



Diversity Progress Report Overview¹
2008-2009 Academic Year

May 12, 2009

All campus units have been productively engaged in realizing goals of SAPs during this second year of implementation. Many units have created sustainable diversity infrastructure (e.g., fully engaged diversity committees) and these efforts have led to substantial incremental progress for such units. While last year's campus progress report described the establishment of many base-building activities across units, this year's progress reports demonstrate a shift for many units from developing infrastructure to taking action on specific strategies. Diversity-related professional development activities are widespread for faculty and staff in academic and administrative units, and this year has seen increases in professional development approaches designed to bring a broader base of representation from individuals both within and across units. The availability of multicultural scholarly activities (e.g., courses, conferences, symposia, speaker series) across many academic disciplines continues to grow substantially. Many academic units are continuing or launched programs designed to expand the pipeline for underrepresented students to the University. Many units have made tangible progress in goals related to building a critical mass of diverse faculty, staff, and students; others have planned for or have received formal professional consulting to develop hiring strategies that enhance diversity. Among the most significant advances in campus efforts this year, and a challenge/future direction raised in last year's report, is the widespread increase in cross-unit collaboration in pursuing diversity goals.

In addition to these many strengths, numerous challenges persist or are newly noted related to UO diversity efforts. As the campus has transformed from planning and infrastructure building to action-taking, complacency is a major risk and current vulnerability. While unit leaders can now point to many activities that are underway to support diversity goals, what evidence is there that these activities are more than "the appearance of doing something?" Moreover, engagement in various diversity activities could have the effect of lowering the sense of urgency within units to maintain focus on fully realizing diversity goals and to move effectively from initiating activities to sustaining efforts. Put another way, how do we keep diversity and equity as forethoughts rather than afterthoughts? Other major challenges include a need to develop outcome and performance measures that could be utilized campus-wide, a continued need to provide consulting opportunities by connecting units making more progress with those experiencing challenges, and an ongoing need to enhance campus-wide communication about emerging promising practices. Finally, the challenging economic environment confronting the state and the University, and the presidential leadership transition underway at the UO present challenges in our potential to lose institutional focus on diversity goals, as well as the opportunity to reaffirm our steadfast commitment to these goals as integral to academic excellence and the UO mission.

Overall, the University continues to make steady and substantial progress in responding to the call to action within the University Diversity Plan. While there is little doubt that lasting change has already occurred at the UO, the campus community will need to work together to further develop models that

¹ This overview provides general information about the progress of units Strategic Action Plans. More specific and detailed information can be found in the full report at <http://oied.uoregon.edu/page/strategic-diversity-planning>. For questions contacted the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity at vpdivers@uoregon.edu or (541)346-3175.

sustain current efforts and that set the stage to advance the more complex goals that are likely to underlie future refinements of the Diversity Plan.

Major Strengths Across Unit Activities

Many strengths are noted in the SAP progress reports. Across plans, these include:

- All 17 units have engaged in targeted actions that are part of unit SAPs.
- For many units, actions have progressed towards more sophisticated integrated activities that bind diversity to the academic mission of the university (e.g., greater integration of diversity and multicultural themes into courses).
- Significant increases in cross-unit collaboration are noted.
- Many units now have functional diversity committees, and those units with such committees have made large strides in maintaining focus on strategic actions.
- Innovative program development is widespread in both academic and administrative units.
- There continues to be significant personal engagement in diversity efforts within and across units.
- Consistent with the definition of diversity in the UO Diversity Plan, units continue to advance diversity efforts beyond a narrow focus on race/ethnicity and gender.
- Units continue to regard SAPs as “living documents” and there is ample evidence of unit-level refinement of planned actions based on experience.

Ongoing Challenges and Future Directions

In addition to the many strengths noted, a number of ongoing challenges and possible future directions are noted. These include:

- While all units are actively engaged in carrying out actions from SAPs, an accompanying challenge is the potential for complacency and diminished focus. To counter this, more effort needs to be placed on ways to sustain energy and momentum within units and across campus. This is particularly important now given the many other pressing issues faced by units (e.g., unprecedented economic worries, leadership transitions, etc.)
- A number of units routinely collect and disseminate diversity related outcome data (e.g., survey results regarding unit climate, staff/faculty/student demographic data). Still, many unit SAPs and SAP reviewers note the need for a more systematic campus-wide approach to collecting and disseminating diversity performance indicator outcome data. To accomplish this, an institutional effort should be commenced that involves unit leaders, OIED, the Office of Institutional Research, and other stakeholder groups.
- Though the SAP progress reports for this year showed significant growth in cross-unit collaboration, sustained effort in this area is needed, especially to provide additional avenues for support among units with less advanced SAP efforts.
- The current UO presidential transition is an important opportunity to reaffirm the campus commitment to the Diversity Plan, to maintain its integral relationship to the academic mission of the University, and to engage the incoming President in establishing his vision for diversity on campus. Broad engagement of campus stakeholder groups will be needed.
- Additional opportunities to share information from this summary report and to share more specific review feedback with unit leaders will be planned for summer and fall 2009.