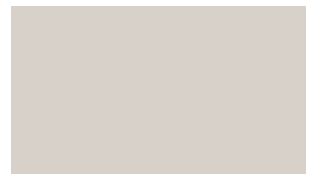


Office for Civil Rights Compliance
and Prevention Education

2023-2024 Annual Report



CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE
AND PREVENTION EDUCATION
VIRGINIA TECH.

From the Associate Vice President

Each year presents distinctive challenges and opportunities for any university's efforts toward building a safe and inclusive culture. In Virginia Tech's Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education, we are positioned not only to respond in difficult moments but also to enable progress on our path to an environment free of barriers to equity in education and employment. We approach our charge with care, commitment to our core values, and the understanding that our work has ripple effects well beyond the university.

The Office for Equity and Accessibility is now the Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education (CRCPE). This new name better aligns with the work that we do and the mission of the university, remaining focused on ensuring that Virginia Tech is a welcoming and safe place for all faculty, staff, and students. It is important to note as I reflect on our 2023-24 goals, previously as Office for Equity and Accessibility, to expand access to our resources, increase education and outreach initiatives, develop sustainable models for gender-based violence prevention, and further improve campus accessibility, I am encouraged by our team's achievements, including but not limited to:



- Establishing the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education (SVPE) department and hiring our inaugural director, Jenn Wiggins.
- Gaining acceptance into the National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine Action Collaborative to strengthen our structures for preventing and responding to sexual harassment in academia.
- Hosting a networking conference for equal opportunity and civil rights leaders at Virginia higher education institutions.
- Designing a new, on-demand civil rights and Title IX compliance training program for employees.
- Implementing new processes establishing CRCPE as the central point for reporting and responding to student-to-student allegations of discrimination and harassment and implementing multiple efforts to raise awareness of these new procedures.

We are grateful for continued collaboration and engagement with our institutional partners and colleagues in Student Affairs, Services for Students with Disabilities, Human Resources, Faculty Affairs, the Women's Center, Inclusive Strategy and Excellence, Facilities, Information Technology, Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies (TLOS), Communications and Marketing, and others.

Fostering a culture of belonging and respect has its complexities. Together, through our daily work, we find ways to overcome the challenges and create space for every individual to feel valued.

We offer the following annual report to illustrate this significant work and document trends from the 2023-24 year. With the exception of the affirmative action and search exemption information, which is based on the federal fiscal year of Oct. 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2024, the data in this report reflects the academic year from Aug. 1, 2023, to July 31, 2024.

In sharing this view of our current campus climate, I look forward to the new ways the community will combine efforts to create a more equitable and accessible Virginia Tech - free from harassment and discrimination - where all employees and students can thrive in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Kelly Oaks

Associate Vice President

Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education

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The Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education: Our Role

CRCPE engages in the following activities to further Virginia Tech's commitment to learning and working environments that protect against harassment and discrimination, consistent with our [Principles of Community](#):

- Assess the university's progress toward full equal employment opportunity for women, minorities, protected veterans, and individuals with disabilities.
- Review requests for search exemptions to determine if there are compelling justifications to limit equal employment opportunity in our hiring practices.
- Provide reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities and oversee institutional practices to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility for students, employees, and visitors.
- Develop and deliver training programs to inform members of our campus community of their rights and responsibilities under University [Policy 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities](#), [Policy 1025: Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Assault](#), and [Policy 1026: Title IX Sexual Harassment and Responsible Employee Reporting](#).
- Respond promptly to allegations of conduct prohibited by the university's nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies.
- Fulfill our institutional commitment to respond to reports of sexual and gender-based misconduct.
- Serve on campus, community, state, and national committees and boards focused on civil rights, equity, affirmative action, accessibility, and inclusion.

In addition to our response efforts, we focus heavily on strategic partnerships, community engagement, and professional association leadership to ensure the campus fulfills its commitment to equity and accessibility. CRCPE team members:

- Coordinate and provide administrative guidance to the [Campus Accessibility Working Group](#) (CAWG), an initiative of the Office of the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, to advance accessibility as an institutional priority.
- Partner with the [Division of Information Technology](#) and [Technology-enhanced Learning and Online Strategies](#) (TLOS) to lead campus efforts supporting digital accessibility in all university communications.
- Align efforts with the [Division of Facilities](#) and other campus partners to implement improvements for physical accessibility on the university's campuses.
- Collaborate with the [Division of Human Resources](#) to ensure equitable hiring processes.
- Maintain active membership in the [National Industry Liaison Group](#) to champion effective relationships between federal contractors and the federal agency that oversees contractor compliance.
- Engage in campus governance activities via roles in the [Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity](#), [Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate](#), [Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs](#), and [Staff Senate](#).

Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance

As a federal contractor, Virginia Tech takes proactive steps to ensure equal employment opportunity for women, minorities, covered veterans, and individuals with disabilities. We continually evaluate our personnel processes, analyze our recruiting efforts, and develop action-oriented programs to succeed in our efforts. While our responsibilities are evolving, the following information reflects the efforts made in the last year to eliminate discrimination and support merit-based decision-making practices.

