

**Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity**  
**2015 Diversity Plan Accountability Report (Due 12/08/15)**

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**Unit:** Public Partnership and Outreach  
**Contact Person:** Suzanne Droleskey

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**Email:** sdroleskey@tamu.edu

**I. Overview:** Public Partnership and Outreach (PPO) is in a unique position as an organization because FY2015 was a year of significant organizational restructuring which resulted in FTEs increasing from 10 to 66 with the addition of Global Program Support, University Press, Educational Broadcasting Systems, and communications staff. While these changes occurred without disruption of mission critical services, leadership recognizes that these changes have essentially resulted in a new organization. Therefore, rather than try to make comparisons with past diversity efforts in the old unit, PPO diversity efforts will begin with this report and make comparisons in future years.

**II. Recruitment -** Assess and describe the strategies your unit has implemented to attain a strong, demonstrable presence of diversity in our faculty, staff, students, and administrators where they have historically underrepresented in your discipline, your unit, and/or in the institution.

There were three vacant positions open in PPO in FY2015, in a department newly moved to PPO. Two of these were filled in the start of FY2016 with White females. With so few open positions and time to coordinate in a unit newly added, there has been little opportunity to incorporate unit-wide strategies aimed at recruiting a diverse staff into these three hiring processes. The Associate Vice President for External Affairs has committed to the following for upcoming vacant positions:

1. Prior to an NOV being created, supervisor(s) responsible for hiring will be provided with the AACDC's report on hiring practices within Academic Affairs.
2. Supervisors will work with the unit's diversity liaison to implement recommendations in the AACDC report in the hiring process including use of diversity language in NOVs, posting on diversity networks, and using reference and interview questions that explore diversity experience and skills.
3. Supervisors will work with AABS to ensure that they know about any EEO goals for an open position prior to the posting of that position.
4. All leadership team members who have not been to an EOD "Position Descriptions and Hiring Procedures" training in the last five years, and who will hire staff, will attend a training program prior to developing and posting an NOV. This is in addition to the requirement for hiring supervisors to take "Effective Hiring Practices" every two years.

Instead of recruiting, PPO's challenges have been focused on absorbing staff from other units who have been moved organizationally under the PPO umbrella: Global Program Support, Academic Affairs communications staff, the University Press, and Educational Broadcasting Systems. Key strategies used to accomplish these mergers successfully have included open and frank dialogue with leaders in each group, taking time to learn about the important services provided by each one, identifying skills and talents of the staff that can be optimized, and working through structural issues at a meaningful pace to ensure respect for the human resources being added to the PPO team.

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Benchmarking data related to staff ethnicity, age, and gender have changed based on these mergers and will be examined closely by the leadership team when the next benchmarking data becomes available so that future recruiting will facilitate outreach to underrepresented groups.

**III. Retention** - Assess and describe the strategies designed to retain diversity in our faculty, staff, students, administrators, and supporters where they have been underrepresented.

PPO has developed an equity plan that has closely examined a number of issues arising out of the aforementioned mergers: salary, titles, workspace, establishment of PPO's new mission and strategic plan, revision of PDs and establishment of SOPs. While this effort focuses on equity, implementation of the equity plan has resulted in retention of existing staff. Refer to the section on Equity for additional information.

Future strategies in retention include the following:

1. Benchmarking data related to staff ethnicity, age, and gender may have changed based on mergers over the last year and will be examined closely by the leadership team when the next benchmarking data becomes available so that retention strategies may be crafted that address needs identified in the data.
2. 2012 Academic Affairs Climate Survey data indicate that staff in the division feel underappreciated. In addition to current informal efforts to appreciate staff that are instigated by staff themselves (holiday gatherings, birthday celebrations, office lunches, etc.) and public thanks for work well done (e-mail, statements in meetings, etc.), the leadership team will identify and implement PPO staff recognition activities.
3. 2012 Academic Affairs Climate Survey data indicate that most staff in the division have access to professional development opportunities. However, with the recent mergers, it is unclear how consistent the use of these is applied across all the PPO staff. Unit leadership will explore this issue to identify and close gaps. As an example, one PPO supervisor has already identified and corrected an equity issue among direct reports in relation to their access to and use of development opportunities from remote locations. That resulted in work with EOD to create better connections to programs available online or through other electronic options.

Future staff input and findings from division climate surveys will indicate impact and success of these efforts.

**IV. Campus Climate** - Assess and describe the strategies used to create an environment where the opportunity to fully participate does not inappropriately or unintentionally depend on elements of an individual's identity.

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With so many different groups coming together over the last year as part of the PPO team, there has been understandable stress over change, which compounds the stressful work conditions described by Academic Affairs staff in the 2012 Academic Affairs Climate Survey. In addition, PPO staff were asked to provide input about PPO climate concerns during Spring 2015. A summary of the information from those who replied follows:

- Competing views of the teamwork:
  - We work across job duties to facilitate events (some staff merged in see it this way)
  - Old PPO not fully merged with new units added in (some staff in original PPO unit see it this way)
- Strong concern for lack of 1) communication and 2) consistent processes; stress of not being able to get answers (or consistent answers) from leadership; stress of not having updated position descriptions

Therefore, strategic efforts include the following:

1. Develop SOPs for critical services as part of the process of merging units.

The first of these arose out of the annual FY 2015 assessment process, and is focused on the development of an SOP for events and programs, a primary service of PPO staff who were part of the organization in FY2015. After analyzing feedback from PPO clientele, program organizers and participants in the 2014-2015 assessment cycle, it was determined that there were many opportunities to improve the delivery of programs and reduce the stress of PPO staff members facilitating them if SOPs could be developed that focus on managing shared equipment and staff resources. An action plan was developed to create these SOPs for events and programs. Staff who facilitate these activities worked together through the summer to identify key issues and develop meaningful guidelines that form the basis of the draft SOPs. These went into effect in Fall 2015, addressing a major component of staff stress. Other needed SOPs will be identified by leadership or staff members and implemented to facilitate continued organizational stability and improved climate.

