

Strategic Inclusion Plan

2016-2020



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NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Minneapolis Community and Technical College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in, programs, services, and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or familial status. In addition, discrimination in employment based on membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law is prohibited.

Harassment on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or familial status is prohibited. Harassment may occur in a variety of relationships, including faculty and student, supervisor and employee, student and student, staff and student, employee and employee, and other relationships with persons having business at, or visiting the educational or working environment.

This policy is directed at verbal or physical conduct that constitutes discrimination/harassment under state and federal law and is not directed at the content of speech. In cases in which verbal statements and other forms of expression are involved, Minneapolis Community and Technical College will give due consideration to an individual's constitutionally protected right to free speech and academic freedom. However, discrimination and harassment are not within the protections of academic freedom or free speech.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College shall maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of expression, inquiry, teaching and research. Academic freedom comes with a responsibility that all members of our education community benefit from it without intimidation, exploitation or coercion.

This policy shall apply to all individuals affiliated with Minneapolis Community and Technical College, including but not limited to, its students, employees, applicants, volunteers, agents, and Board of Trustees, and is intended to protect the rights and privacy of both the complainant and the respondent and other involved individuals, as well as to prevent retaliation or reprisal. Individuals who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary or other corrective action.

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MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Minneapolis Community and Technical College is guided by the overarching mission, vision and values of our institution.

Mission

Minneapolis Community and Technical College provides access to the transformative power of education in a diverse and dynamic downtown environment.

Vision

We see a college that provides access to excellence and pathways to opportunity.

Values

- Student-centered: anchor all decisions, programs and services around student needs
- Inclusion: create a climate that empowers, supports and invites participation in the college and the community
- Community: build an interdependent community allied with our external partners
- Excellence: work daily to create an outstanding environment for learning and success

Integrity: be guided by honesty, fairness, and compassion in all our dealings

INTRODUCTION

Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) is a public two-year college located in the heart of downtown Minneapolis. MCTC enrolls nearly 13,000 credit students annually and is an active partner in initiatives designed to strengthen the social, economic and cultural vitality of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. MCTC also serves businesses, nonprofits and individual learners by providing customized training opportunities to meet their specific needs.

The college is committed to the principles and practices of equal opportunity, equity and inclusion in all of its policies, practices and programs. MCTC is committed to serving its increasingly diverse communities by responding in a manner that meets the standards of a culturally competent organization.

Minneapolis Community and Technical College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices, or access to and participation in, programs, services, and activities with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or familial status. In addition, discrimination in employment based on membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law is prohibited.

RATIONALE

Our MCTC Strategic Inclusion Plan provides a framework for the members of the MCTC communities as we create and sustain successful learning experiences for our students, employees and other stakeholders. Focused on recruitment, retention and graduation, the plan provides goals and measureable outcomes that inform the total MCTC experience.

DEVELOPMENT & SCOPE OF INSTITUTIONAL INCLUSION PLAN

This plan's scope includes MCTC's facilities, student services, curriculum and pedagogy and assessment and accountability infrastructure. This plan was developed in FY16 by the Strategic Inclusion Plan Committee that included staff, faculty, supervisors and students and, within that, bargaining unit representation. The process was led by the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), Whitney Harris, Ph.D. and the African-American Empowerment Program (AME)/Power of You Coordinator, Jay Williams, Ph.D. In addition, Pete Talbert and Jessica Shryack, Ph.D. in Strategy, Planning and Accountability (SPA) helped develop the final draft of this document.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

Minneapolis Community and Technical College is guided by the overarching Mission, Vision, and Values of our institution. One of the College's values is, appropriately, Inclusion, which we hope will influence everyday individual and collective behaviors. Communicating and embedding our Mission, Vision, and Values along with a campus-wide Service Quality Statement are all aspects of creating inclusion-focused culture change.

INCLUSION EXCELLENCE

Inclusive excellence at MCTC means we:

- Create the infrastructure to support inclusion, diversity, equity, and cultural competency efforts; this infrastructure includes processes, policies, resources, and physical space usage
- Value and respect our own and others' diverse life experiences in all aspects of our institution
- Use data on opportunity gaps and the student experience to understand student needs and design and evaluate improvements
- Understand that both qualitative and quantitative data are equally important to understand a person, issue, event or system comprehensively
- Publicly report on our progress in creating inclusive excellence.

