



## Office of the Vice President for Government Relations Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan FY 21

“At the University of Michigan, our dedication to academic excellence for the public good is inseparable from our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is central to our mission as an educational institution to ensure that each member of our community has full opportunity to thrive in our environment, for we believe that diversity is key to individual flourishing, educational excellence and the advancement of knowledge.” *From President Schlissel’s Charge to the U-M Community for a Strategic Planning Process on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, July 2015*

In 2016, the University of Michigan embarked on a broad based planning initiative to envision and seek to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive university community. This work builds on UM’s history of consciously seeking to expand and enhance the teaching, learning and work environment in response to the changing world around us. This new initiative uses an expansive definition of diversity to include not only race and ethnicity but many dimensions such as socio-economic status, gender and gender identity, age, religious affiliation, sexual orientation and (dis)ability status to name a few. It also seeks to go beyond just attracting a diverse pool of students, faculty and staff but to examine our culture to make sure we strengthen and enhance elements that provide equal opportunity for success to all members of our community.

Promoting diversity throughout an institution takes people making a commitment to the work. It demands commitment at all levels throughout the organization over time to begin to make positive change. Thus every school, college and unit was asked to participate in this strategic planning process and to prepare a plan that holds each unit accountable for our collective success in creating a diverse, welcoming, equitable environment that better allows us to achieve our academic, scholarly and public service missions. The Office of the Vice President for Government Relations is committed to promoting diversity and moving forward the principles of equity and inclusion through our work with internal and external communities.

## Who We Are

The Office of the Vice President for Government Relations is a small unit within the executive offices of the university. We have 16 employees in three physical locations: Ann Arbor, Lansing and Washington D.C. Due to the physical distance between staff, we functionally operate as 3 independent groups for day-to-day operations.

- Our Ann Arbor based staff consists of the VP and state government relations' staff; our community outreach unit; and our professional support staff including administrative and online support.
- Our DC office has 4 staff members (including student employees) that focus on engaging with national legislators and organizations in support of the university's work.
- Our Lansing office has 2 employees that focus on community relations, outreach to Lansing and other mid-state communities, and supports the Wolverine Caucus activities.

At present, our staff is 73% female and 27% male. We are 86% white and 14% black. In terms of age/life experience, we are majority baby boomers, and most have worked at the University for 10 years or more.

Much of our work is done with external constituencies and communities. We engage with local, state and national legislators; state and national organizations; Michigan communities; alumni; faculty; and students. In broad scope, we serve as a liaison between these external groups and the university community. In this context, we

- share relevant information created at the university that is of interest to communities/individuals
- advocate for support for programs and policies important to the work of the university
- connect communities/individuals with university resources – such as staff, faculty, students, facilities, or products and programs
- provide a mechanism for community voices within the university structure

Our work brings us into contact with a wide-ranging, diverse group of individuals, organizations and communities.

We engage with state and national legislators to support the work of the university – not only in its education and research activities but also as a large employer. Proposed and pending legislation can impact many aspects of the university. New laws may affect research funding or may impact aspects of student life or may impose new employer regulations that could be costly to implement. Over time, our staff has developed relationships in both Lansing and Washington DC that give us avenues to discuss and shape legislative activities. We analyze the impacts of proposed bills and work with our university community to help clarify appropriate actions and responses. We often facilitate conversations between faculty experts and legislators and/or their staff to help people understand complex topics impacted by legislation. We work with the university community to help them understand the impact of legislation. We provide advice to schools and colleges who want to advocate for particular programs or views regarding legislative matters. In both Lansing and DC, we work with other organizations such as university coalitions,

like the Big 10 universities, for example. We serve on boards and committees to represent the work of the university in larger state and national forums.

Our community relations/state outreach component serves the public mission of the university. We look for opportunities to engage university resources to address community priorities and challenges within Michigan when there is mutual benefit. We work with our local communities of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County to make sure the university is a good neighbor. We visit communities throughout the state representing UM in forums such as chamber of commerce events, K-12 and community college activities, planning meetings, and social functions. We actively meet with community leaders, policymakers and other influencers to learn about their communities and organizations. We visit places outside of southeast Michigan on a regular basis and become a ‘face’ of the university to communities across the state. We share information about the university and serve as a first contact for people wanting to learn more.

The Government Relations unit has several keystone programs that we feature each year:

- Michigan Road Scholars Tour – a week-long traveling seminar about the State of Michigan for UM faculty
- Wolverine Caucus – a seminar series conducted in Lansing that brings UM experts to speak on topics of current interest
- Michigan Congressional Breakfast – an annual event held in Washington D.C. that brings together UM alums and D.C. policymakers.
- Michigan Impact – an online communication to alums in the state of Michigan, sharing data about the UM’s economic impact and its activities in every corner of the state.

The nature of the work we do in this unit has been supported by a core group of long-serving employees that have engaged in building relationships over many years. We strive to keep relationships over time and build new ones that are beneficial to the university and to Michigan communities.

### **Update on Year Four Progress**

This section will be updated each year with a review of the progress for the year just ended.

Our DEI efforts in year four focused on:

- Recruitment, Retention and Development
- Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community
- Service
- Sexual Misconduct Training

Although we had accomplishments under all of our objectives during the year, Recruitment, Retention and Development as well as Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community dominated.

