

Overarching Recommendation for Addressing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at MSU

MSU should adopt a comprehensive framework for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) centrally and within local academic and support units. The framework will provide a sustainable, institutionally embedded structure to foster change, promote MSU's core values, and transform the university's culture. Additionally, such a framework will create a mechanism for holding MSU and individual units accountable for doing the necessary work to continually foster diversity, equity and inclusion.

MSU has and will likely continue to make some progress with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion. However, to date this progress has not been the result of a coherent approach or strategy that has the ability to lead to sustained, systemic and structural change. Units are adding diversity and inclusion committees that are recommending new DEI initiatives or enhancing existing initiatives, including individual unit climate surveys. Several units have created new positions that are to lead DEI efforts that are not coordinated with central university initiatives. As a result, there are disparate DEI efforts that are not connected well with various unit efforts; this has led to inefficiencies, minimal to non-existent resource sharing, and less accountability for moving the needle. Additionally, the efforts that have been undertaken have not been aligned well with our institutional goals/values.

The campus and the various constituent communities want and deserve change. MSU is at an opportune time in its institutional history to begin to deliver on real change with respect to diversity, equity and inclusion. Implementing the necessary culture shift has to be the responsibility of all MSU stakeholders and guided by principles grounded in best practices.

Based on years of experience, expertise, multi-institutional research, and best practices, the MSU Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives has identified six institutional focus areas for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion at MSU and from which unit efforts can emanate and be expanded upon:¹

1. Leadership
2. Access, Retention, Advancement
(applicable to faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students)
3. Research
4. Curriculum (formal and informal)
5. Campus Climate
6. External Engagement

¹ A comprehensive and overarching framework for addressing diversity, equity and inclusion at MSU can result in experimentation, innovation and excitement about the possibilities for systemic and sustained culture change. There is precedence in Michigan and the Big Ten for embracing an institutional model where the university undertakes certain initiatives centrally and also sets an expectation that each unit structure their diversity, equity and inclusion work around the overarching framework. For example, UM introduced three "core strategies" in its campus wide Strategic Plan: Strategy 1: Create an Inclusive and Equitable Campus Climate; Strategy 2: Recruit, Retain and Develop a Diverse Community; and Strategy 3: Support Innovative and Inclusive Scholarship and Teaching [<https://diversity.umich.edu/strategic-plan/unit-activities/>].

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - Additional Contextual Considerations

The analyses and recommendations in this White Paper focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, in order to achieve these goals, eventually they must be connected to other key components of the University. Whether one thinks of MSU as a complex organization or a social ecology, the point is that in order to foster diversity, equity and inclusion, comparable structural changes will have to occur throughout the university. One area that is closely connected to DEI is outreach and engagement. Without a comprehensive framework for advancing outreach and engagement centrally and within local academic and support units, the success of the following DEI recommendations may be impeded. Robust outreach and engagement activities – locally and globally – create new possibilities for recruiting and retaining a more diverse and inclusive faculty, staff, and student body. A more diverse and inclusive faculty, staff and student body will lead to pressure for greater equity in terms of research funding and teaching opportunities. The following analysis and recommendations focusing on DEI is the first step in constructing a comprehensive framework for better aligning MSU's practices and culture with its core values and land grant mission.

Ideas for Further Analysis Related to the Culture of Inclusiveness and Responsiveness²

There is no shortage of policies, special programs, and procedures aimed at expanding the quality and diversity of faculty and administration on campus, yet the Provost has reminded us of three particular areas where it is evident that we need to focus more of our efforts: (1) the number of African-American faculty (84); (2) the low number of women, and especially women of color, who serve as chairs and associate chairs; and (3) attracting and retaining a more diverse student body. It is reasonable to assume that there might be a relationship between these three areas.

What follows are ideas for addressing these challenges. All require further analysis, especially as we have to understand the variety of practices in the units.

We need to establish an institutional level framework and commitment from which unit goals can be derived. We have to look at ourselves as leaders and take steps that make the goals we set and programs we establish priorities throughout the institution. These goals must be as important as our curricular and research priorities, and engage all aspects of the university.

