Diversity and Inclusion Plan

“Achieving Dreams at DCC”
October 2016

I. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

In 2015, Dutchess Community College, through an extensive and collaborative process, created new institutional vision and mission statements based on five core values, and a five-year strategic plan.

Our vision: Dutchess Community aspires to be an innovative, transformative community of learners that promotes exemplary student success.

*We believe that in order to achieve our vision as an institution we must promote equity of access for all races, gender identities, age groups, socioeconomic groups, people with disabilities, and nationalities.*

Our mission: Dutchess Community College offers educational opportunities that enable individuals to realize their full potential and contribute to a diverse and global society.

*Through our efforts, we will create an academic environment where everyone is able to pursue the development of original, creative and diverse educational solutions that stimulate innovation and prepare a well-educated citizenry willing and capable of contributing to the democratic process.*


Our Goals: Increase student success; Promote a collaborative campus culture; Enhance institutional effectiveness through integration of assessment, planning and resource allocation; Contribute to the vitality of the region through community engagement; Embrace diversity as part of our institutional identity.

II. CURRENT CAMPUS DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVENESS ASSESSMENT

With a commitment to diversity as both an institutional goal and value, the College has more directly focused its actions on fostering a campus environment that embraces diversity and inclusiveness over the past 18 months.

As of fall 2016, the percentage of full-time faculty grew to 16% compared to 10% in 2009. Six diverse faculty members have been hired since 2014. Opportunities to diversify both faculty and staff are growing as 118 current employees approach retirement eligibility. Information on racial and ethnic identity is currently unavailable for non-faculty employees, which include non-teaching educators and other administrators, as well as civil...
service personnel. The College acknowledges that this is an area that requires attention, and plans to collect and assess this information going forward.

Human resources is at the forefront of diversifying our campus by reflecting a more inclusive campus culture in recruitment materials, by expanding recruitment advertising in minority-targeted publications and job boards, and by more effectively guiding search committees towards a hiring process that recognizes the importance of providing more equity of access for under-represented groups. HR spends approximately $11,000 per year to provide mandatory online employee training on issues regarding diversity and inclusion, and has changed the College’s Equal Opportunity policy to an Equal Access and Fair Treatment policy that expands the number of protected characteristics. In addition, HR amended the Charge of Discrimination grievance procedure to facilitate investigation and action.

Student diversity also has increased at DCC. Currently, in fall 2016, 38% of students are minorities, which represents an increase of 6% in one year. A decade ago, diverse students comprised less than 22% of the College’s student population. The largest growth is among Hispanics from under 8% in 2006 to 19% in 2016. The percentage of students identifying as black has stayed relatively flat at 12% over the past decade.

The College is working to expand educational opportunities especially in the city of Poughkeepsie where the population is 33% black and 20% Hispanic. Community partnerships are advancing these efforts. Initiatives include E-TECH, a rigorous program for 9th graders culminating with an associate’s degree in engineering or electrical technology after six years. There is also a new site at The Family Partnership Center, where English as a Second Language and High School Equivalency (in both English and Spanish) are offered. We expect an increase in minority student enrollment by creating these pathways to college in Poughkeepsie, coupled with projections on the changing population in Dutchess County over the next decades.

The College recently joined the Achieving the Dream initiative to enhance student success and close the achievement gap. Among the two-year fall 2013 cohort of new/transfer students, 76.4% of the total population returned the following semester. Among black students, the retention rate was 71% (compared to 67% for the 2009 cohort); among Hispanic students it was 74% (same in 2009). There is a greater disparity in course-completion rates. For the general student population, 73% of courses attempted over two years were completed with a grade of A, B or C. For black students, the rate is 63%, and for Hispanic students, 67%. These numbers have remained relatively stable since 2009.

Dutchess Community College hosts an array of lectures and other events related to diversity, multi-culturalism and inclusion. The Black History, Hispanic Heritage and Women’s History committees, comprised of faculty, staff and students, ensure that programming reflects diverse perspectives. The departments of History, Government and Economics and Behavioral Sciences also organize and sponsor a number of events that foster diversity and inclusion. The President’s Diversity Council is exploring ways to align efforts; the appointment of a Chief Diversity Officer is expected to help in that regard in the future.
The college is responsive to the needs of LGBTQ students, faculty and staff, and has established the ALLY Network of specially trained, easily identifiable personnel (via an emblem on their office doors) to provide assistance to these students. Individuals may use the restroom of the gender with which they identify, and private restrooms are available throughout campus buildings. The Dean of Student Services and the Office of Human Resources are among the leaders of these efforts.

