

# Centering Equity and Social Justice: A Plan for Inclusive Excellence



## OSU-Cascades

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan | 2019-2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Inclusive excellence is a framework for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. It recognizes that the success of an institution depends on the degree to which it serves and engages diverse constituencies with equity and inclusion.*

OSU-Cascades’ recognizes that, in order to contribute significantly to the intellectual, cultural, ecological, social and economic vitality of Central, it must strive to model the principles and practices of a thriving, equitable, and sustainable society. This includes creating a culture of learning and exploration in which all community members strive to:

- Respect the dignity of all, across cultures, belief systems, and disciplines
- Aspire to excellence and integrity in every endeavor
- Consider current and future generations in every deliberation
- Demonstrate leadership in service to community

In order to realize this vision, OSU-Cascades must address the inequities experienced by students, staff, faculty, and others from marginalized and underrepresented communities. OSU-Cascades has increased its focus on, and investment in, efforts to center equity and social justice on campus – including supporting a Diversity Committee, creating a Diversity Coordinator role, and hosting events related to equity and social justice.

But we still have work to do. Inspired by OSU Office of Institutional Diversity’s strategic plan “Innovate and Integrate: A Plan for Inclusive Excellence,” OSU-Cascades’ DEI strategic plan supports the goals articulated in “Innovate and Integrate” while also responding to the unique needs and strengths of the Cascades campus and Central Oregon community.

This DEI strategic plan is organized around four key goals. These ambitious goals are rooted in OSU-Cascades vision, mission and values and can be achieved by centering equity and social justice while leaning on our campus culture of collaboration, creativity, and innovation:

- ▶ Adopt a framework of inclusive excellence and embed a commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion within all aspects of OSU-Cascades.
- ▶ Make OSU-Cascades a destination of choice for diverse, historically marginalized, and underrepresented students, staff, and faculty.
- ▶ Provide innovative and transformative learning experiences enabling all students and employees to advance equity and social justice.

► Communicate OSU-Cascades' accomplishments, initiatives and innovations as the campus advances equity and social justice and model best practices in inclusive excellence to the Central Oregon community.

## KEY TERMS

### **Climate**

Climate refers to the way that an organization is perceived and experienced by its individual members; whether they feel valued, listened to, personally safe, and treated with fairness and dignity.

### **DEI**

Refers to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

### **Diversity**

Diversity refers to differences in identity and/or experience, typically focusing on those identities or experiences that may be subject to bias, harassment, or discrimination.

### **Equity**

Refers to the distribution of resources in a way that counteracts disparities to create equal access and outcomes.

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion in the manner in which marginalized and underrepresented communities are not only included, but valued as necessary voices.

### **Inclusive Excellence**

Inclusive excellence is the recognition that an organization's success depends on how well it values, engages, and includes members from marginalized and underrepresented communities.

### **Marginalized Communities**

Marginalized communities consist of individuals holding identities that have been historically marginalized – deprived of access and opportunity because of identity.

### **OSU-Cascades Community**

The OSU-Cascades community includes current students and employees, alumni, partners, and collaborators.

### **Social Justice**

Social justice refers to a theoretical framework that understands justice as being shaped by social systems and manifested through social action. Beyond legal rights, social justice also considers the impacts of disparities in equity and access.

### **Transformative Learning**

Transformative learning is the expansion of awareness through the evolution of individual worldviews and perceptions of oneself, and may include accessing new information and frameworks and critically analyzing underlying premises.

### **Underrepresented Communities**

Underrepresented communities consist of individuals holding identities that are underrepresented or underserved within academic or administrative areas at Oregon State, within the state of Oregon, and nationally in higher education.

## BACKGROUND

### DEI at OSU-Cascades

#### Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion supports students, staff, and faculty on the OSU-Cascades campus. This office is currently staffed by a 0.5 FTE Diversity Coordinator, whose responsibilities include: strategic planning; assessment and evaluation; bias response; supporting equitable and inclusive teaching; developing strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse students, faculty, and staff; and promoting cultural competence through engagement and education.

Prior to the hiring of the current Diversity Coordinator in February 2018, the position was vacant for more than a year. During that time, the Diversity Committee successfully advocated for the position to be posted and for the capacity to be expanded from 0.25 to 0.50 FTE. The creation and operationalization of this plan is a primary responsibility of the Diversity Coordinator.

#### Diversity Committee

OSU-Cascades has had a Diversity Committee since it shared a campus—and committee—with Central Oregon Community College. Committee membership varies from year to year and includes staff and faculty from a wide range of units and programs, as well as a student.

