



COMMISSION_{ON}
DIVERSITY_{AND}
INCLUSION

Strategic Planning Report

Submitted to:
Chancellor Mark S. Wrighton
Provost Holden Thorp

June 23, 2017

Recommendations for Strategic Planning

June 23, 2017



Last year the chancellor and provost charged the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion with making recommendations to implement a 12-point action plan designed to make Washington University in St. Louis a more diverse and inclusive community. The Commission requested a working group explore and consider how to best implement action item number #8: “Each school and unit will devise a strategic plan for promoting diversity and inclusion...” In consultation with the working group, the Commission on Diversity & Inclusion makes these recommendations.

BACKGROUND

Since the inception of the Diversity Commission in 2015, several academic and administrative units are in various stages of progress on diversity and inclusion strategic planning. Some units are at a more advanced stage of planning and are looking to build on their work and provide a framework for other schools, units, and departments. Other schools and units are in the nascent stages of planning and are looking for guidance from the Commission. Consequently, rather than outline diversity strategies for every academic or administrative unit, the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Planning Task Force elected to construct a conceptual model for diversity strategic planning that could be adapted for use across the University. Measurement and evaluation are embedded in the model to gauge the success of diversity and inclusion efforts. During the formative stages of the Strategic Planning Task Force, a decision was made to adopt a creative approach to strategic planning that incorporated design thinking¹, which emphasizes problem identification and prototype testing until the problems are addressed.

The Strategic Planning Task Force additionally reviewed the concepts underlying strategic thinking² (vs. strategic planning). Among the highlights, strategic thinking relies less on measurement systems and more on organizational purpose that guides the minds and choices of those in the organization. In standard strategic planning, the creation of the plan per se is the ultimate objective, whereas in strategic thinking the outcome is a well-structured planning process, incorporating many aspects of continuous quality improvement. The Commission’s deliberations on the hiring of a chief diversity officer, along with the merits of an external evaluation for diversity efforts on campus and an ongoing assessment of climate surveys, are in line with strategic thinking, which is identified as a process that defines the manner in which people think about, assess, view, and create the future for themselves and others.

The Task Force embraced the charge:

The task of the Diversity Strategic Plan Committee is to review the salient components of an effective institutional strategic planning document, review

best practices both internally and externally, and draft a commonsense document that will guide the University forward in promoting diversity and inclusion. Our goal is not to impose a one-size-fits all approach to diversity strategic planning, but to be creative and incorporate design thinking that will allow flexibility in how each unit in the University measures and achieves diversity while aligning all units around the goal of documenting significant advances in campus diversity and inclusion.

Our approach, using quantitative and qualitative metrics to document improvement in diversity outcomes, is consistent with that of innovative thought leaders in diversity and inclusion who rely on periodic assessments of campus culture as an index of successful interventions and eschew overly-prescriptive policies.

The Task Force recognized that one cultural fit for all schools and administrative units is not possible or even desirable. In order to avoid solving “the wrong problem,” Task Force members identified some of the major challenges their respective units face in improving diversity and inclusion.

¹ Herbert Simon (1969). *Design Thinking: The Sciences of the Artificial*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

² Fiona Graetz, (2002), “Strategic Thinking versus Strategic Planning: Towards Understanding the Complementarities”, *Management Decision*, 40(5/6), 456-462.

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Early in the strategic planning process, there are several questions academic and administrative units need to ask: What does diversity mean to us? What are main problems with diversity and inclusion on our campus? What are the main problems for our unit? Who is solving them and how do we share those solutions? How do we make sure it's "working"? How do we distill information about best practices? The Task Force endeavored to construct a conceptual framework that should be generalizable for all the dimensions of diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, disability, etc.). However, based on both historical legacy and contemporary events on our campuses, the overarching concern for diversity is the inclusion of women and underrepresented groups. The Task Force outlined several challenges that academic and administrative units face across the University:

a) Campus Climate: There is a longstanding perception that the University is very hierarchical, leading to a sense of inequality among some groups.

b) Recruitment, Retention, Advancement: There is difficulty in the recruiting, retention, and advancement of underrepresented minorities (URMs) and women. In academic units the main issue is the limited numbers of candidates and the subsequent fierce competition for them. Administrative units face similar, but also distinct problems.

