



## **COMMUNITY MANAGER**

**Updated November 2019**

### **Responsibilities of the Community Manager**

The Community Managers serve three main purposes:

- Mediating interpersonal conflict between staff members as it affects Argus business
- Serving as a resource for issues of sexual misconduct and discriminatory harassment in the workplace
- Intervening in perceived office tensions or conflicts, even when no staff members have reported a problem, if they consider it appropriate

The reporting system applies to interpersonal dynamics that affect comfort and safety in the Argus office. The Community Managers are not trained to be counselors; their responsibility is to manage Argus-related problems. In the cases of sexual misconduct, Community Managers will treat anything said to them as private and will not discuss with the staff. Editors in Chief will be informed and involved if there is an interpersonal conflict, unless there's a conflict of interest and is specifically requested otherwise. Community Managers will be educated in resources available to students and will offer relevant resources to the Argus staff. They will also be trained in mediating conversations regarding interpersonal conflict.

By default, the partner Community Manager(s) will be made aware of any reports, but the member of staff who is bringing forth a concern has the option to make information private from another Manager when a conflict of interest might arise. (Going forward, the concerned staff member will be referred to as the “reporting person.”) Interpersonal conflict—*not* those involving harassment or misconduct—will automatically involve EICs. In cases in which there may be a conflict of interest if an EIC were involved, however, the Community Managers have the option to make the information private. With decisions such as suspension or expulsion (from the Argus), the larger group (EICs and Community Managers) will be included, members of staff will be notified of staffing changes as it pertains to their Argus work, and the reporting person will be kept anonymous. If someone raises a concern about an EIC and/or a Community Manager, the case will be handled by the other individuals.

General conflicts should follow the discretion of the person reporting a problem to the Community Manager, including issues of disrespect, professional disagreement, or workplace incompatibility. These issues will be resolved on an individual basis. The reporting structure as it pertains to issues of sexual misconduct and discrimination should fall in line with the [Argus](#)

[Community Guidelines](#) and the [University's Code of Non-Academic Conduct](#), pages 7-15 in the Student Handbook.

The Community Managers can be contacted either in-person or via email. Staff should always feel free to approach Community Managers one-on-one.

At the beginning of each semester, the Community Managers and EICs will undergo training and schedule Bystander Trainings 101 and 201 for new staff members.

### **Speaking With a Community Manager**

If a member of staff would like to speak with a Community Manager, they can reach out over email to one or both of the Community Managers, or can approach a Community Manager in person. Contact information for Community Managers is listed on the staff page on the Argus website.

Those who want to speak with Community Managers can choose to bring people for support, who are affiliated or unaffiliated with The Argus. They can choose to meet with one Community Manager or multiple Community Managers. They can also ask for one or both EICs to be present.

For those who want to send an email about an issue to a Community Manager, they are encouraged to answer as many of the following questions as is comfortable:

- What can you tell the Community Manager about your experience?
- Who is involved?
- When did this occur?
- When would you like to meet with a Community Manager?
- Is there anyone else you want to come to an initial meeting that you'd like the Community Manager to contact?
- Are there other resources you'd like to use? (Resources are listed on the [SACE website](#). Community Managers can further explain each of these resources.)
  - Office of Equity & Inclusion, Deputy Title IX Officer
  - Counseling And Psychological Services
  - Office of Survivor Advocacy and Community Education
  - Public Safety
  - Moderated/open discussion with Argus staff
  - Women and Families Center
  - New Horizons
  - Middletown Police Department
- Is there anything else you would like the Community Manager to know?

### **Action on the Part of Community Managers**

When a Community Manager receives an email from a reporting person, they will respond to set up a time, and offer to include other Community Managers and/or one or both EICs.

The Community Managers, and EICs if they're involved, can help find solutions for any issues that come to them. *In cases of interpersonal conflict*, these can include:

- Facilitating a discussion between the involved parties, or offering a discussion facilitated by an outside party
- Mediating a conversation with the whole section, if it is an intra-section problem
- Switching sections to decrease contact between the individuals involved

*In cases of sexual misconduct*, these can include:

- Offering a discussion facilitated by an outside party, such as Johanna DeBari, a SACE Office intern, or someone from the Title IX office
- Switching sections to decrease contact between the individuals involved
- Temporarily suspending an editor
- Demoting an editor to staff writer
- Removing the editor from staff altogether

If a reporting person wishes to go through Title IX proceedings against an editor or staff writer, both parties should be moved from their positions as necessary to eliminate conflicts of interest. The Argus will work to accommodate the No-Contact Order by having an editor switch sections, having involved parties edit remotely, or finding an alternative solution that is agreed upon.

