

Division of Student Affairs

2015 Diversity Plan Accountability Report

The Division of Student Affairs (DSA) represents 17 departments (Becky Gates Children’s Center, Department of Information Technology, Disability Services, Memorial Student Center, Multicultural Services, Music Activities, Office of the Commandant, Recreational Sports, Residence Life, Student Activities, Student Counseling Service, Student Health Services, Student Life Studies, Offices of the Dean of Student Life, University Center and Special Events, University Art Galleries, and the Veteran Resource and Support Center), with a mission to support Texas A&M University by providing exceptional services, facilities, and programs that promote student success, embody the Aggie spirit, and foster a diverse and inclusive campus community to deepen the understanding and individual application of the Aggie Core Values – Excellence, Integrity, Leadership, Loyalty, Respect, and Selfless Service.

The division is committed to advancing and enhancing the University’s Diversity Plan through alignment with accountability, climate, and equity (ACE) initiatives. As a Division, ACE is accomplished in various ways and through multiple outlets throughout the division. This report assesses our most impactful and transformative diversity-related strategies. The DSA 2.0 committee (Diverse Strategies in Action) is charged with assessing and reporting ACE initiatives for the Division of Student Affairs.

1. Recruitment

Divisional Diversity Statement

Linkage – The inclusion of a uniform diversity statement reflects comments made on campus climate surveys for staff and students. Comments reflect a need to better illustrate the DSA commitment to diversity. DSA 2.0 discussions and research noted that not all DSA departments had diversity statements and the division as a whole lacked a uniform statement and commitment. As part of the DSA Strategic Plan, a standard diversity statement has been adopted by the division and is one of the strategic commitments.

“Diversity and Inclusion – We are committed to cultivating a campus environment where people from all back grounds and experiences can thrive. We build and model a welcoming environment that promotes a deeper understanding of identities of an in increasingly diverse population.”

Impact - Upon approval by the Office of President for Student Affairs (OVPSA), the diversity statement will be included on hiring literature sent out by departments. Additionally, department diversity statements are being aligned with the division’s statement to reflect a uniform message and branding of diversity for student affairs at Texas A&M University.

Reflection on effectiveness – The DSA Strategic Plan was revealed and shared with division staff at the February 2015 Staff Development program. The commitment to diversity and inclusion was highlighted and explained in detail during the program. Additionally, the DSA leadership emphasized the importance of Goal 3 of the DSA Strategic Plan, “Create and inclusive environment that develops global citizens and leaders who productively engage in a wide spectrum of ideas, perspectives, and cultures.” Staff feedback from program assessment indicated satisfaction with promoting diversity and inclusivity in the division and more prominently in the strategic plan.

Future strategies, projects, or ideas – The new DSA website will feature a DSA tab highlighting diversity and inclusion information including links to the University Diversity Plan, Office of the Vice President and Associate Provost for Diversity, student and staff climate reports, DSA strategic plan, and DSA 2.0 initiatives. Departmental sites will also be reviewed for alignment with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs diversity statement and web-links. The departmental review will be completed by August 2016.

Recruitment

Linkage - Based on feedback from a Fall 2015 questionnaire administered to DSA directors and hiring managers regarding staff recruitment, hiring and promotion, a DSA 2.0 subcommittee was formed to study fundamental issues of equity in recruitment of division staff at the department level.

Impact – Three concerns in hiring across departments within the division were identified as potentially impacting diversity in the recruitment process: paying of travel costs for on campus candidates, salary negotiations, and relocation expenses. As a result of this, the DSA 2.0 subcommittee is reviewing current division wide processes and researching best practices for hiring diverse staff.

Reflection on effectiveness – Recognizing that there are challenges with identifying a uniform approach across departments due to size, budgets, and personnel credentials, the committee is encouraged that conversations are happening to address the identified issues.

Future strategies, project, or ideas - Results of the subcommittee departmental reviews will be shared with the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs in February 2016 for review and action by DSA Directors and hiring managers.

2. Retention

Welcoming Environment

Linkage - During the 2014-2015 annual diversity reporting cycle, the Division of Student Affairs reported that 74% of employees reported feeling “Very Welcome” at the monthly division staff meetings. In the response letter to our annual report we were asked to look in the 26% who reported feeling ‘Somewhat Welcome’; specifically looking at gender and race/ethnicity. In response to this question DSA asked all staff in attendance at the annual awards ceremony the following question: “How welcome and a part of the DSA Community do you feel?” Consistent with previous findings, 74% of staff indicated feeling “Very Welcome”, and 26% reported feeling “Somewhat Welcomed”.

