

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

Unit: Undergraduate Studies

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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.

Undergraduate Studies (US) looked at several peer institutions (UC San Diego, University of Florida, and University of Texas) and determined the need to recruit a diverse pool of applicants by a posting to a variety of job recruitment tools. US has made progress in this regard by reaching out to constituent networks and other groups that target diverse groups. Additionally, US has also done the following in recruitment efforts:

- **Added questions about inclusion during interviews; including how to develop an inclusive environment**
- **For student positions, recruited from LGBTQ Center, Department of Multicultural Services, etc.**
- **Eliminated candidate that didn't understand inclusion and inclusiveness**
- **Looked for language ability**

We were able to yield several applicants from sending postings to constituent networks and to offices that reach a diverse group of students. We continue to make strides in this area.

Areas still in progress include:

- **Creating outreach materials that reflect a friendly unit to a diverse audience**

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.

In comparison to Georgia Tech's mentor program, the Study Abroad office within US continues its mentor program. This program has given experienced advisors (advisor II) who do not have supervisory responsibility, more responsibility and the mentee is able to learn quicker and better.

Other units within US are considering a program such as this; however, those units have yet to incorporate such a program.

Additional retention efforts continue to exist and work to help keep staff engaged, such as:

- Providing professional development
- Adhering to the wellness release policy—staff 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 everyone their own office.

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. **Last year, US sought to provide a friendly, open and inclusive work environment within all of its units. We looked to the University of Florida and the University of Minnesota and various programs (awards—similar to mini-grants and diversity education to help in the understanding and need for inclusivity and working together cohesively). We have done and continue to do what we sought to do:**

- Open discussions during staff meetings to discuss current events. This has helped staff become more comfortable discussing certain issues
- Held a diversity training for all of US with Kelli McCloud-Schingen (diversity consultant)
- Created specialized advising modules in Study Abroad for working with DACA students
- SECC luncheon to support the American Red Cross
- As part of their staff retreat, the Transition Academic Programs (TAP) staff volunteered together at the local Red Cross. Staff felt a sense of togetherness and camaraderie
- Expanded staff meetings to include all staff; including administrative staff in leadership meetings (Success Center)
- US Staff Appreciation Luncheon with a diversity theme—Diversity Bingo game helped the entire unit learn more about each other.

Others plans that are in the queue but have not been done yet:

- Inviting main HR to discuss, with unit leadership, what we can and cannot do as staff related to current events (i.e. protests)
- Conducting a conflict resolution training

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.).

US looked to UC San Diego and UC Davis in the area of equity. As a result, we proposed several strategies:

- Merit-increases and paid administrative leave to full-time staff for excellent work performance
 - Due to budget restrictions, most departments in US were severely limited in giving merit increases; however, most did utilize

administrative leave for staff

- **Allowing flex schedules to accommodate staff needs**
 - **This strategy has been met and is on-going**
 - **Flex schedules for staff for family commitments; caring for ailing family, picking up kids from school, educational leave**
- **Promoting staff when job duties warrant it**
 - **This strategy continues to be in progress.**
 - **Leadership (directors) have discussions to lay the groundwork as to why certain people are promoted.**
- **Providing equity adjustments to align staff with comparable positions within US, Academic Affairs and the University as a whole**
 - **The System-wide pay plan has given us the opportunity to augment salaries when it is justified**

Additionally, we have done the following to help with equity:

- **Providing revolving opportunities for staff to go on specialized study abroad trips (LAUNCH)**
- **Office accommodations for staff with disabilities**
- **Provided standing desks when needed and warranted**