

**Annual Report on Diversity Initiatives and Progress  
Furman University  
2015-2016**

**Submitted by:**  
**Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee**  
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## **Message from President Davis**

### **Diversity Vision**

The diversity vision and diversity statement were created by the 2011 University Diversity Committee and adopted by the Vision 2020 Strategic Planning Committee to be incorporated into the university's strategic plan. The vision is stated as follows:

Furman University embraces diversity as an implicit value and as an explicit practice in all of its endeavors. In keeping with its educational mission and the ideals of its founding, the University seeks to build a community that upholds the inherent worth of individuals in an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and civility.

### **Diversity Statement**

Enhancing the University's commitment to diversity expands the intellectual engagement of its members. Recognizing and respecting the inherent worth of each individual and respecting differences among groups, the University aspires to create a community of people representing a multiplicity of identities including, but not limited to, gender, race, religion, spiritual belief, sexual orientation, geographic origin, socioeconomic background, ideology, world view, and varied abilities. Furman aspires to integrate the value of diversity into the fabric of campus life: curricular, co-curricular, and administrative. Furthermore, Furman is committed to attaining diversity in the recruitment, retention, and advancement of students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups. Most importantly, Furman expects all members of its community to honor the values implicit in this vision and to demonstrate a genuine willingness to move from an awareness and tolerance of difference toward understanding and acceptance.

### **Diversity Strategic Plan (created in 2011 by the University Diversity Committee, re-visited annually)**

In order to achieve diversity and inclusiveness as core values, this strategic plan outlines the following goals:

#### **I. Institutional Equity & Access Practices**

1. Create an increasingly diverse community of faculty, staff, and students.
2. Create an administrative leadership structure accountable for program development, oversight, and practices throughout the University.

#### **II. Education and Training in Diversity and Civil Discourse**

1. Comprehensively review the academic curriculum for breadth, depth, and progression of diversity content.
2. Provide a range of student programs that address all aspects of diversity and best practices for creating an inclusive cultural climate.

3. Provide a range of faculty and staff programs that address all aspects of diversity and best practices for creating an inclusive cultural climate.

The strategic plan, with its vision and goals, must be recognized as a fluid document that outlines current challenges, solutions, accountability measures and serves as a structure for the continual creation and nourishment of a culturally diverse, inclusive learning community at Furman University.

### **Progress on Priorities for 2015-2016**

The specific priorities selected for academic year 2015-2016, related to the goals of the Diversity Strategic Plan, were:

- **Establish a Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT) for faculty, staff, and students**
- **Establish an Ombudsperson resource for faculty**
- **Hire a Chief Diversity Officer**
- **Create and disseminate an annual report to the Furman community**

In addition, other recommendations of the Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee (D&IC), in its 2014-2015 report to President Davis, emerged as needing to be addressed this year:

- **Create an inaugural mini-grants application opportunity for diversity initiatives generated by faculty, staff, and students**
- **Create the inaugural Meritorious Faculty and Staff Awards for Diversity and Inclusion, and more broadly recognize the student diversity award already in place (*Rosa Mary Bodkin Award*) as part of the Shucker Center for Leadership Development**
- **Create a communication plan to include an accessible website hub for diversity initiatives and related campus-wide communications**
- **Initiate conversations with Mike Hendricks, Vice-President for Enrollment Management, regarding plans for recruitment and financial support of a greater number of students from under-represented groups, specifically those more representative of South Carolina's demographics**

**First**, the university's progress on the four primary recommendations submitted in the fall:

- **Bias Incident Response Team (BIRT)**. President Davis approved team members based on nominations from the community. BIRT is comprised of faculty, staff, and students. Team members are Kristin Austin (Human Resources); Jim Benes (Facilities); Rob Carson (Academic Assistance & Athletics); Courtney Firman (Housing); Neil Jamerson (Student Life); Muhammad Zakaria Shafqut ('19); Katie Stover (faculty, Education), Maria Swearingen (Chaplain's Office); Dov Tennenbaum ('17). Pamela Freeman, a higher education consultant, trained the team on March 22, and the Vice Presidents plus other key administrators on March 23, 2016. Based on that training, the team plans to advertise and market themselves and activate in the fall of 2016. Neil Jamerson, Assistant Vice-President for Student Development, has been appointed chair of the BIRT.

