

Diversity and Inclusion Office Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Mission

The Diversity and Inclusion Office works with the entire Ferris State University community to support the mission and vision of the University, and to ensure that diversity, in its many forms, is understood, respected and valued. The Diversity and Inclusion Office at Ferris State University will guide efforts to conceptualize, assess, and cultivate diversity and inclusion as institutional and educational resources.

More specifically, the Diversity and Inclusion Office will:

- Be a strong advocate for diversity and inclusion;
- Introduce diversity into the systems, structures, and culture of the University;
- Provide expertise and leadership on diversity and inclusion related matters, for example, faculty recruitment and retention issues, and the educational impact of diversity;
- Lead university-wide diversity planning and implementation efforts, resulting in a collaborative vision of diversity and inclusion;
- Help develop policies designed to improve the University climate;
- Identify strategies to enhance the compositional diversity profile of students, faculty, and staff;
- Provide resources and direction for infusing diversity into the curriculum; and,
- Offer annual assessment of University's progress toward implementing Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

Vision

Ferris State University is committed to transforming into a truly diverse institution. Such a transformation requires moving beyond the *toleration of diversity* approach toward an institutional change that celebrates, supports, and infuses diversity into the University's core. Diversity and inclusion are not simply noble goals; they are essential parts of the make-up of great educational institutions. Ferris State University is envisioned as a great institution—a university improved by the exchange of diverse experiences and perspectives. We aspire to be an institution where the quality of education is enhanced and enriched by a diverse campus community. By bringing together people from many different backgrounds, we equip the next generation to engage present and future challenges and opportunities. In sum, Ferris State University is envisioned as an institution where all members of the community, including historically underrepresented groups, enjoy campuses that are academically and professionally supportive, respectful, safe, and welcoming—campuses where diversity is so ingrained that it is difficult to determine where diversity begins and ends.

Learning Outcomes

The Diversity and Inclusion Office is committed to creating environments that facilitate student learning. The specific outcomes are influenced by and consistent with the General Education learning outcomes at the University. Students who work with the Diversity and Inclusion Office will be helped to:

- ... comprehend why it is important to understand differences.

- ...understand how diversity shapes people's relationships within and among groups across societies and cultures;
- ... understand how historical and contemporary social conditions influence the status and treatment of individuals and groups;
- ... understand the value of divergent and varied opinions and perspectives;
- ... interact respectfully with others, including those from different demographic backgrounds;
- ... identify, access, and use information effectively; and,
- ... integrate and apply what they have learned inside and outside of the classroom.

Strategic Initiatives

The Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO) will support and enhance the University by implementing the following initiatives:

Food and Housing Insecurity For Ferris Students	Measures of Success (In progress)	FSU Core Values & Strategic Focus Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investigate definitions, policies, and practices related to homelessness at Ferris. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In January 2016, a workgroup began this investigation. The group continued to meet throughout 2017. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion, civility, and respect • Diverse Learning Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify homeless students at Ferris and assess their academic and social needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For 2016-17, Ferris State University had 49 students that were determined to be Unaccompanied Homeless Youth either by the University or by the homeless liaison in their high schools. A question needs to be added to the Senior Survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collect information on food resources for people who live in Mecosta County. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data on area food pantries and community meals was collected, see http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/DiversityOffice/arearesources/index.htm 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify specific action steps to help Ferris State University students experiencing food insecurity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DIO worked with Wesley House to create an emergency food pantry. ○ DIO began Ferris: There is Food Here! Initiative. ○ Working has begun with Advancement & Marketing and Academic Affairs to raise funds to address food insecurity and 	

homelessness on campus.

- Identify specific action steps to help Ferris State University students experiencing temporary homelessness.
- Collect and analyze data on poor populations in communities surrounding the Ferris main campus.
- Research is underway exploring the feasibility of creating a Host Homes Program.