During the past year the Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance team:

- Collaborated with the Division of Human Resources to complete Virginia Tech's Pay Equity Study.
- Worked collaboratively with the Division of Human Resources and college diversity leaders to develop and implement plans, as well as revise existing processes, that address barriers to equal employment opportunity.
- Provided training to aid search committees in conducting fair hiring processes.
- Provided specialized training to assist the campus community in understanding nondiscrimination and our obligations as a federal contractor.
- Held an Equal Opportunity summit for Virginia higher education professionals.
- Presented a Veteran's panel that focused on helping veterans successfully transition into the civilian workforce.

Members of CRCPE's Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance team hold membership in the National Industry Liaison Group (NILG) and in a regional industry liaison group. These groups comprise a consortium of federal contractors and subcontractors who work in partnership with federal agencies to achieve equal employment opportunity for all employees. Their efforts are critical to strengthening the relationships federal contractors have with the OFCCP and ensuring contractors have a voice in regulatory changes. As part of our efforts to extend influence beyond our campus, our team presented at the NILG National Conference on the important role veterans play in the workforce.

University Workforce Data

The Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance team takes a snapshot of the university's workforce annually on October 1 to track our progress toward full alignment with the core values and priorities as outlined in the 2020 strategic plan: [The Virginia Tech Difference: Advancing Beyond Boundaries](#).

As of the third quarter of 2024, the overall gender distribution at Virginia Tech was 47.3 percent men and 52 percent women (with less than 1 percent choosing not to disclose gender). The data for the teaching and research faculty includes adjunct faculty. Men decreased by 1 percent in the teaching and research faculty category to 61 percent; while women continued to represent the majority of A/P Faculty at 58 percent.

The numbers for race and ethnicity changed slightly with an increase in minority academic faculty from 28 percent to 31 percent; however, the A/P faculty minority percentage remained consistent at 17 percent.

The overall representation of veterans in the workforce across all employment categories remained constant at 3 percent. The hiring benchmark for Veterans set by the federal government is 5.2 percent. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) describes the benchmark as an aspirational goal that is utilized as a comparison tool to measure the progress and effectiveness of outreach and recruitment efforts. As of this year's snapshot, Virginia Tech hired veterans at 4.3 percent. As a [Virginia Values Veterans \(V3 Program\)](#) certified employer for the Commonwealth of Virginia, one of the university's in-house recruiters attends workshops, hosts virtual job fairs, and visits military installation bases in a proactive approach to recruit and communicate with the [university's Veteran Caucus](#) and the veteran community about the importance of self-identification.

The OFCCP requires that federal contractors annually analyze their utilization of individuals with disabilities against the 7 percent aspirational goal set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act. Within Virginia Tech's workforce, 6.4 percent of employees self-identify as having a disability. CRCPE began regular communications to university employees throughout the year to encourage them to self-identify.

Working in collaboration with colleagues in the [Division of Human Resources](#), [Office for Inclusion and Diversity](#), and [Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost](#), the Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance team will continue to evaluate our efforts to improve the demographic representation of Veterans and people with disabilities in our workforce.

Search Exemptions

Virginia Tech is committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all qualified individuals. In support of this commitment, competitive searches are conducted to fill many of our vacancies. There are some instances in which the competitive process is not used, and the positions are filled using the search exemption process when specific criteria are met.

During the 2024 affirmative action plan year of Oct. 1, 2023, to Sept. 30, 2024, 455 search exemptions were processed by CRCPE. Most of these

exemptions were for individuals who self-identify as male in the category of gender (**Figure 1**) and as white in the category of race and ethnicity (**Figure 2**). The majority of requests were for research faculty roles at 59 percent, followed by teaching and research (T&R) faculty at 26 percent; at 15 percent, A/P faculty had the lowest percentage.

Figure 1

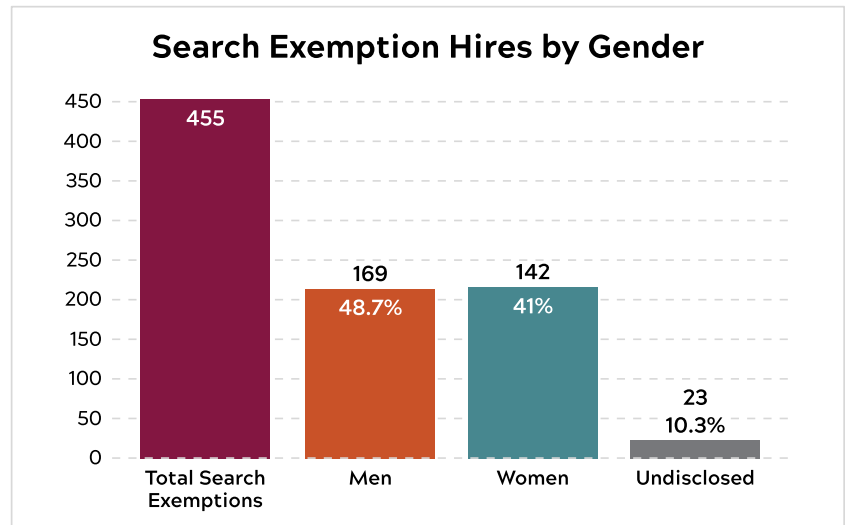
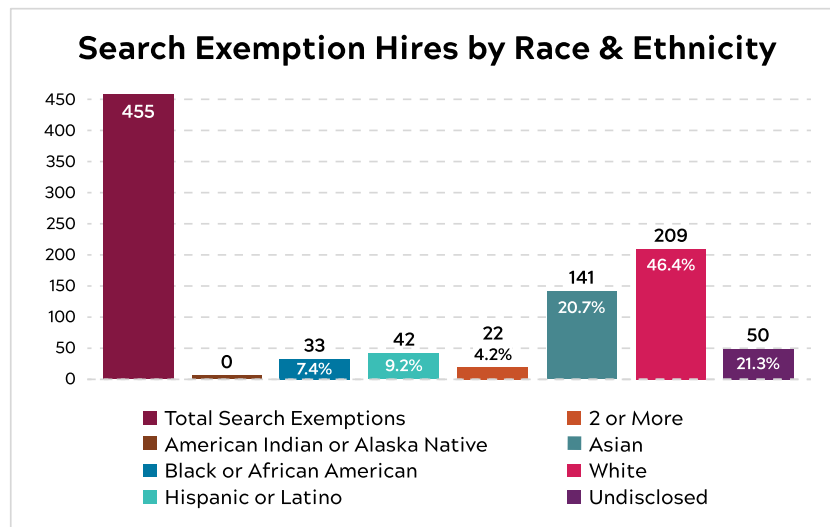


