

# POLICY STATEMENT 11 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

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# POLICY DIGEST

Primary Monitoring Unit: Human Resources Secondary Monitoring Unit: Chancellor

Initially Issued: May 29, 2011 Last Revised: July 3, 2020

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#### I. PURPOSE

- 14 The purpose of this policy statement is to assert Louisiana State University at Eunice's
- 15 commitment to provide equal opportunity for all qualified persons in admission to, participation
- in, or employment in the programs and activities which the University operates without regard to
- 17 race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression,
- 18 religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status, as well as to
- 19 implement a procedure to address complaints for those who believe they have been subjected
- 20 to discrimination and/or harassment in violation of this policy.

#### II. POLICY

- 22 Louisiana State University at Eunice supports affirmative action and equal opportunity standards
- as set forth in the University's Affirmative Action Plan. The University's Affirmative Action Plan
- 24 requires that all employees and applicants receive fair consideration for employment and that all
- employees are treated fairly with regard to recruitment, promotions, demotions, transfers,
- 26 layoffs, furloughs, terminations, rates of pay and other forms of compensation, tenure, training,
- 27 and other employment practices. This policy statement also affirms the LSU Eunice's policy
- 28 regarding sexual harassment as outlined in the University's Policy Statements on Sexual
- 29 Harassment (PS-30) as well as its policies and procedures related to disability as established in
- 30 PS-44.
- 31 LSU Eunice complies with the provisions of Title IX. Title VI. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation
- Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VII, the Age Discrimination in Employment
- 33 Act (ADEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state law. The Office of
- 34 Human Resources Management and the Office of Affirmative Action/ Equal Employment
- 35 Opportunity are designated at LSU Eunice as responsible for coordinating the University's
- 36 compliance with these statutory provisions.
- 37 The University reaffirms and emphasizes its commitment to provide a workplace free from
- 38 discrimination and harassment and to provide a means to address complaints of discrimination
- 39 and/or harassment. LSU Eunice also reiterates its commitment and responsibility to protect its
- 40 employees and students from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation for participating in the
- 41 complaint process. This Policy Statement is not intended to infringe upon constitutionally
- 42 guaranteed rights nor upon academic freedom. In considering allegations of discrimination

- and/or harassment, the University must be concerned with the rights of both the complainant
- 44 and the accused.
- 45 All complaints of discrimination and/or harassment will be addressed. Substantiated cases shall
- 46 result in appropriate discipline or other corrective action. The severity of the disciplinary action
- 47 shall be consistent with the seriousness of the act of discrimination and/or harassment.
- 48 Additionally, under appropriate circumstances, the University may take action to protect its
- 49 employees and students from harassment by individuals who are not employees of the
- 50 University.
- 51 The Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors and all other supervisory employees are
- 52 responsible for assisting the University in the implementation of this policy.
- Anyone having questions regarding this policy or a complaint regarding a possible violation of
- 54 this policy should contact the Office of Human Resource Management or the Title IX/AAEO
- 55 Coordinator.

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#### A. Complaint Options

- Any member of the University community who believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment in violation of this policy has a right and an obligation to report the conduct to any University official, supervisor, or the Office of Human Resource Management, or the AAEEO Coordinator. No student or employee is required to report or make a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment to the person who is engaging in the problematic conduct.
- Because discrimination and harassment may involve a wide range of behaviors and is, in part, a function of the way in which such behaviors are perceived, the way in which a given incident is appropriately treated depends on its effect upon the recipient as well as upon the specific behavior itself. For example, simply informing the individual through verbal or written communication that the behavior is unwelcome and should cease may be sufficient to end it. If this is ineffective or the situation is such that an individual is unwilling or unable to deal with it in this way, other means of addressing such concerns are provided in this policy.
- To insure that situations that may involve discrimination and/or harassment are handled appropriately, Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors, supervisory employees and any other University officials who receive a complaint or who become aware of a possible violation of this policy will immediately notify the Office of Human Resource Management or the AAEEO Coordinator for advice and assistance on how to respond to the complaint (Science Building Rm. 120 phone: 337-550-1222). The Office of the Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for addressing complaints involving student on student harassment and/or discrimination when neither the accused(s) nor the accuser(s) are employees of the University.
- If an individual believes that he/she has been subjected to discrimination and/or harassment, the individual may make use of both the informal and formal resolution procedures explained below.

