**Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Climate Advisory Committee**

**Statement of Values for the Department of Veterinary & Animal Sciences**

The Department of Veterinary & Animal Sciences is part of a diverse campus community at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. We are committed to creating a dynamic environment for learning and working for students, staff and faculty. This includes providing a safe and inclusive environment that allows us to represent and celebrate the strength that diversity offers. We recognize that differences are a strength that provides broader perspectives and opportunities for collaboration that strengthen our common goal of learning. We are dedicated to working with communities on and off campus to create a rich environment that allows us to adapt and build new partnerships. As part of an inclusive environment, we commit to supporting efforts to eliminate discrimination, intimidation and bias against members of our Departmental and University community.

Achieving these goals relies on recruitment of people with diverse skills and perspectives. To accomplish this we will promote partnerships with stakeholders in the community and within the professions represented in the Department to recruit and retain diverse membership in our Department. In addition, we commit to steps to continually address areas of bias whether overt or implicit in an effort to strengthen the community. We will continue to provide opportunities for formal and informal dialog among the student, staff and faculty to celebrate differences as well as strengthen our common purpose.

**OUR PRIORITIES INCLUDE ADVANCING:**

**RESPECT** for the contributions of each member of our community and for their essential role in achieving excellence in our mission

**AWARENESS** of perspectives beyond our own personal experience

**OUR VALUES** regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion through transparency in expectations and commitment to accountability for all members of our community

**COMMUNITY** through engagement and interactions

**EMPOWERMENT AND A SENSE OF AGENCY** through informed and inclusive decision making

**INCENTIVIZATION** to recognize and reward exemplary commitment and success

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**through application of best practices in recruitment, retention, and advancement of all community members

**INTERPERSONAL SKILLS** to promote civility and inclusivity in the workplace and in the classroom

**LEARNING COMMUNITIES** through the sharing of knowledge across units

[College of Natural Sciences Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](https://www.cns.umass.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion)

The members of the Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences are committed to advancing the workplace and learning climate.

This commitment is an integral component spanning our core missions to: 1) provide a rigorous and innovative scientific education for all, 2) foster scientific discovery, and 3) disseminate knowledge of these discoveries. We affirm that our collective achievements will be the greatest in an environment where each member of our community has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

To proactively address our commitment to inclusiveness and respect for diversity, the Department of Veterinary and Animal Sciences has created an advisory committee on workplace climate. The goals of this committee include monitoring the status of the climate, assessing current norms and practices that influence inclusivity, and developing suggestions of best practices to positively advance the department beyond its current position. Our committee is composed of faculty, staff, and students (both graduate and undergraduate). We welcome every member of VASCI’s participation in this effort.  The committee is dedicated to fostering a safe, respectful, and diverse environment for students, faculty, and staff in the Veterinary and Animal Sciences Department.

Current members are:
Joe Jerry, chair
Lena Pobezinsky
Jill Smith
Annmarie Morawiak
Amy Roberts
Lisa West