c) Resource Allocation: How do we promote hiring during times of fiscal belt-tightening? How will resources for recruitment and diversity program development be effectively deployed at schools and departments? Who has access to these resources? Can those resources be utilized to make salaries for women and members of underrepresented groups more competitive?

d) Staff: While we have activities that are great for faculty and students, activities for staff, including leadership development, are less well developed. We recognize that staff concerns are indeed unique on our campus, but can we find commonality in our efforts to build critical mass and cohesion between staff, students, faculty, and other constituents?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR STRATEGIC THINKING

The Task Force created a working vision to guide planning and highlight what the task force hopes to accomplish. While this vision statement does not attempt to encompass the University's broad vision for diversity and inclusion, units should have the latitude to incorporate and revise the vision statement as they see fit.

The Task Force adopted Guiding Principles as a foundation for the conceptual model:

- **Engagement:** We seek out different perspectives and experiences
- **Learning:** We challenge ourselves to think critically, we discover and explore identity
- **Respect:** We are responsible to our community for our actions
- **Inclusion:** We welcome differences as well as commonalities, and value others
- **Collaboration:** We collaborate as a method of achieving excellence by leveraging inclusion

- **Opportunity:** We need to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to participate in the academic environment and to become successful within it

For the purpose of simplifying the complex strategies needed to enhance diversity and inclusion across several schools, departments and fiscal units, each with its own unique culture, a logic model was constructed, with characteristics of a traditional pipeline (Figure 1 on page 10). We have assumed that the pipeline is porous, with a diverse group of staff, students, and faculty members shuttling in and out at various times. This model has an added assumption that pipeline programs can be just as effective for staff as students and faculty members

Inputs: An effective, comprehensive plan engages our full constituency, e.g., the faculty, graduate students, students and trainees, staff. We could also include "patients", vendors, contractors, external community, community research participants, with each school and unit having its own unique communities. Among the traditional inputs into an academic institution, the Task Force recognized there is much more in common between faculty members, students and staff than is customarily asserted. Loss of students, trainees, staff and faculty members can occur early in the pipeline through attrition and self-selection.

Activities: These include fellowships, professional development programs, and formal mentoring. There are ways to prime the pipeline and create opportunities for advancement of students, staff, and faculty members. Table 1 on page 9 outlines areas of commonality among these groups. One example is the Faculty Reach Out Program³, or FROP created by a medical school faculty member. FROP, funded through a University Diversity & Inclusion Grant,⁴ was designed as a junior faculty development program. The program attracted senior graduate students and junior faculty across the country as well as internally who participated in a four-day professional development program in which they were exposed to research opportunities, sessions on grant-writing and drafting scientific papers, as well as formal networking. It was widely viewed as successful, but funding has not been sustained.

Along the pipeline are several channels that facilitate influx of new talent. This includes use of holistic review: a flexible, individualized way of assessing an individual's capabilities by which balanced consideration is given to

experiences, attributes, and academic metrics and, when considered in combination, how the individual might contribute value to our institution. Tailoring hiring to be more holistic applies to staff, students, and faculty members. Another approach to enhance faculty diversity is Target of Opportunity Hiring⁵- an opportunity to recruit a candidate of outstanding quality who has not emerged through a conventional national search. Other channels into academia, particularly into the faculty, include anti-bias training for search committees, the use of diverse search committees – with diversity perspectives provided by underrepresented minority or women faculty members or a diversity liaison, and creating opportunities to be exposed to diverse faculty members through expansion of Visiting Professorships and Distinguished Visiting Scholars⁶.

In addition to attrition early in the process, there is leakiness at the distal end of the pipeline, which is particularly critical when established faculty and staff members leave the institution. The attrition can be mitigated by applying supportive

services to promote retention. Those services include improving the cultural climate, providing more professional development opportunities such as the Women Faculty Leadership Institute and the Professional Leadership Academy & Network⁷, and instituting formal mentoring programs.

