



**2022 | DIVERSITY AND  
INCLUSIVENESS POLICY**

Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

## North Carolina A&amp;T State University

**NORTH CAROLINA A&T STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION**  
**Adopted, Spring 2012, Revised spring 2022. Under further review by the unit's Diversity and Inclusion Committee during 2022-23 school year with plans for further revision.**

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS POLICY**

The mission of North Carolina A&T State University includes the provision of a quality education to any student, especially those who otherwise may not have an opportunity to acquire the type of education the university provides. In fulfilling this mission, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, age, color, national origin, marital status, religion, handicap, sexual preference, political affiliation or any other basis as prohibited by Federal or North Carolina law. These (mission and non-discrimination) statements apply to the University's admissions, instructional and counseling services; its scholarship, loan and other University-administered programs; and its employment practices.

The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences observes policies that are consistent with the University's mission and non-discrimination statements. The Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, a unit in the College, commits to these statements and interprets them in ways that are consistent with the importance of journalism and mass communication as a reflector, facilitator and promoter of diversity. The commitment and interpretation are reflected in this plan, which contains (a) the conceptualization of diversity and its aspects; (b) the specification of the objectives under each aspect in the department; and (d) the description of means for achieving the objectives.

**Conceptualization of Diversity**

The department sees diversity as a condition of variety as opposed to uniformity, or distinctiveness as opposed to sameness, among the parts of systems. It sees this diversity as existing in the demographic and/or ideational aspects of the systems. It views its major benefits as integration and complementarity among the parts.

The department views these ideas as applicable to its constituents and its field. It sees itself as pursuing, (1) among its students, staff and faculty, the ideal of (a) demographic diversity. It also sees itself as cultivating, (2) among its students and faculty, (b) an understanding of demographic diversity in journalism and mass communication, (c) an understanding of ideational diversity in the field, and (d) an appreciation of and dedication to this diversity.

**Goals, Objectives and Policies**

The department recognizes that it is a part of a historically Black university, and most of its constituents are African Americans. It also recognizes that demographic diversity means the inclusion of all groups, including those that receive protection from discrimination on the basis of

race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, political affiliation or other factors. This has led to these objectives in demographic diversity:

**1. to pursue the recruitment, admission, retention and graduation of diverse students**

- **recruitment:** the department utilizes personal contacts, electronic mail, University recruitment programs, High School Media Day, and its Web site to attract students, and believes that awards such as the Dowdy Scholars program will draw exceptional students.
- **admission:** the department admits all qualifying freshman and transfer students who meet its entry requirements; advises non-qualifying freshman, internal transfer and external transfer students on how to meet its requirements before they are able to enter into its program; and advises returning students on how to meet departmental and University requirements on the way to the resumption of their studies.
- **retention:** the department provides students with academic advisors; both instructors and academic advisors will monitor student performance and progress; they will use Center for Academic Excellence advisors assigned to the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to help students address academic and other problems;
- the department promotes participation by its students in organizations that give them peer support and contacts with professionals; the department will refer those with special needs to offices or services -- such as the Multicultural Student Center and the International Students and Scholars Office -- that meet the needs.
- **graduation:** the department assigns the students to advisors who will help them meet graduation requirements – with special attention paid to helping them comply with the requirements of their concentrations, the department, the university, and the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)

**2. to pursue the recruitment, retention and advancement of a diverse faculty and staff**

- **recruitment:** the department recruits faculty through the professional contacts of its faculty and by placing announcements in outlets read often and widely by diverse groups (such as the University Website and the paper and Web versions of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, the *AEJMC Newsletter*, and *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*)
- the department recruits staff through professional contacts and by placing announcements in University and other media-related jobsites.