Another staff requested component is a clean-up of the various electronic drives. For example, there is still a “GPS” drive and a “PPO” drive with varying access levels among staff members. While not essential to resolve immediately, it is symbolically important to resolve so that the daily access of files emphasizes the merger of units rather than maintaining an artificial separation of historic workgroups.

2. As a regular process, ask staff about their past efforts to improve staff climate within PPO as well as invite input on ways to improve the climate.

In FY 2015, staff reported the following:

- One staff member used knowledge of admission and financial aid to help two PPO colleagues with their educational goals

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- One staff member coordinated nomination of another for the Tradition of Excellence award and two arranged a party to celebrate the nomination even though the nominee was not an award recipient
- One staff member ensures that all 8<sup>th</sup> floor Rudder staff with birthdays are celebrated
- Staff gained knowledge about diversity issues through the following in the last year:
  - 2 staff members served on the AACDC 2014 Climate Survey Subcommittee
  - One finished service on the AACDC Steering Committee and one still serves on it.
  - One served on a hiring committee for Director of Multicultural Services
  - One serves on the Marcom Diversity committee
  - Several facilitated activities that assisted OGAPS with its graduate student climate goals
  - One staff member attended several diversity training programs
  - One staff member advises international student organizations

Suggestions for future efforts included the following:

- Have all PPO staff participate in a Community of Respect training program
- “meaningful” retreat for all staff
- “get to know you” coffee hour with other offices in Rudder Tower (Student Success Center) to get to know and also encourage collaboration
- Schedule Myers-Briggs for PPO to learn work and learning style preferences
- Have regular leadership team meetings (w/ or w/o the VPs) to facilitate discussion and handling of issues that impact everyone. This would also build teamwork.
- Include diversity as a permanent agenda item on leadership and team meetings.
- Identify some projects that can be delegated downward (with clear guidelines about authority for decision making if there are decisions only the VP can make).

3. Build and maintain a strong sense of teamwork and shared culture within PPO.

In FY 2016, the leadership team will work together to coordinate a full staff retreat that can address some of the issues identified by staff as well as discuss strategic planning and future goals.

Future staff input and findings from division climate surveys will indicate impact and success of these efforts.

**V. Equity** - Assess and describe your unit’s strategies to address equity issues across applicable groups (e.g., advancement, promotion, professional development, salary, staff training and development, student leadership development, start-up packages, leadership succession planning, etc.).

Salaries/titles: In general, historic salaries and titles have been established over many years and have been earned by those who are still providing outstanding work efforts for the institution. A detailed assessment of titles and salaries was undertaken as part of the PWC review. While some titles have been changed to facilitate equity with others who have comparable work duties, some historic titles and salaries have been retained owing to staff

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responsibilities as part of established and emerging organizational needs. Title and salary analysis will take place annually, each January, to address adjustments due to professional experience, education level, job duties, length of service, etc. The information will be prepared with assistance from AABS and shared with the leadership team to facilitate adjustments in the next budget cycle.

Workspaces: Workspaces were identified to facilitate the merger of PPO and Global Program Support in October 2014 into two new locations. The space in Rudder Tower and the Williams Building has been more amenable to the pursuit of PPO's mission of service to colleges and Academic Affairs internal clientele. PPO staff who primarily support Provost Office initiatives are in the Williams Building, while PPO staff who primarily support external clientele are located in Rudder Tower, easily accessible by both on campus and off campus visitors. Furthermore, hosted delegations of foreign national visitors, meetings of the Retired Faculty Community, small workshops and other PPO facilitated activities have a more welcoming and appropriate space for their use. With the addition of new groups in FY2016, another review of workspace will be conducted and needs identified. Leadership will be addressing these needs in FY2016.

Mission and Strategic Plan: Establishment of the mission has been a complex matter since the mission is altered slightly with each new workgroup merged into PPO. However, the service and engagement focus of the mission has remained the central component, and staff have been kept updated about and asked for input on the mission statement as it has evolved to meet institutional needs. The strategic plan has also expanded and changed as the organization has evolved. Finalizing both the mission and the strategic plan is a major part of the unit's equity plan because finalizing such foundational documents will provide much needed stability to the organization, and facilitate staff understanding of their roles in the organization.

Revision of PDs: As roles have shifted, PDs in PPO have not kept pace with the shifts over several years. Therefore, during the 2014-2015 assessment cycle, staff who were part of PPO by the evaluation period had revisions made to PDs to ensure that staff have accurate records of their job duties. The goal is to update these in PATH by then end of December 2015. Those of Educational Broadcast Systems, communication staff, and University Press will be adjusted in the 2015-2016 evaluation period. As the organization continues to stabilize, leadership will continue to look for opportunities to eliminate duplicative services, freeing up staff to take on functions more critical to the organization.

Establishment of SOPs – This is discussed under the “climate” segment of this report. Staff will be invited to share with the leadership team additional needs in relation to SOP development.