The task of chronicling the wide array of diversity activities at different units in the University is daunting, but progress has been made with the University's diversity [website](#) and other units' websites and other communications. A more formal process is needed to assess what specific diversity initiatives are ongoing and considered to be effective at all the schools, departments, and central fiscal units. It may not be necessary to have a complete compendium for this report, as those activities may wax and wane based on staffing and funding.

Outputs: Outputs refer to products and guidelines as well as policies. Products are mostly toolkits. Toolkits are being developed at the Danforth and Medical campuses.

³ Faculty Reach Out Program. <https://source.wustl.edu/tag/faculty-reach-out-program/>

⁴ Diversity & Inclusion Grants <https://diversity.wustl.edu/initiatives/grants/diversity-inclusion-grants/>

⁵ Target of Opportunity Hiring. https://provost.wustl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/target_of_opportunity_hires.pdf

⁶ Distinguished Visiting Scholar Program <https://diversity.wustl.edu/initiatives/distinguished-visiting-scholars/>

⁷ Women Faculty Leadership Institute <https://diversity.wustl.edu/initiatives/leadership-development/women-faculty-leadership-institute/>

Professional Leadership Academy & Network <https://diversity.wustl.edu/initiatives/leadership-development/professional-leadership-academy-network/>

Outcomes: Short term (1-2 years), medium term (2-5 years) and long term outcomes (>5 years) are outlined below, along with effective methods for measurement:

1. Improved campus climate: “It feels good to be here.” Measured through performance evaluations, campus surveys.
2. Greater campus diversity: “We are a global community, as evidenced by our personnel.” Measured by traditional Human Resources metrics, such as headcount, percentages, attrition, etc.
3. Engaged constituents: “Campus members have a sense of belonging to the academic community and are actively engaged.” Measured by climate surveys.
4. Enhanced community engagement and partnerships: “We relate well to our community and are perceived positively.” Measured by engagement surveys.
5. Recognition as trailblazer in diversity and inclusion: “We are the gold standard among our peer institutions, as evident by the awards we have received from our peers and other industry leaders.”
6. Outstanding campus resources: “We have the available, centralized and easy to access resources and infrastructure to support our desired outcomes.”

EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT

The conceptual model should be subjected to continuous measurement and evaluation and be girded by design thinking to ensure innovation. Nonetheless, there is still a need for precise analytics to demonstrate effectiveness. While data analytics per se cannot adequately capture progress toward our ultimate objectives, a focus on data collection and analysis will allow us to track improvement in areas such as the diversity of our entering classes or faculty ranks, satisfaction with campus climate, the use and effectiveness of various trainings, or the trend in reports of discrimination or bias.

- Given the complexity of assessing outcomes and the limited external data for comparison, formal evaluation will require multidimensional assessment tools and an assessment of major challenges facing each school

- There is inherent difficulty in tracking who enters the University and who leaves since exit interviews are not uniformly conducted. Reasons for attrition may include discomfort with the campus climate; limited systematic approaches to mentorship; limited opportunities for upward mobility and professional development; and of course personal reasons, e.g., to be closer to family.
- Focused exit interviews will provide opportunities to mitigate attrition and increase the likelihood that faculty and staff members will remain and succeed in our institution. Recent improvements to the faculty hiring website as well as a recent analysis by Human Resources on staff attrition should allow us to capture and evaluate critical data to ascertain why people leave.

RECOMMENDATION #1

The University should continue to foster Diversity and Inclusion strategic planning within each academic and administrative unit. The Task Force’s conceptual framework for strategic planning, based on design and strategic thinking, should guide each unit along the way. That process

includes: problem identification; crafting school or unit-specific vision, mission and values statements; deciding on strategic objectives; identifying the relevant constituents that plan will address; crafting initiatives that will lead to the objectives, and developing guidelines and products (such as toolkits), that will aid in achieving the outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION #2

The University should assist in creating a diversity toolkit, which could include:

- a. Instructions on enhancing search committees (use of diversity liaisons);
 - b. Information on target of opportunity hiring;
 - c. Information on cluster hiring;
 - d. Listing of student, staff, and faculty professional development opportunities;
 - e. Fellowship opportunities for faculty, staff, and students;
 - f. Methodology for establishing University-wide gender equity committees;
 - g. Database of potential visiting faculty members.
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RECOMMENDATION #3

