

Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion
2025-2026 Agency DOI Goals - Year end Accomplishments
June 30, 2026

Agency: Christopher Newport University
Year: July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

<p>COVA Plan Goal 1: Access and Success - Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.</p> <p><i>CNU Goal 2: Recruit, retain and engage students, faculty and staff whose diverse backgrounds and perspectives demonstrate the University's commitment to inclusive excellence.</i></p> <p><u><i>CNU Plan Goal Progress Summary:</i></u></p> <p><i>CNU has renewed our partnership with the DoD as a Skill Bridge Business Partner, which provides internship opportunities to transitioning service members. An individual who completed their internship with CNU was successfully hired into a full-time role in the Office of Emergency Management. Also, the Office of Human Resources is currently hosting a Skillbridge participant. The advertisement period for the SkillBridge cohort starting in September has closed, and both Emergency Management and Human Resources are currently reviewing those applicants. CNU is also preparing to begin advertising for the next cohort, which will start in January 2027. CNU is looking to expand the SkillBridge program by increasing the number of participants in additional departments across campus.</i></p> <p><i>In an effort to retain faculty and staff, we have implemented additional training to include Entering our Community of Excellence & Inclusion; Civility & Communications; Leading with Authority, Kindness, Critical Thinking; and Having Difficult Conversations.</i></p> <p><i>The hiring process for Instructional and Administrative Professional faculty was reviewed and updates made to the University Handbook to allow for more flexibility and clarity for both the applicants and the search committees in an effort to generate a more diverse applicant pool by using “review date” and “open until filled” model, allowing for the timely review of applications while maintaining opportunities for qualified candidates to apply throughout the duration of the search. These changes enhance transparency regarding the hiring timeline, support broader outreach efforts, and increase the likelihood of attracting a larger and more diverse candidate pool.</i></p> <p><i>Objective 1: Continue to improve hiring processes and increase access to potential applicants from diverse populations.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Apply for and obtain a DoD contract with Skillbridge to assist with placing veterans in the workforce.b. Review the hiring process to allow for a more diverse applicant pool by using an application “review date” and “open until filled” model for Instructional and

- Administrative Professional faculty.
- c. Utilize advertising sources that increase outreach to underrepresented candidates to attract a more diverse applicant pool.

Objective 2: Continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.

- a. Continue to make ongoing updates to the current recruitment/marketing plan in an effort to increase diverse applicant pools.
- b. Establish faculty recruitment, retention, and promotion action steps based on the spring 2024 faculty experience survey.
- c. Examine the retention data and disaggregate the information to ensure we address opportunities across the workforce.

COVA Plan Goal 2: Welcoming and Respectful Culture - Create and sustain a culture that welcomes and embraces diverse opinions, independent thinking, and respectful interactions to deliver optimal results for the organization and its customers.

CNU Goal 1: Create and maintain a culture that is inclusive, welcoming and respectful of the various backgrounds and perspectives of the Christopher Newport community.

CNU Plan Goal Progress Summary:

Reflecting one of the key objectives of the university’s strategic plan, the President’s Council on Inclusive Excellence was established to support a lasting, sustainable culture of inclusion and belonging. The council is composed of representatives from multiple levels of staff, faculty, and students. This body will review the ongoing progress of initiatives related to inclusion and belonging.

This past year we launched the President’s Leadership Speaker Series for Faculty and Staff and hosted several speakers that made a meaningful impact on our efforts to create a stronger culture of inclusion and belonging.

Fireside Chat/Leadership Discussions continue in an effort to bring mid-level supervisors with various backgrounds together to openly create dialogue around current topics pertaining to higher education directly with the President and Chief of Staff.

New staff members are introduced to the University Statement on Free Speech and Expression and discuss the university’s strategic priority to “Create a Stronger Culture of Inclusion and Belonging.” The discussion highlights their speech rights as well as their responsibilities to respect the rights of their fellow community members.

Additionally, as a part of the University’s Getting Started Week before the beginning of the Academic Year, new faculty members have similar discussions as the staff. However, faculty are also presented with resources related to supporting inclusion and belonging, students’ speech and expression, and facilitating healthy exchanges in the classroom.

A series of Constructive and Inclusive Dialogue sessions are offered to employees each semester. Faculty and staff explore frameworks and resources that support productive exchanges of ideas and promote workplace community and collaboration. The series is a partnership with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities.

Objective 1: Persist in creating and maintaining a supportive and respectful climate that

values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.

- a. Continue to acknowledge and expand history and heritage months along with other observances. Focus on expanding University sponsored events that run in conjunction with events sponsored by faculty and student service organizations.
- b. Continue and expand educational workshops and materials on the value of diversity and efforts to enhance inclusion, and freedom of speech and expression.

