**Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)**

**Strategic Planning Committee Subcommittee**

**DRAFT White Paper**

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**SOAR Analysis Summary**

**Strengths**: The current mission of Western Kentucky University (WKU) is to **“…**prepare students of *all backgrounds* to be productive, engaged, and socially responsible citizen-leaders of a global society.”[[1]](#footnote-1) While not explicit in the current language, WKU has historically been commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by supporting efforts led by faculty, staff, and students across campus. For example, WKU provides resources to students through offices such as the Division of Students Affairs, the Intercultural Student Engagement Center, the Pride Center, the International Enrollment Management, and Academic Advising & Retention. In accordance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (revised 1992), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, WKU ADA Services offers support for faculty, staff, and students. In addition, WKU has a full-time Title IX coordinator to address cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination based on gender and gender non-conformity.

**Opportunities:**The demographic makeup of WKU faculty and staff roughly matches that of the student body with a little over half female and about 16% members of a racial and/or ethnic minority.[[2]](#footnote-2) With growing diversity in the United States (61% white, non-Hispanic or Latinx; 39% racial/ethnic diversity),[[3]](#footnote-3) it is imperative that WKU create strategies to recruit and retain a population of faculty, staff, and students that more closely matches the national population. According to the McKinsey Report[[4]](#footnote-4), *Diversity Matters*, companies and organization with diverse leadership (gender and race/ethnicity) perform 35% better than those that are homogeneous. Additionally, diverse students are more likely to succeed in school if they have at least one teacher throughout their educational career who matches their race/ethnicity.[[5]](#footnote-5) WKU is also poised to expand the reach of support to include, but not limited to, sexual orientation, gender identity and conformity, and hidden disabilities.

**Aspirations:** WKU aspires to be a leader in the recruitment, retention, and support of diverse faculty, staff, and students in the both state of Kentucky and at the national level.

**Results:** WKU will a) increase the number of diverse WKU faculty, staff, and students, b) decrease incidences of conscious and unconscious bias in all aspects of university life toward faculty, staff and students, c) decrease all intolerant behavior targeting faculty, staff, and students including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, hate speech, violence, and salary inequity, d) eliminate all barriers to the success of diverse population at WKU, e) proactively included all members of the WKU community in institutional actions and initiatives, and f) increase the diversity in WKU leadership

**Emerging Themes**

While included as a specific strategic planning subcommittee, DEI ***must*** be included in all experiences (recruit, retention, curriculum, etc.), systems (policies & procedures), processes (training), and resources (tuition, budget, etc.) in order to create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive WKU campus environment.

**Vision Statement**

*The WKU DEI Strategic Plan seeks to create a thriving, equitable, and inclusive environment that recruits, engages, retains, and supports the life-long growth and success of students, faculty, and staff of all diverse backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives to be culturally-competent, productive, and socially responsible global citizens.*

**Mission Statement**

*The mission of the WKU DEI Strategic Plan intentionally constructs space to foster institutional equity, diversity, and inclusion by creating a diverse curriculum, training and opportunities, inclusive policies and procedures, and equitable recruitment and retention efforts for all members of our community.*

**Overarching Goals, Objectives, Targets, & Strategies of DEI**

Diversity: Diversity is defined as various differences in people including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, economic status, national origin, religious affiliation, age, disability status, points of view and political affiliation.

***Goal 1*** - We will increase diversity across *all sectors* of the WKU campus community to enjoy the richness of diverse perspectives.

**Objective 1**: Intentionally support the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty & staff at WKU

* Target 1 (5 year): Increase the number of diverse WKU faculty and staff by 15%
* Target 2 (10 year): Increase the number of diverse WKU faculty and staff by 30%
  + ***Strategies***:
    - Examine and monitor all hiring outcomes and retention of WKU faculty and staff
    - Review policies and procedures that inhibit hiring outcomes and retention of WKU faculty and staff
    - Provide and require diversity training for all WKU search committees
    - Establish mentorship programs for new WKU faculty and staff
    - Create incentives and support for targeted and clustered hiring
    - Collect data from WKU faculty and staff who leave the university (find out way and how we can improve)