Impact – The gender and racial/ethnic profile from the annual awards ceremony indicated that males feel more welcomed than females in the division and white staff more welcome than non-white staff. Eighty-three percent (83%) of males and 71% of females reported feeling very welcome, and 75% of whites and 63% of non-whites reported feeling very welcome as part of the DSA Community.

Reflection on effectiveness – The New Staff Orientation program and Staff Development team have worked diligently to engage new staff and connect them with individuals and resources on campus and in the local community. More data is needed to gain a better understanding of the climate and factors experienced by the 26% feeling only somewhat welcomed as part of the DSA community.

Future strategies, projects, or ideas - Reviewing the DSA exit interview process is one recommended strategy to gain feedback from staff leaving Texas A&M about their experiences in the division. The DSA 2.0 committee is reviewing current exit interview processes for content, purpose, and consistency.

3. Campus Climate

2013 Campus Climate Survey Data

Linkage – The DSA 2.0 Committee reviewed the 2013 Undergraduate Campus Climate survey for insight about the campus community. The committee specifically compared responses of students who graduated to those who dropped out, looking for differences between these student groups. The committee identified demographic differences within these student groups who were having a different experience at Texas A&M University.

Impact – Students who dropped out reported different experiences than those who graduated, including higher levels of micro aggressions and lower levels of engagement in critical areas of traditions, student organizations, or high impact practices. The data also revealed five areas of student identity most impacted by climate: Sexual Orientation, Religion, Socioeconomic status, International students, and Race and Ethnicity. The area of student identity most negatively impacting persistence was students whose sexual orientation differs from the campus majority, followed equally by religious diversity (differs from campus majority) and race/ethnicity.

Utilizing information 2013 Undergraduate Campus Climate survey, New Student and Family Programs started a cultural audit program to evaluate how inclusive their programming is for underrepresented groups. This process will take place over several years however, knowing that religion and international student identities are highly correlated to dropping out, these two areas were focused on during Summer 2015 new student and transfer student conferences. The cultural audit results showed that both first time freshman and transfer students and International students and non-Christian students felt welcome at a rate similar to domestic students and Christian students. However, for both student groups the results suggest that NSC has work to do on accommodating non-Christian religious needs and using religiously inclusive language. These results are being shared with all of the various groups across the University who participate in New Student Conferences and how their presentations can be adapted to use religiously inclusive language.

Reflection on effectiveness – Based on these findings, the Division of Student Affairs is actively reaching out to student organizations and other groups who serve these communities. DSA 2.0 is making groups and communities impacted by this data aware of diversity

funds and resources that area available to assist with educational interventions in the division. Externally, meetings to discuss partnerships are being explored with the GLBT Resource Center, all Campus Ministry Alliance, International Student Center, and groups that serve low socioeconomic students to share this data and discuss collaborative interventions.

Additionally, the DSA intentionally and strategically planned division staff development programs to explore and educate staff on these issues. Staff Development topics and learning outcomes related to the climate study findings are listed in the following table:

Date	Topic	Speaker	Learning Outcomes
October 2014	Be the Change You Want To Be	Jessica Pettitt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To understand the difference between Diversity and Social Justice ▪ To remove excuses that stand in one's way from doing social justice work ▪ To utilize three basic tools of self-reflection: tracking, triggers, and listening ▪ To motivate and inspire audiences to become participants in their own change
Breakout Session	Social Justice: When Diversity Isn't Enough	Jessica Pettitt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To understand how pre-existing assumptions affect an individual's ability to recognize and value diversity ▪ To recognize and give examples of difference in both a singular and plural context
Breakout Session	The Day Everything Changed	Jessica Pettitt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To learn to facilitate discussions around contingency plans for campus crises. ▪ To clearly identify obstacles to an ideal campus climate and facilitate change in campus protocol to achieve meaningful change. ▪ To understand how to effectively manage crises preparation on campus. ▪ To clearly define the roles of campus members in proactively addressing campus situations.
April 2015	The International Student Experience	Lesley Vaculin and Panel of International Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To learn factual demographic information about TAMU International student population ▪ To gain a better understanding of the international student experience at TAMU and ▪ Understand how DSA staff can better serve international students.

Table 1: Staff Development D&I Programs

All of the abovementioned programs addressed issues identified in the 2013 Campus Climate Survey and are in alignment with strategies outlined in the TAMU Diversity Plan. Assessment data from the programs indicated that the majority of staff in attendance agreed or strongly agreed that the programs provided insightful knowledge about marginalized populations, were relevant to their current work, and inspired or motivated them to become change agents.

