Diversity Orientation Packet

For

New Faculty

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Strategic Plan for Diversity  
University of Missouri and Lincoln University Extension

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

University of Missouri Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension are engaged in a cooperative effort to ensure that people in Missouri have access to and participate in an education system where all can achieve their full potential. As land-grant institutions, we are committed to serving all of the people of Missouri. In particular, we want to ensure that diverse audiences are served by extension. (To view diversity by county, see http://oseda.missouri.edu/county_facts/index.html.)

A Diversity Catalyst team was named to develop and implement a strategic plan for diversity. Guided by a set of core values and a mission that embodies a commitment to diversity, the joint catalyst team designed a strategic plan that will lead to a positive workplace climate; increased workforce diversity; accessible programs and services; expanded audiences; cultural competency of the workforce; recognition and awards for those who exemplify the diversity ideals of both universities; and compliance with all university and USDA policies and with local, state and federal laws and regulations.

This comprehensive plan outlines goals to be reached within each area of diversity, expected outcomes to be achieved, action steps, performance indicators and a set of measures. It also identifies those who are responsible for each area of focus. In addition, timelines are established for meeting expected outcomes. A final component of this plan includes communication strategies for ensuring internal and external communication.

The plan focuses on statewide goals and a systemic approach. It is the responsibility of all within extension to carry out this plan if we are to be successful in achieving our land-grant mission. The 1862 Director of Extension and the 1890 Administrator for Land-Grant Programs assume overall responsibility for implementation of the plan.

II. DIVERSITY VISION
It is our vision that everyone has access to, and participates in, an educational system where all people can achieve their full potential.

III. DIVERSITY MISSION
It is the mission of the University of Missouri Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension, working in partnership with the people of Missouri, to create opportunities so that extension becomes an organization fully committed to diversity, meeting the needs of all individuals and communities through research-based education and information.
IV. CORE VALUES

Our practices will reflect the following values:

- **Diversity**: Value all and reflect the broad diversity of Missouri.
- **Equity**: Maintain fair access and treatment for all.
- **Respect**: Honor one’s self and others -- demonstrating our commitment to the full range of diversity in the world.
- **Integrity**: Behave ethically in our interactions and work practices.
- **Appreciation**: Recognize and cherish the unique and intrinsic value of each person.
- **Inclusivity**: Create a climate where everyone is welcome in our organization and can become engaged in our work.
- **Social Responsibility**: Give voice to the voiceless and power to the powerless.
- **Broad-based Research**: Provide cutting edge research and programming that is reflective of diversity issues.
- **Pro-activity**: Lead state efforts in diversity through our words and deeds through understanding the demographics of a changing society.
V. DEFINITION OF TERMS (For the purposes of this plan, working definitions are adapted from the National Change Agent States for Diversity Project.)

- **Diversity:** The full range of differences that occurs in individuals. This may include differences in racial or ethnic background, religion, gender, ability to speak English, sexual orientation or socio-economic level. Others may relate to one's disability, geographic location, veteran status or other differences.

In this plan, diversity includes, but is not limited to, the terms listed below:

- **Racial Background:** A group of people sharing a common origin, which distinguishes the group from other groups

- **Ethnic Background:** A group of people who share a unique social and cultural heritage

- **Religion:** Individuals who identify themselves as Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Atheist, Not Religious or in another way

- **Gender Identity:** The inner sense of being male or female, which includes one’s sense of self and the image that one presents to the world

- **Non-Native English Speaker:** People for whom English is not their first language

- **Sexual Orientation:** Inclusive of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people.

- **Transgender:** Individuals who blend gender identity, including cross-dressers, transvestites, transsexuals, intersexuals and androgynous persons

- **Socio-economic status:** People living with varying amounts of economic resources

- **Disability:** A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Examples of disabling conditions include, but are not limited to, blindness, diabetes, learning disabilities, deafness and psychological disabilities

- **Physical Characteristics:** People who do not fit the socially constructed “perfect” physique (e.g. too thin, too heavy, too tall, too short, etc.)

