



Office of Equity and Inclusion Newsletter

January 6, 2021



A Message from Dr. Keith Johnson, Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

“You Have The Right Too”

“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 subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”. This definition is extracted directly from the [Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964](#).

This federal law prohibits discrimination on these bases. This law does not include income level as a protected classification. This law does, however, allow persons to file administrative complaints with federal departments and agencies alleging discrimination based on race, color, or national origin by recipients of federal funds. If you believe that you or someone you know have experienced discrimination based on the protected variables mentioned, you could file a Title VI complaint with The [Office of Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#). You do not need to be the victim of discrimination yourself to file a complaint. You have 180 days to file your complaint of discrimination unless your regional Civil Rights Director extends this time for good cause. In many circumstances, there are institutional grievance protocols that are available. At East Tennessee State University, we have such a protocol. If you choose that path, in addition, you must file the OCR complaint within 60 days of the last act of the institutional grievance procedure.

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**We have before us the glorious
opportunity to inject a new dimension of love
into the veins of our civilization.
~ Martin Luther King, Jr. ~**

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The current [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#), formerly known as the Office of Equity and Diversity was once responsible for addressing Title VI and Title IX complaints. However, as the office evolved to become Equity and Inclusion, [University Compliance](#) was established within [The Office of University Counsel](#). Thereby, addressing university compliance matters. If you are considering filing a grievance, there are things that you should know.

Filing a grievance is not an anonymous process. You will need to identify yourself, the person who was discriminated against (if it was not you), where the alleged offense took place, and what agency, institution, or individual is accused of the offense. For the most part, the identity of the complainant is kept confidential by University Compliance but may be revealed as necessary to advance the investigation or if the law requires disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.

What happens if you file a Title VI grievance? Will you be terminated? Will you be retaliated against? Will you be demoted? All of these questions may cross your mind if you are considering filing a grievance. It is important to know that Title VI institutions, such as ETSU, are strictly prohibited from retaliating against anyone because they reported any potential discrimination in violation of Title VI or by participating in a Title VI complaint.

According to the [Office of Civil Rights](#), *"Retaliation is prohibited under each of the civil rights laws that OCR enforces, including Title VI. Retaliatory acts against any individual who exercises his or her rights under Title VI are considered to be discrimination and are unlawful. Recipients of federal funds are prohibited from intimidating, threatening, coercing, or discriminating against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by the statutes that OCR enforces."*

ETSU is a campus and community where discrimination based on race, color, or national origin will not be tolerated and definitely is not welcomed. We are an institution whose people are always growing into our university mission:

PEOPLE come first, are treated with dignity and respect, and are encouraged to achieve their full potential;

RELATIONSHIPS are built on honesty, integrity, and trust;

DIVERSITY of people and thought is respected;

EXCELLENCE is achieved through teamwork, leadership, creativity, and a strong work ethic;

EFFICIENCY is achieved through wise use of human and financial resources; and

COMMITMENT to intellectual achievement is embraced.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, or national origin, remember your rights under Title VI, and please consider filing a formal complaint with the [ETSU Office of University Compliance](#).



Meet Marlina A. Rogers, Esq., University Compliance Counsel



My name is Marlina Rogers and I currently serve as ETSU's Compliance Counsel within the Office of University Compliance. I started in the position of Compliance Counsel in November of 2020. My family and I are very excited to be back in Johnson City; my husband and I both received our under-

graduate degrees from ETSU and I was also a member of the ETSU softball team. We now have two children and are looking forward to raising them in the beautiful place where we first met.

I return to ETSU from the life of private legal practice in Macon, Georgia, where I worked for the last five years primarily doing insurance defense and serving as the compliance coordinator for both private and government entities. Working as a litigator provided the experience of practical application of the law, allowing me to see the short and long-term goals and consequences of legal issues and equipping me with the skills to better serve and advise the ETSU community in the area of compliance.

The Office of University Compliance is comprised of myself, the Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator, and two Assistant Compliance Officers/Deputy Title IX Coordinators. Our office is tasked with the receipt and investigation of all discrimination, harassment, and Title IX complaints. We work in conjunction with the Office of University Counsel to ensure compliance with all state and federal laws. Our office collaborates with campus partners to provide policy development, education, enforcement, and remediation to the University community.