1. Leadership

Expanding Opportunities for Women in the Administration

Although there are a number of efforts underway to identify and bring women leaders together (e.g., AAN currently gathers chairs, directors, and selected associate deans) and college-level spotting of faculty capable of taking on larger administrative roles, we are still in need of more concentrated steps.

² This white paper is not meant to address all possible iterations of the programs and initiatives already occurring or new ones that will need to occur to address diversity, equity and inclusion. Similarly, there are many constituencies who will be a part of discussions and actions as we collectively work on campus climate in general, and diversity, equity and inclusion in particular. This white paper is in response to specific issues the Provost raised with the deans. We fully recognize that there are issues pertinent to the MSU community which may not be addressed or adequately addressed in these pages. The intent is to foster a discussion and action plans that will necessarily have to incorporate additional voices and perspectives as we move forward in our efforts.

Action Items and Considerations:

1. Should there be a numerical or percentage rate target for women chairs and associate chairs, including women of color, whether a percentage or absolute increase over the next 18 months? Any targets that may be set cannot circumvent our obligations under state and federal laws, including Section 26 of Article I of the Michigan Constitution (more popularly known to many as Prop 2) and those laws and regulations related to our obligations as a federal contractor to have an affirmative action plan that includes placement goals and engaging in good faith efforts to address such goals. This strategy should be developed in close coordination with the Office of the Provost, Academic Human Resources and the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives.
2. Deans need to exchange information on the demography of chairs and directors and how chairs are chosen in different units. It would be beneficial to provide clear guidance as to how and why internal versus external searches are conducted for department chairs.
3. We should look at vacancies in the Associate Chair and Associate Dean and similarly situated positions, where feasible, as opportunities to appoint candidates outside of disciplinary homes. These positions often have a focus on personnel issues and process, skills that go beyond disciplines.
4. We need a special program such as a pre-CIC on campus for identifying and grooming associate chairs. This might be cast as a departmental level administrative fellows program. There are some efforts within AAN that could likely provide direction for such an initiative.
5. We should develop a list eligible women and faculty of color at MSU, who have expressed an interest in being considered for administrative appointments, especially at the chair level, that would have to be consulted for any chair opening. We could also test a version of the NFL'S "Rooney rule" where someone from this list would have to be interviewed for any open post. It is important to note that we will not be granting preferential treatment; but rather ensuring a robust and diverse candidate pool.
6. Deans and the Provost should identify steps to make chair selections subject to greater transparency and openness. These efforts should include increasing the ability of departments and schools to hold national searches for chairs and directorships. It may not be in the best interest of the university or faculty of color to establish a hard and fast rule or practice of requiring units to only hire leadership from within its existing ranks.

2. Access, Retention, Advancement (applicable to faculty, staff, and undergraduate and graduate students)

Expanding the Number of Faculty of Color

MSU could set a short-term goal of expanding tenure system African-American faculty to 100 (or more) in the next 18 months, by putting in place the policies, oversight, reporting and fiscal support to make this an all-university effort. Our goal should be not only to change the direction of the numbers, but also to seed such faculty throughout the university. This goal could mirror the process established for the Academic Competitiveness/Global Impact Initiative. Consideration should be given to the pool of fixed term faculty of color as a source for possible placement into the tenure system. These goals and efforts cannot circumvent our obligations under state and federal laws, including Section 26 of Article I of the Michigan Constitution and those laws and regulations related to our obligations as a federal contractor to have an affirmative action plan that includes placement goals and engaging in good faith efforts to address such goals. The development of this strategy should be done working

closely with the Office of the Provost, Academic Human Resources and the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives.

