

**STRATEGIC  
PLAN**

**FY 2005-2010**

**FOR**

**THE  
OFFICE OF  
EQUAL  
OPPORTUNITY  
PROGRAMS**

## **SECTION I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs was created by the President of the University to administer the University's Affirmative Action Program and to ensure that applicants for employment, employees, prospective and enrolled students at the University of South Carolina are provided equal opportunity and are protected against illegal discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, and veteran status. The President has mandated that qualified individuals be afforded equal opportunity in both employment and academic instruction. The President has appointed an Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs who is responsible for planning, developing, administering and evaluating the University's equal opportunity/affirmative action policies and practices to ensure compliance with both federal and state statutes relating to non-discrimination in employment and education at the University of South Carolina.

In order to achieve the President's mandate of providing equal opportunity in both the workplace and educational environment, and supplement the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs' current activities, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs has developed an aggressive training and education program directed toward the faculty, staff and student body. In that regard the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is committed to achieving the President's mandate and has as its' primary purpose and mission the prevention and elimination of discrimination in both the workplace and educational environment. In order to achieve this mission, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs over the past four years has prioritized training and education as an essential element of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs' strategic plan. During the next five years the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs will continue to focus on training and education for our staff and faculty. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs will continue to use its' resources to develop and implement ongoing interactive training and educational programs that are specifically

designed to reach all of our administrative, supervisory and non-supervisory employees as well as our faculty, staff and students who request training. In addition, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs shall continue to modify and update our internal operational investigative procedures to ensure they provide due process for persons alleging complaints of discrimination as well as those accused of illegal discrimination.

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is **strongly oriented toward prevention**. We believe that the University can avoid and significantly limit its exposure and liability by ensuring equal opportunity and promoting affirmative action and by pursuing an aggressive training and education course of action. We believe that through ongoing education, training and the monitoring and review of all complaints in a timely manner, we will be able to prevent and eliminate discrimination and foster an environment that truly ensures equal opportunity for all persons who utilize the University's services.

## **SECTION II: MISSION STATEMENT**

The primary mission of the University of South Carolina, a multi-campus system serving the entire state of South Carolina, is the education of the state's diverse citizens through its endeavors of teaching, research and service.

In this regard the University of South Carolina, the state's flagship university, provides equal opportunity and affirmative action in education, employment and programs for all qualified persons and applicants regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status. The President of the University has mandated that the University will provide equal opportunity and affirmative action in employment, education and all programs offered throughout the University of South Carolina. The President has designated this function, as well as the ADA Title II, Section 504 and Title IX implementation and coordination to the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.

The President has appointed an Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs who is responsible for planning, developing, administering, monitoring and evaluating the University's compliance with federal and state statutes relating to equal opportunity, affirmative action and non-discrimination in employment, education and programs at the University of South Carolina. The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs has been provided with support staff to implement the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action program and related activities.

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, in effect, serves as an integral part of the University of South Carolina and exists for the overall purpose of supporting the University (at all campuses) in accomplishing its priority mission of providing quality teaching, research and service to the citizens of South Carolina as well as our faculty, staff and students regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

### SECTION III: ANNUAL REPORT – FY 2005-2006

The following outlines the goals, objectives and accomplishments within the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.

A. **Complaints of Discrimination:** Complaints are processed in a timely manner (60 to 90 days).

The following outlines the complaints of discrimination that the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs handled during the last calendar year. (Average complaint processing time 65 to 68 days.)

<b>COMPLAINTS 2005-2006</b>
52

B. **Training** – Provide on-going EEO Training to Faculty and Staff.

The following outlines the training sessions provided by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs during the last calendar year. Training Programs included EEO Laws and Application, Sexual Harassment Prevention, How to Comply with the ADA, Diversity In the Workplace and Unclassified Employee Recruitment.

<b>Training Sessions Conducted in 2005-2006</b>
47
<b>Number of Attendees</b>
2,376

C. **Research and Support Services Activities During FY 2005-2006:** (Provide support services for the University in EEO and Affirmative Action arena.)