#### B. Complaint Procedures

#### 1. Preliminary Inquiry

The Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator (AAEEO) or designee shall conduct or supervise the initial review of the complaint, with such assistance, as needed and/or appropriate under the circumstances, from other campus administrators with responsibilities relevant to the nature of the complaint. A complainant or respondent has the right to a confidential advisor or an advisor of choice at any stage of this process.

 The initial review of the complaint shall be concluded as quickly as possible, within a reasonable amount of time required to complete the review in a manner that is adequate, reliable and impartial and based on the nature and complexity of the complaint. Generally, the initial review should ordinarily be completed within 15 business days of receipt of the complaint. The purpose of the initial inquiry is to determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe a specific policy/policies may have been violated. After completion of the preliminary inquiry, any initial determination that a policy has not been violated shall be made by the AAEEO Coordinator.

To ensure a prompt and thorough initial inquiry, the complainant should provide as much information as possible. A complaint may be submitted anonymously or by an individual who is not a party to the alleged violation. The following may, but is not required to be, provided in writing:

- a. The name of student(s) or employee(s) to include student organization, academic department, and position of the person(s) allegedly violating the LSU Eunice PS-11/LSU PM-55 Equal Opportunity policies;
- b. A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witness(es);
- c. If the complainant is an employee, the alleged effect of the incident(s) on the complainant's position, salary, benefits, promotional opportunities, work environment, or other terms or conditions of employment;
- d. The name(s) of other student(s) or employee(s) who might have been subject to the same or similar conduct; and/or
- e. Any other information the complainant believes to be relevant to the alleged discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

At any time after becoming aware of a complaint, the AAEEO Coordinator or other responsible party, may recommend that interim protections or remedies for impacted parties involved be provided by appropriate LSU Eunice officials. These protections or remedies for the parties involved or witnesses will be provided by appropriate University officials. Remedies may include issuing a timely warning to the campus community, separating the parties, placing limitations on contact between the parties, interim suspension from campus, or making alternative workplace, classroom, course scheduling, dining, or student housing arrangements. Interim measures may vary depending on the nature of the complaint, status of respondent, or other criteria. All parties shall be notified of the availability of these measures as well as the fact that such measures are put into effect.

#### 2. Confidentiality

All parties involved in a complaint, any investigation, and/or resolution, including witnesses, are encouraged to keep information concerning the complaint private until a final decision is rendered in order to protect both the complainant and the respondent. LSU Eunice may be required to divulge information on a need-to-know basis in order to properly address the complaint, when there is a threat to others, pursuant to subpoena, or other court or administrative order, or as may be required by applicable law. Violations of confidentiality by any other persons involved in the resolution, investigation or administration of the complaint, including any employee, faculty, staff, or student if identified and confirmed, may result in disciplinary or corrective action. Only individuals employed as mental health counselors, victims' advocates, university chaplains or others designated by the University as provided by law can guarantee confidentiality.

#### 3. Notice of Investigation

If, after the initial inquiry, the AAEEO Coordinator finds reasonable cause to believe a policy or policies may have been violated, an investigation shall be conducted. At any time during the investigation the matter may be referred, if appropriate under this policy, to the informal resolution process. If an investigation is warranted, then at the recommendation of the AAEEO Coordinator, a full investigation into the facts and circumstances of the complaint will ensue. The investigation may include in-person interviews with all parties involved, including witnesses and parties that the investigator(s) may deem appropriate. The investigator may also collect and review any documents or other relevant information to include but not limited to photographs, video recordings, and/or information from social media. Any such investigation shall be conducted by the AAEEO Coordinator or a designated trained person, authorized and assigned as an investigator by the AAEEO Coordinator and Chancellor, including, but not limited to, trained employees from Office of Human Resource Management.

