

## **WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT**

Western Carolina University emphatically states that it will provide equal employment opportunities for all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, gender identity or expression\*, sexual orientation\*, genetic information, veteran status, disability, or political affiliation, except where religion, sex, or age are bona fide job related employment requirements. This is in keeping with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Executive Order 11246, as amended, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1968 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, NC G.S. 1126-16 as amended, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) of 2008, and other applicable federal and state EEO and anti-discrimination laws or statutes.

In furtherance of this policy Western Carolina University will not tolerate unlawful harassment based upon the above classes or characteristics. Additionally, retaliatory action of any kind taken by any employee of Western Carolina University against any other employee or applicant for employment because that person filed a complaint or charge of employment discrimination, testified, assisted or participated in any manner in a hearing, proceeding or investigation of employment discrimination is prohibited.

To ensure that equal employment opportunity exists throughout the university, a results oriented equal employment opportunity program will be implemented to overcome the effects of past discrimination and to eliminate any artificial barriers to employment opportunities for all qualified individuals that may exist in any of our programs. All selection, hiring, and promotion decisions will be based on valid requirements that are job related and consistent with performance of the essential functions of the job.

This program shall ensure greater utilization of all persons by identifying the underutilized groups in the workforce (especially minority, female and disabled workers) and making special efforts to increase their participation in recruitment, selection, hiring, promotion, compensation, performance appraisal, disciplinary and grievance procedures, separations, and reduction in force, and any other term, condition, or privilege of employment. When necessary, Western Carolina University will provide reasonable accommodations for applicants and/or employees with disabilities when doing so will enable them to successfully perform the essential job functions of the job or benefit from training. WCU is also committed to preventing any harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, gender identity or expression\*, sexual orientation\*, genetic information, veteran's status or disability including sexual harassment.

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Program objectives and timetables shall be established to reduce and eliminate the underutilization of all groups through the equal employment opportunity plan and program. Responsibility for the development of this plan and program is assigned to the Director of Employment and Affirmative Action Programs. However, responsibility for the implementation of the EEO compliance program will be shared by all managers and supervisors.

The equal employment opportunity program will be evaluated and monitored continuously. Periodic reports on the progress of this program will be presented to the Chancellor by the Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity Programs.

Western Carolina University is committed to this program and is aware that with its implementation, positive benefits will be received from the greater utilization and development of previously underutilized human resources.

*\*Western Carolina University recognizes that the categories of gender identity or expression and sexual orientation are not protected categories under federal or state laws. By extending protection to these categories as an internal policy matter it is not the intention of the University to create any rights that either may be pursued or enforced off-campus, that extend to the employee benefits package made available by the State of North Carolina or other off-campus entities, or that interfere with the University's relationships with outside organizations, including the federal government, the military or private employers.*