

Bias Education Support Team (BEST) Annual Report

2024-2025

Stetson's Bias Education and Support Team (BEST) aims to provide students with an opportunity to receive education, support, and resolution in response to perceived biases. Our goal is to empower students to find resolutions on their own, to provide support and education when needed, to foster personal and intellectual development, and to promote resiliency. As part of our plan to be transparent, we release an annual report after the academic year to anonymously summarize each case, how it was handled, and to provide trends across time.

BEST members represent a wide range of experts and have experience addressing various bias-related matters across campus. The full list of BEST members through the academic year is included below:

Erin Doggette, Chair, Executive Director for Cultural, Civic, and Community Engagement
Michael Eskenazi, Associate Professor of Psychology
Lynn Schoenberg, Dean of Students
Jes Day, Executive Director of Residential Living and Learning
Lizzie Dement, Associate Director of Leadership and Student Events
Jackson Dennis, Residential Life Coordinator
Anne Eible, Assistant Director of Career Success
Reed Barkowitz, Hillel Program Director
Kelcey Ferguson, Head Athletics Trainer/Health Care Administrator
Todd Campbell, Campus Chaplain and Director of Residential and Spiritual Life

In total, 26 reports were submitted during the academic year. Of the 26, 8 were referred to their appropriate reporting office. 18¹ of the reports submitted were actual BEST cases. The majority of those reports involved racial bias (n = 11), and the rest of the reports included bias based on sexual orientation (n = 4), gender identity (n = 2), political bias (n = 2), religious bias (n = 1), and other bias (n = 1). *3 Reports were in multiple categories. Most reports occurred in an academic building (n = 9) or residential building (n = 8) with additional reports in other spaces including, the CUB (n = 4), online (n = 4), and one incident each in a campus restaurant (n = 1), and an off-campus restaurant (n = 1). Over time, reports related to race, sexual orientation, and gender identity have been the most frequent. An increase occurred in the rate of cases related to race over the last three years. The percentage is consistent with its typical trend line. The rate of cases related to gender identity has decreased from the last three years. This year included the lowest number of reports submitted. Sexual orientation cases increased but do not yet show a significant trend in comparison to the highest report submitted four years ago. Political bias was reported for the first time. Overall, conclusions cannot yet be drawn about whether these

¹ Three reports were classified in multiple categories, which is why the total number across the categories exceeds 21.

findings mean that fewer bias-related incidents are occurring on campus or whether students simply were less likely to report them.

