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Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Plan

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Diversity, Equity + Inclusion Plan





Introduction

Portland State University is situated in the heart of downtown Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. Multnomah County rests on traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River. Multnomah is a band of Chinooks that lived in this area. Portland State University wishes to recognize that since time immemorial these have been the lands of the Indigenous peoples of this region.

Since its inception as Vanport Extension Center (VEC) in 1946, the institution now known as Portland State University has provided a rich learning environment for many not encouraged by other institutions.

In an era when a college education was usually reserved for those with the most privilege, VEC actively encouraged the enrollment of veterans, first generation college students, students with children, women and people of color. As the first publicly supported institution of higher learning in Portland, VEC committed itself to engaging all members of the community. That commitment continues today and PSU remains the most diverse four-year campus in the state.

With the creation of VEC, the promise of an

equitable education opportunity was made by the state of Oregon to those who had served in the nation's armed forces as well as others for whom social justice had been denied, although funding was initially tentative. Today, we the framers of this Diversity Equity and Inclusion Plan (DEIP) endeavor to bring that promise to realization here at Portland State University. Student protests against the current condition challenge us to reach greater heights in our vision of a possible future. We trust that the efforts made in creating this plan adequately address our need to be a socially just organization in all we do.

Later dubbed The College That Would Not Die, VEC had to weather natural disaster and endure political obstacles along the road. VEC struggled both against the established Oregon universities for funding and the outright societal prejudice exhibited against underrepresented and underserved groups. Many in state government wished that the Vanport flood of 1948 would have caused the permanent closure of the young upstart school. It was the sheer tenacity of VEC administrators, students and community partners that convinced the Oregon Board of Higher Education to allow it to continue. Today, Portland State University is the second largest university in Oregon, is Oregon's only urban research university and is an anchor institution in the Portland region.

Portland State University chooses to honor its rich and complex history by expanding its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as a centerpiece in providing students with a dynamic education. By embracing this institution's unique history we further ground PSU in the community and acknowledge the permanence of its diverse population. Our institutional privileges cannot be misspent when the stakes are so high. The decisions we make at this micro level will have rippling effects through generations. We now choose to direct our resources toward the greater good and hear the needs of our students, staff and faculty. We commit ourselves to make their outcomes the best we can.

In many ways, Portland State University is a reflection of this city that struggles to define itself and its relationship to diversity, equity and inclusion during a shifting demographic tide. The past year has seen an entering undergraduate class with 40 percent coming from historically underrepresented and underserved communities of color. Efforts are being made by faculty, staff and students to grapple with serious equity issues. There are more difficult and courageous conversations about diversity, bias, hatred, ethnic slurs, equity and inclusion in classrooms, hallways, multicultural centers, boardrooms, cafeterias and various media forums than ever before. These conversations are often awkward and uncomfortable but extremely necessary for our institution to be the model of excellence it seeks to be.

The superior scholarship and community engagement emanating from Portland State University is a source of pride to us and we endeavor to support it. Annually, PSU is recognized for being among the nation's most innovative, inclusive and finest institutions. We achieve these accolade worthy accomplishments by intentionally listening, learning and acting. This DEIP is part of that process. Our students, faculty and staff suggest where we need to go, and by listening, this institution becomes a national role model.

Institutions are made up of individuals where budgets are expressions of values, combining responses to realities and priorities. Budgets are also political documents that reflect attitudes toward those individuals. Equity initiatives increase the likelihood that documents issued by an institution reflect the

needs and desires of the many rather than the few. Our DEIP is an extension, and plan for implementation of our Strategic Plan and supports its commitment to be forward thinking in our effort to "Let Knowledge Serve the City" and by committing the necessary resources to do so.

Why a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan?

Portland State University is committed to maintaining and promoting an inclusive environment, accessible to all in a physical, mental, emotional and spiritual manner while supporting academic excellence. A diverse workforce and student body is essential to our ability to provide the best possible education and to create an atmosphere in which all our people thrive. We believe that the diverse background of our people brings necessary and varied perspectives that enrich our university. Those perspectives make us more than a diverse community; they make us engaged and culturally responsive.

A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan represents a moral compass for our institution indicating where we have been and where we are going. We can achieve diversity without equity but equity cannot be achieved without diversity. These two constructs need to be recognized as distinguishable and both need to be realized. Thinking solely in terms of representational numbers must give way to structural change such as curricular and pedagogical reforms and emphasizing the positive quality-of-life experiences students, faculty and staff have on campus.

With the recent publication of the PSU 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, the commitment has been made to achieve greater diversity and equity. By adopting an Equity Lens through which to develop and assess university policy, practice and decision making, this institution formalizes its objective to adopt best practices creating a more inclusive, accessible and just campus.

The criteria and metrics by which we operate will be increasingly critical to this institution's accreditation review process. The PSU Board of Trustees approved the university's new Strategic Plan in December 2015. Shortly after, it also adopted the plan's five strategic goals as its new core goals for accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities

(NWCCU). Accreditation Core Goal # 4 now calls for PSU to “Expand our Commitment to Equity.” This commits PSU to “creat[ing] an environment that is open, inclusive, and committed to diversity, and to ensur[ing] that all students and faculty embrace culturally responsive teaching and learning.”