Work to Make the Institution More Inclusive

Measures of Success (In progress)

FSU Core Values & Strategic Focus Areas

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designate spaces for individuals to pray, contemplate, and meditate. ○ Designate single stall restrooms throughout the Big Rapids campus. ○ Create an LGBTQ Resource Center. ○ Make faculty and staff more aware of accommodations for students and employees who are religious and individuals with disabilities. ○ Identify best practices for handling food in ways inclusive of medical, religious, ethnic, and philosophical | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The College of Pharmacy created two prayer/meditation rooms: one for the Big Rapids campus and one for pharmacy students in Grand Rapids. Plans are underway to create a prayer/meditation room in FLITE. ○ This work began in 2016. ○ A number of Ferris State University faculty, staff and students are working on this initiative; Student Affairs and the DIO are leading this effort. The expectation is to have a space identified and occupied by Fall 2017. ○ Need to begin again conversations between Academic Affairs and the Diversity and Inclusion Office. Calendars in Academic Affairs and the Diversity and Inclusion Office were updated to include High Religious holidays. ○ There has been some progress at labeling food. Build partners to help Ferris be more accountable. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion, civility, and respect ○ Excellence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Superior University experience ○ Opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access |
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concerns.

- Display art with diversity and inclusion themes across the campus.
- The DIO worked with Carrie Stermer to identify strategies for bringing fine art produced by racial and ethnic minorities to the Big Rapids campus.
- In Spring 2017 Diane Cleland, then a docent in the Jim Crow Museum, painted the portraits of six African Americans who came to Ferris from Hampton between 1910-1928. Sets of these paintings appear in the Arts & Sciences Dean's Office, the IRC foyer, and the Jim Crow Museum.

Implement Other Initiatives in Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Measures of Success (In progress)

FSU Core Values & Strategic Focus Areas

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish a university-wide Diversity and Inclusion Work Group to sustain diversity and inclusion initiatives and support the implementation of the diversity and inclusion plan. ○ Establish a Multicultural Student Advisory Group to provide informal counsel to the Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion on various issues affecting the undergraduate experience. This group acts as a sounding board, provides constructive feedback, and identifies issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Diversity and Inclusion Work Group (DIOWG) was established in Spring 2016. The group meets 1-3 times a semester, as needed. ○ Established February 2016, amended to include Vice President for Student Affairs in addition to Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion. The DIO needs to identify strategies to ensure that the meetings are meaningful and well attended. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion, civility, and respect |
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needing attention.

- Reallocate a faculty member to the Diversity and Inclusion Office to serve as a liaison to that Office and the diversity work teams in divisions and colleges.
- Strengthen the academic resources in the Office of Multicultural Student Services (OMSS) and foster a stronger collaboration between OMSS, colleges, and faculty to create intentional learning opportunities for students.
- Develop a university-wide mechanism for the sharing and coordinating of effective recruiting strategies and best practices, focused on underrepresented faculty and staff.
- Evaluate current support efforts specifically focused on underrepresented faculty and staff, and add mechanisms as needed (e.g. targeted orientation and onboarding programming, mentoring, and Affinity Groups, etc.).
- Find and create opportunities for career advancement and professional development of women and members of underrepresented groups who are employed as Ferris State University faculty and staff, such as succession planning, job shadowing, interim appointments, and mentoring.
- Host State of Michigan Equity in the Classroom Conference in 2017.
- The University has experienced a significant drop in student enrollment and subsequent cuts to its various budgets; therefore, it may not be practical to relocate a faculty member.
- OMSS is in Student Affairs; however, there is an initiative in Academic Affairs that is relevant: the proposed Academic Literacies Center—where OMSS may be re-conceptualized as a “center” of academic excellence.
- The DIO has created a relevant resource, <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/president/DiversityOffice/recruitingworkforce.htm>
- Academic Affairs participates in the HERS program; DIO works with graduates of that program.
- VP for DIO is serving as mentor for four employees, two women and two men.
- Planning Group began work Spring 2016; however, the conference did not occur because of actions taken by state

employees. The DIO worked with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning to host a mini-conference.