The AAEEO Coordinator will notify the appropriate campus offices as necessary. Both the respondent and complainant will be provided written notice that an investigation will be undertaken as well as the nature of the complaint. The notice should include the specific section(s) of policy that may have been violated. All parties will have an opportunity to identify pertinent evidence to be considered by the investigator(s). The investigator(s) will author a written investigative summary to include a timeline of events, facts, and circumstances surrounding the complaint.

Upon completion of the investigative summary, the AAEEO Coordinator or designee, in consultation with LSU's Employee Relations (employees) or Student Affairs designee (students) will reach a finding based on a preponderance of the evidence or more likely than not that a policy was or was not violated. Prior to issuing a finding, the AAEEO Coordinator may request an additional investigation, if deemed appropriate. Upon issuance of a notice of investigation, any and all effort should be made to conduct a thorough and prompt investigation based on the facts and circumstances of each complaint ordinarily within thirty (30) business days of the notice. Complicated or extensive investigations may take longer.

After a full investigation, a determination that a policy has or has not been violated,

from a more likely than not or preponderance of the evidence standard, shall be made by the AAEEO Coordinator or designee, by admission of responsibility by the respondent or by the complainant's admission of making false charges against the respondent. Both the complainant and the respondent will be given written notice of the results of the investigation.

#### C. Resolution Procedures

In the event that a determination has been made that from a more likely than not or preponderance of the evidence standard that a policy has been violated, the University has both informal and formal resolution procedures to address alleged violations of this policy. Both procedures will be implemented by individuals who have received training on issues related to equal employment/opportunity misconduct. The complainant and respondent have the right to an advisor of choice or a confidential advisor at any stage of the Informal Resolution or Formal Resolution processes. Both informal and formal resolution procedures will utilize a preponderance of the evidence standard throughout the process, with respect to determinations as to whether, or not, there has been a violation of LSU PM-55.

As set forth below, an informal resolution procedure is available under certain circumstances. After a full investigation, or at the request of the parties as provided or if the respondent accepts responsibility for violation(s) of policy and if the investigator finds that reasonable cause exists to believe that University policy has been violated, the AAEEO Coordinator or designee will determine whether the informal resolution procedure is appropriate. If an informal resolution is not appropriate, a formal hearing by a panel of trained hearing officers will be scheduled, for situations involving student matters only. In situations involving an employee as a respondent, the AAEEO Coordinator or designee will determine the appropriate procedure to follow in consultation with Human Resources Department, LSU's Employee Relations Department and/or applicable campus administrator(s), and report recommendations to the Chancellor. If the AAEEO Coordinator or designee determines that informal resolution is appropriate, the complainant and respondent shall be advised of the option to pursue an informal resolution procedure. If both complainant and respondent agree in writing, the informal resolution procedure will be followed, without further investigation, unless and until informal resolution is unsuccessful.

#### 1. Informal Resolution

The use of the informal resolution procedure is optional and must be agreed upon by all parties involved. The informal resolution procedure will not be followed: if any of the persons involved in the complaint do not wish to engage in the informal procedure; if the AAEEO Coordinator deems the informal resolution procedure inappropriate for the alleged offense; if the respondent does not accept responsibility for the alleged policy violation(s); or, if an attempt to utilize the informal procedure has been unsuccessful.

Additionally, the parties may discontinue participation in the informal process at any time. Information obtained regarding the complaint and the investigative summary will be treated as private, with only those with a need to know being informed of the complaint. An attempt to informally resolve the complaint shall be made by the AAEEO Coordinator or designee and should be ordinarily concluded within fifteen

(15) calendar days of the decision to pursue informal resolution. Such informal resolution includes meeting with each party to the complaint; review of any initial findings; review or continuance of interim remedies; and any other actions deemed appropriate by the parties, and LSU's Employee Relations. Any further inquiry or review deemed necessary should be concluded in that same period.

