



# A Framework for Inclusive Excellence

## ROADMAP

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## Executive Summary

The principle of “Inclusive Excellence” was introduced by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in 2003 and has re-oriented many institutions’ approaches to diversity and quality. In its strategic planning, The University of Akron has committed to making Inclusive Excellence a core institutional value.

*Design for Our Future*, the academic plan that serves as the “compass” for navigating *Charting the Course*, the University’s strategic plan, identifies Inclusive Excellence as one of five design principles by which the University seeks to create “an exceptional place for students to learn, grow and succeed in today’s knowledge economy.” The other four design principles are Leadership, Innovation, Engagement, and Assessment. The Strategic Roadmap for Inclusive Excellence outlines how the University can implement Inclusive Excellence as both a key component of the academic plan and a fundamental value at the heart of the University’s mission.

In order to achieve Inclusive Excellence as a core value and as a foundation for the future, this roadmap outlines **five strategic goals**, along with a series of measurable implementation Actions. The five Goals of this initiative are to attain distinction in:

1. *Climate*: To foster a campus environment that respects differences while encouraging inclusiveness.
2. *Recruitment and Retention*: To Increase the recruitment, retention, and representation of people of color, women, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups among students, faculty, administrators, and staff.
3. *Education and Training*: To develop and implement a comprehensive system of education and training focused on effectively managing -- and leveraging -- diversity for the benefit of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community.
4. *Community Building*: To build and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities, businesses (through a strong supplier diversity initiative), and civic organizations for the purpose of supporting diversity and multiculturalism both within the University and in external communities.
5. *Communication*: To develop and execute a comprehensive University of Akron Inclusive Excellence Communication Plan.

The Actions that will be carried out in the achievement of these goals will consciously invoke the other four design principles of Leadership, Innovation, Engagement, and Assessment, without which Inclusive Excellence cannot be attained. As we move forward, the roadmap will identify individuals and units ultimately responsible for meeting the diversity and Inclusive Excellence challenge at Akron. Among the most important will be dedicated staff in the Office of Inclusion and Equity, such as the Associate Director for Inclusion and Equity, who will be responsible for communications, outreach, and development, and a Director of Retention and Retention Coordinators, who will focus specifically on implementing Inclusive Excellence principles in the service of at-risk students.

It should be noted that Inclusive Excellence accountability is the responsibility of everyone in The University Akron community. It is also important to note that the Roadmap, with its vision and goals, is a fluid document that serves as a structure for the continual creation and nourishment of Inclusive Excellence at The University of Akron. It is a consensus document that reflects the common bonds and goals of the community.

## Inclusive Excellence Defined

We are already engaged in the process of creating a New Gold Standard for a great American university; a new model of university excellence.

--President Luis Proenza, *The Challenge of Change: The Opportunity of Transformative Engagement* (State of the University Address, November 3, 2008)

In his November 2008 State of the University address, President Proenza invited the University of Akron community to embrace change with optimism. Reminding us of the goals established in the university's strategic plan, *Charting the Course*, he observed that UA has successfully positioned itself to become "the public research university for northern Ohio, the University dedicated to the education and success of its students and to the production, integration, and dissemination of knowledge for the public good."

Key to this goal is a framework that incorporates diversity at its core: Inclusive Excellence.

Inclusive Excellence is a rejection of the model in which diversity and quality are seen as "separate but equal" goals. Rather, Inclusive Excellence involves grounding the academic experience of students and faculty in intellectual rigor that presupposes the importance and complexity of diversity and contributes to the development of the sophisticated intercultural skills necessary to work in a diverse society and interconnected world. Inclusive Excellence is a commitment to creating a campus environment that not only recognizes and appreciates the talents, skills, and perspectives of every staff member, faculty member, and administrator, but also uses those skills to achieve educational and organizational objectives while producing a robust, creative environment. In short, Inclusive Excellence is comprehensive educational reform based on research and theory as well as best practices, designed to yield better outcomes for students while fulfilling the University Mission.

An institution that has embraced Inclusive Excellence possesses the following characteristics:

1. *A welcoming campus climate.* In concrete terms, it means seeking out, listening to and respecting the perspectives of all students, faculty, staff, and community, with particular appreciation for the diverse backgrounds that students, faculty, staff, and community bring to the educational experience.
2. *A purposeful development and use of organizational resources to enhance student learning and employee development.* Organizationally, it means challenging students to achieve at high levels, and expecting faculty and staff to incorporate inclusiveness in teaching, service, and research.
3. *A focus on intellectual and social development in equal measure.* Academically, it means offering the best possible course of study.

## Strategic Roadmap Goals Summary

**Mission:** Establish Inclusive Excellence as a core value at The University of Akron.

**Vision:** The University of Akron is nationally recognized as a dynamic academic institution. Akron's culture attracts and develops students, staff, faculty, and administrators who represent multiple dimensions of Inclusive Excellence. It is a fair and equitable culture in which the talents of every member of The University of Akron community reinforces its values and contributes to achieving its mission.

**Goal 1:** *Climate:* To foster a campus environment that respects differences while encouraging inclusiveness.

**Goal 2:** *Recruitment and Retention:* To Increase the recruitment, retention, and representation of people of color, women, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups among students, faculty, administrators, and staff.

