (3) interim measures; (4) monitoring investigation findings when there is a violation of policy; and (5) assessing policy and practices, and recommending, or implementing changes where necessary to comport with Title IX and university policy.

**Reporting and Referrals to I3**

The university encourages persons who believe they have experienced sexual misconduct to come forward with their complaints and seek assistance. Faculty and staff who have received a report of relationship violence or sexual misconduct, or have witnessed this as defined by the policy, must promptly report such information to the Title IX Coordinator. All university employees are mandatory reporters, unless exempted by university policy, e.g., licensed counselors. It is important to note that there are no statutes of time limitations between reporting and incidence occurrence. The chart below illustrates the status of a claimant and the appropriate offices to file a report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY OF REPORT: STATUS OF CLAIMANT</th>
<th>TYPE OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT</th>
<th>WHERE TO FILE REPORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student⁴</td>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
<td>I3 and MSU Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
<td>I3 and MSU Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>Supervisors must report to I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All other employees strongly encouraged to report to supervisor or I3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Party</td>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
<td>I3 and MSU Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Party</td>
<td>Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>I3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students are often in vulnerable positions and may not know about resources or are fearful of reporting. When I3 receives a report based on a disclosure, it often comes from Residential Assistants (RA), i.e., student employees. RAs are a critical component of Resident Education and Housing Services (REHS). REHS regular staff oversees many student employees and works closely with I3 and other important partners in responding to sexual misconduct.

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⁴ Reports involving student employees are considered student reports.
Other important partners refer victims to I3 and also provide support for students, including the Counseling Center, Sexual Assault program (SAP), and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), usually from Sparrow Hospital, Lansing, Mich.

It is important to note that MSU has a strong relationship with the city of East Lansing and overall with the Greater Lansing region. This relationship extends to organizations that are committed to helping victims and providing education to prevent incidents of sexual violence on a number of levels. An example of this is a monthly meeting of the Capitol Area Sexual Assault Response Team (CASART). CASART meets once a month at the MSU Police Department to exchange information on process, procedure, resources and educational events. I3 is a member of this team, along with the MSU Sexual Assault Program (SAP), Safe Place and MSUPD.  

RAs and all other mandatory reporters on campus are instructed to report sexual misconduct to both the MSU Police Department and I3. I3 works very closely with MSUPD to respond to and address concerns of sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct. Reporting to both entities is important because they involve separate investigation processes. The most significant difference between the two reflects the function and purpose of the respective organizations. The police are concerned with whether or not a crime was committed. I3 is concerned with whether or not a university policy was violated.

**No Retaliation**

Every member of the MSU community has the right to come forward and file a claim of sexual misconduct without being retaliated against. The university and the law prohibit retaliation against persons who complain about alleged sexual misconduct or who cooperate in an investigation of reported sexual misconduct.

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5 The community partners who work with CASART include Sparrow Hospital’s SANE program, The Listening EAR, End Violent Encounters (EVE) Domestic Violence Shelter.
Every MSU community member should know where to report sexual misconduct, access university resources and how to help a fellow Spartan. Here are the four things students should know:

**Where can I talk to someone confidentially?**

**MSU Sexual Assault Program**  
14 Student Services Building  
556 E. Circle Drive  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
(517) 355-3551 (office)  
(517) 372-6666 (24 hour crisis line)  
www.endrape.msu.edu

**MSU Safe Place**  
(517) 355-1100  
Email: noabuse@msu.edu  
http://safeplace.msu.edu

**University Ombudsperson**  
354 Farm Lane, Room 129 (North Kedzie Hall)  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
(517) 353-8830  
Email: ombud@msu.edu  
Web: https://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/index.html

**Where can I file a report?**

**Title IX Coordinator** (Paulette Granberry Russell)  
Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives  
101 Olds Hall  
East Lansing MI 48824  
(517) 353-3922  
inclusion@msu.edu

**MSU Police Department**  
1120 Red Cedar Road  
East Lansing, MI 48824  
(517) 355-2221  
Emergencies: 911
What is the definition of consent?\(^6\)

Consent means the voluntary, willful and unambiguous agreement to engage in a specific sexual activity during a sexual encounter. Consent cannot be given by someone who is:

- Sleeping
- Unconscious, unaware or otherwise mentally or physically helpless because of drugs, alcohol or other contributing factor (“incapacitated”)
- Unable to understand the nature of the sexual activity due to a mental disease or condition (“mentally incapable”)
- Under duress, threat, deception, coercion or force

Consent must be clear and communicated by mutually understandable words or actions. The following are examples of situations that do not imply consent:

- Silence
- The absence of a verbal “no” or “stop”
- The absence of resistance
- The existence of a prior or current relationship or sexual activity

What can I do to help a friend?