- Create ways to bring students, including students from underrepresented groups and international students, and local community people together.
- Continue to enhance the Mentoring Program of the Ferris Youth Initiative addressing the diverse needs of students who have experienced foster care.
- Continue to address the academic needs of the youth who participate in the Ferris Youth Initiative as they work towards degree completion.
- DIO is a part of team working on strategies to connect Ferris with West Michigan communities.
- In the Summer of 2016 and 2017, existing and new mentors participated in trainings that were conducted by professionals from the human services field that work directly with young adults who have experienced foster care.
- Mentor recruitment is completed on an on-going basis with specific consideration given to the specific needs of students who participate in the Ferris Youth Initiative.
- The Ferris Youth Initiative had a student graduate in May 2016 and two students graduate in May 2017 (both completed internships summer 2017). Additionally, two students are on-track to graduate in May 2018.
- The Ferris Youth Initiative Program Coordinator has worked directly with the "FYI" student on an On-going basis to address academic needs and academic monitoring.
- Ferris was awarded a Michigan Department of Health and Human Services grant (\$115,960 a year for three years) to support the FYI.

**Telling the Ferris/
Hampton Story**

**Measures of Success
(In progress)**

**FSU Core Values &
Strategic Focus Areas**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Research and continue to unearth details of the story of those African Americans who came to Ferris from Ferris Institute from Hampton Institute between 1910-1928. o Promote the Ferris-Hampton story. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Worked with Professor Kimn Carlton-Smith and her students. o Compiling relevant sources for writing manuscript. o The DIO created six portraits of Hampton/Ferris students. The paintings will be displayed at several locations on campus. o <i>Expect Diversity</i>, a Ferris television show hosted by David Pilgrim, won first place in the Talk Show/Scripted category at the Michigan Association of Broadcasters in 2017. The show, featuring Franklin Hughes, discussed the Ferris/Hampton story. o There are plans to create a postcard set and calendar. |
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**Improve and Enhance
Jim Crow Museum**

**Measures of Success
(In progress)**

**FSU Core Values &
Strategic Focus Areas**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Inventory and catalog collection. o Improve accessioning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The inventory process for the objects displayed in the museum began in 2015 and should be completed in 2016. The items in storage are also being inventoried. o This process began in Summer 2016. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Diversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion, civility, and respect o Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory and innovative scholarly activities |
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FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

- Staff museum with graduate students, undergraduate students, interns, and volunteers sufficient to meet the goals of the museum.
- Develop and sustain processes and procedures in effective curation, restoration, and preservation of all museum assets.
- Conduct a needs assessment of current/future adequate storage and collections work space required to effectively store and preserve artifacts.
- Develop and sustain the financial viability of the Museum, including effective management of the budget.
- Sustain current and establish new collaborations with museums, government and human rights organizations, K-16, including high schools and colleges.
- Create kiosk station.
- A part time docent position was created in 2016.
- Museum staff members are working to identify areas of need—areas where student workers and interns might be used in effective ways.
- Museum staff are utilizing the professional development and best practice resources of the AAM and AASLH for museum collections management.
- Cash handling procedures were implemented to facilitate sale of the *Understanding Jim Crow* book to museum visitors.
- Strategies are being devised to generate new revenue streams. John Thorp, former director of the museum, designated a \$100,000 plan gift for the museum.
- The Jim Crow Museum is now a member of the Michigan Museums Association.
- The Museum is working with a faculty member in the School of Education to develop lesson plans for middle school students.
- Museum staff is exploring options.

- Develop means for evaluating, assessing, and continuing to improve the work of the Museum.
- Museum staff developed and presented best practice guidelines to the Fall 2016 FSUS instructor orientation meeting; Fall FSUS tours nearly doubled from previous year.
- Museum added a suggestion box in Winter 2017.