**Goal 3:** *Education and Training:* To develop and implement a comprehensive system of education and training focused on effectively managing -- and leveraging -- diversity for the benefit of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community.

**Goal 4:** *Community Building:* To build and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities, businesses (through a strong supplier diversity initiative), and civic organizations for the purpose of supporting diversity and multiculturalism both within the University and in external communities.

**Goal 5:** *Communication:* To develop and execute a comprehensive University of Akron Inclusive Excellence Communication Plan.

*\* This is a fluid document which will be reviewed annually. Revisions, updates, and additions will be made as necessary to continue embedding Inclusive Excellence into the culture at University of Akron. The roadmap is meant to be inclusive of all members of the University community, focusing particularly on historically or currently underrepresented and minority groups through use of the terms "people of color," "ethnic minorities," "women," "people with disabilities," and "other underrepresented groups."*

**GOAL 1 -- CLIMATE. To foster a total campus environment that respects differences and encourages inclusiveness.**

<b>STRATEGY 1: Establish institutional expectations for the support of diversity and Inclusive Excellence as a core value</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Reestablishment of the University Diversity Council charged with overseeing and implementing strategies for systemic organization change	Provost, President, COS, CDO	Members appointed and communicated
Action 2	Create an official definition of diversity and Inclusive Excellence at Akron.	Chief Diversity Officer, UDC, Provost, Chief of Staff, President	Definition published in this plan, approved by Provost and President, worked into approved BOT policy/resolution as appropriate.
Action 3	Ensure commitment to diversity at the highest levels of the institution through approval of policy statement via resolution by the University Board of Trustees	President, Provost, COS, CDO	Policy/resolution passed

<b>STRATEGY 2: Initiate programs and activities that enhance cultural awareness for the entire campus, creating opportunities for campus education, constructive dialogue, and honest reflection on diversity and Inclusive Excellence.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Create more opportunities for diversity programming and multicultural forums for students, faculty, and staff with focused outcome results.	OMD, ITL, CDO, UDC, Student Affairs, ASG, Residence Halls	Increase in programming and participation numbers
Action 2	Establish and publish a comprehensive annual Diversity Calendar of events, celebrations, historic dates, and holidays.	CDO, Printing Services, ASG	Calendar published and available
Action 3	Profile an UA student each month in the <i>Buchtelite</i> . These students should reflect diverse population groups on the UA campus	ASG, Buchtelite	Monthly article published
Action 4	Develop an awards program for faculty and staff that have made and contributed to the advancement of diversity and Inclusive Excellence at Akron.	Provost, CDO, COS, OMD, Women's Studies	Recommendations presented, adopted, and communicated
Action 5	Establish an African American Alumni Advisory Board to the Office of Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer.	CDO, Provost, COS, Alumni Association	Board established
Action 6	Establish a student affinity group advisory board to the Office of Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer.	ASG, CDO, Provost, COS, Student Affairs	Board established

Action 7	Work with Development Office to solicit funds for Inclusive Excellence scholarships for diverse students.	Development, UDC, administrative leaders	Recommendations submitted as per existing protocol and acted on
Action 8	Ensure prominent minorities are considered as part of ongoing awards of honorary degrees and honorary doctorates.	Office of Provost, UDC, administrative leaders, Chief Communications Officer, and Marketing (to publicize honorees)	Degrees awarded

**STRATEGY 3: Provide all students, faculty, and staff an accessible, secure Campus environment.**

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Review campus facilities with the ADA Coordinator and representatives of Office of Accessibility to ensure that all facilities are safe and accessible.	Office of Accessibility, Facilities, Vice President-Capital Planning, Human Resources, Director of EEO/AA and Employee Selection	All facilities reviewed annually and action plans are initiated
Action 2	Review campus policies to ensure measures are adopted to create safe, open access for all students, faculty, and staff, with all facets of diversity appropriately represented.	Vice President-Student Affairs, Director of EEO/AA, and Employee Selection Human Resources, UDC	Review complete, report published.

**STRATEGY 4: Conduct an annual campus climate survey to monitor progress toward creating an inclusive environment, publicizing all data and findings, and comparing results to baseline data to make additional recommendations.**

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Develop a process for the collection and reporting of data and for the implementation of recommendations.	Institutional Research, Department of Marketing, Chief Communications Officer, University Diversity Council, EEO/AA and Employee Selection, and CDO	Survey instruments developed; data collected; reports published, publicized, and analyzed; action taken

**GOAL 2 -- Recruitment and Retention: To Increase the recruitment, retention, and representation of people of color, women, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups among students, faculty, administrators, and staff.**

<b>STRATEGY 1: Senior Administrative Levels, Department Heads, and Chairs - Seek to include all University constituencies including people of color, ethnic minorities, women, and members of other underrepresented groups in positions of President, Provost, Vice President, Dean, Assistant Vice President, Associate Provost, Department Head, and/or Chair, Directors of Programs, and other non-academic departments.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Develop and implement requirements of a diverse search committee to ensure an inclusive process in all UA job searches.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Human Resources, CDO, Provost	Develop a process and requirements and communicate these to the University Community
Action 2	Develop and implement education and training for all search committees so that certification of completion of this training is a prerequisite for participation.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Human Resources, CDO, Provost	Training and certification process implemented
Action 3	Establish search criteria regarding diversity for use as guidelines for external search firms, and analyze previous search firms' ability to deliver a diverse slate of candidates.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Human Resources, CDO, Provost, COS	Approved docket of search firms
Action 4	Establish a women's graduate assistant mentoring program to supplement Action 4 for those desiring to become professors.	Provost's Office, Human Resources, Chief of Staff	Program developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness
Action 5	Implement a career development/succession planning program to allow all University employees including women, people of color, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups the opportunity to grow through broad leadership experiences.	Human Resources, Provost, Chief of Staff, CDO	Program developed and career development plans completed
Action 6	Establish an administrative mentoring program to supplement Action 4, above.	Chief of Staff, Human Resources, Provost, CDO	Program developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness

<b>STRATEGY 2: Faculty Retention – Increase the retention of women, people of color, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in our faculty.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Analyze exit interview data for the past two years reviewing reasons and decisions to leave and make recommendations.	Provost, UDC, Human Resources, EEO/AA and Employee Selection	Report from the analysis
Action 2	Create a mentoring program to aid in retention of faculty members and provide for broad dissemination of the availability of such programs, especially to underrepresented groups.	Provost, AV Provost, COS, CDO	Program developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness

<b>STRATEGY 3: Student Retention</b> <b>Increase the graduation rate of students of color, ethnic minority students, women, students with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups to the same level as non-minority students who enter The University with comparable preparation</b>			
<i>Five-Year Program housed in OMD reporting to the AVP, Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer</i>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1a	Hire two academic support coordinators who will assist with retention efforts through the Four-Phase Advising System Program with first- and second-year students and focus on improved graduation rates among minorities.	Provost, CDO, OMD, Student Affairs	Improved Retention and graduation rates
Action 1b	Hire two graduate assistants to provide support to the Office of Inclusion and Equity, learning communities, and ADVANCE Orientation and cultural programming.		
Action 1c	Hire a Director for Student Retention and Involvement who will be responsible for supervision of coordinators working with the National Pan Hellenic Council, providing leadership to campus organizations such as PASO, HOLA, SAAB, etc., as well as increasing involvement with new graduates of color, alumni association, and Adult Focus initiative.		

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1d	Students of color placed on probation or who receive an academic dismissal warning (in addition to interventions provided by Summit or University College) will be required to register and participate in the Four-Phase Advising System in the Office of Multicultural Development.	Provost, CDO, OMD, Student Affairs	Improved Retention and graduation rates
Action 1e	The Office of Multicultural Development, in conjunction with the Office of the Associate Vice President for Inclusion and Equity, will host an annual <i>Welcome Cookout</i> for new students of color and their parents. Also, hold a formal graduate <i>Passing the Torch Dinner</i> for minority students.		
Action 1f	Register all first-year students of color with a peer mentor in the Office of Multicultural Development and acquaint them with other student organizations on campus.		
Action 2	Conduct research to better understand the dynamics of current retention rates.	Institutional Research, Colleges and Schools, Student Success and Retention Committee, AVP Enrollment Management, OMD, CDO	Report
Action 3	Establish a mentoring program at the College/School level to focus on retention of students and provide for broad dissemination of the availability of such programs, especially to minority students.	Colleges and Schools, Graduate School, Student Affairs	Program recommendations formed and implemented
Action 4a	Review Akron undergraduate student base for recruitment of graduate students. Consider alternate programs to encourage undergraduates to continue their graduate studies at The University of Akron.	Provost, Assistant Dean Graduate School, College Deans, CDO	Percentage of students entering UA graduate programs
Action 4	Partner with graduate school faculty by providing stipend for expenses to recruit potential graduate students when they are attending their professional conferences.	Provost, Assistant Dean Graduate School, CDO	Percentage of students entering UA graduate programs

<b>STRATEGY 4: Faculty Recruitment</b> <b>Increase the recruitment of women, people of color, ethnic minorities, and other underrepresented groups to faculty positions.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Create a position in Human Resources to focus in part on recruiting underrepresented faculty as positions become available.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Provost	Position created and filled
Action 2	Advertise faculty openings through HBCU networks, professional organizations, and multicultural publications.	Human Resources, all Colleges and Schools Faculty members	Number of application and resumes; number of positions filled.
Action 3	Develop College and School plans to increase the diversity of faculty applicant pools.	All Colleges and Schools	Plans reported to the Provost
Action 4	Identify doctoral students through professional organizations who are women, people of color, ethnic minorities, or members of other underrepresented groups for possible recruitment to The University of Akron faculty.	All Colleges and Schools, EEO/AA and Employee Selection, CDO	Number of applications and resumes received; number of positions filled

<b>STRATEGY 5: Students</b> <b>Increase the recruitment, retention, and thus representation of people of color, ethnic minorities, women, and other underrepresented students.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Establish Inclusive Excellence scholarships to facilitate achieving a diverse student body including students of color, ethnic minorities, and other underrepresented groups, and provide for broad dissemination of the availability of such scholarships especially to high schools populated by such groups.	Student Affairs and all Colleges and Schools	To reach 100% of the targeted high schools, number of scholarships awarded, and the value to the resources committed to this recruitment effort.
Action 2	Ensure that recruitment for graduate programs includes a focus on women, people of color, ethnic minorities, and other underrepresented groups.	Assistant Dean Graduate School, Colleges, and Schools	Require reports to Graduate School annually
Action 3	Expand the international student population, both undergraduate and graduate.	Office of International Programs, Admissions, Graduate School	Increased enrollment numbers of International students

