



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION PLAN

(2018-2023)

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I. Introduction

A. President's Statement

Concordia University, St. Paul has a long-standing commitment to supporting diversity within its academic community and embracing the multicultural urban environment that surrounds us. This commitment is rooted in our ethos as a Christ-centered university. St. John writes: "We love, because he first loved us" (1 John. 4:19). In that spirit, we welcome all.

We recognize that living out this commitment is a perpetual, intentional, and holistic process. This process is stewarded by leaders at all levels of the organization, beginning with the Board of Regents, President, and senior administrators, and ideally permeates every corner of the organization. We further recognize that we will never "arrive" in our effort to live out our commitment to diversity. Nevertheless we embrace the opportunities we have within this university community to learn from, grow alongside, disagree with, and cherish each other amidst our differences.

We believe that our mission "to prepare students for thoughtful and informed living, dedicated service to God and humanity, and the enlightened care of God's creation, all within the context of the Christian Gospel," enhances the university's capacity to engage diversity in all its forms. While our strong commitment to the Christ of the Scriptures and the Bible as the inspired Word of God does inherently carry with it the various perspectives around some aspects of diversity, we believe God's love for all of us in Christ provides an ideal context for living with and loving each other. We invite all who are stakeholders at this institution—regents, faculty, staff, students, supporters, friends, and community partners—to participate in the healthy conversations around diversity, which occurs within this context and see what great things can happen when love for God and love for each other intersect.

This Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan portrays our reality, paints a picture of our aspirations, and identifies the gaps that exist in our journey to be the kind of university we want to be from the perspective of diversity. As such, it is a living document that will shape us and be shaped by us for many years to come.

B. Purpose of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

Concordia University, St. Paul's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan articulates an aspiration for an explicit, integrating, strategic, university-wide approach to our inclusion and diversity efforts. The plan challenges the University to live up to its promise of creating a dynamic and engaging environment in our multicultural and urban setting. It is a living document that will change to reflect the growth of the university. Moreover, the plan is this community's effort to acknowledge, celebrate, and claim our beliefs that diversity is an asset to who we are as an institution, and that it provides immeasurable benefits to us as individuals and as a collective. It enhances and embodies the mission, vision, and promises of the university (to view Concordia's Mission, Vision, and Promise statements, please refer to <https://www.csp.edu/about/mission-vision-promise>). Diversity is an important part of our history, our present and our future.

C. How do we define diversity at CSP?

Concordia University, St. Paul welcomes and affirms diversity in its many manifestations. CSP is proud to be one of the most diverse private universities in the state. It is our responsibility as a university of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to create an institutional culture that respects, values, and celebrates diversity. As such, CSP celebrates and embraces the rich dimensions of diversity included within each member of the Concordia community. Diversity includes identities and experiences of all students; it is our goal to serve and support underrepresented individuals and groups such as, but not limited to: new immigrant populations, students of various gender identities and sexual orientations, first-generation students, socioeconomic status, people of different religious faiths, veterans, and students, staff, and faculty from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities, races and cultures.

D. Scope of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

Concordia University encompasses staff, faculty, administrators, and students that are local and global, face-to-face and online, undergraduate and graduate. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is relevant to all of these as a university of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to create up and enhancing the work and learning environment for each and every member of the Concordia University community. It is our expectation that all faculty create curriculum that reflects our student population, enact pedagogies that welcome and affirm all members of our student community, and that all staff create an inclusive work environment.

The writers of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan acknowledge that the word, “campus” has a variety of definitions and connotations. The traditional understanding of “campus” defines it as an area of land where a university has its buildings and facilities. This definition of “campus” most often references our traditional undergraduate student populations who attend face-to-face classes in St. Paul. The scope of the plan begins by placing emphasis on this student’s experience of Concordia University. It seeks to create a supportive and respectful environment for the populations that are studying and living within the walls of the traditional campus. However, we understand that Concordia University is not only defined by the traditional campus experience.