STRATEGIES

Strategies for Preparing the College for Our Students			
Strategy #1: <i>Inclusive spaces and access to information</i>	Goal #1: Ensure academic performance is equally supported for all ability statuses	Goal #2: Make sure all incoming and current students have abundant access to information about campus resources using highly visible and non-traditional, rapport-based communication formats	Goal #3: Use physical spaces in a more visible and accessible manner.
Strategy #2: <i>Inclusive Services</i>	Goal #1: Improve the cultural competence and service quality offered by employees so that student-employee interactions become an asset in the effort to improve student satisfaction and retention		
Strategy #3: <i>Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy</i>	Goal #1: Establish the expectation of culturally responsive instruction aligned with maximizing intrinsic motivation in students. Engagement is motivation.	Goal #2: Ensure that all aspects of course placement, course and program requirements, and course content are well-aligned with actual requirements of living-wage jobs and/or four-year degrees	Goal #3: Ensure that annual planning includes a focus on academic equity

Strategies for Preparing the College for Our Students			
Strategy #4: <i>Inclusive</i> Infrastructure, including organizational and individual accountability and assessment	Goal #1: Create sustainable processes and structures that make inclusion a highly visible aspect of the College evident in MCTC's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical environment • Website • Key Performance Indicators and strategic planning documents • Employee hiring, onboarding, and professional development • Organizational structure • Policies 		

Strategy 1: Inclusive Spaces and Access to Information

“People frequently think that accessibility compliance and universal design are synonymous. They are not, and in fact, the difference between UD and accessibility is profound. Accessibility is about compliance with regulations that protect a small percentage of the population. Universal design is about empowering the entire population to reach its potential. Accessible design is accomplished through compliance with state, local, and national building codes and standards that establish a minimum level of design necessary to accommodate people with disabilities. Universal design is the art and practice of design to accommodate the widest variety and number of people throughout their life spans. It can be thought of as the process of embedding choice for all people into the things we create “(Salmen, 2011, p. 14).

Student Access Need	Goal	Action Steps	Proposed Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
All students need to have equal access, with or without accommodations to all campus programs and activities.	Increase accessibility across all aspects of the college Reduce quantity of physical,	Formalize Accessibility Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and implement strategic accessibility plan. Hire captioning coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish process for implementing and monitoring appropriate captioning 	Accessibility Committee will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an accessibility checkpoint for all campus policies, procedures, and procurements to ensure that proactive compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations occurs 	Vice President of Student Affairs Accessibility Resource Center	Counseling Staff CTL Faculty Students	FY17

Student Access Need	Goal	Action Steps	Proposed Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
<p>(Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012; Salmen, 2011; Scott & Gregg, 2000)</p> <p>Students need to interact with faculty, staff and administrators who have the requisite level of knowledge and skills regarding best practices</p>	<p>informational, and attitudinal accessibility barriers across all aspects of the college</p>	<p>Create and implement appropriate training and professional development opportunities that includes, but not limited to, the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Awareness • Universal Design • Accommodations 	<p>Captioning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caption 95 percent of all of MCTC's public facing media (Measure Report available by June 30th, 2018) • Caption 75 percent of course media (Measure Report available by June 30th, 2018) <p>Professional Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge, skills, and use of best practices for accessibility • Decreased accessibility issues for students 			
<p>Students need accessible information regarding available campuses resources and support services in accessible formats.</p>	<p>Make sure all incoming and current students have abundant access to information about campus resources using highly visible communication formats</p>	<p>Make information available to students where they would expect to get the information by doing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement digital kiosks to house campus resource information at key points in high-traffic areas of campus buildings • Provide a “resource orientation” as a follow-up to overall campus orientation that includes campus tour to most-used services • Encourage support services (e.g., Learning Center, AME, Resource and Referral) to visit academic department meetings to share student support services 	<p>Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) data will show greater frequency of use for key campus departments</p> <p>Department-level data will show increase in student use</p> <p>Students will report knowing about campus resources in their first semester</p>	<p>Vice President of Academic Affairs</p>	<p>Dean of Enrollment Management</p> <p>Director of Quality Initiatives</p> <p>Center for Teaching and Learning</p> <p>Director of Facilities</p>	<p>FY17-18 or 19, depending on improvement type (longer for digital kiosks)</p>