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 4	Support and enhance the program of inviting junior and senior High School students to UA for a day, and provide for broad dissemination of the availability of such programs, especially to African American and Hispanic American students. This initiative should include analyzing actual applications submitted and projecting goal application rates for future day visits.	OMD, Student Affairs	Evaluate the program and document the number of visits and applications
Action 5	Invite guidance counselors from high schools in the southeastern United States, especially those from racially and ethnically diverse schools to The University of Akron for an orientation.	Student Affairs, OMD, CDO	Evaluate the program and document the number of guidance counselors who attend
Action 6	Examine current graduate curricula to determine if additional programs should be added in order to attract a more diverse graduate student population.	Graduate School, Provost, CDO	Report of analysis

**STRATEGY 6: Staff Recruitment and Retention**

**Seek to increase employee diversity, including women, people of color, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups in higher-level staff positions**

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Review all job descriptions before posting to determine if the requisite skills and/or experience is being <b>overly</b> required.	Human Resources, Hiring Manager, COS, CDO	TBD
Action 2	Increase the recruitment of people of color, ethnic minorities, women, and other underrepresented groups in order to maintain diversity in staff positions.	Human Resources, EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Hiring Manager	Annual review and assessment of recruitment
Action 3	Implement a career development program for all employees and provide for broad dissemination of the availability of such programs, especially to women, people of color, ethnic minorities, and members of other underrepresented groups to give them the opportunity to position themselves for advancement within The University of Akron.	Human Resources, Hiring Manager, COS, CDO	Development of programs and tracking systems to monitor progress

**GOAL 3 --Education and Training: To develop and implement a comprehensive system of education and training focused on effectively managing -- and leveraging -- diversity for the benefit of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community.**

<b>STRATEGY 1: Establish a baseline of assessment, training, education, academic courses, and experiences, which are focused on Inclusive Excellence, and/or elements of diversity.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Create an operational definition of diversity and Inclusive Excellence and code of conduct standards to serve as a guide for the training and behavioral assessment of all University employees.	Provost's Office, CDO, Human Resources, EEO/AA and Employee Selection, OMD	Definition an standards statement completed
Action 2	Incorporate diversity and Inclusive Excellence as a performance dimension within the annual employee performance appraisal process for all faculty, administrative/professional and University staff.	President's Office, Provost, and Human Resources	Development of performance appraisal instruments for all University employees.

<b>STRATEGY 2: Conduct diversity training specific to a college campus environment for students, faculty, and staff</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Implement a mandatory supervisory training program for all employees with direct reports to include diversity, intercultural communication, and equal employment opportunities.	Human Resources, EEO/AA and Employee Selection, President, Provost, CDO, COS	Commitment from senior administration and implementation and evaluation of training
Action 2	Conduct diversity training for student leadership, i.e., ASG, Residence Hall Leaders, Pan Hellenic Council, etc.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Human Resources, AVP, Student Life, Resident hall Leaders	Training implemented and evaluated
Action 3	Provide progressive diversity-oriented professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.	EEO/AA and Employee Selection, Human Resources, CDO, Provost	Training established and evaluated. Participation tracked and compared with benchmark programs at other institutions such as The University of Virginia and The University of Michigan

<b>STRATEGY 3: Ensure that the University's academic curriculum creates global awareness and multicultural understanding in its students</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Broaden the University's general education requirements to include multicultural studies such as Global studies, African-American studies, Hispanic-American studies, Asian-American studies, and Women's studies.	Provost, ITL, Deans, and Directors of target programs	Number of faculty teaching; number of programs offered; number of students enrolled; annual number of classes reported to Provost
Action 2	Create a Diversity Education Course requirement and allow students to select from University-approved diversity courses and study abroad options to meet the requirement.	University Diversity Council, Women's Studies, Pan African Studies, Office of International Programs	Menu of courses developed

**Goal 4 -- *Community Building*: To build and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities, businesses (through a strong supplier diversity initiative), and civic organizations for the purpose of supporting diversity and multiculturalism both within the University and in external communities.**

<b>STRATEGY 1: Develop a comprehensive plan including an assessment protocol for managing the University's spending with Minority, and Women Business Suppliers.</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Create ongoing in servicing of all purchasing and capital outlay personnel regarding supplier diversity initiatives and programming.	CDO,CFO, Vice President of Capital Planning	TBD
Action 2	Establish current spending with Minority and Women Business Suppliers by implementing a spending tracking mechanism that identifies central and decentralized purchase activities and discretionary spending.	Purchasing, Vice President Finance, Vice President Capital Planning	Quarterly spending reports published
Action 3	Identify list of current and potential MWBE suppliers and communicate this information campus-wide	Purchasing, Vice President Finance, Vice President Capital Planning, CDO	Supplier list available to entire campus
Action 4	Develop a communications strategy to attract potential MWBE suppliers by hosting a supplier fair.	CDO, Chief Communications Officer, Purchasing, Akron Innovation, Vice President Finance, Vice President Capital Planning	Strategy published; relationships generated from supplier fair
Action 5	Join key trade organizations such as the Minority Business Enterprise 2.5, Black Pages, etc., to establish collaborative relationships.	CDO, Purchasing, and Accounts Payable	Document memberships