Figure 2



Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Accessibility

Virginia Tech is committed to equal employment and education opportunity for individuals with disabilities and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended; the Rehabilitation Act, as amended; and other state and local laws that apply to individuals with disabilities. The ADA and Accessibility team handles Title I employee accommodation requests and authorizes reasonable accommodations per Policy 4075: University Accommodations of Persons with Disabilities for qualified employees with disabilities.

ADA and Accessibility Services received 469 requests for accommodations during the Aug. 1, 2023 - July 31, 2024, annual plan reporting period. Of those requests, 334 were authorized— a decrease of 7 percent from the previous reporting period. Reasons accommodations were not provided included: employee no longer needed accommodation (74), no response from employee (27), no reasonable accommodation (17), and waiting for forms (1). Of the 74 employees who no longer needed accommodations, more than half (30) were classified as return to work (RTW). Reasons for the RTW employees no longer needing accommodations included returning to work at full duty or utilizing another benefit.

The majority of accommodation requests were return-to-work cases (237) as shown in **Figure 3**. As shown in **Figure 4**, most of the return-to-work accommodation requests were for physical disabilities (233) and four were for mental health-related requests. The ADA team received requests for 187 workplace accommodations, 10 travel accommodations, zero disability working (LTDW) accommodations, and 35 for reassignment. Workplace accommodation requests were primarily for physical disabilities (126) with 59 requests related to mental disabilities.

Figure 3

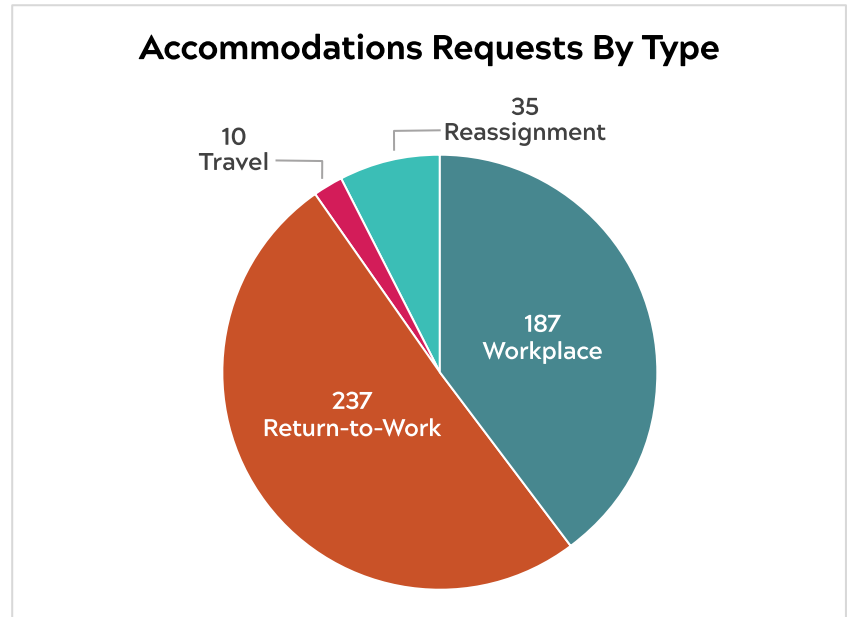
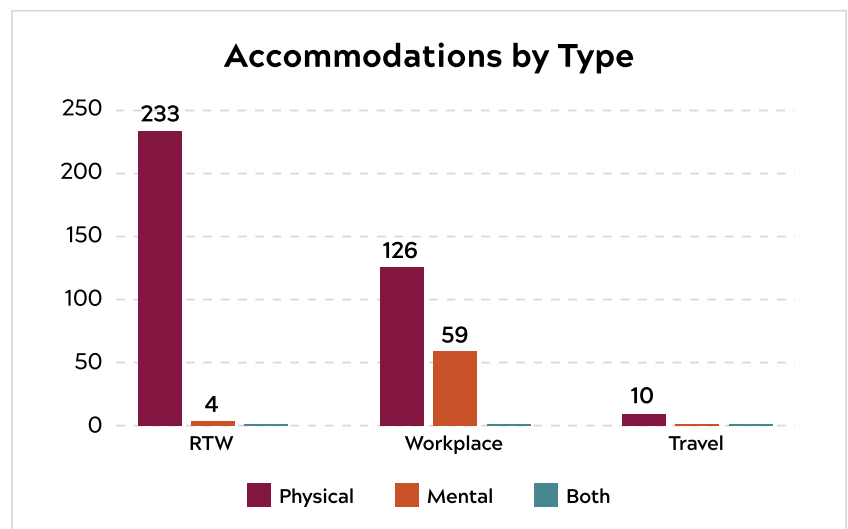


