Our Commitment to a Diverse and Inclusive Campus

President Castro's Diversity and Inclusion Statement

As a native of the San Joaquin Valley, I was raised to appreciate that the rich tapestry of diversity that defines the region is one of our greatest strengths. I am proud that the diversity of Central California is strongly reflected in Fresno State's students, faculty, staff and administrators. It is essential to our academic excellence.

We are dedicated to reducing any barriers to success that come from race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, culture, religion, linguistic diversity, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, geographical region, personality, learning styles, life experiences and other human characteristics.

The President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity (PCHRE) supports acceptance and fairness at all levels of the University. Fresno State is an institution where exploring the diversity of thought and discouraging marginalization is valued as a means of enriching knowledge and critical-thinking. The Commission developed a comprehensive plan to make sure this commitment is understood across our campus.

As an engaged University, we focus on broadening students' intellectual horizons, fostering lifelong learning skills, developing the leaders of tomorrow, promoting community involvement, and instilling an appreciation of world cultures. We nurture cultural competence by celebrating the diversity of the campus community and welcoming the participation of all.

As President, I am committed to maintaining a campus known for its integrity, civility, equity, respect and ethical behavior. The University must be safe and inclusive. We do not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination or intimidation, as prohibited by University policy and state and federal civil rights laws.

Our efforts depend on the continued dedication of every member of the University community. We are all responsible for upholding these core objectives while working and learning at Fresno State.

Joseph I. Castro, President

Creating a Network of Diversity and Equity Throughout All Levels of the University

The President's Commission on Human Relations and Equity (PCHRE) is focused on supporting an atmosphere of acceptance and fairness, and enthusiastically embraces its charge from President Joseph I. Castro to:

- Develop a comprehensive three- to five-year Diversity Plan with measurable outcomes and visible results;
- Create a Diversity Plan that is dynamic and reflects the rich and diverse experiences, values, world views and cultures that make up humanity; and
- Affirm the President's Diversity and Inclusion Statement while aligning the Diversity Plan with the University Strategic Plan.

The Commission adopted the framework found in the Association of American Colleges and University publication, ***Making a Real Difference with Diversity: A Guide to Institutional Change*** (AAC&U, 2007), based on research obtained from the Campus Diversity Initiative (CDI) to strategically improve campus diversity at 28 California colleges and universities. This comprehensive approach offers a broad conceptualization of diversity work on campuses by integrating the four dimensions of diversity:

1. Institutional viability and vitality
2. Access and success
3. Education and scholarship
4. Climate and intergroup relations

In developing the plan, the Commission members have undertaken a broad effort to communicate, collaborate and coordinate with the many individuals, campus groups and the community at large to ensure that all voices were heard and varying perspectives were reflected in the Diversity Plan.

Working Definitions

The following working definitions are critical components of A Strategic Plan for Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE):

Diversity: Individual differences (e.g., personality, language, learning styles and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, country of origin and ability status as well as cultural, political, religious or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning.

Inclusion: The active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within (and change) systems and institutions.

Equity *(student focus)*: The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion.

Source: Association of American Colleges & Universities Website, 2011

Equity *(employee focus)*: The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations of employees (faculty and staff) to have equal access to professional growth opportunities and resource networks that are capable of closing the demographic disparities in leadership roles in all spheres of institutional functioning.

Source: Clayton-Pedersen, 2011; Adapted from the University of Southern California's Center for Urban Education's Equity Scorecard™

Cultural Competence: The state of having and applying knowledge and skill in four areas: awareness of one's own cultural worldview; recognition of one's attitudes toward cultural differences; realization of different cultural practices and worldviews; and thoughtfulness in cross-cultural interaction. Over an extended period of time, individuals and organizations develop the wisdom and capability to:

1. examine critically how cultural worldviews influence perceptions of power, dominance and inequality; and
2. behave honorably within the complex dynamics of differences and commonalities among humans, groups and systems.

Fresno State is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI), reflecting the rich diversity of Central California.

Fresno State is an equal opportunity employer and educational institution supporting diversity.

A Strategic Plan for Inclusion, Respect and Equity (ASPIRE)

Embracing, Supporting and Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Competence Through All Levels of the University

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ADMINISTRATOR

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Recruiting, Developing and Supporting Employees

At Fresno State, attracting personnel from diverse backgrounds and increasing representation of groups that have been historically underrepresented is a priority. An emphasis on recruitment, retention, mentoring and talent development are a first step to reverse these long trends, strengthening equity, inclusion and cultural competence in the hiring, promotion and advancement processes of underrepresented groups. In addition, the University will work to engage campus leadership at all levels in the work of broadly diversifying the faculty, staff and administrators.

