

# ATLAS DIVERSITY BENCHMARKING: UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA - LINCOLN

Conducted by



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# Atlas Diversity Benchmarking: Introduction & Methodology

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This chapter describes the Atlas diversity benchmarking and its employed methodology.

*\*Please note that graphic representations of the data may be affected by common rounding error. All raw data calculations have been verified in our analysis.*

# Atlas Diversity Benchmarking: Introduction

## Atlas Diversity Benchmarking: Introduction

Atlas is a national database that showcases all diversity-related initiatives, efforts, and strategic plans for all accredited colleges and universities in the U.S. (approximately 7,500 institutions; this data source does not include online universities). Through Atlas, Halualani & Associates has nationally benchmarked University of Nebraska-Lincoln in comparison with its peer, regional, and national institutions in terms of diversity and inclusion work via our scoring mechanism and in terms of different variables and various indices.

Indeed, diversity and inclusion work in higher education does NOT exist or operate in a vacuum; some practices are deemed more effective and impactful than others for specific type of institutions. Such knowledge should be gathered and provided to institutions in relation to their peers. Through Atlas diversity benchmarking, we gauge a university's level of incorporation of key proven factors and high impact practices associated with diversity excellence at comparable institutions in higher education. These key proven factors and high impact practices derive from the most recent higher educational literature and evidence as well as corporate best practices on diversity on the national front. Through this benchmarking, a university will discover the extent to which it has fulfilled its commitment to diversity excellence and how this status stands in relation to national benchmarks.

Halualani & Associates conducted an Atlas diversity benchmarking for University of Nebraska-Lincoln in order to

highlight the current comparative status/performance on inclusive excellence in terms of their peers on the following index:

### ● **Diversity General Education Curricular Program Index Series:**

- Quantity of Diversity General Education Course Requirements
- Depth and Quality of Diversity General Education Course Requirements
- Depth and Quality of Student Learning Objectives
- Degree To Which Various Aspects of Diversity Are Incorporated

# Atlas Diversity Benchmarking: Methodology

## Methodology

Halualani & Associates conducted Atlas diversity benchmarking on the aforementioned index through the following research steps.

- We first collect, trace, and track all data related to the aforementioned diversity index in terms of the most recent (within the last six months) efforts, programs, and initiatives for all designated peers. Such information is gathered from a combination of web scraping, electronic documents, and mandated accreditation reports, and often includes both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Then, once all of the data has been collected, our team scores each institution based on a coding scheme and set of algorithms that are informed by high-impact and “gold standard” practices (from the research literature of proven practices). Higher scores and codings are assigned to those institutions that possess high-impact practices and in relation to proven, high success-potential factors.
- Ultimately, on all indices, a scale of 1 to 100, with 100 representing the highest and most positive/successful/impact score, is used to compare University of Nebraska-Lincoln with its peer institutions.

The following benchmarking chapter features the ranking of University of Nebraska-Lincoln in relation to its designated peers on this diversity General Education

curricular program index series. All information about why the scoring was assigned and the kinds of efforts or initiatives that each designated peer engages in, is provided in detail. The quantitative information via the ranking charts are displayed along with thick descriptions of the kinds of efforts and initiatives being put on by all of the peer institutions.

## Chapter 2

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# Diversity General Education Curricular Program Index Series

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This chapter features the Atlas benchmarking findings for University of Nebraska-Lincoln on this index series.

*\*Please note that graphic representations of the data may be affected by common rounding error. All raw data calculations have been verified in our analysis.*

# Diversity General Education Curricular Index Series

## Diversity General Education Curricular Index Series

This index series highlights how your institution compares to your designated peers in terms of the presence, quality, and rigor of the General Education (required) diversity curriculum at those universities.

The **Diversity General Education Curricular Index Series** includes the following indices:

- Diversity General Education Curricular Presence Index
- Diversity General Education Curricular Components Index

**University of Nebraska-Lincoln** selected the following peers for comparison in this index series:

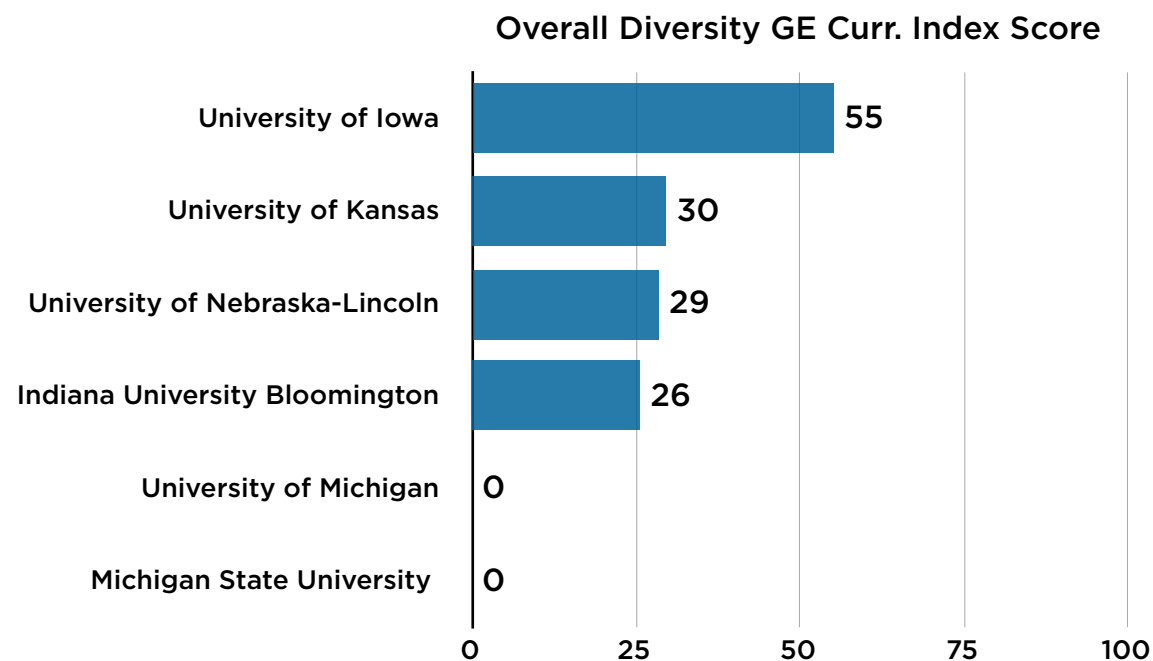
- University of Iowa
- Indiana University Bloomington
- Michigan State University
- University of Michigan
- University of Kansas