Figure 4



Outreach and Training

The team offers educational and outreach opportunities throughout the year. These include departmental trainings, resource fairs, ADA Liaisons Network meetings, graduate student trainings, educational trainings, new employee orientations, and National Disability Employment Awareness Month events in October. During the reporting period, the team provided 120 training and outreach opportunities for the university community. There were 3,944 training and outreach participants for the reporting period, which was a 34 percent decrease when compared to the last reporting period. Participants included graduate students, supervisors, HR division directors and managers, staff, faculty, and undergraduate students.

Physical Accessibility

The campus ADA architect ensures compliance with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design in all new construction and renovations. This role:

- Evaluates, assesses, and improves accessibility in existing campus structures.
- Educates the campus community on accessibility through presentations, trainings, and consultations.
- Investigates and works with campus teams to resolve barrier reports.
- Collaborates with university Facilities personnel on a wide range of accessibility-related issues on construction projects such as ramps, walkways, and building interiors.
- Works with numerous departments across disciplines on the most beneficial and cost-effective ways to address and correct complex accessibility issues on the Blacksburg and northern Virginia campuses.

In the past year, 27 barrier reports were filed and all were resolved. Those reports involved doors or door operators (2), accessible routes (10), parking (1), elevators (8), and other issues (6).

The ADA Architect has compiled a catalogue of accessibility issues covering the majority of campus buildings and is working towards initiating renovation projects to correct these accessibility issues. Through regular inspections, the ADA Architect also identifies smaller issues outside of the scope and scale of capital projects that can be rectified by the renovations team.

The ADA Architect is also actively engaged with the campus community. He has lectured as part of the Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC) cohort, Virginia Tech's Wicked Con, and at numerous classes for the Architecture and Residential Design departments.

Digital Accessibility

The digital accessibility officer oversees online and electronic accessibility compliance at Virginia Tech, leading efforts to create and streamline processes for digital accessibility testing for products used within websites such as platforms and systems for education, learning management, communications, payments, and registration systems procured by the university. With the assistance of an accessibility developer and partners in TLOS we are working to comply with laws, regulations, and policy.

The team conducted numerous classes, seminars, and consultations on digital accessibility, including 32 classes related to compliance and accessibility in the reporting year and seven state and national conference presentations in the reporting year. Application testing and development with software developers across campus was a primary focus, as was improving the procurement process for cloud-based applications.

The team's digital accessibility work earned the Spotlight Award from the Virginia Higher Education Accessibility Partners in 2024 for the Keep C.A.L.M. campaign, earning the award two years in a row.

Civil Rights Compliance and Conflict Resolution

CRCPE's civil rights compliance and conflict resolution team guides the university's efforts to maintain living, learning, and working environments free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. During the reporting year, we partnered closely with Student Affairs and Residential Wellbeing on multi-pronged efforts to raise awareness of students' rights to report incidents of discrimination and harassment, including by providing training programs tailored for student leaders, RWB coordinators and case managers, and the RWB leadership team. A primary focus of our outreach efforts involved educating our community on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and with it the university's commitment to providing equal access to university programs and activities free from discrimination based on race, color, and national or ethnic origin, including shared ancestry and caste.

We also designed a new, in-house civil rights and Title IX compliance training program for all employees that is available on-demand. This new training module provides university-specific information about policies, procedures, and practices, as well as more transparency around responsible employee reporting rules using examples. And, as always, we continue to provide a prompt and equitable response to reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Response to Reports of Prohibited Conduct

In the 2023-24 academic year, we received 283 reports of potential discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. This represents a significant increase from the previous reporting year (+85 percent) that is attributable to a combination of factors. Chief among these factors was the creation and implementation of a revised process for reporting discrimination in cases involving a student or student organization that is alleged to have violated the nondiscrimination policy. This new process ensures that every report that even potentially includes an allegation of discrimination is reviewed and evaluated by a trained civil rights subject matter expert who then determines an appropriate university response.