- **Ombudsperson.** The newly created role of ombudsperson for faculty has been approved with plans to have those duties officially assumed by Dr. Victoria Turgeon and Dr. Joe Pollard by the fall of 2016. In preparation, they both attended intense national training and certification courses in April, 2016.
- **Chief Diversity Officer (CDO).** The search for a CDO position will begin in August, 2016 under the leadership of Connie Carson, as chair, with hopes the position will be filled and the person will begin their responsibilities in January 2017.
- **Annual Report.** The committee identified various offices, including Institutional Assessment and Research, Student Life, Enrollment Management, and Finance and Administration, to contribute to the development of this annual report. A working team comprised of committee members took on this task (Pochard, Jamerson, Swearingen, and Quast).

**Second,** President Davis provided the committee a budget intended to stimulate wider diversity and inclusion initiatives such as programs, events, projects, research, and conferences via mini-grant applications. The grant recipients this year were: Pam Davis (Bridges to a Brighter Future); Beth Crews (Evening Studies); Onyx Henry (adjunct, MLL); Chrissy McCrary (International Education); and Sergio Lopez Cuevas (student). In future years, the D&IC will begin soliciting applications early in the academic year.

**Third,** the inaugural Meritorious Faculty, Staff, and Student Diversity and Inclusion Awards had a call for nominations in the spring and the following awardees were announced: faculty – Dr. Steve O’Neill (History); staff – Carol Hagood (Academic Assistance); student – Liza Veilleux (’16). Liza received the *Rosa Mary Bodkin Award* at the Leadership Banquet, which then qualified her to receive the Meritorious Student Diversity and Inclusion Award, as well. The awardees will be publicly honored at fall Convocation.

**Fourth,** a team of D&IC members (Swearingen, Quast, Jamerson, King, Baker) met four times with a team from Marketing (Pierce, Fisher, Niedringhaus) with two of those including ITS (Hildreth). We will be creating a website hub for Diversity and Inclusion that will be the “go to” location for what is occurring across campus with diversity initiatives, and what resources are available to various constituencies. The first phase is to create the internal site for purposes of making communications more available and accessible, including the work of the Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee and Student Life. The second phase will be the creation of the external website that will present Furman authentically and will have greater interactivity. That will take longer to develop.

**Fifth,** The Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee sought to address issues that align directly with the stated goals of the Diversity Strategic Plan -**cultural climate** (how members of our community from underrepresented identity groups fare here); **access** (who has access and opportunity here at Furman, which includes students, staff, and faculty); **education** (how we learn more [and better] about one another’s lived experiences and our social and cultural landscape); **policy/structure** (the structures and policies in place that can either support or hinder campus diversity and inclusiveness) and **assessment** (data to inform the community and to be accountable.)

The D&IC would like to highlight several efforts that are indicative of what the committee sought to stimulate:

**Cultural Climate.** The Office of Student Activities (OSA) invited Dr. Terrell Strayhorn to lecture February 2 and meet with students, staff, and faculty for a day-long set of interactions on February 3. This included the Student Diversity Council, the Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee, Student Life, and Academic Advisors. Specifically, Strayhorn's research and teaching interests center on two major foci: (a) assessing student learning and development outcomes and the ways in which college affects students and (b) identifying and understanding factors that enable or inhibit the success of historically underrepresented and misrepresented populations in education, with a particular accent on the experiences of racial/ethnic minorities, college men, economically disadvantaged individuals, and marginalized groups in postsecondary education. Additionally, OSA sponsored several "Dins Dialogues" centered around timely issues of diversity and inclusion. They launched an "I Am Furman" poster campaign, held two Student Diversity Council banquets, celebrated MLK Day with volunteer community service, hosted Heritage Month celebrations, developed a Multicultural Leadership program, and a speaker series, along with individual support and advocacy. Additionally, in the fall of 2017, Student Life and Bridges to a Brighter Future plan to initiate an educational program for all incoming First Generation students.

The Chaplain's Office hosted opportunities for the community to reflect on our collective response to racism, xenophobia, and systemic injustice in various ways. Two days after the massacre at Mother Emanuel AME Church, the office hosted a gathering of solidarity and lament. In collaboration with Greenville's Dream Weekend, the office also hosted an MLK Interfaith Celebration which included calls for justice from the world's religious traditions represented on Furman's campus. Rev. Kimberly Jackson (06') offered a keynote address. The Furman Creative Collaborative, Chaplain's Office, Muslim Student Association, Jewish Student Association, and Interfaith Youth Core co-sponsored a CLP event entitled "Standup for Peace," in which Muslim comedian Dean Obeidallah and Jewish comedian Scott Blakeman addressed issues including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and xenophobia. This event won the Boundary Breaker Award at the Leadership Awards Banquet.

- **Access.** Enrollment Management plans to work more closely with the Bridges program to enroll a greater number of students from the program each year, beginning with fall 2016, and to structure financial assistance in a way that makes this possible. Other plans to diversify the student body are being researched by that office, with community input.
- **Education.** (1) Faculty Chairs and Program Directors were taught how to avoid and eliminate bias in the hiring searches, the hiring and tenure processes, and were encouraged to facilitate the conversation in each of their departments. They continued engaging the topic of bias during their February meeting by discussing

portions of Joann Moody’s book, Faculty Diversity: Removing the Barriers. (2) Professors Lloyd Benson, Brandon Inabinet, and Steve O’Neill created a faculty led reading and dialogue group centered on the Reconstruction and reading of Race and Reunion by Dr. David W. Blight of Yale. This was an opportunity for interdisciplinary shared learning by faculty, staff, and students. Dr. David Blight was on campus in March. (3) Of the 195 CLPs offered 81, or 42%, were on topics of diversity related issues (as determined by title). (4) Refer to the content under Cultural Climate, as those programs were educational opportunities as well. (5) Faculty Chair, Kate Kaup, is planning the two-day fall 2016 faculty retreat around the theme “Recruitment and Retention: Expanding Inclusive Excellence at Furman”.

- **Policy/Structure.** (1) We refer to the Bias Incident Response Team and Ombudspersons as solid current examples. (2) The Due Process Committee worked on changes to current procedures for handling adverse faculty personnel decisions and appeals. (3) In Student Life, Neil Jamerson and Deborah Allen were employed as Assistant Vice President for Student Development with major responsibility for strategic planning for diversity and inclusion, and Associate Director of Diversity Programs and Student Activities, respectively. (4) Finance and Administration has intentionally sought minority/women-owned businesses to employ for procurement. They have one year of reliable data that will be used as a baseline and goal-setting opportunity for future increased participation. Below is the data for 2014-2015.

	# Vendors	\$ Spent
Minority Owned Business	143	\$ 149,774
Women Owned Business	337	\$ 522,146
Total	480	\$ 671,920
Grand total	13,517	\$ 13,592,609
Minority/Women Owned %	3.6%	4.9%

- **Assessment.** Dr. David Eubanks, Assistant Vice President for Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness, piloted a study using the Global Perspective Inventory as an assessment of student attitudes, ideas, and experiences at the beginning of a sample of spring 2016 courses with content focused on diversity and/or global cultures. The results posed opportunity for faculty to see the aggregate of their students’ attitudes, ideas, and experiences and could then determine if they needed to adjust their pedagogy. In addition, the Political Science and Psychology departments utilized the inventory in their classes. Beginning fall 2016, the Global Perspective Inventory will be administered to all incoming freshmen and again at the end of their senior year. The pre- and post- assessments will be one set of indicators of what attitudinal and ideological difference the academic and co-curricular experiences at Furman have made. Don Pierce provided the data sets in the Appendix of this report.

