

Overview of The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (USC)

A. Executive Summary of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs was created by the President of the University as an administrative office to administer the University's campus wide, ongoing equal opportunity/affirmative action program, promote diversity within the student body, faculty, and staff, and to ensure that applicants for employment, employees, prospective and enrolled students at the University of South Carolina are provided equal opportunity, access and equity and are protected against illegal discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation and veteran status in all academic and administrative units.

Vision of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

The ultimate goal of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs is to create and maintain an environment at the University of South Carolina where equal opportunity in employment and academic programs prevail regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation and veteran status. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs works to ensure the University is able to avoid and significantly limit its exposure and liability to possible legal issues in employment and the academic programs by ensuring equal opportunity, and promoting affirmative action and diversity.

In order to achieve the President's mandate of providing equal opportunity in all academic and administrative units, 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 order to achieve this, the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs has prioritized training and education as an essential element of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs' strategic plan.

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs uses 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.

Mission Statement of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

The primary mission of the University of South Carolina is the education of the state's diverse citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and service, and in so doing continue to be an economic engine to improve the state's overall economic, social and educational status. The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs plays a vital role in ensuring

that this mission is achieved by serving as the lead administrative department at USC in promoting and advocating equal opportunity, diversity, access and equity and affirmative action in education, employment and sponsored university programs campus wide for all qualified persons and applicants regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation and veteran status.

How Mission and Vision are Linked

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 mission of providing teaching, research, creative activity, service and ensuring a great quality of life to all in the University community regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation and veteran status.

Annual Goals

1. Prevention, elimination, and prompt resolution of EEO complaints within the University of South Carolina and its system campuses.
2. Continue to upgrade and expand the USC EOP Office's equal opportunity and diversity training program for faculty, staff and students and add a link that can be accessed through The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs website by working closely with the University of South Carolina's Technical Services Division.
3. Continue to work with the USC Graduate School to ensure the University is able to attract and graduate a more diverse student population in all disciplines/areas of the Graduate School as part of our Access and Equity Program.
4. Provide current statistical reporting data for the University of South Carolina to ensure mandatory compliance and timely reporting to both federal and state compliance agencies.
5. Increase the diversity of the University faculty by supporting the Provost's efforts to remedy underrepresentation in various disciplines campus wide, and to ensure compliance with the letter and spirit of state and federal recruitment laws.
6. Provide staff support to the Office of the President in the coordination of community service activities as relates to the President's Community Advisory Committee, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative celebrations and other community service activities.

Annual Goals

Goal 1

Prevention, elimination, and prompt resolution of EEO complaints within the University of South Carolina and its system campuses.

Initiative 1

Expand the existing network of support between USC Legal Department, the USC Division of Human Resources and the USC EOP Office campus-wide by establishing campus/departamental liaisons to address complaints in a more timely manner.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

- *Provide additional training and establish EOP liaisons on each university campus on EEO/Diversity issues.
- *Timely review and processing of all complaints within 60 days.
- *Continue to develop our no-fault mediation process to reduce complaints at the lowest levels during the fiscal year on all campuses.

Results

- ❖ The EOP Office offers training on a college/departamental basis within individual colleges/departments. This has been very successful in making faculty and staff aware of EEO rules and regulation and meeting faculty and staff on their turf.
- ❖ When a complaint is filed, the EOP Office has instituted a policy that all parties are offered mediation within 5 days from when the complaint is filed. This has greatly reduced processing time and often provides quick resolutions.
- ❖ In Fiscal Year 2010-2011, the EOP Office processed 11 complaints to closure and provided 40 pre-complaint counseling/reviews to potential complainants. Every complaint was processed in less than 60 working days.

Goal 2

Continue to update and expand the USC equal opportunity and diversity training program for faculty, staff and students so that diversity training can be accessed on-line through the USC Office of Equal Opportunity Programs' [EOP Office's] website.

Initiative 2

* Develop a diversity training program that is designed to reach faculty, staff and students campus wide through on-line interactive modules within the current fiscal year.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

*Incorporate the current diversity training program into a web-based format with various training modules.

*Success will be determined by the number of faculty, staff and students who successfully complete the program over the next twenty-four months.

Results

- ❖ The EOP Office is working with the UTS department on expanding our current web site on diversity training.
- ❖ The EOP Office created and developed a Diversity Resources manual and it has been activated on the office's web site for viewing by faculty, staff and students.
- ❖ The EOP Office during the 2010-2011 fiscal year has successfully conducted a minimum of thirty-two [32] hands-on diversity training sessions this year.

Goal 3

Continue to work with the USC Graduate School to attract and graduate under-represented (African-American) students as part of our Access and Equity Program.

Initiative 3

*Develop a strategy to attract more underrepresented students (African-Americans) for the USC Graduate School (PhD and Masters Programs).

*Develop a strategy to improve retention and improve graduation rates for underrepresented students (African-Americans) pursuing PhD and Masters degrees in USC's Graduate School.

*Work with the African-American Professors Program to improve retention and graduation rates for underrepresented students (African-Americans) in USC's Graduate School.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

Retention and graduation rates will be monitored and coordinated with the USC Graduate School and improved each year for the targeted population.