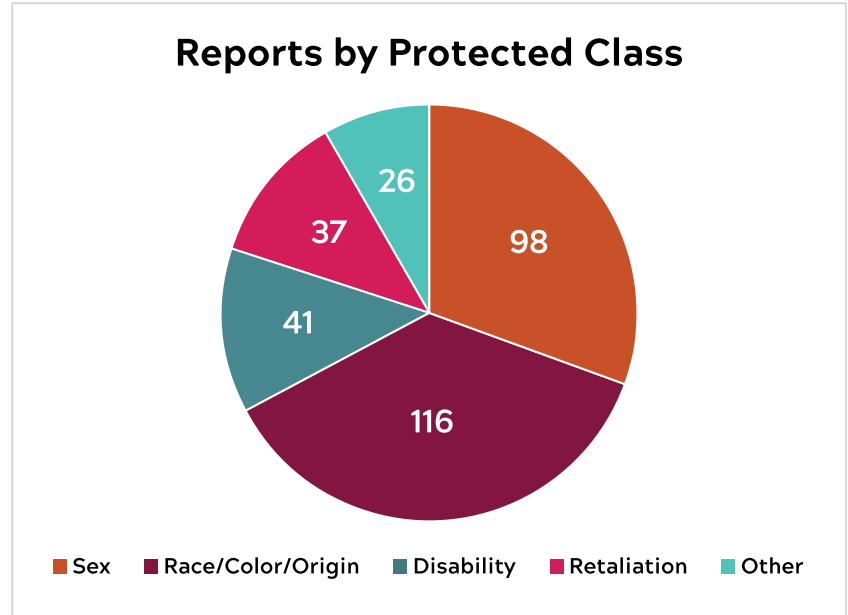
Summary of Reports of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Our team is mindful that every report that comes to our office is part of a wider context. Just as we have an obligation to respond promptly and equitably to all reports of discrimination and investigate thoroughly and with impartiality all complaints containing a potential violation of our nondiscrimination policy, we also believe we have an obligation to identify trends and patterns in reports and complaints. To that end, we track and regularly monitor a range of data about the reports and allegations we receive, including (1) what kind of discrimination is being reported; (2) who is experiencing the discrimination; (3) who is being alleged to be engaging in the discriminatory action; (4) how our reports are resolving; and (5) how promptly we are resolving complaints.

First, in terms of what kind of discrimination is being reported, we categorize every allegation by the protected trait, characteristic or status that appears to be involved, such as whether an allegation appears to involve potential sex discrimination or religiously motivated discrimination, or maybe both. To do this effectively, we group classes that receive protection under Policy 1025 into five major categories. Those

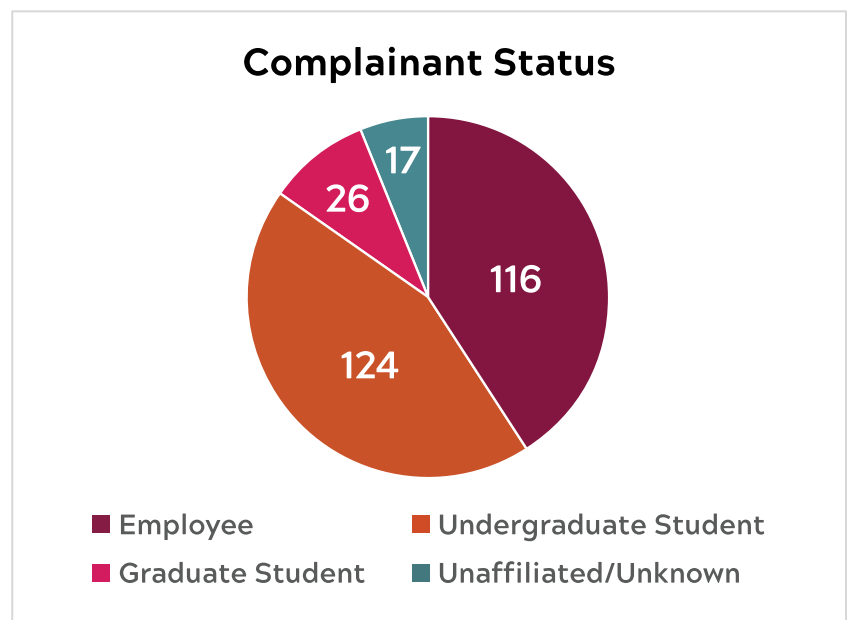
categories include the following: (1) race, color, and national and ethnic origin, including caste and shared ancestry (“race, color, or origin”); (2) sex, including gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy (“sex”); (3) disability; (4) religion; and (5) other, including age, genetic information, political affiliation, and military status (“other”). For the 2023-2024 reporting year, just over 40 percent of reports included one or more possible allegations of discrimination based on race, color, or origin. More than a third of reports included a possible allegation of sex discrimination, a category that includes reports of sexual harassment. About 15 percent included an allegation of discrimination based on disability, and a little under 15 percent included an allegation of discrimination based on religion. (Figure 5).

Figure 5



Second, for each report, we track the university affiliation of the person or people alleged to be experiencing the discrimination (“complainant(s)”) and the affiliation of the person or group who is accused of potential discrimination (“respondent(s)”). The categories we use for affiliation are student (undergraduate and graduate), employee, and unaffiliated or identity unknown. For the reporting year, a little more than half of all complainants were students. Of those, about 17 percent were graduate students and 83 percent were undergraduate students. Just over 40 percent of complainants were employees. (Figure 6). In comparison, employees are much more likely to be identified as respondents in reports: about a quarter of respondents were identified as students and about 65 percent were employees, with the remainder unaffiliated or unknown. (Figure 7).

Figure 6



Third, we constantly monitor how reports resolve. Reports typically resolve in one of three ways: (1) with outreach, meaning a complainant did not respond to our outreach attempts or declined a consultation or other form of support from our office; (2) with a consultation, meaning a trained civil rights expert met with one or more complainants and provided options for resolving the report but no further action was requested or taken (or a referral or other form of support requested by the complainant resolved the report); or (3) with a resolution process, such as a determination from our office under the nondiscrimination policy or an investigation and referral to a campus partner. For the reporting year, just under half of all reports concluded with consultation; most of these involved either a referral to a campus partner or support measures provided through our office. About one out of five reports resolved through a resolution process, such as an investigation or informal resolution. Most of the remainder resolved after outreach to the complainant. (Figure 8).