The Equity Lens

In creating its new Strategic Plan, PSU used a unique approach to develop planning initiatives that were inclusive and culturally sensitive to its diverse student body, faculty and staff. When assessing the plan, it applied an Equity Lens to all of its elements. This approach will influence PSU’s commitment to equity in the following ways; it will:

- Help identify opportunities to make PSU policy, programs and practices more equitable.
- Elevate the campus’ expectations for greater accountability around equity issues.
- Acknowledge the importance of equity considerations in promotion and tenure guidelines, performance evaluations and similar assessments.
- Recognize that cultural understanding is a prerequisite for an engaged education and that PSU has a responsibility to provide our students with the necessary competencies to be able to work with diverse colleagues and the organizations they serve.

It is essential that we move beyond the diversity goal that has been central to prior equity initiatives at PSU. Diversity is an important yet insufficient movement for advancing student outcomes yet if we do not address structural racism and other inequities the marginalized will remain so. Our goal is to increase retention and graduation rates for student members of non-dominant communities, as well as the hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff. To achieve this goal we have taken the two-fold strategy to first consolidate the essential elements for a campus with greater diversity, equity and inclusion, and second, to identify an implementation plan that reflects the pragmatics of limited financial and human resources as well as our commitment to respond to urgent

issues.

Within the range of marginalized communities, we currently prioritize race and ethnicity in response to the local and national imperative to address racial disparities. Student mobilizing at PSU and across the nation urges action; waiting longer is unacceptable. At the same time, we recognize the struggles of those from additional marginalized groups, such as those in the LGBTQ and disability communities. Starting with race and ethnicity will give us experience in making gains which can then be extended across additional identity groups. The DEIP remains inclusive of the range of marginalized communities, and we position race and ethnicity as the current priority with which we will lead.

How the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan was Created

In the spring of 2016, Dr. Carmen Suarez, Vice President for Global Diversity & Inclusion, appointed a Writing Team, with the approval of the Diversity Action Council (DAC), to draft a starting version of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan (DEIP). Drawing from faculty, staff and students, Dr. Suarez recruited those with experience in PSU’s Strategic Plan and the Equity Lens Panel:

- Ann Curry-Stevens, Associate Professor, Social Work (Co-Chair)
- Jasmin Hunter, Student, Economics Major
- Ebony Oldham, Graduate Student, Education, Leadership and Policy
- Stephen Percy, Dean, College of Urban and Public Affairs (Co-Chair)
- CeCe Ridder, Assistant Vice President for Student Access and Success
- Kevin Thomas, Graduate Student, Urban Studies
- Mark Wubbold, Senior Policy Analyst, President’s Office
- Marisa Zapata, Assistant Professor, Urban Studies and Planning

After substantial work during the summer of 2017, the Writing Team completed its draft and submitted it in October 2017 to the Vice President for Global Diversity & Inclusion. The plan was next shared for review and comment with the President's Executive Committee and the Academic Leadership Team chaired by the Provost. The plan was also shared with the full 80-member Diversity Action Council, representative of our university as a whole, whose role is to foster equity and social justice by reviewing PSU programs, policies, and decision making and developing recommendations to serve the best interests of our diverse constituents. Modifications were made in response to feedback received during this review process. The Diversity Action Council has approved the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan (that will replace the former Diversity Action Plan). Feedback about and support for this plan is being sought from other campus stakeholder groups.

↳ **Reference to the PSU Strategic Plan:**

Objective, Goal #4: Create an environment at PSU that is open, inclusive, and committed to diversity...

Definitions

Diversity: Diversity is achieved when we ensure that participation levels of students and employees alike reflect that of the population. Specifically, for PSU, diversity will be achieved when it reflects the composition of the Portland metropolitan region in which PSU is based. We aspire to increase the percentage of students, faculty and staff who are from underrepresented groups. Underrepresented groups refer to, but are not limited to, groups based on race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, tribal status, geographic location, gender, gender expression, disability status, documentation status, etc. who are underrepresented in institutions of higher learning. Underrepresented may also refer to other economic or social indicators such as persons from economically disadvantaged backgrounds or those who are first generation of their family to attain a higher education.

Diversity is further used to describe the many national, racial, ethnic groups and sovereign tribal Nations in the United States that have brought their cultures, languages and belief systems to North

America. It is a term that has grown to include the representation of all those who hold both dominant and minoritized identities, and it aims to prioritize attention to the importance of diversification across society, including employment, research, policy making, political representation, and institutional governance composition. Its goal is both a means and an end – diversifying who is at the table making decisions (such as hiring committees) is more likely to end up with more inclusive results. Diversity is also an important outcome of initiatives to, for example, diversify the student and faculty body.

Equity: "Equity exists when everyone has access to opportunities necessary to satisfy essential needs, advance their well-being, and achieve their full potential." "We have a shared fate—as individuals within a community and communities within society. All communities need the ability to shape their own present and future. Equity is both the means to healthy communities and an end that benefits us all." - Portland City Council, 2011.

Inclusion: Inclusion occurs when the structures and practices that support students and employees alike make them feel welcomed, affirmed and respected across campus and outside campus while they undertake university-related activities. Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth, dignity and ways of knowing of all people are recognized. In deference to certain tribal sovereignty initiatives, inclusion should also be considered a willful act.

Culturally Responsive: Culturally responsive practices are those that are respectful of, and relevant to, the belief, practices, culture and linguistic needs of diverse populations and communities. Cultural responsiveness influences access to services, the nature of services provided/delivered, as well as the quality of these services. Cultures are distinct for members of various underrepresented groups. Cultural responsiveness describes the capacity to respond to diverse communities, and requires knowledge and capacity at different levels of intervention: systemic, organizational, professional and individual.



1

Create a More Inclusive Campus

Diversity exists in many forms. To create an inclusive campus and classroom environment, it is important that faculty, staff, and students alike understand the many different people attending Portland State University. Building a campus community of respect and equity requires culturally responsive training, education, and sharing opportunities.

