

2016 University Diversity Plan Accountability Report

Reporting Unit: Office of Graduate and Professional Studies

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Instructions: Please report student, faculty, and staff data from your unit from **Fall 2015**, and comparison data from three aspirant peer institutions. Peer-comparison data should minimally include race/ethnicity, gender, and classification. Your **report is limited to five (5) single-sided pages (including any graphics) and should use at least a 10-pt font size**. As you reflect on your accountability, climate, and equity efforts and activities, please use the guiding questions provided below to frame your responses.

I. ACCOUNTABILITY – Review and compare current year and previous years’ data for applicable groups within your unit(s) across your peers and articulate what the data tell you related to unit, peer, local, and national contexts. Describe accountability procedures in place for unit leaders (*e.g., leadership team, department heads, supervisors, managers, student leaders, etc.*) and any specific action/intervention plans instituted as a result of the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of your data.

A. Recruitment. Examine how peer institutions’ strategies and unit strategies are contributing to the recruitment of a strong, demonstrable presence of diversity for students, faculty, and staff.

1. What strategies are your peer institutions using to address recruitment of students, faculty, and staff in their units or departments? How do peer institutions compare to what your unit is doing?

Our peer institutions are employing several main strategies to address recruitment in their units. One of these strategies is to train search committees to break down barriers and ensure that application pools contain a diverse representation of various ages, genders, and races/ethnicities. They also reach out to minority and underrepresented groups when advertising open positions.

This is similar to the measures our office takes to ensure a strong presence of diversity within our unit. In addition to posting all open positions with Human Resources, OGAPS also contacts targeted staff organizations via email to promote employment opportunities through the Office of Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity.

As we generate new positions or re-open existing positions, OGAPS continues to examine job postings/descriptions to ensure that each reflects our requirement for 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.

Several new hires were added to OGAPS in the last year, and all add to our diversity in terms of age, gender and race/ethnicity.

2. In light of peer comparison findings, are there any plans to modify current or add new unit level strategies? Why or why not?

For FY17 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.

B. Retention. Examine how peer institutions’ strategies and unit strategies retain diversity in undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff.

1. What strategies are peer institutions using to address retention of students, faculty, and staff in their units or departments? How do peer institutions compare to what your unit is doing?

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Our peer institutions are employing several main strategies to address retention in their units. First, many of them have a strategic plan to promote an inclusive environment and provide professional development opportunities for their staff. This plan often includes facilitating a campus climate survey, clearly defining and publicizing the institution's commitment to diversity, and providing diversity training and education to all members.

This is similar to the measures our office takes to ensure a high level of retention within our unit. OGAPS is operating on the basis of a strategic plan that includes a goal to create and nurture an office climate that leads to excellent performance and collegiality among staff. Additionally, we also require that each staff member must engage in at least one professional development activity each year.

OGAPS also set a target for its Climate and Diversity Committee to host at least one program annually to educate employees and promote diversity. All staff were invited to the following "Lunch n'Learn" events that were hosted on the following topics:

- Green Dot Bystander Training – October 7, 2015
The Green Dot Bystander Intervention Training teaches Aggies to be aware of potential violence around them and provides the skills to use the power of peer influence to intervene appropriately in high-risk situations.
- Title IX – February 24, 2016
This was a presentation given by Dr. Lupiani that discussed the Title IX legislation and our responsibility as staff, as well as the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).
- Active Shooter Preparedness/Panic Buttons/Campus Carry – July 8, 2016
An officer from University Police Department trained our staff regarding what to do in an active shooter situation. We also discussed campus carry and the implications for our office, as well as the use of panic buttons and how to provide law enforcement with the proper information.
- ImageNow – July 7, 2016
This presentation discussed the basic functions of the ImageNow system and informed our staff about our current processes and solutions for future use.

OGAPS is currently planning a Lunch n'Learn that will take place this upcoming year that will train our staff members in effective methods of cross-cultural interaction with individuals from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

In addition, staff members take advantage of the many courses offered by the Employee and Organizational Development Department. A target in the OGAPS strategic plan is for all full-time staff members to attend at least one course or alternate (approved) activity that focused on climate and diversity to raise awareness and build skills. This target was met this year.

OGAPS encourages all staff to participate in campus committees so they can impact decision-making in the office and across campus. There are several office committees where staff can give input on social media strategies, aesthetic website changes, and utilizing the CEM system.

In July 2016, OGAPS hosted an all-day workshop designed to give advisors tools to create more inclusive environments for all graduate students. Dr. Kathy Obear was the presenter, and topics included intersecting identities, group membership, microaggressions and other exclusionary practices.

2. In light of peer comparison findings, are there any plans to modify current or add new unit level strategies? Why or why not?

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This year, OGAPS plans to expand 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 will be part of the Strategic Plan and PATH, and we aim to achieve 100% participation from all staff. Employees can meet this requirement by attending a professional development activity or by serving on an office, unit, or university committee.