- Believe them! Listen and offer comfort.
- Let the person know that you care.
- Reassure your friend that they are not to blame.
- Encourage your friend to reach out for support.

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\(^6\) This definition of consent is taken from the Relationship Violence & Sexual Misconduct Policy
Addressing Reports of Sexual Misconduct

When a claim of sexual misconduct is reported to I3, there are a number of factors that influence the actions taken by the university and I3. Each claim is evaluated to determine if the university has jurisdiction over the claim, i.e., that the conduct implicates university policy. Once it is determined the university has jurisdiction over the matter, I3 will determine if the matter can be pursued based on the information provided; if the matter can be resolved informally, when appropriate; or if it can proceed to conduct a formal investigation. Factors that may impact whether to proceed to a formal investigation include: the decision of the claimant to proceed and participate in the investigation and whether we have the identity of the respondent. I3 will follow-up with the claimant to encourage the individual to share sufficient information upon which a formal investigation may proceed. However, if there is insufficient information upon which to proceed, a formal investigation may not be possible. Regardless of whether a formal investigation proceeds, the claimant is always made aware of campus resources and interim measures will be taken based on the information reported to I3.

As noted above, all complaints of alleged sexual misconduct undergo a review with the oversight of the University’s Title IX Coordinator. The university initiates its investigation process for all complaints of sexual misconduct it receives, regardless of where the conduct occurs. I3 also may determine a formal complaint warrants an investigation if the university has sufficient notice that sexual misconduct is occurring. Investigations include a determination of the university’s jurisdiction over the matter and interviews of the claimant, respondent and witnesses.

Informal Procedures

- Consulting and Advising
  All complaints of alleged sexual harassment undergo a preliminary review or information gathering process. During this initial stage the investigator reviews a report and may speak with a claimant to determine the university’s jurisdiction and if the claim meets the definition of sexual misconduct. The Office for Inclusion provides information and guidance regarding avenues for pursuing claims and requirements for proving individual claims during this time. This process generally can be accomplished on a confidential basis with a confidential record of the meeting maintained.

- Interim Measures
  Interim measures are an important step to ensure that claimants are able to maintain their educational activities when an incident of sexual misconduct occurs. Students often require interim measures that address health and safety, and academic support. When I3 receives a report of sexual misconduct, the office works with claimants in a variety of ways. Interim measures may include, no contact orders, housing reassignment for either party, no trespass order, interim

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7 The university generally does not investigate allegations of sexual misconduct, harassment or discrimination that fall outside the jurisdictional limits of the Anti-Discrimination Policy and General Student Regulations. Nevertheless, the university will process all complaints of sexual misconduct, harassment or discrimination in accordance with the policy, regardless of where the conduct that is the basis for the complaint allegedly occurred, in order to evaluate whether there is a hostile environment on campus that would be contrary to the university’s legal obligations.
suspension, facilitating a class change for either party, contacting a professor or adviser about special course accommodations or ensuring that a student can keep an on-campus job. I3 also will refer students to Safe Place or the Sexual Assault Program (SAP) for counseling. The 2015 annual report will detail data on interim measures.

- No Further Action
  I3 may not proceed with an investigation for three main reasons.
  1. Sometimes the claimant may not want to participate. Best practices while working with victims of sexual assault emphasize the importance of providing space for victims to exercise agency and make choices for themselves.
  2. During the review process, I3 can determine there is no jurisdiction for a variety of reasons. Mandatory reporters are directed to report any disclosure that may include childhood sexual abuse or an off-campus incident where the respondent has no affiliation with the university. It is important that all disclosures are reported to ensure students have the appropriate resources for a successful educational experience.
  3. I3 encourages reports even when there is doubt about the implicated behavior. If an investigator determines a particular incident does not warrant an investigation, they will refer an incident to a campus unit such as REHS to assess what may be the most appropriate way to handle or respond to the incident, or in cases of student employment, to the supervisor for appropriate action.