There are several state and federal laws which prohibit discrimination and harassment. The most commonly referred to in the context of education programs is Title IX. Title IX is a civil rights law that prohibits all sex or gender discrimination on educational campuses that receive federal financial assistance. Title VI and Title VII are civil rights laws that prevent discrimination and harassment

in employment and federally funded programs based on certain protected classes, including religion, race, sex, and national origin, among others.

There are several other federal and state laws which prohibit discrimination based on other protected classes such as age and disability, and others which relate broadly to campus safety and student privacy. It is important for all members of the campus community to understand their civil rights. Protecting the integrity of the University as an institution starts with equipping students, faculty, and staff with the necessary information and resources to understand and exercise their rights under the law.

Most employees know that they have rights in the workplace, but have not been fully informed on what those rights are. For example, in my experience with Title VII compliance I have found that while many employees know that they cannot be terminated based on their protected class, they are not aware that Title VII protects them while they are employed against certain adverse actions based on their protected class, such as equal access to training and use of facilities. In certain circumstances, employees also have a right to accommodations for religious practices and/or disabilities. Most federal laws also include a strict prohibition on retaliation, which protects individuals asserting their rights or opposing any perceived unlawful conduct.

One of my primary goals for the Office of University Compliance, which intersects with Equity and Inclusion's six targeted goals, is to proactively ensure that the ETSU campus is a safe and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, staff, and visiting community members. Accomplishing this goal starts with education. My team did a terrific job implementing and disseminating the Discrimination and Harassment Prevention training modules in advance of the spring semester, and I hope to continue our efforts to provide the campus and community with tools to identify and prevent discrimination and harassment.

I welcome any questions the campus may have for me or the Office of University Compliance, and look forward to working with and being an integral part of the ETSU community.

ETSU University Compliance

The Office of [University Compliance](#) seeks to support and enhance East Tennessee State University's vision, mission, and values by providing independent and objective measures to address the University's legal, regulatory, and ethical responsibilities.

[Title IX](#) is a federal civil rights law that prohibits all sex or gender discrimination on educational campuses that receive federal financial assistance.

Title IX protects individuals of all genders and sexual orientations and applies to students, faculty, staff, independent contractors, campus visitors, and other participants in University educational programs and activities. All forms of sexual or gender-based harassment, including but not limited to dating and domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault are violations of Title IX.

[ETSU is committed to providing an equitable environment to all members of the University community.](#)

What is Discrimination?

Discrimination is generally defined as a materially adverse action that interferes with or limits a person's employment or academic status that is taken because of an individual's race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, disability or genetic information.



What is Harassment?

Harassment is a form of discrimination. It is generally defined as unwelcome conduct, on or off campus, that is based on race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, disability or genetic information, that (1) is subjectively and objectively offensive, (2) is severe or pervasive, and (3) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance and creating an abusive, hostile or intimidating environment for work or learning. Whether particular conduct constitutes harassment often depends on the totality of the circumstances.

ADA/Accessibility

ETSU is committed to creating an accessible campus for all members of the University community. The [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) provide that qualified individuals cannot be denied access to or participation in services, programs, activities, or employment at ETSU. The [Fair Housing Act](#) prohibits discrimination in campus housing transactions based on disability.

Limited English Proficiency/Title VI

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the University, as a recipient of federal funds, must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). [Click here to learn about language services and resources.](#)

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Events & Programs

LEGACY PROGRAM

January 15 - 11:30am

A short program honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy at the ETSU Carillon.

For more information, please contact the Multicultural Center at mcstaff@etsu.edu or 423-439-5872.



VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE

January 21 - 7pm

Via Zoom: <https://etsu.zoom.us/j/95448916808>

Bettie Mae Fikes
"The Queen of the Blues"

Celebrated icon of the 1960's civil rights movement, SNCC Freedom Singer, recipient of the Long Walk to Freedom Award, and recently inducted into the Smithsonian Institute's 'Museum of Tolerance' in an exhibition honoring women of the Civil Rights Movement.

For more information, please contact the Multicultural Center at mcstaff@etsu.edu or 423-439-5872.

NATIONAL DAY OF RACIAL HEALING

January 19

This annual observance is hosted by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), and was created with and builds on the work and learnings of the Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation (TRHT) community partners. Fundamental to this day is a clear understanding that racial healing is at the core of racial equity. This day is observed every year on the Tuesday following Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Learn more at [NDRH](https://www.ndrh.org/).