Beyond building such capacity through training and other supports, it is important to ensure accountability to ensure that complaints about the absence of inclusive practices, and the missteps that are injurious are effectively heard and responded to.

Creating a more inclusive campus includes five elements:

1. Conducting a campus climate survey
2. Advancing education for cultural responsiveness,
3. Creating a culturally responsive curriculum,
4. Giving students voice, and
5. Creating an Office of Tribal Liaison.

Undertaken together, these strategies will help us understand, analyze and monitor problems and assets, build capacity to deliver inclusive and culturally responsive education, and provide a method for surfacing both problems and suggestions for improvements in ways that aim to empower students and require that the institution is responsive to core issues.

↳ **Reference to the PSU Strategic Plan:**

Initiative #1: Create a More Inclusive Campus

1A. Conduct Campus Climate Survey

The PSU Strategic Plan calls for a campus climate audit to assess and inform safety and inclusion. The charge involves, but is not limited to, the work of equity and diversity. In recent months, multiple campus units have undertaken or begun planning for some form of climate survey or audit.

Equity and inclusion are important campus commitments that should be regularly studied and understood on the PSU campus. Climate audits are one means to understand the status of equity efforts and changes in overall equity and inclusion in the PSU community. They provide core insights into challenges in various locations on campus, the nature of these challenges and are of sufficient sample size such that we can disaggregate the results by social groups, such as race and disability status. We can also use climate surveys as an avenue to gather opinions on how best to address issues.

Recommendations

Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) in partnership with the Diversity Action Council's (DAC) Culture and Climate Committee is charged by the President with creating and administering a Campus Climate Survey. The results of the survey will generate a regular campus "pulse" regarding perceptions about and experiences related to inclusiveness, diversity and equity. The survey will be administered electronically to students, staff, faculty, and administrators on campus. The results of the survey should be reported to the President of the University and other leadership/governance groups on campus. These results should inform campus programming and innovations related to equity and diversity.

1. Issues that could be addressed in a climate survey include, but are not at all limited to:

- Assessment of openness within the campus community to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Experiences of collegiality and multi-cultural understanding
- Respect within and among stakeholder groups on campus
- The extent that pedagogies and curriculum support understanding of equity and inclusion
- Evidence that equity lenses are being applied and advancing overall equity and justice on campus
- Recommendations for improvements or innovations aimed at advance appreciation for and practice regarding equity and inclusion

2. In reporting results, findings should be disaggregated by different demographic and stakeholder groups.

↳ Reference to the PSU Strategic Plan:

1.2 (or 4.1.2) Conduct a campus climate audit to assess and inform safety and inclusion.

1B. Build a Culturally Responsive and Equity-Driven Workforce

PSU should make every effort to ensure that all employees work within their sphere of action to promote equity and inclusion. We need to build capacity within our workforce to integrate culturally responsive practice in their day-to-day responsibilities, to advance equity in the workforce, and to consistently demonstrate respect for the full range of students, community members and employees who 'touch' the institution that is PSU. To this end, requiring these elements in regular professional development for each employee is included in the DEIP recommendations.

Some may question the wisdom or appropriateness of requiring faculty to engage in learning opportunities designed to increase cultural responsiveness and equity capacity. The reality is that expertise in cultural responsiveness and equity is an ongoing learning activity. With equity issues at the forefront of the PSU Strategic Plan, it only makes sense to expect that faculty will advance skills and knowledge related to this important area of our campus commitment. Equity considerations and expectations for cultural responsiveness need to be effectively integrated across human resource activities, including job postings, hiring, promotion, retention and performance evaluations – including integration into the Promotion and Tenure guidelines of the university and of each academic unit.

Recommendations

PSU should create continuous learning processes to promote understanding of practices that can advance inclusiveness, cultural responsiveness and equity on campus for all employees.

1. New employees should be provided with opportunities to learn about the campus commitment to equity and about programs and mentoring that can support effective practice of inclusion and equity in their work. This learning can be started during orientation sessions and continue with workshops during the first year of employment.

2. Policies and systems used to evaluate employee performance should include recognition of all workplace learning undertaken to promote cultural responsiveness, inclusiveness, and equity in performance of job duties.
3. All employees should be required to participate in regularly scheduled professional development initiatives focused on a dimension of equity, diversity and/or inclusion. In partnership with Global Diversity and Inclusion, the Provost, Academic Affairs, and the Partnership Council will identify a spectrum of professional development opportunities, from which each employee will select a learning opportunity. The range is expected to include understanding oppression, building skills in cultural responsiveness, inclusiveness and equity, interrupting oppression, culturally responsive pedagogy, and addressing whiteness bias in the classroom. Existing initiatives would be included as options.

↳ **Reference to the PSU Strategic Plan:**

1.1 (or 4.1.1) Create expectations, training and incentives for faculty, staff, and students to regularly participate in culturally responsive education and sharing opportunities.

1C. Create a Culturally Responsive and Equity-Driven Curriculum

A culturally responsive and equity-driven curriculum will educate students from all backgrounds about injustices in our communities and pathways to achieve equity. Cultural responsiveness means that course curriculum and dissemination methods should embrace the multiple ways that students learn about, live in, and experience the world. Equity-driven means that specific attention will be paid to marginalized populations in the development and implementation of courses. To accomplish the dual goals of a culturally responsive and equity-driven curriculum, we recommend a combination of faculty-wide

expectations, student requirements, departmental initiatives and expectations for faculty to implement into each course.