Formal Investigations
I3’s approach with respect to its formal process is to be fair to all individuals involved in the process and provide a thorough investigation and analysis of every claim. I3 gives finality and certainty to each claim by issuing a written report in as prompt a manner as possible. I3 does not act as a representative for either side; rather, it serves as a neutral fact-finder for determining if there was a violation of university policy.

If there is a finding of discrimination or harassment by an employee under the policy, I3 may make recommendations to the unit for remedial actions. The unit responsible for the responding party is the final decision maker on any remedial actions. The respondent may have the right to challenge an action taken by the unit under other university procedures.

Interim Anti-Discrimination Policy Student Disciplinary Hearing Board
If there is a finding of violation of the policy, I3 files the report with the Department of Student Affairs. The interim Policy (ADP) Student Disciplinary Hearing Board adjudicates all student judicial cases involving allegations of harassment, including sexual misconduct prohibited under the ADP. The hearing board reviews the findings of I3 to determine the appropriate sanction to be imposed. Either party may appeal a decision of the ADP Hearing Board to the University Student Appeals Board. Either party may appeal a decision of the University Student Appeals Board to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services. The vice president’s decision is final.

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8 The I3 investigators are trained on investigating sexual misconduct and, along with MSUPD, exercise best practices while promoting safety for victims and the larger MSU community.
Overview of Sexual Misconduct: August 2011 – August 2014

In January 2011, MSU revised the university’s Policy on Sexual Harassment. At that time, I3 assumed jurisdiction over student-on-student claims of sexual misconduct. Between August 2011 and August 2014, I3 received 174 reports of sexual misconduct involving students. I3 investigated a total of 47, or 27 percent, of reported cases. There were 127 reports that did not undergo formal investigations. The reasons include the inability of a claimant to participate in an investigation, I3 did not have any jurisdiction to conduct an investigation, or the standard of harassment was not met to undergo a formal investigation. As of Dec. 4, 2014, 41 cases, or 24 percent, of cases are closed.

Investigation Outcomes for 2011-2014

- Closed
- No Claimant Participation
- No Jurisdiction
- Standard not met to Investigate
- Investigation Complete
- Pending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Jurisdiction</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard not met to Investigate</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation Complete</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 174
Of the 41 closed cases, 23 claims resulted in a finding of violation of policy and one still is pending an outcome/sanction on appeal. These claims involved various types of sexual misconduct, ranging from non-physical sexual harassment to non-consensual sexual contact. To date, the hearing board upheld all findings by I3 in the disciplinary hearings, including all appeals.

The variety of sanctions imposed by the disciplinary board included:

- Seven (7) respondents dismissed from the university.
- Four (4) respondents suspended from the university ranging from six (6) years to two (2) semesters.
- Four (4) respondents received a sanction of probation and various other measures such as no contact orders, no-trespass orders and behavioral compliance plans. These cases did not involve allegations of rape.
- Four (4) respondents withdrew from the university and may not reenroll.

It is important to note that a respondent may have had more than one claim against him or her.

![Sanctions Administered 2011-2014](chart)

![Sanctions Administered 2011-2014](chart)
Reports of Sexual Misconduct: August 2013 – August 2014

Reports of Sexual Misconduct August 2013 – August 2014

There were 97 incidents reported to I3 implicating the sexual misconduct policy during the period academic year Aug. 15, 2013, to Aug. 15, 2014. When I3 receives a claim, the person who is the victim/survivor is considered the claimant. The person accused of an action, and who will have to respond to an allegation, is referred to as the respondent.

The 97 incidents reported involved students, employees and third parties. The graph illustrates the status of the individuals involved within an incident. The largest number of incidents indicated that 46, or 48 percent, occurred between students. The second largest number is 35, or 36 percent, of incidents that occurred where the respondent is either unknown or does not have an affiliation with Michigan State University. Of the 97 claimants who reported last academic year, 81 were students.
There were 32 formal investigations conducted on sexual misconduct claims brought by students, faculty, staff, and third parties during 2013-2014 out of the 97 reported.

Student Incident Overview 2013-2014

During the 2013-2014 academic period, there were 81 incidents referred to I3 that involved student claims of sexual misconduct by other students or third parties. There were 31 referrals (38 percent) that came from Residential Education and Housing Services (REHS).  

