



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee FAQ

Many diversity committees are being created across the university to prioritize an inclusive working environment, identify systemic departmental inequities, and to enhance the overall competency of staff and faculty. The Office of the Vice President for Diversity offers the following strategies toward creating an effective diversity committee within our university.

Considerations when Creating a DEI Committee

Support From Senior Leadership

DEI initiatives must have support from senior leadership within your division or college. Inevitably there will be people who question the purpose, intention, and need for the committee. Securing public and open support for the committee will help to set the tone for the importance of the committee and solidify a prioritization of the committee.

Specific Charge and Resources

Having clear direction in the form of a committee Charge and supporting committee resources are absolutely necessary when creating DEI committees. Understanding why your senior leader has created the committee, what resources are available to you, and the desired outcomes of your committee will assist in establishing clear goals and prioritization for your committee from the beginning.

Direct Link to Larger Strategic Planning

DEI committees must clearly link their diversity strategy to the overall goals and strategic plan of the organization. This emphasizes the importance of diversity as an organizational priority and aligns the efforts of the committee with other strategic efforts.

**The university is currently undergoing a strategic planning process, it is unclear if diversity plans for colleges and divisions will be included in a larger plan, however, that does not limit the ability of your DEI committee to create your own diversity plans.*

Diverse Membership

Diverse representation is absolutely necessary on your DEI committee. Diverse identities, positions, and perspectives will assist in setting more comprehensive goals and objectives of the committee. It is imperative that your committee have members with decision making power or have social capital to make change. Many DEI committees have failed to make change when they could not move ideas into action.



Additionally, members of your committee need to have an increased competency in DEI. Make it a priority to strengthen and build the competency of committee members; caring about DEI, though important, is not sufficient. Committee members must also have the knowledge and skills necessary to evaluate policies and culture critically.

Questions to consider when considering committee membership:

- Do you have representatives from different identities and perspectives?
- Do you have different job classifications represented?
- Do you have positional power represented?
- Do you have undergraduate and graduate student voice represented?

Clearly Communicated and Realistic Goals and Outcomes

It is imperative that DEI committees create, and then communicate, realistic goals and outcomes of the committee. Use existing data to inform goals and be realistic with resources needed to achieve stated goals.

Develop Long-and Short-Term Strategies

Organizational change takes time. While some inclusive practices can be created and communicated within a few months, the vast majority of change efforts will take time and dedication to see real change in your organization. DEI committees should focus on short-term and long-term strategies within their goals and objectives.

Assess Progress

Determine how your DEI committee will assess efforts by the committee. This will help to elevate the outcomes of the committee while holding your organization accountable to progress.

Initial DEI Committee Steps

Step 1

- Consult your DEI coordinator
- Not all areas on campus have an official DEI coordinator.

Step 2

- Determine Membership
- Who needs to/wants to be on your committee?

Step 3

- Define purpose and goals of committee
- What is the purpose of your committee?

Step 4

- Articulate how your committee will benefit the organization
- How will your committee improve or enhance the organization?

Step 5

- Determine a communication plan
- How will people know what you are doing?

Step 6

- Create an assessment plan
- How will you know if what you are doing is working?



Creating a Plan - Where do I start?

After you have created a DEI committee and completed the initial DEI committee steps, you are now able to begin to work on goals, objectives, and a DEI plan for your committee.

1. **Gather Data** – You cannot determine where you want to go until you know where you are. Fortunately, there are data points which already exist within the university’s assessment strategy for you to utilize. We encourage DEI committees to start by determining which data already exist for their needs, rather than creating their own survey.

Types of data to use:

[Employee Climate Survey Results](#)

[IR Employee and Student Data](#)

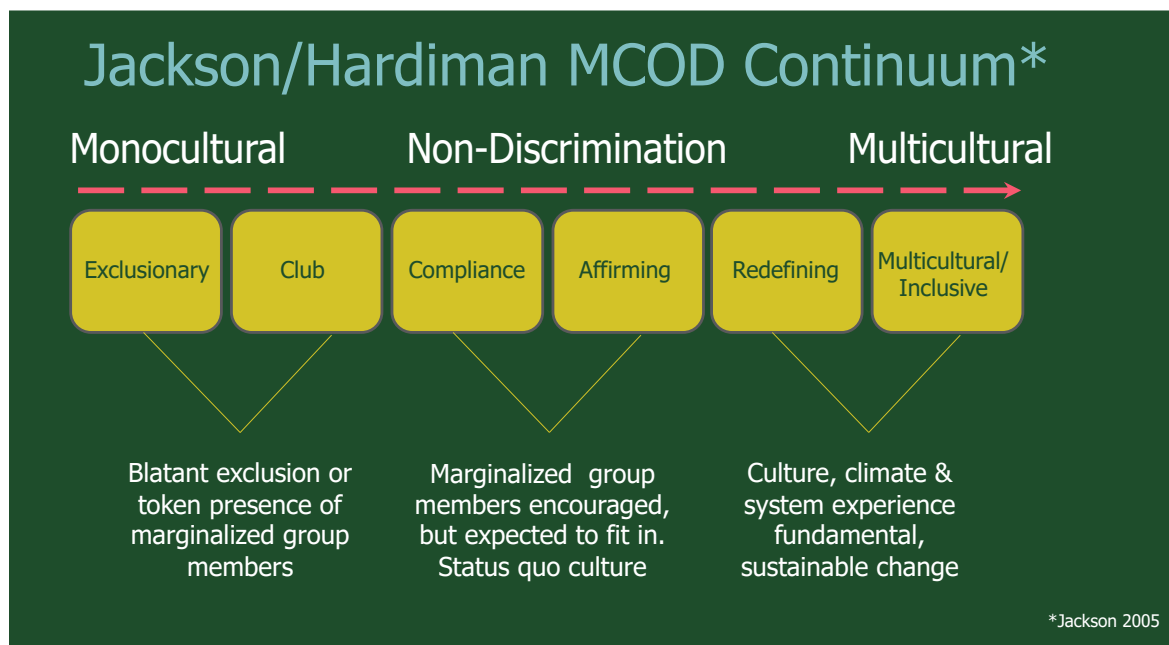
[Gaps in Student Success](#)