**STRATEGY 2: Support an environment of respect for the multiple religious/spiritual faiths represented with the University and community.**

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Assist in creating awareness of the many religious/spiritual groups and their traditions at Akron and in the Community	CDO, OMD, Office of International Programs, Admissions, Chief Communications Officer, Marketing, Helen Qammar and Karyn Katz	Measure through the campus climate survey

**STRATEGY 3: Create and foster a partnership with the City of Akron and other community and state concerns to support and value a commitment to diversity.**

	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Establish an advisory board of regional community and business leaders that will meet to discuss and determine a course of action with the CDO office.	OMD, Mayor's Office, President's Office, COS, Provost	Course of action defined and reported
Action 2	Establish an annual Black Caucus Conference at UA designed to educate legislators about research and outreach at UA, to encourage an open forum for broader discussion of statewide issues affecting diversity, and to update legislators and others on the state of diversity at UA.	Outreach, President	Conference organized and well-received
Action 3	Establish an advisory board of African-American alumni to meet and discuss courses of action for the CDO office and University.	President's Office, COS, Provost	Course of action defined and reported
Action 4	Establish an advisory board of Student Affinity groups to meet and discuss courses of action for the CDO office and University.	President's Office, COS, Provost	Course of action defined and reported

## Goal 5 -- *Communication*: To develop and execute a comprehensive University of Akron Inclusive Excellence Communication Plan.

<b>STRATEGY 1: Through multi-media forms, promote diversity and Inclusive Excellence as a core value for UA</b>			
	Action	Partners	Measure
Action 1	Create web-site link on UA's homepage that speaks to diversity and Inclusive Excellence.	Chief Communications Officer, CDO, Provost	Completed
Action 2	Examine ALL current communications to ensure a global perspective.	Chief Communications Officer and Marketing	Inventory complete and reported
Action 3	Develop a campus-wide diversity communication strategy through full and open consultations with faculty, students, and staff to ensure that all internal and external communications are consistent with the operational definitions of diversity and Inclusive Excellence.	CDO, Chief Communications Officer, Provost, UDC, Institutional Marketing, ASG, Faculty Senate	Draft completed, reviewed, and published
Action 4	Ensure campus events and visual displays are inclusive of religions or faiths represented on campus.	ASG, Colleges and Schools, OMD, CDO	Completed calendar, annual report
Action 5	Include a column entitled "Discussions on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence" authored by the President, Provost, or their designees in regularly published documents as appropriate.	President, Provost, CDO	Articles Published
Action 6	Publish a semi-annual electronic diversity/multiculturalism publication.	OMD	Semi-annual report published
Action 7	Hold an open discussion with the Editorial Board of the Akron Beacon Journal concerning the use of a broad base of authors and stories regarding diversity and multiculturalism.	President, Provost, Deans, Editorial Board of Akron Beacon Journal	Discussions held
Action 8	Seek and identify other university and community collaborations that highlight diversity as a core value; publicize these collaborations by featuring articles, editorials, and stories on diversity initiatives.	Chief Communication Officer, Institutional Marketing, President's Office, COS, CDO	Articles and editorials published and distributed
Action 9	Disseminate the diversity strategic roadmap and promote it among all The University of Akron audiences.	Office of Communications and Marketing, Schools and Colleges, President, Provost, Deans, Directors, Department Heads, COS, ASG	Plan publicized and distributed to media, online, and in print

# The Roadmap

## I. Destination: Inclusive Excellence

### *Where We've Been, Where We Are and Where We're Going*

Like most universities, The University of Akron has a history that includes events and attitudes that do not always reflect understanding or appreciation of diversity. At the same time, the University can be justifiably proud of many accomplishments with respect to the promotion of diversity. It is important to acknowledge and learn from the past, and to resolve to create a new reality that will serve as a better history for generations to come. As part of its commitment to Inclusive Excellence, the provost's office commissioned a survey in 2007 to give the university a snapshot of the status of diversity on campus. Additional research and data collection on diversity has been carried out in various capacities, all for the purpose of giving us a true sense of the problems that we need to correct as well as the accomplishments on which we must build.

From this research, we have learned that accomplishments with respect to diversity on this campus are many. They include the establishment of **units** such as the Women's Studies Program, the Office of Accessibility, the Office of Multicultural Development, International Studies Programs, Adult Focus, the Confucius Institute, and the new Office of Inclusion and Equity; **programs** such as the McNair Scholars Program, Diversity Week, Black Male Summit, Rethinking Race: Black, White and Beyond, and Women Trailblazers; and **scholarships**, such as the McNair Scholars Program and the Inclusive Excellence Scholarship Program.

Challenges, however, remain. One of the most urgent is the alarmingly low graduation rate among male students generally and African American males in particular. Among males overall, graduation rates in four-year programs at UA range from below 10% at year four to below 50% by year nine, and from below 30% at year four to below 50% by year nine in two-year programs. Among African American males, these numbers are even lower: since 1994, the fourth-year cumulative graduation rate among African American males has declined from an already-too-low 2.4% to .80% in four-year programs and from 5.1% to 1.3% in two-year programs. Tremendously low retention rates among African American males – enrollment often drops by 30-50% from the first to the second year and can drop by 90% by the ninth year from enrollment -- contribute to the problem.