E. Benefits of Diversity

A diverse campus community allows us an opportunity to work toward developing a hospitable, inclusive environment, where equity and mutual respect are the hallmarks of the campus culture and diverse student, faculty, and staff perspectives and experiences are welcome. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan will help guide us in our dispositions, interactions, discussions and relationships with individuals who have different opinions, perspectives, cultures and backgrounds. It will provide ideas, guides, and resources on how to participate, respond and interact with respect and civility in our behaviors, communication and dispositions.

i. Value/Affirmation Statements

1. As a Lutheran university, we affirm the intrinsic value of God’s diverse creation. We understand the body of Christ to be comprised of many members, all of whom are children of God: “There is no Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 2:38, ESV). We believe each member of this community—from international students to administration, from emeriti faculty to grounds-keeping staff, from alumni to first year students—is beloved by God, and indeed created in God’s own image. It is therefore incumbent upon us to cultivate a community that affirms the God-given dignity of each of its diverse members. In doing so, Christ’s teachings of hospitality, grace and love are made manifest at Concordia University.
2. Preparing students for thoughtful and informed lives of service in God’s diverse world requires that students have ample and supported opportunities to learn with, from and alongside the many diverse members of our community. Research is increasingly documenting a myriad of academic, psychosocial, and career and life readiness benefits for all students—whether from underrepresented or majority backgrounds—who learn in diverse settings in which there is strong institutional support for diversity. Concordia’s diverse community is well placed to provide just such an opportunity. Enacting this Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan, therefore, supports Concordia University in living out its mission, vision and promise to offer students exceptional, relevant and real learning opportunities that support their life and career readiness.

F. Where does Concordia currently stand?

Although this data herein provides a strong rationale for continuing diversity work at Concordia University, St. Paul, it likely underrepresents the diversity within our community due to its self-reported nature. In these complex times, we have students, faculty, and staff with various legal residency statues, those who are first generation, and individuals of various gender identities and sexual orientations who may not feel comfortable identifying themselves according to the categories below. Therefore, the numbers and groups profiled likely do not reflect the totality of underrepresented students, faculty, and staff comprising the Concordia University community. In short, our diversity itself is likely underrepresented herein.

i. Profile of Underrepresented Students

1. More than a third of traditional students and more than a quarter of all students at Concordia University are from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups.

2. Enrollment of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups grew almost 200 percent from 2007-2016 making them the fastest growing demographic group.
3. In 2016-2017, 30 percent of students used Accessibility Services on campus. There has also been a 30 percent increase in students using their services over the last 10 years. The number one disability at Concordia is mental health. The largest increase in student usage occurred from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015, an increase of 61 percent in one year.
4. The international student population has increased by 44 percent over the last five years.
5. Veterans currently make up 3 percent of the undergraduate population.
6. The student population is made up of many different religions including LCMS, other Lutherans, other Protestants, Catholics, Muslims, no religious affiliation and other faiths. There is a steady increase in the diversity of beliefs and practices of the students we serve.

ii. Need for Underrepresented Faculty and Staff

1. While we have seen growth in the population of underrepresented students, including more students of color, the representation of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups hasn't consistently increased. The faculty and staff demographics do not reflect the diversity of our student population. For example, 8% of faculty and 7% of staff are employees of color while 35% of students are of color.
2. Concordia faculty and staff completed the Intercultural Effective Scale Assessment, which evaluates competencies critical for effective interaction with people from different cultures. A series of follow up sessions for faculty and staff has been scheduled for the remainder of the 2017-2018 year. Ongoing training for intercultural and diversity development is highly recommended.
3. Due to the lack of representation of the various religions of faculty and staff compared to that of students, it is important for faculty and staff to be culturally aware and sensitive to the diverse religious backgrounds and beliefs of the students we serve.

iii. Campus Environment

1. There is currently a lack of diverse involvement and attendance from students, faculty, and staff in extracurricular activities, student clubs, organizations and activities.
2. Current support for campus-wide conversations relating to topics such as race, religious beliefs, culture, accessibility, and gender identity is limited.

