

Dr. Shernita L. Lee
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Dear Dr. Lee:

Per Dean DePauw's instructions, below is a description of the ways that the MA Program for the communication and reputation management majors in Communication will comply with the Diversity and Inclusion Requirements from the Graduate School, The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A requires that students meet the following guidelines:

1. The Virginia Tech Principles of Community as they apply to the valuing of human diversity and inclusion.
2. The impact that personal actions and words have on self, others, and the communities—university, national, and global—in which we live; issues of privilege, bias, power, prejudice, and discrimination; concepts of multiple personal, social, and cultural identities.
3. Available avenues of redress and our shared responsibilities as active by-standers.
4. The process of individual introspection required both to understand one's own forms of implicit or unconscious bias and to create inclusive environments.

Students who are graduates of the MA Program in Communication (both majors) will meet these objectives in the following ways:

1. Require all new entering graduate students in School of Comm to complete the "Diversity: Inclusion in the Modern Workplace" employee version training.
2. Require all School of Comm. graduate students to attend the annual graduate program D&I speaker hosted by the Graduate Program at the School of Communication. Speakers will rotate on an annual basis and will be held during the Fall semester. Speakers may include internal and external to VT speakers on diversity and inclusion issues in research and graduate education.
3. Require all new School of Comm grad students to attend the D&I training at the VT Graduate School orientation.

4. Require D&I components to the three required core curricular classes in the graduate programs. All students must pass those courses to proceed in the program. Note: We have 2 majors in our graduate program and we require both majors to take the same three core courses.

The three major courses for our program are:

COMM 5014: Communication Theory: This course discusses a variety of theories in communication that address race, gender, class, sexual orientation, disability, culture, and age in communication. Specific theories are covered that discuss D&I issues from a diverse set of scholars within the academic field of communication. The course's content specifically addresses intersectional issues within communication, and examines a variety of theories that address these topics such as: critical race theory, feminism, identity theories, standpoint theories, intercultural communication competence, co-cultural theory, cultural contracts theory, and developmental model of inter-cultural sensitivity, among others.

COMM 5024 Communication Research Methods: This course discusses bias in research methods across quantitative methodologies. Specifically, the course discusses epistemology and how sources of knowledge can bias a researcher's approach to research, research questions and understanding data. The course also requires CITI training, which is the Institutional Review Board (IRB) training for working with human subjects. This training includes Social and Behavioral Research Training that discusses how power inequity between researchers and subjects can impact how participants interact with them. The training also requires cultural competence, which addresses cultural and social influence on beliefs of research subjects.

COMM 5054 Qualitative Methods in Communication: This course speaks to D&I issues as it relates to qualitative methodology and scholarship. The course content examines qualitative research methods as applied to diverse topics including: gender, race, LGBTQIA communities, AAPI communities, indigenous peoples, and D&I subjects that pertain to communication. There are also readings from diverse scholars, and a week of topics covered focusing exclusively on race and gender.

Sincerely,



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