- **Non-traditional audiences:** Audiences that have historically been underrepresented in extension programming.
Underserved audiences: Audiences that are not served to the extent in which they are represented in the population (e.g. If 18 percent of the population is low socioeconomic level and the extension program audience is 2 percent of that population.)

Geographic location: Locations within the state – urban and rural.

- **Workforce:** The paid and unpaid workers at every level within extension.

- **Discrimination:** The individual or systematic, intended or unintended denial of recognition, power, privilege and opportunity to certain people based on their personal characteristics or the groups to which they belong.

- **AA/EEO:** “Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity.” It includes specified legal requirements for “nondiscrimination,” informal and formal processes to resolve complaints involving discrimination in employment, program practices or behavior in the workplace.

**VI. FOCUS AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DIVERSITY**

Focus will be placed on the following seven areas of diversity:

A. Workforce Diversity
   Expected Outcome - The University of Missouri Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension workforce reflects the diversity of the state.

B. Climate
   Expected Outcome – The extension workplace is welcoming to all.

C. Programs and Services
   Expected Outcome - Extension programs meet the needs of the people who live in Missouri.

D. Audience
   Expected Outcome 1 - Underserved populations will participate in, and benefit from, extension services and programs.

   Expected Outcome 2 - Funding sources for programming that serves underserved audiences are identified and equitably available and used when appropriate.

E. Professional Development
   Expected Outcome 1 - Extension faculty and staff will easily access useful information to learn more about working with non-traditional audiences.
Expected Outcome 2 – A comprehensive professional development program in the area of diversity will be designed to enable extension staff, council members and volunteers to be skilled and culturally competent.

F. Recognition and Awards
Expected Outcome 1 - Faculty will be recognized for work in the area of diversity

Expected Outcome 2: Individuals who implement changes are rewarded

G. Compliance

Expected Outcome – University of Missouri Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension are in compliance with all University and USDA policies, local, state and federal laws, regulations and executive orders.

Each faculty and staff member has a role in ensuring compliance. To learn more about

a) your Office Civil Rights File,
b) non-discrimination statement required for all Extension brochures and publications,
c) Program Complaint notification (http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/eeo-programcomplaints.aspx)
d) Affirmative Action Plans that you develop each year, and
e) sexual harassment and other training opportunities (http://extension.missouri.edu/hr/HR_Training_Presentations/index.htm),

see the Compliance website at http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/eeo-compliance.aspx

To learn more in general see the diversity website at http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/diversity.aspx.

If you have any questions or a complaint, please contact:

Julie Middleton, Ph.D.                      Yvonne Matthews, Coordinator
Director of Organizational Development    Human Resource Development Specialist
University of Missouri Extension           Lincoln University Cooperative Extension
109 Whitten Hall                           106 Allen Hall
Columbia, Missouri 65211                  Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
(573) 882-3407                             (573) 681-5536

Or

USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
University of Missouri Extension Affirmative Action/Employment Opportunity Policy

University of Missouri Extension Affirmative Action/Employment Opportunity Policy complies with the provisions of Title 7 - Agriculture, Subtitle A - Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, parts 15-15f and Part 18 (7 CFR 18) and with the University of Missouri's Collected Rules and Regulations Section 320.010.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The following is the approved non-discrimination statement to be used for all MU Extension brochures, publications, etc. It should be used in full whenever possible.

"Equal opportunity is and shall be provided to all participants in Extension programs and activities, and for all employees and applicants for employment on the basis of their demonstrated ability and competence without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, or status as a protected veteran.

For instances of limited space, such as letterhead, the following is acceptable.

"equal opportunity/ADA institution"

More information concerning each faculty and staff member's responsibilities may be found at http://extension.missouri.edu/staff/eeo-compliance.aspx.