Recommendations

1. PSU students need to be prepared for their future roles as employees and as participants in civil society. To this end, we work towards all PSU students graduating with a 3-credit course in “equity, inclusion and social justice,” over the next few years. To begin, all departments would identify their current practice in this area, and the Office of Academic Affairs would then catalogue standards in different departments, along with a list of what would be considered “qualifying” courses. The DARS academic tracking system could have these requirements embedded to ensure student compliance.
2. Over time, we seek to establish a standard that courses are reviewed to ensure that culturally responsive material and pedagogy are integrated. We aim to pilot this within the “lead instructor initiative” that is detailed in the Implementation Strategy. Lead instructors will work with a pilot tool (included in the Appendix, and still needing further development) to review the courses they are improving over the two-year initiative.
3. All teaching departments should include the following elements in student evaluations of their courses that indicate an inclusive classroom: culturally responsive course materials, pedagogy, and ability to address classroom conflicts. Student perspectives are of significant importance on the effectiveness of instructors. This material is carried forward into Promotion and Tenure reviews, and we also ask that the Provost’s office be provided with a synthesis of these scores for each department so that capacity can be identified and these insights can inform preparation of a professional development agenda for the university.

4. In the Promotion and Tenure process, instructors are encouraged to discuss their growth in becoming more culturally responsive and equity-oriented in their teaching. In recognition of significant research that demonstrates that faculty of color are rated more harshly by students in their teaching (as white instructors are given more favorable ratings), Promotion and Tenure Committees need to address this in their review of instructional faculty, and ensure that faculty are not penalized by this practice.
5. Departments are encouraged to review instructional patterns in these elements across their programs, and if inadequate, will develop an improvement strategy.

Instructors and departments need to improve their ability to identify student satisfaction with instruction and instructional materials. Methods for disaggregating student experiences in classrooms is included in the “equity analytics” section of this DEIP.

The Faculty Senate and the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) holds an important role in ensuring these recommendations are achieved. It is essential that all departments increase their ability to deliver culturally responsive teaching. The Faculty Senate’s and OAA’s reach across campus gives them the stature to influence educational delivery systems, and we simultaneously need to establish policy to ensure these elements are structurally rooted.

↳ **Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:**
3.2 (or 4.3.2) Train faculty to incorporate diversity elements in their courses. The Writing Team extended this to include equity and cultural responsiveness.

1D. Give Students Voice

Students are PSU’s lifeblood without whom we would not exist, and advancing their education remains the primary role of the institution. To that end, their experiences signal to PSU the degree to which we are able to enact commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion. Student roles in advancing equity and

inclusion are important, and the university needs to create and support an environment where pressing concerns can be addressed. The voice of students provides us with their lived experience of PSU’s educational efforts and provides us with a blueprint for doing better. The specific complaints and advice of students need to be widely shared so that university staff, faculty and administrators are aware of both challenges and assets, and that improved policies and practices can emerge.

Recommendations

1. Create permanent pathways for student voice to be gathered, listened to, and acted on
 - a. As was conducted with the Student of Color Speak-Out in 2015, the university needs to host a series of listening sessions to hear student experiences, priorities and recommendations for action. This should be led by students on campus, with institutional support offered by Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA). Administrators, faculty and staff would be invited to listen to these dialogues and to provide a response at the close of the event. Reports would be generated and become a formal record of the university. It should then become an ingredient for each department to address in establishing their own equity priorities for the coming year.
 - b. Within each department, we need assurances that students of color and other equity-seeking communities have formal regular opportunities to give voice to their concerns to administrators in the department. This would identify “hot spots” and priorities for departments to address. A written report of these insights would be prepared by the host administrators (checking first back with participating students to ensure it accurately reflects student priorities) and included in the Dean’s annual report to the Provost. In turn, a summary of issues,

trends and emerging issues across campus would be prepared by the Provost's office and shared with the DAC, Faculty Senate and students. These insights would inform professional development opportunities, DAC activities, and PSU's deployment of resources.

2. Create an Advocacy Office that provides a complaint and advocacy mechanism for students and employees. This office would provide advocacy supports, conflict resolution processes, and a pathway for less serious, but still difficult, experiences to be addressed. The office would be situated within EMSA.

↳ **Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:**

No Direct Reference: New Idea from Writing Team

1E. Create an Office of Tribal Liaison

Federal policies under which Native American tribal governments are treated as distinct legal and political entities, with their own powers of self-governance and self-determination are well established. Given the unique treaty status that the federally recognized Tribal Nations have, it is incumbent upon Portland State University to establish an office of Tribal Liaison to facilitate government to government relationships, build trust and facilitate mutually beneficial relationships. Establishment of the Office of Tribal Liaison would also align PSU with the City of Portland, many universities and other major organization in the states of Oregon, California, Idaho and Washington that have already done so.

To facilitate the achievement of mutually beneficial relationships, the Tribal Liaison would write memoranda of understanding with each of the federally recognized tribes that describe a bilateral agreement between the two parties. The Tribal Liaison would also promote knowledge and practice of cultural protocols in the continuing process of decolonization. Further, the Tribal Liaison would conduct government to government, tribal self-determination and sovereignty trainings for all senior administrators. The Tribal Liaison would provide support for the Native

American Advisory Board and be based in Global Diversity & Inclusion.

By setting out terms for mutual cooperation, PSU seeks to enhance the university's efforts in providing education, research and service to Native American communities and to promote better understanding of Native American issues. This would enhance PSU's ability to communicate and build relationships with tribes and further promote the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion. PSU desires to strengthen its connection with and commitment to the well-being of the Native Community.