The University should commit resources to guide measurement and evaluation of strategic initiatives. While there is a strong commitment to design thinking, consideration must be given to key quantitative metrics that help drive successful diversity and inclusion initiatives. Possible categories of metrics include:

- Progress on diversity and inclusion strategic initiatives: activity toward implementing initiatives; participation rates; specific outcomes.
- Number of:
 - Diversity-related activities and events on campus and within units;
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion scholarly products (publications, collaborations, courses) produced by faculty members and students.
- Reports of harassment, bias, discrimination incidents (bias reporting, Title VII and IX).
- Demographic diversity of workforce groups.
- Demographic diversity by salary.
- Student, staff, and faculty members' perceptions of equal opportunity for success (climate surveys).
- Student, staff, and faculty members' reports of experiences of discrimination (climate surveys).
- Student, staff, and faculty members' feelings of sense of belonging and affirmation (climate surveys).
- Demographic diversity of:
 - Undergraduate students—first year class makeup, senior class makeup, graduation rates;
 - Graduate students—first year makeup, graduation rates, time to degree;
 - Faculty—postdocs, assistant professors, associate professors, full professors, promotions, denials of promotion, retention/turnover;
 - Staff—applicant pools, selection pools, interview pools, hires, promotions, retention/turnover;
 - University leadership—major decision-making positions, major administratively titled positions;
 - Committee membership and other key institutional groups.

RECOMMENDATION #4

All anti-bias training should be subjected to extensive evaluation, using nationally validated survey instruments. The Task Force recognizes that without formal processes for debriefing and evaluation, anti-bias and cultural competence training can possibly become counterproductive.

- Rigorously assessed cultural climate surveys should

be conducted periodically (2-4 years), guided by robust analysis. Results should be posted on a central, accessible website. The Task Force recommends that survey instruments be designed to separately capture faculty members' responses for the purpose of rigorous measurements of their perspectives across peer networks.

RECOMMENDATION #5

The University should conduct exit interviews of staff and faculty members. Engaging an Ombuds or independent agent in this process could further ensure confidentiality and integrity of the interviews, reduce the possibility of

retaliation, and allow appropriate aggregation of data. We also endorse the Undergraduate Student Report Recommendation on conducting exit interviews of students who depart the University for non-academic Reasons.

RECOMMENDATION #6

The University should develop an Academy of Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Thinkers. As the Commission concludes its formal deliberations, forethought should be given to ensuring prototype testing and continuous evaluation of diversity initiatives, which are the hallmarks of design thinking. Acknowledging the innovative spirit that has spawned diversity and inclusion initiatives across the University, the Strategic Planning Task force recognizes the opportunity to create an Academy of strategic thinkers who can assist units

in the planning and execution of their diversity strategic plans and serve as a think tank for future ideas. The Academy, staffed by full time employees, could promote uptake of a scorecard that evaluates a unit's progress toward diversity and inclusion excellence⁸. Academy members could then share the best practices across the University and provide the requisite resources to assist their widespread adoption and sustainability. Such an Academy could report to an Executive Vice Chancellor.

CLOSING

This report hopefully fulfills the Task Force Charge of creating a conceptual framework that can guide the University forward in promoting diversity and inclusion. The recommendations are structured in a way they can be

embraced by all units comprising Washington University in St. Louis while respecting the unique culture of our varied schools, departments, and units. In this way, we would be better positioned to achieve our desired objectives and emerge as a trailblazer in diversity and inclusion.

⁸ Ande Diaz and Judy Kirmmse. A New Rubric for Assessing Institution-Wide Diversity. Association of American Colleges and Universities. <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/new-rubric-assessing-institution-wide-diversity>. Accessed June 7, 2017.