Student Access Need	Goal	Action Steps	Proposed Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have staff automatically refer students to services the student needs as identified through a needs assessment survey given in advising or orientation • Include support service information in syllabi and D2L sites • Implement common participation-level system to determine student use of services (e.g. card readers) • Insure information about and link to student retention guide that is available in each class syllabus or provide boiler plate language on most frequently used services in the syllabus. Create the syllabus language with faculty representing the different schools. 			Vice President of Finance and Operations	

Strategy 2: Inclusive Services

Student Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
MCTC's diverse student body needs staff to exhibit the cultural competency skills that match our College values (Omar et al., 2015; Student Equity Audit Report: Findings and Recommendations, 2013; Carlos, 2016)	<p>Increase in student reports of positive student-employee communications that does not differ by protected class</p> <p>Reduction in student complaints about student-employee communication that</p>	<p>Implement Service Quality Statement across the campus</p> <p>Implement service quality survey in visible locations on campus and online</p>	<p>Annual increase in service quality satisfaction between FY17 and FY20</p> <p>Increase in satisfaction with course evaluation items related to communication</p> <p>Reduction in student complaints related to communication</p>	President's Council members	<p>Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>Director of Quality Initiatives</p> <p>All employees including work-</p>	Pilot in FY16, full implementation in fall FY17

Student Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
	does not differ by protected class	Use survey data to improve student-staff interactions Use course evaluation form, influenced by service quality statement and survey, to improve faculty-student interactions	Increase in positive YELP! reviews compared to Normandale and Century College Increase to equal to or above national norm on CCSSE Item 11.C measuring warmth and supportiveness in interactions with administrative offices and staff		study employees Executive Committee members	

Strategy 3: Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogy

“Accountability has become a prominent movement within higher education. No longer can institutions of higher learning simply rely on anecdotal accounts of student learning. Faculty and administrators now must document student learning and achievement through the systematic assessment of outcomes. Alongside the accountability movement is the use of “diversity” as a buzzword within most, if not all, colleges and universities. One would be hard-pressed to find an institution whose mission does not include helping students appreciate diversity. Yet, students continue to grapple with learning how to value the differing experiences and perspectives their peers bring to the campus. If students are to benefit from the gains associated with classroom diversity, faculty must respond to the accountability movement by holding themselves accountable for offering culturally inclusive pedagogy and curricula” (Quaye & Harper, 2007).

Student Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
Inclusive pedagogy and organizational practices provide an avenue to increase critical	Delivery: Establish the expectation of culturally responsive instruction aligned with maximizing intrinsic motivation in students. Engagement is motivation.	Compile and make available current campus and national best practices on culturally relevant pedagogy. Provide faculty- and student-led training in culturally responsive instruction. Members of the ethnic	Increase course completion percentage among underrepresented students. Catalyze development of culturally responsive	Faculty Chief Diversity Officer Ethnic Student Caucus	Faculty	FY17

Student Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
thinking (Quaye & Harper, 2007), increase a sense of belonging regardless of race and increases academic achievement for first-generation (Stephens et al., 2012) and Black students (Walton & Cohen, 2007). (See table and comment below)		student caucus, SPA staff, and CDO to conduct a qualitative study on exceptional pedagogy with faculty the most positive course evaluation results on inclusiveness and have the lowest equity gap in course completion. To endorse the recommendations of the First-Year Retention Committee related to closing equity gaps.	teaching skills amongst faculty.	Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Mindset Meetup		
	Content: Ensure that general education competencies include a category on diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency and that the category is mapped to programs and courses through curriculum mapping Establish a sufficiently diverse curriculum to properly reflect our current student body (e.g., race, gender, ability status, class) and develop an experiential diversity co-curriculum (events, speakers, trips)	CDO, Ethnic Student Caucus and Inclusion Committee work with the Assessment Committee and Curriculum Coordinator to embed diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency lens Provide support resources: <i>e.g.</i> , faculty and staff sabbaticals or fellowships for developing curriculum and co-curriculum; selected staff would work with the CDO, Ethnic Student Caucus and College Inclusion Committee	Increase student reports of engaging in meaningful dialogue with people of other backgrounds (race, religion, etc.) as measured by MnSCU special items on CCSSE The college establishes a Core General Education Competency in diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural competency			FY17-18
	Ensure that annual planning includes a focus on academic equity	Academic deans will conduct an annual Portfolio Review of their academic programs, focusing on course success and the gap in course success between Students of Color and White students	Reduce the gap in course success between Students of Color and White students	Vice President, Academic Affairs	Deans Center for Teaching and Learning	FY17