Figure 1. Percentage of three most common types of cases over time

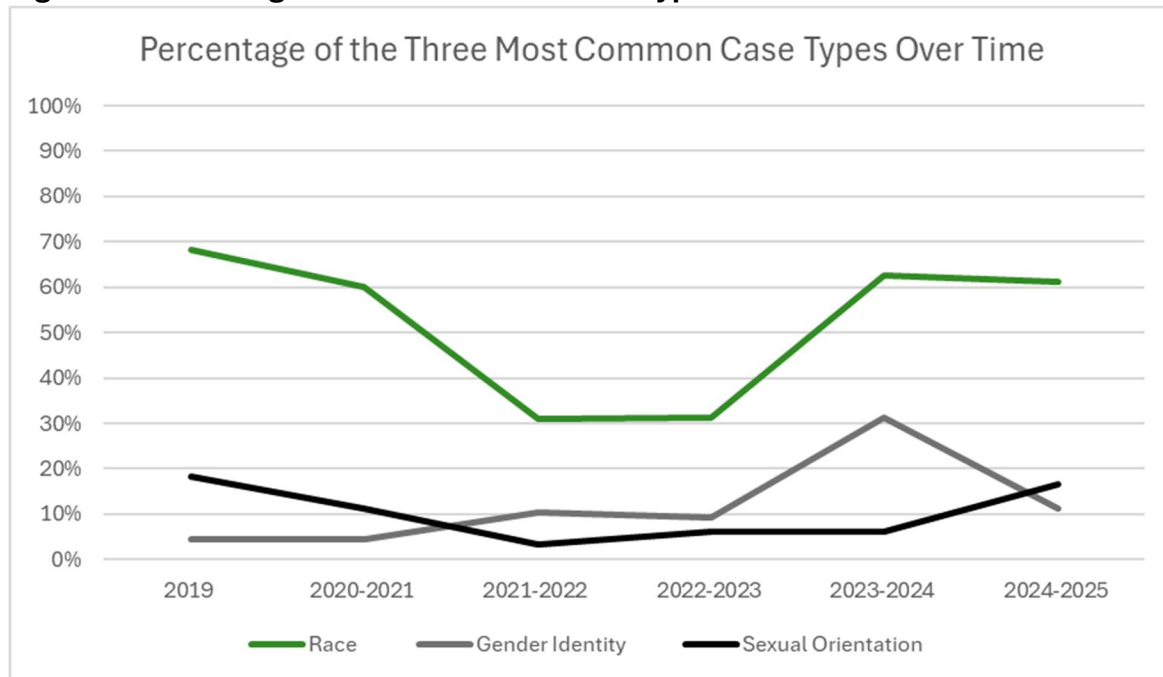


Figure 2. Actual percentage of three most common types of cases over time

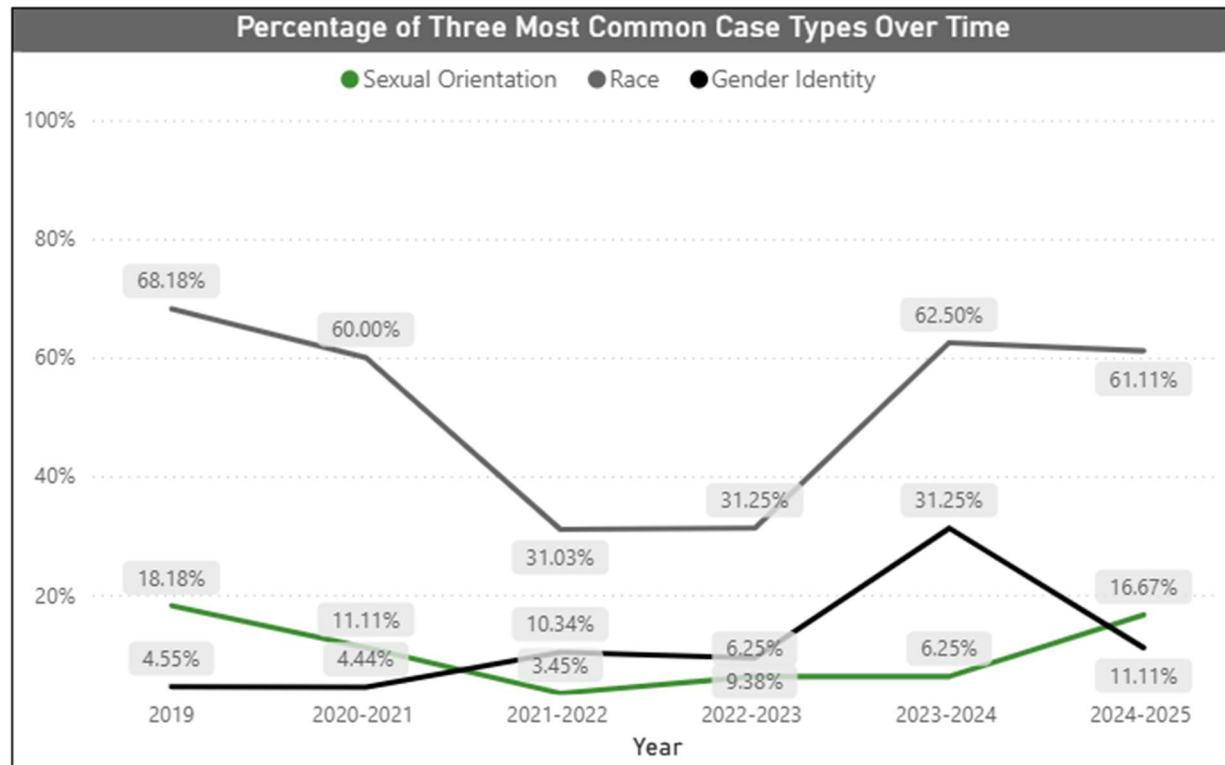


Table 1. Summary of the number of reports in each category over time.

