

# COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

Policy Name: Diversity & Equal Opportunity Policy  
Policy Owner:  
Responsible University Office: Office of Legal Affairs, Ethics, and Compliance  
Approval Date:  
Effective Date:  
Revisions:  
Policy Number: None  
Related Policies:

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## I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

Columbus State University (CSU) supports the principles of equal opportunity and diversity in employment and education. CSU seeks to ensure that no person will encounter discrimination in employment or education on the basis of age, color, disability, sex, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran's status. This policy is applicable to both the employment practices and administration of programs and activities within CSU.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**A. Discrimination-** Decision-making based on protected categories of race, ethnicity, ancestry, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetics, veteran status, or any other category protected by law.

## III. POLICY SECTION

It is the policy of CSU that no person shall be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or in any way be subject to discrimination in any program or activity at CSU.

CSU applies this commitment to all employment and educational practices, including but not limited to, recruitment of staff and students, admissions, hiring and training procedures, advancement and retention policies, and curriculum/course materials. More specifically, CSU is committed to diversification of all its internal divisions by race and gender. This commitment stems not only from legal and moral considerations, but also from a conviction that an institution of higher learning is enriched by the presence of diversity and that narrow cultural biases serve to limit rather than enhance its teaching, research, and service functions.

Compliance with this Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy is the responsibility of all administrators and others whose duties are related to any personnel decisions regarding employees and students. Further, it is CSU's obligation to fully participate in the implementation of all applicable federal, state, and local laws dealing with nondiscrimination.

CSU, in its dedication to equal opportunity and non-discrimination, has assigned overall responsibility for related monitoring and reporting procedures to the Office of Legal Affairs, Ethics, and Compliance. It is the mission of the Office of Legal Affairs, Ethics, and Compliance to eliminate discrimination in the workplace through:

- 1) the promotion of equal opportunity in employment through compliance with the federal, state, and local civil rights employment laws,
- 2) education and outreach, and
- 3) the fair and voluntary resolution of disputes.

Established procedures are in place which allows complaints of alleged discrimination to be investigated and resolved. Any questions or concerns may be addressed to the Office of Legal Affairs, Ethics, and Compliance.

#### **IV. PROCEDURES**

**A. Overview:** These complaint procedures are promulgated in the hope that their accessibility, simplicity, speed, and high standards of fairness will encourage employees and students to choose the internal forum over an external one in seeking redress of perceived injustices.

- 1. Coverage:** These procedures apply to all complaints which may arise in matters of general personnel administration and matters involving the rights provided under Title VII which directly affect the personal interests and well-being of an individual employee or student. Complaints which are covered exclusively under provisions in a valid collective bargaining agreement remain subject to those provisions.
- 2. Eligibility:** Any employee or student believing that he or she has been discriminated against through the action of another employee, a supervisor, a teacher, or other person acting for the institution, may bring an informal complaint under these procedures.
- 3. Interpretation of Coverage:** Where a dispute exists as to whether a particular matter is subject to coverage by these complaint procedures, CSU reserves the right to make the final judgment on that question, through the President.

## **B. Grievance Procedures**

- 1. Statement of Purpose:** CSU has established the following complaint procedures to demonstrate its commitment to nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or status as a Vietnam veteran.
- 2. Responsibilities:** Any member of the University community, who believes he/she has been discriminated against, may file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer. The EEO Officer is responsible for conducting investigations of alleged discrimination and sexual harassment complaints.

Any employee or student may at any time contact the EEO Officer for purposes of advice, discussion of an alleged discrimination complaint and/or assistance in undertaking a formal or informal resolution of a complaint. An investigation leading to a formal determination will normally be undertaken by the EEO Officer or his/her designee upon receipt of a written complaint. If there are multiple reports of allegedly illegal harassment or discrimination or of a single allegation of particularly grievous harassment or discrimination, the EEO Officer may, after consultation with the President, (or President's designee), initiate an investigation in the absence of receipt of a written complaint.

Complaints should be submitted as soon as possible after the alleged discrimination has occurred in order to permit prompt and equitable resolution. In situations that require immediate action, because of safety or other concerns, the University may take any necessary action (e.g. suspension with pay) in order to facilitate the investigation. The investigation shall be completed as thoroughly and expeditiously as possible.

Any University staff and/or faculty member in a supervisory role has the duty to report to the EEO Officer any known alleged sexual harassment and/or discriminating behavior based on sex, race or other basis that creates a hostile environment, whether or not a complaint has been made by an alleged victim.

A complaint of alleged discrimination, including sexual harassment, against the University President should be filed with the chair of the University Board of Trustees. Complaints against the EEO Officer should be filed with the President, who will appoint a neutral party to carry out the role of the EEO Officer as outline below.

## **C. Complaint Procedures**

Complainant will be asked to complete an in-take form which will include a description of the alleged discrimination and the nature of the remedy desired. Any investigation may be assigned by the EEO Officer to the EEO Officer and/or any appropriate designee.

A private interview will be conducted by the Coordinator with the complainant.

The Coordinator will notify and interview the person(s) named in the complaint (respondent) to apprise them of the charges and afford them an opportunity to respond.

The investigation by the Coordinator will include interviewing witnesses, collecting documentation, and seeking any additional information necessary. In conducting the investigation, the Coordinator shall have unrestricted access to all pertinent materials, records, reports and documents in possession of any University personnel, and shall be afforded the opportunity to interview all persons possessing relevant information.

The Coordinator may assist in the informal resolution of the complaint. With the consent of both parties involved, the Coordinator will arrange for information to be shared between the parties regarding applicable issues and appropriate remedies. Failure to reach a resolution will result in the continuation of the investigation.

The Coordinator will prepare and forward a written report of the investigation and findings to the EEO Officer. The EEO Officer will then determine whether there exists substantial evidence to support the alleged complaint.

A final written determination, setting forth the EEO Officer's decision will be sent to both the complainant and the respondent.

A review of the final determination of the EEO Officer may be requested of the President.

Complainant has the right to file with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) at any time during an investigation. Be aware that the EEOC has time limitations for filing a charge of discrimination.

Any retaliatory action taken by a CSU employee against a complaining party as a result of that party's seeking redress under these procedures is prohibited and shall be regarded as a separate and distinct cause for complaint under these procedures. It is a violation of this policy for anyone to knowingly make false accusations of discrimination or harassment. Failure to prove a claim is not equivalent to a false allegation. Sanctions will be imposed for making false accusations of discrimination or harassment.

## V. RELATED BOARD OF REGENTS' POLICIES

### A. [Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity](#)

## VI. LINKS

- A. [Age Discrimination Act of 1975 \(Age Act\), 42 U.S.C. §§ 6101 et seq.](#), and its implementing regulation, [34 C.F.R. Part 110](#), which prohibit discrimination on the basis of age by recipients of FFA from the Department.
- B. [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 \(Section 504\), as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794](#), and its implementing regulation, [34 C.F.R. Part 104](#). Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of Federal financial assistance (FFA) from the Department.
- C. [Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(Title II\), as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 et seq.](#), and its implementing regulation, [28 C.F.R. Part 35](#). Title II prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities.

- D. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 100 which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin by recipients of FFA from the Department.
- E. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et seq., and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 106, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in any education program or activity operated by a recipient of FFA from the Department.

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