Student Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
		Improvement plans will be created for large-gap courses			Other faculty content experts	
Gap of more than 30 percentage points in academic preparedness for students of color compared to white students (Factors of First-Year Retention, 2016)	Ensure that all aspects of course placement, course and program requirements, and course content are well-aligned with actual requirements of living-wage jobs and/or four-year degrees	<p>Charge the Developmental Education and Assessment for Course Placement Committee (DEACP) to establish and require sufficient number of non-credit preparatory courses in Reading, Writing, Math & ESOL for students placing below college level through multiple measures</p> <p>Establish multiple measures for course placement</p> <p>Provide a first-year experience student transition course that provides the information, experiences, supports, and connections that students need to be successful in the first year of college while aligning with guided pathways</p>	Increase percentage of underrepresented students placed into college-level English, reading, and math	<p>Developmental Education and Assessment for Course Placement Committee</p> <p>Appropriate Academic Departments</p>	Minneapolis School Counseling Offices	Summer Semester 2017

Additional Action Steps for Consideration

MnSCU special questions on the most recent (2015) CCSSE survey show that while students are “very often” “exposed” to diversity (57%), significantly fewer of those have serious conversations across difference (26%) or “very much” understand the “international/multicultural world” based on their experiences at the college (25%). Ideally, these experiences would be contributing to serious conversation and learning about our multicultural world at a higher rate than they do. See table below.

Table 1: CCSSE Data

CCSSE Data		Your College		MnSCU	
Item	Responses	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
6. How often has your experience at this college exposed you to diverse faculty, staff, and administrators diversity in age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sexual orientation, disability, religious beliefs, creeds, or income)?	Very often	216	57	3771	30.4
	Often	89	23.4	3974	32
	Sometimes	50	13.2	3677	29.6
	Never	24	6.4	985	7.9
	<i>Total</i>	<i>380</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>12,406</i>	<i>100</i>
7. In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability?	Very often	98	25.7	2,291	18.6
	Often	107	28.2	3,037	24.6
	Sometimes	113	29.7	4,298	34.9
	Never	94	16.4	2,707	21.9
	<i>Total</i>	<i>381</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>12,333</i>	<i>100</i>
8. To what extent have your experiences at this college contributed to your understanding of today's international/multi-cultural world?	Very much	94	25.1	1,630	13.4
	Quite a bit	120	32.1	2,859	23.5
	Some	106	28.2	4,376	36
	Very little	39	10.3	2,311	19
	Not at all	16	4.3	994	8.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>375</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>12,169</i>	<i>100</i>	

Strategy 4: Inclusive Infrastructure, Including Organizational and Individual Accountability and Assessment

“Evaluation can improve the educational quality of all students’ experiences. It can help an institution know if it is meeting its mission. It can reveal how students across different groups are faring. It can provide blueprints for how and where an institution needs to do better.” (Garcia et al., 2001)

Organizational Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
Organization needs to know at both strategic (leaders, managers) and operational (staff, faculty) levels how it’s performing related to diversity, equity, cultural competence and inclusion (Williams et al., 2005; Smith, 2015)	Create sustainable processes and structures that make inclusion a highly visible aspect of the College evident in MCTC’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical environment Website Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and strategic planning documents Employee hiring, onboarding and professional development Organizational structure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create an ongoing Inclusion Committee <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a OneNote library in SharePoint of scholarly articles on equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency Prominently demonstrate support, value, and acceptance of student communities by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing United Nations of Indian Tribes for Education (UNITE) and Xicanos Latinos Unidos (XLU) as initiatives of the college tasked with retention of their community members. Coordinating with the Facilities Committee to find a more prominent location for UNITE and a dedicated space for XLU Investigate possibility for centralizing location of ethnic based initiatives around a multicultural center Include equity measures in Key Performance Indicators (quantitative: course success, retention, graduation, transfer, employment, wages, default rates; qualitative: Diverse Learning Environments Survey or CCSSE items; focus groups; collaborative student letters) 	<p>Permanent College Committee is established and begins systematic data collection and publications on equity, inclusion, diversity, and cultural competency (representatives include: e.g., campus workgroups, CTL, ARC, faculty, staff, and administration)</p> <p>Equity-focused KPIs and equity-focused strategic planning documents are found easily on the external website</p> <p>Highly visible physical spaces reflect campus diversity, inclusion, and equity</p> <p>CDO reports to president</p> <p>Faculty evaluation and staff evaluation processes assess equity and inclusion knowledge, skills, and abilities</p>	President President’s Council Members	Deans Managers Faculty Staff	FY17-FY18 Measurement period: through FY20

