Introduction

Diversity is a broad and complex topic requiring a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach. Diversity and inclusion efforts move beyond numbers of students or numbers of programs as end goals. Instead, diversity efforts are multilayered processes through which UND may achieve excellence in learning, research and teaching, access and equity, student development, local and global community engagement, workforce development, and more.

Diversity at UND means our community reflects and is strengthened by members representing the full range of human differences, seen and unseen.

Diversity Advisory Council Charge

UND President Mark Kennedy established a group of twelve faculty, staff, students and community members charged to:

1. Complete inventories of existing campus diversity and inclusion practices and programs with a specific focus on Essential Studies that qualify under the diversity requirement.

2. Identify best practices to enhance our understanding of diversity and inclusion in the higher education setting.

3. Based on our current programs/practices, identify practices and provide the president a list of recommendations for our campus.

Recommendations

These recommendations establish a small and far from exhaustive set of concrete, achievable actions that focus on helping UND and the individuals within the organization to gain competence for working with diverse constituents; comply with laws and regulations and create policies related to them; affirm the interconnectedness and value of every person; improve organizational performance; and treat each individual on our campus equitably and ethically.

Loosely defined, the key recommendations may be categorized as demonstrable best practices on campus and community climate; teaching, learning and scholarship; and student development and involvement.

Campus and Community Climate

The intentional fostering, building and maintaining of a positive campus climate is critical to achieving the benefits of diversity for all students. Campus climate is the atmosphere or ambience of an organization as perceived by its members. … reflected in its structures, policies, and practices; the demographics of its membership; the attitudes and values of its members and leaders; and the quality of personal interactions; Behaviors within a workplace or learning environment, ... that influence whether an individual feels personally safe, listened to, valued, and treated fairly and with respect (Campus Climate, The University of Wisconsin-Madison).

- Create a universal statement of community values and expectations regarding diversity, inclusion and civility to be integrated throughout the UND experience for all faculty, staff and students.
- Conduct regular comprehensive quantitative and qualitative climate assessments to glean areas for improvement and measure gains.
- Strengthen connections between UND and Downtown and the Greater Grand Forks community through collaborative activities such as Grand Forks Reads or other opportunities through the Knight Cities Foundation.
- Guided by faculty and staff interests, create employee resource groups to aid in the retention of underrepresented faculty and staff.
- Create a clear process and mechanism for reporting and responding to bias motivated incidents.
- Build a culture of assessment regarding diversity which includes the disaggregation of data and regular climate assessment.
- Build a critical mass of students from traditionally underrepresented groups by expanding multicultural student recruitment through relationships with high schools with large numbers of students of color (especially in neighboring states).
Teaching, Learning and Scholarship

Students who attend colleges and universities with more racially and ethnically diverse student bodies are exposed to a wider array of experiences, outlooks, and ideas that enhance the education of all students. As we prepare students for professional, civic and personal success we must do so in light of our increasingly global economy and the rapid changes in our nation's demographics. The following recommended best practices foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive climate for teaching, learning, and research:

- Develop, refine and implement diversity strategic plans within colleges and departments that address issues related to classroom climate, pedagogy, recruitment (of students and faculty), content, and/or curriculum.
- Create a position (either a new hire or a faculty fellow) to work with colleges and departments as they develop and refine their diversity strategic plans and support academic diversity-related efforts.
- Build a critical mass of faculty from traditionally underrepresented populations through intentional focus on recruiting more diverse pools of candidates.
- Establish an intentional and integrated first-year experience which will include a common read.
- Support the current effort by the Essential Studies (ES) Committee to revise the ES Program's diversity requirement, including providing the funding necessary to revise or create ES courses that meet heightened standards.
- Promote increased exposure of students to diversity, equity, and inclusion frameworks and content in their majors and electives through high impact practices such as study abroad experiences and student exchanges with minority-serving institutions.
- Create and deliver training for faculty on inclusive practices for teaching and learning, classroom environment, curriculum development, and advising, by providing ongoing funding and support to the Office of Instructional Development which is designated for these purposes.
- Develop formal faculty exchange programs with minority-serving institutions, such as the state’s tribal colleges and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).
- Develop concepts for cluster hires whose scholarly activity is related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Ensure that diversity-related scholarship is recognized in the promotion, tenure, and evaluation process.
- Encourage and support formal diversity, equity, and inclusion-related research initiatives.
- Create mechanisms that encourage networking among scholars at UND pursuing diversity, equity and inclusion scholarship, including ways of sharing their research with the larger UND community.
Student Development and Involvement

"Student development is the way that a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education" (Rodgers, 1990) with an emphasis on the individual and interaction with educational environments.

Student involvement refers to "out of class active participation that enhances academics through the relationships [students] build, the communities they serve, the networks they create, and the personal skills and knowledge they acquire" (University of Florida).

- Conduct a co-curricular programming survey of faculty/staff and to students to assess diversity initiatives and needs.
- Increase resources for diversity centers on campus that support student retention initiatives.
- Provide additional staff to support diversity programming that attract a variety of constituents to learn about diversity and related concepts.
- Develop goals and outcomes for the student experience related to diversity and inclusion.
- Create a "Diversity Challenge Fund" that incentivizes collaboration with departments outside of the division of Diversity & Inclusion to sponsor programs related to diversity.
- Create a campus environment that is representative of diversity at UND and a multicultural world beginning with renovation and rebranding of spaces on campus, specifically the Memorial Union, to be more inclusive and welcoming for all students.

Further Recommendations

- Continue the work of the Diversity Advisory Council to work in concert with the AVP for Diversity and Inclusion to assist with various tasks including the review of college and department diversity strategic plans and provide feedback to colleges or departments.
- Develop a Diversity Strategic Plan for the University in conjunction with the university's overall strategic planning process which will establish a set of concrete, achievable actions that will make the University of North Dakota a more fully inclusive institution that understands and appreciates diversity.
- Create and deliver training for staff on diversity, inclusion, cultural competence, SafeZone, culturally competent customer service and employee relations by providing ongoing funding and support to the Office of Learning and Development designated for these purposes.

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Diversity Advisory Committee Members

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Ryan Zerr  
Director of Essential Studies and Professor of Mathematics


University of Florida, Division of Student Affairs, What Is Involvement?, https://www.studentinvolvement.ufl.edu/GetInvolved/What-is-Involvement, accessed 12/16


