2020-2021
Institutional Programs of Cultural Diversity
Annual Progress Report

Salisbury
UNIVERSITY

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Salisbury University (SU) Description of Diversity

The following is the SU Diversity Statement. "Diversity and inclusion are core values of Salisbury University. A diverse and inclusive campus community brings irreplaceable value to our educational experience and work environment, and strengthens us all. Diversity encompasses more dimensions than just the legally protected categories. All people have talent and potential that are spread across communities and groups, locally and globally. Inclusion means creating an environment of respect, connection and involvement among people with different experiences and perspectives. We strive to create a truly diverse and inclusive environment where the richness of ideas, backgrounds and perspectives of our community is harnessed to create value for our institution, today and in the future."

This statement was adopted in 2015 when the SU Shared Governance's Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Consortium Committee (CD&ICC) was reconstituted. The CD&ICC is comprised of diverse stakeholders from across campus who represent various constituent groups. The purpose of the committee is to assist campus leadership in weaving the diversity strategy throughout the University through providing advice, monitoring the campus climate as it relates to diversity, inclusion and equity, advocating for diversity and inclusion throughout the institution, advising on the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff and student body, developing programs and initiatives to promote the University's diversity goals and support community members, building networks to support the diversity mission, monitoring implementation of diversity goals of the Strategic Plan, and assessing progress and setting goals for improvement.

The CD&ICC allowed for a collaborative process to be used in creating the diversity statement that provided the opportunity for various campus stakeholders representing constituent groups to have input in the development of a campus statement; the statement was recommended to the President in 2015 for adoption. The committee created a digital working document to develop the key themes that committee members felt captured the comprehensive perspective that represents diversity at SU.

The SU Office of Diversity and Inclusion added the following definition to it's webpage for further guidance. This definition was developed after research and guidance from the SU Diversity Statement. "Diversity refers to the variety of personal experiences, values and world views that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, geographic region and more."

Highlight of the *most successful* ongoing and new institutional initiatives designed to address issues related to cultural diversity within the campus and the broader community, and how their efficacy is measured.

In 2019, Salisbury University Office of Institutional Equity established a Campus Climate Study Workgroup. The group's work included acquiring an external consulting company, Rankin and Associates to conduct a campus-wide study of the campus climate. The company conducted focus groups and a campus-wide survey in spring 2020. Rankin and Associates presented a report of the findings in October 2020. December 2020 President Wight implemented a Campus Climate Study Implementation Committee comprised of members representing Shared Governance constituent groups. The committee was charged with reviewing the report for recommendations that could be implemented immediately. The committee recommended 18 actions to be considered for immediate implementation in April 2021 that were directly tied to information from the Campus Climate Study Report. Metrics will be developed for the recommendations.

In support of a major objective in the Salisbury University's Strategic Plan, the Provost's Office has worked with a variety of stakeholders on a draft plan to recruit and retain diverse faculty in tenure-track positions. The plan is based on best practices and details planned activities from initial position justification, to recruitment, selection and hiring, onboarding, professional development and mentoring, preparing for tenure and promotion and post-tenure growth and success. This project has benefitted from the expertise available through Maryland's AGEP Promise Academy Alliance. Measures of efficacy will include number of faculty from under-represented groups hired into tenure-track positions, improvement in faculty retention, and, ultimately, increases in enrollment and retention of students from historically minoritized populations.

Multicultural Student Services continues to operate the Powerful Connections pre-orientation and transition program for multicultural students to assist with recruitment, retention and creating a sense of belonging for students participating in the program. The program matches upper class students with first-time freshmen from diverse backgrounds to assist in the transition to college. Efficacy has been based on first-year retention data along with annual surveys of the program. The program has recently expanded to include collaborations with TRIO and the Disability Resource Center.

May 2020, SU hired a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) and Associate Vice President to lead strategic diversity efforts. Fall 2020 the CDO implemented campus-wide diversity training for employees and students to establish a baseline of common knowledge to build upon to assist in educating the campus community around topics to create a more inclusive campus environment. All employees took two courses, *Diversity in the Modern Workplace* and *Managing Bias* and Supervisors took an additional course, *Accommodating Disabilities*. 100 percent of employees completed the training. All new students will be required to complete diversity training starting in fall 2021. Efficacy will

be measured through surveys regarding campus climate. Student training is still in progress until April 21, 2021.

Ways in which the institution anticipates COVID-19 most affecting – either negatively or positively – efforts to enhance diversity on campus.

Part of the preparation for COVID-19 included establishing and COVID-19 Inclusive Excellence Committee. The committee included members from various constituent groups, including students and administrators. The committee identified potential challenges to maintaining inclusive excellence during the pandemic and made recommendations, including establishing an COVID-19 Inclusive Excellence Statement that was included in the training for all employees and students. We believe the pandemic will have a disproportionate negative impact on students of color due to the economic challenges it created. We believe this will result in decreased enrollment from traditionally under-represented populations. We believe that distance education has created greater inequities in various ways that will impact our retention of first year students of color.

Due to Zoom fatigue, it has been more difficult to attract students to attend voluntary diversity programming. Diversity programming has continued to be offered for the community and the campus, especially around the Cultural Heritage Months. The pandemic created restrictions for student organizations to convene, which has impeded engagement during this academic year. This lack of engagement this year is predicted to yield challenges in reconvening student organizations and their operations next academic year. The pandemic will also impact negatively the college-readiness of new students of color, as well as increase their anxiety towards entering college, especially for first generation students.