

Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Plan

2019-2022



INTRODUCTION

Minnesota State Mankato is committed to promoting diversity and continues to move forward in implementing this strategic priority at all levels of the University. We have a responsibility to acknowledge and respect diversity, as it is an essential component of a quality educational environment. Diversity enhances the educational process as it enriches us personally and professionally, it fosters good citizenship, and develops strong communities that maximize the potential of its members. Diversity promotes economic prosperity as it prepares globally-oriented citizens who can compete successfully in an interconnected global economy and who can work effectively with persons of different backgrounds. At Minnesota State Mankato, we care about diversity because we want to foster an actively engaged and inclusive learning and working community based upon civility, trust, integrity, and respect. We care about diversity because each of us—students, staff, faculty, and administrators— need a safe and respectful place to learn and to work.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Direction 1: Access, Equity & Opportunity

Strategic Direction 2: Curriculum & Learning for Intercultural Competence

Strategic Direction 3: Supportive Campus Environment

STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goal 1: Minnesota State Mankato will provide accessible, equitable access, and opportunities for all students.

- Strategy 1.1: Increase and improve access to and retention at Minnesota State Mankato for all students, especially underprepared, underrepresented, and non-traditional populations.
- Strategy 1.2: Increase retention of MSU students with varying levels of academic preparation and abilities.

Goal 2: Minnesota State Mankato will provide opportunities to improve competence for a complex, diverse, and globalized society.

- Strategy 2.1: Increase student intercultural competencies through curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities with diverse courses, individuals, and communities.
- Strategy 2.2: Increase the intercultural competencies of faculty and staff through intercultural engagement opportunities.

Goal 3: Minnesota State Mankato will provide an inviting, safe, and supportive environment for people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

- Strategy 3.1: Increase recruitment, retention, and advancement of underrepresented faculty and staff at all levels of the university to enrich university life and provide role models.
- Strategy 3.2: Increase student and employee sense of community, personal inclusion, personal safety, and value.

Access, Equity & Opportunity

Goal 1: Minnesota State Mankato will provide accessible, equitable access, and opportunities for all students.

The University has experienced a steady increase in non-traditional adult learners, working students, low-income students, students of veteran status, and students from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Thus, the campus needs to respond accordingly to the growing non-majority population needs to increase retention and graduation rates. Additionally, it is essential the University reduce the opportunity gap between majority and non-majority populations.

Strategy 1.1: Increase and improve access to and retention at Minnesota State Mankato for all students, especially underprepared, underrepresented, and non-traditional populations.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19- 20	Yr. 2 20- 21	Yr. 3 21- 22
1	Implementing the strategic marketing plan to target diverse students by increasing K-12 and community exposure to and understanding of Minnesota State Mankato's broad educational programs and resources.	Admissions	X	X	X
2	Provide translation of key marketing materials into Spanish, Somalia, Hmong (print and online). Explore critical language/translation needs and develop plan for implementation.	Admissions		X	
3	Increase partnerships and articulation agreements with community colleges within Minnesota State. Target: 20 new articulation agreements by Fall 2022.	COD			X
4	Establish goals for recruitment and retention of all student populations in all colleges.	COD			X
5	Evaluate academic policies to determine if existing policies disproportionately impact underrepresented students negatively and if so, make recommendations to reduce impact and/or revise policies.	Office of Undergraduate Education	X		
6	Develop a one-credit FYE or LEAD type course for students with disabilities.	Academic Affairs, Institutional Diversity		X	
7	Investigate the feasibility of creating a campus-wide testing center. Learn, explore, and make a recommendation regarding our University's comprehensive testing services. Include location, what should be managed centrally versus de-centrally, who could provide supervision, what tests should be considered for inclusion in a testing service.	Academic Affairs, Student Affairs		X	
8	Investigate software that converts text into audio format and translates into multiple languages to	IT		X	