Prompt and Thorough Response to Complaints

Our team serves as an unbiased, impartial place to file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment to the university. When we receive a complaint, we provide a response that is both prompt and thorough. While we try to resolve every complaint within 75 days from the date it is filed, in practice, we cannot sacrifice any amount of thoroughness to achieve promptness. In each reporting period, we expect that some complaints will take longer to resolve. Therefore, the team starts each year with the goal of resolving 80 percent of complaints

Figure 7

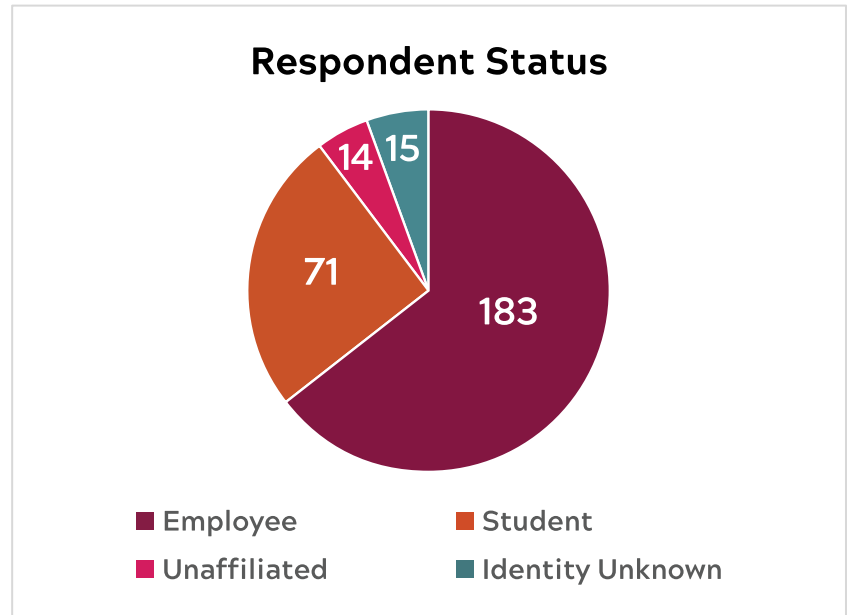
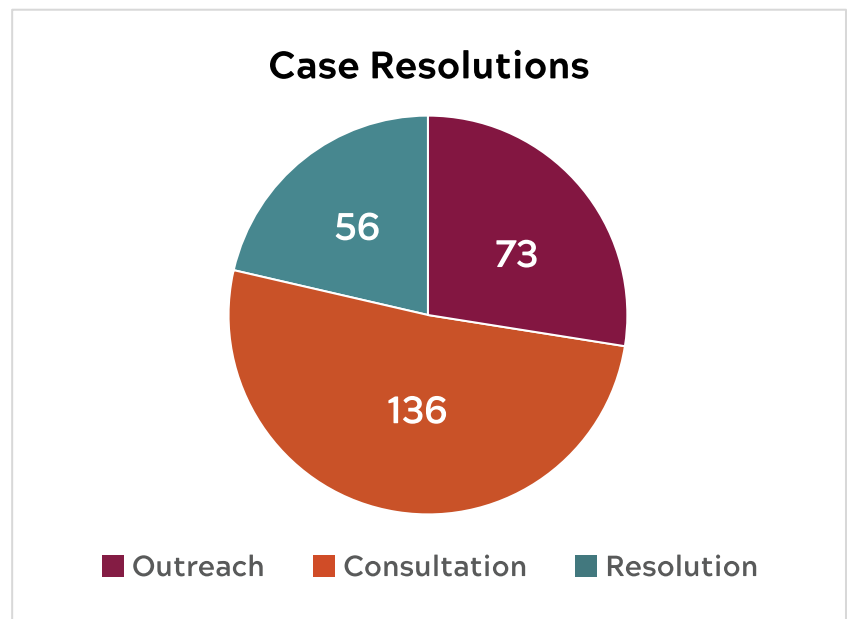


Figure 8



within 75 days or fewer. In the most recent reporting period, we met this goal by resolving 90 percent of complaints within 75 days or fewer. It took an average of 32.5 days for complaints to resolve; the median complaint resolved in 22.5 days.

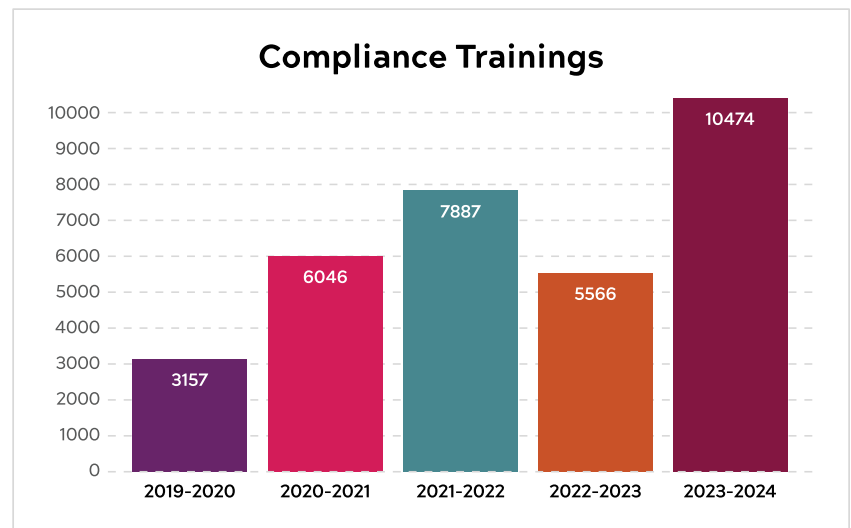
Training and Education Efforts

Civil rights compliance is a shared responsibility. In order to respond promptly and appropriately to reports of discrimination, CRCPE depends on every employee of the university to know and understand the university's responsible employee reporting policy—that is the policy that requires employees to report discrimination and harassment to our office.

