



OHIO
UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Strategic Plan Framework





The work of building a diverse and inclusive community is far more than a set of boxes to check or a series of events to attend. It happens in small steps and in big leaps, in one-on-one conversations and in massive demonstrations. To succeed we must be both relentlessly intentional and open to the spontaneous opportunities for positive change.

VISIBLE is about shining a light on all of it – the good work, the hard truths, the differences we easily embrace and those that make us uncomfortable, the barriers, the opportunities, and most of all, the people who are, or strive to be, a part of our Bobcat community.

In this moment it's not just about what we need to do, but who we need to become

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE | D&I Strategic Plan Contents

- 3 | **Overview from the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion**
- 5 | **Supporting and Enriching OHIO's Academic Enterprise through Diversity and Inclusive Excellence**
- 7 | **Timeline and Process**
- 9 | **Strategic Plan Framework**
- 11 | **Investment, Benefits, & Measuring Success**
- 12 | **Implementation**
- 13 | **Educational Benefits of Institutional Diversity**
- 15 | **References and Further Reading**

A MESSAGE

from Ohio University's Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion

To the OHIO Community:

With great excitement, I present to you the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan of the OHIO Division of Diversity and Inclusion. You will learn about our core principles, strategic goals, and action steps that will help guide Ohio University to an inclusive and equitable future. Together, we can turn our shared vision into reality.

In what follows, we explain why inclusive excellence - grounded in principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and anti-racism - matters. Our experience, bolstered by the research is clear: Inclusive excellence promotes greater student achievement, faculty and staff satisfaction and retention, and lifelong ties between our graduates and OHIO. For us, inclusive excellence is more than an aspiration – it is a vital component of a sustainable, cohesive, and strong campus community that celebrates difference and advances equity.

Since Spring 2019, our team has engaged in countless campus-wide conversations – including with the D&I Advisory Board, participants in our Diversity Leadership Institutes, and over 30 feedback sessions with campus constituencies – to ensure that many voices could provide feedback on our strategic goals. Together, we identified four strategic priorities:

- **Recruit and retain a diverse campus community**
- **Create a sense of belonging for all members of the campus community**
- **Reimagine teaching and learning with inclusivity as a core design principle**
- **Build a sustained commitment to data collection, analysis, dissemination, and continuous improvement**

With your support, diversity, equity, and inclusion will forever remain a cornerstone of an OHIO education that prepares our graduates to succeed in 21st-century career paths and become champions in their diverse local and global communities. While 2021 continues to pose great challenges – including a global pandemic and the ever-present threat of systemic racism. I am confident that, together, our Bobcat family will chart a path to a bright, equitable, anti-racist, and inclusive future.



In Bobcat Pride,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gigi Secuban'.

Dr. Gigi Secuban

Vice President for Diversity & Inclusion



SUPPORTING AND ENRICHING

OHIO's Academic Enterprise through Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

Introduction

Our commitment to inclusive excellence will support and enrich OHIO's educational mission of teaching and learning while paving a unique path for student success and transformation.

On September 12th, 2019, President M. Duane Nellis introduced the "Fearlessly First" Strategic Framework that reimagines the academic enterprise at a time when higher education is undergoing fundamental shifts, accelerated by the current COVID-19 pandemic. During a time of change, OHIO is refocusing on core strategic priorities that ensure student access, inclusion, equity, and success. Within the OHIO Strategic Framework, diversity and inclusion remains a strategic priority in relation to both instruction and campus life.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion as core aims central to inclusive excellence reflect institutional aspirations and practices rooted in the following three (3) experience and research-based convictions:

1. Students from diverse backgrounds with a strong sense of connection to community and place are more likely to succeed academically, devote energy and passion to their studies, and retain their connection to Ohio University as enthusiastic alumni.
2. Students who learn with and from others with backgrounds and experiences different from their own are best prepared to succeed in their chosen careers and become leaders in their diverse local and global communities.
3. Faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds who enjoy professional support, receive mentorship, and have their identities affirmed report higher levels of job satisfaction and remain in their positions as devoted supporters of OHIO's mission and our diverse student body.