While it is true that the decline in male African-American retention and graduation rates is so widespread nationally and in the state of Ohio that the Governor's Office has created a task force for the sole purpose of addressing it, The University of Akron cannot ignore its responsibility to serve as a leader in the effort to reverse this trend. The proposed new Director of Retention in the Office of Inclusion and Equity will focus specifically on implementing Inclusive Excellence principles in the service of at-risk students, using the most up-to-date research and best practices available.

In addition to the urgent issue of student retention and graduation rates, the University needs to attend to ensuring diversity and equity in the hiring and treatment of faculty and staff and to developing a campus climate that is truly welcoming. Currently, the university employs twice as many full-time male employees as female, and four times as many Caucasian full-time employees as minorities. Meanwhile, women constitute the majority of faculty off the tenure track. In order to address these inequities, five **sub-committees of the newly established Diversity Council** have been established. They will focus on **University Climate; Improving Student Recruitment, Retention and Graduation Rates; Faculty Diverse Hiring; Staff Diverse Hiring; and Business Outreach and Supplier Diversity.**

## II. Justification: Why the Journey?

### *Thinking Globally, Acting Locally*

In spite of historic events including the election of the country's first African American president, higher education today exists in an environment where the achievement of diversity still presents enormous challenges. One of the challenges is access, as expressed in the Supreme Court's majority opinion in the University of Michigan Law School admission case. The court said: *"It is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity."*

The challenge of access is not confined to the United States, and does not refer only to the ability to walk through the door of a college or university. Nations on every continent struggle with marginalization issues related to diversity, and educational institutions across the globe are responsible for nurturing and developing the potential of every student, not only for his or her own benefit but indeed so that the world will have access to and be enriched by what he or she has to offer. Such challenges present opportunities for institutions that willingly put in place culturally transformative processes to meet them. Institutions less equipped to meet diversity challenges stand to fall short of their missions.

We embark on this journey, then, for the purpose of "enrichment" in all of its forms. As the population of the United States and of Ohio grows more diverse and companies do business in a global economic system where products made in Ohio are sold all over the world and Ohio consumers purchase products manufactured worldwide, the material enrichment that comes from cultivating Inclusive Excellence becomes immediately apparent. However, if The University of Akron wishes to produce graduates equipped to take a prominent place not just in the global marketplace but indeed in the global community, providing principled leadership and reflective capacity, enlivening art and culture, innovative scientific inquiry and intellectual rigor, then it must recognize the intellectual, ethical, spiritual, and cultural enrichment that comes from being exposed to diversity in all of its forms.

While the goal of this Inclusive Excellence initiative is to expand our understanding of what "diversity" is, it is also important to have a clear understanding of and commitment to some of the most deeply rooted diversity issues in our national and local context. The United States Census Bureau projects that students of color and ethnic minorities will become the majority in K-12 classrooms by the middle of the 21st century. This dramatic shift in the proportion of minority students is already taking place, with 37% of elementary and secondary school students now identified as students of color or ethnic minorities. Forty percent of all high school graduates in the United States will be non-white by the year 2010, up from a third this year and less than 25% in 1980. Current population estimates project that "minority" students will become the majority in U.S. classrooms by 2050, with an estimated 54% of all students being people of color and ethnic minorities. Women, who in the past have constituted minority populations in colleges and universities, are now the undisputed majority. Yet although both of these groups have achieved or are achieving majority status in terms of numbers, they continue to face challenges related to their sociological minority status.

The contradiction and complexity that is reflected in the status of populations defined by "traditional" diversity categories like "minorities" and "women" only multiplies when additional categories are considered, as they must be in the twenty-first century. Today it is common for students, faculty, and staff to belong to more than one -- even multiple -- categories, encompassing disability status, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age,

care-giving status, and veteran status. Institutions must be proactive in identifying the needs of all students, faculty, and staff and providing facilities to meet those needs. Inclusive Excellence is both a means for accomplishing this goal and its beneficiary. Diversity on campus and in the curriculum is producing new knowledge, new respect, and a new commitment to the community. This is an extraordinary resource for a democracy that is growing more diverse by the minute.

While the path to Inclusive Excellence is clear and exciting, we should not believe that this new learning can be achieved easily. Learning with and from people whose backgrounds and assumptions are different from our own is enriching, but given our national history of separation, it is difficult. Diversity on campus and in the curriculum is producing new knowledge, new respect, and a new commitment to the community. This is an extraordinary resource for a democracy that is growing more diverse by the minute.

### ***Economic Justification***

The current economic recession has created an urgent need for bold innovation, responsible entrepreneurship, and attention to social justice. The University of Akron sees the traditional tripartite mission of higher education as essential for guiding the region, the country, and the world back to economic stability and prosperity: **research** to generate the technological knowledge and infrastructure that will rebuild the economy; **teaching**, to provide citizens with the skills and values necessary for lifelong learning and access to opportunity; and **service**, to ensure that both individuals and communities are empowered to participate fully in our economy and our democracy.

In order to fulfill its responsibility as a regional and national economic leader, The University of Akron must welcome people from diverse backgrounds and cultures to work and study here, and create an environment in which the talents of everyone are recognized and developed. Achieving institutional prominence in the absence of an appreciation for diversity is extremely improbable in today's competitive world. This fact is illustrated by the diversity represented by the individuals and communities that have already contributed to the University's reputation as an innovative and achievement-oriented institution.