	increase comprehension and access for all students. Students with disabilities, English Language Learners and all learners could benefit. Example: Kurzweill 3000 – Firefly Institutional License.				
9	Develop plan to increase the number of graduate students by cultivating new alliances and enhancing existing partnerships with MSIs.	Dean of Graduate Education	X		
10	Expand peer mentor program beyond orientation week for 100 international students.	Dean of Global Education		X	
11	Review financial aid policies, particularly those that trigger financial holds to determine if existing policies disproportionately disadvantage Pell eligible students or students with limited family financial support.	Director of Financial Aid	X		
12	Increase the number of need-based scholarships.	ID, Foundation, COD, Program Chairs	X	X	X
13	Create a financial literacy module for students to complete during the first semester	Student Financial Services	X		
14	Implement a Second Year experience for returning students.	Office of New Student and Family Programs			X
15	Improve academic success and graduation rate for students of color who no longer have eligibility within Athletics teams with an intrusive advising model of service	ID, Athletics	X	X	X
16	Provide additional support of students from underprepared, inner city, and under resourced high schools to be successful at MSU with an intrusive advising model of service	ID	X	X	X
17	Develop a plan to provide additional resources to the Office of Inst. Analytics & Strategic Effectiveness to ensure timely analysis of assessment data.	Provost	X		
18	Hold departments and faculty accountable for improving classroom environments for inclusivity and diversity, including but not limited to review of promotion and tenure document requirements to show commitment to inclusion and diversity.	Provost	X		
19	Develop plans to ensure staff receive training and show improvements in customer service to all employees and students.	Cabinet	X		

Strategy 1.2: Increase retention of Minnesota State Mankato students with varying levels of academic preparation and abilities.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19-20	Yr. 2 20-21	Yr. 3 21-22
1	Create “Master Major” tracks for majors with similar General Education requirements to provide students with alternative majors for courses already taken to increase graduation within six years.	Office of Undergraduate Education	X		
2	Provide financial resources for high impact practices such as supplemental instruction, peer tutoring, and immersive tutoring to assist faculty with high fail rate courses.	Academic Affairs	X		
3	Create a centralized advising system so that students have a consistent academic coach throughout their academic career.	Director of Advising	X		
4	Provide professional development and peer faculty support for faculty with high fail rates.	COD	X		
5	Implement a university-wide supplemental instruction/tutoring program for high fail rate classes and classes with significant gaps between majority and students of color	ID, Undergraduate Education, COD, College Deans	X	X	X

Curriculum & Learning for Intercultural Competence

Goal 2: Minnesota State Mankato will provide opportunities to improve competence for a complex, diverse, and globalized society.

As the campus becomes more diverse and students arrive from less diverse communities, the campus needs to create an environment of support for learning and living in a diverse environment.

Strategy 2.1: Increase student intercultural competencies through curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities with diverse courses, individuals, and communities.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19-20	Yr. 2 20-21	Yr. 3 21-22
1	Implement the President’s Convocation Requirement as a graduation requirement.	ID		X	
2	Create a resource guide that provides information on resources for students to enhance their participation and campus livelihoods. By creating the guide, we will remove perceived organizational obstacles to seeking help	Academic Affairs	X	X	X

	and decreasing barriers to academic and social pursuits for all students.				
3	Increase the range and marketing of lectures, symposia, conferences, dialogues, and other intercultural experiences.	Office of Undergraduate Education	X		
4	Increase off-campus student engagement with and immersion in a variety of intercultural communities. Expand definitions of, and outreach to, new off-campus sites. Specific targets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two culturally relevant sports clubs for extended campuses • At least three community partnerships for community and civic engagement for the extended campuses • At least one new university supported sports club reflective of interests of students such as men's soccer or rugby 	Undergraduate Education/Extended Learning/Athletics		X	
5	Implement a student cultural competency certificate program.	ID		X	

Strategy 2.2: Increase the intercultural competencies and capacities of faculty and staff through intercultural engagement opportunities.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19- 20	Yr. 2 20- 21	Yr. 3 21- 22
1	Create a Faculty Diversity Advocacy Program. Such faculty will commit to mentoring diverse students and promote participation in intercultural events sponsored by the university and neighboring community.	ID	X		
2	Provide faculty curriculum development stipends to both design and redesign courses to achieve intercultural competence and global perspectives goals	Academic Affairs	X		
3	Provide student and faculty research grants to support research and scholarship on issues related to diversity and inclusion	Academic Affairs	X		

Supportive Campus Environment

Goal 3: Minnesota State Mankato will provide an inviting, safe, and supportive environment for people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Research has shown that students of diverse backgrounds are more likely to be retained and graduate in educational environments where they see and interact with people with shared

experiences. To accomplish this, the campus needs to increase the number of faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds at all levels of the University. However, recruitment is only part of the strategy. Once diverse professionals are hired, it is important that they are completely supported in their respective roles and feel welcomed to the campus and community at large.