TABLE 1. RELATIONSHIP OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTIVITIES TO CONSTITUENT GROUP

	Students	Trainees	Faculty	Staff
Recruitment and Retention				
Diversity Admissions	+++	+++		
Fellowships	+++	+++	+++	+++
Professional Development Programs	+++	+++	+++	+++
Target of Opportunity Hiring		+	+++	+++
Holistic Review	+++	+++	+++	+++
Diversity Searches			+++	+++
Visiting Faculty			+++	+
Exit Interviews		++	+++	+++
Improving Cultural Climate				
Climate Surveys	+++	+++	+++	+++
Cultural Awareness Programs	+++	+++	+++	+++
Formal Mentoring	+++	+++	+++	+++

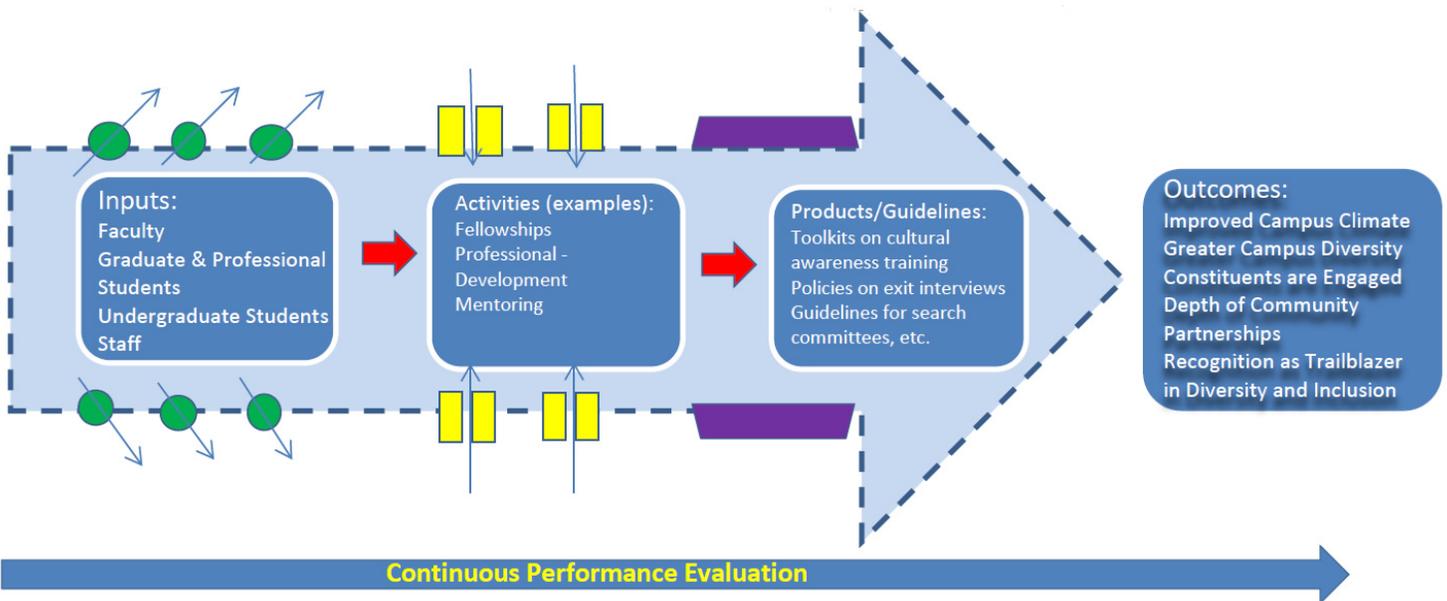
FIGURE 1. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our Vision

We are committed to ensuring Washington University is an inclusive community where everyone is valued and respected. By working collaboratively, we will create a better, stronger university that inspires leadership, education excellence and innovation in an increasingly diverse world.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Engagement:** We seek out different perspectives and experiences
- **Learning:** We challenge ourselves to think critically, discover and explore identity
- **Respect:** We are responsible to our community for our actions
- **Inclusion:** We welcome differences as well as commonalities, we value others



Legend:

● Attrition – Loss of faculty, students and staff generally occur earlier in the pipeline but can be seen at any stage. Efforts to mitigate attrition should begin at the initial hiring stage.

▬▬ Efforts to promote diversity and inclusion include targeted programs such as Holistic Review, Target of Opportunity Hires, Diversity Searches, Visiting Faculty, as well as other talent acquisition programs.

▬ Retention Efforts to mitigate attrition: Improved Climate, Professional Development, Mentoring, etc.

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To view the full report click [here](#);
to view the Executive Summary of the report, click [here](#).