

2019

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

VISION

An academic ecosystem whose success and impact are amplified by a diverse and inclusive culture.

MISSION

We create a world that works by building awareness of the benefits that diversity in all its forms can bring, and by ensuring that each person is able to contribute to and benefit from a culture and climate of inclusion.

VALUES

UK Engineering values diversity in people and of ideas; access and inclusion; pursuit of excellence; collaboration and multidisciplinary endeavors; integrity; transparency and trust.

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT CONDITIONS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

At the present time, the College of Engineering at the University of Kentucky comprises 145 faculty members, 172 staff members, 3,398 undergraduate students and 449 graduate students. The demographic composition of the College is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic composition of the College of Engineering at the University of Kentucky (Fall Semester, 2018).

Category	Women (%)	3-year Change 2015-18 (%)	Underrepresented Minorities† (%)	3-year Change 2015-2018 (%)
Advisory Board	20	-4	8	+3
Faculty	21	+40	9	+133
Leadership	20	+8	0	none
Professional Staff	39	--*	1	--*
Office/Clerical Staff	93	--*	10	--*
Undergraduate Students	21	+13	11	+7
Graduate Students	22	+9	6	+25

†Aggregate of American Indian/Alaskan Native, African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Two or More Races.

* Data not available.

Table 1 shows that the College is at or near national averages (1) for representation of women and underrepresented minorities among its faculty, staff and students with the exception of minority representation in College leadership. By sustaining the momentum indicated by rates of increase over the past three years, the fraction of women and underrepresented minorities on the College faculty will substantially exceed national averages in just a few years. Sustaining recent momentum will also lift the fraction of women and underrepresented minorities among undergraduate and graduate students above national averages. Additional attention, if not intentional effort, is needed to ensure diversity in College leadership positions.

1) B.L. Yoder, Engineering by the Numbers, ASEE (2017).

CULTURE AND CLIMATE

Intellectually, the College culture has pivoted towards issues in diversity and inclusion, but anecdotal reports and institutional surveys indicate instances where the climate remains chilly. This suggests that our actions do not always match our intentions when it comes to creating an inclusive working and learning environment. The most obvious actions across the College in support of diversity are in recruitment of faculty, staff and students. In recent years there has been strong to very strong representation of women and diverse persons in recruitment cohorts. There is also strong notional support for diverse populations and an inclusive culture. However, awareness of the specific actions and issues that work against an inclusive culture is shallow. This is particularly true among majority men, who genuinely want to support their diverse colleagues, but who have had only limited formal exposure to the relevant core concepts. All faculty and staff have had basic unconscious bias training per university requirements, but majority populations remain largely ignorant of the idea of majority privilege and systemic privilege that operates in the College's social framework. More importantly, many have not been exposed to the day-to-day actions they can take to support women and diverse colleagues. Across all groups—majority and minority; men and women; black; brown; white, trans and cis, etc.—there is a poor awareness of the intentionality that is needed to combat the action of socially reinforced implicit biases that are infused in daily activities, decision-making and execution of formal responsibilities.

In summary, attention to diversification of the College of Engineering demographic has been very good in recent years. However, explicit actions to address issues of culture, climate and intersectionality that are emerging in an increasingly diverse population have been largely absent. These circumstances define the course of action the College must take to fulfill its ambitions of an inclusive environment for learning, discovery and engagement.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY SUPPORT FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The College has a standing committee for diversity and inclusion, the College of Engineering Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The committee comprises 20 persons of mixed gender and ethnicity. Membership includes the Dean, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, faculty, staff and students. The committee is chaired by the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs. The committee is broadly charged with oversight of all activities pertaining to diversity and inclusion, including programming of events, speakers, workshops and facilitated discussions. It tracks best practices nationally and serves in an advisory capacity to the Dean and College leadership, and reports on a periodic basis to the College Executive committee, which comprises the department chairs and senior College leadership.

The College's Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan has two core goals. The first goal is to enhance the diversity of our student, staff, faculty and leadership populations. The purpose of this goal is to assure that the College can benefit fully from the well-documented advantages that diverse groups bring in support of the organizational mission. The second goal is to create and maintain a college environment that values inclusion and equity and demonstrates those values through individual and collective action. The purpose of this goal is to assure that all members of the College can participate freely in the various activities of the College and benefit fully from their association with it.

The Office for Institutional Diversity, led by Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President for Institutional Diversity, advises the President and Provost on all academic, fiscal, programmatic and administrative policy decisions regarding the University's diversity and inclusivity goals; on development, implementation and annual assessment of the University's diversity plan; and engagement of diversity issues in the community, Commonwealth of Kentucky and beyond. Dr. Feist-Price is the senior administrative officer responsible for promoting collaboration among all members of the university community, including students, faculty, staff and administrators in an earnest pursuit of the University's diversity agenda.

The University also operates an Office of Institutional Equity (OIE), which reports to the Office of the Provost. The OIE mission is to promote an environment free of discrimination and inequity. It is responsible for upholding the University's commitment to equal opportunity for all members of the University community in academic programs, research, service and employment. OIE responsibilities include:

- Addressing both internal and external complaints of discrimination
- Addressing complaints of sexual misconduct
- Training the University community on equal opportunity and affirmative action issues
- Developing and disseminating the University Affirmative Action Plan
- Recommending and monitoring the attainment of faculty and staff employment goals
- Fostering a diverse and inclusive learning and working environment

The Provost's Office and OIE have an aggressive program for funding diverse faculty hires. One-year's salary and benefits cash equivalent can be provided—subject to availability of funds—to units making faculty hires that increase unit ethnic diversity.

The University has mandatory training in the area of unconscious (implicit) bias, and a range of non-mandatory training options for faculty and staff. Training is carried out in person and in web-based formats. Additionally, all undergraduate students participate in unconscious bias training through UK 101, a course that helps new students transition to university life, and/or through participation in approved student organizations operating on campus.

GOALS STRATEGIES AND METRICS STATEMENTS IN THE COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

Diversity and Inclusion goals are written into the college's 2019 – 2024 Strategic Plan. The following Goals, Strategies and Metrics statements from the plan are reproduced here.

GOAL: Enhance diversity among our students, faculty and staff.

STRATEGIES	METRICS
Increase gender and ethnic diversity among faculty, staff and students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attain record value diverse student recruitment 2 of 3 years to 2021 • Attain record value diverse faculty recruitment 2 of 3 years to 2021 • Exceed Office of EEO Utilization rates for women and underrepresented groups
Expand need-based scholarships as a means to ensure affordability and access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a holistic scholarship review process • Fundraise for \$2 million in new, annual need-based scholarship support by 2023

GOAL: Create and sustain a college environment that values inclusion and equity and demonstrates those values through individual and collective action.

STRATEGIES	METRICS
Elevate the awareness of climate, culture and its impact on diverse persons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College-level diversity office by 2020 • Slate of regularly recurring workshops and facilitations to elevate awareness of core concepts and practice for promoting an inclusive culture by 2020
Integrate diversity and inclusion performance measures in annual performance evaluations for college, departmental, center and staff leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise College and departmental governance documents to explicitly include expectations for faculty and staff to promote equity and an inclusive climate by 2019
Develop annual programming around diversity and inclusion themes relevant to engineering disciplines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty, staff and student awards that recognize efforts to promote equity and inclusion by 2019 • A slate of regularly recurring events and recognitions for diversity engagement and accomplishment by 2020