	2019	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Race	15	27	9	10	10	11
Gender Identity	1	2	3	3	5	2
Sexual Orientation	4	5	1	2	1	3
National Origin	1	5	5	3	0	0
Language	0	1	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	0	2	4	0	1
Political	0	0	0	0	0	2
Body Size	1	1	0	0	0	0
Disability	0	2	2	2	0	0
Age	0	2	2	0	0	0
Other	0	0	5	4	0	1
Various	0	0	0	4	0	3
Total	22	45	29	32	16	18

*3 Reports were in multiple categories. The reports in the various category are distributed in their additional categories. The “Total” row is the actual number of reports reviewed and not a sum.

Date: August 21, 2024

Basis of Bias: Gender

Location: Residential Building

Summary: A student was making sexist comments about the intelligence of women and uncomfortable comments about their bodies

Summary of Response: This case was referred to Title IX.

Date: August 30, 2024

Basis of Bias: Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation (various)

Location: CUB and Academic Buildings

Summary: Flyers with a rainbow flag and a cancel symbol over the rainbow were posted and passed around. This was perceived as threatening and offensive to LGBT students.

Summary of Response: The group of students posting the flyers were contacted, and flyer posting policies were shared. The out of policy flyers were removed.

Date: September 10, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Residential Building

Summary: Sexually explicit images and threatening language were sprayed on a historically black sorority sign and plot table

Summary of Response: This case was referred to Public Safety.

Date: September 11, 2024 (Three reports on the same case)

Basis of Bias: Gender Identity

Location: Academic Building, Social Media

Summary: A new flyer was created for an event that contained an image of a transgender activist with a cancel sign over the face, and a thumbs down over the trans flag

Summary of Response: This case was referred to Community Standards because the flyer violates a policy that the organization was previously told about.

Date: September 16, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Residential Building

Summary: Student traveled out of town and returned to find the door to his apartment ajar. Student discovered missing items and learned that his roommate stated that he does not "like Black people."

Summary of Response: This case was referred to Residential Living and Learning

Date: September 19, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Residential Building

Summary: Racist language was used towards a student during an intramural football game.

Summary of Response: This case was referred to Community Standards because it involved physical aggression, verbal abuse, and the throwing of an object.

Date: September 20, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Academic Building

Summary: There were concerns that a student was making racially- based comments to another student. The student was given the option to report to BEST or Community Standards.

Summary of Response: Student medically withdrew. The case will be held. If alleged returns to Stetson, reporting student will have the choice to revisit the case.

Date: October 17, 2024

Basis of Bias: Other/Unknown

Location: Academic Building

Summary: Inflammatory language was discovered on a whiteboard in a classroom in an academic building.

Summary of Response: This was an anonymous report. BEST reached out to the listed email to no avail.

Date: October 31, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Academic Building

Summary: A complaint was filed alleging that a faculty member made discriminatory remarks to a student concerning an academic assignment.

Summary of Response: A follow-up meeting was held by BEST with the student to determine appropriate next steps. The matter will be monitored with faculty intervention scheduled based on ongoing assessment of the situation.

Date: November 7, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Academic Building

Summary: A complaint was filed alleging that a staff member engaged in racial profiling of Black students regarding access to an academic building.

Summary of Response: Since the report involved a staff member, it was referred to HR to handle.

Date: December 3, 2024

Basis of Bias: Religion

Location: CUB

Summary: A request was submitted for more inclusive holiday displays to better represent diverse religious observances.

Summary of Response: BEST shared the concern with the CLaSS leadership team, and the leadership team discussed and brainstormed ways to be more inclusive of religious holiday displays.

Date: December 7, 2024

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Residential Building

Summary: A student's car was vandalized with derogatory language and a racial slur.

Summary of Response: BEST sent follow-up communication to the affected individual. No response was received. The case was referred to Public Safety.