Future strategies, projects, or ideas – The DSA will work with Student Life Studies on a timeline for a 2017 Student Campus Climate Survey. Discussions are underway regarding the utility of using the SERU to assist with gaining data on campus climate and student experiences with diversity and inclusion. The DSA 2.0 committee will continue to work with the DSA Staff Development Team to support and fund at least two speakers or workshops a year on issues related to ACE. The Department of Student Activities is working with Dr. Nancy Watson, Center for Change and Conflict Resolution, to create training modules for student organizations focused on Critical Dialogues. The training modules will equip student leaders with strategies for engaging in face-to-face conflict management and dialogue with an emphasis on organizational inclusivity. Additionally, the DSA contributed \$5,000 to the Texas A&M Campus Climate Conference and will support division staff active participation with the conference.

Campus Climate Internal and External

Linkage - Further contributing to campus climate, the Division of Student Affairs engaged in collaborations internal and external to the division that addressed issues of diversity and inclusion from multiple perspectives. These collaborations directly linked backed to the DSA Strategic Plan Goal 3 b, c, and d.

Impact – Educating and supporting diversity and inclusion efforts positions DSA departments to become regional and national leaders and helps inform research through practice. Additionally, collaboration encourages involvement with internal and external stakeholders at various learning levels. All 17 departments within the DSA impacts campus climate. Each fosters a diverse and inclusive environment, contributing directly through services and programming for students, or indirectly through support of those

departments who touch the lives of students on a daily basis. Below is a snapshot of the scope of campus climate diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives and DSA collaborations with internal and external stakeholders.

D&I Collaborations and Consultations:

DSA departments reported collaborations and consultations with partners inside and outside Texas A&M University regarding diversity and inclusion programs and initiatives. The below chart shows those contributions, by department, totaling 118 campus partner collaborations, 72 external partner collaborations, and the 121 program consultations focus on ACE.

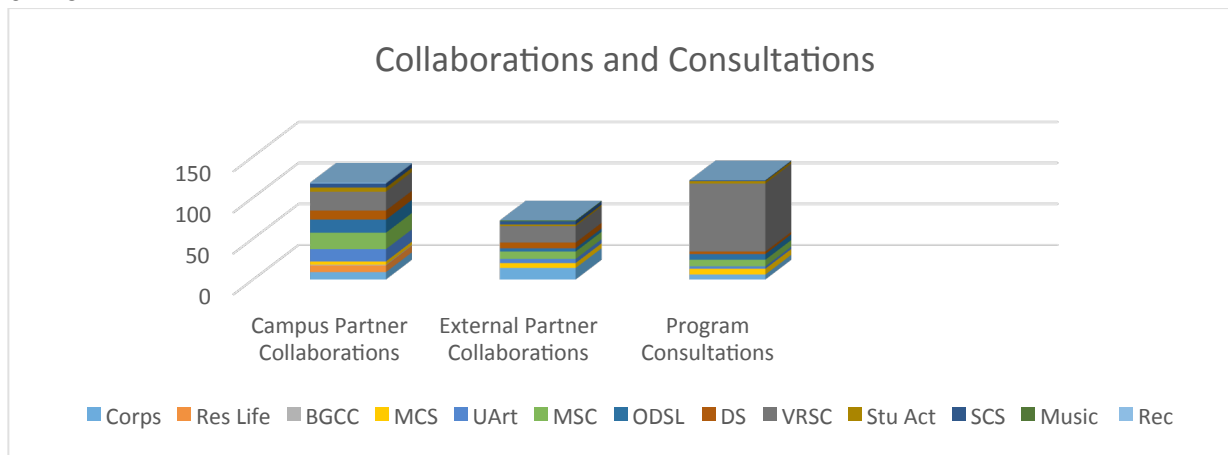


Table 2: DSA Collaboration and Consultations – Accountability, Climate, and Equity

Select ACE collaborations and consultations.

- Multicultural Services: Diversity Certificate collaboration with the College of Architecture, College of Geoscience, and College of Liberal Arts.
- Multicultural Services: Cultural Leadership Understanding and Exploration for Sophomores (CLUES) with the College of Agriculture and Life Science.
- University Art Galleries: Dia de los Muertos alter display in the Stark Galleries, collaboration with the Hispanic Presidents Council and Professional Hispanics Network.
- Memorial Student Center: Gilbert Achcar: Arab Youth the Arab Spring (MSC L.T. Jordan Institute) in collaboration with the Department of Sociology.
- Memorial Student Center: Dear White People, presented in collaboration with MSC WBAC, Aggie Cinema and the Department of Film Studies.
- Veteran Resource and Support Center: the Aggie Veteran History program offered in collaboration with the college of Liberal Arts, Evans Library and TAMU Archives.
- Office of the Commandant (Corps of Cadets): Three-week exchange program for 35 Republic of Korea ROTC cadets in collaboration with the South Korean ROTC association.