If the responding party is found responsible through Title IX proceeding (i.e. the person against whom a complaint is levied), the Community Managers and EICs may suspend the party temporarily or indefinitely. If temporarily suspended, the individual has an opportunity to return to staff, contingent on the comfort of the reporting person. The reporting person's comfort does not mean that the individual will necessarily be able to return if there are broader concerns about the comfort and safety of the staff.

In the event of any punitive action, other members of the editorial staff will be notified when it affects their Argus responsibilities. Community Managers and EICs will not divulge why a person is being suspended in order to protect the reporting person. The reporting person can, of course, share what they wish with whomever they want.

Community Managers will also keep records of any issues that were brought to them or that they intervened in as they progress. These records will all be completely anonymized and depersonalized. (This includes but is not limited to names, genders, and section positions of the involved persons.) The Community Managers will file information in a spreadsheet, which will be shared with the CMs only. This information will include, at a minimum: approximate dates of incidents, actions taken on the part of the Community Managers to mitigate or solve the problem,

and strategies that helped/hindered resolution. Other relevant information, still depersonalized, will also be included.

### **Training, Eligibility, and Elections for Community Managers**

At the beginning of each semester, EICs will coordinate an all-staff meeting, mandatory for editors, to discuss the [Argus Community Guidelines](#). Staff members who are not editors will need to agree to these guidelines before joining the staff.

Staff members of The Argus who are involved in editorial or production are eligible to be a Community Manager: section editors, assistant section editors, production managers, layout editors, head layout editors, copy editors, head copy editors, photo editors, and assistant photo editors. Note that EICs are not eligible for the position of Community Manager.

At the beginning of each year, EICs will send out a Google form asking if staff members are interested in being a Community Manager. If more than three people are interested, another Google form, listing the people who expressed interest, will be sent to staff members in the above-listed roles to elect two Community Managers. If exactly three people indicate interest, all three will become Community Managers.

During any in-person meeting with a reporting person, the Community Manager will:

- Inform the reporting person about who will be told about their report (other Community Managers, potentially EICs), and confirm that the person doesn't perceive any conflicts of interest
- Discuss potential solutions and further actions with the reporting person
- Provide access to or more information about resources
- Offer to put the individual in contact with the Office of Equity & Inclusion, Deputy Title IX Officer, Office of Survivor Advocacy and Community Education, Counseling and Psychological Services, Public Safety, or any other resource

Community Manager Training will occur once a semester. Both Community Managers and EICs will undergo training. The training will involve:

- Learning about resources for survivors including the Title IX process, how to best talk to survivors about their options, self care, when to intervene from Johanna DeBari
- Getting training in conflict resolution, code of non-academic conduct, with Deputy Title IX Coordinator Debbie Colucci
- Attending Bystander Training 101 and 201
- Receiving Process Advisor Training, if/when it's offered
- Participating in additional opportunities as they arise

At the end of each semester, Community Managers and EICs will meet with Johanna DeBari and Debbie Colucci again to discuss issues that have arisen over the course of the semester.

Community Managers should use both DeBari and Colucci for guidance as they feel is needed.

## **Best Effort Timeline**

Aim for the week before orientation, or before classes go into session

Meetings at the beginning and end of each semester

Bystander Intervention Trainings scheduled at the beginning of each year

### **Resources:**

- The University's Ombudsman: Israela Brill-Cass (specialist in conflict mediation)
  - Email: [iabrillcass@fixerr.com](mailto:iabrillcass@fixerr.com)
  - Provides services only to faculty and staff but may be a good person to reach out to for advice/tips about the role.
- Professor Sarah Ryan
  - [sryan@wesleyan.edu](mailto:sryan@wesleyan.edu)
  - Taught a class in conflict resolution