Strategy 3.1: Increase recruitment, retention, and advancement of underrepresented faculty and staff at all levels of the university to enrich university life and provide role models.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19-20	Yr. 2 20-21	Yr. 3 21-22
1	Develop an employee resource guide to help employees find needed resources	ID	X		
2	Develop plan to expand leadership development opportunities for underrepresented employees	Cabinet	X		
3	Analyze the staffing process to maximize opportunities to diversify the workforce	EOTIX		X	
4	Develop a recruitment and retention survey of employment applicants to identify best practices	EOTIX		X	
5	Explore the addition of an Equity & Retention Specialist/Recruitment Coordinator staff position to focus on an employee diversity recruitment plan in connection with the University's Affirmative Action Plan	EOTIX		X	

Strategy 3.2: Increase student and employee sense of community, personal inclusion, personal safety, and value.

Action Plans		Responsible <i>Leading Person</i>	Yr. 1 19-20	Yr. 2 20-21	Yr. 3 21-22
1	Establish workshops for faculty to revise courses to increase feelings of inclusivity in all campus spaces and develop assessment tools and outcomes measures for inclusivity.	CETL		X	
2	Increase the size of the Multicultural Center space to create a more open, inviting, culturally rich environment to address the growing diverse student body.	ID			X
3	Strengthen the office infrastructure of the Office of Accessibility Resources to include more support staff and implement a data management system to improve efficiency and communication systems with students and faculty.	Office of Accessibility Resources		X	

4	Explore higher education case management models for students experiencing medical emergencies. Analyze where such needs are best met and how.	Office of Accessibility Resources, ID			X
5	Increase support for Transfer students by creating a “first year experience” program to help Transfer (online and face-to-face) students assimilate to the campuses.	Academic Affairs/Academic Advising	X		
6	Increase transfer student support by adding a transfer SRC to the office of New Student and Family Programs.	Academic Affairs	X		

STRATEGIC PLAN RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

Create and sustain an institutional financial infrastructure that effectively supports diversity/inclusivity.

- Provide funding for inclusivity and diversity training.
- Provide funding for the creation and on-going support of diversity advocates in each college
- Provide support for the redesign of courses to be more inclusive

ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY OF ACTION TOWARDS COMPLETION

Improve assessments and accountability for inclusivity at every level of the university.

- Mid-year and annual reporting for all primary stewards for all action steps under each objective and goal will be included in each mid-year and annual report due to the head of the division of Academic Affairs or Student Affairs. This will ensure timely completion and accountability of all action steps towards a more inclusive campus for all.

ACRONYMS

AH-College of Arts and Humanities

AHN-College of Allied Health and Nursing

AVP-Assistant Vice President

COB-College of Business

COD-Council of Deans

COE-College of Education

CSET-College of Science, Engineering and Technology

EOTIX – Equal Opportunity & Title IX

F&A-Finance and Administration

FA-Faculty Association

ID-Institutional Diversity

Ifo-Interfaculty Organization

IR-Institutional Research

MSU-Minnesota State University, Mankato

PCD-President's Commission on Diversity

PCSW-President's Commission on the Status of Women

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

There may be many definitions of the words or phrases below, but the definitions provided indicate how the Minnesota State system's Strategic Inclusion Committee has defined them for the purposes of this document.

Academic Success—The demonstration of student achievement in higher education through a series of indicators including, but not limited to: grade point average, rigorous coursework, acceptance to program major, persistence towards graduation, and graduation.

Access(ible)—Refers to a student's opportunity to participate in all of the education-related offerings provided by an educational Institution. Traditional access-related initiatives in higher education seek to remove barriers and provide support for historically underserved or underrepresented students.

Affinity Groups—Groups or programs that connect individuals based on interests, identities, and circumstances. Such programs can be especially helpful to first-year students and students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Brave Space— A community space where different points on a journey of learning and growing are acknowledged.

Campus Climate—The cumulative and continuing perception of the context in which the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential are felt.

Co-curricular Learning—Learning that takes place outside of a traditional classroom model (or curriculum) that directly relates to or enhances one's understanding of the targeted content area. Examples of co-curricular programs include study abroad, internships, symposia, conferences, and lectures.