In pursuing these commitments, OHIO aspires to:

- Build an intentional culture of inclusion to enhance the student experience.
- Impact retention and address achievement gaps by ensuring the individual success and retention needs of an increasingly diverse student body are met.
- Create an enriching academic experience by offering curricular and co-curricular experiences that expand civic engagement and cultural competency outcomes and promotes anti-racism.
- Increase the diversity of faculty within the academic colleges and build an intentional culture of inclusion to enhance the experience of faculty and staff.
- Achieve national recognition for inclusivity and positively impact our national rankings through improved student success and enhanced inclusion.



SUPPORTING AND ENRICHING

OHIO's Academic Enterprise through Diversity and Inclusive Excellence

Principles that Inform Our Work at OHIO

We embrace principles that affirm the importance of pursuing our vision of inclusive excellence. We seek to foster student success and retention, encourage debate and dialogue, promote empathy, instill curiosity, broaden intercultural competence and awareness, and inspire a lifelong commitment to equity and racial understanding. Thus, our efforts will focus on the enhancement of research-based, campus-wide actions, initiatives, and structures that are coordinated and sustainable; and that together foster greater diversity, inclusion, equity, belonging, and shared accountability in every academic and administrative unit. Ohio University is committed to inclusive excellence as a guiding aim to foster a welcoming, respectful, supportive, equitable, and engaging learning environment in which all Bobcats can grow and thrive.

Embedded with our overarching commitment for inclusive excellence are core aims associated with equity; diversity and inclusion; and anti-racism.

We will pursue initiatives centered on equity aims, which are grounded in ideals of universal fairness and access. In an equitable community, everyone has access to the resources and support systems they need to succeed. To ensure that all potential and current students, faculty, and staff at OHIO have such access, we must be intentional in identifying and addressing equity gaps for students, faculty, and staff while proactively reducing access barriers.

Correspondingly, our commitment to achieving diversity and inclusion goals is central to our mission. Diversity describes who we are, the many visible and invisible differences between and among the individuals, groups, and cultures that make up our communities. Specifically, diversity is inclusive of our different

lived backgrounds and experiences, races, ethnic groups, genders, gender identities, sexualities, ages, national origins, cultures, socioeconomic classes, first-generation status, abilities and disabilities, familial status, veteran status, geographic regions and more; and our many perspectives and viewpoints, including those reflecting different political, as well as religious and spiritual beliefs.

If diversity is *what is*, inclusion is what *can be*. Inclusion describes practices that affirm, encourage, and empower all members of our campus community in order to keep them feeling engaged, valued, and affirmed in their lived experiences.

Aligned with these core aims, we embrace anti-racism strategies and actions through which the University will challenge and counter inequalities, prejudices, and forms of discrimination based on race. We are mindful that being anti-racist is more than simply not being racist or being “non-racist.” Becoming an anti-racist community means we must take an unambiguous stand against racism in all its forms and do so with purpose, self-reflection, and intentionality. The goal of anti-racism is a key component of our vision to provide the nation’s best transformative learning experience.

With these foundations, our work pays particular attention to the ways in which some identities have been marginalized within higher education settings. In other words, our broad definition of diversity paves the way for a nuanced and targeted understanding of the ways in which individuals may be prevented from full participation and opportunities. Therefore, our operationalization of diversity as institutional practice aims to create space for a multitude of voices that may otherwise be excluded or sidelined.



