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# **Office for Prospective Students Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report (2021-2022) and Annual Plan (2022-2023)**

## Introduction

The Office for Prospective Students (OPS) recruits prospective students nationally and internationally and serves to represent the demographics of the people of the State of Nevada. This requires balancing future enrollment growth with academic preparation to ensure access for as many of Nevada’s prospective students, the nation, and internationally as possible.

This plan is a summation of the department’s actions during the 2021-2022 academic year to address systemic bias and discrimination as it applies to our policies and procedures in recruiting students to the University as well as document steps to be taken in the future to continue to address bias. Additionally, this plan provides a detailed description of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) goals and the actions plans that will be put in place to achieve those goals.

This report also Identifies current DEI related training and professional development opportunities that the OPS staff have participated in over the last year as well as summary data and recommendations for future progress. We have engaged as a team to have many conversations about our own personal levels of competency regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and will continue to as we strive to understand the students and families we continue to serve.

## Department Foundation

**Vision**

To continue to grow the enrollment of the University in quality students while equaling or surpassing the diversity of K-12 population of the state of Nevada to the student body of the University of Nevada, Reno.

**Mission**

The Office for Prospective Students recruits quality students nationally and internationally while focusing on ability, geography and diversity. We are committed to better representing the demographics of the State of Nevada. The Office for Prospective Students continues developing outreach programs focused on access, preparation and retention for the elementary through university level student.

**Values**

* **Access and Opportunity**: Fostering a learning environment equitable to all groups while striving to remove barriers to higher education. Demonstrate culturally inclusive advising and supporting coaching strategies
* **Growth:** Learning from shared experiences for new opportunities and self-development
* **Engagement and citizenship:** Promoting a campus and community culture that supports the free exchange of ideas, civic engagement, and the free expression of identities and beliefs
* **Knowledge:** Creating opportunities and experiences that develop the whole student for lifelong learning and success.
* **Student-Centered:** Fostering an environment that is supportive, and embraces students’ unique needs and talents, diverse backgrounds, interests, and goals.
* **Advocacy:** Integrating research, reflection, and experience into action
* **Empowerment**: Developing agency and the social capital of students and colleagues to promote leadership
* **Community:** Promoting a working and learning environment that contributes to the development of collaborations, partnerships, and networks, and provides opportunities for individual and collective growth

**Commitment to Equity**

As one of the areas at the University that has the ability to quantify our recruitment efforts every fall and every spring based on the enrollment at the University, we will continue to assess our efforts to make sure we are providing the power of a college

education to as many students as possible.

**Diversity Statement**

We believe a college education is one of the most powerful tools to improve peoples’ lives. We are committed to providing the opportunity to all populations, but most importantly, to those populations historically not given the opportunity through our information, guidance, and encouragement.

**Overall Department Goals**

Increasing the enrollment of underrepresented students is essential to the mission on the University specifically the ethnicities of African American, Native American, Asian American, and Latinx. It is important that our OPS staff also represent the diversity we seek in our student body which is currently 85% of our Admissions Counselors (recruiters) being people of color.

## Goals related to DEI in 2021-2022

**Review of Systematic Bias and Discrimination Report**

**Identity the department goals or systemic barriers to minoritized students related to DEI**

**1) Overreliance on test scores**: Long before the University required ACT or SAT there were documented issues with test scores specifically the research demonstrating racial bias creating an inequitable system. This bias is not only present in decisions for admissions but also in the awarding of scholarships.

This bias has only grown over time. Today not only is there still the racial bias associated with the scores but most recently a Wall Street Journal investigation showed that more than 90% of students who qualified for extra time on the ACT and SAT due to learning disabilities were both white and affluent.

Until Fall 2020, we relied on test scores for:

Nevada Advantage (Tuition discount), Special Admissions, Scholarships, and our criteria for offering participation in the Best and Brightest recruitment program.

**2) Bias in the work place:**

When opportunities are offered to specific people versus the group it can potentially create bias. We assign tasks to an individual based on how well we know them, get along with them and how well we know their talents. Other staff members may possess those talents but we don’t realize them because of differing relationships.

