

May 19, 2013

To: Deborah Welsh, Department of Psychology Head
From: Department of Psychology Diversity Council
RE: End of 2012-13 Academic Year Report

As we end this academic year, each of the members of the Diversity Council would like to express our appreciation. First, we thank you for the foresight and leadership to create the committee that evolved this year into the Diversity Council. We are very appreciative of your commitment to diversity. We are also grateful for the opportunity to serve our Department as members of the Council. Thank you for appointing those of us you appointed, and for setting in motion the other mechanisms that brought the rest of us to the group.

We are very proud of the document we created, and of the work we started this year. We emphasize the term *started*, because we are aware of how much remains to be accomplished. In an important sense, developing a diversity plan and presenting it for approval to the faculty is only a first small step – and after all, it is a step we've taken before. We believe that next year will be even more critical than the past year for our Department's diversity efforts. Whether we continue the momentum that the Council built this year, or whether this plan languishes will depend on two critical factors: an energetic and enthusiastic 2013-14 Diversity Council, working together with broad support; and a willingness to contribute from many other faculty, students, and staff.

To give next year's Diversity Council the best chance for success, we thought it best to end this year with some recommendations for you, followed by a brief summary of the progress made this year on each of the six component goals of the Diversity Plan. We've prepared the summary for distribution to the department faculty.

Recommendations:

1. Early in this year, an individual member of the Council took the lead responsibility for revising and collating feedback for a specific goal for each of the six component goals of the plan. We believe this structure worked very well. We recommend that next year's Diversity Council organize themselves along similar lines, with six individuals taking the lead responsibility for each of the plan's component goals. This responsibility will include implementing component objectives, gathering benchmark data, and soliciting wider participation from among faculty, students, and staff not appointed to the Council. Note that all of the "Goal Point Persons" do not need to be faculty members. After Jess Hay took her leave of absence at the end of the first semester, the three student members of the Council did a superb job of taking over responsibility for Goal 1. (Special thanks to Alex, Jerika, and Michael.)
2. The Diversity Council this year contained six faculty members, three students, and two staff members. Given that the plan evolved to encompass six goals, it might be a good idea to appoint 12 members for the coming year – perhaps six faculty, four students, and two staff. In this way, each goal could potentially be covered by a lead person and someone else in something of a "co-pilot" role.

3. The participation model we are suggesting for next year would rest on a foundation of Diversity Council members who take responsibility for each of the six goals, but also fluid participation from many other members of the Department community. We envision ad hoc “task groups” of volunteers organized by a member of the Diversity Council around achieving a particular objective.

4. Finally, we recommend that you charge each new Diversity Council with the task of preparing an annual, data-based progress report that details achievements in each of the six goal areas. The report should be delivered to the faculty, as well as students and staff, so that it can become a regular discussion item at the April Department meeting. To get this tradition started, what follows is a brief summary of where we stand on each of the six component goals of the Diversity Plan.

Academic Year 2012-13 Final Report
Diversity Council
Department of Psychology

Goal 1: Create and sustain a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive departmental climate.

The student members of the Diversity Council were charged with making revisions to Goal 1 of the diversity plan. Progress was made toward this goal through the completion of several objectives. One objective was simply to create the Diversity Council and establish student members as an integral part of the decision-making process, reflecting the perceptions and needs of students alongside faculty members and staff. As part of our initiative to integrate student needs into the plan, a departmental student-wide survey revealed important information about the unique needs and observations of the graduate students in our programs. Thus, several revisions were made to the diversity plan in order to integrate these expressed needs. Furthermore, data from the survey helped to prioritize the goals and objectives of the plan in a way that coincided with student desires.

Another concrete achievement this year was instillation of an automatic opening mechanism for the third floor entry door. Austin Peay is now more welcoming to persons with disabilities. In addition, two Safe Zones trainings were also conducted.

As part of the expressed desire for richer clinical training on issues of diversity and working with diverse clientele, the student representatives have proposed the implementation of a clinic survey to assess the experience of clients who utilize psychological services and may have unique, specific needs and their perception of their provider's competence in these areas. We aim to implement this proposal in the Fall 2013 semester. Furthermore, in order to establish a safe mechanism for collecting feedback from students, faculty, and staff, we proposed the development of an online submission space to process comments from anyone desiring to comment anonymously. This submission portal will become part of the diversity webpage and be open at all times. Any submissions will be reviewed at regular Diversity Council meetings. Lastly, due to the success of the student survey this year, we hope to conduct another annual survey in the Spring of 2014 to update and revise our plan according the needs and desires of next year's incoming class and all current students. Additional training opportunities such as SafeZone and other desired programs will take place in order for students to demonstrate their commitment to providing a welcoming environment for all. Lastly, we hope to take two new student members on the Diversity Council, as Michael will be leaving for internship and we would like to have 4 student members. The current student members will work to take nominations and coordinate voting by the graduate student body in the Fall.

Goal 2: Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from under-represented populations into faculty, staff, and administrative positions).