Our mandatory civil rights compliance training serves as our foundation of our efforts to establish a shared understanding of university nondiscrimination policies, including reporting responsibilities. New hires are expected to complete the training within 90 days of their first day, and all employees are expected to retake the compliance training every two years. **Figure 9** shows the trends in the total numbers of employees who complete the compliance training in each reporting year for the past five years. With the development and rollout of our redesigned Respect, Equity, and Anti-discrimination Training (READ) compliance training, our office collaborated with HR partners in a concerted effort to encourage employees to take the training this year. We believe this was a significant contributing factor in the sharp rise in the numbers of employees who completed the training this past year.

Each year, we explore and implement innovative ways to augment the compliance training and engage with key partners to provide education about the university's nondiscrimination policies. As noted above, during the reporting period, our team focused on increasing the visibility of our office through targeted training sessions with our employees who most frequently interact with our students, such as staff in Residential Wellbeing.

Figure 9



Conflict Resolution Services

We take the view that a great civil rights process must, when possible, empower parties and stakeholders to make the choices that are best for them. Our civil rights compliance and conflict resolution team offers a range of opportunities for employees to resolve conflicts and concerns informally— meaning without filing a complaint and participating in a formal process. Participation in a conflict resolution service or process is always voluntary, and services range from individual conflict coaching sessions to department- or office-wide climate reviews. The goal of these services is always to look forward and explore ways to strengthen communication and increase collaboration and inclusion. In the reporting year, we provided individual conflict coaching sessions to more than 160 students and employees, and more than 1,000 members of the university community received training in effective conflict resolution and communication skills. We also led efforts to raise awareness of the variety of available conflict resolution options, including by hosting a workshop designed to provide a foundation for a cohort of 25 university leaders to incorporate concepts of restorative justice into university processes.

Equity Services in the Greater Washington, D.C., Metro Area

Reporting to the director of compliance and conflict resolution, CRCPE’s civil rights and education manager is based in the Washington, D.C., metro area and serves as a regional, in-person point of contact for questions and concerns related to the university’s nondiscrimination policies. The equity manager works with our partners, such as the [Cook Counseling Center](#), Division of Human Resources, and the [university ombuds](#) and [graduate ombuds](#) offices, to create a robust network of support for the region’s students, faculty, and staff.

During the reporting year, in addition to hosting regular office hours across [Virginia Tech’s campuses in the Washington, D.C., area](#), the equity manager co-facilitated or co-hosted events for students and employees, and provided conflict resolution for faculty and staff in the region.



Sexual Violence Prevention and Education (SVPE)

Virginia Tech has a long-standing commitment to sexual violence prevention. In the fall 2023, the Sexual Violence Prevention Initiative (SVPI) was launched to build on this work and advance a university-wide commitment to sexual violence prevention. A formal strategic plan was developed to prioritize prevention efforts and align resources and strategies to create a shared responsibility for a safe relationship culture at Virginia Tech. The Office for Sexual Violence Prevention and Education (SVPE) was established in 2024 and tasked with leading efforts to operationalize this strategic plan.

Mission

SVPE's mission is to foster a safe and supportive environment through comprehensive education, advocacy, and prevention strategies. The department will do this by:

- Empowering individuals and communities with knowledge, skills, and resources.
- Challenging harmful attitudes and behaviors that contribute to gender-based violence.
- Collaborating with diverse constituents to create a culture of respect, equity, and accountability.

Strategies for Implementation

SVPE will utilize the Social Change Model, Socioecological Health Model, and Skills-Based Approach to enact its mission. The models work together to promote individual and community well-being by addressing societal transformation, health influences, and personal empowerment. The Social Change Model emphasizes leadership, collaboration, and collective action for societal progress. The Socioecological Health Model highlights the interconnectedness of individual, community, and environmental factors in shaping health outcomes. The Skills-Based Approach equips individuals and communities with essential tools like communication and decision-making skills to make informed choices and drive change. Combined, these models create a comprehensive strategy that fosters empowerment, collective action, and sustainable health improvements across all levels.

Over the next year, SVPE will:

- Conduct a needs assessment by evaluating the strategic plan and gathering input from key constituents.
- Develop an organizational structure and plan for staffing, ensuring the team has the necessary skills and expertise.
- Establish a budget that covers operational costs, staffing, and infrastructure.
- Establish key workflows, protocols, and communication channels for professional staff and peer educators.
- Ensure alignment with existing practices to maintain efficiency and integration.
- Develop trainings and implement events to engage the Virginia Tech community.
- Define key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the department's success.
- Promote cross-departmental collaboration to integrate the new department effectively.