**3) Assumptions in the Admissions Process**

Bilingual Materials and Websites

In my very short experience as a recruiter, this has actually been a challenge within the Latinx population that I closely work with. Not so much when speaking with students since many (but not all) of them are bilingual and are happy with the materials we provide them in English, but the challenge emerges when we begin to have conversations with their parents who may or may not be so fluent in English. The college admission process is already confusing and a bit challenging on its own and I am sure it is 10x harder if all the information that is available on our websites, brochures, and other recruitment materials are not in their native language. Not to mention many of these parents have never even been through the admission process for a college, yet alone a four-year institution, themselves and it just makes it even more challenging to successfully complete the admission process and continue their education.

After reviewing this past year’s numbers and seeing that the second largest group of students are part of the Hispanic/Latinx community, it only makes sense that we have materials in Spanish available for those who may need it.

**Price transparency**. We don’t do first gen families any favors by talking only about tuition (excluding fees) or using low estimates for housing. In spite of what our competitors do I think we can lead (and market our transparency).

For example, Nevada Resident from outside Washoe. The $7,300 tuition cost means almost nothing to them in practical terms. Tuition, fees, books, and a Peavine double with the lowest meal plan is: 7268+1098+7540+4509+1000 = **$21,415**

CA Resident with WUE. Tuition and fees and a Peavine double with the lowest meal plan is: 10902+1098+7540+4509+1000= **$24,049**

In my experience, first gen kids have a hard time understanding that tuition isn’t what school costs and can get too deep in the process, start laying out deposits and then get deep in the summer before they realize they can’t pay. Imagine a marketing piece, where we do the leg work and find the actual cost of attendance for UCB, OSU, WSU, and UA and compare that to ours? Then not only do we market ourselves as peers but as less expensive peers.

**Describe progress towards each**

I Overreliance on test scores

 NV Advantage will be test score OR GPA **(achieved)**

 Special Admissions will be test optional **(achieved)**

 Scholarships will not consider test scores **(achieved)**

II Review of opportunities including committee selection, recruitment assignments, security clearance taking place now. Changes will be implemented by (Spring 2021).

Review of office manuals and training for student workers taking place now. Changes will be implemented no later than **Achieved** **Fall 2022.**

III New website for Spanish speakers under development and will be in place by Spring 2021. More brochures (including new price transparency recruitment piece) translated into Spanish**. In progress Fall 2022**.

New price transparency brochure created Fall 2020 and corresponding digital campaigns. **Achieved** **Fall 2022**.

## Department DEI Strategic Plan Summary

After a series of meetings and conversations, OPS developed a number of DEI initiatives throughout the 2021-2022 academic year. The following initiatives have been or are in the process of being implemented as part of OPS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan (Appendices A).

*Goal Area 1 – Education for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

* Training sessions on Foster Care and First-Generation College Students, University Design, Pathway to independence
* Accessibility training for social media, web, and software
* Creation of a resource list for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
* Partner with other divisions including DRC and NCED

Progress Achieved

* Trainings for Foster Care, First Generation College Students, and Pathway to Independence have taken place for all staff
* Accessibility training for social media, web and software has taken place

*Goal Area 2-Student Recruitment, Access, Engagement and Retention*

* Utilize SLATE to assess marketing and recruitment efforts for minoritized populations
* Assessment of all recruitment activities designed for minoritized populations
* Partner with other divisions to develop activities that strengthen the University’s link with ethnically diverse and rural school districts
* 50% of incoming freshmen class will be ethnically diverse

Progress Achieved

* Assessment of all recruitment activities designed for minoritized populations is currently taking place with results coming after late registration is complete
* Waiting for data from late registration to see if 50% of incoming Freshmen class is ethnically diverse **(one year ahead of goal).**

*Goal Area 3- Faculty/Staff Recruitment and Retention*

* Assist with the development of the Recruitment and Retention Practices Committee
* Develop exit interview process of outgoing staff to learn more about their experiences to improve access and work culture
* Utilization of ACPA/NASPA Competency Areas of Social Justice and Inclusion for profession development including participating in sponsored Division wide DEI trainings and/or certification

Progress Achieved

* More than 50% of staff have begun or completed ACPA/NASPA Competency Areas of Social Justice and Inclusion of Professional Development trainings.