PSU recognizes the importance of Native knowledge and living in harmony with nature, and how it complements the sustainability mission of the university. Combining traditional ecological knowledge with empirical studies would allow PSU and Native organizations to increase their mutual understanding and respect for this land. The Tribal Liaison would ensure that Indigenous research methods and cultural protocols would be respected during these greater research opportunities.

Recommendations

1. Establish the Office of Tribal Liaison, based either in Global Diversity and Inclusion, or reporting directly to the President. Preferred would be to position this office to yield the greatest influence and sustainability.
2. Establish a Native American Advisory Board

↳ **Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:**

Aligned with the Equity Lens (goal 4) although not explicitly noted in the Strategic Plan.



2

Promote Recruitment, Retention and Graduation of Diverse Students

The student body of PSU is the most racially diverse four-year college campus in Oregon. Effective supports need to be in place to ensure equity in recruitment across all departments, and then once in the university, supports are essential for maximizing retention and graduation across diverse communities.

In order to achieve this, we are obligated to provide services, support and classrooms which are culturally intelligent and responsive from recruitment to graduation with equitable outcomes for all students. Knowing that degree attainment by race is overall lower for students of color, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, advancing degree completion is imperative. We must create pathways for students that are flexible and responsive. Self-efficacy and a sense of belonging positively contribute to student success. Students should be able to connect with individuals and groups who understand their cultural backgrounds and experiences. Campus environments which engage and validate the cultural backgrounds of students makes it easier for those students to become involved in the academic and social life of their institutions.

Numerous initiatives have been underway at PSU over the years. Continuing these equity-oriented projects is important, and the experiences from these initiatives can help strengthen the new initiatives. PSU's existing efforts include the Last Mile project, early identification of students at risk, those students entering PSU with a high school GPA below 3.0, the Undergraduate Student Persistent Project, Student with Excessive Credits Project, financial concerns, Charting a Pathway to Degree Completion project, reducing the number of courses with preponderance of D, W, F grades, assessing the effectiveness of

academic policies, procedures and services, and making student success data available at the unit level.

Recommendations

1. Expand professional development opportunities whereby all staff build culturally and linguistically appropriate support services (see Build a Culturally Responsive Workforce).
2. Expand awareness of best practices in student retention including financial literacy, technology training and holistic advising practices.
3. Focused outreach to parents and families from diverse backgrounds that begins at recruitment and ends at graduation.
4. Work with the Office of Admissions, GDI, community-based learning initiatives (via OAI) and the Student and Community Engagement Center to assess, continue and expand intentional engagement in Portland area middle and high schools.
5. Participate in "equity analytics" (a later section in this action plan) to ensure we understand, in disaggregated ways, who we have represented, and who is being left behind, on our campus.

Promote Diversity through Effective Workforce Hiring and Retention



Our goal is for the staff and faculty of PSU to reflect the diversity of the study body, thereby signaling significant equity and inclusion gains for the campus. Achievement of this goal will demonstrate that we are actively committed to building equity. Diversifying PSU’s workforce can be expected to advance student success, retention and graduation. Students who learn in diverse settings have a much higher capacity to develop multicultural competence. Faculty, staff and students from marginalized communities will feel more comfortable, understood and appreciated in a diverse and inclusive university.

Recommendations

1. The University should take all necessary steps to ensure that all hiring and promotion activities are aligned with best practices in attracting and supporting a diverse and inclusive workforce. Global Diversity and Inclusion should develop workshops and training toolkits to advance diversity and inclusion in all campus hiring decisions. All recruitment/search committee members should receive training in such workshops at the start of recruitment efforts.
2. The University should create a pool of resources dedicated to attracting and retaining faculty from traditionally marginalized groups including faculty of color. Such resources could be used to support start-up packages including monies for start-up salaries, travel and professional development, and equipment and supplies.
3. PSU should create a set of “employee resource groups” (ERGs) for employees from various marginalized communities to provide mutual support, community and spaces of inclusion. Additional tasks would likely be to identify mentoring opportunities, amplify concerns about fairness in university policies and benefits, and promote growth and inclusiveness of employees from their community. ERGs may provide reflection and insight about how workforce diversity can be advanced and supported.
4. Working with the Office of Academic Affairs, the PSU Foundation should actively pursue fundraising initiatives (including support for endowed professorships and cluster hires) in academic areas with high promise of making diversity hires.
5. The University should ensure adequate funding to support employee accessibility accommodations.





4

Utilize an Equity Lens in Campus Planning and Decision Making

The PSU 2016-2020 Strategic Plan commits the university to using an Equity Lens for making decisions, stating that the university will “develop and utilize an equity lens in campus decision making” (pg. 14). Using an Equity Lens will make the effects of policy and programmatic decisions on marginalized populations transparent, and cultivate more equitable decision-making across campus.

An Equity Lens incorporates a series of systematic questions to ask during all policy and plan making as well as programmatic implementation to ensure the needs of marginalized populations are articulated and understood. The questions are designed to develop and sustain an analytical framework to assess the effects of decisions on marginalized groups. The lens pairs an examination of the equity of a planning process with the equitableness of the outcomes of plans, policies, and programs created through the process.

Some example questions found in many lenses include: what are the expected results of a policy; how will those results affect different racial groups; and does a proposed policy address a pressing issue identified in data about a racially marginalized group. An Equity Lens does not make the decision for us. Rather, it helps distill the equitable, or inequitable, effects of a decision to help inform the discussion. An Equity Lens can be applied at the point at which a group is trying to decide how to solve a problem, whether to move forward on a given program, or how

to implement a project.