# Overall Diversity General Education Curricular Index

## Overall Diversity General Education Curricular Index

**Overall Diversity General Education Curricular Index:** The higher the score, the greater the presence, quality, and rigor of the General Education (required) diversity curriculum.



- Overall, **University of Iowa** ranks 1st overall on this index because it features two General Education (required) diversity curricular areas: one that is based on international/global diversity (cultures and languages) and the other on domestic diversity (or racial/ethnic/gender groups within the U.S. hierarchy). These General Education curricular areas have multiple student

learning objectives and highlight a varied range of diversity aspects. (Although it should be noted that this university is in the process of replacing its domestic diversity area with two new GE diversity areas.)

- **University of Kansas** ranks 2nd overall because it features a Diversity General Education program that highlights both domestic and global diversity and emphasizes different aspects of diversity (race/ethnicity, socioeconomic class, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender, and other identities) as key constructs.
- **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** ranks 3rd overall on this index because it requires a General Education type of learning outcome on global diversity that encompasses multiple aspects of diversity and can take on multiple iterations by department. The mid-tier ranking is also due to the fact that this Diversity General Education curriculum is framed in a generalized form and does not provide enough exposure to domestic diversity and in contemporary contexts.

- We also note that all of these peer institutions rank at the mid-level or lower on this index area and do not represent the very best models of Diversity General Education in our database. The institutions that have rigorous and high-quality Diversity General Education curricular requirements/programs all have the following:

- The incorporation of two GE diversity areas (one on domestic diversity and the other on international/global diversity) which ensures that the quality, consistency, and assurance that diversity is covered in a significant way in terms of both domestic and international issues. The goal of a true General Education Diversity Requirement (Depth) Area(s) is to make sure that all students are exposed to the following types of diversity-related student learning objectives:

- Locates the student in current sociopolitical contexts
- Examines the historical dynamics around cultures and difference
- Focuses on visible and invisible structured inequalities in the U.S. context
- Provides an understanding of the constructive actions of various racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural groups in U.S. society (historically and in contemporary times)
- Emphasizes the role of constructive actions to improve lives of others and bring about social justice
- Exposes students to perspectives about difference, privilege, power relations, and

intercultural justice that are not articulated in socially approvable ways in the surrounding region and society (this is extremely important given the sociopolitical climate across the United States).

- Note also that high-quality diversity-related General Education curricular programs have the advantage of being offered on a more regular basis and provide important FTES for disciplinary programs and departments that have the subject and educational expertise to offer such diversity-related courses (like Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Social Sciences, Communication, among others).