## **Progress on Recruitment, Retention and Development**

Our initial data collection highlighted the fact that our staff is fairly homogenous on the characteristics of gender, race/ethnicity and age. Therefore, our plan includes a variety of actions related to seeking to diversify the demographics of our staff.

Here are some of the strategies we have tried:

- We worked with UMHR to post jobs in a wider variety of venues rather than just to the UM careers site -which was our practice in the past. We posted job openings in:
  - Michigan Higher Education Recruitment Consortium
  - Michigan Works Talent Bank
  - Voices of the Staff Network Team for Career Development
  - Voices of the Staff Network Team for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- For some positions, we also made use of our professional networks to share the posting with colleagues and to share it on mailing lists of various professional groups where we may not have shared in the past.
- The COVID-19 Hiring freeze, as well as budgetary adjustments may impact our ability to hire new staff members.

## **Progress on Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community**

Our activities in this area primarily revolved around providing learning sessions to increase our understanding of people different from us and opportunities to engage with DEI related issues and concepts to strengthen our personal competencies.

Staff members attended the following during the year:

- Using lunch documentary viewing sessions, we raise awareness on issues related to particular groups. After watching the movie American Factory, we discussed issues as it related to socio-economic and cultural clashes and our different viewpoints/observations as well as personal experiences. This not only builds awareness of issues we may not have thought about but let's us learn about our colleagues in new ways.
- Fleming Building DEI team, made up of the DEI leads of the units within the building hosted several sessions open to all building staff:
  - A New Vision of Generational Differences at Work, by Tina Jordan to remediate a previous presentation on Generations in the Workplace.

In addition to these structured activities, one of the unintended benefits of this work is the spontaneous conversations that have occurred throughout the year. Diversity, equity and inclusion concepts are much more in the forefront of our thinking and people are eager to engage and learn more.

The Michigan Road Scholars Application has been revised to include gender non-binary options.

We've had conversations about political polarization, racial bias and the difficulty of being taken seriously as a young employee – in hallways, over lunch and in conference rooms. The fact that these topics are coming up and being discussed openly and with interest and respect within the department goes a long way in further establishing a welcoming, safe environment.

## Progress on Service

- Schedule visits with new organizations in out-state communities that may be interested in learning about the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.
  - The Michigan Road Scholars program engages with a variety of community organizations. Road Scholars continued to expand faculty's exposure to and understanding of the diversity of Michigan. This year we had to cancel this program due to COVID-19.
- Continue staff discussion about this domain to further clarify strategies for future consideration.
  - This is an ongoing effort.
  - Considering recommendations to expand DEI representatives.
- Strengthen mechanisms to share information across government relations about staff and faculty with expertise, experience and abilities to engage with external organizations/audiences.
  - Connecting Michigan initiative, designed to facilitate this, is an ongoing effort.
- Identify opportunities to plug in UM speakers/expertise into community organizations.
  - Wolverine Caucus connects faculty to Lansing on some issues related to DEI.
  - Wolverine Caucus has increased its diversity of presenters measurably year over year.
- Increased number of faculty/staff engagement with external organizations.
  - Michigan Road Scholars connects faculty and staff with external organizations.
- Work with Wolverine Caucus planning committee to promote speakers covering diversity related topics.
  - Continue to actively consider issues related to DEI in setting Wolverine Caucus program sessions.
  - The WC is a forum where diversity issues can be presented.

## **Progress on Sexual Misconduct Training**

As of 8-28-2020 100% of our staff have completed the required sexual misconduct training.

## **Initial Data Gathering**

*(Subsequent data gathering can be found in Appendix A)*

This strategic planning initiative goes deep into the university, and is not being processed or implemented by a centralized group – the plan seeks input from a wide variety of sources – staff, faculty, and students. It has created mechanisms to provide input through town halls, social media and the ‘Be Heard’ program. The goal is to assess as best we can, where we are starting from on this journey to a diverse, equitable, inclusive community. Although we have supported past initiatives on a university wide basis, the department of government relations has done relatively little work internally to evaluate our own structure and vision in this area. So our starting point was to gather some initial data.

### *Survey*

As our first step, we conducted a simple survey. The survey was intended to provide initial data about where we are, how we see our current operations relative to diversity, equity and inclusion and to solicit ideas for moving forward in this area. Ten out of fifteen staff members completed the survey. The survey was anonymous so no data was collected revealing the demographic profile of the actual respondents. Collecting such data might be useful in the future to determine if there are issues related to particular employee categories (i.e. new hires, administrative, management) that need attention.

### *Phone Interviews*

In addition to the survey, phone interviews were conducted with staff from our Lansing and Washington D.C. locations to solicit any input, issues and ideas about engaging in this initiative from afar.



## Data Analysis

The data gathering process indicated the following thoughts about diversity, equity and inclusion within the department.