3. There are physical limitations to our campus that makes it a less welcoming environment. Examples include limited elevators, ramps, accessible restrooms, single stall restrooms, accessible fire routes, and spaces for those of different faiths, cultures, orientations, and interests. There are also limitations as to how specific offices and departments are perceived to be accessible.

II. GOALS/OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES

A. Goal 1: Retention and Graduation Rates for Underrepresented Students

i. Objective 1: Increase the completion rate by 10 percent for students from underrepresented populations to graduate within four or five years.

Strategies:

- a. Expand cultural awareness and sensitivity training for all students (including students in service and leadership roles) and all employees.
- b. Develop mentoring relationships or programs within majors to provide additional information, direction, and support for underrepresented students.
- c. Campus-wide support of the programs and activities of the Diversity Center.
- d. Identify and encourage more students to participate in a variety of campus-wide opportunities (ie. club events, MLK day event, ethnic specific events, discussion forums, etc.).
- e. Provide more financial aid literacy and support for students and parents/guardians.
- f. Provide more support services and resources for the increasing number of students using Accessibility Services.

ii. Objective 2: Monitor and assess retention strategies to increase persistence for underrepresented students to graduate.

Strategies:

- a. Create a committee of staff, faculty, and students to review and discuss retention strategies twice a year.
- b. Use numbers and qualitative data in order to inform how to allocate resources to space, staffing, and services to meet our students' needs.
- c. Create a Diversity and Inclusive Campus Project fund to consider improvements to campus spaces, resources, artwork, training, and services, with consideration to our diverse campus populations.

B. Goal 2: Recruitment and Development of Staff and Faculty

i. Objective 1: Increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and staff at all levels of the university by 10 percent.

Strategies:

- a. Develop tools and partnerships to increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and staff at all levels of the university.
- b. Continue review of hiring and onboarding policies and practices to ensure diversity elements are threaded throughout the process and consistently adhered to.
- c. Develop a presentation for Coalition for Acceptance, Respect, and Equity (C.A.R.E.) Committee to share data and have intentional conversations in departments for hiring practices.
- d. Include a person from an underrepresented population on all hiring committees for external candidates.
- e. Develop training on expectations of the search process for the chairpersons of hiring committees.

ii. Objective 2: Develop persistent and sustained diversity and equity training to increase the knowledge, awareness, and skills for strengthening faculty and staff's work in and with our diverse community of learners and workers.

Strategies:

- a. Establish baseline cultural intelligence levels to increase the intercultural competencies and capacities of faculty and staff.
- b. Develop a training series to help faculty and staff develop the necessary skills for diversity and equity work.
- c. Create a training of teaching and learning strategies in the classroom.
- d. Integrate equity and inclusion in performance and professional development plan.

C. Goal 3: Strengthen Curriculum and Instruction

i. Objective 1: Strengthen faculty and staff's ability to enact culturally responsive pedagogies

Strategies:

- a. Develop faculty and staff knowledge of, dispositions toward, and skills in culturally responsive praxis.
- b. Create professional learning communities focusing on creating and enacting culturally responsive pedagogies.
- c. Partner with the Faculty Scholarship Center regarding training in culturally responsive pedagogies.

- d. Create a brown bag series on creating culturally responsive pedagogies-provide incentives for participating (certificate for advancement, HR certificate).
- e. Partner with graduate students doing research in this area who might want to provide training for our faculty.

ii. Objective 2: Supporting and encouraging faculty and staff to follow the Curriculum Internationalization/Equitization objectives in order to meet the cultural, intercultural, international, and equity curricular dimensions and perspectives in their course offerings.