# Diversity General Education Curricular Presence Index

## Diversity General Education Curricular Presence Index

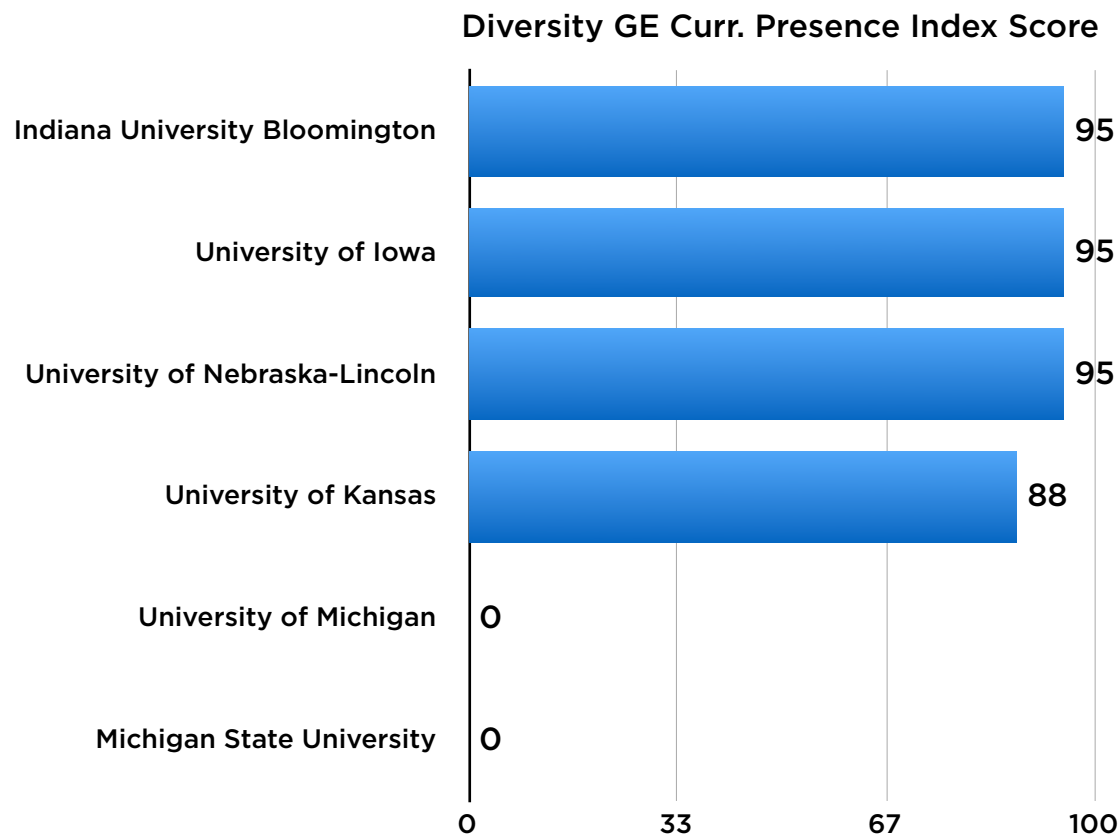
This index measures the presence and quality of a Diversity General Education (required) curriculum that each university currently has in place.

On this index, the higher the score, the more the university has established a Diversity General Education curriculum on its campus.

According to our Atlas diversity benchmarkings, **Indiana University Bloomington**, **University of Iowa**, and **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** all rank 1st in relation to its designated peers in terms of the presence and quality of a Diversity General Education (required) curriculum for its campus. This ranking is due to the fact that all three of these institutions have instituted a Diversity General Education Curriculum of at least 3 units (or 1-2 courses or 3 options).

**University of Kansas** ranks 2nd in this index area only because its required unit/course structure was lower than the leading peers — with two units/course options.

- We recommend to the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** that it:
  - implement a meaningful and rigorous Diversity General Education program that spans at least two different areas: 1) domestic diversity and structured inequalities and 2) global cultural contexts and issues;
  - make the two aforementioned areas separate General Education diversity requirements of at least 3 units each. There is research noting that students who complete at least two required diversity General Education courses, have greater cognitive and affective benefits as well as increased comfort levels with difference



(Bowman, 2010). According to Bowman (2010), “In a large multi-institutional sample, students who take one diversity course generally do not show greater gains in well-being and orientations toward diversity than those who take no courses. However, students who take two or more courses experience substantial benefits” (p. 1)\*\*;

- ensure that this Diversity General Education Program be **required** and encompasses multiple disciplinary areas across the curriculum (humanities and fine arts, social sciences, applied sciences, science and engineering, race, ethnic, gender, and GLBT studies, and many more).

\*\*Bowman, N. A. (2010). Disequilibrium and resolution: The nonlinear effects of diversity courses on well-being and orientations toward diversity. *The Review of Higher Education*, 33(4), 543-568.

# Diversity General Education Curricular Components Index

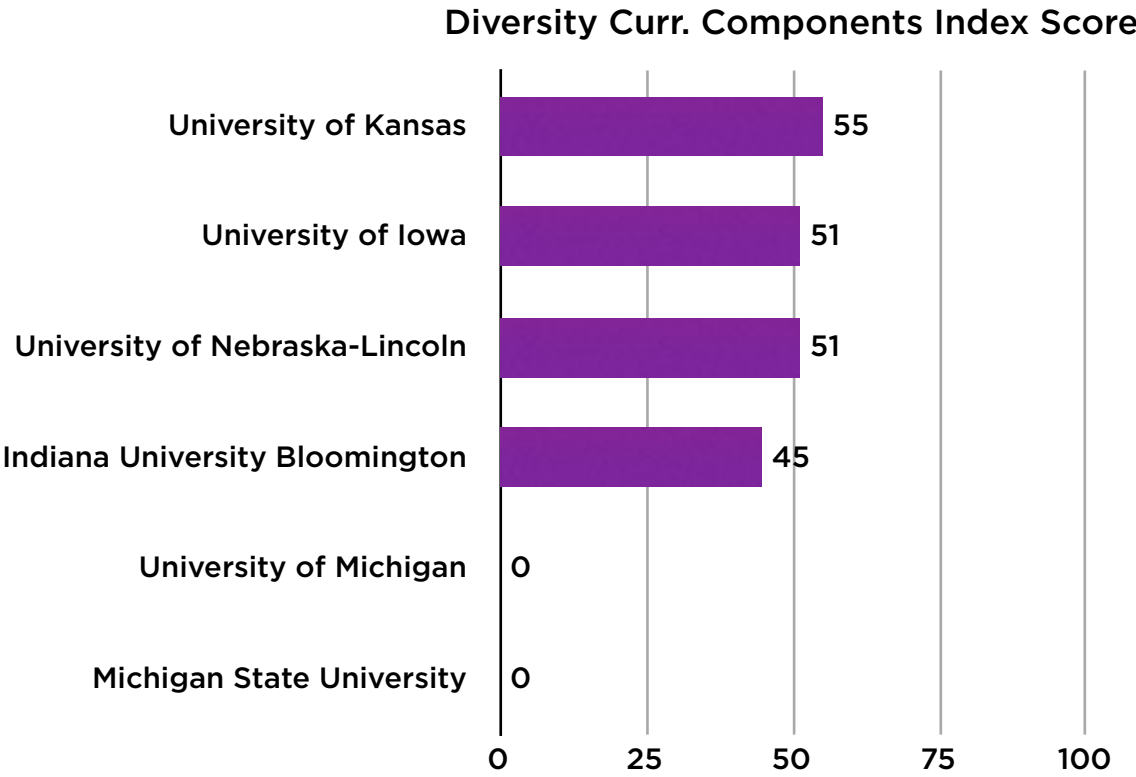
## Diversity General Education Curricular Components Index

