



**RUTGERS**

Student Affairs

**Diversity Strategic Plan**  
**3-year plan**

There's a **U** in Rutgers

## Process Overview

As the broader university initiated the university-wide diversity strategic planning efforts, Student Affairs formed a Diversity Strategic Plan Working Group to spearhead the strategic planning process for the division. The working group utilized key university documents (including University Equity Audit, University-wide Diversity Strategic Planning Toolkit, and the divisional Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs Organizations survey results) to guide the process in a phased approach. The five priorities identified for the university provided the working group with strategic direction to enable divisional alignment with institutional goals.

The five priorities guiding the university's diversity strategic planning process:

- Recruit, retain, and develop a diverse community.
- Promote inclusive scholarship and teaching.
- Define sustainable and substantive community engagement.
- Build the capacity of leaders to create inclusive climates.
- Develop an institutional infrastructure to drive change.

Diversity Strategic Plan Working Group Members:

- Ji Lee, Co-Chair  
Executive Director – Intercultural Engagement & Inclusion Initiatives
- Neela Patel, Co-Chair  
Interim Executive Director – Student Centers & Activities
- Francesca Maresca  
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Health & Wellness
- Laura Randolph  
Associate Dean of Students/Director – New Student Orientation & Transition Initiatives
  - Krystyne Sevarese  
Former Senior Director – Residence Life for Campus Communities
  - Darnell Thompson  
Assistant Director of Education – Center for Social Justice Education & LGBT Communities
- Dayna Weintraub  
Executive Director – Student Affairs Planning and Strategic Initiatives,
- Kerri Willson  
Associate Dean of Students/Director – Off-campus Living & Community Initiatives

# **Goal: Recruit, Retain, and Develop a Diverse Community**

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## **OBJECTIVE**

Build and retain a university community that more closely reflects the state of New Jersey, paying particular attention to access and equity gaps in the success of underrepresented populations among students, faculty, and staff.

**SA Subgoal #1: Review current Student Affairs recruitment practices for professional staff to identify areas of bias and develop baseline recruitment and hiring practices for consistency across all Student Affairs areas.**

## **ACTION STEPS**

- Develop a diversity statement/expectation for all job descriptions.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation include DEI Council, ED IEII, and vetting with Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and SA Leadership.
- Develop a job description review process for all positions to ensure inclusive language and elimination of bias, accurate reflections of job responsibilities, and consistency with other comparable positions within the university.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA Human Resources staff, ED IEII, and key stakeholders.
- Benchmark marketing strategies for recruitment from peer institutions and determine key organizations and advertising sites.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII, SA Leadership and UHR.
- Develop guidelines to promote positions to diverse communities.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include leadership, ED IEII, and area stakeholders.
- Develop trainings for search committee and interviewers on expectations and implicit bias.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII and DEI Council representatives.
- Develop standardized rubric/template for reviewing candidates prior to review of resumes.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, Director of Assessment, and area stakeholders.
- Develop a training on recruitment and hiring practices and expectations for hiring managers and search committee chairs inclusive of communication strategies, making hiring offers and negotiating requests.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII, and DEI Council representatives.

- Revisit current intranet systems and consider developing a user-friendly, efficient internal divisional HR platform that includes recruitment policies, procedures, checklists and resources.
  - Time frame: 1 - 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, SA IT unit, ED IEII, and key stakeholders.

**SA Subgoal #2: Develop a systematic exit interview process for Student Affairs professionals leaving their current position.**

**ACTION STEPS**

- Benchmark exit interview processes of peer institutions and comparable organizations outside of student affairs.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, and ED IEII.
- Develop list of exit interview topics and questions for universal consideration.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII, and DEI Council representatives.
- Develop timeline and process for exit interview protocols (staff responsible for conducting in each unit, timeframe, etc.)
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, ED IEII, and DEI Council representatives.
- Identify a divisional team to come together quarterly to review key themes surfacing across exit interview processes and recommend strategies for improvement or response.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include: SA HR staff, ED IEII, DEI Council.

**SA Subgoal #3: Develop and implement a new employee on-boarding process for Student Affairs staff to instill connectedness to the division and department.**

**ACTION STEPS**

- Periodically review, modify and update the new employee welcome letter sent from the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and key area stakeholders.
- Create a sequence of communications during the new employee welcome process, ranging from messages from key leaders to logistical onboarding information.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, Student Affairs Senior Leadership, and Marketing & Communications staff.

- Create a webpage with universal information for new Student Affairs employees.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff, SA IT staff, Marketing & Communications staff, and other key area stakeholders.
- Develop a list of manager requirements for onboarding a new staff (some examples include: conduct initial one-on-one, review of job description and performance evaluation documentation, schedule of meetings with key partners and stakeholders, etc.).
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff
- Develop a list of year one activities for all new Student Affairs employees.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Create a required central training for new Student Affairs employees to learn about required trainings (COI, Title IX), policies/procedures, organizational structure, university acronyms and language, RU traditions, navigating campus geography, and key divisional initiatives/opportunities.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Develop a new staff handbook (Divisional and Department information)
  - Time frame: 1 -2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.

**SA Subgoal #4: Conduct comprehensive review of all job descriptions and salaries across Student Affairs.**

**ACTION STEPS**

- Develop a central repository of all position descriptions in Student Affairs.
  - Time frame: 1 - 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Create a standard template for reviewing position description language for bias.
  - Time frame: 1 - 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Charge all units with updating position descriptions to accurately reflect associated work tasks and long-term scope.
  - Time frame: 1 - 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Work with University HR to conduct equity audits across job grades and job categories resulting in possible job description revisions and salary adjustments.
  - Time frame: 1 - 2 years

- Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include SA HR staff and key divisional area stakeholders.

