



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive Excellence Task Force Report

February 13, 2015

Overview:

Our recent Status of Women and Status of Faculty and Staff of Color reports show that we have an opportunity to more fully embrace our commitment to Inclusive Excellence. While these reports explicitly focus on compositional diversity for racial and ethnic minorities and women, the Task Force's recommendations address all groups relative to establishing a positive climate and creating respect and equity for all. These recommendations will benefit the entire DU community, and should be integrated into the work of the University at all levels.

The Task Force used the recommendations from the status reports to cover four areas in which action steps can begin immediately. A preliminary draft of Campus Climate for Students Working Group report was also utilized by the Task Force, and there was considerable overlap in the recommendations of all these reports. We realize that our diversity initiatives are a work in progress, and hope that the following discussion will help move our ongoing efforts forward.

In reviewing the status reports and reflecting on other diversity initiatives, the Task Force concluded that our current efforts have been fragmented, incomplete, and seen as optional rather than being central to our mission. The Task Force has chosen action steps that create immediate ways to more fully integrate these principles. These action steps, outlined below, highlight the importance of consistent policies, procedures, and practices. The Task Force notes that these steps need to include concrete plans for accountability and sustainability. In order to turn our good intentions into measureable progress, it will be important to have clear plans that delineate responsibility and provide checks and balances. What follows is a description of general infrastructure changes that will allow the creation, modification, and evaluation of our proposed action steps.

General Recommendations: Leadership and Accountability

The newly developed Vice Chancellor for Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence position will allow structural change that can scaffold the action steps described below. This position will provide essential leadership in implementing a program of cultural change throughout the institution. These actions will require significant contributions from many offices in the University, and will call on collaborative efforts between several levels of leadership. It is highly likely that positions will need to be created or re-organized to ensure that the recommendations listed below can be implemented, evaluated, and modified as needed. Leadership will be needed to integrate Inclusive Excellence into the experience of students, faculty, and staff at the University, and improvements in each area will require focus and expertise. Developing a leadership and accountability infrastructure will ensure that these recommendations have a



transformative impact on every aspect of our campus community, including but not limited to the academic enterprise, the student experience, and human resources.

In addition to supporting the creation of a new Vice Chancellor position, the Task Force recommends the creation of a Chancellor's Diversity and Equity Advisory Committee. This small group should include key stakeholders from the DU community who have expertise in Inclusive Excellence. The group can be a resource to the Chancellor and her executive leadership team in identifying and recommending strategies to address ongoing challenges in implementing the steps listed below. The group can also support the vision of expanding our success in this area.

Specific Actionable Items

I. Joining the University

We recognize that in order to be a great University we must seek and attract the best people, and then bring them into our community in a way that is welcoming and establishes our values. Our recruitment efforts for faculty, staff, and students can be improved to expand our talent pool and improve accessibility. We also see that in order to increase our compositional diversity, we must expand the number of people who want to be at DU. By improving the ways that people join our University, we seek to create a community that draws a wide range of people to DU to develop their strengths and experience success.

- A. The first step to consider is **recruitment**. The following actions are recommended to improve our recruitment practices:
 1. Establish resources and incentives for diversity hiring and admissions
 2. Improve our procedures for faculty and staff searches
 - a. Standardize policy for all searches
 - b. Train all search committee chairs, and provide training resources for all search committees
 - c. Collect data on candidate pool and recruitment practices in order to identify successes and change ineffective procedures
 3. Examine and track efforts to improve compositional diversity of entire campus community
- B. Once students, faculty, and staff have chosen to come to DU, they need adequate **acculturation and support** to become a part of our community:
 1. Cover diversity education and awareness on first day of faculty/staff orientation, and provide follow up during first year (via mentors, etc.)
 2. Incorporate diversity awareness into first year experience for all students at the undergraduate and graduate level
 3. Coordinate and publicize efforts to support student access and success



II. Providing ongoing professional and academic development and career advancement

Our performance in Inclusive Excellence can be improved by providing ***training and professional development*** for all faculty, staff, and students. The University recognizes that equity and inclusivity are essential to our functioning, and are maintained through ongoing efforts. Further, a major task of the University is to support professional advancement for all faculty, staff, and students:

- A. Educate all employees on job classifications and publish a job family analysis
- B. Develop targeted diversity training for each unit that identifies opportunities for administrative and academic improvement
- C. Incorporate diversity into other community-wide initiatives for all students
- D. Develop a career advancement plan for all staff, faculty, and students
- E. Collect information on Inclusive Excellence aspects of courses, service, and research
- F. Require periodic orientation updates for all employees to reinforce community standards and increase engagement

III. Communicating our concerns and achievements

A major aspect of a thriving community involves the ability to ***identify and share information about our problems and successes***. As such, the University will seek greater transparency and visibility for our Inclusive Excellence initiatives. Through improved communication, we can foster an environment of trust and collaboration.

- A. Develop a Diversity Dashboard, similar to other administrative dashboards, that will allow a clear picture of the status of diversity efforts in each unit
- B. Provide yearly summary of the Inclusive Excellence component in academic program reviews
- C. Create a clearinghouse for campus wide resources pertaining to Inclusive Excellence, and find an effective way to publicize events and resources
- D. Review DU communication strategies to promote inclusiveness through website, publications, presentations, and other public venues
- E. Increase consistency in policies and procedures for complaints and problem resolution, and ensure that the community understands and utilizes these procedures constructively

IV. Evaluating and tracking the success of diversity initiatives

In order to fully implement the action steps described above, the University will need to ***establish and track metrics for progress***. The availability of measurable goals will help establish accountability, particularly as our new personnel structure identifies responsibility for each action item. Across units, various data sources will be utilized:

- A. Incorporate Inclusive Excellence competencies into all performance reviews, so that individual goals will be set, measured, and rewarded



- B. Provide annual report at unit level
 - 1. Climate and culture
 - 2. Admissions, hiring, career advancement, and retention
 - 3. Diversity goals and achievements
- C. Develop campus wide annual report of grievances and resolution to ensure effectiveness of procedures
- D. Conduct ongoing, comprehensive study of compensation to evaluate equity and set targets for improvement

In summary, we are poised to make significant positive change in our ability to utilize Inclusive Excellence to improve DU. We believe that the University is ready to demonstrate the value that we place on the wealth of human identities and experiences, and recognizes the significant gains that can be achieved through these efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive Excellence Task Force Committee Members

Shelly Smith-Acuña (co-chair)
Frank Tuitt (co-chair)
Shadee Abdi (student)
Stefanie Ungphakorn Cowan
Alejandro Garcia (student)
Theresa Hernandez
Mike Holt
Lavita Nadkarni
Todd Rinehart
Nik Scott