Organizational Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Strategic planning documents should highlight the role of diversity in institutional and educational quality 6. Involve CDO, campus equity experts and students in the FY17 Policy Review Project 7. Retain the structure of CDO reporting to President and being part of President's Council 8. Faculty evaluation documents are redesigned to include a focus on equity 9. Staff evaluations include participation in equity/diversity/cultural competency training 10. Ensure faculty and staff reflect the demographic and socioeconomic composition of our student body. 11. Create a comprehensive suite of professional development programming that includes and is not limited to the following trainings: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mental health and trauma awareness b. Cultural competency c. Accessibility and universal design d. Conflict resolution e. Unconscious bias f. White privilege g. Living Room Conversations on Race h. Book Discussions (e.g., "See No Color") 12. Reinforce trainings through informal or formal individual and 	<p>Deans and managers annually assess their program's or department's performance on serving diverse populations</p> <p>Continue HR practice of using minimal degree requirements and expanded experience requirements for new hires that help MCTC match the demographic and socioeconomic composition of our student body (% diverse new hires, % employees of color retained/white employees retained)</p> <p>Evaluate effectiveness of training in terms of participation, satisfaction and follow-up regarding behavior</p> <p>80 percent of employees will complete 12 hours of professional development activities and trainings per year on equity, inclusion, diversity and/or cultural competence</p> <p>Embed recognition of outstanding faculty, staff, administrators and departments/programs demonstrating higher-than-average</p>			

Organizational Learning Need	Goal	Action Steps	Outcome	Responsible	Partners	Launch Date
		team/department/program recognition system 13. Identify appropriate cultural competency training for incorporation into new employee onboarding.	or most growth in cultural competency in the annual employee recognition event (May of each year) Revise employee onboarding training to showcase MCTC's inclusion efforts, set expectations for inclusive behavior and educate new hires about MCTC's student populations			

Additional Considerations: Data Collection Methods

It is critical for the Strategic Inclusion Plan Team to show how outcomes for the plan above will be tracked. A Data Tracking Plan is needed.

TYPE OF DATA	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Internal Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document and data reviews/audits
Qualitative Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus groups Surveys Interviews
Quantitative Data	Descriptive and/or inferential statistics for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course-level data by race, gender, disability status – e.g., Drop-fail-withdraw rate, withdrawal rate only, course success rate Department/program-level data by race, gender, disability status - e.g. retention, graduation, transfer, related employment rate, defaults Institution-level data by race, gender, disability status – e.g. retention, graduation, transfer, related employment rate, defaults

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

There may be many definitions of the words or phrases below, but the definitions provided indicate how the Strategic Inclusion Committee has defined them for the purposes of this document.

Academic Success – The demonstration of student achievement in higher education through a series of indicators including, but not limited to: grade point average, rigorous coursework, acceptance to program major, persistence towards graduation, and graduation.

Access(ible) – Refers to a student’s opportunity to participate in all of the education-related offerings provided by an educational Institution. Traditional access-related initiatives in higher education seek to remove barriers and provide support for historically underserved or underrepresented students.

Affinity Groups – Groups or programs that connect individuals based on interests, identities, and circumstances. Such programs can be especially helpful to first-year students and students from underrepresented backgrounds.

Campus Climate – The cumulative and continuing perception of the context in which the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards of faculty, staff, administrators, and students concerning the level of respect for individual needs, abilities, and potential are felt.

Co-curricular Learning – Learning that takes place outside of a traditional classroom model (or curriculum) that directly relates to or enhances one’s understanding of the targeted content area. Examples of co-curricular programs include study abroad, internships, symposia, conferences, and lectures.