Once the informal resolution procedure is complete, written notification of the determination of whether or not this policy(s) was violated will be provided to the complainant and respondent. If a determination has been made that a policy was violated, any changes in status, restrictions, limitations, or other recommended outcomes shall be given to all parties. Any party not willing to accept the proposed informal resolution has the right to make a written request, within five (5) calendar days upon receipt of written notification of the proposed resolution, to the office of the AAEEO Coordinator, thereby requesting the opportunity to pursue the formal resolution procedure set forth below.

#### 2. Formal Resolution

If either the respondent or complainant is not in agreement with the outcome of the informal resolution process or if the University, the respondent, and/or the complainant have not consented to and/or determined that informal resolution is inappropriate or insufficient, the formal procedure will be utilized. Upon submission of written notification by either the respondent or complainant to the AAEEO Coordinator communicating an intent not to accept the proposed informal resolution outcome, formal consideration will be given for a formal resolution process.

The complainant and the respondent will be notified in writing the specific section(s) of policy alleged to have been violated, and the date, time, and location of the formal resolution process. Information obtained regarding the complaint will be treated as privately as possible (as set forth herein) with only those with a legitimate educational interest being informed of the complaint and the outcome of the investigation. The formal procedure will consist of a formal review of all allegations, the initial complaint, supporting documents, investigative summary and corresponding documentation.

For complaints involving students as respondents, the formal procedure will consist of a panel of trained hearing officers as outlined in the code of student conduct and/or policy/policies governing student conduct. For complaints involving employees as respondents, the AAEEO Coordinator or designee, LSU's Employee Relations Department, and the Office of Human Resource Management and/or applicable campus administrator will direct the formal process of the investigation.

Each Campus shall adopt or utilize existing procedures to address alleged violation(s) of LSU <u>PM-55</u> that afford both the complainant and the respondent due process as well as appeal options and other procedural rights as outlined in University policy.

#### D. Resolution/Disciplinary Action

LSU Eunice will take appropriate action against any person found to be in violation of this policy. (Note: violations of this policy may also be subject to individual civil liability

under the state or federal law). When an employee is deemed to have violated this policy, the AAEEO Coordinator and the Office of Human Resource Management and/or applicable campus administrator will jointly determine the appropriate disciplinary action, or recommendation for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and/or LSU Eunice policies. The recommendation will be submitted to the Chancellor, who will make the final decision regarding the appropriate disciplinary action. For violations involving students, except when acting in the capacity of an employee, the appropriate campus office or administrator responsible for student conduct, student services or student life will determine the appropriate action, pursuant to any applicable code of student conduct and/or policy/policies governing student conduct.

In addition, to the extent possible, LSU Eunice will interact with appropriate law enforcement or third parties to address the actions of nonstudents or non-employees. Violations of this Policy may result in outcomes such as residential life contract cancellation, deferred suspension, suspension, expulsion, class only restriction (student) and/or disciplinary action or separation of employment.

#### E. Appeal

Either party may appeal the findings of the formal resolution process in accordance with existing University policies detailing appeal procedures for students or for employees. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the AAEEO Coordinator or designee within ten (10) business days upon receipt, by the appealing complainant or the appealing respondent, of notification of the outcome of the formal resolution process.

#### F. Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who has been subjected to equal employment/opportunity misconduct, or against one, who in good faith brings a complaint of equal employment/opportunity misconduct or who, in good faith, participates in the investigation of an equal employment/opportunity misconduct complaint, is prohibited; and shall be a violation of this policy and shall constitute misconduct subject to disciplinary or other action, as described above. LSU Eunice will take steps to prevent recurrence and remedy the effects of any violation of LSU PM-55.

#### G. Record Keeping

Records will be kept in accordance with Louisiana law and federal law. For students, records will be maintained for seven (7) years by the Dean of Students or other office tasked with the maintenance of student records, except in cases of suspension and expulsion, which records shall be permanent. Employment actions in violation of this policy will be maintained in the employees' respective Employee Relations file.