#### **Diversity Committee membership for 2018-2019 included:**

Stephanie Beamer (Admissions)	Nick Martin (Housing)
Kathy Biles (Counselor Education)	Carmen Martinez (Admissions)
Sara Freedman (Marketing)	Desiree Ness (Human Resources)
Jenna Goldsmith (Writing)	Zola Nkansah (Financial Aid / Veterans)
Debbie Goff (International Students)	Diane Pritchard (Disability Access)
Donna Harris (Graduate Licensure)	Lura Reed (HDFS)
Andrew Ketsdever (Associate Dean)	Erin Rook (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)
Kreg Lindberg (TROL)	Norm Rush (Accounting)

## Preparing the Plan

### DEI Strategic Planning Committee

**Erin Rook**

Planning Committee Chair, Diversity Coordinator

**Jenna Goldsmith**

Diversity Committee Chair, Writing Instructor

**Nick Martin**

Diversity Committee Co-Chair, Resident Director

**Stephanie Beamer**

Diversity Committee Member / Former Chair, Assistant Director of Admissions - Recruitment

### Planning Process

The DEI Strategic Planning Committee provided multiple opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to provide feedback on the plan.

These included in-person sessions with students, staff, and faculty, as well as via a Qualtrics survey. The goals and strategies were approved by the Leadership Team in June 2019.

## ASSUMPTIONS

The work of advancing diversity, equity and inclusion is dynamic and constantly evolving. As such, we recognize that the preferred language and best practices in this space may shift over the five-year span of this plan. We trust that the stewards of this plan will carry it forward in a way that balances its core principles and objectives with changing needs and realities.

This plan is built upon the following assumptions:

1. The advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion is essential to the mission, vision, and goals of OSU-Cascades and the pursuit of inclusive excellence.
2. Because inequity and injustice are built into systems, efforts to advance DEI within institutions requires systemic change.
3. This work cannot and should not be done by the Diversity Coordinator or Diversity Committee members alone, and must engage the entire campus community.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### Role of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The OSU-Cascades Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will be primarily responsible for monitoring implementation and progress of the campus DEI strategic plan. However, the work of inclusive excellence necessarily involves all OSU-Cascades community members. This strategic plan is organized around goals that require all campus stakeholders to take responsibility for implementing OSU-Cascades' vision for inclusive excellence.

### Vision

OSU-Cascades, through innovative initiatives and practices, will integrate principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of the campus to become a model for inclusive excellence in higher education and in the Central Oregon community. As a result of this work, OSU-Cascades will be destination of choice for students, faculty, and staff seeking teaching and research excellence within a dynamic, inclusive, and student-centered campus community.

### Mission

The mission of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is to design, plan, lead, and implement – in collaboration with campus and university partners – institutional change actions, initiatives, and communications to advance diversity, equity and inclusion throughout OSU-Cascades. This work supports the realization of Oregon State University's mission as a land grant institution committed to teaching, research, outreach, and engagement.

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion works with a social justice framework that:

- Focuses on structural and systemic institutional issues.
- Actively addresses dynamics of bias, oppression, and privilege to counteract inequities.
- Considers how people, policies, practices and every part of the campus can collaborate.
- Recognizes the importance and impact of historical and institutionalized social categories including race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and others.
- Recognizes that every member of the university plays a key role in advancing the goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion.



## DEI STRATEGIC GOALS (2019-2024)

**GOAL 1: Integrate and advance inclusive excellence within all aspects of OSU-Cascades.**

*This goal focuses on the systematic decentralization of diversity, equity and inclusion work through the innovation and integration of policies and practices to sustainably enhance and embed a commitment to equity and social justice at all levels of the campus.*

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Develop and adopt university-wide definitions for key DEI terms.
2. Create a model DEI strategic plan for use by all administrative and academic units.
3. Monitor implementation of DEI plan and report annually on progress.
4. Create a clear mission, goals, and bylaws for the staff/faculty Diversity Committee.
5. Incorporate DEI language and assessment criteria in all position descriptions.
6. Ensure that physical and learning spaces, as well as internal and external official communication, reflects OSU-Cascades' commitment to DEI by striving to exceed minimum standards for equity and access.
7. Include language about OSU-Cascades' commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in all marketing and outreach materials and guiding documents.
8. Create model syllabi language on diversity, equity and inclusion in the classroom.
9. Ensure assessment criteria and metrics for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion are adopted and applied in all hiring, review, promotion and tenure, compensation, and advancement processes.
10. Develop and support affinity groups focused on deepening relationships with and building connections among OSU-Cascades students, staff, faculty and alumni from historically underrepresented or marginalized communities.
11. Create student jobs focused on DEI to expand capacity and student engagement.
12. Ensure that all students, staff and faculty are knowledgeable about the definition of a bias incident and when and how to address concerns related to bias, sexual harassment/assault or bullying.

