



DIVERSITY PLAN 2018-19

**Division of External Relations
Colorado State University**

**DIVERSITY PLAN 2018-19****Diversity Planning Goal: Environmental Audit, an examination of internal practice, content and professional engagement.****Subcommittee: Kimberly Stern, Connie Schimmels, Gary Ozzello, and Pam Jackson**

This goal was self-identified by the Division of External Relations (DER) directors and not among the six goal options in the *CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Campus Climate Blueprint* provided by the Commission on Diversity and Inclusion. The Environmental Audit is one of three proposed goals (the other two from the Blueprint) selected by the DER leadership team for our 2018-19 commitment toward helping CSU to ensure an inclusive campus, and it is intended to provide a general overview of how DER exercises diversity and inclusion practices in the communications content we produce and in our professional pursuits on behalf of the key units we serve and support.

We recognize the DER teams of Creative Services (CS), Public Relations (PR), Video and Photography are cognizant of the need to uphold the Principles of Community and help promote a campus climate that is inclusive of everyone. However, it is expected that the findings of this proposed audit can assist the Division's future planning around diversity and inclusion best practices for our teams, improve our issues management efforts on behalf of the university with respect to diversity and inclusion, and further help us to support a culture of inclusive excellence at CSU in our roles as strategic communicators, public relations coordinators, brand managers and consultants.

Analysis:

We know that as a Division our staff broadly appreciates and respects the need to support an inclusive culture on our campus through our individual and collective work. But what we do not know, and need to understand, is how well we are hitting the mark and what are the perceptions of our work and efforts among our staff and key units that we serve.

Design:

In order to meet this goal, we recommend conducting an information-gathering exercise or audit so that we can better understand how DER staff and the units we serve perceive where we do well in supporting an inclusive campus, and to solicit ideas from them on where we can create or capture opportunity that we currently might be missing. We also recommend such an audit seek to identify internal and external forces that might be creating obstacles to our ability to promote diversity and inclusion in our supporting role to other units.

We would seed interviews for this audit with three key definitions of what is diversity, inclusion and inclusive excellence. The *CSU Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Campus Climate Blueprint* has a glossary of several terms (pages 14-16) which include the following definitions:

Inclusive Excellence re-envision both quality and diversity. It reflects a striving for excellence in higher education that has been made more inclusive by decades of work to infuse diversity into recruiting, admissions, and hiring; into the curriculum and co-curriculum; and into administrative structures and practices.



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Diversity refers to the variety of differences and similarities/dimensions among people, such as race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, physical abilities/qualities, sex, sexual orientation, age, culture, first generation status, different ideas and perspectives, familial status, immigration status, geographic background, marital status, national origin, religious and spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, and veteran status.

Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive university promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents.

Journalism Professor Emeritus Donna Rouner, an expert in conducting research surveys, social group communication, narrative persuasion, audience evaluation of imagery, and information value-affirmative and value-processing of messages, was consulted. We asked to advise us on how we might construct an audit in pursuit of this goal, and for recommendations of the type of questions we should and should not ask to understand the perceptions of DER staff and representatives of key units we serve. Dr. Rouner helped us design the questions below for DER staff and unit representatives.

Unit Representatives:

- Can you provide examples of where you or your unit (committee, initiative) specifically designed and implemented a project, program, event, collateral materials or other messages, or campaign with DER's direct consultation and/or support that directly or indirectly assisted you with the promotion of inclusion and diversity through your unit? What worked well? What did not work well or have the desired outcome, and why?
- What are examples of something your unit developed and implemented directly, but was supported in parallel by DER? What worked well? What did not work well, and why?
- Are there ways that DER can better support your unit in its diversity and inclusion efforts? (Please provide examples.)
- Are there ways that DER can better support the university's efforts toward inclusive excellence? That is, what would you like to do or see us do differently? (Please provide examples.)

We recommend interviewing one representative from the following key units, committees, initiatives:

- Vice President for Student Affairs (Kathy Sisneros)
- Vice President for Enrollment and Access (Leslie Taylor) Vice President for Operations (Lynn Johnson)
- Vice President for University Advancement (TBD)
- Vice President for Diversity (Shannon Archibeque-Engle) Presidential Communications (Cara Neth)
- Athletics (Albert Bimper)
- Facilities Management (Fred Haberecht) Housing & Dining Services (Tonie Miyamoto)
- Standing Committee on Status of Women Faculty (Ellen Fisher) Women and Gender Collaborative (Cori Wong)
- Employee Councils (Chairs)

**DIVERSITY PLAN 2018-19****DER Staff:**

We recommend interviewing one or two staff members from each DER team, and that this occurs following the full implementation of a staff re-organization, currently underway March-July 2018. The invitation would clarify their participation is voluntary and they may decline to participate without explanation or if they select to participate, they may choose to not answer certain questions without explanation.