TIMELINE & PROCESS

	Summer 2018 VP Secuban held initial meetings, upon arrival, with a variety of campus and community constituents (alumni, faculty, staff, and students) to assess DEI needs across campus	Spring 2019 Hosted inaugural Diversity Leadership Institute and gathered feedback to inform the development of a framework for the D&I strategic plan
Summer 2019 Drafted strategic plan framework based on initial feedback received at the DLI	Fall 2019 Created a D&I Advisory Board including representatives from across campus Worked with D&I Advisory Board members to develop mission, vision, values, and formalize the strategic plan framework	Spring 2020 Conducted strategic plan framework feedback sessions for campus constituents
Summer 2020 Continued meetings with different campus constituency groups to garner feedback on the strategic plan framework and gather possible action items Presented formal strategic plan framework to the President's Council for feedback and approval	Fall 2020 Continued meetings with different campus constituency groups to garner feedback on the strategic plan framework and gather possible action items Presented for approval revised framework to the D&I Advisory Board Presented for approval revised framework and potential campus-wide action items to the President's Council	Spring 2021 Continue meetings with different campus constituency groups to garner feedback on the strategic plan framework and gather possible action items <i>NOTE: We have met with over 30 campus constituency groups to gather feedback on the plan.</i> Finalize 2021 action items for inclusion in the plan Present the framework and action items to the Board of Trustees for review and approval



TIMELINE & PROCESS

Since Spring 2019, our team has engaged in countless campus-wide conversations – including over 30 feedback sessions with campus constituencies – to ensure that many voices could provide feedback on our strategic goals and action items. Below is a listing of campus constituency groups who participated in Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan Presentations and Feedback sessions conducted by the Division of Diversity and Inclusion starting in Spring 2020.

Spring/Summer 2020

- Online Poster Session via Voice Thread (18 viewers and 15 comments)
- President's Council

Fall 2020

- President's Council
- Black Student Organization Coalition
- Student Senate Meeting
- Administrative Senate Meeting
- DSA Equity and Social Justice Committee
- Breakfast for Progress
- Shared Governance Leadership
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Diversity Leadership Ambassadors
- Bobcats Lead Change Student Group
- Operationalizing Diversity and Inclusion Working Group
- Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board
- Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership

Spring 2021

- Library Staff
- OUPD Staff
- Faculty Senate Exec Committee
- Faculty Senate
- Chairs and Directors Meeting
- Board of Trustee Chairs
- Dean of Students Leadership Team
- Dean, College of Health Sciences and Professions (CHSP)
- CHSP Diversity Committee
- Dean, College of Business
- Dean's Council
- Diversity Leadership Ambassadors
- Graduate Student Senate
- Division of Diversity & Inclusion Directors
- Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board
- HCOM Executive Staff
- Facilities Management Staff
- Vice President for Student Affairs Leadership Team
- Regional Campuses Deans Council
- Diversity Leadership Ambassadors
- Student Senate
- Geological Sciences Staff
- Presidential Leadership Scholars
- NAACP/Black Student Leaders



STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

Ohio University's Mission and Vision

Mission: Ohio University holds as its central purpose the intellectual and personal development of its students. Distinguished by its rich history, diverse campus, international community, and beautiful Appalachian setting, Ohio University is known as well for its outstanding faculty of accomplished teachers whose research and creative activity advance knowledge across many disciplines.

Vision: Ohio University will be the nation's best transformative learning community where students realize their promise, faculty advance knowledge, staff achieve excellence, and alumni become global leaders.

Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan Mission and Vision

The pursuits outlined in the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan are closely aligned with Ohio University's central mission – the intellectual and personal development of its students – and our vision of being the nation's best transformative learning community. Outlined below are the plan's mission and vision statements:

Mission: Ohio University is committed to inclusive excellence and achieving the benefits of diversity through inclusive practices, policies, curricula, and programs that lead to a welcoming, respectful, supportive, and affirming environment; especially for those who have been marginalized.

Vision: Ohio University will be recognized as a national leader in our diversity and inclusion efforts defined by our innovative approaches to designing an inclusive curriculum and educational programming, enacting comprehensive recruitment and strategic communication strategies, supporting students, crafting campus-wide mentoring initiatives, and focusing on continuous assessment.