As an advisory body with representation from across campus, and support from the College president, the Diversity Council will continue to assess and address campus diversity and inclusion issues.

III. STRATEGIC DIVERSITY GOALS, ACTION PLAN, AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Increase student success

Reduce financial barriers that impede student access and completion.
- Promote access to federal and state financial aid in the community.
- Expand the amount of need-based aid available through DCC Foundation.
- Explore the use of open educational resources to reduce the cost of textbooks.

Enhance access for an increasingly diverse student body.
- Assist students with undocumented status.
- Review existing student support services for possible gaps.
- Create a mentoring program where second year students mentor incoming students.
- Identity and analyze achievement gaps.

Recruit, hire and support a diverse workforce.
See section III, part 2: Increase the diversity of our campus community, particularly that of faculty and staff.

Through expand collaborations with K-12 and community partners; increase the percentage of college-bound students in Dutchess County.
- Cultivate relationships with community-based organizations as a means to reach prospective students and their families.
- Facilitate the interface with Social Services on campus.

Ensure our learning environment is inclusive and values the culture and heritage of our entire student body.
- Establish a Center for Diversity and Innovation to translate creative ideas into reality and publish scholarly research.
- Include a section on the DCC Promotion and Tenure form on efforts toward inclusion and diversity.
- Expand Ally Network trainings throughout the organization.
Enrich our campus and learning community through targeted programs, events, materials and visitors that expand our collective experience with others.

- Appoint a Chief Diversity Officer that reports to the President and who will lead the Diversity Council and related institutional efforts.
- Encourage the creation of an SGA Chief Diversity Officer.
- Join the national Achieving the Dream initiative to bolster best practices for ensuring success of all students.
- A Faculty and Staff Group will attend the SUNY 2016 Diversity Conference-Awareness to Action: Building a Culture of Inclusive Excellence.
- President and Coordinator of Service Learning will attend the 2016 Minority Serving Institutions Conference in Washington, D.C.

2. Model an inclusive organization that educates and celebrates the unique contributions of all members of our community

Ensure a welcoming and supportive campus.

- Institute campus wide cultural competency multi-tiered diversity and sensitivity training.
- Form a PSO committee with a mandate to organize and coordinate events for the campus community, outside of the classroom setting, designed to engage students in “problem-posing education.” Events such as brown-bag panel discussions, teach-ins of major issues, film viewing and debate, workshops, and guest speakers.

Increase the diversity of our campus community, particularly that of faculty and staff.

- Increase the number of diverse faculty and staff to match the diversity of the student and community populations and provide the support needed to retain them.
- Reinstate EEOC Committee; job specifications determined by department head and checked by HR; advertise for candidates at least six months in advance of the need to fill the position; screening committee of EEOC Officer and HR to review resumes of all applicants; Search Committee consists of members of the Diversity Council and EEOC Committee; President makes final candidate selection.
- Increase networking with local organizations and build relationships that will serve as a feeder for under-represented talent across disciplines and interests.
- Ensure that the faculty-mentoring program is attentive to diversity.
- Identify diverse community leaders that can serve as mentors.
- Create a committee to support HR and search committees in the recruitment and identification of diverse candidates.

Expand diverse curricular offerings.

- Create an endowed faculty chair, or refocus an existing chair, to promote issues of diversity on campus.
- Include diversity issues in programs of study.
• Each syllabus should reflect the goal of the institution to embrace diversity as a creative form to prepare students for a changing world.
• Create new courses that present diversity issues in the arts and sciences, or revise course materials to view subject through a diversity lens.
• Create multidisciplinary courses.
• Make multi-cultural courses part of course requirement.

**Play a leadership role in supporting diversity in the surrounding community.**
• Participate in the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. community breakfast.
• Establish an extension site for HSE and ESL programing in the City of Poughkeepsie.
• Encourage participation of faculty and staff on community advisory boards.

**IV. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

By 2020 the achievement gap for traditionally underserved students will decrease by 50% at Dutchess Community College.

Administer a campus climate survey.

Incorporate questions on surveys about how well the college as an institution and individual instructors at DCC address issues of diversity.

**V. SUMMATIVE STATEMENT**