While the Equity Lens includes a focus on the equitableness of the process, in part by examining who is participating in the decision making, not all decisions occur in an idealized equitable decision space. For instance, some decisions such as those related to personnel cannot be open to everyone. Decisions that must be made rapidly may also be harder to incorporate a full Equity Lens decision-making guidelines or collect or analyze significant amounts of data. Whenever possible these decisions should be slowed down, even for a brief time period for equity dimensions to be considered. In the narrowest of application opportunities, questions about equity can always be raised, discussed, and acted upon.

Recommendations

1. Equity Lenses should be used in all university decision-making bodies across the whole campus from the Board of Trustees to individual academic and non-academic units as well as individual decision makers.
2. PSU should provide resources on how to create and use equity lenses.
3. Each unit should develop its own lens. Units are able to center those marginalized communities needing attention. Racial equity should always remain a priority; others can be added. Tools are being created by the campus to support equity lens applications.
4. Units should document how the equity lens is used in making decisions. Each year, Deans should submit documentation to the Provost about how the Equity Lens is being used in the dean's units. Specific attention should be paid to how equity considerations strengthen university decision making, and how it diverges from existing decision making practices.

↳ Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:

1.3 (or 4.1.3) Develop and utilize an equity lens in campus decision-making.





5

Institutionalize our Commitment to Equity and Diversity

In order to embed the commitments of this Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan, as well as the equity elements of the Strategic Plan, we need to ensure that the efforts underway are “hardwired” into the university’s practices. The need for such hardwiring is to move beyond the good intentions of some administrators to incorporate equity into practices, and ensure that this initiative has enduring influence on the lives of students, faculty and community groups who hold marginalized identities. Hardwiring is also essential to ensure that we move from intentions to impacts, meaning that we embed clear actions and measures that provide assurances that our efforts will lead to improvements in diversity, equity and inclusion, as opposed to relying on the intentions of individuals to generate gains. Without this institutionalizing, the DEIP initiatives risk disappearing when administrators leave their positions, being of uneven importance in different units on campus, or even being ignored in some parts of the campus. This effort will require cooperation with the full range of partners on campus, including AAUP, FADM, RSP, Faculty Senate, the DAC, EMSA and other relevant units.

Recommendations

1. To establish the commitment to equity at the highest level possible in the university, the Board of Trustees needs to create a university-wide Equity Policy that defines and confirms PSU’s commitment to racial equity, and other forms of equity, and that identifies the core commitments and accountability practices that are being implemented. It would include requirements to implement the Equity Lens, along with expectations for its use, and tracking of results. The policy should also require documentation: the DEIP should be updated every five years, and operationalized with bi-annual implementation plans, with progress reports prepared annually. It would be the responsibility of the President to oversee adherence to this policy. This documentation should be reported to the Board of Trustees and disseminated broadly across the campus.
2. Charge the University Policy Committee to create procedures and policies within Human Resources to ensure that workforce diversification (as contained in 1B) progresses at a solid pace, and that employees are held accountable for their ability to integrate equity and cultural

responsiveness in their professional roles.

Examples could include requiring that there is racial diversity within those being interviewed, and if not, recruitment would continue. Another could be requiring that outreach to diverse media outlets occurs.

3. Create an accountability structure to increase the likelihood that students' learning experiences are infused with equity and cultural responsiveness. We want to build teaching faculty capacity in an iterative process that includes promoting critical self-reflection, learning circles, training, and additional incentives for building this capacity. While we emphasize voluntary compliance, movement towards involuntary measures may be needed if improvements are not in evidence (as will be tracked through the "Equity Analytics" in element #6). We also identify the need for an equivalent initiative on the administration side of the campus, to ensure that the entire PSU workforce moves towards demonstrating cultural responsiveness and equity in their roles.
4. Every employee at PSU (staff, faculty and administration) should have their proficiency for and demonstration of cultural responsiveness included in regularly scheduled performance review periods. This is a concrete dimension of accountability that will move the campus firmly in the direction of equity and inclusion.
5. Scholarship resources are needed to extend PSU's focus on teaching, learning and research in equity and inclusion. This includes financial investments. One example, the PSU-AAUP Faculty Development Program (formerly called Faculty Enhancement Grants) should implement an equity lens to ensure that its grant making aligns with equity.
6. To support our mission of "let knowledge serve the city," the Partnership Council should gather input from community partners on the effectiveness of our efforts to advance racial equity, diversity and inclusion. Based on this information, the Partnership Council would subsequently make recommendations to the Equity Leadership Team (described in the "Pillars of Implementation" section) on how to affirm and strengthen the work. Inclusion of partners who have hosted and hired PSU students are key stakeholders in such a consultation.
7. Units are encouraged to conduct their own equity assessment. Conducting an equity assessment helps each unit identify its own assets and challenges, and in the process of doing the assessment, builds a group of people who have skills to understand the reach of equity issues, and options for improving the department's policies, practices and procedures. Please see Appendix 2 for an example of an equity assessment. responsiveness, inclusiveness, and equity in performance of job duties.

↳ **Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:**

1.3 (or 4.1.3) Develop and utilize an equity lens in campus decision-making.



6

Use Equity Analytics to Track Progress in Equity Work

As this Equity Plan is implemented, it is critical that we know where we are making gains and where we need to double-down our efforts to improve outcomes. Creating an evaluation framework is essential for identifying progress and gaps, and it needs to be operationalized in numerous domains. Many organizations establish benchmarks that define adequacy in their progress, and track their progress towards them. The rationale for such an effort is to move the university into a level of certainty that it holds an acceptable level of cultural responsiveness and equity proficiency in how it adheres to its established goals on equity and inclusion. Regardless of our decision about setting benchmarks, we are convinced that tracking progress, and establishing an evaluation framework is essential to ensuring that the Equity Plan is implemented successfully. If challenges are identified, we then have the opportunity for course corrections and improvements. The evaluation framework will need to cover items ranging from individual skill acquisition that might address the number of students, faculty, staff and student advisors reached, and their skill levels, to the ways that the institution is building capacity to implement the Equity Lens, to efforts to characterize the status the organization holds in movement towards being a fully inclusive and responsive institution.