Core Values

Compassion

for all people, situations, backgrounds, perspectives

Communication

with transparent, respectful, and engaged dialogue

Collaboration

to create a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment

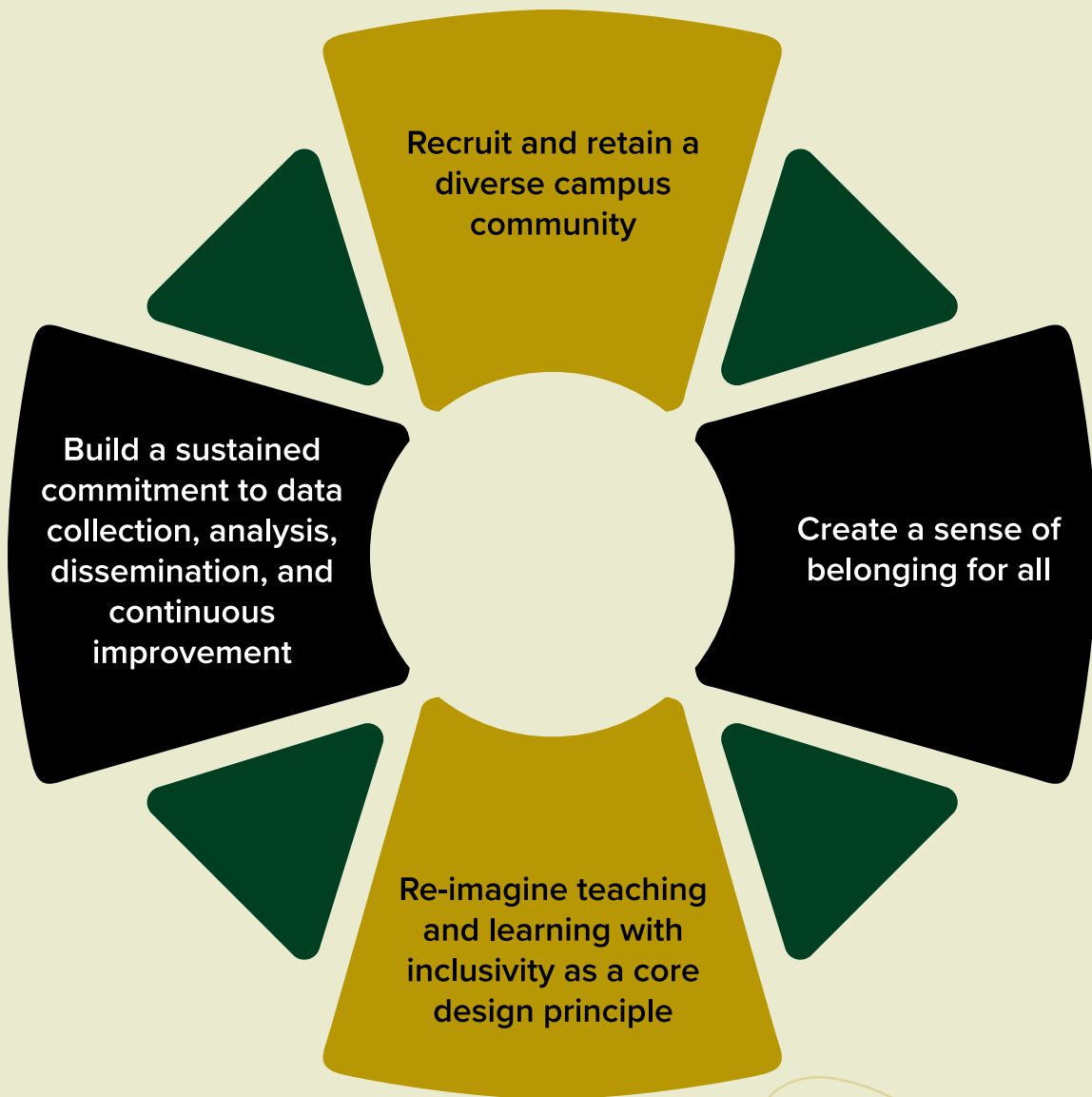
Community

connecting ideas and people across differences

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

Strategic Goals

The Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan goals are designed to provide guidance as we operationalize Ohio University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and related equity aims. Driven by our University's core values these strategic goals give us a clear roadmap as we build a campus culture of accountability and will help support the continued progress of diversity, inclusion, and equity work at OHIO.