- A diverse and inclusive workplace was described as including diverse kinds of people where there is open communication, different ideas are expressed and welcomed, there is mutual respect and acceptance and people feel they have a voice in decisions and making a contribution.
- There are divergent views of whether government relations currently could be described as diverse. Some feel that we are diverse in a variety of dimensions and others commented on the relatively older, whiter skew of our employees thus concluding that we are not a diverse work group.
- Positive work environment elements were identified such as our breadth of experience to draw on, and the feeling of mutual respect among/between our staff. Less positive aspects mentioned were too much similarity in age and life experience, people not feeling supported for their work equally, and limited opportunity to make change.
- There was an expressed need for planning and setting a vision for what we are trying to achieve with our efforts in this area.
- The need for training staff and new hires was identified. Multiple activities were suggested as ways to help staff learn more about and feel comfortable with a diverse environment including the need to interact with multicultural groups.
- There is a desire to use our work with external organizations to enhance the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.

During the planning process, schools, colleges and units have been asked to think about a strategic plan that addresses the following domains:

- Recruitment, retention and development
- Promoting an equitable, inclusive community
- Education and scholarship
- Service
- **Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention**

After the survey data was collected, responses were sorted into these various domains. The data was then grouped into categories under each domain. The following chart lists the categories that emerged from government relations' staff responses. (The chart also includes input from the phone interviews.)

<b>Recruitment, retention and development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hiring Criteria/Process</li> <li>• New Hire Training</li> <li>• Staff Training</li> <li>• Management Training/Vision</li> </ul>
<b>Promoting an equitable, inclusive community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Departmental Communication</li> <li>• Comply/Follow University DEI Program</li> <li>• Work Environment</li> <li>• Department Planning</li> <li>• Increase Interdepartmental Collaboration</li> </ul>
<b>Education and scholarship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor Students from Under-Represented Groups</li> <li>• Engage with Alums and Feed Input Back into DEI Process/Plan @ U</li> <li>• Connect Under-Represented Community Members/Organizations with Faculty and Students</li> <li>• Support and Advocate Policies that Enhance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Higher Ed</li> </ul>
<b>Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategically Target Organizations</li> <li>• Communicate DEI Externally</li> <li>• Provide Input from External Organizations/Individuals to U</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support unit-level participation in mandatory training</b></li> <li>• <b>Educate our community on sexual and gender-based misconduct prevention in an effort to promote a safe and supportive environment for all members to work, learn, and thrive.</b> [L] [SEP]</li> </ul>

**Strategic Objectives**

This initial planning phase has allowed our unit to begin to think about diversity, equity and inclusion as they apply to our own work. But it is just a start. We’ve collected some minimal data but have not yet heard from all staff voices. Our data thus far has revealed that we need a deeper dive into this topic to understand how well our current operations and defacto unit culture is furthering the ideals of diversity, equity and inclusion. Therefore, our strategic objectives for this first year of the plan focus on continued data gathering, staff development and using data to examine our current operations to identify areas for improvement.

## **Strategic Objective: Recruitment, Retention and Development**

One of the findings from our initial survey was the feeling that government relations as a working group does not represent the kind of diverse life experience and perspectives that we might want to see. As stated earlier, our workforce is majority female and skews older and has had this make-up for the last 5-10 years. Given that our employee turnover is relatively low, position openings may only occur every 2-3 years. When openings do occur, we typically get a lot of applicants – often hundreds for an open position. We currently have a multi-step process from application review to initial screening interviews to finalist interviews often with multiple team members. Although we get a large applicant pool and our process is inclusive, our staff make-up is still fairly homogeneous – at least on race/ethnicity and gender.

There may be factors such as unconscious bias that come into play as we select, interview and hire new employees. With a broad definition of diversity, it is also possible that our staff is diverse on other parameters that we may not be assessing at present. Or it may not be that our applicant pool is not diverse but our internal criteria results in a ‘status quo’ composition of our staff. In order to begin to explore this and other possible factors at play, we propose engaging staff in discussions about key hiring criteria and skills needed within our department that might enable us to create a more diverse team and exploring staff development opportunities around ‘unconscious bias’ or other topics that can help us recognize what may be influencing our hiring decisions.

Objective 1. Develop recruitment and hiring practices that attract and successfully hire a demographically diverse staff through strategies and actions that are consistent with law.

### **FY 21 Actions:**

- Continue to develop recruitment and hiring practices that attract and successfully hire a demographically diverse staff through strategies and actions that are consistent with the law.
  - As part of overall exploration of the workplace climate include discussion to identify key aptitude, attitudes, skills and experience that would help us achieve increased diversity in staff over time.
  - Once identified, develop language that can be included in our job descriptions to attract applicants with the desired qualities. Check in with central HR to review proposed language.
  - Expand awareness of unconscious bias and other potential influences in our hiring through staff development.
- Continue to evaluate the departmental new employee orientation process focusing on how we communicate values and expectations related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
  - Meet with all hiring staff/supervisors to be able to come up with a plan that best suits our office and information that needs to be relayed.
- Continue to develop recommendations for new employee orientation based on evaluation.

- Based on meeting with hiring staff/supervisors create a plan that would be beneficial with all staff members that come on board as new employees.

Measures:

- Language to modify job descriptions to reflect the desired criteria and is consistent with law. Check in with central HR to review language.
- Review and compare orientation process for teams within government relations.
- Identify components of a common orientation to government relations that all new employees receive based on review and discussion.