Results

- ❖ On a regular basis, communication is established with the Graduate School to ensure access and equity for targeted underrepresented minority students pursuing masters and terminal degrees (Ph.D.s).
- ❖ The S.C. Commission on Higher Education's Access & Equity Program, implemented to assist in the matriculation of underrepresented minority students, was not funded for FY2010-2011 and has been totally cut from the FY2011-2012 budget by the legislature as well. However, CHE is maintaining the program though it is unfunded.
- ❖ The EOP Office's strategy has been to seek other resources and financial support for underrepresented masters and doctoral students, thus allowing them to concentrate on their studies. Degrees awarded in the Fiscal Year [FY] 2009-2010 for underrepresented (African-American) graduate students [includes masters, specialists and doctoral degrees awarded] **increased by 6.25%** from the previous academic year. Data from the Institutional Assessment & Compliance "Fact Book" reveals for the FY 2009-2010 a total of 255 degrees were awarded; FY 2008-2009 a total of 240 degrees were awarded; for FY 2007-2008 a total of 212 degrees were awarded; and for FY 2006-2007 a total of 200 degrees were awarded to African-American graduate students [professional degrees excluded].

Goal 4

Provide current statistical reporting data for the University of South Carolina to ensure compliance, and timely reporting to both federal and state compliance agencies.

Initiative 4

*Continuation of ongoing statistical reporting for the University of South Carolina to ensure compliance.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

All statistical reports are submitted in a timely fashion and approved by state and federal compliance agencies on behalf of the University of South Carolina, thus ensuring grants and contracts are not negatively impacted.

Results

- ❖ Completed and submitted documents for the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs [OFCCP] in conjunction with the Division of Human Resources and the Legal Department. [Reports successfully completed, with OFCCP continuing to request additional information throughout the year – OFCCP onsite audit review.]
- ❖ Completed and submitted the Goal Achievement/EEO Progress Report [i.e., “Proviso Report”] to the S.C. Human Affairs Commission. [Successfully approved.]
- ❖ Completed and submitted the Applicant Information Report to the S.C. Human Affairs Commission. [Successfully approved.]
- ❖ Completed and submitted the VETS 100 Report to the U.S. Department of Labor. [Successfully approved.]
- ❖ Completed and submitted the “Response to Proviso Report” to the S.C. Human Affairs Commission. [Successfully approved.]
- ❖ During the year, successfully completed approximately 15 “underutilization reports” requested by departments and search committees reference major searches.
- ❖ Provided other statistical reports as requested and completed all necessary financial reports requested in compliance with the Budget Office in a timely manner.

Goal 5

Increase the diversity of the University faculty by supporting the Provost’s efforts to remedy underrepresentation in various disciplines campus wide and to ensure compliance with the letter and spirit of state and federal recruitment laws.

Initiative 5

*Maintain current data and records of faculty searches at USC as well as maintaining two manuals which assist faculty recruitment university-wide.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

All faculty searches at USC will be recorded in a timely manner and information coordinated with the Office of the Provost. All inquiries concerning faculty recruitment will be maintained per state and federal law. All resource manuals will be updated on an as needed basis to comply with state and federal law.

Results

- ❖ The EOP Office, within the past fiscal year, has successfully worked with the Office of the Provost to continue to review and update all policies and procedures impacting faculty searches.
- ❖ The EOP Office has worked with the Provost to continuously provide current data and to update recruiting guidelines to ensure university, federal and state policies are provided and are applied in an equitable manner by all deans, department heads and search committees.
- ❖ During the past fiscal year, the EOP Office's staff completed over 65 notice letters to deans/department chairs notifying them of specific recruitment practices and procedures for searches.
- ❖ During the past fiscal year, the EOP Office provided EEO Data Reporting Forms and EEO Data Tabulation Sheets to over 35 departments who were closing out their search processes.
- ❖ During the past fiscal year, the EOP Office's Executive Assistant has served on both the Diversity Initiative Task Force Committee and the Focus Carolina Committee.

Goal 6

Provide staff support to the Office of the President in the coordination of campus wide community service activities as relates to the President's Community Advisory Committee, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Celebrations and other community service activities.

Initiative 6

*Coordinates, assists, and maintains specific programs to promote diversity and community outreach needs.

Action Plan/Indicators of Success

Activities are intended to expand and encourage innovative programs, resource opportunities and cooperation within the community, allowing supportive relationships to develop among all persons that the University serves.

Results

- ❖ The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs provided staff support for the President's Community Advisory Committee and provided resource information to assist the committee in its official capacity as it relates to USC community outreach activities and services.
- ❖ The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs chaired the university's annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Commemorative Celebrations which were successfully received by the public. Additionally, the EOP Office's staff worked diligently to contribute to the success of the overall celebrations on the campus impacting faculty, staff, students and the general public.

- ❖ The EOP Office's staff coordinated the annual BTW Service Weekend activities, a community outreach program in the African American community recognizing the significance of the Booker T. Washington educational legacy and its historical relationship with USC.
- ❖ The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs has also served as a liaison to the President's Office for women and minority initiatives on behalf of the university.
- ❖ The Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs has also served on the Diversity Initiative Task Force Committee to establish a system wide strategic plan for diversity as an integral part of Focus Carolina.