1. Complete revision of manual ***“Strengthening Academic Excellence Through Affirmative Recruiting, Spring 2005.”***

*In association with various offices, (Provost, Human Resources, University Publications, Printing. etc.) the EOP office completed and revised the EOP Recruitment Manual and distributed it to all vice presidents, deans, department chairs and academic heads. Additionally, the EOP Recruitment Manual is distributed to all search committees of which the EOP Office is requested to staff.*

2. Complete revision of Recruitment Resources Manual ***“Affirmative Action Recruiting Sources, Spring 2005”***.

*Revisions completed, Resources Manual produced and distributed to deans, department chairs and academic heads, etc.*

3. Complete “Applicant Information Report” on all campuses for the S.C. Human Affairs Commission (hereinafter referred to as SCHAC).

*Completed and report submitted.*

4. Complete EEO Progress Report (Proviso) for SCHAC on all campuses as required by the General Assembly [also known as Goal Achievement Report].

*Completed and report submitted.*

5. Complete revisions for SCHAC’s Affirmative Action Plan as well as Goal Achievement Report (Proviso).

*Completed and submitted.*

6. Complete revisions on state’s OHR system for census codes for SCHAC.

*Completed and submitted.*

7. Complete VETS100 Report for all campuses as required by the federal government.

*Completed and report submitted.*

8. Formally advise deans/department chairs and/or other heads of search committees of areas of underutilization in their respective areas, some of which may require data searches.

*Completed and submitted all requests made to EOP Office.*

9. Complete annual reports for the Access and Equity Program as required by the S.C. Commission on Higher Education.

*Completed and submitted.*

10. Other areas of the research and support services activities which were undertaken:
  - a. Served as liaison to the S.C. Professional Association for Access and Equity (SC-PAAE) and worked on a statewide annual conference as coordinator.
  - b. Served as liaison for the university to the S.C. Commission on Higher Education (CHE) on Access and Equity.
  - c. Served as liaison for the EOP Office with Human Resources on Affirmative Action Plan to comply with SCHAC's requirements.
  - d. Served as EOP Office's liaison for university committees (Network Managers meetings, Budget Officers meetings, etc.)
  - e. Regularly briefed various search committees defining the EOP Office's guidelines for recruiting of deans, department chairs and other administrators.
  - f. Met with various individuals concerning recruitment, EEO and affirmative action issues as requested.
  - g. Provided affirmative action training and support services as requested.
  - h. Attended professional development training with regional and national associations – received certification on Affirmative Action Plan Development.

#### **D. Faculty Recruitment Activities:**

##### FACULTY RECRUITMENT COORDINATION

July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006

Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs has monitored/completed EEO reviews of 140 faculty searches during the period of July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006 and 64 of those were closed so departments could proceed with the hiring paperwork.

\*The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs specifically reviewed all tenured track faculty searches as well as administration searches. Currently there are approximately 80 positions under review and 15 closed as of November 1, 2006.

**E. Other Related Activities:**

1. Coordination of the annual Martin Luther King Celebration for the University.
2. Provided Access and Equity Coordination for the University with the S.C. Commission on Higher Education.

## **SECTION IV: STRATEGIC GOALS**

The primary goals as established by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs for the next five years focus upon providing ongoing training and education throughout the University for persons who hold key administrative, managerial and supervisory positions. These administrators, managers and supervisors are key players in ensuring that the University is able to continue to meet the President's mandate of ensuring equal opportunity and promoting our ongoing affirmative action program.

Through ongoing training and education, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is committed to increasing the level of awareness of all administrative, managerial and supervisory employees (staff and faculty) and in so doing reduce the University's exposure to liability as it relates to possible discrimination complaints in both the academic and employment arenas. Through training and education we shall continue to reassess how we recruit, promote, and retain faculty and staff. Accordingly, we believe we will improve our overall affirmative action posture and truly foster an environment that is free of illegal discrimination.

We have prioritized training and education and, pursuant to our charge from the President, will address focused basic training in the following areas with our faculty and staff who have supervisory authority:

1. EEO policies and procedures that govern higher educational institutions.
2. ADA training and compliance in both the employment and academic arenas.
3. Affirmative action recruitment and compliance as required by the S.C. General Assembly & the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP).
4. Recognizing and preventing illegal racial, ethnic and sexual harassment in both the employment and academic arenas.
5. Value and promotion of diversity in higher education.
6. Ethics in employment.
7. Equal access to educational opportunities.

