

We have completed our task to develop short-term diversity initiatives, which include actions & inclusion. We started with 60 participants, ended with about 30. We wrote recommendations for the following: Campus-wide faculty/staff training, recruiting diverse staff, resources and support groups, exit interviews of diverse faculty/staff, recruiting and retaining international faculty/staff.

As chairperson of this diverse group of participants, I am proud of the work we have accomplished as well as the commitment each person demonstrated for this challenge, as well as their love for our university.

Trina Creighton, Chair

August 20, 2018

Campus-Wide Faculty/Staff Training and Mentoring Program

***Team Members:* Julie Singh (co-leader), Joy Eakin (co-leader), Lyda Snodgrass, Natasha Crawford, & Heather Patterson Meyer**

We recommend instituting a campus-wide faculty and staff training and mentoring program. The program could initially be piloted in one department. Training should be focused on diversity pedagogy, implicit bias, micro affirmations, micro aggressions, cultural competency skills, and leading for inclusion and conducted as part of New Employee Orientation as well as throughout the year for existing employees. Some examples include OUCH! Training, Implicit Association Test, and Intercultural Development Inventory. These training sessions would serve as pre-requisites for mentors before they begin mentoring others. Mentoring should focus on providing transition services for new employees and networking opportunities and connection to resources for all participants. Mentors and mentees would apply for the program and be matched with more than one mentor based upon what the mentee wants to learn and the mentor's area(s) of expertise or also via a networking event. A computer program and/or person can administer the matching but both the mentor and mentee should have a choice in this process. An evaluation survey measuring effectiveness should be conducted after each training and mentoring session. To reinforce the importance of the mentoring program, an annual event could honor mentors and provide for all participants to celebrate diversity and inclusion.

This recommendation supports the Halualani Diversity Mapping Report in that diversity-related professional development and retention of diverse faculty and staff were designated as urgent areas of focus. Action Step 4 of the Report recommends that mentoring programs be utilized as a leverage point that could be heightened more as elevated goal areas in order to create powerful synergy and outcomes for the University. This recommendation also supports Action Step 15 of the Report regarding the focus of training programs.

The training program can be modeled after UNO/UNMC's Re-Imagining U program. In this program, 500 level class electives focus on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion. UNL can use as a guide the mentoring programs of other institutions such as Penn State, Notre Dame, New Mexico, Union College, Brown, and Baltimore.

In three to five years, implementation of a campus-wide faculty and staff training and mentoring program that prioritizes diversity and creates an inclusive environment would demonstrate the University is committed to its employees' wellbeing; increase employees' understanding of diversity and inclusion; and increase employees' sense of belongingness, acceptance, and satisfaction, which would lead to an increase in employee retention.

Recruiting a Diverse Staff

Team Members: Jeff Norris (co-leader), DeVanee Lasley (co-leader), Becki Barnes, Christian Robinson, Corey Rumann, Jon Gayer

Recruiting a diverse pool of staff candidates for open positions must be a top priority if we, as an institution, wish to increase our diverse employment rates. We propose several areas to target and focus our efforts to begin making an immediate impact. Allow HR professionals and hiring managers to identify qualified candidates through outside sources and automatically place them on short lists with IEC/HR. In order to do this UNL must design and implement a certification program so key employees become qualified to prescreen potential applicants while at job fairs, networking, referral sources etc. We compete with private sector organizations who are at an advantage being able to “headhunt” top candidates of all backgrounds.

Setting measurable goals for the recruitment and hiring of underrepresented sections of the local population. Achieve these goals through methods such as Identifying and utilizing organizations within the Lincoln and Omaha area that UNL can collaborate with in order to market jobs to their diverse memberships. A key part of setting these goals would be conducting an audit of staff/faculty in all departments, to assess their specific needs for diverse hiring benchmarks. The University of Iowa has a departmental audit process we can model to understand and identify where our weak points to address immediately.

Intentionally and purposefully addressing implicit bias of search committee members (and others) during the screening, review and hiring process. One identifiable way to remove initial bias is hiding names of applicants before moving to hiring managers. UNL should strongly consider hiring a consultant to provide ways to improve the initial search and hiring practices to make them a more equitable and inclusive process. Working with a consultant, such as Kathy O’Bear, to identify key areas to address bias in the hiring process.

In three to five years, we will be at or above our benchmark goals for hiring a diverse and underrepresented population of applicants. We will increase in our employee numbers toward par levels of predetermined, underrepresented groups based on local and area demographics along with input from internal and external sources.

The Halualani report specifically states UNL has “few efforts have specifically focused on recruiting and retaining diverse UNL staff members and thus, targeted efforts should be designed for this group”. The go on to point out that we need creative ways to recruit employees that will not violate Nebraska Initiative 424. Starting out with making our candidate pools wider and targeting an audience to fill them will start the process of hiring off right and I shouldn’t violate Nebraska Initiative 424. The new initiatives are not showing preferential treatment, merely increasing our hiring options.

Resources and Support Groups

Recommendations: Resources and Support Groups

Team Members: Gwendolyn Combs (co-leader), Melissa Peters (co-leader), Marcia Dority Baker, J.S. Engebretson, John Goldrich, Kathryn Grier, Corrie Svehla

Encourage full engagement in diversity and inclusion efforts by enhancing and communicating opportunities for faculty and staff to participate in university-wide resources and support groups. We must provide strategic and pro-active conversations and training, tailored specifically to the needs of faculty and staff.

These efforts can be accomplished by recognizing people for being engaged and involved in diversity and inclusion opportunities. For example, provide both faculty and staff with incentives for attending campus events on diversity, inclusion and current event topics. University leadership will need to develop mechanisms for removing barriers for involvement by reducing the current siloed approach to training and development opportunities by establishing a variety of methods for participation. Also, champion support for campus organizations, both official and unofficial, that provide faculty and staff peer groups and ally-ship. A key component of success is better implementation of a communication plan. We need transparency concerning these resources and opportunities.