Cultural Competence—Cultural Competence is the policies and practices of an organization, or the values and behaviors of an individual, that foster effective cross-cultural communication. It is a point on a continuum that ranges from cultural destructiveness to cultural proficiency. A culturally competent organization values the people who work there, understands the community in which it operates, and embraces its clients as valuable members of that community. This means that the culture of the organization promotes inclusiveness and institutionalizes the process of learning about differences. Cultural competence suggests a willingness to expand the organization's paradigm for culture.

Members of an organization with cultural competence as a goal examine their own cultures to understand how they, as cultural entities, impact the perception and interaction of those who are different. This means identifying the dynamics of difference caused by historical distrust. Clearly understanding who we are and accepting how others perceive us is one of the first steps towards cultural competence. The next step is the same underlying, non-defensive examination of the organization's culture.

Culturally Relevant/Responsible–Recognizing, understanding, and applying attitudes and practices that are sensitive to and appropriate for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Culture–Denotes the way of life of a group of people, encompassing their ideas, values, beliefs, norms, language, traditions, and artifacts.

Diversity–Minnesota State Colleges and Universities recognizes and respects the importance of all similarities and differences among human beings. The system and its institutions are committed, through their programs and policies, to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance, and respect in a multicultural society. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, ethnic origin, national origin, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, religious beliefs, creeds, and income. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to confronting prejudicial, discriminatory, or racist behaviors and policies.

Domestic/local multicultural experiences–Off-campus engagement opportunities with diverse communities (racially, culturally, socioeconomically, religiously, etc.) within the state of Minnesota or within the United States. This distinction was made in response to traditional immersion activities outside of the United States or what is more commonly referred to as study abroad.

Early Alert–A system in which faculty can log student behaviors that have been deemed strong indicators for dropping out or stopping out from college. Such systems have become more popular in higher education as institutions seek to improve their abilities to identify high-risk behavior.

Equity/Equitable–The proportional distribution or parity of desirable outcomes across groups. Sometimes confused with equality, equity refers to outcomes, while equality connotes equal treatment. Where individuals or groups are dissimilarly situated, equal treatment may be insufficient for or even detrimental to equitable outcomes. An example of equity is individualized educational accommodations for students with disabilities, which treat some students differently in order to ensure the equitable access to education.

Ethnicity–The shared sense of common heritage, ancestry, or historical past among an ethnic group. Ethnicity is a distinct concept of race, as illustrated by the fact that Hispanics, designated an ethnic group in the United States may nevertheless be of any race. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget definition of ethnicity, the U.S. Census Bureau defines ethnicity or origin as “the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.”

First Generation Student–(Minn State Definition) A student whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have not completed a bachelor’s degree at a four-year college or university.

(Federal Definition) Undergraduates whose parents never enrolled in postsecondary education (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/98082.pdf>)

Global—Activities, events, programs, and other learning experiences that are directly connected to international communities, cultures, and contexts.

Inclusion—Organizational strategies and practices that promote meaningful social and academic interactions among persons and groups who differ in their experiences, their views, and their traits. Expanding upon efforts that promote diversity on the basis of demographic differences.

(Inter) Cultural Competence—An ability to learn about and interact effectively with people of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This competence comprises four components: (1) awareness of one’s own cultural worldview, (2) attitude towards cultural differences, (3) knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and (4) cross-cultural skills.

Intercultural Engagement—Refers to educational opportunities, events, and programs that invite individuals to step into new cultural contexts with the intent of developing greater cultural competence.

Intergroup Dialogue—A facilitated, face-to-face discussion with the objective of creating new levels of understanding, relating, action between two or more social identity groups.

Interreligious Engagement—Events, projects, and curriculum designed to support activities related to the study and practice of religion in comparative and cross-cultural contexts.

Learning Communities—A group of people actively engaged in learning together, from each other, and by habituation.

Learning Communities often consist of two courses linked together to explore common themes and encourage partnerships with professors and peers.

Multicultural—Refers to a collective variety of cultures that can be defined along racial, sex, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, language, religious, and education lines. Goals for multicultural education vary along a continuum that includes demographic inclusion, student empowerment, intergroup understanding, educational equity, and social transformation.

Personal Safety—A person’s sense of safety as it relates to social, intellectual, physical, and cultural interactions, and spaces.

Safe Spaces—Spaces where students, community members, and employees feel socially and physically safe to represent their full identities and share their unique perspectives.

Underrepresented—Any individuals who are historically underrepresented in American higher education in terms of: race/ethnicity/nationality, gender, parental education level, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, or spirituality/religiosity/philosophy.