**Note that the University of Michigan has implemented a hiring freeze.**

## **Strategic Objective: Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community**

Our simple survey results indicated both positive and negative aspects of the culture within government relations. The simple seven-question survey we conducted focused primarily on broad diversity, equity and inclusion concepts and did not really get at issues related to our internal culture and whether it is or is not achieving our vision of an equitable, inclusive work environment. It is clear that more information is needed to fully begin to assess what aspects are working and where we need to focus attention for improvement. For example, as we currently function, do we have clearly understood career pathways – particularly for early career staff? Do we have sufficient communication mechanisms in place so people feel they know what's going on? When things aren't working and there's conflict, do staff know what to do - how to raise contentious issues? Our data collection to date doesn't provide sufficient information to answer these questions. We need to do a more robust climate study to provide this data. Once the climate study is conducted, we can review the data and schedule follow-up discussions with staff to develop new strategic objectives to address any areas of concern. As stated earlier, staff discussions around the issues of equity and inclusion are new to this unit in a broad sense. Having a starting point for these conversations based on climate study data, will let us focus our attention on the most important areas.

Due to time constraints, schedule conflicts and travel requirements, we have not had an opportunity to have an all-staff group discussion focused on these issues. Since starting the planning process, we recognize the need to provide a broader forum for discussion. Our various internal groups do different work focused on different constituencies and we need to have conversations across these boundaries to flesh out how each part of our organization contributes to enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion within the unit. It will also help us to solidify our common goals in this arena and to strengthen our collective commitment.

Objective 1. Assure all staff feel recognized and supported

FY 21 Actions:

- Increase cross-cultural competency for all staff
  - **Continue to investigate available resources for staff development that meet the needs of staff not only in Ann Arbor but in Lansing and Washington D.C. as well.**
  - Continue to explore more opportunities to provide to our team and provide a space for discussion after a documentary or film.
- Include DEI-related topics at monthly staff meetings when appropriate to better meet communication needs across teams within government relations.

**Measures:**

- Develop a new performance evaluation form that includes goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion principles.
- **Schedule informal 'brown bag' sessions to explore DEI topics**

The topic of interacting with/ being exposed to ‘multicultural’ situations was raised multiple times in our survey results. Over the next year, we may begin to explore this concept of multicultural competency through staff development. For example, state outreach staff have been working with the federally recognized tribes in the state and yet the learning from interacting with the Anishnaabe culture has not been broadly shared within the unit. Given the relationships built in this community, it would be possible to have a guest speaker come and give us a cultural awareness session. Undoubtedly, there are other activities within the department where relationships have been developed with key individuals and organizations that might be called upon to help us grow our cultural competencies as a unit.

Staff development for all of our staff at one time is difficult due to the three physical locations – one of which is out of state. There has never been a time when all staff were in the same physical location at the same time. We would have to designate time and budget to make this happen. We do however conduct a monthly staff meeting via conference call that may be used for development activities and/or discussions. This meeting currently is focused on staff activity updates but since most staff attend - it offers an opportunity. Being a small unit, we’d like to include all staff in this conversation but figuring out ways to do it will be a challenge that we need to think about creatively.

#### Objective 2. Increase cross-cultural competencies for all staff

##### FY 21 Actions:

- Continue to investigate available resources for staff development that meet the needs of staff not only in Ann Arbor but in Lansing and Washington D.C. as well.
- Require staff to add a training goal for annual review related to diversity, equity and inclusion that helps expand our cultural competency/awareness. Staff may attend an existing training session on their own or facilitate group sessions such as a guest speaker or sharing personal culture/heritage.

##### Measures:

- Resource list of relevant training opportunities available to staff
- % of staff completing/facilitating training
- Written evaluations of individual training sessions will be shared via email prior to the monthly staff meeting so that other staff can ask questions/discuss the topic if desired.
- Staff meeting discussion opportunity for any group session provided.

## **Strategic Objective: Service**

The desire to intentionally use our work with external organizations to expand and enhance the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives was expressed often in our survey results. This was expressed in a variety of ways such as ideas for bringing diverse groups to campus or identifying best diversity and inclusion practices or simply to bring information from these external communities into the university process. There are a variety of current on-going activities that can serve as starting points to expand our efforts in the service domain.

In government relations, we interact with a wide variety of organizations such as state and national coalitions, legislative offices, local units of government, economic development groups, chambers of commerce, neighborhood associations and community service organizations. We attend events held throughout the state representing the University of Michigan hosted by such organizations. We serve as a bridge between these groups and the university and often are asked to find a speaker or identify other expertise located within our community to assist them. The external nature of our work provides avenues to share the work the university is engaged in around diversity, equity and inclusion. It also gives us a chance to attend sessions on the topic hosted by others. For example, a staff member recently attended a diversity forum held in Grand Rapids. Regularly attending meetings with groups such as the Tribal Health and Education Directors give us an opportunity to update them about the diversity, equity and inclusion initiative and to solicit input from them.

Objective 1. Strategically target interactions with organizations that enhance the university's ability to meet its diversity objectives.

### **FY 21 Actions:**

- Continue to search for key organizations (and forums) that we currently work with and brief them on the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Solicit feedback if appropriate.
- Attend forums/seminars related to diversity topics hosted by other organizations especially those focused on diversity in higher education.
- Collaborate with other University units: communications, Office of the President, admissions, as well as with external entities like the Alumni Association, to broaden the public's knowledge of the DEI activities and why it is important
- Expand social media presence for government relations. Actively 'push out' information and activities to a broader audience.