**Objective 2:** Intentionally support recruitment and retention of diverse students at WKU

* Target 1 (5 year): Increase the number of URMs and other diverse students by 20%
* Target 2 (10 year): Increase the number of URMs and other diverse students by 40%
  + ***Strategies***:
    - Examine and monitor recruitment, admission, and retention of URM students and other diverse students
    - Institutionalize diversity within the curriculum; requirement of diversity curricula in the Colonnade Program
    - Review policies and procedures that inhibit recruitment, admission, and retention of URMs and diverse students
    - Focus on diversity in the next SACSCOC Quality Enhancement Plan
    - Increase mentorship and support programs for students
    - Reward faculty and staff who participate in student retention efforts (student support, teaching, research, etc.).
    - Collect data from WKU students who leave the university (find out way and how we can improve)

Equity: Equity is the state of eliminating conscious or unconscious bias and harassment and discrimination and other forms of inappropriate or illegal categorization of persons.

***Goal 2*** - We will achieve a state of equity so that *all members* of the campus community are free to learn, work, and grow personally and professionally based on their inherent human potential.

**Objective 1**: Create a common understanding of conscious and unconscious bias at WKU

* Target 1 (5 year) Decrease incidences of conscious and unconscious bias in all aspects of university life toward faculty, staff and students by 75%
* Target 2 (10 year) Decrease incidences of conscious and unconscious bias in all aspects of university life toward faculty, staff and students by 100%
  + ***Strategies:***
    - Mandate WKU faculty and staff diversity training
    - Review policies and procedures that inhibit equity among WKU faculty and staff (promotion, salary increases, etc.).

**Objective 2:** Create an equitable and safe campus environment for all WKU faculty, staff, and

Students.

* Target 1 (5 year) Decrease all intolerant behavior targeting faculty, staff, and students including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, hate speech, violence, and salary inequity by 75%
* Target 2 (10 year) Decrease all intolerant behavior targeting faculty, staff, and students including, but not limited to, bullying, harassment, hate speech, violence, and salary inequity by 100%
  + ***Strategies:***
    - Create a faculty-staff-student conduct partnership to monitor, educate, and inforce intolerant behavior on campus
    - Establish a “zero-tolerance” university policy for harassment, hate-speech, violence, bullying, etc., aimed at diverse groups or individuals
    - Act and swiftly resolve incidences of harassment and discrimination
    - Examine and monitor all faculty and/or staff evaluation, tenure, and promotion procedures for bias, bullying, inequity, etc.
    - Conduct WKU faculty and staff biennial salary studies in cooperation with administration, University Senate, and Staff Council

Inclusion: Inclusion is defined as a deliberate status where *all individuals* in the campus community—regardless of differences or perspectives—are proactively included in institutional actions and initiatives.

***Goal 3*** - We will achieve a campus environment where all individuals feel a sense of belonging in our collective purpose and processes.

**Objective 1:** Create an environment that accommodates, includes and celebrates all member of the WKU community.

* Target 1 (5 year): Eliminate all barriers to the success of diverse population at WKU by 100%
* ***Strategies:***
  + Review, implement, and mandate all federal ADA compliance policy and procedures including, but not limited to, physical disabilities, mobility issues, and hidden disabilities (food allergies, psychological disorders, chronic health impairments (such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome), cancer, HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, and learning disabilities)
  + Hire and support a full time, cabinet level Chief Diversity
  + Officer for faculty, staff, and students who oversees all areas of the strategic plan and beyond

**Objective 2:** Proactively included all members of the WKU community in institutional actions and initiatives.

* Target 1 (5 year): Increase the diversity in WKU leadership 25%
* Target 2 (10 year): Increase the diversity in WKU leadership 50%
* ***Strategies:***
  + Provide support for internal and external leadership training to ALL WKU employees interested in institutional advancement
  + Include diversity and equity in our WKU Vision Statement and all
  + marketing materials (brand WKU as a place for ALL)
  + Socialization and transitioning for faculty and staff beyond than nuts and bolts of doing to becoming a part of the “WKU community.”

1. https://www.wku.edu/about/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.wku.edu/instres/documents/2017\_fact\_book.pdf (page 62) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045216 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/business%20functions/organization/our%20insights/why%20diversity%20matters/diversity%20matters.ashx [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://archive.org/details/ERIC\_ED562618 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)