

Equal Opportunity



The University of Georgia
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences



Learning Objectives

- Equal Opportunity (EO) in UGA's CAES
- Legal context
- EO in Extension program development
- Individual responsibilities
- EO "Best Practices"



UGA CAES

Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences (working cooperatively with Fort Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the counties of Georgia) offers its educational programs, assistance, and materials to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation or protected veteran status and is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action organization.



Why Equal Opportunity?

We are the 1862 land-grant university in the state and a publicly funded institution. Because of this, we are subject to federal, state, and local laws regarding our day to day operations.



Legal Context

- Compliance with federal and state Civil Rights Laws with special emphasis on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964



Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

“...no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”



Title VI - “Non-Discrimination Law”

- Offer Programs to all based on Race, Color and National Origin
- Cannot exclude from participation
- Prohibits discrimination in Federally Assisted Programs
- Non-compliance results in loss of federal funds



Title IX - Education Amendments of 1972

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”



Equal Opportunity: People with Disabilities

- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 - Section 504: Non-discrimination
 - Section 508: Accessible Information Technology
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 1990
 - Federal antidiscrimination statute designed to remove barriers which prevent qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same employment opportunities and program services that are available to persons without disabilities



Who is Protected?

1. Individual with a physical, mental, or emotional impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
 2. record of having such an impairment
 3. regarded as having such an impairment
- Also cannot discriminate based upon an association with someone with a disability



Our Requirements

1. Cannot discriminate
2. Provide Program Access
 - Modifications to policies, practices, or procedures
 - Provision of auxiliary aids and services in order to ensure effective communication
3. Provide Reasonable Accommodations (in employment situations)



Accessible Information & Facilities

- Websites
 - Hyperlinks, etc.
- Emails
 - formatting, outline
- Documents & Publications
- Handicap Accessible Program Areas
- “And Justice for All” poster visible



Remember...

- Don't:
 - Make assumptions about a person's disability
 - Charge a fee for an accommodation
- Do:
 - Hold your events and meetings in accessible locations
 - Include an ADA accommodation statement on any registration materials, announcements, and publications



Who reviews UGA CAES to ensure compliance?



USDA – NIFA Equal Opportunity Staff in conjunction with the US Department of Justice



What do they examine?

- On-going Programs
- Program Accessibility
- All Types of “Mailing” Lists
- Office Facilities
- Advisory Committees (ELS)
- Public Notification
- Program Participation Data (GACounts)
- And More...



Potential Audience

- Potential recipients are persons or groups within your defined geographic area who might be interested in or benefit from the educational program.



Proactive Measures

- We're required to assure equal opportunity and to proactively serve historically underserved and underrepresented protected groups.
 - Women, Black or African Americans, Asians, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians & Other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics or Latinos



Proactive Measures

- Discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or veteran status (federal law and UGA policy)
- **All reasonable efforts** should be made to reach these protected categories due to past and present discrimination and the continuing impact of historical discrimination



All Reasonable Effort

Three steps are required to demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made--

1. the use of all available mass media
2. the use of personal correspondence and/or flyers or publications
3. the use of personal contacts (invitations to participate) by Extension staff



Program Accessibility

- Diversity of programs
- Diversity of participants
- Days/times of programs



EO Outreach in Program Development

- Understand demographics
- Recognize power and privilege within society and the community
- Be inclusive in seeking input
- Use expertise from Extension specialists
- Invite participation through special activities and personal contacts
- Hold meetings in accessible facilities



EO Outreach in Program Development

- Evaluation
 - Apply principles of inclusiveness
 - Use culturally competent and appropriate materials, data collection methods, and interpretation
 - Enlist diverse volunteers and partners
 - Solicit funding to reach traditionally underserved
 - Take advantage of appropriate technology
 - Partner with those who do not discriminate



Extension Leadership System

- In place & active
- Reflective of county demographics
- Serves on a rotational basis



Public Notification

- Obtain nondiscrimination information from partners
- Diverse media utilized
- Non-discrimination statement in media
- Special needs persons welcomed
- **All reasonable effort!**



“Mailing” Lists

- Race & Gender documented
- Minority lists
- Available to entire staff
- Updated regularly



Program Participation Data GACounts

- Planned & reported goals
- Accurate data recorded
- Data recorded timely



Individual Responsibilities

- Learn about the demographics of your county—Census, local data, local knowledge
- Define potential audiences for each program
- Work w/partners and stakeholders who represent and serve those protected by Equal Opportunity Laws to analyze situations
- Carry out *all reasonable efforts* to reach those who are representative of all the cultures, ethnicities, genders, and ages in your county in all stages of your programming



Individual Responsibilities

- Conduct meetings and educational sessions in facilities in welcoming and accessible locations and provide accommodations for people with disabilities
- Know where to find UGA and equal opportunity policies on the Web or in your county office
- Understand how to respond to a discrimination or harassment complaint



Individual Responsibilities

- Create a set of Equal Opportunity files
 - Demographics and Potential Audiences
 - Partner Information
 - Workplace Information
 - Special Outreach Activities
 - Equal Opportunity Documents
 - Equal Opportunity Action Plan



Valuing Equal Opportunity

- Equal Opportunity
 - Civil Rights, EEO, Affirmative Action, ADA Activities, Hiring a Diverse Workforce
- We value differences in people, ideas, programs and partnerships
- This guides educational programming and our relationships in the workplace and with our clientele
- International Opportunities w/ UGA IPSO



Equal Opportunity Goals

- Expand access to people from historically underrepresented or underserved groups
- Promote nondiscrimination and the valuing of differences among staff and clientele



Equal Opportunity Activities

- More sharing best practices in outreach to underrepresented audiences
- More education of colleagues about equal opportunity principles
- More stress on activities that expand access throughout the program development process
- Making connections with other efforts to promote nondiscrimination and valuing differences in staff and clientele



County Extension Offices to be reviewed?

- All offices will participate in self assessments
- Many offices will host on-site training/review



Should you require/desire further information:

www.caes.uga.edu/unit/hr/employment/

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