II. **CLIMATE** – Examine how your peer institutions are working to create and maintain an inclusive and healthy working and learning environment for students, faculty, and staff.

- A. What strategies are peer institutions implementing to address climate for students, faculty, and staff in their units or departments? How do peer institutions compare to what your unit is doing?

To promote an inclusive climate, our peer institutions are employing several main strategies. First, many of our peers strive to promote an environment of open communication through social events that provide an opportunity for staff to develop relationships with high-ranking staff and faculty. Second, they often provide partial release from regular job duties to allow staff to devote time to learn ways in which they can include diversity and inclusion at work.

Our Social Climate and Diversity Committee is an important influence on the OGAPS office culture. Composed of 10 staff members, the purpose of this committee is to promote a welcoming and diverse environment through team-building activities and events. As part of our strategy to improve office climate, the OGAPS Social Climate/Diversity Committee hosts at least one program annually to encourage a welcoming and diverse office environment.

In addition, the committee is responsible to: plan holiday gatherings, maintain a birthday calendar and celebrate office birthdays monthly, celebrate employee milestones (e.g. retirement, baby showers, etc.), plan events for employees to better understand the cultures of the students they serve, and support the planning of staff retreats. Regular social functions are scheduled to promote employee interactions. Some of these include: potluck meals, birthday luncheons, a summer baking contest, and holiday celebrations.

OGAPS established a measure to include at least two activities per year that will be held to examine the Academic Affairs Diversity and Climate Committee findings. At least one of these would be an internal activity/discussion taking place (during the weekly staff meeting) using the academic affairs climate and diversity survey report.

To promote an inclusive and welcoming office climate, which could positively influence the campus climate as a whole, OGAPS held an office retreat in January 2016. The retreat focused on team building activities to promote office solidarity.

Staff are encouraged to attend cultural/diversity events on campus, and often do attend. For example, several staff attended the Climate Matters Conference this past year.

In July, 2016, Dr. Kathy Obear presented at an all-day workshop designed to give advisors tools to create more inclusive environments for all graduate students. Topics included intersecting identities, microaggressions and other exclusionary practices, and group membership.

Team leaders demonstrate the importance of diversity and climate issues by their own example of respectful behaviors, encouraging professional development and diversity training, and endorsing the reporting of inappropriate behaviors in the workplace.

Members of the executive team meet to determine and allocate the unit's financial support to various programs throughout the university that support university-wide diversity. For example, last year the unit supported Brazos

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Valley Worldfest, Student Research Week, the MLK Breakfast, Ethel Ashworth Tsutsui Memorial Awards and Lecture, and Women in Science and Engineering.

OGAPS has a target in its strategic plan for functional and cross-functional interactions to occur bi-monthly with a representative from each office area attending another area's regular meetings. This target was met this year.

The University's Diversity Operations Committee (DOC) representative regularly attends lectures, meetings and trainings on diversity and climate, and reports back to OGAPS with information and instructions to the administrative team and staff.

- B. In light of peer comparison findings, are there any plans to modify current or add new unit level strategies? Why or why not?

OGAPS is planning to organize an additional social event for graduate students. This social mixer will occur mid-semester, and will provide a social gathering opportunity for graduate students to interact and engage with each other. The mixer activities will be designed to allow students to share not only their educational goals, but cultural background information as well.

III. EQUITY – Examine unit level strategies to address equity issues and perceptions of inequity for students, faculty, and staff (*e.g., advancement, promotion, access to information and opportunities, professional development, salary studies, student leadership development, start-up packages, leadership succession planning, etc.*).

- A. What strategies are peer institutions using to address equity and perceptions of inequity for students, faculty, and staff in their units or departments? How do peer institutions compare to what your unit is doing?

When addressing equity and perceptions of inequity for students, faculty and staff in their units, our peer institutions encourage mentorship programs between senior and junior staff members, assisting employees in developing roadmaps for their careers, and promoting the use of standardized and proactive human resource processes.

Many of the strategies employed by OGAPS are similar to those employed by our peer institutions. For example, OGAPS annually reviews salaries for equity discrepancies to ensure fair compensation. OGAPS has a target in its strategic plan for staff matrices to be reviewed annually to ensure job descriptions are accurate and duties are distributed appropriately. This target was met this year.

OGAPS utilizes a Graduate Student Specialist career ladder to ensure the timely advancement of all staff. OGAPS also allows staff to work flexible schedules to support family needs.

Additionally, supervisors in our office promote the use of standardized and proactive human resources processes for all staff.

- B. In light of peer comparison findings, are there any plans to modify current or add new unit level strategies? Why or why not?

We plan to incorporate a Cultural Competency component into our New Graduate Student Orientation sessions. Through collaborative efforts with equity and inclusion experts on campus, we plan to incorporate a main plenary session focusing on defining the TAMU community, encouraging proactive alliances, and encouraging students to stand up and speak out.