



2020 DIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Northern Arizona University (NAU) Diversity Strategic Plan (DSP) is to create a framework of action for the university to enhance Diversity and Inclusion throughout the fabric of NAU. The goal of the DSP is to create a community that exhibits true diversity and inclusion. This means that at all levels of the institution, diversity and inclusion are recognized as institutional strengths and exhibited through a reflection of ideals and participation by all members of the diverse NAU community.

Northern Arizona University is an institution of higher education built on a student-first foundation. NAU has an enrollment of over 30,000 (fall 2019) with over 60% female and increasing numbers of underrepresented and diverse student populations. Two-thirds of NAU students are from the state of Arizona; a state that likewise is seeing an increase in the diversity of state demographics.

The Diversity Strategic Plan focuses and prioritizes the university's attention and resources around diversity, inclusion, and a culturally competent environment for all, with particular attention to underrepresented, marginalized, or underserved groups in higher education. The DSP aligns with the University Strategic Plan (USP) that, in turn, aligns with the Arizona Board of Regents Strategic Plan, "Impact Arizona."

The NAU DSP is a culmination of the work of dedicated teams, starting with representatives of the university diversity commissions and invested stakeholders across campus, and most importantly the DSP Task Force. The result is a plan that focuses on short- and long-term strategies to achieve key goals and objectives. The planning process was led through the NAU Center for University Access and Inclusion (CUAI) with input from the President's Diversity Fellow. Contact CUAI@nau.edu for more information.

Key Strategic Priorities

1.

Accelerate toward a culturally competent community and accessible environment.

2.

Increase, support, retain and graduate underrepresented students.

3.

Increase, support, retain and advance underrepresented faculty, staff and administrators.

4.

Adopt accurate and reliable evaluation and assessment methods and metrics for all diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives.

5.

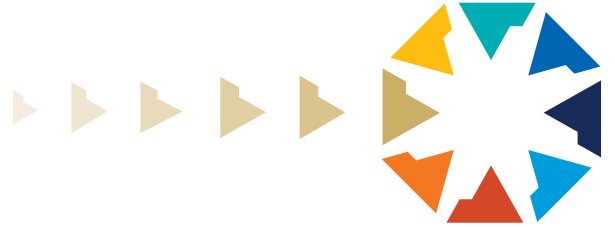
Establish transparent and universal paths of communication and responsibility for diversity and inclusion.



VISION

The True Diversity University A university environment exhibiting true diversity and inclusion where there exists a wealth of individuals whose unique experiences of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual and gender students identities, disability, and other perspectives are valued and woven into the fabric of the institution.

THE NAU DSP PROCESS



History of the Diversity Strategic Planning Process

(How We Got Here)

NAU has a long history of working toward increased diversity and inclusion. The university diversity commissions, individuals, and departments have dedicated countless hours to education, programming, and initiatives. The formal long-term diversity strategic planning process, through which this Diversity Strategic Plan has evolved, began in early 2016 when President Cheng announced the effort and the establishment of the Center for University Access and Inclusion (the Center). President Cheng appointed a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) to begin assessing the current landscape and create a format for long-term planning. The CDO conversed with the university diversity commissions, student groups, the Faculty Senate, the Classified Staff Advisory Council (CSAC) and the Service Professional Advisory Council (SPAC), interested individuals, representatives from academic areas centered on issues of diversity and inclusion, and leadership. Those efforts resulted in the first iteration of the Diversity Strategic Plan (DSP).