Complaint procedure

University of Missouri Extension's Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Policy provides for prompt processing of complaints regarding employment status or condition through informal and formal procedures.

Complaints may be filed by current employees, former employees or applicants for employment (referred to as complainants) who believe that discrimination in employment has occurred or that an employment practice has or will result in discrimination. A complaint of general discrimination in employment practices also may be filed by an organization for current employees, former employees or applicants for employment provided that upon request of the vice provost of extension, the organization furnishes the names of individuals who are affected adversely by those practices.

A complaint is defined as:

1. An employee's, former employee's or applicant for employment's expressed dissatisfaction with, and request for redress from, discrimination on the part of management, which has affected the individual personally.

2. General discriminatory practices by an organization.
Complainants may file an informal or formal complaint. However, complainants are encouraged to use informal means of resolving complaints before pursuing a formal complaint.

**Informal complaint procedure**

The informal complaint procedure is outlined below:

1. Employee informs an EEO counselor (link to list of eeo counselors) of the complaint, in writing or in person. This may be the counselor in their region or another region.

2. The EEO counselor hears the complaint and immediately informs the person of the right to file a formal complaint with the MU Office of Human Resources (Link [http://hrs.missouri.edu/policies-and-procedures/equal-opportunity-affirmative-action/index.php](http://hrs.missouri.edu/policies-and-procedures/equal-opportunity-affirmative-action/index.php)) if they have a staff appointment, or with the MU Equity Office (link [http://equity.missouri.edu/](http://equity.missouri.edu/)) if they have a faculty appointment. They should also be informed that they may file a complaint directly with USDA at Office of Civil Rights, Director, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410.

Finally, they should also be informed that they may file an informal complaint with the Extension AA/EEO Officer. Before beginning the process, the EEO counselor should refer the individual to the appropriate web page that describes university policies and the grievance process.

3. If the individual decides that they do not want to file a formal complaint and desires to discuss the situation further with the EEO counselor the EEO counselor gathers facts through interviews with appropriate individuals and examination of pertinent records and documentation.

4. The EEO counselor may meet by phone or in person with the complainant to discuss possible solutions. The EEO counselor may meet with the complainant and others involved in the complaint separately or together — at the complainant's discretion. Depending on the nature of the problem, more than one meeting may be required to gather all information and clarify possible solutions. The EEO counselor may contact the EEO officer at any time in the process to discuss pertinent issues.

5. The EEO counselor should complete fact finding and meetings with all parties within a reasonable amount of time, usually within 21 days. If the issue cannot be resolved, on the 21st day, the counselor must remind the complainant in writing of their right to work directly with the Extension EEO Officer or file a formal complaint of discrimination. The individual may decide at any time to stop discussions with the EEO counselor and meet with the Extension AA/EEO Officer or file a formal complaint.

Once the situation is resolved, the EEO counselor sends a record of the informal complaint, circumstances surrounding the complaint and description of attempts to resolve the complaint to the AA/EEO officer. This documentation must be submitted within five calendar days of the final counseling session.


**Formal complaint process**

The formal complaint process may be found at: [http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/departments/gc/rules/grievance/](http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/departments/gc/rules/grievance/).
If staff, the formal complaint process may be found at http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/departments/hr/manual/502.shtml.

If faculty, the formal complaint process may be found at http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/departments/gc/rules/grievance/370/015.shtml.

**Protection of complainants, employees, witnesses and representatives from interference, intimidation and reprisal**

All employees are to be free from any or all restraint, interference, coercion or reprisal on the part of their associates or supervisors in making a complaint or appeal, in appearing as witnesses or in seeking information in accordance with these procedures. These principles apply with equal force after a complaint has been adjudicated. Should these principles be violated, the complainant may bring the facts to the attention of the AA/EEO officer so that appropriate action may be taken.

The Extension AA/EEO Officer works closely with the MU Office of Human Resources and the MU Equity Office to resolved complaints. (http://equity.missouri.edu/)