Date: January 12, 2025

Basis of Bias: Sexual Orientation

Location: Off Campus

Summary: An anonymous report was received alleging that a student used a sexual slur.

Summary of Response: Multiple attempts to contact the student were unsuccessful.

Date: January 15, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Campus Restaurant

Summary: Two students filed a complaint alleging that another student made racial comments in response to a peer dancing to ethnic music.

Summary of Response: The reporting student met with a BEST team member to discuss support needs and requested educational intervention with the reported student. An educational conversation was conducted during which the reported student did not recall making the alleged comments but acknowledged they were consistent with possible behavior. The reported student recognized the hurtful and insensitive nature of such comments and offered to apologize to those affected.

Date: January 22, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: CUB

Summary: Students in organizational attire were reportedly subjected to inflammatory comments regarding Middle Eastern issues.

Summary of Response: Student declined additional support services but agreed to report future incidents to the Dean of Students. Alternative reporting resources (Reportit site) were provided.

Date: February 6, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Social Media

Summary: A student reported being rejected from a Greek organization's recruitment based on their race.

Summary of Response: Follow-up contact attempted with no response received.

Date: February 11, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Academic Building

Summary: Student reported that a professor presented racially generalized and discriminatory content.

Summary of Response: Direct intervention was attempted by the reporting party. The individual involved indicated they believe the matter is resolved.

Date: February 11, 2025

Basis of Bias: Political

Location: Academic Building

Summary: Student reported alleged discriminatory comments by a professor and concerns regarding excused absence policies.

Summary of Response: Administrative consultation occurred with referral to support services. The matter was resolved through dialogue resulting in mutual understanding.

Date: February 16, 2025

Basis of Bias: Gender

Location: Residential Building

Summary: An anonymous report alleged that explicit sexual content was displayed on student doors in a residential building.

Summary of Response: Due to anonymous reporting, no specific remedy recommendations were provided. BEST members met with residents in the affected rooms for reflective conversations regarding posting policies. Students were directed to remove the materials or relocate them to private spaces in compliance with the Guide to Residential Living.

Date: February 28, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: Residential Building

Summary: A student resident requested lockout assistance from the on-duty RA. During subsequent text communication, the student sent a racial slur, then immediately deleted the message. The RA questioned the message, and the student responded with "Okay." The RLC referred the RA to the ReportIt form.

Summary of Response: Student declined to attend scheduled meeting and disputed responsibility for the reported communication.

Date: March 3, 2025

Basis of Bias: Sexual Orientation

Location: E-Learning

Summary: Student reported discriminatory comments in E-learning class communication that negatively impacted LGBTQ+ students.

Summary of Response: Multiple communication attempts made with no response from student.

Date: March 16, 2025

Basis of Bias: Political

Location: Academic Building

Summary: Student reported feeling targeted by classmates following their response to a class question and alleged the professor failed to intervene.

Summary of Response: A BEST member contacted the student, who requested a late course withdrawal. The college Dean approved the withdrawal. The student expressed concerns about classroom management.

Date: March 25, 2025 (Two reports on the same case)

Basis of Bias: Race

Location: CUB

Summary: Student reported concerns that another student allegedly used a racial slur regularly in conversations.

Summary of Response: Direct intervention was attempted by the reporting party. The individual involved believes the matter is resolved but remains open to mediation by BEST if needed.

Date: April 9, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race/Gender (various)

Location: Academic Building

Summary: Student reported alleged discriminatory treatment by IT staff that interfered with completion of academic coursework. The incident raised concerns about equitable treatment of students of color in campus technical facilities.

Summary of Response: BEST member followed up and never received a response from the student.

Date: April 14, 2025

Basis of Bias: Race/Sexuality (various)

Location: Social Media

Summary: Student reported for posting discriminatory content on social media that violates university conduct policies.

Summary of Response: Matter resolved through educational intervention with agreement to modify future conduct.

Date: April 14, 2025

Basis of Bias: N/A

Location: Residential Building

Summary: Student reported roommate for substance policy violations.

Summary of Response: Matter referred to appropriate reporting office.