### H. Related Policies

To the extent other LSU or campus-based policies may conflict with <u>PM-55</u>, the provisions of PM-55 procedures shall supersede and govern.

#### Task Force

298 LSU Eunice shall establish a task force to address equal employment/opportunity. The task force shall invite student members to be represented through their respective student government body or other student organizations.

#### J. Amnesty Policy

LSU Eunice encourages reporting of equal employment/opportunity misconduct and seeks to remove barriers to an individual or group reporting such conduct. An individual or group who, in good faith, reports misconduct, either as a complainant or a third party witness, shall not be sanctioned for a nonviolent student conduct violation, at or near the time of the complained incident, provided that any such violation did not and does not place the health and safety of any other person at risk.

#### III. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The University, through its recruitment and employment policies, will recruit and employ qualified personnel for all its diverse activities and will provide equal opportunities during the selection process and employment without regard to race, color, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status. The following guidelines are designed to achieve the recruitment and placement objectives set forth in the University's Affirmative Action Plan.

- A. General Guidelines for Faculty, Classified, Other Academic, and Professional Positions
  - Position advertisements and selection criteria will be developed in direct relationship
    to job requirements, University policies (ex. LSU <u>PM-23</u>) and applicable University
    standards. Requests to create or fill vacant positions will include a position
    justification and proposed job description that will be submitted to the Office of
    Human Resource Management for review and additional administrative approval.
  - 2. The recruitment process shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the goal of attracting a diverse pool of applicants. For certain vacancies, this could include placing advertisements in appropriate sources to attract minority and female candidates. The Office of Human Resource Management serves as a resource to hiring departments in determining the most appropriate strategies for recruiting minority and female candidates for vacancies at LSU Eunice. The level and classification of the vacancy will determine the scope of recruitment activities. Most full-time faculty and senior professional vacancies should be advertised regionally and/or nationally. All ads must include the statement "LSU Eunice is an Equal Opportunity/Equal Access Employer." Advertisements may include a salary range. All advertisements, including the scope of advertising effort (i.e. local, regional, or national) and the advertising sources used, must be formally submitted to and approved by the Office of Human Resource Management prior to publishing.
  - 3. All vacant regular full-time and part-time positions will normally be publicized at least within the University to ensure that all interested and qualified employees are aware of opportunities for promotion or transfer. Internal promotions are strongly encouraged. Promotions to or in faculty rank must either result from a competitive external search or part of the formal promotion and tenure review process. Advertisement may not be waived.

- 340 4. The minimum time between publication of an ad and the application deadline for Classified/Civil Service positions is 5 calendar days, and 14 calendar days for all other positions. All vacancies should be advertised far enough in advance to attract an adequate applicant pool.
  - 5. All pre-employment selection procedures, including credential reviews, interviews and reference checks, shall be conducted without regard to race, color, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or veteran's status.
  - 6. The use of search committees to fill vacancies is encouraged. Every effort should be made to have diverse representation. This may include females and minority representation on search committees, as well as members of the department, representatives from the Office of Human Resource Management, external constituents, and/or members of other academic or administrative departments. (Note: For faculty positions, the use of search committees does not replace the requirement for a vote of the eligible voting faculty in accordance with LSU Eunice PS-12.)
  - 7. Records pertinent to the employment decision (ex., copies of advertisements, letters of application, resumes, replies to and from applicants, reference notes, interview notes, selection criteria) must be retained in the employing department for at least three years from the date the position is filled, and if not filled, three years from the date the posting/application period closed and made available to the Office of Human Resource Management upon request.
  - 8. Certain demographic information is collected from the applicant online at the point of application submission. To ensure accurate EEO data tracking and reporting, the hiring unit must indicate the applicant dispositions in the Applicant Tracking System or send the applicant dispositions to the Office of Human Resource Management.
  - The Office of Human Resource Management may randomly select positions for monitoring and audit. This can occur pre- or post-selection. Selection procedures, as well as applications and resumes submitted by applicants will be reviewed when positions are monitored or audited.
  - 10. Additionally, positions for which LSU Eunice has determined that underutilization of females and/or minorities exists may be targeted for monitoring and auditing.

