UCOP Guidance for DEI-Related Programs and Services

The checklists provided in each topic area are simplified versions developed from the original document to more easily highlight the relevant areas for UC ANR (minus the student-focused pieces of the guidance).

UCOP Overview

Purpose

The document is intended to support and enhance review of campus-level diversity, equity and inclusion-related programs and services for legal and policy compliance. The areas listed below are those warranting particular attention.

Programs or policies that are compliant with existing anti-discrimination law and university policy may be continued. Revisions or modifications to remove potential ambiguity as to compliance with federal and state law, as well as university policy, should be considered in accordance with campus review procedures and should include discussion with campus counsel and Local Implementation Officers (LIOs).

Where systemwide action may be indicated (e.g., anti-discrimination/Proposition 209 training, personnel matters, UC Recruit), the resources and tools needed for implementation will be provided via the UC ANR Workplace Inclusion and Belonging Unit in collaboration with UC ANR Leadership and UC ANR Human Resources.

Background

The university must comply with existing federal and state nondiscrimination law, and it does not interpret recent executive orders, federal guidance documents and/or federal grant certification requirements as establishing a different legal standard.

While recent actions by the executive branch, including executive orders, have drawn increased attention to these issues, they do not, in themselves, alter the law.

The university will remain attentive to further legal developments in this area. In particular, under existing law, the university may not limit eligibility criteria, provide preferences or otherwise discriminate on the basis of, among other things, race, ethnicity, national origin or sex.

Additionally, the guidance below reflects certain policy decisions that go beyond the requirements of existing law. Such policy decisions include, for example, prohibiting the requirement of standalone statements of contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion in faculty hiring, requiring removal of historical information if that history included an exclusive focus on serving members of protected classes.

Volunteer Selection (Admissions)

Allowable:

- Selection criteria that are not based on race, ethnicity and sex or other protected characteristics.

- For example, first-generation or low-income status or consideration of demonstrated traits like resilience or overcoming adversity.

Unallowable:

- Selection preferences based on race, ethnicity, sex or other protected characteristics.

- Making race, ethnicity, sex or protected characteristic-based selections by identifying the applicant's protected characteristic in an application and making decisions based on the identified protected characteristics.

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Ensure applicant demographic information is not shared with selection committees at any stage.

☐ Review all documents, publications, and webpages to clearly state that volunteer selection is not based on protected characteristics. *Consider* adding clear statements affirming that no such preferences exist.

☐ Train all selection committee members in conducting unbiased reviews.

☐ Train all selection committee members on federal and state nondiscrimination laws and University policies.

ANR Responsible Offices

Statewide Programs/Institute Directors, Workplace Inclusion and Belonging unit, HR unit, and other relevant leadership that may have overlapping roles and responsibilities.

Diversity Programming

Allowable:

- Affinity and Employee Resource Groups focused on a group defined by race or sex or other protected characteristics, but that are open and welcoming to all.

- Educational, cultural, or historical observances (e.g., Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month) that are open and welcoming to all.

Unallowable:

- Affinity groups or Employee Resource Groups where participation is limited based on race or sex, or other protected characteristics.

- Programs that offer a benefit or preference based on race or sex, or other protected characteristics.

- Programs that are exclusive on the basis of race or sex, or other protected characteristics.

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Update websites, charters, programs, and materials to clearly state that all employee groups and events are open to everyone.

☐ Ensure all practices and benefits are accessible to all employees.

☐ Create guidelines to foster a welcoming environment for all participants.

Workplace Inclusion and Belonging Unit, HR Unit, and other relevant units, programs, or institutes that may have overlapping roles and responsibilities.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Infrastructure and Staffing

Allowable:

- Offices and staff that enhance community climate and culture and promote access and opportunity for the UC ANR community.

- Services that support particular groups and address particular groups' concerns but are open to all, including affinity groups and employee resource groups.

Unallowable:

- Programming that is exclusive based on protected characteristics and available only to identified participants.

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Review and update practices, documents, publications, and webpages to confirm services are not limited to any specific protected class.

☐ Analyze employee engagement and belonging data (e.g., Staff Engagement) to identify additional groups who may benefit from services.