**Appendix A**

**Office for Prospective Students**

**DEI Strategic Plan 22-23**

**Goal Area 1-Education for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

*Objective 1: OPS will reach out to other departments and units to continue to learn about DEI in other areas around the University.*

Action Steps:

* By fall 2022, OPS will partner with Queer Student Union to learn more about the challenges out students face.
* By spring 2022, OPS will complete DACA training so all faculty and staff understand the unique challenges these students face as well as how to guide these students through the process.
* By spring 2023, OPS will begin to develop a resource list for staff to utilize in their own growth and understanding of DEI.
* By December 2023 OPS will have an assessment on the staff’s knowledge of the key DEI terms

 *Objective 2: The department will increase overall competencies of issues associated with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*

Action Steps:

* By May 2023, 100% of OPS will participate in accessibility training for marketing and recruitment efforts in the areas of social media, web, and software products used in marketing and recruitment.
* By Fall 2022 OPS will develop training for Foster Care students so the University can better serve these students.
* By May 2023, OPS Staff will double the number of trainings the staff participates in compared to 2022.

**Goal Area 2- Student Recruitment, Access, Engagement and Retention**

*Objective 1: Develop better assessment tools to determine the most effective events and activities associated with recruiting minoritized populations.*

Action Steps:

* By December 2022 create a report through SLATE to assess all previous year’s recruitment activity associated with minoritized populations by determining attendance, applications, conversion, and yield.
* By May 2023 OPS will partner with the Center to develop activities that strengthen the University’s link with ethnically diverse and rural school districts by familiarizing prospective students with the University’s opportunities and resources.
* By 2023, increase freshmen enrollment of underrepresented populations to 50%.

*Objective 2: Develop recruitment plans to address system barriers to the recruitment of prospective students.*

Action steps:

* By fall 2022 all recruitment staff will be trained on Foster Care students and their unique needs as well as opportunities at the University
* By spring 2022 develop a committee to examine current recruitment policies, protocols, and activities to determine other examples of systemic bias.
* By spring 2023 develop additional recruitment brochures in Spanish.
* By fall 2022, launch Spanish website for prospective students and their families.
* By spring 2023 OPS will consider alternatives to application fee waivers to make the application process affordable to all students
* By fall 2022, OPS admissions counselors will actively promote the fact that any application that does not initially meet the requirement of a 3.0 GPA will receive a second review for admissions consideration.
* By fall 2022 remove the requirement test scores from consideration of admissions including special admissions.

*Objective 3: Develop partnerships with academic units to showcase the schools and colleges of the University to underrepresented populations.*

Action Steps:

* By spring 2023 OPS will expand special Nevada Bound programing targeted to students from diverse backgrounds with the various colleges. OPS will also increase the number of free Nevada Bound trips for students.

* By spring 2023 OPS will expand their recruitment program Nevada Scholars of Tomorrow to offer a retention component to the program once students have begun courses at the University. This will include creating a specific ASUN recognized student club.

**Goal Area 3-Faculty/Staff recruitment and Retention**

*Objective 1: OPS will utilize the ACPA/NASPA Competency Areas of Social Justice and Inclusion to help staff develop competencies as part of documenting their professional development.*

Action Steps:

* By fall 2022, OPS will use baseline indicators of the Social Justice and Inclusion competencies in the annual evaluation process of staff.

* By fall 2022, OPS will establish year Social Justice and Inclusion goals for each staff member.
* By Spring 2023, OPS will develop competency markers for individual staff that will be incorporated into the evaluation process.

*Objective 2: OPS will use concepts like Cultural Humility and Design Theory to increase the awareness of the staff regarding issues of DEI.*

Action Steps:

* By February 2023, OPS staff will attend a workshop to develop their own individual perspectives on cultural humility.
* By Spring 2023, staff will share their perspectives on Cultural Humility and Design Theory to the rest of the staff.
* By Spring 2023 OPS will collaborate with at least two other departments/units to discuss steps taken by each to better understand and implement DEI initiatives.