

Virginia Tech Principles of Community

- **We affirm** the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.
- **We affirm** the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely. We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.
- **We affirm** the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and the University. We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.
- **We reject** all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training, and interaction with others.
- **We pledge** our collective commitment to these principles in the spirit of the Virginia Tech motto of *Ut Prosim (That I May Serve)*.

Code of Conduct

We each have an obligation to ensure that the Virginia Tech Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation is a great place to work for all. Therefore, the purpose of this code of conduct is to provide specific guidelines for conduct for all students, staff, faculty, volunteers, or other employees within the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation. All members of the Department of Fish and Wildlife are expected to adhere to the Virginia Tech Principles of Community while representing the department which can include, but is not limited to, on-campus activities, conferences, field work, as well as online platforms. As such, members of this department are expected to show respect and courtesy to others at all times. Any actions, speech, writing, or behaviors that can be classified as harassment, discrimination, or bullying (defined below) or otherwise making someone feel threatened, unsafe, or unwelcome in our community will not be tolerated, are in opposition to the Virginia Tech Principles of Community, and can be subject to disciplinary action regardless of the intent (e.g., joking). The official Virginia Tech policy regarding harassment and discrimination can be found [here](#).

Harassment is defined as aggressive pressure or intimidation.

Discrimination is defined as the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on grounds of race, nationality, sexual orientation, ability, health, age, gender, or other status.

Bullying is defined as seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone who is typically perceived as vulnerable.

Reporting

Regardless of the type of reporting (e.g., formal or non-anonymous), retaliation against a person who reports a violation of our code of conduct will not be tolerated and can be subject to disciplinary action.

All members of the Virginia Tech community can make a formal, and non-anonymous complaint regarding discrimination and/or harassment against themselves or others by filling out the [Equity and Accessibility Complaint Form](#). This form requires your full name, position or title, phone number, email and physical address, as well as information regarding the incident (i.e., type, description, people involved, date, and location) and any supporting documentation. This complaint must be filled within 300 days of the last incident. Questions and complaints involving faculty, staff, or students can also be filed with the Assistant Vice President for Equity and Accessibility (North End Center, 300 Turner St., 540-231-2010, equityaccess@vt.edu).

If you do not wish to make a formal and non-anonymous complaint, the ombuds office can offer a safe and confidential place to discuss concerns. The graduate student ombudsperson, Bryan Hanson, can be reached by email: gradstudentombud@vt.edu or bryanh76@vt.edu or by phone 540-231-9573 while other VT community members (e.g., undergraduate students, faculty, staff) can reach the ombuds office by email ombuds@vt.edu or by phone 540-231-3125.

Developed by the Virginia Tech Dept of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, including tenure/tenure-track faculty, research faculty, and graduate student representative, and approved by the Faculty on May 10, 2022.