This index measures the quality and rigor of the curricular components in the required Diversity Education curriculum that each university currently has in place.

On this index, the higher the score, the more the university has established a set of high quality and rigorous curricular components such as student learning objectives and course offerings in its required Diversity Education curriculum.

According to our Atlas diversity benchmarkings, **University of Kansas** ranks 1st in relation to its designated peers in terms of the quality and rigor of the curricular components in the required Diversity Education curriculum. It earned this ranking due to its focus on both domestic diversity (in the U.S. context) and global/international diversity and culture and the way it addresses multiple aspects of cultural difference beyond race/ethnicity and nationality. Its student learning objectives also highlighted the importance of various aspects of diversity, identity, culture, and difference. Its curricular components included the following:

- **University of Kansas’ Curricular Components:**
  - **Name of Diversity General Education Program:** Culture and Diversity Courses
  - **Student Learning Objectives:**
    - “Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to investigate the diversity of human experience within the United States, considering, for example, age, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and social class, and appreciate the contributions of different social groups.”
    - “Upon reaching this goal, students will be able to examine a variety of perspectives in



the global community, distinguish their own cultural patterns, and respond flexibly to multiple world views.”

- **Examples of Course Offerings:**

- Black Experience Americas; Intercultural Communication; Afro-Amer Postcolonial Theatre and Drama; Global Ethnic & Racial Relations; Africa History; Introduction to American Studies; America’s Latinos/ Latinas; History - American Women: 1870 - Present; The Rhetoric of Women’s Rights; Global Environmental Literature; U.S. Latina/o Literature; Islam in Europe; Communication and Gender; Gender, Sexuality and the Law; Politics of Identity

### **University of Iowa and University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

rank 2nd in relation to its designated peers in terms of the quality and rigor of the curricular components in the required Diversity Education curriculum because these institutions seemed to have more of an emphasis on global contexts (as opposed to domestic diversity contexts) and or had an overly general mission and student learning objectives. These universities’ curricular components included the following:

- **University of Iowa’s Curricular Components:**

- **Name of Diversity General Education Program:**  
International and Global Issues
- **Student Learning Objectives:**
  - “Students develop knowledge of one or more contemporary global or international issue.”

- “Students demonstrate a greater awareness of various perspectives and a deeper appreciation of how differences arise.”
- “Students are better able to adapt to the complexity and diversity of contemporary life through their understanding of international and global contexts.”
- “Students know and are able to apply at least one method of analysis and critical inquiry.”

- **Examples of Course Offerings:**

- Environment: Technology, Culture, and Social Justice ; Anthropology and Contemporary World Problems; Latin American Economy and Society; Urban Anthropology; Cultural Misunderstandings: France and U.S.A.; Geography of Asia: From Japan to Pakistan; Globalization and Geographic Diversity; Germany in the World; Civilizations of Asia: China; Civilizations of Asia: Japan; Honors Seminar in International and Global Issues; Introduction to International Studies; Introduction to Comparative Politics; Introduction to Politics in the Muslim World; Introduction to International Relations

- **University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Curricular Components:**

- **Name of Diversity General Education Program:**

Achievement-Centered Education Learning Outcome 9

- **Student Learning Objectives:**

- “Exhibit global awareness or knowledge of human diversity through analysis of an issue.”