2. **Utilize the MCODE Model** - In 2015 the Vice President for Diversity, with support from then President Tony Frank, formally adopted the Multicultural Organizational Development (MCOD) Model as a tool to assess the culture of the university. Your DEI committee can use the Model to determine which stage you are currently in, which will assist in creating change interventions.

[MCOD Article](#)

[Schedule a MCODE Training](#)





3. **Construct a Plan** – DEI efforts should focus on three different and distinct levels of change: Individual, Organizational, and Structural.

Individual Examples:

- Outcomes: enhance DEI competency; increase personal responsibility; develop individual awareness; learn and promote inclusive individual actions
- Interventions: participate in professional development; learn language which promotes visibility and inclusion; develop awareness of own implicit and explicit bias; recognize and address microaggressions

Organization Examples:

- Outcomes: change departmental culture; promote inclusive group norms; improve inter/intra group dynamics
- Interventions: hold people accountable; consistent and relevant evaluations; define and use equitable practices; develop social identity consciousness

Structural Examples:

- Outcomes: make structural changes; create equitable policies; increase faculty diversity
- Interventions: evaluate structures and policies for inequity; audit physical space; review onboarding and recruitment processes, be willing to make changes

What is a DEI Organization?

1. Inclusion refers to a cultural and environmental feeling of belonging.
2. It can be assessed as the extent to which employees are valued, respected, accepted and encouraged to fully participate in the organization.
3. Employees in inclusive environments feel appreciated for their unique characteristics and are therefore comfortable sharing their ideas and other aspects of their true authentic selves.
4. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to our organizational functions, priorities, and employee culture.

<https://www.gallup.com/workplace/242138/requirements-diverse-inclusive-culture.aspx>



DEI Committee Planning Template

To be utilized by DEI committees in establishing goals.

DEI Goal				
	(Example) Recruitment and Retention of Historically Underrepresented Faculty	Time Frame for Implementation?	How will you know if you are successful?	What resources do you need?
Individual Outcomes				
Individual Interventions				
Organizational Outcomes				
Organizational Interventions				
Structural Outcomes				
Structural Interventions				

This document was developed by Ria Vigil for use by The Office of the Vice President for Diversity.



Individual and Departmental Audit

1. Complete a personal audit using the following questions:

If people observed you for several days (in meetings, as you interacted with colleagues, alumni, and students, scanned your office area, followed you on social media, etc.):

- What might they assume about your commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion?
- What issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion would they assume you care about?
- How would your treatment of colleagues and students be characterized?
- What behavior indicators demonstrate competency in diversity, equity, and inclusion?

2. Begin an audit of your department's culture, including physical environment, group norms, behaviors, and values

- Imagine you are coming into contact with your office for the first time. What impression do you have about the area's commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive environment for all?
- Do group norms and behaviors conflict with the department's espoused values?
- Scan specific visual items/space and note which ones contribute to a welcoming, inclusive environment, and which could be improved:
 - office decorations
 - pamphlets and other paper materials on display
 - web site statements, pictures/graphics, descriptions of programs and services, marketing
 - office assignment
- How accessible is the office space/web site for people with disabilities (mobility, visual, hearing, learning)?

3. Begin to review/analyze policies, programs, and services with an inclusion lens

- Who is our department serving?
- What groups might not be getting all they need from our department?
- How would we know?
- Identify 2-3 examples of a program, service, procedure, or policy **that has been intentionally designed** to meet the needs of people from underrepresented identity groups (CSU's definition of diversity).



- Example: first-generation students, veterans, women in agriculture
- Identify 1-2 examples of a program, service, procedure, or policy **that could possibly be improved** to better meet the needs of people across a full range of identity groups (CSU's definition of diversity).
 - Example: orientation, seminar course, graduate teaching assistant training

ONCE YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR DISCUSSION OF THE PREVIOUS SECTION,
COMPLETE NEXT STEPS

Next Steps

Based upon the previous audit, identify possible next steps at each corresponding level:

1. Individual
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Areas for growth
 - c. Reflection
 - d. Possible action steps
2. Organizational
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Areas for growth
 - c. Reflection
 - d. Possible action steps
3. Structural
 - a. Strengths
 - b. Areas for growth
 - c. Reflection
 - d. Possible action steps

Adapted from:

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*https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/organizational-self-assessment-related-to-racial-equity_oct-2013.pdf