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| College of Agriculture and Life Sciences | |
| Initiative Number 2 – Civil Rights Training and Compliance | |
| 1. Inclusive Excellence Dimension(s) | B - Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations |
| 2. Constituent Group(s) | C – Faculty Members; D – Staff Members; E – Others (VCE Volunteers) |
| 3. Initiative Description | CALS recognizes the importance of diversity and inclusion in the development and delivery of its Extension (VCE) and Research (VAES) programs. USDA also has specific civil rights expectations in the areas of identifying needs, setting priorities, allocating resources, selecting and assigning staff, conducting programs, and getting feedback. In order to meet these expectations, CALS has created a set of civil rights educational modules and internal civil rights compliance review procedures. The purpose of the training and compliance audits is to increase awareness and understanding of civil rights responsibilities in order to remain in compliance with all federal and state civil rights laws, VT policies, and USDA guidelines. But the ultimate goals of our efforts are that it will result in expanded access to VCE and VAES programs and services to under-represented client groups, and will promote a culture of non-discrimination and one that values differences in our clients, volunteers, and employees. To date, over 800 faculty and staff in all 12 campus-based CALS departments, 107 Unit offices, 11 ARECs, and six 4-H Educational centers have participated in the civil rights training. Peer-reviewed internal audits have taken place with all VCE Unit offices, 4-H centers and ARECs. All new VCE/VAES employees are required to participate in the training, but existing employees are also expected to continue their training after three years using new training content. |
| 4. Rationale | A 2007 USDA Civil Rights compliance review of VCE and VAES identified training on civil rights, and diversity and inclusion as an area that needed greater emphasis. This and the fact that the makeup of the Commonwealth’s citizens are rapidly becoming more diverse, motivated CALS to put greater emphasis into insuring that our programs truly are inclusive and that diversity in our clientele, and volunteer base is valued. |
| 5. Design | Based on research and consultation with USDA, peer Land-Grant institutions, and VT office of Equity and Access, training modules and other resources were developed, and procedures were put into place. Due to the distributed nature of VCE and VAES, an online training approach was created as the primary delivery method. It was supplemented by face-to-face trainings. All VCE and VAES faculty and staff are expected to avail themselves to training every three years. New modules are currently being developed as the first three year period is coming to an end. Internal compliance reviews are scheduled for every CALS unit once every 5 years. |
| 6. Responsibility | Joe Hunnings, CALS Director of Civil Rights Compliance |
| 7. Accountability | Dr. Edwin Jones, Associate Dean and Director of VCE |
| 8. Timing | This is a continuing initiative that was started in 2011. |
| 9. Measures | New and revised modules developed. Records are maintained on all employees’ participation in training activities. Internal compliance review documentation is shared with Units, with subsequent follow-ups made by Unit supervisors. |
| 10. Outcomes | Internal reviews have shown a higher level of awareness, understanding, and compliance on expected practices and recordkeeping. This has resulted in Units making positive strides in expanded access and inclusion of clients and volunteers. |

1. Inclusive Excellence Dimension – (a) Access and Success, (b) Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations, (c) Education and Scholarship, (d) Institutional Infrastructure
2. Constituent Group – (a) Undergraduate Students, (b) Graduate/Professional Students, (c) Faculty Members, (d) Staff Members, or (e) Other
3. Initiative Description – describe the initiative, citing the Inclusive Excellence Framework Dimension
4. Rationale – describe the original or current motivation for this initiative
5. Design – summarize the steps/actions to be taken, resources consulted, and process of implementation
6. Responsibility – designate an individual/group who has or will directly performed the work
7. Accountability – designate the unit leader who is responsible for initiative
8. Timing – describe the timeframe of the initiative (new or continued); target date(s) for progress/completion
9. Measures – assessment and other forms of data collected from or about the constituent group, to measure the efficacy of the initiative
10. Outcomes – describe the expected results