Recommendations supporting the Halualani Diversity Mapping Report: provide a systematic approach to developing a strategic initiative per recommendation from the Halualani Report. While UNL has produced a solid record of diversity activity in the last five years, moving ahead the university will need improved communication and transparency concerning what resources/support groups/opportunities are available, as well as how participation is encouraged. Numerous examples are available (see attached spreadsheet).

Supportive research: create an organized, accessible list of organizations and resources at the university, such as UNL Resource Group List.xlsx (internal and external – available in Box); Michigan State Inclusion and Intercultural website <http://www.inclusion.msu.edu>; Ohio University Diversity website <http://www.ohio.edu/diversity>

In 3-5 years UNL will have: well-defined, organized and clearly communicated university-wide resources for diversity and inclusion training and support groups; formal recognition for faculty and staff for participation in diversity and inclusion efforts, university-wide as well as at “local” levels; an electronic check-in system for participation for campus events and activities; new faculty and staff orientations that incorporate inclusion and diversity training, available resources, and expectations.

Exit Interviews of Diverse Faculty/Staff

Team Members: Stephanie Bondi (co-leader), Kristen Derr (co-leader), Beverly Russell, Keri Rockwell, Julia McQuillan

We recommend an independent group conduct exit interviews and collect honest feedback of departing employees (K12HRsolutions, 2003) so that changes can be made to improve UNL. Researchers at UNL's SBSRC have developed an exit survey aligned with national datasets so we recommend they strengthen the diversity and inclusion components and conduct the interviews.

Administrators will lead the process and disseminate results to unit leaders who have responsibility for implementing changes. Changes should be evidenced-based practices that show progress towards meeting articulated benchmarks and goals.

Dashboard reporting of exit surveys (see CSU example) addresses Halualani report that we need to measure and report. The dashboard should report about campus climate for different groups while also keeping in mind confidentiality protections, which can be more difficult for people who are more easily identifiable.

The Halualani report suggested a climate survey be conducted every two years, we suggest yearly. We found examples (UNL LGBTQA+ Resource Center, 2012; Rankin, 2003). Following the completion of the climate survey we recommend employees have an option to participate in a stay interview similar to what Gonzaga (2010) and UNL ITS do. According to Finnegan (2012), stay interviews are a preventive tool in employee retention addressing that point in the Halualani report.

Employees may be reluctant to share with a supervisor or other leader. Interviewers need to "understand the cultural experiences of their respondents" (Mertens, 2015, p. 257) and mitigate power differences which may discourage honest feedback. Powerful people can be effective change agents when properly trained (Prime, J., Foust-Cummings, H., Salib, E., & Moss-Racusin, C., 2012) so white, male, full professor/directors should be trained to create and implement stay plans with employees.

In three to five years, UNL will have a systematic, transparent, and accountable structure – that is representative of all the stakeholders involved – to better understand, assess, and manage the 4 categories of services for international faculty and staff: (1) procedural, (2) interpersonal, (3) remedial, and (4) preventive services.

Recruiting and Retaining International Faculty and Staff

Team Members: Soo-Young Hong, Roz Hussin, & Amy Metzger

We recommend that the University (a) continue to conduct interviews with key stakeholders across colleges and departments to gather information about current practices, challenges, and suggestions regarding immigration-related support for international faculty and staff (see [Appendix A](#) for preliminary interview results); (b) launch an 'International Faculty and Staff Advisory Board' with stakeholders (i.e., administrators, international faculty and staff, international students, and International Students and Scholars Office [ISSO] staff) and a legal counsel; and (c) implement a systematic and centralized process of documenting all immigration-related processes and issues by adopting a software program as a mechanism for continuous assessment, escalation, and accountability including supportive resources.

The Halualani Diversity Mapping Report recommends that the University take effort to recruit and retain more diverse faculty and staff and to internationalize curriculum, which has implications for recruiting and retaining international faculty and staff. It is critical to have a diversity infrastructure in place that "provides enough direction for all divisions and units" and mechanisms for assessment and accountability, conducive to "creative outside the box strategies."

Higher education institutions' intentional effort to support the internationalization process is positively associated with quality of education. To make the process successful, it should be reflected on their "hiring practices, internationalizing the curriculum, and developing research and institutional partnerships." Interviews with international faculty and staff who have experienced challenges in immigration-related processes reveal an array of existing and ongoing problems, many systemic. These issues result in multiple unforeseen complications, time and financial loss for all stakeholders involved, plus unnecessary hardships, some severe. Other universities utilize their website to provide international faculty and staff as well as hosting and hiring units with detailed, step-by-step information about immigration services, which UNL seems to have just started. Indiana University adopted a systematic process for documenting all immigration-related work (i.e., Sunapsis) that regularly sends out automated notifications to all involved parties with updated personnel data and important timeline. University of Michigan has a Faculty & Staff Immigration Services Advisory Council that directly communicates with the University leaders about any immigration-related issues.

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Footnotes & References:

Campus-Wide Faculty & Staff Training and Mentoring Program

¹ OUCH! Training: <http://www.diversityinclusioncenter.com/>

¹ Implicit Association Test: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html>

¹ Intercultural Development Inventory: <https://idiinventory.com/>

¹ Halualani & Associates. "Diversity Mapping Report: University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)". 2017. Page 26-28.
Online: <https://diversity.unl.edu/diversity-analysis>

¹ "Re-Imagining U" program: <https://www.unmc.edu/news.cfm?match=20764>

Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Faculty/Staff

References

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