There are obviously new investments that could be made in key subject areas (e.g., Africa, urban studies, African-American studies, some areas of political science, sociology, and social work, etc.), where the pipeline for African-American and other faculty of color may be more robust. However, there has to be buy-in from all areas of the university, especially where research reputation is strongest. This will be particularly challenging because many of MSU's areas of research strength are in disciplines where the pipeline is the narrowest, i.e., STEM fields. Thus, as we make short-term progress where we are able, we should also put in place targeted longer-term investments in post-docs, research funds for underrepresented minorities, and special summer programs for minority students and graduate students that expand the pathways and help identify future faculty. Establishing pathway programs in fields where faculty and graduate students of color are typically under-represented should be of the highest priority.

We are aware that the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives conducted a qualitative research study on the lived experiences of faculty of color at MSU. Rather than take new steps to assess the climate for existing African-American faculty and other faculty of underrepresented and/or marginalized/invisible groups, we support greater study of the existing data to inform our efforts. Additionally, where there may be gaps in data, including data on marginalized/invisible groups that are not racial/ethnic minorities, we urge that additional steps be taken to gather the necessary data and assess the climate. Thorough exit interviews should be undertaken for all departing faculty in these categories, with the reasons for the departure analyzed and widely disseminated. The Diversity Research Network and Academic Human Resources have begun work in this area that should be used to inform and implement an overall exit interview strategy.

We have to take administrative steps that make this effort a genuine institutional priority. This initiative has to be as important as our key research and curricular priorities. This means efforts have to be taken among the deans to identify best practices, exchange information, develop priorities, and support them, regardless of college. This also means oversight at the highest levels and through the fall planning and spring budgeting processes. Special incentives should support areas where pipelines are narrow; and success anywhere should be rewarded.

Action Items:

1. Identify and implement a mechanism similar to the Advance Grant to continue to advance and embed goals of diversity, equity and inclusion in policies, procedures, practices, MSU culture and the environment experienced by faculty and academic staff/teaching of color. This derives directly from the 2/20/18 Provost LEAD.
2. Develop and sustain programs and systems to support faculty of color, and other under-represented groups, for recruitment, retention, advancement, and future leadership. This is consistent with issues discussed at the 2/20/18 Provost LEAD.

Expanding Undergraduate Opportunities

The university could use its Detroit Center to expand programs for MSU admits with a special set of courses helping them get a head start or address any needed remediation. We should also offer such options in Flint, Saginaw, and in selected rural and upper

peninsula (UP) community colleges. Collaborations with extension facilities could be useful to address rural portions of the state.

Remedial curriculum for entering students from poor performing high schools should be free or provided at minimal cost. Curriculum reforms already underway should be expanded to other applicable courses. We could also facilitate expanded access to both online and residential credit-bearing summer bridge programs.

Tuition discounting has to be on the table. We should target selected out-of-state high schools in poor communities for tuition discounting and selected aid. If we can provide special scholarships for India or out-of-state honors students, we should be able to do so in key communities out-of-state (e.g., Chicago area).

Equal attention needs to be focused on retention and student success in order to close the opportunity gaps we see between different groups of students, recruiting alone will not be sufficient.

Action Items:

1. Work proactively with the Enrollment Management Advisory Group to the Provost to develop comprehensive, flexible and sustainable strategies for the recruitment, admission, matriculation, persistence, success, and graduation of students, particularly those from low-income communities, communities with lower performing high schools, and under-represented groups in general, as well as by disciplines and professions. This approach would be consistent with MSU's access mission as well as the core values of quality, connectivity and inclusivity. This is consistent with key issues discussed at the 2/20/18 Provost LEAD.
2. Work with the academic units that provide many of the bridge and remedial courses to continue to refine curricular approaches to enhance student success.

Enhancing Structures to Advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within Colleges

The Office of the Provost has reaffirmed a commitment to the role of Faculty Excellence Advocates (FEAs). Accordingly, the Office of the Provost will continue to fund diversity efforts, consistent with the commitments over the last several years for the faculty excellent advocates and will provide enhanced professional development to build the skills necessary to be an effective advocate for faculty around diversity, equity and inclusion within the colleges. In addition, the Office of the Provost endorses the creation of separate college administrators who have responsibility for DEI across the entire college mission – for students, faculty and staff.