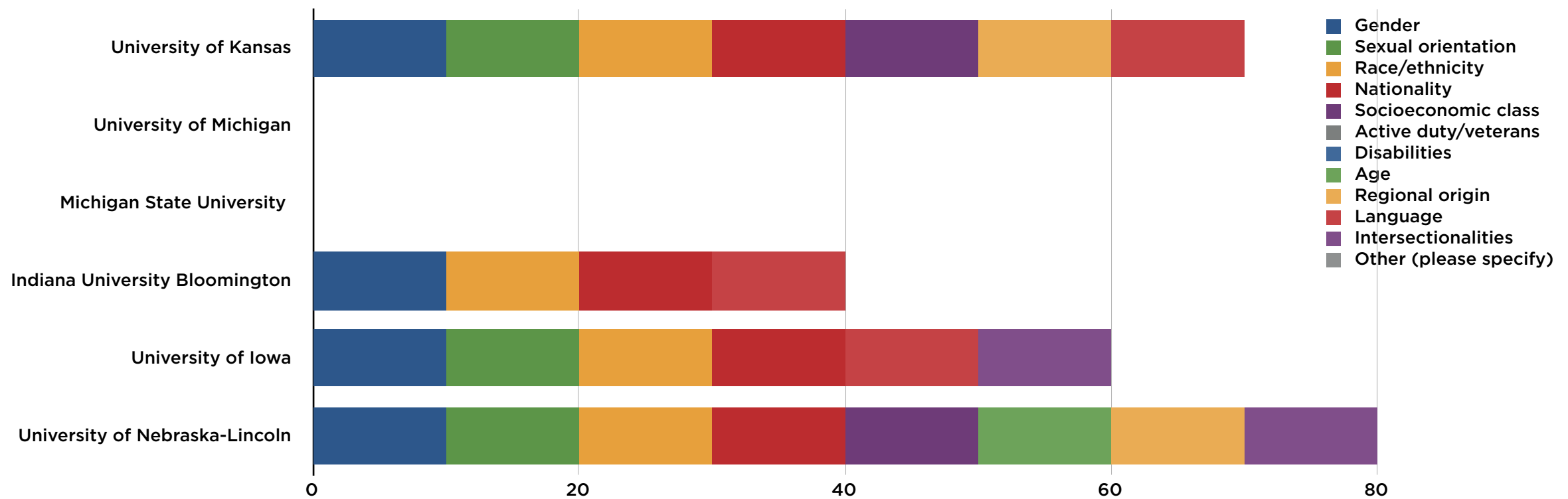
- **Examples of Course Offerings:**

- International Food and Agricultural Trade; Introduction to Global Agricultural and Natural Resources; Global Heritage; Digital Heritage Tools; Exploring Love, Sexuality and Femininity in the History of Arabic Culture; Women in Quran; Global Issues; Global Leadership and the Culture Map; Intercultural Communication; Race, Ethnicity and Criminal Justice; Special Topics in Family and Cultural Diversity; Introduction to International Economics; U.S. Education in the Age of Globalization; Introduction to Lesbian and Gay Literature; Introduction to Women's Literature; Global Literatures since 1850; African American Literature since 1865; Introduction to African Literature; Black Women Authors; African-Caribbean Literature; African American Literature before 1865; Introduction to Asian American Literature; Introduction to Native American Literature; Chicana and/or Chicano Literature; Jewish-American Literature; Native American

Women Writers; Survey of Women's Literature; Women in Popular Culture; Cuban-American Literature; Rhetoric: Argument and Society; Global Experiences in Engineering Energy in Perspective; Freshmen Seminar-The Minority Experience; Introduction to African American Studies; Introduction to Native American Studies; Introduction to Latina and/or Latino Studies; Cultural Encounters on the Great Plains; History of Hip Hop; History of Modern Crime; Introduction to Jewish History; Women in History; Native American History; Landscape and Environmental Appreciation; Social Justice, Human Rights and the Media; Managing Diversity in Organizations; Leadership in a Global Context; Women Write the World; Social Problems Sociology of Race and Ethnicity; Families and Society; Exploring Hispanic Culture; Multicultural Education; Introduction to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-gender; Queer/Sexuality Studies; Sex and Gender Around the Globe; Women, Gender and Science

- We also note that **all of the peer institutions** conceptualize and approach diversity as “Cultural Appreciation” or “Intercultural/Linguistic Competence.” We did NOT find any of the peer institutions including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln conceptualizing or approaching diversity as “Culture in Relation to Structured Inequalities and Power Dimensions” which we find to be the cornerstone of any required Diversity General Education program.

Aspects of Diversity - GE Curr. 1



- We also note that these Diversity General Education curricular components covered different aspects of diversity. The more colors that are displayed for each institution row (and the longer the row) indicates that the more aspects of diversity are being covered and discussed in the Diversity General Education program.

- The chart indicates that the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** covered the fullest range of diversity aspects in its curricular components of its Diversity General Education Program/Area. Specifically, it covered the following aspects of diversity:
  - Gender
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Nationality
  - Socioeconomic Class
  - Age



- Regional Origin
- Intersectionalities
- **University of Kansas** covered the next fullest range of diversity in its faculty diversity-related professional development trainings and workshops. Socioeconomic class and transgender issues were not fully covered in such professional development opportunities.
  - Gender
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Nationality
  - Socioeconomic Class
  - Regional Origin
  - Language
- **University of Iowa** covered the 3rd fullest range of diversity in its faculty diversity-related professional development trainings and workshops. Socioeconomic class and transgender issues were not fully covered in such professional development opportunities.
  - Gender
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Nationality
  - Language

- Intersectionalities
- It is clear that all of the peer institutions are covering key aspects of diversity (gender, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity) but only a handful are covering disabilities, socioeconomic class, and intersectionalities (including religion).
- We recommend to the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln** that it:
  - create meaningful student learning objectives that highlight the importance of diversity and culture and what this means for students;
  - design a Diversity General Education Program that conceptualizes diversity in terms of more than just cultural appreciation or linguistic competency but rather in terms of understanding the following:
  - make sure that multiple and varied (and seemingly controversial) aspects of diversity are incorporated into the program especially those that receive little to no “air play” in public discourse or mainstream media such as religion, transgender issues, political ideologies, and gender ideologies.