## **Goal: Build the Capacity to Engage and Lead**

### **OBJECTIVE**

Equip leaders with the cultural competencies necessary to engage with others in ways that foster dialogue, enable understanding, and promote resilience when conflict occurs, attending especially to the role of leadership.

**SA Subgoal #1: Provide training and education for all divisional staff that promotes inclusion and prevents structuralisms from showing up in the workplace.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- Develop education and training curriculum tailored to different audiences (student staff, professional staff).
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Create tabletop tool kits for staff to have on-going discussions.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Construct a growth inventory for employees, which consists of an optional map and pathway to the employee's individual growth.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.

**SA Subgoal #2: Develop and commit to a DEI philosophy process for your department/unit that connects to shared core values of Student Affairs.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- Center the Student Affairs Diversity Statement and each of its pillars – Diversity, Inclusion & Responsibility.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Create a tool kit for departments that includes the following information and resources: DEI statement development exercise and actions and behaviors that demonstrate how to actualize the statement.

- Time frame: 1 - 2 years
- Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Prioritize the DEI philosophy in hiring and retention processes.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include DEI Council representatives, ED IEII, SA HR staff, Center for SJE & LGBT Communities, and key divisional area stakeholders.

## **Goal: Serve the Public Good and Expand University-Community Partnerships**

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### **OBJECTIVE**

Marshall the university's core activities of teaching, research, and engagement in service of the public good promoting the institutional commitment to the community on and off-campus.

**SA Subgoal #1: Cultivate a culture around “the Art of Neighboring” for all Rutgers community members.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- Create messaging around the “art of neighboring,” and implement with all first-year students.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include Office of the Dean of Students (particularly Off-campus Living & Community Partnerships), ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and other key campus and community stakeholders.
- Foster relationships with local property owners and businesses.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include Office of the Dean of Students (particularly Off-campus Living & Community Partnerships) and other key campus and community stakeholders.

**SA Subgoal #2: Create and/or strengthen opportunities for students to participate in community engagement in the city of New Brunswick and surrounding communities.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- Define what community engagement looks like within the Division of Student Affairs.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include Office of the Dean of Students (particularly Off-campus Living & Community Partnerships) other key campus and community stakeholders.
- Outline expectations for meaningful community service engagement.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year

- Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include Office of the Dean of Students (particularly Off-campus Living & Community Partnerships) and other key campus and community stakeholders.

## **Goal: Refine Systems, Policies and Procedures**

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### **OBJECTIVE**

Ensure that university systems, policies, and procedures promote equity, facilitate diversity goals, improve clarity, provide transparency and enhance accountability.

### **SA Subgoal #1: Implement a Divisional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council**

#### **ACTION STEPS**

- Create and relaunch a Student Affairs DEI Council charged with oversight of the varying workgroups appointed to address the Student Affairs Diversity Strategic Plan initiatives.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, senior divisional leadership, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Assign an ex officio representative from the DEI Council to each of the workgroups to ensure effective flow of communication across the initiatives.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Determine a regular cycle of communication between the DEI Council and different levels of divisional leadership as well as to the entire Division to foster transparency across initiatives and the organization.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.
- Develop a process for the DEI Council to regularly review the charge of the council, and the needs of our staff, students, and division.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and key divisional area stakeholders.

### **SA Subgoal #2: Develop a divisional recognition process to highlight individuals and department efforts that promote the spirit of diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

#### **ACTION STEPS**

- Create an award granted at the Student Affairs Year End Celebration that highlights an individual, team, or effort that promotes the spirit of intended divisional DEI outcomes.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and key divisional area stakeholders.



- Develop an equitable awards process with publicly available timeline, rubrics, and logistics to foster a transparent nomination and selection process.
  - Time frame: 6 months – 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and key divisional area stakeholders.
- Develop communication strategies to highlight university, community and professional association awards relevant to DEI.
  - Time frame: 0 - 6 months
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and key divisional area stakeholders.

### **SA Subgoal #3: Develop a review process regarding policies and procedures**

#### **ACTION STEPS**

- Appoint a workgroup to develop centralized procedures and standards for Student Affairs.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, and other key stakeholders.
- Inventory, review and develop Student Affairs core policies and standards.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, and other key stakeholders.
- Develop standards for intentional policy design (gender-neutral language, accessibility, brand guidelines, etc.)
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, and other key stakeholders.
- Create a template and training materials regarding accessible universal design for high-use documents (screen-reader friendly structure, appropriate creation of tables, etc.)
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, Marketing & Communications staff, and other key stakeholders.
- Develop standards for all Student Affairs units to codify practices across the organization to preserve institutional history and foster successful staff transitions over time.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include all key divisional key stakeholders and area heads.
- Review student affairs procedures for equity and accessibility over time and ensure procedures accurately reflect and align with policies.
  - Time frame: 1 – 2 years
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, SA HR staff, DEI Council representatives, and other key stakeholders.

## **SA Subgoal #4: Develop and Implement Marketing and Communication Protocols**

### **ACTION STEPS**

- Conduct a review of all websites for gender-neutral language, accessibility, brand guidelines, and other compliance indicators.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.
- Develop and share inclusive standards and best practices for DEI-mindful communication and marketing practices across websites, e-mail, videos, and social media.
  - Time frame: 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.
- Create a social media policy governing appropriate practices and protocols for issuing statements relevant to identity-related incidents/hate crimes.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.
- Create a standard practice for issuing public statements for incidents.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.
- Develop a mechanism for individuals to provide comments, questions, or concerns regarding Student Affairs divisional and/or departmental messaging.
  - Time frame: 6 months - 1 year
  - Discussion/consultation, planning, and implementation to include ED IEII, DEI Council representatives, and Marketing & Communications staff.