

**College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station**

Diversity Council Charter

History:

Diversity Council established April 15, 2014 by Dean (CALs) / Director (MAFES) Dr. George Hopper.

[Note: Future amendments or revisions to this Charter will be noted here]

Charge:

The purpose of the College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALs) / Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFES) Diversity Council is to:

1. Provide recommendations for actions to create a more inclusive environment for faculty, staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders.
2. Serve as a forum to promote understanding and management of diversity.
3. Develop and implement plans for, and methods of, responding to diversity issues.
4. Assess the effectiveness of diversity metrics for strategic planning.

The term diversity is interpreted in accordance with the MSU Diversity Strategic Plan definition (September 2013; <http://www.oidi.msstate.edu/pdfs/DiversityStrategicPlan.pdf>) as follows:

“For purposes of this plan, the term diversity is given a broad meaning and includes, but is not limited to, differences based on race, ethnicity, national origin or citizenship, gender, religious affiliation or background, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic class or status, political affiliation or belief, age, and ability or disability. We recognize the difficulty of using a term like diversity that is subject to multiple interpretations. Our intent is to be inclusive.”

Reporting:

The CALs/MAFES Diversity Council will report to the Dean of CALs and the Director of MAFES. A summary of meeting minutes and/or committee outcomes will be provided to the Dean/Director following committee meetings by the co-Chairs following approval of the document(s) by the committee.

Council Composition:

The CALs/MAFES Diversity Council shall be composed of FOURTEEN members. The Associate Dean of CALs and the Associate Director of MAFES will serve as co-Chairs for administrative purposes and are non-voting members. The remaining twelve members will be appointed by the Dean/Director based on recommendations from the Academic Department or Center Heads. The twelve seats will include CALs/MAFES representatives from each of the four off-campus R&E units (NMREC, DREC, CMREC and CREC) and the on-campus departments. Composition of the twelve members should include at least two staff members and one graduate student. Any faculty, staff, or student with a CALs and/or MAFES appointment is eligible to serve. Efforts will be made to incorporate representation from all

academic/research departments via on- and off-campus appointments. All twelve voting members of the committee have equal votes. In the case of specific issues that come to a vote by the Committee, ties will be broken (if necessary) by the Dean/Director as to the direction of the issue before the committee. Committee members will serve three-year, staggered terms (except in the first two years of inception of this Charter where 1, 2 and 3 year terms will be assigned to facilitate initiation of staggered terms). Members can be reappointed to serve consecutive terms.

Frequency of Meetings:

The committee shall meet at least quarterly. More frequent meetings may be called for the purposes of conducting committee business. Meetings are called by one or both of the co-Chairs, or by a majority of the regular committee members (i.e., seven collective members).

Recommendations:

All recommendations made by the committee must be approved by a minimum of seven members of the voting committee by individual (in person) or by proxy or electronic vote. The committee will not meet without at least seven voting members present (either in person or by video/computer or by phone/conference call).

Amendments:

Proposals to amend this Charter may be made by the committee at any time. Proposed amendments must be circulated to Diversity Council members at least two weeks before a vote can be conducted, and subsequently approved by the Dean.

Approved by Committee: April 29th, 2014
[DATE]

Ratified by Dean/Director: April 29th, 2014 by: *[signed copy maintained in the CALS/MAFES Dean/Director's Office]*
[DATE] [George Hopper, Dean-CALS / Director-MAFES]