Key Strategies and Actions

- Disseminate to various constituencies easily accessible reports and other information about the diversity of the faculty, staff and administrators.
- Promote best practices and provide resources for identifying, recruiting, retaining and supporting the most talented, culturally competent, globally aware and diverse faculty, staff and administrators in order to create a University culture of inclusiveness, shared leadership and integrity.
- Engage campus leadership at all levels in the work of broadly diversifying the faculty staff and administrators.
- Hold leaders and search committees accountable for understanding and implementing existing policies, procedures and practices regarding their hiring, retention and advancement processes.
- Ensure that reports and plans that are developed for the federal and state governments are translated into accessible formats and disseminated to administrators and search committees.
- Publicly recognize the success of faculty and staff who support diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by highlighting the elements of their initiatives and praising their personal commitment.
- Transparently support guidelines and criteria for advancement, while ensuring equity in opportunities (e.g., professional growth and development, mentoring, support to succeed), encouraging participation, tracking accessibility of opportunities and collecting data related to participation and equitable access.

Indicators

- Greater diversity in recruitment and hiring of new faculty, staff and administrators.
- Greater success in retaining diverse faculty, staff and administrators.
- Greater success in retaining and promoting diverse faculty, staff and administrators.

Supporting Student Access and Educational Success

Providing access to a population that is regionally, nationally and globally diverse is merely the beginning. In order to attract, retain and graduate a diverse student body, the University must promote outreach efforts that convey the importance of advanced education to the community – reaching across the spectrum of individual differences and group/social differences* to ensure all students know about the value and benefits of diversity and the University's role in supporting a culture of respect and inclusion. (*See the working definition of diversity.)

Key Strategies and Actions

- Promote outreach efforts that communicate the importance of undergraduate and graduate education to individuals and families in regional, national and international communities.
- Improve knowledge across the University community about diversity issues in student access and success, especially among those who engage in outreach and student success efforts.
- Expand the capacities and abilities of individuals and administrative units that are charged with outreach and student success. Examine current programs and efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Support the periodic surveying of the diverse student body to become aware of changing trends, shifting priorities and different needs in relation to access and success.
- Inform the campus community about student success gaps (retention, progression, grades and graduation rates) across population groups and promote awareness about existing programs that are designed to narrow these gaps.
- Support the expectation among all members of the campus community that student success is a shared responsibility of students, faculty, staff and administrators, and that each has a role in ensuring this success.

Indicators

- Greater engagement in diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at various institutional levels.
- Greater knowledge of Fresno State's unique mission [federal designations: Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI)] among various constituent groups.
- Greater knowledge of student success gaps across various populations, and means and resources to address them.
- Narrower gaps in learning outcomes across various student populations.

Promoting and Supporting Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Scholarship

Diversity, inclusion and respect are essential elements of learning that positively influence both the University community and the classroom experience. As faculty work to foster and spread awareness of diversity, the University will continue to support efforts that are successful, work to strengthen promising efforts and develop new ways of providing support across the campus to assure the success of a broadly diverse student body.

Key Strategies and Actions

- Offer faculty various mechanisms to explore how diversity, equity and inclusion topics can deepen students' understanding of their disciplines.
- Encourage students to enroll in courses that address diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competence.
- Provide faculty multiple venues to learn about effective educational practices and online delivery systems, gain practical experience in using these tools and encourage practices to engage a broad array of student learning styles.
- Encourage and support faculty to engage both in interdisciplinary interactions that expand their contribution to scholarship and creative activities related to advancing and/or infusing diversity, equity and inclusion topics into the curriculum, while offering meaningful incentives to lead these efforts.
- Identify all courses that address diversity, equity and inclusion in meaningful ways and establish a process of better understanding the impact on student learning outcomes.
- Identify Fresno State faculty who are already using High Impact Practices and ask them to help spread knowledge of the practices and their effect on student learning outcomes so other faculty might incorporate these efforts in meaningful ways.
- Develop a reward structure that recognizes faculty members' efforts at including diversity, equity and inclusion topics in their scholarship or at improving their teaching effectiveness for developing students' cultural competence.

Indicators

- Increased research activities that address topics of diversity.
- Improved curriculums that include topics of diversity.
- Improved cultural competency among faculty.

Affirming a University Culture of Inclusion, Respect and Equity

Diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competence can greatly impact student success. The University will strengthen diversity as part of each person's role within the community by promoting a culture that embraces these qualities at every operational level. We will encourage awareness and use of universal design and establish administrative policies, procedures and practices to sustain a teaching and learning environment that is built on a foundation of respect allowing everyone to thrive.

Key Strategies and Actions

- Communicate diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competence as core values of the University by using symbols (e.g., visual, auditory, linguistic and cultural) that reflect the University's diverse heritage.
- Make campus physical spaces reflective of the intellectual, artistic and social contributions of all groups, including historically underrepresented populations.
- Demonstrate, consistently, the link between diversity and institutional excellence.
- Demonstrate and communicate a meaningful and well-informed commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competence by facilitating opportunities for civil discourse around these topics.
- Support the University community's use of existing vehicles (i.e., centers, institutes and workshops) for cross-cultural knowledge development and sharing of cultural heritage and traditions.
- Support methods to disseminate knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural competence.
- Expand cultural and social experiences for various local, statewide, national and international constituent groups in order to increase understanding of various cultures.

Indicators

- Greater use of existing Academic units and programs for cross-cultural knowledge development.
- Greater communication of diversity, equity and inclusion as core University values.
- Increased opportunities for internal and external dialogue and interaction that builds cultural competence for all employees.