

Equal Opportunity Office (EOO)

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1. *What does your signature mean on the electronic hiring forms when you are searching for a new faculty or staff member?*

Your signature represents that you have ensured that the search process has followed the appropriate equal opportunity guidelines, and if you are searching for a position in an underrepresented job group, that proactive outreach efforts to attract diverse applicants have been undertaken. The Department Chair reviews all paperwork related to the search to ensure that it is within departmental and college parameters and passes the electronic “Request to Recruit” form forward to the Dean for final signature approval.

2. *What do you do if someone brings you an EO issue or you become aware of one?*

If a student, faculty, or staff member voices a concern to you that is related to a legally protected category [e.g., race, religion, disability, sex (including sexual harassment), national origin, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status or creed], then you should refer the individual to the EOO. Depending on how upset the individual is, you may contact the office, or walk the individual to the EOO yourself. Make sure your Dean is aware of this situation. We do not advise you to attempt to resolve these types of issues yourself, without consulting with the EOO.

Be aware that these issues are at times presented in very subtle forms. Also, if a supervisor (this includes Department Chairs) “knew or should have known” about a potential EO discrimination issue/concern, and chose to ignore it or not take it seriously, there could be liability for him or her.

3. *What do you do if someone brings you an EO issue and asks you to keep it in confidence?*

Because the law requires a supervisor to address a discrimination issue if he/she “knew or should have known” about it, then the supervisor (in this case the Department Chair) must address it. While we respect an individual’s privacy, there are supervisory obligations to not ignore potential discrimination. If the individual indicates at the beginning of the conversation that she/he wants you to keep her or his issue confidential, you should explain your inability to do this and can refer the student, faculty or staff member to a counselor or the Employee Assistance Program.

4. *If you get a new faculty or staff member in your department, what EO training is available and is any EO training required?*

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training is required of all faculty and staff and you should provide a list of your new employees to the Dean's Assistant. This person will contact the EOO to set up the training. Other EO and diversity-related training is available to Department Chairs and their faculty and staff, as well as to any other group on campus. These trainings include, but are not limited to: valuing diversity; issues of sexual orientation; religious discrimination; disability awareness; etc. The EOO can also develop EO-related training to address your particular needs.

5. *In addition to training, what other resources does the EOO offer for you that would be helpful?*

The EOO is integrally involved in the search process and is here to assist you. EO staff brief each faculty and professional search committee at the onset of the search to ensure that all equal opportunity and affirmative action guidelines are followed. The EO staff is available to you for assistance throughout the duration of the search.

The EOO also has a small library on issues of protected category discrimination and diversity-related materials that is available for your use. In addition, each quarter, the EOO offers an internship to students who are interested in gaining experience in equal opportunity, affirmative and diversity areas, and we welcome your referrals of students.

The EOO is here to assist you to provide advice and assistance in dealing with any of the protected category areas as well as broader issues of diversity. We provide informal as well as formal resolution for those individuals who believe they have been the victim of discrimination, and can work closely with Department Chairs in an advisory capacity.