Recommendations

1. The list below identifies important areas for tracking, and thus a large portion of the work is already embedded in this plan. Additional evaluation approaches are recommended, such as considering pre/post measurement, and identification of best practices in evaluating equity and inclusion. It is certainly recognized that the list below is implausible to fully implement, simply due to its size. We ask that the Diversity Action Council create a subcommittee, an “Equity Analytics Team”, which would be a collaborative team charged with developing metrics for tracking progress on a subset of these elements. This team would develop an attainable yet robust plan for a two-year period, and then revised in subsequent years. Partnership with OIRP should be explored, mindful of the existing workload of the office. The elements to be tracked may include:
 - Student learning
 - Teaching capacity
 - Faculty and all advising
 - Workforce diversification
 - Retention rates for students and employees of color and other marginalized identities
 - Implementing the Equity Lens and its results
 - Student complaints
 - Completion of the Equity Assessments
 - Policy development and systemic adherence to policies
 - Campus climate
 - Student voice to identify emerging concerns and recommendations before they become crises
 - Inclusion of marginalized communities and PSU’s responsiveness to their issues
 - PSU’s responses to the priorities for action surfaced by students and employee
 - Research tracking of who is doing equity-oriented research, and how the investments of PSU-AAUP’s Faculty Development Grants support equity-oriented research
 - Faculty service loads
 - Systemic penetration of equity as a core organizational capacity, as well as departmental and unit-based capacities
2. Anticipated elements of this plan include:
 - a. Details of the reach, data collection methods, required improvements in data systems, analysis practices, methods for evaluating data, and a monitoring process that will report widely across the campus on gains and challenges in our progress.
 - b. Data systems improvements that support the disaggregation of data for the full range of items in this DEIP, including routine sharing of staff, faculty, administrative and student metrics that are disaggregated to ensure that we know of the disparities that exist and that we are making progress towards their eradication. Existing privacy protections to not disclose populations that are less than five people will be upheld.
 - c. Analysis practices whereby we consider whether the PSU data is comparable to the growth rate and diversification of the Portland metro area, and what other regions should be comparators.
 - d. Identify individually-oriented capacity metrics that would provide each department with suggestions for how to measure the depth and breadth with which students are gaining core skills for working cross-culturally and in noticing and deconstructing racial bias and related systems. This is likely to include developing a standardized practice “test” related to these competencies, and customized for various academic departments.

↳ **Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:**

3.1 (or 4.3.1) Incorporate assessment of diversity learning outcomes in academic units and the Diversity Action Plan.



7

Promote Equity in Contracting and Purchasing

The university spends money in ways that stimulates the economy. It does this in numerous ways, including building construction, purchasing office supplies and technology, contracting for research supports, hiring consultants, and printing a wide range of publications, reports and communications materials. The bulk of the benefits go to the owners of the businesses with whom one contracts, and secondly it supports the employees of such businesses. When these contracts and purchases do not reach business owners of color, not only do these individuals lose out, but so too do their families and communities. As a result, PSU created an Equity in Public Contracting Policy in 2014.

Recommendations

1. The Office of Contracting and Procurement Services (CAPS) should report annually, in disaggregated ways, on PSU's contracting expenditures. This will let us see how PSU's resources are differentially benefiting minority-owned, women-owned and emerging small businesses. This report will be publicly available, posted on the CAPS website.
2. CAPS should create and disseminate the following information to each administrative body on campus: the policy, its intention, and sources of information on minority contractors.
3. CAPS should create a workshop in partnership with GDI, delivered to fiscal officers in each PSU unit, in order to build awareness of the importance of this issue.

↳ Reference to PSU Strategic Plan:

Strategic Goal #3, Objective 4.5: "Develop a strategy for leveraging our purchasing, employment, and investment priorities to advance equity, sustainability and community wealth-building."



The Pillars of Implementation

Without question, the recommendations for action in this report—together—represent a bold and integrated approach to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion at PSU. In proposing these recommendations, we understand that the work is extensive and cannot be accomplished overnight. We see these actions, as well as innovative implementation strategies that we anticipate will be developed, as a significant step forward in embracing a long term commitment to sustained attention to and advancement of equity, diversity and inclusion.

The reach of recommendations in this Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan (DEIP) is expansive. We consider the full set of recommendations as the expansive road map forward. Moving forward, an implementation strategy is needed, and some prioritizing within the full range of recommendations identified in the DEIP. To this end, we propose this five-part plan to address leadership, prioritize urgent items, deepen implementation in some selected units on campus, extend capacity across the campus for equity, and identify what we call “low hanging fruit” for initiatives that can readily be implemented.