In April of 2017, the strategic planning effort transferred to the Assistant Vice President for Equity Compliance who worked closely with the co-chairs of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Ethnic Diversity, the Commission for Native Americans, the LGBTQIA Commission and the Commission for Disability Access and Design. In these meetings, which expanded to include representatives and volunteers from other areas and ultimately ad hoc task forces, participants reviewed DSPs from institutions across the country, including Brown University, the University of Michigan, Harvard, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and University of Texas at Austin, and adopted best practices with consideration of NAU's unique experience and vision of the future. Notably, much time was spent crafting definitions, including the all-important and now very broad definitions of diversity and inclusion. This process resulted in the second iteration of the DSP, which, with all revisions to date, has been posted continuously on the Center's webpage and accessible to the entire NAU community to provide feedback. The opportunity for feedback was announced through NAU News and specific presentations were made to the Academic Chair's Council, CSAC, SPAC, the Provosts' Academic Leadership Committee, Faculty Senate, departments upon request, and at three student feedback sessions. Those efforts resulted in a DSP that incorporated a plethora of strategies and metrics meant to achieve the stated goals and objectives. Three ad hoc task forces then began the process of prioritizing the objectives and strategies, refining the metrics, and addressing particularly challenging issues such as how best to achieve inclusive excellence in personnel processes.

In June of 2019, President Cheng appointed Dr. Gabriel Montaña as the President's Diversity Fellow to lead the third phase of the planning process and prepare the DSP for submission and adoption. Dr. Montaña embraced the formidable task of condensing a myriad of excellent ideas into a concise strategic plan that could be implemented expeditiously with an eye toward meaningful, achievable, and measurable results. This current DSP provides for immediate action and lays a strong foundation for continuing improvement and implementation over the long term. It truly is a living document.

Access

The removal of barriers to enter, communicate, and make full use of facilities, programs, services, and opportunities.

Cultural competency

The institutional and personal commitment to obtain and demonstrate knowledge and skills that allow us to learn, work, and engage effectively in a diverse environment.

Diversity

The complexity of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences and intersections of culture and circumstance. Such differences and intersections include race, sex, ethnicity, age, religion, language, ability/disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic, veteran or other status, or geographic region.

Underrepresented

Those diverse groups, identities, and communities including those that are historically underrepresented, underserved, or marginalized at institutions of higher education and/or within disciplines.

Inclusion

An environment where all people engage in creating a community where all groups have equal access and are welcomed and valued.

Inclusive

The measure of the institution's expanding access, participation, and resources to underrepresented individuals, groups, and communities.



DEFINITIONS

PRIORITIES

1

Accelerate Toward a culturally competent community and accessible environment

Across NAU, pursue opportunities to increase diversity and inclusion initiatives. Embed diversity in learning outcomes, professional development, performance expectations, evaluations and increase opportunities for the NAU community to participate in and advance diversity and inclusion.

OBJECTIVES

1

Widely acknowledge, disseminate, and promote NAU's commitment to diversity, inclusion and cultural competency

2

Institutionalize the value of diversity-centered learning, service, scholarship and work

3

Incentivize diversity-centered learning, service, scholarship, and work

4

Increase mandatory and optional learning opportunities in multiple formats

5

Remove barriers to access for individuals with disabilities

6

Increase community engagement around diversity

2

Increase, support, retain and graduate underrepresented students

Continue to assess, develop and implement strategies focused on generating purposeful support of underrepresented students.

OBJECTIVES

1

Recruitment and enrollment of underrepresented students

2

Student support, retention and graduation from underrepresented populations

3

Assess NAU as an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution

3

Increase, support, retain and advance underrepresented faculty, staff and administrators

Continue to assess, develop and implement strategies focused on generating purposeful support of underrepresented faculty, staff, and administrators.

OBJECTIVES

1

Recruit underrepresented faculty, staff, and administrators

2

Support, retain and advance underrepresented faculty, staff, and administrators

4

Adopt accurate and reliable evaluation and assessment methods and metrics for all diversity and inclusion strategies and initiatives.

Establish and refine tools and mechanisms upon which an accurate and continual assessment of progress within diversity and inclusion can be rendered.

OBJECTIVES

1

Determine how metrics will be collected and managed

2

Develop mechanisms for communication

5

Establish transparent and universal paths of communication and responsibility for diversity and inclusion

At institutional, College, and Unit levels, create an understanding and appreciation of how diversity and inclusion are implemented at NAU.

OBJECTIVES

1

Create a Culture of Shared Responsibility

2

Enable successful implementation of Diversity and Inclusion initiatives