### Demographic Data

In the appendix are the demographic data sets for faculty, staff, and students for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 academic years. The last tab indicates the 2015-2016 comparison of minority representation for full-time faculty at the ACS member institutions. Additionally,

historical data (presented in a different format than the 2014 and 2015 data) is included for faculty and students. At the time of the writing of this report, historical staff data is not available to be included in this report. The last data set depicts rank and gpa by sex and ethnicity for cohorts 2007-2009 (graduation classes of 2011-2013) as well as retention rates of students from freshman to sophomore year for cohorts of 2012-2014. This latter set is for information only and is not remarked upon in this document.

- Faculty data indicate that in 1999, women comprised 27.3% of the faculty composition while in 2013 through 2015, women comprised approximately 35% of the faculty (increase of 8% over 16 years); in 1999 minority faculty (combined demographics) comprised 3.2% while in 2013, minority faculty comprised 12.2% (increase of 9% over 14 years) and for 2014 and 2015, minority faculty comprised approximately 11% with the data indicating minority women faculty in 2014 and were 16%-17% of the total number of women faculty while for 2014 and 2015, minority male faculty comprised .87%-.95% of the total number of male faculty. Overall, minority faculty represent approximately 11% of the total for 2014 and 2015, a decrease of approximately 1.2% since 2013.
- Student data indicate that in 1985, African-American students comprised 3.14% of total enrollment and by 2015, 5.7% (increase of 2.56% over 30 years). In 1985, Hispanic students represented .42% of total enrollment and by 2015, 4.4% (increase of 3.98% over 30 years).
- Staff data indicate that women comprised 52%-53% of the total non-management staff, with 10%-12% minority representation; 10%-10.5% of non-management men are minority representation, with an overall total of 10%-11% of non-management staff. Of the total management-only staff, women comprise 39%-41% of the total, with numbers of 2-3 individuals of minority representation (out of 26 women); in 2014 there was one male minority individual (out of 38) and in 2015, there were no minority individuals in management only-staff.

Even though appropriate benchmarks can be determined by divisions/offices responsible for recruitment, retention, and/or upward mobility of individual employees, overall it becomes blatantly clear from the data that we must make access and equity a major focus for recruitment and retention of faculty, staff, and students from under-represented groups. Simultaneously, however, we must provide all members of the Furman University community the education and training needed to create a campus culture that will nurture and support individuals and groups that represent diverse identities.

### **Additional Concerns Requiring Action**

- Lack of broad representation and engaged participation by department chairs/program directors and faculty in continued efforts to provide reading and discussion opportunities centered around unintended bias; poor attendance by faculty at the *Reconceptualizing the Role of Academic Advisors: Cultural Navigations and Student Success* and other presentations by external consultant, Dr. Terrell

Strayhorn; only one faculty member (adjunct) submitted a Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee mini-grant application; and faculty nominations for faculty and staff Meritorious Diversity Awards were minimal.

- Complacency by a large percent of our majority students about timely and urgent cultural issues.
- Greater intentionality to engage faculty and staff together for conversations about diversity issues, and educational programs to understand “privilege”, “power”, and “authority” of faculty that may hinder faculty-faculty, faculty-staff, and/or faculty-student relations.

## **APPENDIX**

**Demographic Data Sets for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016**

**Historical Data Sets 1985-2013 and 1999-2013**

**Rank and GPA by Sex and Ethnicity for 2007-2009 Cohorts**

**Retention from Freshman to Sophomore Year for Cohorts 2012-2014**