It follows, then, that The University of Akron should strive to create and nourish a culturally diverse community, educating students, faculty, and staff so that attitudes of racism, bigotry, and prejudice are overcome. Individuals are better equipped to deal with cultural differences in their future lives by learning these attitudes and skills just as they are by learning language, engineering, biology, or business.

### ***Ethical Justification***

The University of Akron was recently recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching for its dedicated efforts in community engagement through the awarding of a Community Engagement Classification in Curricular Engagement and Outreach and Partnerships. By seeking this designation, the University announced its intention to provide leadership to and collaboration with local, regional/state, national, and global communities on issues related to civic and academic learning, community well-being, and the exploration and application of knowledge, information, and resources.

In order to live up to this honor, the University must create and nourish a culturally diverse community, for such an accomplishment will have the effect of enhancing the reputation of The University of Akron among scholars and among the best students in the state, nation, and world. When we examine universities ranked as among the best in the country, they are generally diverse in their faculty, staff, and student body. We must at least consider the possibility that their diversity contributes to that high regard. Conversely, we must also consider that lack of diversity can contribute to a less favorable

regard. More importantly, by embracing Inclusive Excellence and implementing it in a meaningful way, the University fulfills its role as a regional and indeed a national leader and becomes a moral compass by which other institutions can measure their own efforts to make Inclusive Excellence central to their missions.

### ***Educational Justification***

The Association of American Colleges and Universities defines “liberal education” as

An approach to learning that empowers individuals and prepares them to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. A liberal education helps students develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings.

[http://www.aacu.org/leap/What\\_is\\_Liberal\\_Education.cfm](http://www.aacu.org/leap/What_is_Liberal_Education.cfm)

Inclusive Excellence is a natural outgrowth of intentional engagement with and reflection on the real world. Far from an ivory tower, The University of Akron is committed to meeting the diverse needs of its constituencies: the students, faculty, staff, and citizens of the Akron community, as well as citizens of Ohio, the United States and indeed the world. Inclusive Excellence is integral to the University’s stated mission, culture, and goals. It grounds education in its roots and orients it toward its goals.

### III. Navigation: Getting to Where We're Going

The inaugural ideas and recommendations outlined in the strategic roadmap are based on seven months of meetings and deliberations held by the Chief Diversity Officer with input from several key departments and units of the University community, site visits to other campuses, member participation at national and regional diversity conferences, and interactions with consultants who have unique expertise in diversity. After the strategic roadmap is accepted by the President and Provost, it will be submitted to the University Diversity Council to facilitate and incorporate campus-wide input, formatting, editing, and delivery to senior administration.

The goals and objectives set forth in this document are designed to provide The University of Akron with a proactive framework for implementing Inclusive Excellence and ensuring that it will not only meet but exceed its commitments. These goals are the core of a fluid plan to guide and motivate additional initiatives over time. The plan encompasses goals, actions, assignments of accountability, and measures of accomplishments. Timetables for action will be determined upon plan implementation. Outcomes will be demonstrated by new forms of decision-making, communication, skills development, and behaviors in Akron students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Key to the achievement of these goals and objectives will be the hiring of appropriate staff to implement them. The Office of Inclusion and Equity will require a strong and capable team to work with the Associate Vice President/Chief Diversity Officer: **an Associate Director of Inclusive Excellence** to take charge of implementing initiatives, communication efforts, outreach and development; a **Director of Retention** to supervise efforts to improve retention and graduation rates among the most at-risk student populations; and two **Coordinators for Retention** to work with other campus offices on implementing best practices for advising and mentoring at-risk students directly.

By embedding Inclusive Excellence within the University's Strategic Plan and Academic Plan, the University will ensure that Inclusive Excellence initiatives will achieve high priority in planning and budgeting processes. Activities will be monitored, measured, evaluated, and documented through established procedures, and the implementation of initiatives will be evaluated through inclusion of Inclusive Excellence achievements in performance evaluations of all faculty, staff, supervisors, and administrators. Each Vice President and College Dean will be responsible for evaluating and disseminating information about initiatives as part of annual University strategic planning efforts. While the initiatives outlined herein are overarching university initiatives, each Vice President, Dean, and Director will maintain and carry out more specific initiatives for each area. Individual status reports will be completed and forwarded to the Provost for review.

Inclusive Excellence is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students as individuals and as members of various university areas and organizations. In particular, to ensure progress, there must be a demonstrated commitment to Inclusive Excellence at the highest administrative levels. The President, Provost, Vice Presidents, and other senior leaders are responsible for providing the leadership needed to create meaningful progress. For Inclusive Excellence to take root on this campus, the entire community will need to work together to take ownership of the process and the goal. With this Strategic Roadmap in hand, it can be done.



