

## Diversity Plan

**Diversity Statement:** The William Allen White School of Journalism and Mass Communications (hereafter, J-School) aims to create and maintain an environment that values diversity by:

- Respecting the identities and experiences of students, faculty and staff
- Enhancing cultural competency skills for students, faculty and staff
- Including social justice in learning, teaching and mentoring activities
- Encouraging a variety of respectful opinions pertaining to current societal matters
- Supporting interdisciplinary collaborations

**Diversity Conceptualization:** Diversity is an evolving concept, which encompasses a multitude of experiences, perspectives, identities, and actions.

**Diversity Rationale:** The J-School recognizes the need to use a narrow conceptualization of diversity based on certain demographic characteristics (mainly race and gender) in order to comply with demands from the University of Kansas and accreditation organizations. The J-School also recognizes that this focus on race and gender when measuring the diversity of a particular unit is the result of a society that has been built on and continues to function in a system of institutional racism and sexism. Given this legacy, the J-School encompasses race and gender in its definition of diversity *and* broadens it by being more inclusive of people's multiple identities, how these identities intersect, and how they change over time and based on context. Moving beyond identity, and exploring other facets of diversity, the J-School conceptualizes diversity as the variety of experiences, perspectives, identities and actions.

**Diversity Committee:** Diversity and Inclusion Action Group (DIAG). Membership will consist of three elected faculty members, one elected staff member, three undergraduate students, one graduate student, and two at-large, ad-hoc, non-voting members appointed by the Dean. DIAG members will elect a chair (faculty or staff). Chair serve a two-year term; a chair-elect will be elected mid-term. Faculty and staff members will serve at least a two-year term. Undergraduate and graduate students will serve a minimum one-year term. DIAG will propose an annual budget to the dean, including \$5,000 for a summer applied research award.

**Diversity Action Steps:** All steps are measurable in order to assess the implementation of the diversity plan.

### Action Steps I:

#### Develop an academic environment fostering cultural competency and social justice

- Assess overall cultural competency levels of the J-School (students, faculty and staff) using a cultural competency assessment at least every four years.
- Discuss results of cultural competency assessment and future steps.
- Defend the actions and rights of students, staff and faculty while they exercise their free expression and interpretation of diversity.
- Encourage and promote the inclusion of diversity in syllabi to meet ACEJMC diversity standard.
- Feature syllabus links and web page to various 'diversity-oriented' professional associations, such as the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association, the Native American Journalists Association, etc., to be updated annually.
- Encourage instructors to post on Blackboard events organized/sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and use extra credit as incentive for their students to attend some of these events every semester.
- Work with the Resource Center Administrator to create a display panel in the Resource Center highlighting student/course accomplishments that reflect the diversity of experiences in the J-School.

- Celebrate and share cultural experiences through events and guest lectures open to all.
- Encourage and promote the free circulation and exchange of ideas as an essential component of diversity by hosting School-wide discussions about current events pertaining to diversity matters.

### **Action Steps II:**

#### **Recruit and retain students who belong to underrepresented groups that reflect demographics trend in the U.S. in general and in higher education in particular**

- Collaborate with JOUR 304 Media Writing students and instructors to create profiles of diverse students to be posted on the J-School's website.
- Increase financial resources devoted to supporting the Journalism Multicultural Scholars Program.
- Visit high schools in Kansas and throughout the country with high diverse populations.
- Recruit diverse J-School ambassadors to travel to high schools and participate in college fairs in nearby cities.
- Recruit alumni to reach out to students.
- Collaborate with JOUR 560 Message Development students and instructors to develop print and online materials in Spanish geared at Spanish-speaking family members of potential students.
- Focus on recruiting efforts not only in creating a racially-diverse environment, but also in fostering a diverse ideological and cultural environment.
- Increase mentoring and leadership opportunities for students.

### **Action Steps III:**

#### **Recruit and retain employees (faculty and staff) who belong to underrepresented groups that reflect demographics trends in the U.S. in general and in higher education in particular**

- Develop advertisements for new employees that encourage diverse candidates to apply.
- Consider the inclusion of faculty and staff who belong to underrepresented groups when forming search committees.
- Nominate a professor for the university's Langston Hughes professorship (*committee assignment?*).
- Develop a faculty exchange program with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Latino-Serving Institutions (*committee assignment?*).
- Develop exchange programs with universities outside the United States.
- Promote recruitment of faculty and staff with diverse cultural, life and social experiences.
- Increase mentoring and service opportunities for faculty and staff (*committee assignment?*).

### **Action Steps IV:**

#### **Develop a culture based on intellectual curiosity and inclusiveness (research paradigms, theoretical perspectives, etc.)**

- Showcase student and faculty research projects online and in Stauffer-Flint Hall.
- Collaborate with programs and centers, including International Studies and the Global Health Initiative, and the Center for Excellence in Health Communication to Underserved Populations (CEHCUP).
- Establish research partnerships with Haskell University and HBCUs.
- Develop community-based participatory research (CBPR) projects focused on working with underrepresented populations.
- Expand our research collaboration to other areas of the globe to communities in need of our expertise.
- Establish a summer grant for J-School collaborative research projects that explore diversity matters and have a direct impact on items in this diversity action plan.