

**Office for Diversity**  
**2017 Diversity Plan Accountability Report**  
**(Due 12/1/17)**

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**Unit:** Academic Affairs

**Date:** November 21, 2017

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Units that make up the Division of Academic Affairs include the Division of Research, Undergraduate Studies, Graduate and Professional Studies, Division of Enrollment and Academic Services, Public Partnership and Outreach, the Dean of Faculties, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, and the Office for Diversity. The Office for Diversity is included in this division report; however, this Office's mission is to coordinate and monitor the University and its accountability to the University Diversity Plan. Therefore, specific examples from this office are not included in the unit highlight sections below. Staff from this unit participate in AACDC activities and projects, such as benchmarking data and climate surveys.

The Academic Affairs Climate and Diversity Committee (AACDC) coordinates division-level efforts. AACDC reports mentioned in this document are available at <http://aacdc.tamu.edu>.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this report is assess the continuing progress towards diversity at the unit-level by reflecting on the recent cycle of benchmarking against your peers.

**Instructions:** The report is limited to five, single-sided pages (including graphics). Please use a 10 point font or larger. Where appropriate, use specific examples from individual departments in your unit to provide evidence for your narrative regarding progress towards Texas A&M's Diversity Plan goals: **Accountability, Climate, and Equity.**

1. **Recruitment.** Assess what you have learned recently from your peers and describe future plans, including barriers, to attain a strong, demonstrable presence of diversity in our faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

At the division level the Academic Affairs Climate and Diversity Committee (AACDC) is pursuing three peer recruitment strategies. The Recruitment and Retention subcommittee 1) will create a division-level diversity resource that can be provided in recruitment packages and 2) will identify ways to advertise broadly to diverse populations beyond what is done through Human Resources. The third strategy identified has been abandoned owing to the difficulty in obtaining data that easily identified internal and external candidates for position postings. Additional details are available in our FY 2016 Hiring Process Review.

Sample peer strategies being pursued within the division units include the following:

Office of Undergraduate Studies (US) – This unit has made progress by reaching out to constituent networks and other groups that target diverse populations, adding questions about inclusion during interviews which eliminated one candidate; recruited student employees from LGBTQ Center, Department of Multicultural Services, etc., and are creating outreach materials that reflect a friendly unit to a diverse audience.

Public Partnership and Outreach (PPO) – The unit has investigated creating diversity internships in broadcasting, communications, and publishing (industries with significant opportunity to diversify) that could engage Texas A&M and local high school students. Data collection about models and national statistics has taken place. Discussion about funding needs and donor identification are the next steps in this process.

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs (APAA) – Strategies from the University of Wisconsin – Madison have proven successful to create a diverse pool from which to fill three full-time position hires (two in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Evaluation and a third in the Aggie Honor System Office) over the course of the time period covered by this report. Two of the three were women, one from a historically underrepresented group, with the third being male, also from a historically underrepresented group. Strategies appear to be working well.

Office of Graduate and Professional Studies (OGAPS) -- As we generate new positions or re-open existing positions, OGAPS job postings/descriptions require applicants to possess personal and/or professional experience working with people of diverse backgrounds. Before we begin the interview

process, OGAPS evaluates the applicant pool to make sure they not only meet the listed job qualifications but that they represent a wide array of different backgrounds, ethnicities, etc. This has resulted in increased diversity in terms of age, gender and race/ethnicity. OGAPS will include a consistent hiring matrix ranking based on diversity work experience, as well as standard interview questions that relate to each candidate's competencies in the areas of climate and diversity.

Division of Research (DOR) – DOR took additional steps in the recruiting process to advertise its positions to minority groups, it sought measures to increase diversity in its applicant pools, and continued with its efforts to engage its workforce in promoting diversity and inclusion. DOR is actively implementing recommendations from the AACDC Hiring Process Review including articulating job duties that require skills related to diversity goals, using a diversity-related component in applicable matrices, providing interview questions related to diversity and inclusion, and constituting hiring committees that reflect diverse groups within the division.

Dean of Faculties (DOF) – This office has focused on drafting specific language in the vacancies tailored to attract diversity. Increased efforts focused on balancing the overall gender composition across the DOF. Six vacant positions resulted in hiring overall 5 white females and one Asian female.

