

**RESOLUTION OF VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
REGARDING THE PRESIDENTIAL EXECUTIVE ORDER
ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

WHEREAS, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University highly values diversity, including diversity of thought and experience, and fosters an inclusive environment, encouraging a culture of opportunity for all, which immensely enriches our campus, and is committed to providing every student an education that is free from discrimination and grounded in merit; and

WHEREAS, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University's mission statement includes a commitment to "improving the quality of life and the human condition within the Commonwealth of Virginia and throughout the world"; and

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2025, President Donald J. Trump signed the Executive Order titled "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity"; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) issued a Dear Colleague Letter on February 14, 2025, to clarify and affirm the nondiscrimination obligations of institutions receiving federal funds by explaining and reiterating existing legal requirements under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and other federal civil rights laws; and

WHEREAS, the USED released Frequently Asked Questions on March 1, 2025, to anticipate and answer questions that might be raised by the Dear Colleague Letter and to facilitate compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard; and

WHEREAS, the state law obligations of Commonwealth of Virginia agencies do not require a standalone office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) or dedicated DEI officers, nor do they require an infrastructure, strategic plan, or any elements that do not comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and other federal civil rights laws; and

WHEREAS, both the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University Board of Visitors and its administration are committed to complying with the law, including the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other federal civil rights laws, informed by guidance provided in the January 21, 2025, Executive Order, the Dear Colleague Letter, and the March 1, 2025, Frequently Asked Questions;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the university will take the following actions as informed by the guidance in the February 14, 2025, Dear Colleague Letter as well as the March 1, 2025, Frequently Asked Questions document:

1. Ensure that all university programs, policies, practices, and actions in every regard comply with the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other federal civil rights laws. This includes, but is not

limited to: admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, financial aid, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, discipline, housing, graduation ceremonies, and all other aspects of student, academic, and campus life;

2. Ensure there are no efforts to circumvent prohibitions on the use of race by relying on proxies or other indirect means to accomplish such end; and
3. Ensure there are no third-party contractors, clearinghouses, or aggregators that are being used by institutions in an effort to circumvent prohibited uses of race; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university's Office for Inclusive Strategy and Excellence is hereby dissolved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university shall immediately transfer permissible programs to a new organizational home; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university shall continue to review ongoing guidance from USED and the U.S. Attorney General and make appropriate changes to comply fully with the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other federal civil rights laws; and

LASTLY, BE IT RESOLVED that the president of the university shall update the Board of Visitors on compliance with this resolution within 30 days of the date of this resolution.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the resolution regarding the Presidential Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion be approved.

March 25, 2025