A very noteworthy achievement in this area was the successful hiring of Jioni Lewis. Our new colleague joins the Counseling Psychology program. She is an African American psychologist who was initially identified and recruited through UT's "Finding Future Faculty" program.

Essentially, this process not only increased the diversity of faculty in the department, but because it involved addition of a new faculty line, it also resulted in an increase in the overall number of tenure-line FTE.

Goal 3: : Attract, retain, and graduate increasing numbers of students from historically under-represented populations and international students.

The first objective of Goal 3 was to “Increase representation of diverse individuals in the graduate and undergraduate programs.” Within the first of the strategies/tactics aimed at reaching this objective is ‘Departmental Website Development’. The changes for our website are still in the works, but we do have a plan to include diversity issues (including a link to our department’s Diversity Plan once it has been approved by the faculty). The second strategy/tactic aimed at reaching this objective is to ‘Increase travel funds available to allow strong prospective minority students to attend interview days of the three graduate programs.’ We are putting together information from this year’s Visiting Days for our three programs to begin establishing baseline data.

Relevant to Goal 3, we have also collected data about doctoral admissions of U.S. ethnic minority students and international students shown in the table below. We want to stress that these data represent only two of the many dimensions of diversity that doctoral students bring to our Department: self-identified ethnic minority status and U.S. citizenship status. These data are reported on our application materials, but we do not want to minimize the importance of other forms of diversity (e.g., age, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion – to name only a few.)

The following table shows that, although the number of offers made and number of doctoral students admitted increased from 2012 to 2013, the number of offers made to U.S. ethnic minority and international students declined somewhat, and the number of these students who accepted offers in 2013 declined sharply from 2012. Students admitted in 2012 included three international students and three U.S. ethnic minority students. Students admitted in 2013 included one international and one U.S. ethnic minority student.

Admissions Comparison, 2012-2013

	2012		2013		% change*
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Students offered doctoral admission	22		29		+31.8
Offers accepted, % of total offers	17	77.3	19	65.5	+11.7
^a Focus students offered admission, % of total offers	6	27.3	5	17.2	-16.7
^a Focus students who accepted, % of total new students	6	35.3	2	10.5	-66.7

*calculated as (2013 – 2012) / 2012

^aFocus students are the number of self-identified U.S. ethnic minority students and international students, combined.

Goal 4: Ensure that curricular requirements reflect the Department's commitment to diversity and social justice

Considerable progress was made in incorporating multicultural and social justice issues into the psychology curriculum. Highlights include:

- o The inclusion of a human diversity requirement in the new undergraduate curriculum, to be implemented in fall of 2014.
- o All sections of PSYC 110 included a diversity component
- o PSYC 435: Multicultural Psychology was offered in the spring 2013 semester (53 undergraduate students enrolled)
- o PSYC 577: Multicultural Psychology: Theory and Research was offered to doctoral students
- o Five doctoral students in Counseling completed the two-semester social justice practicum. These students developed systemic interventions aimed at addressing social injustice faced by student veterans, Iraqi refugees in Knoxville, students with disabilities, non-traditional students, and male students of color.
- o Counseling students enrolled in PSYC 675: Advanced Group Methods co-facilitated six intergroup dialogue groups focusing on gender, race, religion and spirituality, sexual orientation, and social class
- o Efforts were made to place counseling and clinical students in field placements that provided exposure to diverse clients and experience advocating for social justice (e.g., Family Justice Center, Steps House, Cornerstone, Cherokee)

The first systematic assessment of courses and field placements will occur in the next academic year, and will ensure that we are aware of and providing recognition to all instructors and supervisors who incorporate diversity and social justice into their training.

Goal 5: Prepare graduate students to become teachers, researchers, and clinicians in a diverse world.

The department continues to make strides in the direction of increased diversity. However, the a few suggested strategies/tactics are not as visible. They are highlighted below:

- ** Build in a multicultural perspective into the weekly departmental colloquium series and lectures.
- ** Encourage more graduate students to attend and present diversity-related research at scientific conferences.
- ** Increase the focus of diversity issues for clinical and counseling graduate students as part of their professional training.

Goal 6: Develop and strengthen departmental partnerships with diverse communities on local, state, national, and international levels.

- o Historically, UTK faculty-led study abroad programs have included Multicultural Psychology in Italy, History of Psychology in London, and Social Psychology in Athens, Greece. The Diversity Council will work with the UTK Programs Abroad Office and department to inform students of opportunities and highlight study abroad programs on the department's website.
- o The Counseling Program coordinated a number of presentations for students enrolled in the Social Justice Colloquium during the 2012-2013 academic year. For example, the Tennessee Equality Project, UTK Disability Career Services, Together! Healthy Knox, and the Southern Equality Campaign provided information to students during the Spring 2013 semester. The Diversity Council will continue to assess faculty, staff, and student involvement in diversity groups and initiatives to promote diversity within the department.

2012-13 Diversity Council Members

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