- the department observes University policy that requires that the College and Department of Human Resources review position announcements for compliance with University, State, and Federal laws on equal opportunity
- **retention:** the department retains faculty by providing them with opportunities to become involved with other faculty and to benefit from peer advice and counseling; providing them with reasonable assignments so that they meet expectations of them; providing them with opportunities to pursue their interests or use their special talents; and referring them to offices and services that specialize in meeting their needs, such as the Center for Distance Learning and the Department of Human resources
- **advancement:** the department observes the policies and procedures on faculty evaluation and promotion that it spells out in its governance document;
- the chair observes guidelines spelled out by the Department of Human Resources and monitored by the College in ensuring the fair and equitable evaluation of staff members (in ways that do not unreasonably jeopardize their later advancement)
- the chair routinely notifies faculty and staff of possibilities for advancement and provide them with opportunities to take advantage of these opportunities; the chair also will review the responsibilities and performance members of staff to determine whether there is justification for their advancement (from Contributing to Journey or from Journey to Advanced) in the state classification system.

**3. to cultivate an environment in which all students, faculty and staff can take part in the department's educational or other activities.**

- **participation:** the department ensures that its students can participate in all classes and other academic activities that it provides and for which they are eligible; to take advantage of instructional support it provides; to take part in opportunities for association, practice, competition or exhibition it provides; and to represent students, concentrations, organizations, and/or the department.
- the department observes policies that promote fairness and equity in the treatment of University employees. These are found in the Unlawful Workplace Harassment policy and the Reasonable Accommodation section of the *State Personnel Manual* (which complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act).
- The chair has an open door policy that includes listening and responding to all students, faculty and staff who claim they have not received fair and equitable treatment in the department; advocate for those he or she believes have not received this treatment; mediate between those who differ over this treatment; and refer cases he or she cannot resolve to appropriate officials.

The department recognizes that contributions to journalism and mass communication may come from various demographic groups in the field. Hence these objectives:

**5. to cultivate in students an understanding of the diversity of ideas on journalism and mass communication, and how diverse groups have contributed to them.**

- **contributions:** the department offers (at times indicated in the *University Bulletin*) the courses that explicitly focus on the professional and ideational contributions. They include JOMC 102, Introduction to Mass Media; JOMC 240, Media History; JOMC 201, Minorities in Mass Media; JOMC 204, Black Press in the United States; JOMC 93, Communication Law and Ethics
- the department offers (at times indicated in the *University Bulletin*) courses that may include discussion of the professional and ideational contributions. Instructors for these courses will maximize the discussion of the contributions in them. They include JOMC 205, Current Issues in Mass Communication; JOMC 322, Media Management and Legal Issues; JOMC 250, Race, Media and Politics; JOMC 351, International Communication; JOMC 352, Communication Theory; JOMC 353, Mass Communication Seminar; JOMC 399, Law in Film and Literature; JOMC 490, Independent Study in Journalism and Mass Communication.
- in professional skills courses, instructors include discussions of the roles that diverse groups have played in professional practice; the contributions they have made to professional practice; and the value of their contributions to the advancement of ideas in journalism and mass communication. These include the two core courses -- JOMC 220, Newswriting and JOMC 245, Technological Information Sources; and other skills courses students take in their concentrations.
- The department worked with other regional institutions (such as Elon University) to implement a faculty exchange program in which faculty members in journalism and mass communication at these institutions make presentations to students in each other's academic units. The presentations augmented the diversity students will have come to see in the field by taking our courses. The unit did a trial run of exchanging professors with Elon. The plan will revisit this effort in the future.

It is important both to understand the nature and presence of diversity and to appreciate its value. Thus one objective is to cultivate in students the perception that diversity in the field leads to integration and complementarity that enriches it. Related objectives are:

**7. to cultivate in students an appreciation of how diverse ideas have been integrated in the clarification or resolution of issues in journalism and mass communication.**

- **integration:** instructors infuse these ideas in all courses listed above as meeting objectives 4 and 5. These especially include Media History; Minorities in Mass Media; Black Press in the United States; Media Management and Legal Issues; Race, Media and Politics;

International Communication; Communication Theory; Mass Communication Seminar; Film Criticism; Organizational Communication; and Independent Study in Journalism and Mass Communication.

- They also include professional courses: For example, in the study of news reporting and producing, students will understand how the disproportionate use of images of African Americans to depict pathology and dependency heightened the recognition of racism in the media coverage of society.

### **Vision of the Department**

In achieving these objectives, the department will attain demographic diversity, as well as the recognition, celebration, and promotion of diversity in journalism and mass communication, among its students, staff and faculty.

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