Division of Enrollment and Academic Services (DEAS) – DEAS has focused efforts, particularly in advising and entry-level professional positions, on recruiting recent graduates or those in the temporary College Recruitment Advisor program (a one year service-type program). The data on the diversity of the student workers hired in the past year does indeed show it is more diverse than recent staff hires, and College Recruitment Advisors (CRA) is significantly more diverse. Unfortunately, while 12 individuals from these populations have been hired into full time positions, only 1 of the 12 was from an underrepresented group. DEAS will work to be more intentional in outreach about full time opportunities to this group.

2. **Retention.** Assess what you have learned recently from your peers and describe future plans, including barriers, to retain diversity in our faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

At the division level the AACDC is pursuing one peer retention strategy: creating and executing a division-level exit survey to identify patterns and issues that contribute to employee departures and inform our retention strategies. The Recruitment and Retention subcommittee has taken on this task. Initially we had hoped to identify information in the overall Texas A&M exit survey but were not able to obtain these data.

Sample peer strategies being pursued within the division units include the following:

US – Study Abroad continues to use a peer mentor program, which other offices are considering. The wellness release policy has caused staff to report that they are happier and feel better; it helps build camaraderie (staff often go to classes together). The University Writing Center and Academic Success Center are reorganizing offices through construction to give staff individual offices.

PPO – Two members of the leadership team have researched best practices for onboarding new hires related to sharing the unit mission/strategic initiatives and are preparing to make recommendations for implementation.

OGAPS -- OGAPS expanded upon the existing educational and professional development measures taken in the past by not only encouraging but requiring our staff to participate in at least one initiative each year that supports Texas A&M's Diversity Plan. This requirement became part of the Strategic Plan and PATH, making it one of the components of each employee's annual review. Employees could meet this requirement by attending a professional development activity or by serving on an office, unit, or university committee.

DOR – There are plans to drill down over the next year to determine if additional programs or actions need to be undertaken to improve diversity retention. Some in progress include an award program to recognize, in part, a commitment to “enhance and support diversity at Texas A&M and within the DOR,” establishment of a division-level wellness committee, and such groups as TEAMSRs—Together Engaging and Managing Social and Real Work Situations within Sponsored Research Services (SRS), which helps all employees within SRS better engage with each other and provides a forum to exchange ideas and information.

DOF -- Participation of the Dean of Faculties staff in an anonymous self-exploratory exercise on their core values pertaining to service, teamwork, accountability and respect; two office units worked closely on this project and it was successful. Another strategy, “matching employees with staff mentors” is still being explored.

DEAS – The division's Enrollment & Academic Services Professional Development Committee has helped to host two outside speakers to improve professional development and employee recognition opportunities. In addition, they have established and presented five Pillars of Excellence Awards to one

team and 4 staff members. Feedback is positive and there is discussion about expanding the awards; all division units have funding to do an internal recognition as well for their employees.

3. **Unit Climate.** Assess what you have learned recently from your peers, including campus and unit climate assessment data and describe future plans, including barriers, to enhance the educational environment where the opportunity to fully participate does not inappropriately or unintentionally depend on elements of an individual's identity.

At the division level the AACDC is pursuing two peer climate strategies. First, we are pursuing enrichment programming for managers in the following ways:

- 1) The bi-annual supervisor meetings took place in 2014 and 2016 and the third is scheduled for 2018. Content is informed by supervisor surveys, climate surveys, and an advisory committee of division supervisors.
- 2) Mediation Training has been provided to 40 people, 27 of whom were supervisors.
- 3) The last of the 2012 climate survey recommendations will be implemented in Fall 2018 and mandates a consistent slate of supervisor training courses for all new division supervisors within a specific timeframe.
- 4) While not specific to supervisors, all division staff have three required trainings due by the end of 2018: an online basic course (100% target for participation) and 2 additional courses (at least one of which must be face to face) with content focusing on climate survey findings and cultural differences (50% target for participation). The online course participation rate as of October 2017 was 96.5% for the Division of Research and 68.9% for the rest of Academic Affairs. These are being reported separately because the DOR assigned the course in Traintraq in early fall, but Academic Affairs Business Services (AABS) was unable to do this because of staffing issues. These were not assigned earlier in Traintraq because Workday was initially going to replace this system; there was also confusion for a period of time about whether Human Resources had made some needed changes to the course before leadership approved our prompting reminders to complete the course. As of September, all new hires are being assigned the course in Traintraq. The training has been assigned in Traintraq to all those who have not yet taken it; Traintraq will notify supervisors if employees have not completed this training.