INVESTMENT, BENEFITS, & MEASURING SUCCESS

Investment

The implementation of the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan and the associated action items will certainly require time and effort by many. As the University continues to engage in the process of realignment to balance the budget, reallocation of existing resources will be the key to identifying funding for new initiatives associated with the plan's implementation.

Benefits

Although the definitive numbers regarding the projected return on investment associated with the plan's implementation are still being projected, the plan's goal to enhance the student experience - which will subsequently increase student satisfaction and success - contributing to our recruitment and retention efforts, will definitively have a positive impact on the University's fiscal position. Further, the plan's curricular goal will positively influence academic quality offering expanded civic engagement and cultural competency outcomes, which will best prepare our students as they enter the 21st-century workforce. Finally, efforts around the plan have the potential to influence faculty and staff satisfaction. All of these outcomes serve to not only enhance the student experience, but to positively influence the entire campus as a whole.

Measuring Success

To measure our success and progress, we are working closely with our colleagues in Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics to identify metrics and develop transparent reporting processes.

A top priority among our 2021 action items will be continuing our work with colleagues in Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics to develop a comprehensive set of metrics to quantify the impact of the Inclusive Excellence Strategic Plan's action items. One such metric is developing comprehensive benchmarking protocols that will allow us to compare our outcomes data, related to graduation rates, retention, and achievement gaps, with other IUC institutions.

In the next several months, we will be developing a web-hosted Inclusive Excellence Dashboard that will serve as a reporting mechanism on progress made on action items related to the plan's strategic goals.



IMPLEMENTATION

The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, in consultation with University leadership, will prioritize and set a timeline for the plan's objectives and action items.

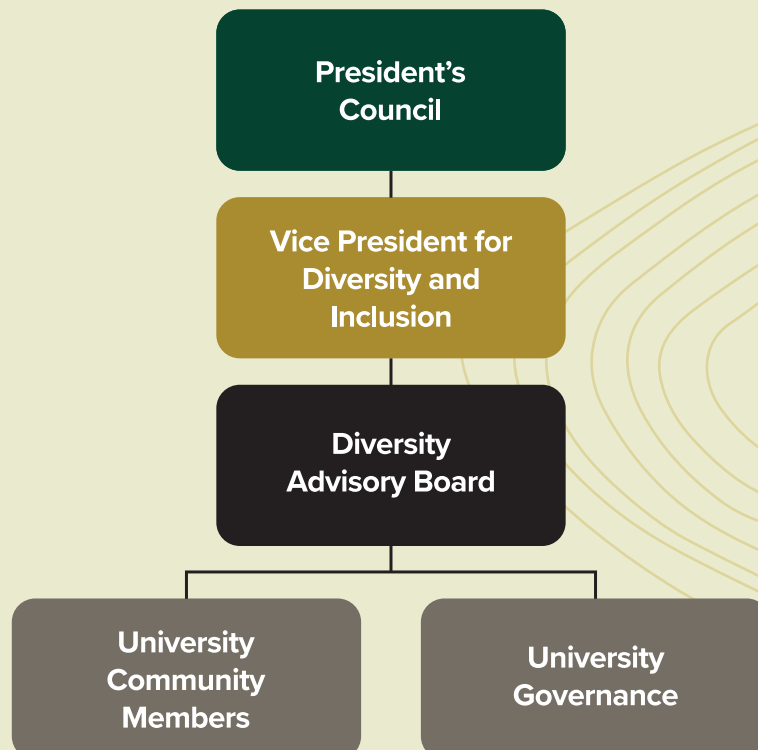
- Annually identify high-priority objectives and action items for implementation.
- Establish realistic timelines and outcome measures for implementing high-priority objectives and action items.
- Work with University leadership to identify financial resources to fund initiatives related to high-priority objectives and action items.