- Can you provide examples of how you have assisted the colleges and units you serve in promotion of diversity and inclusion through work on a story(ies), project, program, event, collateral materials or other messages, or campaign by way of your direct consultation and/or support? What worked well? What did not work well or were obstacles to a better outcome, and why?
- In terms of external (to campus units) support, storytelling, events and other activities, what does DER do well to help the university embrace the values of diversity and inclusion and promote inclusive excellence? What opportunities do you see for us to improve?
- In terms of your own creative work for DER, what most supports your ability to help the university promote inclusive excellence as a core, foundational pillar? What inhibits your ability or what obstacles do you see that prevent you from embracing these values? (Please provide examples.)
- Are you satisfied with the contributions DER makes – internally to our Division and externally in service to the campus community – regarding diversity and inclusion? What would you do or like to see us do differently? (Please provide examples.)
- In your role as a DER employee, have you ever witnessed someone or experienced yourself being excluded or marginalized in a manner that would be counter to the university's efforts to create a climate of diversity and inclusion, and promote inclusive excellence? (Please explain.)

Implementation:

We recommend this audit begin in early summer for interviews with unit representatives, and late summer for DER staff interviews. Voluntary members from each of DER's units will be equally provided with the opportunity to respond to questions. Questions will be thoughtfully designed in collaboration and under the guidance of Journalism Professor Emeritus Donna Rouner as noted above. The proposed question samples are also noted above.

Evaluate:

The complete findings of the audit would be presented to the Vice President for External Relations and the DER senior leadership team with recommendations by the Audit Subcommittee based on the findings. Additionally:

- An executive summary/brief of the external and staff findings should be presented to the full DER staff.
- A follow-up "thank you" email to individuals we interview for the external units for their participation and that we will share the information they provided with our leadership team and staff and their comments will help inform our diversity and inclusion planning moving forward.



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Diversity Planning Goal: Cultivate an inclusive institutional climate

Subcommittee: Elias Martinez, Mike Hooker, Joe Rymski

“Cultivate an inclusive institutional climate” - as defined in the Institutional Diversity Blueprint, the goal is to **improve the campus climate of inclusion.**

As the hub for CSU’s internal and external communications, the Division of External Relations is in a unique position to help cultivate an inclusive climate on campus, and to communicate about, and connect other campus units with, other campus units with ideas and best practices for their own outreach. These recommendations outline specific ways that DER can contribute significantly to the overall efforts to be established in CSU’s Diversity Strategic Plan.

This focus area will naturally have some overlap with focus #3 which is to “increase outreach and engagement.”

Analysis

Diversity and inclusivity are two of the primary lenses through which DER views communication. Our intent to promote these core values is firmly established and much of our work is successful at cultivating an inclusive climate. We consider and actively curate diversity in our choices of how we tell the University’s story every day and as we promote and build CSU’s brand. These recommendations add new ways of increasing inclusivity on campus while also strengthening current practices.

- **Public Relations**
 - Deliberate attention to featuring students and faculty from diverse backgrounds on all of our channels.
 - Constant effort to assure that images representing the university – photos and videos – represent diversity and inclusion
 - Inclusion of diverse voices and backgrounds
 - Encouragement to attend events and trainings that focus on inclusion
 - Thorough coverage of campus inclusion events such as CSUnite, various speakers on campus, Feminist Fight Club, activities of student groups
 - Leadership of compliance with web access policies by communicators across campus
 - Highlight CSU Principles of Community in employee 1:1’s and reviews
 - DER has reps on Incidents of Bias and Campus Climate committees
- **Public Safety Team**
 - For emergency and safety alerts: careful attention to the language we use to make sure it is both inclusive and non-discriminatory. This is an ongoing concerted effort.

Design

A communication audit will provide insight as to how DER (specifically public relations, creative services, and web communications) cultivates an inclusive climate. The audit will be done by the subcommittee members as a brainstorming session.

- **Audit of DER vehicles for cultivating an inclusive climate**
 - Recurring publications
 - Source



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- Social media channels
- CSU Life
- CSU magazine
- On-hold messages
- Graphics and other assets for recurring events such as Ram Welcome, Commencement, Football gameday
- CSU Main page
- Brand.colostate.edu - CSU's Visual Style Guide
- Specific deliverables
 - Photos
 - Video
 - Text
 - Audio
 - University Brand Standards
- Campus advising and consulting
 - SDVI
 - Campus Communicators
 - Professional Development sessions

Implementation

Implementation for this goal would involve a series of actions, as noted below.