Cultural Competence – Cultural Competence is the policies and practices of an organization, or the values and behaviors of an individual, that foster effective cross-cultural communication. It is a point on a continuum that ranges from cultural destructiveness to cultural proficiency. A culturally competent organization values the people who work there, understands the community in which it operates, and embraces its clients as valuable members of that community. This means that the culture of the organization promotes inclusiveness and institutionalizes the process of learning about differences. Cultural competence suggests a willingness to expand the organization’s paradigm for culture. Members of an organization with cultural competence as a goal examine their own cultures to understand how they, as cultural entities, impact the perception and interaction of those who are different. This means identifying the dynamics of difference caused by historical distrust. Clearly understanding who we are and accepting how others perceive us is one of the first steps towards cultural competence. The next step is the same underlying, non-defensive examination of the organization’s culture.

Culturally Relevant/Responsible – Recognizing, understanding, and applying attitudes and practices that are sensitive to and appropriate for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Culture – Denotes the way of life of a group of people, encompassing their ideas, values, beliefs, norms, language, traditions, and artifacts.

Diversity – Minnesota State Colleges and Universities recognizes and respects the importance of all similarities and differences among human beings. The system and its institutions are committed, through their programs and policies, to fostering inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance, and respect in a multicultural society. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, age, ethnic origin, national origin, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, disability, religious beliefs, creeds, and income. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to confronting prejudicial, discriminatory, or racist behaviors and policies.

Domestic/local multicultural experiences – Off-campus engagement opportunities with diverse communities (racially, culturally, socioeconomically, religiously, etc.) within the state of Minnesota or within the United States. This distinction was made in response to traditional immersion activities outside of the United States or what is more commonly referred to as study abroad.

Early Alert – A system in which faculty can log student behaviors that have been deemed strong indicators for dropping out or stopping out from college. Such systems have become more popular in higher education as institutions seek to improve their abilities to identify high-risk behavior.

Equity/Equitable – The proportional distribution or parity of desirable outcomes across groups. Sometimes confused with equality, equity refers to outcomes, while equality connotes equal treatment. Where individuals or groups are dissimilarly situated, equal treatment may be insufficient for or even detrimental to equitable outcomes. An example of equity is individualized educational accommodations for students with disabilities, which treat some students differently in order to ensure the equitable access to education.

Ethnicity – The shared sense of common heritage, ancestry, or historical past among an ethnic group. Ethnicity is a distinct concept of race, as illustrated by the fact that Hispanics, designated an ethnic group in the United States may nevertheless be of any race. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget definition of ethnicity, the U.S. Census Bureau defines ethnicity or origin as “the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.”

First Generation Student – A student whose parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have not completed a bachelor’s degree at a four-year college or university.

Global – Activities, events, programs, and other learning experiences that are directly connected to international communities, cultures, and contexts.

Inclusion – Organizational strategies and practices that promote meaningful social and academic interactions among persons and groups who differ in their experiences, their views, and their traits. Expanding upon efforts that promote diversity on the basis of demographic differences.

(Inter) Cultural Competence – An ability to learn about and interact effectively with people of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. This competence comprises four components: (1) awareness of one’s own cultural worldview, (2) attitude towards cultural differences, (3) knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and (4) cross-cultural skills.

Intercultural Engagement – Refers to educational opportunities, events, and programs that invite individuals to step into new cultural contexts with the intent of developing greater cultural competence.

Intergroup Dialogue – A facilitated, face-to-face discussion with the objective of creating new levels of understanding, relating, action between two or more social identity groups.

Interreligious Engagement – Events, projects, and curriculum designed to support activities related to the study and practice of religion in comparative and cross-cultural contexts.

Learning Communities – A group of people actively engaged in learning together, from each other, and by habituation. Learning Communities often consist of two courses linked together to explore common themes and encourage partnerships with professors and peers.

Multicultural – Refers to a collective variety of cultures that can be defined along racial, sex, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, language, religious, and education lines. Goals for multicultural education vary along a continuum that includes demographic inclusion, student empowerment, intergroup understanding, educational equity, and social transformation.

Personal Safety – A person’s sense of safety as it relates to social, intellectual, physical, and cultural interactions, and spaces.

Safe Spaces – Spaces where students, community members, and employees feel socially and physically safe to represent their full identities and share their unique perspectives.

Underrepresented – Any individuals who are historically underrepresented in American higher education in terms of: race/ethnicity/nationality, gender, parental education level, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, or spirituality/religiosity/philosophy.

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