The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion will monitor implementation of the strategic plan and report annually on the plan's progress.

- The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion will annually report on the progress of the plan to the President's Leadership Team and Board of Trustees.
- An annual progress report on the plan will be posted on the diversity and inclusion website and released to the university community.

The plan will be modified periodically based on emerging issues and updated at least every five (5) years.

- Members of the university community will have opportunities to petition for changes to the plan by consulting with the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion.
- The Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion will appoint a steering committee, including faculty, staff, senior leadership, and undergraduate and graduate students, to complete a review and update of the plan no less than every five (5) years.



EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

of Institutional Diversity

Institutional experience and abundant research confirm the compelling nature of the educational benefits of diversity in enhancing teaching and learning experiences and outcomes; better preparing students for success in the workforce; and providing experiences that will support students civic engagement and leadership. These interests go to the core of what we seek to achieve at OHIO: Providing the kind of experiences that allow each of our students to thrive—through collaboration, engagement, and challenge; and setting the stage for students' success in life.

The Foundation of Compositional Diversity

Having a campus community with a significant number of students from diverse backgrounds provides students with opportunities to engage with others who, with different backgrounds, may have different life experiences and hold different beliefs and opinions, thus providing an effective vehicle for dialogue across differences. Such a diverse environment, critically, mirrors the diverse communities in which our graduates will live and work post-graduation. This socialization has been shown to have a strong effect on cognitive outcomes including critical thinking and reasoning, perspective-taking, and lifelong openness to cognitive dissimilarity and challenge (Harper & Antonio, 2008). Further, the research suggests that students who engage in diverse college environments have higher overall levels of satisfaction with college, retention, and perceptions of campus climate (Astin, 1993; Chang 2001; Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004; Cole, 2007; Engberg, 2007; Gurin, 1999; Pike, Kuh, & Gonyea, 2007). In addition, the research is unequivocal that students who interact in diverse collegiate environments have

an enhanced intellectual and social self-concept, heightened cultural awareness and appreciation, stronger leadership skills, and a lifelong commitment to racial understanding (Antonio, et.al., 2004; Chang et. al., 2006; Chang, Astin, & Kim, 2004; Cole, 2007; Engberg, 2007; Mayhew et.al., 2008; Pike, Kuh, & Gonyea, 2007; Umbach & Kuh, 2006).

Enhanced Civic Engagement Learning Outcomes

A diverse campus community enhances an institution's capacity to provide students with learning outcomes that support values of democracy and pluralism (AAC&U, 2002; Engberg, 2007; Engberg & Hurtado, 2011; Gurin et. al., 2002; Hurtado, 2003; Hurtado et. al., 2002; Pryor et. al., 2007; Zuniga et al., 2005). Gurin (2002) and Hurtado (2002) suggest that democratic outcomes—the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to be full participants in a diverse democratic society—develop when students have opportunities to participate in diverse learning environments. Additionally, Gutmann (2004) and Hurtado et. al. (2008) suggest that these competencies, based on critical consciousness and ideals of civic equality, include the skills and abilities necessary to become ethical decision-makers within dynamic and ever-evolving social contexts.

Inclusive Learning

From a curricular perspective, the benefits of both diversity-focused course offerings and inclusive pedagogy are well established. Nelson Laird (2005) and Nelson Laird et al. (2005) point to the strong effects of diversity-focused courses on student motivation to reduce personal prejudices and foster desire to take action in support of inclusion and social justice. In other words, preparing students for 21st-century career paths requires collegiate instruction that prepares students to be flexible, independent, and complex thinkers and activates capacities for lifelong learning (AAC&U, 2002). Inclusive pedagogical practices honor and celebrate difference within the classroom by engaging faculty in various approaches to teaching and student engagement. For example, Gurin (1999) argues that college graduates need skills that allow them to work effectively in diverse environments, a goal best achieved through teaching strategies that provide intentional classroom learning experiences and engage inclusive pedagogy practices.



EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS

of Institutional Diversity

Co-Curricular Diversity Initiatives

Further, the literature also documents the positive effects of co-curricular diversity initiatives including programming, dialogue, and trainings that address racism, sexism, homophobia, cultural differences, discrimination, and intergroup conflict, all of which enhance key student learning outcomes. Such co-curricular engagement promotes cultural awareness, commitment to cross-racial understanding, positive attitudes toward campus diversity, perspective-taking, and general comfort with dialogue across difference (Engberg, 2004; McCauley, Wright, & Harris, 2000).

Campus Climate

To fully realize the many educational benefits of diversity, the literature emphasizes the importance of overall campus climate (a term more elastic and comprehensive than campus culture). Peterson and Spencer (1990) suggest that campus climate is a multifaceted term that includes attitudes and behaviors and is reducible to three dimensions: objective, perceived, and psychological. The existing research points to a close connection between campus climate and student outcomes, suggesting that negative campus climate has adverse effects on retention and persistence across student populations (Kuh, Kinze, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) while also inhibiting faculty productivity (Seifert & Umbach, 2008). Research supports the need for inclusive campus environments engineered and sustained by institutional policies and practices at both the curricular and co-curricular levels (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Terenzini & Reason, 2012). To create and sustain an inclusive campus climate, leadership must embrace and productively address the perspectives of multiple constituencies, including students, faculty members, and academic and student affairs administrators, to forge consensus-based campus policies, practices, and expectations that reflect research and best practices (Kuh, Kinze, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Reason, 2013).

Workforce Benefits

Ultimately, the benefits of diversity that can be realized within a higher education setting yield benefits beyond graduation. As the U.S. Supreme Court has recognized:

[N]umerous studies show that student body diversity promotes learning outcomes, and better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society, and better prepares them as professionals (Brief for American Educational Research Association et al. as Amici Curiae 3). These benefits are not theoretical but real, as major American businesses have made clear that the skills needed in today's increasingly global marketplace can only be developed through exposure to widely diverse people, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints. (Brief for 3M et al. as Amici Curiae 5; Brief for General Motors Corp. as Amicus Curiae 3 & 4). What is more, high-ranking retired officers and civilian leaders of the United States military assert that, "[b]ased on [their] decades of experience, highly qualified, racially diverse officer corps . . . is essential to the military's ability to fulfill its principle mission to provide national security." (Brief for Julius W. Becton, Jr. et al. as Amici Curiae 27. Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003).

In addition employer surveys have concluded that the educational benefits of diversity – such as improved critical thinking, collaboration, and more – are valued characteristics for hiring recent college graduates (Hart Research Assoc. & Association of American Colleges & University, 2013 & 2015; College Board and EducationCounsel, 2016).

Climate and Job Satisfaction for Faculty and Staff

The connection between expectations and demands in the workforce, relationships with colleagues, job satisfaction, campus climate, and retaining qualified and competent professionals is also documented in the research. Much of the research on job satisfaction in the academy has focused on faculty members and there has been limited research on the job satisfaction of college staff (Aguirre, 2000; Allen et al., 2002; Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000; Austin & Gamson, 1983; Bender, 1990; Blackburn & Lawrence, 1995; Delgado-Romero, Manlove, & Hernandez; 2007; Evans, 1988; Evans & Chun, 2007; Hagedorn, 2000; Jayakumar, et. al., 2009; Johnsrud, 2002; Johnsrud & Rosser, 1999; Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000; Laden & Hagedorn, 2002; Lorden, 1998; Manger & Eikeland, 1990; Olsen, Maple, & Stage, 1995; Putten, McLendon, & Peterson, 1997; Rosser, 2004; Smart, 1990; Smerek, & Peterson, 2007; Stanley, 2006; Volkwein, Malik, & Napierski-Pranel, 1998; Volkwein & Parmley, 2000; Volkwein & Zhou, 2003). In short, the care we take as an institution in addressing faculty and staff job satisfaction and campus climate is directly related to OHIO's diversity, equity, and inclusion pursuits.

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