**GOAL 2: Make OSU-Cascades a destination of choice for diverse, historically marginalized, and underrepresented students, staff, and faculty by fostering an accessible and inclusive campus climate.**

*This goal recognizes that moving toward equity and social justice requires innovative policies and practices to successfully recruit, hire and enroll employees and students from underrepresented communities, as well as the creation and cultivation of learning, working and living environments that allow diversity, equity and inclusion to thrive.*

## ACTION ITEMS

### **Students**

1. Regularly and robustly assess campus climate as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion through quantitative and qualitative measures. Develop a dashboard of student diversity data and establish recruitment and retention goals for diverse and underrepresented groups.
2. Develop and adopt innovative best practices to improve recruitment and retention of undergraduate and graduate students from underrepresented communities.
3. Increase the number of OSU-Cascades college visits by prospective students and community members from underrepresented communities.
4. Offer multiple recruit events for underrepresented student populations each year.
5. Integrate information about OSU-Cascades' efforts to advance diversity, equity and inclusion into Student Ambassador programs.
6. Integrate information regarding OSU-Cascades' commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in START, International Student Orientation and Welcome Week.
7. Increase partnerships with Outreach and Engagement to develop student recruitment pipelines in all 36 Oregon counties.
8. Increase partnership with local and statewide organizations serving underrepresented communities to support recruitment and retention.

9. Make key admissions, financial aid, and other documents available in Spanish.
10. Ensure reporting procedures for student concerns related to access, bias, and Title IX are clear, accessible, and user-friendly.
11. Identify and launch academic programs of interest to students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.
12. Review admissions and marketing materials with a lens for DEI.
13. Support the development of a student diversity advisory group.
14. Host one large student-focused diversity event per term.

### **Staff/Faculty**

1. Regularly and robustly assess campus climate as it relates to diversity, equity and inclusion through quantitative and qualitative measures.
2. Develop a dashboard of staff/faculty diversity data and establish recruitment and retention goals for diverse and underrepresented groups.
3. Develop and adopt innovative best practices to improve recruitment and retention of employees from underrepresented communities.
4. Require affirmative action and implicit/cognitive bias training for all search committee members.
5. Develop best practices for providing information to applicants during the search process regarding OSU-Cascades' commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion.
6. Integrate information regarding OSU-Cascades' commitment to inclusive excellence in new employee orientation programs and materials.
7. Ensure reporting procedures for staff and faculty concerns related to access, bias, and Title IX are clear, accessible, and user-friendly.
8. Ensure that all hiring, firing, and promotion practices are equitable and free from bias.

### GOAL 3: Provide innovative and transformative learning experiences enabling all students and employees to advance equity and social justice.

*This goal recognizes that innovative and transformative learning is central to advancing equity and social justice. All students and employees must have opportunities to develop a deep and practical understanding of the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice.*

#### ACTION ITEMS

1. Develop and implement a 5-year plan to ensure all students participate in innovative and transformative diversity, equity and inclusion learning experiences.
2. Develop and implement a 5-year plan to ensure all employees participate in innovative and transformative diversity, equity and inclusion learning experiences.
3. Adapt existing Oregon State University online and experiential learning programs related to diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice to better reflect the realities of Central Oregon and OSU-Cascades.
4. Develop curriculum and programming specific to OSU-Cascades that supports the core competencies outlined in OSU's Institutional Guidance for Cultural Competency.
5. Increase the number of faculty who participate in the Difference, Power and Discrimination Academy, or similar training, to one per program.
6. Create suggested syllabus language and classroom guidelines aimed at creating a more inclusive learning environment.
7. Create a certificate program for students, staff and faculty to incentivize participation in DEI education.
9. Recognize and reward integration of diversity, equity and inclusion principles into research programs.

**GOAL 4: Communicate OSU-Cascades' accomplishments, initiatives and innovations as the campus advances equity and social justice and model best practices in equity and social justice to the Central Oregon community.**

*Goal 4 recognizes that inclusive excellence requires transparently and thoughtfully describing the university's initiatives and innovations, celebrating accomplishments and addressing challenges.*

#### ACTION ITEMS

1. Increase partnerships with local organizations to offer public DEI programming.
2. Ensure that OSU-Cascades is a key player in community DEI events and conversations.
3. Publish OSU-Cascades Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan on the OSU-Cascades and OSU Office of Institutional Diversity websites.
4. Annually publish progress reports on the OSU-Cascades and OSU Office of Institutional Diversity websites.
5. Develop print, web and social media materials highlighting efforts and initiatives to advance diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice at OSU-Cascades.
6. Establish staff and student diversity advocate awards with an appropriate stipend.
7. Increase national ranking and recognition for OSU-Cascades' innovative DEI initiatives.
8. Apply for DEI awards, such as the HEED and Campus Pride awards.
9. Increase recognition and communication of research advancing inclusive excellence.
10. Increase communications highlighting successes and accomplishments of students, employees and alumni from underrepresented communities.
11. Update the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion website to highlight resources; current DEI efforts and events; and increased recognition for these initiatives.

12. Deliver an annual State of Diversity address to provide information on OSU-Cascades' efforts to advance diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice.