



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ALABAMA
SYSTEM

FIRST
ANNUAL
DIVERSITY
CONFERENCE
SUMMARY

DECEMBER
2007

Suggested Best Practices for IDENTIFYING Underrepresented Faculty

1. Share job announcements with minority organizations (SREB, McKnight Fellows, etc.) and ask them to send to their scholars and fellows
 - a. Recruit via fellowships to graduate students – recruit from within and outside
2. Collaborate with HBCU's:
 - a. Have HBCU faculty as an outside member of search committees to help identify underrepresented faculty
 - b. Contact HBCU's to alert them of job searches
3. Provide search committees with more information:
 - a. Provide current data on faculty mix (race, gender, etc.)
 - i. Note: These data are available for the UAS campuses at <http://www.uasystem.ua.edu/IR%20Data/MinorityParticipationReport2007.pdf> and <http://www.uasystem.ua.edu/IR%20Data/datasum-current.pdf>.
 - b. Accurately assess where deficits are
 - c. Check your data – try and get what you don't have
4. Attend conferences and related activities dedicated to targeted area
5. Have an administrative position dedicated to monitoring and exploring applicant pools
6. Encourage faculty to recruit underrepresented individuals to graduate school

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

1. Funds should be devoted to diversity recruitment and support
2. Stronger commitments from administration
3. Search committees should meet early in the process with affirmative action or diversity officer
4. Funding to cover costs of sending search committee representatives to professional meetings for the purpose of identifying potential applicants and encouraging them to apply
5. Resistance of some faculty
6. Training for faculty and search committee chairs (delivered by HR and Provost)
7. Increase positive community environment – family supportive
8. Willingness to expand recruiting efforts beyond the standard sources

9. Lack of data to committees – provide percentages, etc. at initial meeting

Suggested Best Practices for RECRUITING Underrepresented Faculty

1. Offer fellowships for Ph.D. program and a faculty position (for at least three years)
 - a. Recruit from “within” – graduate fellowships
2. Involve Colleges’ of Education teacher training programs to target minorities for underrepresented fields from the elementary/middle school levels
3. Understand that we are recruiting families
 - a. Sell institution and location/community
 - b. Have spouse/partner relocation support
 - c. Establish a Welcome Wagon
 - d. Make people comfortable
4. Invite targeted individuals to give guest lectures – introduce them to the campus and community
 - a. Positively represent institution
 - b. Provide a snapshot of the “day-to-day” life at an institution
5. Create more funding opportunities (Endowed Chairs, etc.)
6. Actively recruit – not just when a position is available
7. Have Deans allow for broader areas of recruitment

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

1. Let your faculty know what is expected of them
2. Don’t tiptoe around the diversity issue
3. Find out what “they” want and present the best offer possible
4. Lack of strong administrative policy
5. Change timelines for hiring process – start much sooner
6. Be encouraging and positive
7. Develop strong community/family lifestyles and increase positive family environment

Suggested Best Practices for RETAINING Underrepresented Faculty

1. Have more visibility of diversity within institutions
 - a. Have a more diverse student body
2. Create support groups
3. Have opportunities for promotion and advancement
4. Try to keep minority faculty from being overloaded with service and committee responsibilities AND value service work in tenure review process
5. Have minority fellowships for faculty
6. Develop mentoring program
 - a. Consider “informal” mentoring rather than mandated
7. Ask new faculty how their experiences enhance furthering diversity
8. Conduct climate survey of all faculty
9. Develop “first year experience” to integrate new faculty in community
10. Provide faculty development funds
11. Develop collateral relationships with HBCU’s

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

1. Lack of administrative commitment
2. Money
3. Underrepresented faculty being asked to participate in service activities more than other faculty
4. Need to create a community within departments – faculty lunch program – have frank discussions about diversity
5. Be more effective hiring and promoting from within

Suggested Best Practices for IDENTIFYING Underrepresented Staff

1. See suggestions for identifying underrepresented faculty
2. Consult your existing institutional staff
3. Attract the “Millennial’s”
4. Employ Leadership Academy’s
5. Use national search firms

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

1. Become familiar with the mindset and work habits of the “Millennial’s”
2. The perception of the area and the state

Suggested Best Practices for RECRUITING Underrepresented Staff

1. See suggestions for recruiting underrepresented faculty
2. Develop web page with pictures and stories of current faculty and staff
3. Cultivate good relationships with the local community
4. Do a better job with spousal hires
5. Develop internships and management trainee programs for staff
6. Demonstrate the value of diversity as evidenced by your own staffing
7. Display testimonials from current African American employees describing why they came to Alabama, why they remain, or why they are leaving
8. Broaden internal searches so they are not designed for a particular person

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

Suggested Best Practices for RETAINING Underrepresented Staff

1. See suggestions for retaining underrepresented faculty
2. Provide professional development opportunities
3. Ask on the front-end when a candidate chooses us—ask what was the deciding factor. Don't wait for the exit interview
4. Employ recognition program like Employee of the Year, Free Parking, Caller Reward, etc.
5. Display positive work life/family friendly policies on web pages
6. Develop creative compensation programs
7. Develop mentor programs
8. Have a plan of action for job advancement

Suggestions on what needs to be overcome:

1. Review evaluation process
2. Examine pay discrepancies
3. Diversity message needs to be “top down”
4. Be supportive of staff that do advance

SURVEY

The most valuable aspect of the program for me was:

1. Dr. Shirley Malcom's presentation
2. Sharing ideas with people from other institutions
3. The speakers did an excellent job at articulating the current issues and challenges to increasing diversity
4. Exchange of ideas and information received
5. Networking and meeting new people
6. The discussion sessions were highly focused and highly productive
7. Meeting other individuals, especially the fact that Dr. Portera was basically one of the participants as well as Dr. Radonovich. They were available for us to talk with.
8. The presentation by Dr. Malcom was very informative and real to the point. Every university in the state should be **REQUIRED** to hear her presentation at least once. Twice wouldn't hurt. Most inspiring!!
9. Interaction and various reactions from different institutions.

SURVEY

What could have been included to have made this experience more valuable to you?

1. Broader range of topics. Afternoon tended to be repetitive.
2. Mix groups more.
3. Benchmark data from UA, UAB, and UAH. Faculty percentages by race in 1990 to 2007.

Note: These data are available for the UAS campuses at
<http://www.uasystem.ua.edu/IR%20Data/MinorityParticipationReport2007.pdf> and
<http://www.uasystem.ua.edu/IR%20Data/datasum-current.pdf>.

4. Quick outline of Knight/Sims settlement to put that document in context for our discussions
5. Needed to have more administrators present. A larger “white” presence would have been better as well
6. Inclusion of additional leadership from the universities such as other vice presidents, deans, and other upper level administrators
7. Faculty testimonials as to why they came to work at a university in Alabama, why they stay, and possibly why they’re considering leaving
8. Panel consisting of current state institutional diversity officers/VP’s of Diversity & Equity
9. Fewer roundtable discussions and more formal breakout sessions
10. Small group facilitators that would keep focus on the topic
11. More focus on legal issues – we need confidence to be able to respond to charges of reverse discrimination using legal means to improve diversity
12. Overview from legal office on what can and can’t be done in recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce
13. A list of historical and typical barriers in each area – recruitment, retention, etc. – and how these can best be overcome
14. Comparative data for the region, state, and nation.
15. Greater participation by college and university administrators and strong statements of commitment to increasing diversity from them
16. Needed a microphone for questions from participants to Dr. Malcom

SURVEY

Please share with us any additional comments about the program:

1. Excellent first time program
2. Needed to mix the discussion groups
3. Great program. Very insightful
4. The topics were too closely related...perhaps should have made it just one topic
5. Appreciated the comments from Chancellor Portera
6. The ideas, procedures, etc...suggested for recruitment and retention were very helpful
7. Great program – now is the time for implementation of the strategies
8. Would like to see us bring in Dr. Juanetta Cole or Dr. Stephan Young to talk about Mega Messages
9. When conducting searches – be fair – if a person is promised a position...don't waste the time of others with a perfunctory search...monitor and be able to address this practice throughout the System
10. Specific implementation steps should be completed and distributed to the attendees
11. Maybe one year we should focus on training participants in such areas as diversity, committee chairs, using diverse teaching approaches, etc.
12. Provide lists of main contact venues – not everyone is aware of these
13. I believe my institution could do a lot more to enforce the ideas we already have. For example, not approve (through the Deans) a search committee that has no African Americans on it and not approve interviews to begin if there are NO or ONLY one African American candidate
14. We need better training on affirmative action at all levels – and all members of search committees before a search is initiated
15. Well organized; interaction between participants was a valuable experience
16. Should be expanded to discuss significant problems in K-12 education in the state of Alabama. A group like this could successfully lobby for changes in our education system affecting opinions of our government leaders and the general public
17. This conference seemed to be more of a racial discussion in the small groups instead of increasing the promotion of and embracing diversity
18. Most at the table wanted to focus on racial issues of blacks/whites and not all minorities (i.e. Asian, Hispanic, etc.)

