University of Massachusetts
UMASS Lowell

Memorandum

To: Deans, Chairs, and Faculty

From: Ahmed P. Abdelal, Provost

Date: September 8, 2008

Re: Workplace Climate

In 2006, the UMass Trustees directed each campus to prepare annual progress reports on diversity efforts. The Lowell campus identified "Climate Maintenance" as a focus of this annual report. In this context, we have been addressing climate concerns via the "Be Part of The Solution" series. ***Since individual faculty members can under certain circumstances incur personal liability for violations of relevant policies, I ask all faculty who have not previously participated to participate in this initiative.*** In addition to addressing individual and collective responsibility for workplace climate, these programs will cover recent changes in anti-discrimination law, anti-harassment law and effective approaches for interacting in a workplace that embraces diversity.

In order to make participation as convenient as possible with respect to class schedules, the new diversity series will be offered in two web-based programs: "Respecting Differences, Preventing Discrimination" and "Prevention of Sexual Harassment". These modules will be made available for use starting on October 2, 2008. In addition, EOO will also provide in-person sessions for those who may not have access to University computers and/or for those who may require that the programs be delivered in an alternative format. EOO will still be available to provide sessions specifically tailored to the needs of an individual academic department based on a request from a Dean or Department Chair, or in circumstances where such training may be beneficial.

I would greatly appreciate your leadership in this and similar initiatives that aim at realizing a climate that embraces diversity and promotes respect for all people.