### **Measures:**

- # of organization briefings
- Staff will give a summary of any sessions attended as part of their update during the monthly staff meeting
- # of opportunities co-created with partners both within and outside of the University

We can also take advantage of the Michigan Road Scholars program that we plan and implement. In addition to giving faculty the chance to learn more about the state of Michigan, we plan the program to encourage them to develop community engagement activities in their own work. We visit a wide variety of organizations from large businesses such as General Motors to small companies like Kalkaska Screw Products. We have talked with school district leaders from Grand Rapids to rural St. Ignace. We always include a stop with one of the 12 federally recognized sovereign nations in the state. We have visited neighborhood associations in Detroit working to revitalize the city and talked to farmers in the U.P. We have had dinner with UM alums at a country club and eaten lunch in a prison. The program is built to highlight the diversity of the state. It provides a substantial base from which to expand our work with faculty to facilitate more service opportunities. Recently, the Road Scholars program has resulted in university faculty working with the Hispanic Development Corp. in Detroit and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians in the Upper Peninsula. We encourage and support these projects but there is currently no formal and consistent mechanism to facilitate/support post-trip activity.

Objective 2. Evaluate and expand the scope of existing programs to encourage and support the university's DEI work.

FY 21 Actions:

- Continue to actively consider principles of DEI when setting stops for the Michigan Road Scholars program to present as broad a view as possible of the state.

Measures:

- Develop a list of strategies generated during planning meetings that could be implemented the following year for the road scholars program.



## **Strategic Objective: Education and Scholarship**

There are several areas of our work that relate to the domain of Education and Scholarship. Our survey pointed out that many of our staff work with students. Both Ann Arbor and D.C. hire student workers providing opportunities for students to get exposed to the field of government relations. Our Lansing office facilitates presentations of student work in Lansing venues. Staff has served on panels reviewing student projects, selecting students for the Washington internship program, and on committees supporting students such as the powwow planning committee. These interactions provide an opportunity for more proactive mentoring of students.

Community Relations and State Outreach look for opportunities for the university to help communities. When specific needs are identified and there is interest in working with the university, we look for an interested faculty member or internal organization that can help. This often creates learning opportunities for students in the form of projects addressing the needs of the community organization. Staff has also worked with schools and colleges to make connections with community organizations to expand internship opportunities for students and to develop new programs such as Camp Kinomaage. Most of these connections take time to develop. This is an area where we need more thought, so over the next year we need to continue the discussions in our work teams to determine how best to provide value in this domain.

Objective 1. Continue to expand and cultivate relationships with community organizations including organizations that serve or represent under-served communities.

FY 21 Actions:

- Schedule visits with new organizations in out-state communities that may be interested in learning about the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.
- Continue staff discussion about this domain to further clarify strategies for future consideration.
- Strengthen mechanisms to share information across government relations about staff and faculty with expertise, experience and abilities to engage with external organizations/audiences.
- Identify opportunities to plug in UM speakers/expertise into community organizations.

Measures:

- Summary of conversations w/ new organizations shared as part of updates during staff meetings.
- Agenda item on work team meetings to keep focus on the topic over time.
- Develop document/database of potential faculty and staff resources.
- Increased number of UM faculty/staff engagement with external community organizations.

We currently plan and implement the Wolverine Caucus program in Lansing. It provides a forum for sharing university research/expertise with the public and since it's held in the capital city, it can focus on current topics relevant to legislative activities to help educate those involved in the process of law making. This program provides an opportunity to include topics related to diversity in education that might be of interest.

Objective 2. Work with Wolverine Caucus planning committee to promote speakers covering diversity-related topics

FY 21 Actions:

- Continue to actively consider issues related to DEI in setting program for Wolverine Caucus
- Identify speakers on campus that have relevant expertise.

Measures:

- List of potential speakers and their expertise.
- Scheduled speaker focused on a diversity topic.

**Strategic Objective: Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention**

Educate our community on sexual and gender-based misconduct prevention in an effort to promote a safe and supportive environment for all members to work, learn, and thrive.

**Action Item:**

- 1. Support unit-level participation in mandatory training**
- 2. Support central efforts to educate faculty, staff, and students on the new University of Michigan Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct prevention ("umbrella policy")**  
[[L]]  
[SEP]
- 3. Develop and socialize unit-specific value statements that align and reinforce the forthcoming university level values that promote culture and climate change consistent with both the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention work that is already underway** [[L]]  
[SEP]