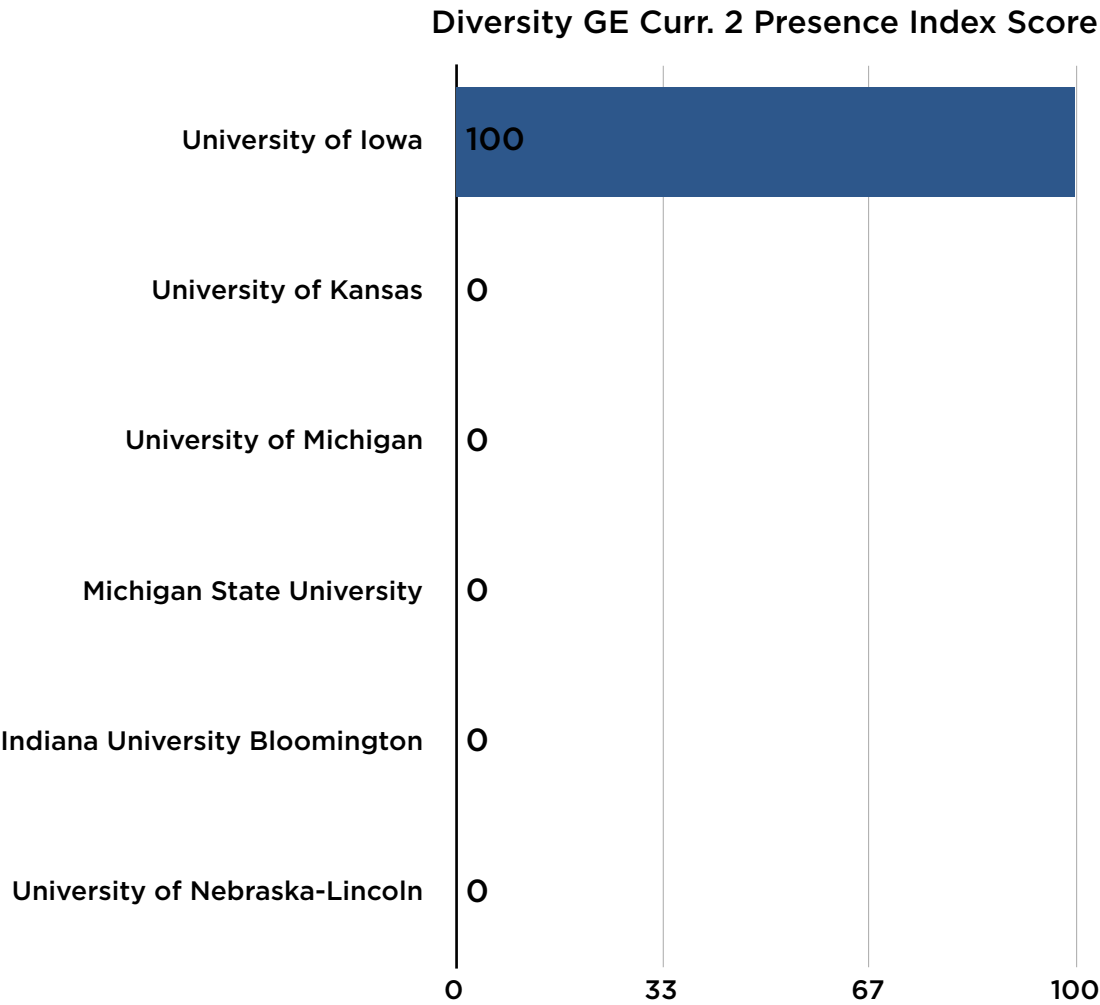
# Diversity General Education Curricular Presence 2 Index

## Diversity General Education Curricular Presence 2 Index

This index measures the presence and quality of a Diversity General Education (required) curriculum that each university currently has in place. We note that we added this index area again to this report because a peer institution has a second Diversity General Education program area.

On this index, the higher the score, the more the university has established a secondary Diversity General Education curriculum on its campus.

According to our Atlas diversity benchmarkings, only **University of Iowa** has a ranking on this index area in relation to its designated peers because it is the only peer institution that has a second Diversity General Education program area with three units/course options. This ranking earned the full points because this secondary Diversity General Education Program area because it highlights a focus on domestic diversity.