19. I hope we really plan to “walk the walk” and NOT simply “talk the talk”
20. Issue a specific invitation to the senior administrators

SURVEY

Please share with us any recommendations for future program topics and speakers:

1. Thank you for the opportunity. The organization of the day was nice. The facility and arrangements were great
2. More in depth review of specific programs that are making a difference
3. We should look at African American student recruitment and retention
4. More speakers like Dr. Malcom. Invite deans, presidents and chairs and have someone like Dr. Portera and Dr. Malcom speak to them in a special session
5. Reports from institutions on advancements made
6. Department chairs, presidents, and the BOT should be invited
7. Promote conference to staff better; some EEO-1 staff didn't know about the conference
8. Best practices on each campus and search committees
9. Hiring in higher education with a focus on legal issues. How to work better with the faculty, board, and community
10. We should examine the recruitment and retention of undergraduate/graduate students. The program should end around 1:30 pm not 4:00 pm
11. Identify speakers who speak about most effective ways to implement diversity, present measures, present ways most effected, and implementation
12. More specific questions to focus discussion
13. Real-life stories shared – “What I wish would have been done and what was done right in my case”
14. How and means to recruit faculty – also places to recruit. Have Dr. Malcom back!
15. Data from all the universities on number of EEO-1 and faculty in key positions
16. Relationship between two-year and four-year institutions in increasing diversity
17. Please have upper level administrators to next year's conference
18. Remember technical, clerical, and maintenance staff employees in future diversity conferences. Address how our institutions can ensure diversity among this group
19. Keep the conference the same but make it a two day conference
20. Include more decision makers

Portera says UA needs diversity in employees

By Adam Jones
Staff Writer

TUSCALOOSA | The University of Alabama System can't reach its full potential without a diverse group of employees, Chancellor Malcolm Portera told about 100 educators and administrators gathered on the UA campus Wednesday.

It was the first of at least five diversity conferences that were mandated by a settlement reached a year ago in a 25-year desegregation case brought against the state's institutions of higher education.

"We are proud of our accomplishments we've made in the state, and we are pleased with our success," Portera told the audience at the Bryant Conference Center. "But we are not done yet."

Wednesday's conference focused on recruiting, hiring and retaining diverse faculty and upper-level administrators. Subsequent conferences will be held on issues such as attracting students from diverse backgrounds, said Charles Nash, vice chancellor for academic affairs and an organizer of the conference.

"This has been a long journey in Alabama and other Southern states, and that journey being finding diversity, equity and inclusion in higher education," Nash said.

Among the stipulations in the settlement in the Knight and Sims v. Alabama case, the UA System and Auburn University agreed to host a statewide meeting of four-year institutions to discuss recruitment of black and other historically underrepresented groups.

In a December 2006 order, U.S. District Judge Harold Murphy approved agreements that settled the case and generated \$210 million in state money for the desegregation effort, most of it going to historically black Alabama A&M and Alabama State University.

Murphy said the state, its historically white universities and other defendants have eliminated traces of segregation "to the extent practicable and consistent with sound educational practice ... and have demonstrated their commitment to continuing to operate in a constitutional and nondiscriminatory fashion."

For the UA System, black faculty numbers — not counting professors born outside the United States — went from 108 in 1997 to 163 in 2006. Black

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professors for the three campuses went from 3.93 percent of all faculty in 1997 to 4.97 percent in 2007, according to UA System data.

During the same time, black executive, administrative and

managerial staff went from 7.51 percent of the group to 11.61 percent.

For the Tuscaloosa campus, the 37 black professors teaching at UA in 1997 were 3.6 percent of the faculty. In 2006, 62 black professors made up 5.1 percent of the faculty.

Also, 3 percent of administrators at UA in 1997 were black,

compared to 11.2 percent in 2006.

Portera said the campuses are committed to achieving diversity goals laid out in the Knight case settlement because higher education is best offered with the exchange of ideas coming from diverse communities talking with each other.

The obstacles to hiring and

keeping a diverse faculty and staff are assuming goals have been accomplished, building pipelines that attract qualified applicants and lack of knowledge about the strength of diversity, he said.

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