## 8. Provide Diversity Training on an on-going basis for faculty, staff and students.

It is the goal of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to provide training during the next five years that will supplement our educational program and provide a minimum of 3 hours of training for all administrative, managerial and supervisory employees on an annual basis. We further believe basic EEO and Affirmative Action training should be required for all academic and non-academic managers, as well as all supervisory personnel. We propose that the individuals holding these key positions will become certified upon completion of this training and shall be appropriately recognized by the University.

It is the goal of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to schedule training for all administrative, managerial and supervisory personnel within the University on a quarterly basis to accommodate schedules. As a result of providing training to these key individuals, the University will be in a position to demonstrate its' commitment to equal opportunity by incorporating this certificate of training into the rating objectives (EPMS) for all managerial and supervisory personnel.

During the past fiscal year, as reported by the S.C. Human Affairs Commission to the General Assembly, we achieved an overall level of goal attainment of 75% as it relates to our overall Affirmative Action Plan. For the next five years we would like to project an overall level of goal attainment of at least 80% to 85%. We believe this is achievable, and that through focused training and education [specifically targeting recruiting areas], we will be able to move our administrative, managerial and supervisory faculty and staff in the direction of helping us achieve our projected level of overall goal attainment over the next five (5) years.

## **A. ASSESSMENT**

In assessing the present state of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, the unit's strengths clearly rest with the experienced staff and support personnel. The units' Executive Assistant has approximately twenty-five (25) years of administrative and supervisory EEO experience and a training background in both EEO law and affirmative action law. The two senior staff persons in the unit have more than twenty years (20) years of combined experience including both EEO investigative training and affirmative action training. The unit's weaknesses can best be described in the context of supply and demand. There is a tremendous demand from the University for the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to provide ongoing EEO training and affirmative action assistance. In addition, our intake of formal and informal complaints has increased. This is due in part to the level of knowledge and awareness the faculty, staff and students now have as it relates to the purpose and function of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. The University of South Carolina employs 1,827 full-time faculty and 4,168 full-time staff [includes unclassified administrators (*Source: IPEDS Fall Staff Survey, 2005*)]. The University, throughout all its campuses, has a total of 31,339 undergraduate students and 8,887 graduate and professional degree seeking students (*Source: USC's Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment for Fall, 2006 as of October 18, 2006*). Presently, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs' staff is not equipped nor staffed to the level that we can expeditiously respond to the level of requests that are being made for training, affirmative action assistance, and internal review and resolution of formal and informal complaints.

Accordingly, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs has added a full-time diversity employee who can assist with training and work directly with the campuses in handling equal opportunity and diversity support.

Approximately 60 to 65% of those persons requesting training, and targeted for training, have been provided basic EEO and affirmative action training during the past fiscal year. This means that 35 to 40 percent of those persons needing basic EEO and affirmative action training still have not been reached. Additionally, less than 10% of our targeted student population has been reached, and most of the non-supervisory faculty and staff have not been given any basic EEO, affirmative action or diversity training. As a higher educational institution, it is imperative that the entire faculty and staff be given some basic exposure to EEO, affirmative action and diversity training.

Given the current staff and budgetary constraints we operate under, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs as part of the strategic plan, we will use our web site to provide basic information about the functions of the office. This web site provides basic information about the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, the procedures for EEO complaint processing, affirmative action status reporting and the current affirmative action trends in higher education and at the University. Over the next five (5) years, we propose to continually expand our web site and provide more hands-on, basic EEO and affirmative action information to the faculty and staff, as well as EEO training on how to comply with the ADA, and how to prevent illegal harassment within the university environment. We want to expose every faculty and staff member, as well as our targeted student population, to the services that the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs provides to the University. We believe that through the use of existing technology we will be able to reach the faculty, staff and targeted students and provide the training needed. We believe that by continually exposing our faculty, staff and targeted student population to basic EEO, diversity and affirmative action training and education we will be able to significantly alleviate potential discriminatory complaints and continue to improve our affirmative action posture throughout the University and on the regional and four-year campuses.

## ***B. ACTION PLAN***

The goal of providing equal opportunity and affirmative action training and education to the University community (at all its campuses) is a mammoth task and one that we realize will not be fully achievable within a period of 1 to 2 fiscal years. We shall continue to provide and offer basic equal opportunity and affirmative action training to all administrative and supervisory faculty and staff this fiscal year.

It is conservatively estimated that there are approximately two hundred administrative and supervisory members of the faculty (i.e. administrators, deans, associate deans, department chairs and supervisory personnel) and 600 managers and supervisory personnel who make up the staff throughout the University.