# Diversity General Education Curricular Components 2 Index

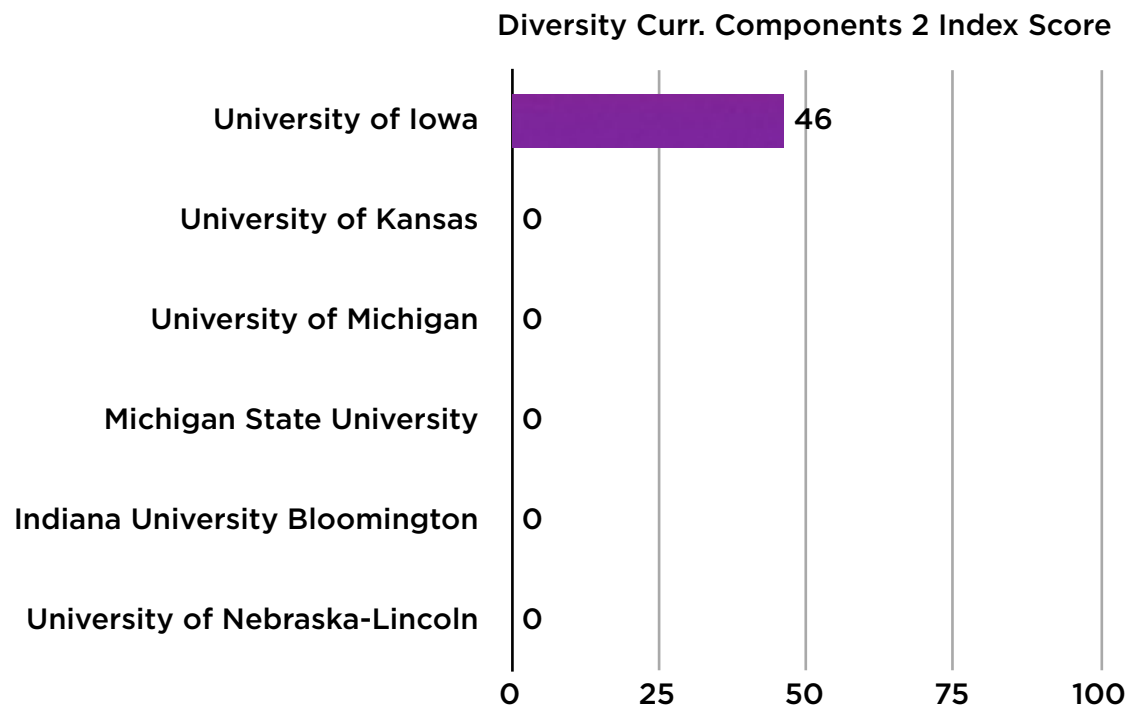
## Diversity General Education Curricular Components 2 Index

This index measures the quality and rigor of the curricular components in the required secondary Diversity Education curriculum that each university currently has in place.

On this index, the higher the score, the more the university has established a set of high quality and rigorous curricular components such as student learning objectives and course offerings in its required secondary Diversity Education curriculum.

According to our Atlas diversity benchmarkings, **University of Iowa** is the only institution that ranks on this index area in relation to its designated peers because it has a required secondary Diversity Education curriculum. It earned this ranking due to its focus on both domestic diversity (in the U.S. context) and global/international diversity and culture and the way it addresses multiple aspects of cultural difference beyond race/ethnicity and nationality. Its student learning objectives also highlighted the importance of various aspects of diversity, identity, culture, and difference. Its curricular components included the following:

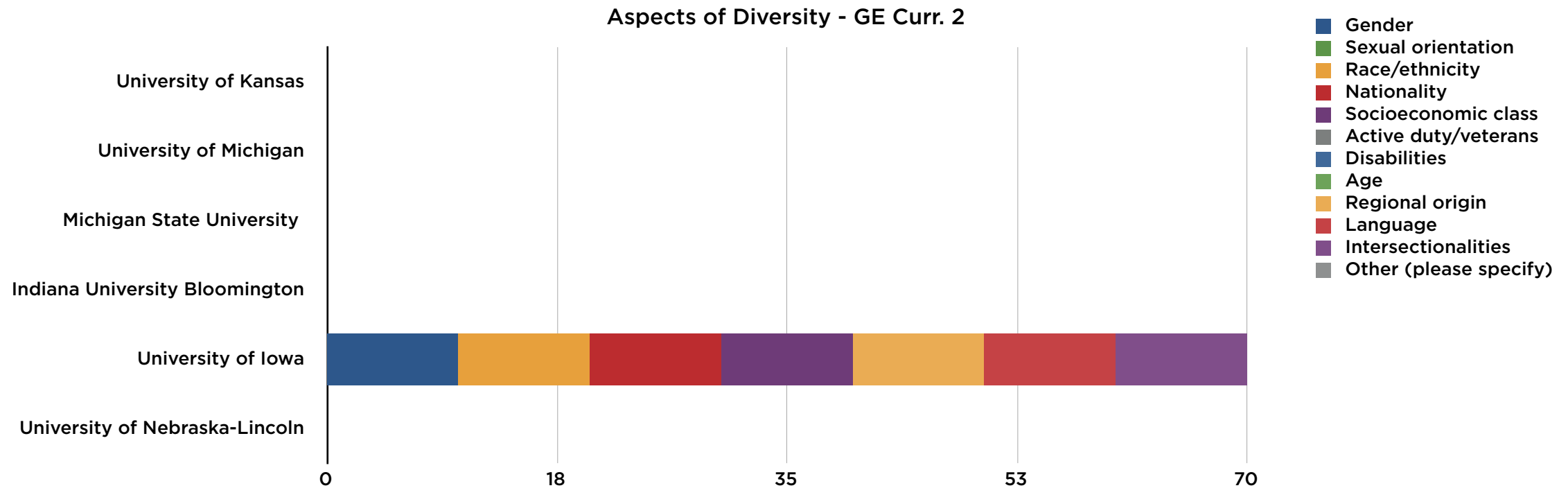
- **University of Kansas’ Curricular Components:**
  - **Name of Diversity General Education Program:** Values, Society, and Diversity
  - **Student Learning Objectives:**
    - “These courses explore fundamental questions about the human experience from a variety of perspectives. You will consider topics in relation to your own values and actions and will gain a deeper appreciation of how cultural differences arise and the importance of diversity.”



