

Mission of Inclusive Excellence

To engage, support, and advance a living, learning, and working environment that fosters respect, diversity, equity, inclusivity, and academic excellence for students in our increasingly global community.

Our mission is driven by the following principles:

- We believe that inclusion and diversity are fundamental to the success of the university, and its students, staff, faculty, and administrators. A collective commitment to diversity and inclusion enriches our learning and prepares students to become actively engaged in our local and global society as responsible citizens.
- We strive to nurture a culture of inclusion that respects the humanity of all peoples. We do not support acts of intolerance against another's race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, ability, socioeconomic status, veteran status, size, national origin, language, religion or any other real or perceived differences based on an individual's identity.
- We aim to promote a climate of respect and shared responsibility that cultivates and sustains transformative practices by forging spaces of possibility where people feel safe, valued, welcomed, and respected. These ideals are intrinsic to collaborative partnerships and our University's mission "to serve the people of Utah and the world."

KEY ACTIVITIES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I. Key Activities & Goals

The Office for Inclusive Excellence maintains a primary responsibility and commitment to creating a campus climate that fosters inclusion, diversity, and respect. In the 2015-2016 academic year, the key activities for the Office for Inclusive Excellence consisted of the following: (a) Responding to bias incident reports (the office received the most reports since its inauguration); (b) Educational support and trainings (as requested by staff, students, and faculty); (c) Development of a website that captures some aspects of the framework for campus climate (its web address is inclusive-excellence.utah.edu); (d) The development of an inclusion scorecard; and (e) A climate assessment (which enabled us to pilot an approach within a college setting).

As a consequence of the complexity of campus climate and its multiple dimensions, we were intentional in creating distinct goals with each key activity.

Key Activities	Goals
A. Responses to bias incidents	To support students who have reported incidents of bias and/or microaggressions and work towards finding solutions through protocols and processes that are currently in place.

B. Educational support and trainings	To enhance our collective knowledge—of the complexities related to bias, microaggressions, diversity, campus climate, and inclusive excellence—and become more proactive about promoting the ideals of inclusive excellence and upholding our institutional values.
C. Development of new website	To generate increased attention to the educational resources and structures that positively contribute to healthier campus climate and student success (particularly those who have been historically underrepresented).
D. Inclusion Scorecard	To develop an instrument that might provide metrics to inform decisions pertaining to campus climate initiatives.
E. Climate Assessment	To gather a wide range of data and better understand students’ experiences and the conditions in which they are navigating at the University of Utah (particularly from their various positionalities).

II. Outcomes

A. Response to bias incidents

The Office for Inclusive Excellence receives bias reports through multiple avenues. They include an online anonymous reporting system at www.RespectU.utah.edu; reports made in-person; and at times, reports made over the phone. In the 2015-2016 school year, we addressed 54 incidents, and partnered with colleagues from numerous offices, like the Office of the Dean of Students and the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action to address them.

B. Educational support and trainings

Our office is very fortunate to serve as an educational resource for many of our campus partners and community members. This year, we were able to reach out to over 600 campus community members. We have conducted a series of trainings, outreach, and presentations to staff members whose responsibilities consist of advising; student-leadership with student groups, like ASUU, MECHA, the Bennion Center, Women-In-Business, and the College of Social Work; a training collaboration with OEO for colleagues in Commuter Services; a lecture and outreach to students in Ethnic Studies (specifically in the Pacific Islander American Experience course and for Diversity Scholars); graduate students in Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP); a presentation retreat for the Office for Equity and Diversity administrators as well as the College of Education; and staff in the Women’s Resource Center. In this academic year, the Office for Inclusive Excellence also participated in co-facilitating the racial solidarity march and townhall with administrators (in November) as well as a workshop for the annual Edie Kochenour Memorial Lecture and panel with colleagues for the Utah Women in Higher Education Network (UWHEN).

C. Development of a new website

Our new and improved website has been enhanced with dashboards and videos by students and it is expected to go live by the end of September: <http://inclusive-excellence.utah.edu/>. In partnership with the Parent Fund, students were given awards for their video productions and we are excited for the public to “hear” our students’ voices.

D. Inclusion Scorecard

As an entity at the U which focuses on better understanding campus climate, it was important for us to develop an instrument that might complement our approach to assessing campus climate. As a result, we designed an inclusion scorecard with indicators (adapted from a number of scholarly work and published research).

E. Climate Assessment

Our climate assessment was piloted in a college. We gathered data from a variety of sources including students (in focus groups); existing quantitative data (based on our inclusion scorecard); curriculum mapping; and GIS maps. We also engaged in multiple tasks to analyze the data. They included transcriptions, coding (using different techniques of analyses such as NVivo and open coding), and demographics.

Given our interest to establish meaningful data that will inform decisions and actions to create inclusive climates, we learned that each college at the University of Utah may require customized scorecards as well as additional characteristics that they would like measured.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Given the complexities and dynamics of campus climate, the Office for Inclusive Excellence anticipates both challenges and opportunities. As we look towards maintaining our responsibilities for campus climate partially through responding to incidents of bias, we will continue serving as a resource for the campus community. In doing so, we plan on making concerted efforts to lead, facilitate, and participate in educational trainings (as requested) on campus. This may require outreach and partnerships to think through classroom practices such as potential syllabi restructuring; pedagogical approaches that could be more inclusive and leads to increased engagement; and/or standardized trainings.

Looking ahead, there are three key activities in which we feel are imperative in our near future (specifically in the following year). They include (1) Data; (2) A campus climate survey; and (3) Grant writing.

A. Anticipated Challenges

- i. Data – While we appreciate data gathering and collection to inform specific ways to strengthen our campus climate, a primary challenge will fall upon the Office to determine how to best organize, utilize, and leverage the data in meaningful ways.
- ii. Campus Climate survey – Developing an instrument to measure campus climate will require a lot of time and labor. It will consist of researching questions, consultation with campus partners and experts, thinking through sampling & distribution, and a process that is grounded in (and supported by) proven research.
- iii. Grant writing – Like other anticipated challenges in this section, grant writing will also be time consuming. It will require outreach and strong campus partnerships (including a shared vision, purpose, and intent), a search for grants, consultation, and the labor of writing the grant itself.

B. Anticipated Opportunities

- i. Data – Once there is a more efficient process established to collect data, it will be important (and exciting) to determine how to best utilize and leverage the data in ways that are accessible and meaningful to our campus partners.

- ii. Campus Climate survey – The opportunities with a campus climate survey will be extremely helpful to the work of Inclusive Excellence. Since our office currently does not have institutional benchmarks for campus climate, it will be exciting to think about the process (of creating) and the outcomes from a climate survey.
- iii. Grant Writing – We are optimistic about the opportunities that may emerge from grant writing. This could mean (renewed and/or stronger) relationship building with campus partners, opportunities to contribute and create new knowledge (based on research and innovation), and potential funding to support students and more positive climates.