☐ Clearly communicate university anti-discrimination policies on office webpages and publications.

☐ Consult UC ANR HR to change payroll titles or office name changes. (*Note: name changes are NOT required.*).

ANR Responsible Offices

Workplace Inclusion and Belonging Unit, HR Unit, and other relevant units, programs, or institutes that may have overlapping roles and responsibilities.

Educational Outreach and Academic Preparation Pathways/Pipelines

Allowable:

- Programming for high school, community college, undergrad, and grad students with an interest in diversity and/or for serving a particular diverse community, ***explicitly*** open to all.

- Pipeline/pathways programs based on high school/community college attended, geographic region or other nonprotected class characteristics, aimed at achieving diverse applicant pools.

Unallowable:

- Programming available to participants exclusively, based on race or sex, or other protected characteristics.

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Update all materials to ensure program eligibility is not limited to specific protected groups.
☐ Use neutral eligibility criteria. Clearly publish all academic and skills criteria.
☐ Remove outdated application and proposal information from websites after the submission deadline.

Statewide Programs/Institute Directors, Workplace Inclusion and Belonging unit, HR unit, ANR Leadership and other relevant leadership that may have overlapping roles and responsibilities.

Recruitment, Hiring, Promotion and Professional Development

Allowable:

- Outreach efforts aimed at achieving broad pools of qualified applicants, provided that information is equally available to all and no special benefits are provided.

- Training, professional development or networking programs for faculty/staff with an interest in diversity and/or for serving a particular diverse community, open to all and operated in an inclusive manner.

    - <u>Example:</u> A program can be designed to support a particular group, as long as the program is available to anyone who wants to join and they are allowed to attend.

- Training leaders of initiatives and programs on fostering and facilitating inclusive environments in alignment with the UC ANR Principles of Community.

Unallowable:

- Numerically diverse slate or diverse interviewer panels.

- Consideration of protected class in hiring, promotion, or termination decisions.

- Training or networking programs available on the basis of race or sex or other protected characteristics.

- Requiring standalone statements of contributions to diversity, equity and inclusion.

A. Equal Employment Opportunity Programs

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Update all communications, documents, webpages, and other publications to reflect the university's status as an equal opportunity employer, including references to affirmative action for protected veterans, individuals with disabilities, and California nondiscrimination requirements.

☐ Use current systemwide examples for job posting taglines and affirmative action references.

- ***Updated Language** (9/2025): It is the policy of the University of California to undertake affirmative action and anti-discrimination efforts, consistent with its obligations as a Federal and State contractor.*

- For the University of California's Affirmative Action Policy, please visit: https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/4010393/PPSM-20

- For the University of California's Anti-Discrimination Policy, please visit: https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/1001004/Anti-Discrimination

☐ Provide recruiters with information on underutilization, with guidance to address applicant pool gaps.

☐ Ensure corrective policies and procedures adopted comply with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and do not favor or discriminate based on protected class.

☐ Follow records retention schedules for documents related to legally required program goals.

ANR Responsible Offices

HR Unit, Academic and Staff Personnel

B. Faculty Cluster Hiring

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Require training for selection/search committees to focus on academic qualifications and contributions only.

☐ Remove references to candidate demographics.

☐ Ensure committee eligibility and selection are based solely on academic criteria.

☐ Review position descriptions and related materials to emphasize academic focus.

☐ Consider centralized review of all cluster hire proposals for consistency.

ANR Responsible Offices

Executive Leadership, Vice-Provost for Academics, Academic Personnel

C. Selection Committees/Search Advisory Committees

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Require training to ensure eligibility, selection and interview questions focus only on required qualifications and contributions.

☐ Remove references to protected characteristics/demographic diversity from all search materials.

☐ Base diversity efforts on nonprotected characteristics (e.g., work functions, seniority/rank, education or research specialties and expertise, certifications).

☐ Review position descriptions, webpages, and other documents.

☐ Remove demographic references from committee member descriptions.

☐ Restrict committee access to non-aggregate demographic data in HR systems.

ANR Responsible Offices

HR Unit, Academic and Staff Personnel

D. Professional Development and Training Programs (Academic/Staff)

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Remove references to protected characteristics from program eligibility and selection materials.