Action Item:

1. Create broad job descriptions and expectations for both the FEAs and additional college level roles focused on diversity issues broadly and across multiple constituencies. These descriptions and expectations should be accompanied by a set of recommendations, to the Provost, on the resources, infrastructure, support, and professional development needed for sustained success, independently and collectively, for each role. It will be important to avoid roles that focus narrowly or exclusively on compliance and advocacy. Rather, the goal is that each role embodies the breadth and depth of responsibilities that provide for intentionality in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion within and across colleges. This work

should be done working closely with the Office of the Provost, Academic Human Resources and the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives.

3. Research

Action Items:

- a. Open and expand a dialogue with the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies to generate a coordinated intentionality around research foci and corresponding support for the varied research programs of faculty of color and other MSU communities. The intent should be to establish a sustainable and embedded institutional structure that facilitates an environment that advances diversity, equity, and inclusion at MSU and includes the research enterprise. For example, if there is to be a third Global Impact Initiative (GI3), these goals should be explicitly stated and conveyed to units that are the beneficiaries of hiring initiatives.
- b. We need to invest in pathways and programs to expand opportunities for newly appointed faculty (tenure system and fixed term), academic specialists/teaching, visiting faculty, post-docs, and special summer programs for graduate students from underrepresented groups, especially in disciplines where the pipelines are narrow. Our aim should be to create representative student bodies, faculties and leaders throughout the campus.

4. Curriculum (formal and informal)

Action Items:

- a. Coordinate and communicate with the multiple offices and entities that shape undergraduate and graduate curriculum (e.g., University Committee on Undergraduate Education (UCUE), University Curriculum Committee (UCC), University Committee on Graduate Studies (UCGS), Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (I3), faculty/instructors/teaching assistants, college and department curriculum committees, and the Offices of the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education (APUE) and Associate Provost for Graduate Education (APGE)). The intent should be to embed issues of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the undergraduate, graduate and post-doctoral experiences in all disciplines and professions. This content cannot be restricted to the undergraduate general education requirements or to select disciplines.
- b. Create and sustain a climate where students of color and other underrepresented and/or marginalized/invisible groups believe that they are being heard by faculty and academic leadership both in and outside of the classroom. Develop an attentiveness to creating an environment in which students believe that the faculty and academic leadership care about them as individuals as well as their success as students. Establish regularly available professional development for faculty and staff to address issues of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. This derives directly from the 2/20/18 Provost LEAD and requests from student groups.
- c. We should work with others on campus to create additional on-campus bridging courses for students of color and other underrepresented and/or

marginalized/invisible groups, as well as create new satellite opportunities in Detroit and other potential locations. Such bridging programs at MSU could have subsidized housing and summer employment, while the satellite programs could serve double duty of helping students get a head start as well as creating another reason for these students to matriculate to MSU.

5. Campus Climate

We should use all data currently available from the array of surveys we have, to identify recurring themes across the populations of faculty, staff, students, and advise units to identify efforts to address the focus areas. MSU has 2009, 2013 ADVANCE grant faculty work environment survey data, both quantitative and qualitative, a 2016 student campus climate survey, and a 2017-18 staff climate survey.

6. External Engagement

This focus area addresses issues related to community outreach and engagement³, alumni relations, donor development, marketing MSU, and outreach to vendors and suppliers of goods, services, etc. to MSU. For example, with respect to vendors and suppliers, what percent of the spending in the various units for goods and services go to diverse suppliers? Similarly, are unit leaders asking staff who arrange for catering and staff with p-cards who order supplies about supplier diversity? Is it even on anyone's radar?

³ DEI and Outreach/Engagement (OE) depend upon each other. To fully understand the symbiotic relationship between DEI and OE will require a follow-up white paper with an intentional focus on OE; particularly as it relates to curricular, research, and personnel considerations. It is strongly recommended that a group of deans develop a separate, follow-up white paper explicitly addressing issues related to the outreach and engagement aspects of external engagement. Such a white paper would contribute to the development of a comprehensive framework and strategy for addressing this important component of the university's land-grant mission.