For the last three years, RAs have undergone rigorous training on sexual misconduct and victim trauma. RAs, as student employees, have dual roles on campus, but when on duty in their role as an RA, they are mandatory reporters. Many RAs receive disclosures from students because of the relationships they build with a cohort of students.

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9 For the last three years, RAs have undergone rigorous training on sexual misconduct and victim trauma. RAs, as student employees, have dual roles on campus, but when on duty in their role as an RA, they are mandatory reporters. Many RAs receive disclosures from students because of the relationships they build with a cohort of students.
There were 21 formal investigations out of the 81 claims brought forth by students against other students or third parties.

As explained in the informal procedures section, in initial stages of a report, I3 determines if a formal investigation is able to occur. The chart below makes clear why a formal investigation was not conducted.
Informal Investigations Overview 2013-2014

During the 2013-14 academic years, I3 received 60 reports out of 81 from students that were not formally investigated. Of the 60 informal investigations, 34 claimants (57 percent) made a decision not to participate.
Formal Investigations Overview

During the 2013-14 academic years, I3 conducted 21 formal investigations out of 81 claims involving two or more students.

The charts below illustrates that of the 21 cases formally investigated, 15 were completed and closed as of Dec. 4, 2014.

*There are four (4) investigations during 2014 that have been completed and are in the final report phase.

I3 makes every reasonable effort to complete a formal investigation within 90 calendar days. There are however delays that occur based on a number of things such as availability of relevant parties, academic breaks during the year and obtaining important documents from any law enforcement agency involved in a separate criminal investigation.

I3 makes reasonable efforts to issue a written report containing a summary of the investigation, analysis, and findings, within 30 calendar days except when the parties are notified by I3 of the need to extend the deadline. The complainant, respondent and the appropriate unit administrator (for employees’ participants) receive a copy of the report. The parties to the complaint then have five (5) business days to review and provide a written response to the report, detailing any factual or procedural error. As indicated above, there are four cases from 2013-2014 that are in the final stages of report writing.

There are two open cases that involve an ongoing police investigation, which does not allow I3 to obtain important evidence or prevents I3 from speaking to an important party to the investigation.
Investigation Outcome

The claimant and respondent receive copies of the report whether or not there is a finding of a policy violation. In cases where there is no policy violation, the case is closed.

The charts below highlight that 8 (38 percent) of student investigations resulted in a violation of policy finding.
During the 2013-2014 academic period, there were eight findings with the following sanctions:

- 2 Dismissals
- 1 suspension of 2.5 years
- 1 suspension of 2 years
- 1 probation, with a no trespass and no-contact order (claim did not involve rape)
- 1 interim suspension pending final decision
- 1 finding of policy violation, pending judicial hearing

The student under interim suspension is a respondent for two separate incidences.

Michigan State University continues its commitment to a fair investigation process with a resulting fair disciplinary process. We remain diligent in our efforts to provide for the safety of our students.
Conclusion

Michigan State University continues to spearhead efforts to support the eradication of sexual misconduct in all of its forms. With the recent amendments to the Violence Against Women’s Act, I3 will continue its charge to investigate sexual misconduct in all its forms as well as assume responsibility for investigating relationship violence, domestic violence and stalking.\(^\text{10}\)

MSU is building on its work of the past four years to not only implement a comprehensive relationship violence and sexual misconduct policy but also educate the campus community on its responsibility to maintain an environment that is safe and supports all Spartans. We will expand current educational initiatives, including bystander intervention, mandatory education and development for all employees and students, and reach beyond the borders of the MSU campus. We will also build on our relationships and partner with community organizations, law enforcement and local businesses to create an environment that no longer tolerates sexual violence.

We are working together, faculty, staff and students to design and implement policies, procedures and protocols that are evidence based best practices. Our goal in the next year includes enhanced data that will influence next steps. We invite the Spartan community to provide feedback on our efforts to the Title IX Coordinator:

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East Lansing, MI 48824
Phone: 517-353-3922
Email: inclusion.msu.edu
www.inclusion.msu.edu

\(^\text{10}\) Statistics regarding complaints of sexual misconduct cited in this annual report are not the same as those provided in the University Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (the “Annual Security Report”). Federal law requires the University to limit its Annual Security Report crime statistics to certain geographic locations, while this annual report includes all complaints made to the Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives regardless of location.