Highlights of ACE program consultations and initiatives:

- Offices of the Dean of Student Life: The Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual, Transgender Resource Center (GLBT RC) provide consultation to the Texas A&M University School of Medicine, conducting Aggie Ally training and facilitated a focus group for students about working with LGBTQ patients.
- Offices of Dean of Student Life: Provided training to the Baylor College of Dentistry regarding resources and resolution of Title IX complaints.
- Veteran Resource and Support Center: Consultations regarding veteran programming in higher education with Northwestern University, North Carolina State University, Virginia Tech, University of Texas- El Paso, Prairie View A&M, University of Texas – Permian Basin, University of Houston, University of Missouri, University of Michigan, Palm Beach State College (FL) and TAMU Galveston, TAMU San Antonio, and TAMU HSC and Law School.

D&I Conference Presentations:

Staff within eleven departments of the Division of Student Affairs gave presentations encompassing inclusion and diversity efforts at 37 conferences. Included were the following highlights:

- Student Counseling Service: *Restorative Justice for Sexual Assault on College Campuses: When Universities Don't Do Enough* at the Association of Women in Psychology, San Francisco, CA
- Multicultural Services: *Black Self-Concept: Legitimizing African American Student Narratives on Predominately White Campuses* at the American Association of Blacks in Higher Education (AABHE) Annual Conference, Charleston, SC.
- Memorial Student Center: *Authenticity in Professionalism: Living within Marginality & Navigating the Tension as a Millennial Woman of Color* at the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Disability Services: *Taking the Lead on the Path to Access: Ways to Make a Difference on Your Campus* at the Association on Higher Education and Disability, St. Paul, MN.
- Student Activities and Student Life Studies: *Extended Orientation Program Persistence Rates: Texas A&M's Six Year Longitudinal Study*, at the National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) Annual Conference, Orlando, FL and the Texas A&M Assessment Conference, College Station, TX.

D&I National Awards and External Funding:

Departments within the DSA helped Texas A&M University to garnish 10 national awards associated with diversity initiatives. Eight of those 10 were awarded to the University through the contributions of the **Veteran's Resource and Support Center**, including the college ranked #1 in 2014 Best Colleges for Veterans, Return on Investment (www.bestvalueschools.com), #7 rank, Best for Vets: Colleges 2015 by the Military Times, #9 rank, 2015 U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges for Veterans and the designation as a Military Order of the Purple Heart School.

Reflection on effectiveness – ACE collaborations, presentations, and recognition illustrates the Division's commitment to diversity and inclusion efforts. The time, energy, resources, and training required to implement the abovementioned initiatives are clear indicators that the DSA is dedicated to promoting and enhancing ACE initiatives at Texas A&M University and to external stakeholders.

Future strategies, projects, or ideas – The Division of Student Affairs and DSA 2.0 committee will continue to measure the impact of campus climate initiatives with internal and external stakeholders through the use of various assessment methods. Additionally, \$85,000 in ACE funding, from the OVPSA, is available in the form of grants as an incentive to further encourage engagement with diversity and inclusion initiatives in the Division of Student Affairs.

3. Equity

Linkage – As previously mentioned, the DSA 2.0 subcommittee on Succession Planning, Promotion, and Recruitment/Retention used data from the DSA Director's questionnaire to begin studying division hiring, promotion, and succession processes. As a result of the study the subcommittee brought forth recommendations for division-wide consideration and implementation to the DSA 2.0 committee.

Impact - The subcommittee review identified a number of issues related to differential practices taking place across departments that could potentially impact diversity and inclusion of staff. Already noted, steps have been taken by the division to focus attention on the various options that are within control of the departments to hire internally, establish career ladders, create career paths, and provide clear efforts to reward and retain staff. However, there is not a uniform approach or division philosophy for internal promotions or succession planning. Recommendations from the subcommittee suggested: a DSA philosophy statement that acknowledges internal promotions as an option for staff retention and process/check list for determining whether to do an internal or external search.

Reflection on effectiveness – Recommendations from the subcommittee are still in development and vetting by the entire DSA 2.0 committee. The utility of a uniform philosophy and approach is a first step and strategy to address equity issues across applicable groups.

Future strategies, project, or ideas – DSA 2.0 will continue to research best practices from peer and aspirant institutions regarding succession planning, promotion, and recruitment/retention. Findings and recommendations will be presented to the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs in July 2016 for review and action.