Second, to address a 2014 climate survey finding, an October 2017 brown bag seminar was conducted with both in person and livestreamed attendees (48 originally signed up) about developing career goals and enhancing professional growth and mobility. In a post program survey, the majority of respondents noted that they gained new insights about what they, their supervisor and Texas A&M do to advance their careers. Overall, they found the information useful and provided feedback that will be used in a future iteration of this program.

Sample peer strategies being pursued within the division units include the following:

US – In addition to unit sponsored diversity trainings, there are discussions during staff meetings to discuss current events. This has helped staff become more comfortable discussing certain issues. Also, the Staff Appreciation Luncheon had a diversity theme— and a Diversity Bingo game helped the entire unit learn more about each other. Transition Academic Programs (TAP) staff volunteered together at the local Red Cross, facilitating a sense of togetherness and camaraderie. The unit plans to coordinate conflict resolution training.

PPO – 34% of the staff serve on unit level committees related to recognition, appreciation, and wellness efforts. This has resulted in several award nomination packages being selected for campus level awards, Walk Across Texas team participation, two staff appreciation events, and a new “years of service” awards that will be presented in January 2018. In addition to providing leadership opportunities, a sense of community is being developed as staff in these committees get to know each other and several across-unit collaborations have occurred.

AAPA -- During the 2015-2016 academic year, the Associate Provost Leadership Team initiated quarterly meetings focused on particular climate issues of relevance to the work the offices across the unit engage in and/or climate issues of significance on campus. These quarterly meetings will continue during the 2017-2018 academic year bringing together staff from across the unit to explore issues related to diversity and inclusion and to reinforce a positive climate across the unit. The content of two of the meetings will focus on climate or diversity related issues, including topics such as microaggressions, work place climate, and the experiences of historically underrepresented groups on campus that each of the offices in the unit serve. The other two meetings will be more social in nature, giving the members of the unit time to share experiences in a casual atmosphere.

OGAPS -- To promote an inclusive and welcoming office climate, OGAPS held an office retreat in January 2017. The retreat featured team building activities to promote office solidarity, including

completing a communication style inventory for each member of the team. The Social Climate and Diversity Committee (10 people) continues to be an important influence on the OGAPS office culture, promoting a welcoming and diverse environment through team-building activities and events (at least one a year focuses on encouraging a welcoming and diverse office environment).

DOR -- Feedback has shown that staff are more inclined to be involved if they have knowledge of the mission and activities of the Division. Bi-monthly newsletters introducing new staff, praising professional accomplishments, and providing information on new business and events provide staff with a sense of unity and promote camaraderie. Plans are underway to create a Diversity and Inclusion Council to more specifically review diversity and inclusion with the division and make recommendations to the VPR on programs and/or actions that could be taken to ensure that all employees feel welcome.

DOF – Instructional Technology Services has organized small retreats for its department to review the mission of the department, small group reviews of departmental priorities, and team building exercises.

DEAS – All units have developed guidelines regarding internal policies for how they handle promotions, merit, admin leave and other HR related policies. The impact of this effort has been minimal. While it has brought more transparency to these decisions, the lack of a base merit program for 2017 largely made this effort moot in improving the climate. With the upcoming launch of WorkDay and the changes it will bring to the merit process, we will again have an opportunity to review the impact of more transparency. Further, the salary pay plan has helped as well to understand the relationship between positions and how to compare them based on grade.

4. **Equity.** Assess what you have learned recently from your peers to address equity issues in your unit and describe future plans, including barriers, to address equity or inequity in your unit (e.g., advancement, promotion, professional development, salary studies, staff training and development, student leadership development, start-up packages, leadership succession planning, etc.).

At the division level the AACDC is pursuing one peer equity strategy: we have started monitoring promotions within the division by tracking five years of promotions from FY2012 through FY2016 to identify patterns that conform to concerns raised in our climate (2014) and supervisor (2016) surveys. Results of the analysis were provided to the division leadership in February 2017 for their consideration and identification of next potential next steps. To date, AACDC has had no additional direction about this report.