**FY 21 Actions:**

- 100% participation in training

**Measures:**

- 100% participation in training

## Action Plan

### Recruitment, Retention and Development

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
Staff/Managers	Develop recruitment and hiring practices that attract and successfully hire a demographically diverse staff through strategies and actions that are consistent with the law.	Key desired employee characteristics related to diversity  Language to modify job descriptions to reflect the desired criteria and is consistent with law. Check in with central HR to review language.	As part of overall exploration of the workplace climate include discussion to identify key aptitude, attitudes, skills and experience that would help us achieve increased diversity in staff over time.  Once identified, develop language that can be included in our job descriptions to attract applicants with the desired qualities. Check in with central HR to review proposed language.	Hiring managers/HR	
		Staff Development session during fall semester	Expand awareness of unconscious bias and other potential influences in our hiring through staff development.	DEI Planning Lead	Cost associated with hiring UM group to deliver training session.
Staff/Managers	Continue to evaluate departmental new employee orientation process focusing on how we communicate values and expectations related to diversity, equity and inclusion.	Review and compare orientation process for government relations.	Meet with all hiring staff/supervisors to be able to come up with a plan that best suits our office and information that needs to be relayed.	Employee Supervisors	
Staff/Managers	Continue to develop recommendations for new employee orientation based on evaluation.	Identify components of a common orientation to government relations that all new employees receive based on review and discussion.	Based on meeting with hiring staff/supervisors create a plan that would be beneficial with all staff members that come on board as new employees.	Employee Supervisors/DEI Leads	

## Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)/ Status
Staff	Assure all staff feel recognized and supported	Summary report of climate study findings highlighting key areas of concern	Conduct climate study to assess staff's current satisfaction with working in government relations.	DEI Planning Lead	There will be a cost to have an external group issue and analyze study <b>Completed Feb 2017</b>
		Written summary of information captured during retreat	Hold an all-staff facilitated retreat focused on planning for and implementing DEI initiatives within government relations.	VP/ DEI Planning Lead	A retreat including all staff in the same place will require travel budget <b>Completed Oct 2016</b>
		Develop new performance evaluation form that includes goals related to DEI work.	Within every staff members 'Performance Evaluation' we have added a question to include that employee's efforts in DEI and their goals.	VP/Directors	<b>Completed June 2019</b>
Staff	Increase cross-cultural competency for all staff	Resource list of relevant training opportunities available to staff	Continue to investigate available resources for staff development that meet the needs of staff not only in Ann Arbor but in Lansing and Washington D.C. as well.	Administrative staff	Ongoing
	Include DEI-related topics at monthly staff meetings when appropriate to better meet communication needs across teams within government relations.	% of staff completing training  Written evaluations of individual training sessions will be shared via email prior to monthly staff meeting so that other staff can ask questions /discuss the topic if desired.  Staff meeting discussion opportunity for any group session provided	Require staff to add a training goal for annual review related to diversity, equity and inclusion that helps expand our cultural competency /awareness. Staff may attend an existing training session on their own or facilitate group sessions such as a guest speaker or sharing personal culture/heritage.	Staff	Ongoing

## Service

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
Staff/Community Organizations	Strategically target interactions with organizations that enhance the university's ability to meet its diversity objectives.	Number of organization briefings	Continue to search for key organizations (and forums) that we currently work with and brief them on the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Solicit feedback if appropriate.	Staff	
		Staff will give a summary of any sessions attended as part of their update during the monthly staff meeting  # of opportunities co-created with partners both within and outside of the University	Attend forums/seminars related to diversity topics hosted by other organizations especially those focused on diversity in higher education.  Collaborate with other University units: communications, Office of the President, admissions, as well as with external entities like the Alumni Association, to broaden the public's knowledge of the DEI activities and why it is important  Expand social media presence for government relations. Actively 'push out' information and activities to a broader audience.	Staff	
Staff/Faculty	Evaluate and expand the scope of existing programs to encourage and support the university's DEI work.	Develop a list of strategies generated during planning meetings that could be implemented the following year for the road scholars program.	Continue to actively consider principles of DEI in setting stops for the Michigan Road Scholars program to present a broad view of the state.	MRS Staff	

## Education and Scholarship

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
Staff/Community Organizations	Schedule visits with new organizations in out-state communities that may be interested in learning about the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.	Summary of conversations w/ new organizations shared as part of updates during staff meeting.	Schedule visits with new organizations in out-state communities that may be interested in learning about the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiative.	Team Leads	Completed 2019
	Continue staff discussion about this domain to further clarify strategies for future consideration.	Agenda item on work team meetings to keep focus on the topic over time.	Continue staff discussion about this domain to further clarify strategies for future consideration	Team Leads	Completed 2019 Continuing through 2021
Staff	Strengthen mechanisms to share information across government relations about staff and faculty with expertise, experience	Continue to search for key organizations (and forums) that we currently work with and brief them on the university's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. Solicit feedback if appropriate.	Develop document/database of potential faculty and staff resources.		

	and abilities to engage with external organizations/audiences.				
	Identify opportunities to plug in UM speakers/expertise into community organizations.	Increased number of faculty/staff engagement with external organizations.			Completed 2019 Continuing through 2021
		Attend forums/seminars related to diversity topics hosted by other organizations especially those focused on diversity in higher education.	Summary of conversations w/ new organizations shared as part of updates during staff meetings.		
		Collaborate with other University units: communications, Office of the President, admissions, as well as with external entities like the Alumni Association, to broaden the public's knowledge of the DEI activities and why it is important	Summary of conversations w/ new organizations shared as part of updates during staff meetings.		
	Work with Wolverine Caucus planning committee to promote speakers covering diversity-related topics	Scheduled speaker focused on diversity topic.	Continue to actively consider issues related to DEI in setting Wolverine Caucus program sessions.	Lansing Center Director	