Objective 2: Continue to provide an environment where conflicts, concerns, and complaints are aired and addressed expeditiously.

- a. Expand the skill-based series around constructive and inclusive dialogue using the Constructive Dialogue Institute which centers on civil discourse.

COVA Plan Goal 3: State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training - Maintain a plan and infrastructure that continues to provide individualized skills training and career development for state employees. Agencies report annually on DOI goals and accomplishments.

CNU Goal 3: Provide comprehensive education, training, and professional development programs for faculty and staff, inclusive of curricular and co-curricular activities/programs/courses, in an effort to enrich skill sets, better educate our students, and work more effectively with one another.

CNU Plan Goal Progress Summary:

This past year, we implemented an extensive supervisor training program which includes monthly training throughout the year. This program includes content on workplace respect and civility, adapting leadership styles, building engagement and motivation, strategic thinking, professional boundaries, change management, and servant leadership. Additional supervisor training was provided to Instructional Faculty who supervise Classified staff. During the 2025-2026 training season, 52 employees took part in the supervisor training program.

The Constructive and Inclusive Dialogue Institute, a university partnership with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, is in its second year. This cohort experience for employees involves six skill-based, educational sessions that focus on responding to critical issues in the workplace and facilitating constructive dialogue that promotes engagement and minimizes divides related to differing values and beliefs. Participants have ranged from administrative assistants to academic deans. Of the three cohorts, all participants have reported (1) the concepts learned in the program are highly relevant to their campus experiences, (2) they learned skills that will be useful in their respective roles, and (3) they would like additional opportunities to practice their skills related to constructive dialogue.

CNU employees and students were provided an opportunity to apply their facilitation and constructive dialogue skills by participating in the Peninsula's Diversity Dialogue Day. This signature program of the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities was hosted on the campus and involved over 100 high school students and approx. 25-30 teachers and

counselors from the Peninsula. Employees and students facilitated group dialogues that focused on high school student diversity, value conflicts and social tensions in high school, and strategies for resolving conflicts in effective and healthy ways.

Beginning Fall 2026, the campus will be introduced to Perspectives for Employees, a blended learning experience which features small group dialogue and online modules exploring values, effective communication, conflict resolution, and civil discourse.

CNU Goal 5: Effectively communicate the University's efforts to increase diversity and inclusion on our campus.

CNU Plan Goal Progress Summary:

The University continues to make progress on the strategic plan, the Strategic Compass, through work dedicated to our Compass Point to Create a Stronger Culture of Inclusion and Belonging.

Key highlights include reviewing all institutional policies, practices, and decision making processes to ensure they are supportive and provide opportunities for all; utilizing inclusive assessment practices to provide necessary information to promote diversity, opportunity and inclusion throughout the institution; and creating and sustaining inclusive and accessible spaces and provide platforms for advocacy, dialog collaboration and community-building to foster a sense of belonging. Also, Human Resources is developing a leadership learning plan that includes training on inclusive leadership.

In January 2026, CNU launched a comprehensive Exit Interview Program to ensure all employees voluntarily separating from the University have an opportunity to provide feedback about their employment experience. Data gathered through this initiative has been used to identify emerging trends, inform leadership and employee development programs, and deliver department-specific insights that support evidence-based decision-making and continuous organizational improvement.

Human Resources also completes the annual Employment Opportunity Plan and Workforce Plan and uses the data to analyze trends and develop goals in conjunction with the University's strategic plan.

Human Resources updated the required Search Chair/Search Committee training to include enhanced content on Diversity and Inclusion. All Search Chairs and Search Committee members are required to complete this training. In addition, Human Resources is currently scheduling several additional training sessions for the upcoming fall semester. The training materials are shareable, and the Recruitment Team regularly distributes them across campus as needed to support search and hiring processes.

Objective 1: Continue to amplify opportunities to advance the goals outlined in this framework.

- a. Evaluate options related to exit, onboarding, and stay interviews to gather additional feedback.
- b. The university will communicate and implement Strategic Compass priorities,

- including a dedicated priority to “*Create a stronger culture of inclusion*”.
- c. Partner with EAB to expand best practices in DOI.

Objective 2: Continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness with the Department of Human Resource Management.

- a. Human Resources will continue to submit the annual workforce planning/succession plan report to the Board of Visitors and the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management.
- b. The University Policy Committee will continue to review all policies for inclusive language.
- c. Human Resources will provide supervisory training to instructional faculty who supervise Classified staff on Virginia’s DHRM processes and procedures.

Objective 3: Continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.

- a. Continue and expand cultural competency development workshops offered to employees, including disability education and civil discourse using the Constructive Dialogue Institute.
- b. Additional training for Human Resources professionals on EEOC and workplace trends.
- c. Update search chair training on diversity and inclusion and offer to all search committee members.