☐ Implement state-mandated training in consultation with UCOP (**AB 2925**) *******All trainings addressing antidiscrimination include the five most targeted groups in the state, as determined in the state Attorney General's annual "Hate Crime in California" report. 2025: Blacks, Latinx, Jewish, LGBTQ, Trans/Non-binary. ***

☐ Clearly state that programs are open to all who meet academic or work requirements.

☐ If serving underserved communities, clarify that eligibility does not require membership in those communities.

☐ Remove demographic references from participant descriptions.

☐ Remove historical program information focused exclusively on protected classes from public webpages.

☐ Store program operations information on internal platforms (e.g., SharePoint; Box) rather than public sites.

HR Unit, Academic and Staff Personnel (including Learning & Development), Workplace Inclusion and Belonging Unit

Research, Extension, and Scholarship

Allowable:

- Activities exclusively connected to scholarships, extension, and research are strongly protected by the First Amendment and academic freedom.

Unallowable:

- Making race or sex or other protected characteristic-based selections for admission to a research or extension program.
- Programs that discourage participation, stereotype, stigmatize, or create a hostile environment on the basis of race or sex or other protected class.

Compliance Enhancement – Checklist

☐ Require harassment and discrimination policy training for all academic supervisors.
☐ Ensure selection decisions for research and extension projects do not consider race, sex, or other protected characteristics.
☐ Update all materials to state that research and extension participation is open to all who meet academic requirements, regardless of protected characteristics.
☐ Clearly affirm that no preference is given based on race, sex, or other protected characteristics.

UC ANR Extension Program Beneficiaries/Participants – Checklist

☐ Refer to Guidelines for Preparing the Thematic Program Review Dossier for UC ANR Academics (eBook) for the specific requirements.
☐ Utilize the Civil Rights Compliance Training | UC Agriculture and Natural Resources to adhere to the requirements within UC ANR.

USDA NIFA and UC Civil Rights Compliance Requirements – Checklist

☐ Notification Requirement: post full UC ANR nondiscrimination statement on all print and non-print materials (***alternatively, use short form: "This institution is an equal opportunity provider."***).
☐ Notification Requirement: Recipients are required to notify individuals with disabilities and LEP individuals of their right to free accommodation and language assistance.
☐ "…And Justice for All" Posters: Posters must be "prominently displayed in all offices where there is a USDA presence and where it may be read by customers."

ANR Responsible Offices

Executive Leadership Team, Vice-Provost Academics, Statewide Program Directors/Institutes, County Directors, REC Directors, academic supervisors, and other relevant divisions or departments that may have overlapping roles and responsibilities.

UC ANR Guidance on "All Employee" Internal Communications

This guidance supports best practices for internal announcements and/or mass emails sent to *"All Employees"* that are on topics of broad interest and supporting connections within the UC ANR community.

The guidance is rooted in the [UC ANR Principles of Community](#) and in alignment with our [Vision 2040](#) mission to cultivate a thriving California based on equitable and collaborative science-based knowledge. These guidelines aim to ensure that all communications are inclusive, accessible, foster respectful engagement across diverse audiences, and reflect the values of UC ANR.

Guidelines:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure communications are accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities. Use plain language and provide alternative formats when necessary.

- **Clarity & Consistency:** Messages should be clear, concise, and consistent across all channels to avoid confusion and ensure everyone receives the same information.

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Be mindful of the diverse backgrounds of UC ANR employees and avoid language or content that could be exclusionary or offensive.

- **Respectful Use of Official Channels:** Utilizing official UC ANR channels/platforms (Collaborative Tools, Email, Constant Contact), must maintain professionalism and inclusive language.

Procedures:

- **Emphasize Clarity of Message:** Work with others within the group and/or outside the group to gain feedback for edits or revisions.

- **Establish a Timeline/Feedback Loop:** Plan early for communications with timelines for follow-up reminders and contact information for feedback on the message.

- **Ensure Required Approvals:** Submit drafts of communications to the group's leadership/sponsor. For county-based groups, that would be your county or REC director; for administrative-based groups, that would be your unit leader or SWP director; for employee groups, that would be the Director of Workplace Inclusion & Belonging and/or Director of HR.