

**Report of Ad Hoc Committee on
Sexual Harassment and Diversity Training
for Faculty Senate**

7 April 2009

Committee Members: Susan Hildebrandt (Chair), Gene Muto, Jim Reilly

Charge

Consulting the Human Resources Office as necessary, this committee will examine state requirements concerning sexual harassment and diversity training for faculty members, evaluate the current delivery of such training at Longwood, and explore alternative modes for satisfying state requirements.

Summary of Findings

Longwood University's Human Resources Office did not respond to repeated emails from the committee inquiring as to the requirement of training and the origin of the mandate that faculty participate in the training.

Therefore, the committee contacted officials at other Virginia institutions (i.e., Virginia Tech, Radford, Christopher Newport, Old Dominion) and found that no other institution required the same training for faculty as for other employees. Nor did any other institution contacted require a commitment of 2 to 3 hours for such training. Among the practices carried out at these other universities were a 15 minute "refresher" given by the head of Human Resources during faculty orientation given the week before classes begin in the fall for all members of the faculty. Also, several institutions offered consultations and services as needed and to faculty who chose to participate, without mandating participation. Other institutions offered an online, on-demand version of training from companies such as emTRAIN (www.emtrain.com), Inspired eLearning (www.inspiredelearning.com), ELT (www.elt-inc.com), or Train Up (www.trainup.com). Average costs for this online training, which is delivered in a way similar to the MOAT computer security training, varied from \$4 to \$7.

Based on informal contact with numerous other faculty at Longwood, the committee would like to highlight that nearly all found the training to be insulting, of little use, or both. Additionally, faculty members feel frustrated that so much time, particularly at busy times of the semester, is taken up with this training and that it is often led by consultants who have less knowledge on the subject than faculty members themselves. As stated by one faculty member, "I want to be 'trained' by someone who I feel knows more than I do."

Recommendations

The committee was very disappointed to have never have received any information from the Human Resources Office at Longwood University. We recommend that administrators encourage that office to be more forthcoming with requested information and to be less deceptive of faculty with draconian mandates which cause frustration and distrust.

It is also recommended that a less time-consuming version of diversity and sexual harassment training be offered to faculty. In its present form, completing both training can take up to six hours. Additionally, it is recommended that the differences between faculty and staff needs for this training be acknowledged and that different options for those different needs be offered. The “one-size-fits-all” training currently provided ill-fits the needs of faculty.