		List of potential speakers and their expertise.	Identify speakers on campus that have relevant expertise.		
Staff	Add DEI related session to summer schedule for the public service internship program.	DEI related session planned and implemented	DC hired new summer intern for the DC Office	DC staff	Completed 2019/Ongoing 2020
	Expand social media presence for government relations. Actively push-out information and activities to a broad audience.	Hire new IT staff focused on digital presence.	New IT Hire has made the website accessible to people with disabilities.	Mark Rivett	Completed 2019/Ongoing 2020

## Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
Staff	Educate our community on sexual and gender-based misconduct prevention in an effort to promote a safe and supportive environment for all members to work, learn, and thrive.	100% Participation in training	<p>Ensure 100% participation in sexual harassment and misconduct training</p> <p><b>Support central efforts to educate faculty, staff, and students on the new University of Michigan Policy on Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct prevention ("umbrella policy")</b> <small>[SEP]</small></p> <p><b>Develop and socialize unit-specific value statements that align and reinforce the forthcoming university level values that promote culture and climate change consistent with both the Diversity, Equity &amp; Inclusion, and Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct Prevention work that is already underway</b></p>	Staff	

### Supporting, Tracking and Updating the Strategic Plan

Much of our activity during the first year focused on continued data gathering, planning and building staff awareness through training. We completed an all staff retreat and a climate assessment to help us gather additional information. We had many questions during our initial planning:

- Are there specific activities or perspectives that are inhibiting achieving a more diverse group?
- Is staff satisfied with department climate?
- Are there areas we need to address?
- Are people feeling supported and acknowledged?
- Do people feel their work matters?

Our retreat and climate study helped to start answering some of these questions. Overall, people are satisfied working for government relations. We have highly functional professionals who respect each other and the work they do. There is strong support for the university's DEI initiative and a commitment to engage – though we may not always know how. These activities provided insight on various areas of focus that we will begin to address in year two: staff development; communication across teams; diversifying staff; using our externally focused work to benefit the university's DEI goals.

Over time, we will keep track of the following metrics as we continue to try to improve departmental climate.

Demographic Composition:

- Headcount
- Race/ethnicity
- Sex
- Age (Generation cohort)

Overall Government Relations Environment:

- Department Climate
- Job Satisfaction
- Work Conditions

University Staff Climate Survey Indicators:

- Satisfaction with unit climate/environment in work unit
- Assessment of semantic aspects of the general climate in work unit
- Assessment of semantic aspects of the DEI climate in work unit
- Feeling valued in work unit
- Feeling of belongingness in work unit
- Assessment of work unit commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Perceptions of equal opportunity for success in work unit
- Feeling able to perform up to full potential in work unit
- Feelings of professional growth in work unit
- Feelings of discrimination in work unit

To help support the DEI goals, the department will actively communicate various university policies around conflict resolution and mechanisms for reporting harassment/discrimination. At present, we adhere to policy 201.08 from the university standard practice guide on grievance procedure and dispute resolution. In addition, we will make staff aware of the work of the Office of Institutional Equity for reporting/investigating issues of harassment and discrimination.

Since we are a small department, it will take shared commitment and responsibility to complete specific action items. Mark Rivett, Web Associate will serve as our diversity lead for the third year of the plan assisted by Anna Marshall, Secretary Intermediate. Key status updates will be given quarterly at our monthly staff meetings or more often if appropriate. This plan will be reviewed and updated at least annually. The following appendices provide update summaries for each year's implementation as a way of documenting progress on the plan.

## Appendix A: Implementation

During our first year of implementation, we focused on gathering more information as a baseline for DEI work. We completed two major actions in this regard: an all-staff retreat focused on DEI and a climate assessment facilitated by the ADVANCE program at the University of Michigan.

### Retreat

The all-staff retreat completed in fall 2016 was the first time in at least 10 years that all government relations' staff was in the same room at the same time. Dr. Diana Wong from Sensei Consulting facilitated the retreat. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a collective understanding of the perspectives and reflections regarding the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan and to explore opportunities for future directions.

Key points and observations provided from Dr. Wong about the retreat are as follows:

- 1. Building OGR Team:* Participants greatly valued the time spent in person together to have everyone present. This is rare to have the attendance of all involved, especially with the travels from the out of town locations. While people from Lansing and Washington DC do travel to Ann Arbor, being able to meet collectively together as a unit in person does not happen. An important outcome was the positive feeling coming from being able to connect in person and increase the social bonding in the unit.  
*Recommendation:* Identify key opportunities to meet in person at least once a year; this becomes increasingly important for professional development, leadership succession, and mentoring and developing talent.
- 2. Professional Learning and Development:* Participants are very interested in learning more and keeping up to date about DEI developments from across the campus, especially about events and resources. This is embedded in their work to represent the University of Michigan. In addition to being within scope of their role and responsibilities, they are also interested in their own professional development related to DEI. Participants appear to be situated on different stages of intercultural development to address DEI which spans from a mono-cultural mindset to an intercultural mindset. People with more intercultural mindsets go beyond tolerance of differences to appreciate diversity with a proactive willingness to learn to manage their own unconscious biases, seek authentic experiences in different cultural contexts for their own development, and seek to build positive relationships on different dimensions of diversity.  
*Recommendation:* Conduct an assessment of the Unit's current state and identify supporting professional development resources to advance the internal professional growth for DEI work.
- 3. Uniqueness of Work at OGR:* The OGR is a small unit that represents the University of Michigan. Requiring the continued development of the DEI Strategic Plan adds value to increase its sense for a boundary-spanning role with different government agencies. For

example, OGR does not teach students but internship opportunities provided by OGR is an opening to apply knowledge and skills from their academic coursework.