1. Create an Equity Leadership Team (ELT)

We identify the need for a high-level team that is charged with implementation and oversight responsibilities. The ELT is a model used in the past, with PSU’s prior Chief Diversity Officer. The advantage (over the Diversity Action Council) is that the group has decision making authority and has reach to identify pathways to move many recommendations in the DEIP forward.

a. Membership

- i. Vice President, Global Diversity and Inclusion
- ii. Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs
- iii. Vice President, Enrolment Management and Student Affairs
- iv. Vice President, Finance and Administration
- v. Assistant Vice President, Student Access and Success
- vi. One Academic Dean
- vii. Representative, Diversity Action Council
- viii. One or more faculty with well-developed equity expertise and endorsement from the Faculty Senate
- ix. Others as deemed necessary

b. Roles

- i. Oversee implementation of the plan
- ii. Create a strategy for implementing “urgent equity items”
- iii. Launch and award the “Equity Implementation Innovators” grantees
- iv. Disseminating the DEIP across campus
- v. Identifying needed resources for implementation
- vi. Create an Equity Analytics Team that reports to ELT

c. Reporting: The ELT would report to the President of PSU, and to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis.

2. Urgent Equity Items

To respond to the urgency for change, according to factors that are most tied to student success, we give priority to the following initiatives, and ask that they become goals of the Equity Leadership Coordination Team, with a timeline of creating the strategy in 2017, and implemented in 2018:

a. Teaching: Three elements are prioritized: student evaluations, teaching capacity building, and student capacity building. Faculty Senate review and endorsement will be critical to the success of these initiatives.

- i. Student course evaluations to be expanded to include equity and cultural responsiveness, and disaggregated by demographic categories to discern where ratings are highest and lowest, and for whom. Subsequently, colleges and schools would identify and implement strategies where ratings are lowest. Implementation responsibility would be shouldered by administrators; instructors would be expected to strengthen equity and cultural responsiveness at the

individual instructional level. Measures should be identified to make sure that women and faculty of color do not unduly shoulder student criticism about equity-infused instruction.

- ii. Students need to receive equity-infused, culturally responsive teaching. This will be a big lift. In the first two years, we ask for tracking of the results of the initiatives implemented by GDI, OAI, and the Equity Implementation awardees (detailed later in this report) to identify the depth and breadth of improvements that are achieved.
- iii. Students’ own capacity building in the area of equity and inclusion needs to be assured. In the first year, the types of requirements and courses that qualify for meeting these requirements are to be tracked.

b. Student Voice: PSU to implement an annual listening session, and the Provost to require colleges and schools to conduct one or more listening sessions and prepare a report of challenges and suggested changes, which would be summarized annually by the Deans in their report to the Provost. These sessions should include one for students of color and one or more for additional marginalized communities.

c. Workforce Diversification: Integrate best practices for workforce diversification, including mandatory training for hiring committees, to be implemented immediately.

d. Institutionalizing Equity: under the leadership of the Equity Leadership Team:

- i. Create a PSU-wide equity policy
- ii. Create an Equity Lens implementation policy

- iii. Create an array of HR policies to support equity capacity and diversification across the workforce

e. Equity Analytics: the ELT will prioritize those elements that are tied to understanding student experiences in disaggregated ways, so that (a) needs can be better understood

3. Equity Implementation Innovator Awards

Using a request-for-proposals approach, the Leadership Equity Team would open a grant process of self-nominations for becoming an Equity Implementation Innovator awardee. Expectations are for interested units to propose an implementation plan that has at least one item in every domain of the DEIP (totaling 10, including implementation of the Equity Lens). Following a similar model to reTHINK, this provides the option for both motivating and supporting units on campus to customize equity initiatives that hold prognosis for achieving important gains. We anticipate that the gains would be considerable. Making funding available to the awardees will be necessary.

4. Campus-Wide Capacity Building: The university needs to identify learning opportunities in each campus unit. Gaining support for making participation mandatory is ideal. The core trainings that are advised are the following:

- a. Reading and discussing the DEIP
- b. Understanding and applying an Equity Lens
- c. Understanding self as socially located
- d. Understanding racism and white privilege
- e. Identifying methods for increasing culturally responsive and equity-infused classroom practices (curriculum and pedagogy)

5. Low Hanging Fruit: Numerous items in the DEIP are relatively easy to implement. We encourage that they be implemented in the first two years of the DEIP.

Appendix I: Definitions of Terms

Units: The term “units” is a generic term that refers to departments, schools, administrative configurations, student groups, and/or academic support configurations.

Employees: All those who are paid by the organization, including staff, administrators, faculty, and student workers.

Workforce: Refers to the composite of all the organization’s employees.

Student: PSU defines a “student” is a person who: (a) is enrolled and/or registered for one or more credit hours; (b) is enrolled in a special non-credit program approved by the University; or (c) was enrolled as a student and is eligible to return or have a continuing relationship with the university.

Student employee: The term “student employee” refers to students who are working for PSU in a position that requires student status and are paid wages through the University. Student employees may perform work on or off-campus.

Faculty: Instructional faculty is defined as all those members of the instructional-research staff who are employed full time, regardless of whether they are formally designated “faculty.” It includes all those whose major regular assignment (at least 50 percent) is instruction, including release time for research.
Source: <https://www.aaup.org/>

Staff: Staff are PSU employees in non-teaching activities of various types who support the educational, research, and service programs of the University.

Administrator: PSU employees whose job is to manage a college, school, or other organizational unit within the university.

References

Source: Portland City Council (2011). Definition of equity. Downloaded from <http://www.portlandonline.com/fritz/?a=365164&c=55242>.

Source: Northwest Health Foundation (n.d.). Our commitment to equity. Downloaded from <http://www.northwesthealth.org/about/equity/>.

Source: Victoria Government (2009). Cultural responsiveness framework: Guidelines for Victorian health services. Downloaded from http://www.health.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/381068/cultural_responsiveness.pdf.

The term “units” is a generic term that refers to departments, schools, administrative configurations, student groups, and/or academic support configurations.