Sample peer strategies being pursued within the division units include the following:

US, DOR, DOF, and OGAPS – These units have examined salaries, administrative leave, merit pay, promotions and reclassifications as means to ensure equity. In addition, flex schedules have been a primary tool in US to accommodate those with educational, family, and other needs. DOF facilitates a teamwork environment by encouraging cross-training and input and ownership of work projects as well as exposing staff to new operational areas to develop experience for potential advancement.

PPO – After loss of 12 people through retirements in FY 2017, totaling 320 years of service to the institution, leadership seized the opportunity to realign job duties, salaries, and titles to ensure equity across workgroups that have merged into the unit within the past several years.

VPAA – The unit focuses on professional development as a means to facilitate equity. Four individuals across the division completed, or are currently completing, training for professional certifications and several attended professional conferences. The Aggie Honor System Office relies heavily on the support and work of students who participate as members of the Honor Council and therefore ensure that development for them includes in-class training, monthly sessions on issues related to academic integrity, and support to travel to attend professional development trainings.

DEAS -- Several offices have proven to have more difficulty retaining staff, either due to workload issues (International Student Services), skills developed within the office (Registrar and Scholarships & Financial Aid), or lack of opportunity for advancement overall (Admissions processing unit). Over the past year, the pay of all employees within Admissions processing was rebalanced since new hires were commanding a larger salary than previous hires. Working within the new three tier salary band structure, equity adjustments were made to address internal equity.

**Progress on Diversity Council Challenges.** While not requested in this reporting cycle, the Diversity Council last year challenged the campus to distribute broadly our diversity strategies and impacts. Academic Affairs facilitated several major efforts in this regard:

1. Coordination of a presence at NCORE 2017 – Working with a group of faculty, staff, and students

from across campus, Academic Affairs provided coordination for an effort that resulted in 20 presentations and 6 posters about Texas A&M diversity efforts being presented at what is the premiere national conference on diversity, social justice, and race/ethnicity issues. NCORE stands for “National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education”. Furthermore, the 120+ Texas A&M attendees wore benchmarked t-shirts, used benchmarked presentation templates, and owing to the generosity of colleges, the office of the Provost and office of the President, Texas A&M sponsored the opening conference reception for the over 4,000 attendees. In assessing the effort, between 88 - 90% of Texas A&M attendees agreed or strongly agreed that there were positive personal, professional, and university impacts of attending and having a strong Texas A&M presence at this conference. In addition, four of the twenty presentations were from Academic Affairs staff and administrators about our diversity plan, strategies, challenges, and successes.

2. NCORE 2017 Speaker Series – Academic Affairs hosted 7 of the 20 presentations in fall 2017 to be presented again to campus audiences, reaching about 300 people, 38% via livestreaming facilitated through KAMU-TV. Among the additional impacts, a presentation on mentoring African American males was presented again at the campus academic advisor conference in November, and some of the livestreamed audience members were from out of town and out of state. We have already received requests for access to some taped presentations for additional viewing and the popularity has extended the speaker series to spring 2018, when five additional presentations will be shared.
3. Data collection and dissemination – Significant institution-wide assessment efforts, coordinated by leadership and staff within the VPAA unit, focused on transformational learning experiences, particularly the impact of opportunities provided for first-generation students, students of color, and other historically under-represented groups. These efforts will continue, particularly as they relate to educational experiences for first generation students and students of color. Collaborative work with peer institutions engaged in similar initiatives is underway, using shared instruments such as the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) with the goal of increasing the effectiveness of these initiatives and leading to more impactful work on this front.
4. New cultural competency component in Graduate Student Orientations -- Through collaborative efforts with equity and inclusion experts on campus (Community of Respect and Consensual Language Education Awareness and Relationships), OGAPS created a main plenary session focusing on defining the Texas A&M community, encouraging proactive alliances and respectful communication, and encouraging students to stand up and speak out.
5. Additional use of university television/radio station – KAMU TV continues to partner with the College of Education to broadcast a radio program that describes diversity research.
6. Program to enhance Scholarly and Creative Activities (PESCA) Grant Program -- This program, administered through the VPR, supports scholarly projects that have the potential to lead to external funding. More than half (53%) of the studies funded last year involved issues relevant to traditionally underserved populations.
7. Center for Teaching Excellence Workshops – Regular offerings of the CTE provide workshops to faculty & graduate students in the area of inclusion, equity, and civility which aim to improve campus climate.