**Recommendation:** Further development of OGR needs to emphasize key priorities for a range of DEI strategic initiatives and conduct “After Action Review” or post-mortem after a major initiative moves forward.

- 4. *Organizational Culture and Performance Outcome:*** OGR has a positive organizational culture to support the successful performance results. The value of a positive organizational culture aligns with high performance results. This is unusual where many organizations have one but not the other. The positive high regard and respect among the Unit’s members is evident throughout the session. Hence, the positive organizational culture enables effective collaboration, communication, problem solving, decision making, and peer support for learning. DEI work can be difficult with sensitive issues that challenge individuals’ worldview, concept of self versus ideal self, and conflict management.

*Recommendation:* Take time to analyze why, how, and what enables the development of a positive organizational culture in DEI; important to identify different ways to sustain the organizational culture.

- 5. *Leadership Diversity and Leadership Succession/Onboarding:*** The demographic profile of OGR is mostly white, highly educated females with many years of experience. There are future retirements and a need to develop a leadership succession process with comprehensive onboarding and talent development. The retirements are not taking place soon which allows for time to develop a comprehensive intentional process that will support the OGR’s alignment with the University’s DEI.

*Recommendation:* Develop DEI knowledge and skill to focus on recruitment, retention, and talent development to address leadership diversity and succession/onboarding process.

- 6. *Recommendation for Next Steps:*** The OGR’s DEI Strategic Plan is a strong one that can be further developed based upon the input from everyone’s contributions and ideas. Hence, there is greater ownership by all involved and higher commitment for the future direction. Further work with the next steps will be having OGR champions for different DEI strategic initiatives that are identified on a timeline with SMART goals. The action items along the timeline will also need to align with the University DEI timeline.

## **Climate Assessment**

We had identified the need to do a climate assessment as part of our initial data collection and this was re-affirmed in the recommendations provided by Dr. Wong after the retreat. We hired the ADVANCE program to conduct the assessment. The climate assessment was conducted through an online survey of all staff members. The survey opened on November 16, and remained open through December 14, 2016. A total of 15 staff members in Government Relations were surveyed and all 15 responded (a 100% response rate).

Here is the summary of their findings:

### *Department Climate*

- Government Relations staff members reported a generally tolerant environment (based on rating of these characteristics: non-racist, non-sexist, non-homophobic, and diverse) and positive environment (based on ratings of these characteristics: friendly, respectful, collegial, collaborative, cooperative, and supportive).
- Most staff described the department as gender egalitarian; none agreed that sexist remarks are heard in the department or that sex discrimination is a big problem.
- Most respondents agreed that the department environment is one in which members of all the groups listed (i.e., men, women, those from other countries, underrepresented racial-ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, those with disabilities, and those from lower- income backgrounds) feel comfortable and are included and that they voice their ideas in meetings as often as others.
- In open-ended responses, staff expressed concerns about communication as well as a need for more diversity within the department.

### *Job Satisfaction*

- Most staff members reported being satisfied with their current position.
- They reported high ratings of their positions on the self-determination and learning scales.
- They also reported moderate levels on the boundary management scale.

### *Work Conditions*

- All staff agreed that they have the resources they need to do their job, they enjoy their co-workers, they are treated with respect by their co-workers, and they know who they can go to for help when they have a problem; nearly all also reported that staff have sufficient knowledge to provide good service and that their working conditions are safe and physically comfortable.
- Only half agreed that the department provides adequate mentoring opportunities for employees.
- All Office of Government Relations staff agreed that they feel a sense of pride in doing their job and nearly all indicated that they like the work they do.
- At the same time, fewer than half reported that their pay is fair compared with similar positions at UM and that they are satisfied with their chances for promotion.

- All respondents reported that the department conducts business in an ethical manner, they understand how their work contributes to the Office of Government Relations' mission, vision, values, and goals, and they have confidence in the Vice President's leadership.
- More than three-quarters agreed that they respect their supervisor's abilities, their supervisor treats them with respect, their supervisor cares about quality improvement, and their supervisor has realistic expectations about what they can achieve. Communication
- More than three-quarters agreed that the department operates smoothly and efficiently, is a place where staff may comfortably raise personal and/or family responsibilities when scheduling office obligations, that there is a climate of trust in the department, and that the department's procedures are fair and equitable to all and are transparent and open for discussion.
- By contrast, half or fewer agreed that there is effective communication within the Office of Government Relations, administration communicates well with staff, the department's future plans are made clear to them, and they have a voice in the decision-making that affects the direction of the department.

We still have the bulk of our action items to accomplish as part of this 5-year plan but both of these activities inform our work moving forward. We put together a small committee to revise our action items for year two and made a few small additions to them. One of the goals for the second year is to get broader input into our DEI work and to provide more learning opportunities for staff around these issues.