- Host trainings (including experts from VP-Diversity and other relevant campus units) for Campus Communicators on the importance inclusive language and images, and important considerations when producing content.
- At SDVI, regular sharing of successes and challenges around issues of inclusion which we encounter while working on projects.
- Add required diversity discussion as part of project planning. This consideration typically happens, but this would formalize it.
- Add a diversity and inclusion element to onboarding for new employees and during annual reviews.
- Regular updates from VP-Diversity on the most current evolution in how people are thinking about these issues, and specifically how they are playing out at CSU on campuses across the country. This is a constantly evolving discussion and while we may be current and up-to-date in our thinking today, that can easily change based on current events or new language and we could suddenly find ourselves behind to curve.
- Partner with VP-Diversity to produce an Inclusion Campaign of images and messaging that promotes this campus value. This campaign would be a branding campaign and coordinated on a timeline that works for both DER and VP-Diversity Office.
- Cultivating regular diversity and inclusion training and professional development opportunities for DER staff in relation to their area of expertise
- Quarterly team strategy sessions to discuss how each unit can champion diversity and inclusion through our everyday work product.

Evaluate

- 100% of division employees will participate in professional development training. The training will be arranged with the VP of Diversity Office and other campus partner experts and possibly external experts, in accordance with their availability, for completion of training

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during the FY18-19 period.

- Participation will be documented for completion during the 2019 annual evaluation process.

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Subcommittee Goal: To increase outreach and engagement with marginalized and excluded external communities.

Subcommittee: Tiana Nelson, Stacy Grant, Jennifer Lobermeier, Kathy Phifer

Colorado State University's and External Relations' commitment to engagement with marginalized and external communities through its professional resources, channels, messaging, and marketing opportunities (i.e.: SOURCE, social media, advertising.) DER demonstrates and fully communicates their commitment to engagement with marginalized and external communities through volunteer and service of staff time, talent, and expertise (i.e.: School Is Cool, United Way, N2N, Meals on Wheels.) DER utilizes its "voice" and influence for what is currently being done for marginalized populations.

Analysis:

The Division of External Relations is committed to fostering community engagement and outreach efforts with marginalized and excluded communities. There are many programs and initiatives in which the division creates or is involved. Additionally, we are aware that staff have personal commitments outside of the office in which they partake. The first step is to survey the division staff members to gather insight as to how each role serves as a key component for community engagement and outreach and to gather feedback as to how individuals support engagement and outreach in their personal time.

Design:

A survey was developed by the subcommittee for anonymous feedback from DER staff members. A google form survey was sent to the individuals within each unit. The survey consisted of three questions and an optional opportunity to provide additional feedback. Questions included:

- How does your work unit work to increase CSU's and/or DER's outreach and engagement with marginalized and excluded communities?
- What role does your position have in supporting engagement and outreach with these populations in a professional sense?
- What role do you have in supporting engagement and outreach with these populations in a personal sense? (For example, what volunteer service are you involved with?)
- Additional comments/feedback

Implementation:

The anonymous survey was distributed to all DER staff members and leadership team members via email and individuals were grouped on the distribution email by unit. Participation was encouraged but optional.

- Utilize External Relations resources and channels to successfully communicate the University's commitment to our external marginalized communities through positive stories, promotions, and volunteer impact.
- Work closely with our campus partners to identify and implement messaging that aligns with University approved language in all communication efforts and projects.
- Create a culture within External Relations that supports and encourages employee engagement with marginalized populations and initiatives both on- and off-campus.

Evaluation – Analysis of survey results:

- 18 responses; 22% response rate
- Responses address many aspects of DER's operation from storytelling to events to social media takeovers to human resource practices – along with others. Examples include of DER's

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- involvement in engagement and outreach with marginalized and excluded communities:
- Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver
 - National Western Center and surrounding neighborhoods
 - Middle school and high school student group visits
 - PR stories that feature individuals or groups from marginalized and excluded communities
 - ADA accessibility for University websites
 - Collaboration with Advancement office for CSU Cares, Fostering Success, Rams Against Hunger, etc.
 - Having a “lens” to include diversity and inclusion in videos, photos, social media takeovers, and stories to best represent CSU’s diversity
 - Collaboration with CSU divisions, departments, colleges and units
- Responses address many personal volunteer services that DER team members are involved in that reflect on CSU and DER in positive ways. Examples include personal volunteer or causes in which DER staff are engaged with marginalized
 - Adopt a Family
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - Meals on Wheels
 - United Way
 - Food Bank of Larimer County
 - School is Cool
 - Special Olympics
 - Volunteer in their child(ren)’s schools
 - J-Day
 - After careful review of survey results, evaluate the feedback and develop strategies on behalf of CSU and External Relations.

Recommendations:

- Showcase the various actions and projects that will continue to engage our marginalized populations.
- Increase awareness and engagement through visible messaging.
- Initiate a DER task force that identifies opportunities for volunteerism with marginalized populations and initiatives.

[Supporting materials attached]