[Click here](#) to learn about other events and programs being held throughout Abingdon, Bristol, Johnson City, and Kingsport.

Infusing Trauma-Informed Strategies



Trauma-Informed Strategies for Teaching and Learning

Creating a Culture of Belonging, Fostering Retention, and Increasing Degree Completion

Facilitator:
Janice Carello, PhD, LMSW
Edinboro University

This event is made possible through the generous funding of an ETSU Instructional Development Committee grant.

January 10

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

An informal conversation about expanding the discourse about trauma-informed practice in higher education and beyond.

January 11

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

A series of interactive workshop sessions about creating space for trauma-informed care (TIC) in our classrooms, offices, and college community. Learn the language of TIC, practice scenarios, enhance course materials, develop strategies for self-care, and create an action plan.

For more info: thomsop@etsu.edu or 423.439.4135

To register visit [Institute for Trauma-Informed Approaches to Teaching and Learning](#).

ETSU Cultural Competency Workshop

Cultural competence is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and one's views about differences, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry. These understandings inform and expand teaching practices in the culturally competent educator's classroom. Cross-cultural competency has been named among the 10 most important skills for the future workforce by the US Department of Education. Employers value culturally competent employees in designing, developing and marketing their products and services to culturally diverse customers. Culturally trained faculty and staff can prepare students with cultural competencies by including inclusive pedagogy techniques in and out of classrooms.

ETSU Office of Equity and Inclusion in collaboration of the Department of Engineering, Engineering Technology and Surveying invites you to attend the ETSU Cultural Competency Workshop funded by Tennessee Board of Regents.

Purpose of the Workshop: The goal of the Workshop is to prepare and deliver the professional development workshop(s) in ways that enhance Staff and Faculty's abilities to: (i) demonstrate a solid understanding of cultural diversity; (ii) effectively accommodate diverse students through inclusive pedagogy and inter-cultural communication; and (iii) effectively prepare students with cultural knowledge for academic, career, and civic success.

Eligibility: Only tenured and tenure-track faculty and all staff members are eligible to attend the workshop. There are limited number of spaces available, so apply early.

Schedule of the Workshop: The Workshop will be conducted virtually over 4 weeks (two hours each week) in the month of March 2021.

Thematic Topic	Date
Laying the Foundations: Movements of the Heart.	March 5 th
Cultural Agility: What it is and how it works.	March 12 th
Tools for Cultural Agility in the Classroom and Beyond.	March 19 th
Expanding the Foundation: Developing and Sharing	March 26 th

Workshop Facilitators: Dr. Keith V. Johnson, VP Office of Equity and Inclusion and Dr. Mohammad Moin Uddin, Associate Professor

Stipend: Each participating faculty and staff will receive a \$300 stipend after successful completion of the workshop (all four sessions) and all assessments.

If you are interested in attending the workshop, please click on the following link and fill out the short form at <https://etsuredcap.etsu.edu/surveys/?s=H8R7M7DJLT>

Deadline: January 31, 2021.

If you have any question about the workshop,
please contact Dr. Mohammad Moin Uddin at uddinm@etsu.edu.

Upcoming Events

January 2021

Monday	January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day		
Tuesday	January 26	Lunch and Learn Session <i>Make Your Classroom More Inclusive</i> Discussion lead: Dr. Taine Duncan, Associate Professor & Director of Gender Studies, University of Central Arkansas	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting

February 2021

Wednes.	February 17	Lunch and Learn Session <i>Working With First Generation Students</i> Discussion lead: Dr. Michelle Hurley, Assistant Director McNair Program and Ms. Meagan Stark, Retention Coordinator TRiO Program	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting
Tuesday	February 23	Lunch and Learn Session <i>Debiasing Techniques</i> Discussion lead: Dr. Antonio Rusinol, Associate Professor, Biomedical Sciences, COM	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting

March 2021

Tuesday	March 2	Lunch and Learn Session <i>New Models of Recruitment and Retention</i> Discussion lead: Dr. John Kuykendall, Dean and Associate Professor, School of Education, University of Indianapolis	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting
Friday	March 5, 12, 19, 26	Cultural Competency Workshop Tenured, Tenure-Track Faculty and All Staff register at: https://etsuredcap.etsu.edu/surveys/?s=H8R7M7DJLT	TBA	
Tuesday	March 9	Lunch and Learn Session <i>Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Populations</i> Discussion lead: Ms. Jessica Wang, Director of Student Success, Clemmer College	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting

April 2021

Tuesday	April 6th	Lunch and Learn Session <i>Social Learning and Social Justice</i> Discussion Lead: Deidra Rogers, Lecturer, Department of Counseling & Human Services, Clemmer College	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting
Tuesday	April 27th	Lunch and Learn Lecture Series <i>Coping With Crisis</i> Discussion lead: Tonya McKoy, Ph.D., LPC-MHSP/AS, NCC Licensed Professional Counselor	12:00-1:00pm	Join Zoom Meeting

Spring/Summer/Fall 2021

Spring	2021	Virtual Corazon Latino Festival	TBA	
Fall	Sept. 20-22	3rd Annual Equity and Inclusion Conference	TBA	



TBR Office of Organizational Effectiveness Grant Opportunities

The TBR Office of Organizational Effectiveness announces its 2021-2022 grant opportunities. Expect the application to open in mid to late January 2021. All applications will be submitted via TBR's online grants platform at <https://tbrgrants.webgrantscloud.com>.

There will be three distinct grant programs available to support completion, equity, and gap closure:

- Student Engagement, Retention, and Success (SERS) Grants
- Faculty/Staff Development Grants
- Open Educational Resources (OER) Grants

More information will be available in the next few weeks regarding specific details, timelines, and applications. Contact completionsupport@tbr.edu with any questions.

TBR Office of Organizational Effectiveness

The Biennial Conference on Equity and Completion began as the TBR Diversity Workshop in 2006. This event is the oldest, largest, and most comprehensive public higher education focused equity and diversity conference in the state. This convening of key administrators and staff from Tennessee's locally governed universities and community and technical colleges provides participants the opportunity to learn from and network with state and national experts who work in the areas of equity and inclusion; faculty, staff and student engagement and inclusion; and increasing student success and completion rates.

Nearly 500 faculty, students, administrators and staff from colleges and universities across the state participated in the College System of Tennessee's We All Rise Biennial Conference on Equity and Completion October 5 and 6, 2020, with a focus on improving college success and completion for all students.

[Click here to view the 2020 We All Rise Recordings and Presentations.](#)



...February is Black History Month...

...March is Women's History Month...

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council Member Spotlight



A native of Chattanooga, TN, Mr. Calvin Claggett, is a two-time graduate of East Tennessee State University, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology, Public Administration and Master of Education in Educational Leadership, Student Personnel.

He began his career in college athletics at ETSU as a marketing intern, and currently serves as the Associate Director for External Operations as his field covers marketing, gameday operations, sponsorship activation, ticketing, and fan experience.

Calvin was recently tapped to lead ETSU Athletics' Equity and Inclusion efforts and serves as a member of ETSU's equity and inclusion council. From organizing department-wide diversity training, initiating a recent voter registration drive for his student athletes, where 100% of all ETSU student-athletes are now registered to vote, implementation of the WIN program, to leading his department's strategic plan for equity and inclusion; Calvin is

committed to the efforts of improving the culture in college athletics.

A fun fact about Calvin, is that he once wanted to enter the field of politics. He spent his last summer as an intern for the City of Chattanooga where he was mentored by government leadership in his hometown.

Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council Seeking Student Members

The [Equity and Inclusion Advisory Council](#) is looking for a few students to join the Advisory Council. Students should be willing to guide, promote, and collaborate with others on campus and in the community on matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Interested students should complete the [Diversity Champion Questionnaire](#) and email it to Kim Maturo at maturo@etsu.edu, Office Coordinator, Office of Equity and Inclusion.

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Facebook: [https://](https://www.facebook.com/etsuequity/)

www.facebook.com/etsuequity/

Instagram and Twitter - [etsu_equity](#)

We would like to hear from you.

If you have an announcement, event, accomplishment, etc. you would like to have published in the newsletter send them to Kim Maturo at maturo@etsu.edu.

To add a name to our mailing list, please email Kim Maturo at maturo@etsu.edu.