## A Framework for Inclusive Excellence

# APPENDIX

*March 27, 2009*

### **Diversity Accomplishments at the University of Akron:**

- Hiring AVP, Inclusion and Equity/Chief Diversity Officer
- Office of Multi-Cultural Development
- Women's Studies Program
- Office of Accessibility
- International Studies Programs
- Confucius Institute
- Pan African Studies Center
- Adult Focus
- Upward Bound Program/Upward Bound Math& Science
- Educational Talent Search Program
- Strive Toward Excellence Program
- Pre-Engineering Program
- Passage 1&2/4 Pass Learning Communities/Developmental Learning Communities
- McNair Scholars Program
- Inclusive Excellence Scholarship Program
- Verna Trushel Displaced Homemakers Scholarship Program
- Office of Multi-cultural Development Awards and Scholarship Program
- Diversity Week
- Martin Luther King Community Celebration and Fair
- International Fair
- Black Male Summit
- Rethinking Race: Black, White and Beyond
- Hispanic Heritage Day
- Pre-Kwanzaa Celebration
- Women Trailblazers
- Women's Heritage Month

## *New Diversity Council*

**Co-Chairs:** **Martin H. Belsky, J.D.**, Dean of the School of Law, and  
**Lee A. Gill, J.D.**, Associate Vice President for Inclusion & Equity/Chief Diversity Officer

**Council members are:**

**Dr. Daisy L. Alford-Smith**, chief executive officer of the Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio

**Dr. David P. Ayers**, director, international programs

**Dr. Linda Ruth Barrett**, associate professor of geography and planning

**Ms. Roxia B. Boykin, M.P.A., R.N.**, vice president of community relations and diversity, Summa Health System Foundation

**Dr. Charles J. Fey**, vice president for student affairs

**Dr. Douglas R. Hausknecht**, associate professor, marketing and international business, interim department chair, Marketing

**Dr. Willis L. Lonzer III**, Abbott Laboratories, Inc.

**Dr. Chand Midha**, acting dean of the Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences

**Ms. Diane Miller-Dawson**, director of finance, Office of the Mayor, the City of Akron

**Dr. A.G. Monaco**, associate vice president for human resources and employee relations

**Dr. Ramona Ortega-Liston**, associate professor, Public Administration and Urban Studies

**Mr. Marcus Phelps**, Board of Trustees, Student Trustee

**Mr. Stanley B. Silverman**, dean, Summit College

**Dr. Harvey L. Sterns**, professor of psychology and director of the Institute for Life-Span Development and Gerontology

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**Dr. N. Margaret Wineman**, dean, College of Nursing

**Dr. Sheldon B. Wrice**, chair, & professor of Technical Writing and Comp., Department of Associate Studies, Summit College

**Dr. Julie Yuhua Zhao**, visiting assistant professor and Ideas Director, College of Engineering

**Mr. Hunter Yurachek**, interim director of intercollegiate athletics

**Mr. Jason Ziegler**, president of Associated Student Government

**Ex-officio members of the committee are:**

- **Dr. Luis Proenza**, president of the University;
- **Dr. David B. Baker**, interim senior vice president, provost and chief operating officer; and
- **Ms. Candace Campbell Jackson**, vice president and chief of staff.

## ***DIVERSITY COUNCIL***

### *Sub-Committees*

#### **1. Focus on University Climate**

##### Co-Chairs

- Dr. Linda Subich, Department of Psychology
- Dr. John Queener, Department of Counseling

Develop strategies to assess and improve the cultural and organizational climate at The University of Akron to determine and ensure that everyone feels welcomed, valued, respected, and that ours is an inclusive community with an environment characterized by equal access and respected participation for all groups and individuals irrespective of cultural differences and, more importantly, where the multiplicity of characteristics possessed by persons are not simply tolerated, but valued and celebrated.

#### **2. Focus on Improving Student Recruitment, Retention, and Graduation Rates**

##### Co-Chairs

- Dr. Mark Tausig, Associate Dean-Graduate School
- Ms. Fedearia Nicholson, Director, Office of Multicultural Development

Develop strategies to assess and improve programs designed to increase the enrollment and completion rates of students from underrepresented populations, accurately identifying both general and demographically specific challenges and opportunities.

#### **3. Focus on Faculty Diverse Hiring**

##### Co-Chairs

- Dr. Cynthia Capers, Special Assistant to the Provost
- Dr. Bill Lyons, Interim Dean, Political Science

Develop strategies for recruiting, developing, and retaining faculty from underrepresented populations, accurately identifying both general and demographically specific challenges and opportunities and ensuring adherence to disciplinary and professional standards of practice.

#### 4. Focus on Staff Diverse Hiring

##### Co-Chairs

- Ms. Kathy DuBose, Manager, Comp Based Assessment and Evaluation
- Mr. James Walczyk, Director, Student Recreation & Wellness Services

Develop strategies for recruiting, developing, and retaining staff from underrepresented populations, accurately identifying both general and demographically specific challenges and opportunities.

#### 5. Focus on Business Outreach and Supplier Diversity

##### Co-Chairs

- Mr. John Myers, Research Foundation, Executive-in-Residence
- Mr. Alan Parker, Financial Analyst, Department of Purchasing

As a major regional employer, diversity and inclusion provide a competitive advantage that drives business results and supports our brand identification. An integral part of our mission is a commitment to purchase from a supplier base representative of our employees, students, and communities. Developing partnerships with minority-owned and women-owned suppliers helps us build the world-class supplier base we need. It creates mutually beneficial relationships that expand the University's sphere of activity.

#### 6. Focus on Retention and Graduation Rates for Student Athletes

##### Co-Chairs

- **Mr. Thomas Wistrill**, Director, Intercollegiate Athletics
- **Mr. Chuck Lewis**, Coordinator of Academics for Football Academic Services

Develop strategies to assess and improve programs designed to increase the enrollment and graduation rates of student athletes.

## Special Thanks

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