In reaching these individuals and providing this training we have identified those persons who fit the profile as administrative and supervisory members of the faculty and staff by name, position, area of responsibility and location.

Those persons previously trained during the 2005-2006 fiscal year were assigned personal identification numbers which have been used by the University to track the supervisory training that those individuals have received. A record of this training is maintained by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs and the Division of Human Resources' Training and Development Office. In addition, we will continue to coordinate our training efforts with the Division of Human Resources' Training and Development Office and utilize the expertise they have available. We shall maintain a record of all EEO training and this shall be made a part of each participant's official training record, and hopefully will become a part of each supervisors' EPMS.

Currently all training is being conducted on a quarterly basis and the use of in-house teleconferencing will continue to be a major vehicle for the delivery of all training. Dates and times for the various types of training offered during the 2006-2007 fiscal years, and ensuing years shall

be disseminated to the faculty and staff in advance which should allow for planning, scheduling and maximum participation on all campuses of the University.

Another important function of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is the recruiting process. The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs (or his designee) regularly presents an EEO overview to search committees to assist their recruiting efforts and goals. During the 2005-2006 fiscal year, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs revised the manual ***“Strengthening Academic Excellence Through Affirmative Recruiting.”*** This booklet has been developed as a reference manual for search committees and other individuals responsible for academic recruitment and selection and has been provided to all academic deans. This manual provides guidance and assistance to those involved in the academic hiring process. We believe this document will serve to heighten the awareness and the importance that our recruitment decisions have upon our affirmative action/equal opportunity posture at the University of South Carolina. Additionally, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs will continue to make site visits to areas in the University where recruitment is occurring. We hope this will serve as an informative and supportive function for those areas involved in the academic hiring process.

## SECTION V: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs currently employs five full time employees (four professional level and one administrative support person) as well as a part-time, temporary employee (the former Research Administrator). The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is responsible for the investigation of all internal and external EEO complaints. In addition, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is responsible for the monitoring and updating of the University's Affirmative Action Plan and reporting requirements to the S.C. Human Affairs Commission, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), as well as other reports for the federal government (i.e., the U.S. Department of Labor's VETS-100 report). The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs also serves as a key liaison [affirmative action resources role] for all faculty search committees, and is the liaison to the Access and Equity Program of the S.C. Commission on Higher Education (CHE) for the University. These activities are all mandated by state and federal laws and are considered as ongoing and required functions of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. Given these required responsibilities we have also, during the past fiscal year, been heavily involved with providing basic EEO training and education to our supervisory faculty and staff. We have been successful in providing this basic EEO training at no cost to the faculty and staff by utilizing the current employees on board. However, given the number of supervisory faculty and staff still in need of EEO training and education, as well as the tremendous demand from the faculty and staff for additional specific EEO training and education, we cannot continue to fulfill our other ongoing responsibilities and provide the level and quality of training that is required without additional resources. We believe that **an ounce of prevention** (training and education) **is worth a pound of cure**. Accordingly, we will continue to prioritize training and education as an essential element of our strategic plan over the next five years. For the 2004-2005 fiscal year, we added one additional professional level employee with a training and planning background who is

responsible for using existing technology and University resources to make our training and educational program more viable and readily accessible throughout the University. We believe that by filling this position and through the use of existing technology, such as teleconferencing, we can establish basic and specialized EEO training and educational programs on all campuses of the University. We believe this will greatly enhance our training and educational capacity and will greatly improve our affirmative action posture and significantly reduce our risks and liability as it relates to possible complaints of discrimination throughout the University. We believe that by being proactive we can move to prevent and eliminate discrimination and truly achieve the President's mandate of non-discrimination and equal opportunity throughout the University.

This resource assessment has been made after careful review of the current state of affairs of the University from an EEO and affirmative action compliance perspective. This assessment covers a period of three (3) fiscal years and we believe accurately reflects a need for ongoing basic and specialized EEO training and education for key administrative and supervisory personnel.

In addition, by prioritizing and making EEO training and education an essential element of our strategic plan we believe that we will be able to eventually offer both basic and specialized EEO training to other state agencies and the private sector on a fee-generating basis. If we are successful in achieving this objective we project that this will provide enough revenue to eventually fund the position of the employee responsible for EEO training and education within the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs.

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*November 15, 2006*