#### IV. ACTING OR INTERIM APPOINTMENTS

- As a general matter, the University seeks to fill positions quickly with permanent hires. In some instances, however, the University must make temporary appointments on an Interim or Acting basis. "Interim" refers to a temporary appointment to a vacant post. "Acting" refers to a temporary appointment congruent to another employee holding the permanent appointment but is unavailable (ex. extended leave).
  - A. Non-Academic Administrator

While an Acting or Interim appointment for one year or less need not be advertised and filled on a competitive basis, appointing officials are encouraged to conduct a search at

least within the department, school, college, or unit. Appointments of this nature must be approved in advance by the Office of Human Resource Management and requisite campus approvals must be obtained. Efforts should be made to identify women and minority candidates for such appointments.

#### B. Academic Administrator

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This sub-section pertains to administrative positions that are academic in nature.

- While Acting or Interim appointments for one year or less need not be externally advertised, they must be filled at least on a competitive basis internally to the campus. Appointing officials are required to conduct a search at least within the department, school, college, or other overarching unit, depending on the scope of responsibility.
- 2. If a person to fill the permanent position has not been named, an Interim appointment may be extended beyond one year. The hiring authority or designee for this case will solicit input from constituency (e.g. faculty and staff in the unit or units of responsibility) and consider this input in making a decision to extend.
- 3. If a person to fill the permanent position has not been named, an Interim position can be extended beyond year two after considering the results of annual performance review from the constituency and obtaining written authorization from the Chancellor or designee.
- 4. An Acting or Interim appointment will not be changed to a permanent position without an advertised search process that is normally required and routine for that position.

## V. OTHER EXCEPTIONS TO THE AVERTISING GUIDELINES (WAIVERS)

In some circumstances, exceptions to the aforementioned guidelines may be permitted. In these situations, the normal advertising requirements are not required or may be waived/limited.

Examples of situations in which advertising waivers may be approved include the following personnel actions:

#### A. Visiting Faculty and Internship Appointments

If the internship program has been pre-approved by the Office of Human Resource Management, appointments need not be advertised and filled on a competitive basis. If a visiting faculty appointment will exceed one year, it must be advertised.

- B. Temporary Appointments (180 days or less)
- Such appointments need not be advertised unless they could result in a permanent appointment. A waiver request is not required for appointment that will not exceed 180 days.
- 415 C. Promotions from within a Division, Department, or Unit (Non-faculty, Non-administrative)
- When a vacancy occurs, the employing department may request an exception to the advertising guidelines from the Office of Human Resource Management in order to

418	promote an employee who is currently employed within the department or unit where the
419	vacancy exists. All qualified employees in the department or unit where the vacancy
420	occurs must be considered for the promotion. After the department has selected the
421	employee to fill the position, the Office of Human Resource Management will, before
422	approving the appointment:

- 1. Review the qualifications of the position and determine if the selected employee meets the minimum qualifications required for the position.
- 2. Review the qualifications of all other qualified employees within the department or unit who have applied for the position, and
- 3. Review the University's Affirmative Action Plan's utilization analysis to determine if underutilization of female and/or minorities exists within the EEO category in which the vacancy occurs.

#### D. Extraordinary Circumstances

Where justified, an exception to the normal advertising guidelines may be granted in any 432 extraordinary circumstance (ex. candidate possesses unique exceptional qualifications). 433 It will be incumbent upon the hiring authority to provide justification and appropriate 434 documentation where applicable. In cases related to academic administrative positions, written authorization must be obtained from the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs 435 436 and the Chancellor or designee. The Office of Human Resource Management will review 437 exception requests for all other positions.

> Any questions pertaining to this Policy Statement should be directed to the Office of Human Resource Management.

#### VI. SOURCES 440

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441 The aforementioned procedures have been adapted from LSU's PM-73.