In consultation with faculty, a definition of Curriculum Internationalization was written to be inclusive of the diverse student body at CSP. Curriculum internationalization is defined as "incorporation of an international (global) and intercultural dimension into the content of the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study" (Leask, 2009.)

Strategies:

- a. Infuse existing courses within the majors, electives, and general education that focus on cultural, international, intercultural, and/or diverse perspectives. New courses can be created if possible or necessary.
 - i. Update readings, course materials, and syllabi to include multiple and diverse perspectives.
 - ii. Incorporate activities that support growth in students' abilities to empathize and take multiple perspectives.
 - iii. Develop student learning outcomes focusing on cultural, intercultural, international, and equity perspectives.
- b. Follow the Curriculum Internationalization Rubric that has been created for the purposes of guiding course development and providing feedback and recommendations to faculty.
- c. Collaborate and support individual departments with the mission of assisting faculty in course development to meet these objectives.

D. Goal 4: Campus Climate

i. Objective 1: Increase campus spaces that are reflective of our culturally rich environment.

Strategies:

- a. Create a Prayer room accessible for different religious faiths.
- b. Continue to consider and develop a plan for restroom accessibility and single stall restrooms.
- c. Encourage offices and departments to creatively develop spaces that are inviting and welcoming to our diverse students and employees.

- d. Assure that spaces on our campus are accessible
- e. Add artwork from a variety of backgrounds across campus.

ii. Objective 2: Provide ongoing support for the Diversity Affairs Office in leading the university community in creating a more open, inviting, and culturally rich environment.

Strategies:

- a. Maintain the Executive Vice President and Dean of Diversity position.
- b. Oversee initiatives and funds related to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan.
- c. Engage in and support the Diversity Center
 - i. Collaborate with student organizations and university offices and departments.
 - ii. Coordinate ongoing dialogue and learning opportunities for students, faculty, and staff.
 - iii. Serve as a resource for staff and faculty training related to diversity and inclusion.
 - iv. Create student employee roles to focus on peer mentoring, programming, marketing, and office tasks.
 - v. Create additional staff positions within the Diversity Center, assuring representation of underrepresented populations.

III. ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

A. Assessment

As part of the five-year plan, we will track various metrics that represent important factors in assessing progress toward our goals. In the near-term, we will track our progress on plan-related action steps such as implementation and participation in programs, development of partnerships and resources, and increased awareness. Longer-term measures not only will include trends in demographic composition of our campus over time, but also will take into account shifts in climate, faculty/staff intercultural competencies, and curriculum changes.

- 1. Categories for Initial Assessment of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan
 - a. Progress on objectives and strategies
 - b. Demographic diversity of:
 - 1. Faculty/Staff
 - 2. Undergraduate students - completion and retention rates
 - c. Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) for Faculty/Staff
 - d. Curriculum Review
 - e. Campus Climate Survey

B. Reporting

The office of the Executive Vice President and Dean of Diversity along with the C.A.R.E. Committee Goal Leaders will oversee the ongoing improvements and will manage the overall reporting. An established Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan committee will review and assess the reports created by the Goal Sub-Committees yearly and identify areas where there is need for more accountability.

- 1. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan Committee consists of the following key leaders:
 - a. Executive Vice President and Dean of Diversity
 - b. Diversity Center Staff
 - c. Faculty/Staff/Alumni Representatives
 - d. Student Representative
 - e. C.A.R.E. Committee Representatives
 - f. Human Resource Director
- 2. Reporting Plan
 - a. September 2018: Plan Launch
 - b. June-August 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 - Yearly Review
 - 1. Assess and report on the progress
 - 2. Refine plan
 - 3. Launch updated plan
 - c. February-April 2021: Midterm Campus Wide Progress Review
 - 1. Assess and report on progress of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan
 - 2. Create mid-term report
 - d. June-August 2023: Evaluate progress of five year plan
 - 1. Assess progress against each goal and objective
 - 2. Complete summary of five year plan progress
 - 3. Develop new or revised Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan as needed



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