- **Examples of Course Offerings:**

- Introduction to African American Culture; Introduction to African American Society; Introduction to American Indian and Native Studies; Understanding American Cultures; Introduction to Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies; Diversity and Power in the U.S.; Introduction to Mexican American History; India Now! A Survey from Bollywood Films to Global Terror; Language and Gender; Jazz Cultures in America and Abroad; Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States; Mardi Gras and More: Cultures of Carnival
- We also note that all of the peer institutions conceptualize and approach diversity as "Cultural Appreciation." We did not see the presence of an approach to diversity that engages "Culture in Relation to Structured Inequalities and Power Dimensions" which we find to be the cornerstone of any required Diversity General Education program.

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We also note that University of Iowa's secondary Diversity General Education curricular components covered different aspects of diversity. The more colors that are displayed for each institution row (and the longer the row) indicates that the more aspects of diversity are being covered and discussed in the Diversity General Education program.

- The chart indicates that the **University of Iowa** covered a range of diversity aspects in its curricular components of its Diversity General Education Program/Area. Specifically, it covered the following aspects of diversity:







- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Nationality

- Socioeconomic Class
- Age
- Regional Origin
- Language
- Intersectionalities

# Recommendations Summary

### Recap of the Recommendations Drawn From This Index

**Drawing from the information gathered through this index, Halualani & Associates recommends University of Nebraska-Lincoln to:**

-  implement a meaningful and rigorous Diversity General Education program that spans at least two different GE Diversity Depth Areas — one for U.S. Domestic Diversity and Structured Inequalities and the other for Global/International Diversity and Contexts. Each of these areas would be required for all students; meaning, they would take one (1) course in each area. These areas would feature several courses that meet specific area criteria and are approved through a GE committee process. We encourage the thorough design of diversity-related student learning objectives and outcomes (that can be tracked and assessed) in these diversity areas. Both of these depth areas would need to be assessed and evaluated with application for continuing certification every two years. The GE certification and assessment process in these areas, needs to be rigorous;
-  make the two aforementioned areas separate General Education diversity requirements of at least 3 units each. (There is research noting that students who complete at least two required diversity General Education courses, have greater cognitive and affective benefits);
-  make the two GE Diversity Depth Areas required for all students; meaning, they would take one (1) course in each area. These areas would feature several courses that meet specific area criteria and are approved through a GE committee process. We encourage the thorough design of diversity-related student learning objectives and outcomes (that can be tracked and assessed) in these diversity areas. Both of these depth areas would need to be assessed and evaluated with application for continuing certification every two years. The GE certification and assessment process to be in these areas, needs to be rigorous;
-  ensure that this Diversity General Education Program encompasses multiple disciplinary areas across the curriculum (humanities and fine arts, social sciences, applied sciences, science and engineering, race, ethnic, gender, and GLBT studies, and many more).
-  design a Diversity General Education Program that conceptualizes diversity in terms of more than just cultural appreciation or linguistic competency but rather in terms of understanding the following:
  -  The goal of a true General Education Diversity Requirement (Depth) Area(s) is to make sure that all students are exposed to the following types of diversity-related student learning objectives:



- 📖 Locates the student in current sociopolitical contexts;
- 📖 Examines the historical dynamics around cultures and difference;
- 📖 Focuses on visible and invisible structured inequalities in the U.S. context;
- 📖 Provides an understanding of the constructive actions of various racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural groups in U.S. society (historically and in contemporary times);
- 📖 Emphasizes the role of constructive actions to improve lives of others and bring about social justice;
- 📖 Exposes students to perspectives about difference, privilege, power relations, and intercultural justice that are not articulated in socially approvable ways in the surrounding region and society (this is extremely important given the sociopolitical climate in the United States);

- 📖 create meaningful student learning objectives that highlight the importance of diversity and culture and what this means for students;
- 📖 make sure that multiple and varied (and deemed “controversial”) aspects of diversity are incorporated into the program especially those that receive little to no “air play” in public discourse or mainstream media such as religion, transgender issues, political ideologies, and gender ideologies.

- 📖 establish a more rigorous review and recertification process for current GE diversity-related courses. Quality control is extremely important for offering a successful GE diversity program in that the depth of the diversity content coverage in each approved course, needs to be checked. In addition, the instructors should be able to demonstrate that they are covering the required student learning objectives and tracking student learning outcomes related to the diversity GE program. When a faculty member or department is applying for one of their courses to be included in one of the two GE diversity areas, they must demonstrate that that course covers the required student learning objectives and content (as well as that faculty member having the required subject and pedagogical expertise and training to teach such a course). In addition, every two years after a course is approved, the department needs to provide evidence that the student learning objectives have been covered and that specific learning outcomes have been assessed. A committee should then review such information and decide if diversity GE certification will continue for another two years. Such a process ensures curricular quality on issues of diversity (which often get “watered down” in favor of other subject matter content) in and rigor in faculty training and preparation for those courses. Dr. Halualani has an outline of different kinds of review and recertification processes as well as optimal student learning objectives and constructs (which she could provide to you all).