Title IX

CRCPE's Title IX team is dedicated to addressing discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment and violence. In collaboration with partners across the university, our team stewards a prompt and equitable process for responding to reports of sex- or gender-based harassment and violence. Our process empowers students who have been impacted by harassment or violence to make the choices that are best for them, including the choice to request a thorough investigation of allegations. But our work goes beyond investigating complaints; our in-house Title IX subject matter experts also meet with students to design and offer support measures as necessary to maintain or restore access to university programs and activities. We are constantly tracking developments in Title IX to ensure that Virginia Tech's policies and procedures comply with relevant laws and are in service of the university community. Underscoring the team's work is the goal of creating a university community free from sex-based discrimination and harassment and a university culture that protects against sexual violence.

Responding to Reports

During the reporting period, our Title IX team responded to 327 reports of sex- or gender- based harassment, including sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and stalking. In addition to investigating 21 formal complaints, Title IX staff provided support services to 132 students, considering each student's unique circumstances in order to tailor support measures to the student's needs—always with the goal of restoring access to an equitable academic environment. For many students, that support was critical to continuing their academic careers. To provide a full picture of these issues impacting the Virginia Tech community, we provide data on all official reports of sexual harassment and violence regarding students via a separate Title IX annual report, available on the [SAFE at VT website](#).

Monitoring Policy and Practice

Our Title IX team regularly reviews and solicits feedback regarding university policy and process related to Title IX, always striving to go beyond our compliance obligations to create as supportive an experience we can for students. For the reporting year, the Title IX coordinator led an advisory group comprised of key university partners who met on a weekly basis to ensure that all reports of sex- or gender- based harassment and violence received a consistent and appropriate response. We also hosted a Student Title IX Advisory Council to garner feedback directly from students on issues related to student experiences of university processes related to harassment and violence. Following recommendations of the Sexual Violence Culture and Climate Committee, CRCPE's Associate Vice President for Civil Rights and Prevention Education and the Title IX coordinator co-chaired a standing committee, the Title IX Policy and Practice Committee, that includes representation from numerous partner offices as well as undergraduate and graduate student representatives. During the reporting year, this committee met to review and, where necessary, propose improvements to the policies and practices that compose the university's shared efforts

to create learning and living environments for students that are free from harassment and discrimination; this committee created working groups tasked with developing an informal or alternative resolution process for Title IX cases and helping coordinate prevention education and programming.

Recognizing that response to harassment is a shared responsibility across university offices, our team arranged a number of events and trainings to ensure that all university staff who have a role to play in the Title IX process are up-to-date on best practices in the field. For example, we organized a comprehensive Title IX training facilitated by a nationally prominent Title IX expert; this two-day training was attended by all university staff and administrators responsible for handling Title IX matters and covered topics ranging from best practices in supporting students impacted by sex- or gender- based harassment to decision-making in the most complex Title IX cases. In the spring, we co-hosted a national expert on technology-enabled abuse to provide a comprehensive training on emerging issues related to the intersection of sex-based harassment, social media, and artificial intelligence, among other topics.



Looking Forward

In the 2024-25 academic year, CRCPE will continue its work to cultivate an educational and professional setting free from harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Goals for the office, by unit, include:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Accessibility Services

- Continue expanding ADA outreach and training opportunities to include accessible online ADA training, if available.
- Evaluating current physical and digital barrier reporting systems for adequacy.
- Continuing to provide prompt responses to requests for accommodation.

Civil Rights Compliance and Conflict Resolution

- Designing new micro-learning opportunities to increase transparency around our work, including responsible employee reporting and our obligations under federal civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination and promptly respond to reports of harassment.
- Reviewing our written procedures to provide as much clarity to participants and stakeholders about what to expect when we receive a report of discrimination.
- Continuing to provide a prompt, equitable, and thorough response to complaints and reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance

- Enhancing the partnership with the Division of Human Resources and college leaders to review and revise existing strategies, focusing on outreach and recruitment efforts essential to the AAP component designed to increase the variety of applicant pools in areas of underutilization at Virginia Tech.
- Implementing an updated search committee training module.
- Continuing the campaign to encourage protected veterans and people with disabilities to self-identify.

Sexual Violence and Prevention Education (SVPE)

- Launch pilot prevention programs based on the identified needs, such as educational campaigns, awareness initiatives, or skill-building workshops.
- Develop marketing and communication campaigns to raise awareness about the SVPE and prevention issues the department focuses on.
- Create a data tracking system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of prevention efforts.

Title IX

- Continuing to think creatively about how we can increase the visibility of Title IX, including the rights that students have to seek support measures to maintain or restore access to university programs and activities after an experience of sex- or gender- based harassment.
- Preparing to implement an alternative resolution process as a voluntary option for students who want to try to resolve a Title IX-related matter outside of the formal investigation and resolution process.
- Moving forward with a Title IX policy and practice group to regularly review and update university policy and procedures related to sex-based discrimination, including harassment and violence.



Resources

Accessible Technologies

assist.vt.edu

Cook Counseling Center

ucc.vt.edu

CRCPE Glossary

civilrights.vt.edu/about/glossary

Report a Barrier

vt.edu/accessibility/barrier

SAFE at VT

safe.vt.edu

Services for Students with Disabilities

ssd.vt.edu

**Gender-Based Harassment
and Violence Reporting Form**

bit.ly/TitleIX_Reporting_Form



**Discrimination and Harassment
Reporting Form**

bit.ly/VT_Discrimination_Reporting_Form



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