



UNIVERSITY RELATIONS AND CAMPUS LIFE  
DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE

TO: Jane Knodell, Provost Office  
Wanda Heading Grant, Provost Office

FR: Tom Gustafson, Vice President, University Relations and Campus Life

DT: September 7, 2012

RE: FY13 Diversity Recruitment & Retention Plan

Attached you will find our updated recruitment and retention plan for University Relations and Campus Life (URCL). This plan is being submitted as requested to address the best practices document provided to the Vice Presidents and Deans this past spring. As noted before, please understand that URCL's recruitment plan is imbedded in a broader scope of mission, values, expectations, commitment and accountability around being multiculturally competent both as individuals and as an organization. Through our experience, we agree that a comprehensive multicultural plan is critical to the ultimate success of our recruitment strategies and efforts. This plan is used throughout the division with the exception of Athletics, University Communications and University Relations who have unique circumstances, which we can discuss at a later time.

I would like to highlight that over the past ten academic years we have hired and filled an average of 50 positions annually and approximately 20% of those positions have been filled with people of color. If we expand our definition of diversity as your recommendation suggests, that percentage would be greater given that we have filled a significant number of positions with people representing various diverse identities such as LGBT, ability, and gender. It is our intention and goal to minimally continue this trend indefinitely.

This past spring, we initiated a thorough demographic study by way of a division-wide census to evaluate our overall recruitment and retention efforts (Attachment B). As part of the census, we sought information using the broader definition of diversity in order to better understand our organization's representation. We will begin to report this information in our 2012-2013 Annual Report and hope to be able to measure trends in the years to come.

In May 2012, the student affairs units in the Division completed an organizational multicultural competency assessment along 7 organizational components. This assessment provided each unit with areas of strength and areas for improvement. The data gathered through this process will help inform goal setting and planning around these units' diversity and multicultural competency work.

In closing, I'd like to share that during the academic year 2012-13, we will be engaging in the following major initiatives to advance our multicultural competency and workforce retention goals:

- Re-engage our learning around affirmative recruitment and bias awareness during the recruitment process;
- Engage in a deeper exploration regarding ability, disability, and intersecting identities through our divisional diversity professional development series and;
- Revise and develop diversity and multicultural goals and plans informed by the results from the Division's multicultural competency assessment process

We look forward to our collective work in creating a multiculturally competent workforce. If you have any follow-up questions, please feel free to contact Dennis DePaul at [dennis.depaul@uvm.edu](mailto:dennis.depaul@uvm.edu) or Loretta Flash at [lcretia.flash@uvm.edu](mailto:lcretia.flash@uvm.edu).



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## Introduction

Roughly ten years ago, the Student Affairs departments within the Division of University Relations and Campus Life developed a comprehensive recruitment and retention model that has consistently provided a diverse and multiculturally competent workforce. As indicated in the cover memo, our recruitment and retention efforts have yielded consistent results in the racial identities and other diverse identities of our staff. While these are impressive recruitment numbers for a predominately white institution, we truly believe that it is our division's overall commitment to diversity and inclusion that has resulted in successful recruitment and retention.

Below, you will find a summary of our overall values, expectations, commitments and accountability practices. In addition, we have provided a few highlights of our comprehensive multicultural plan.

## Values

As members of Student Affairs within the Division of University Relations and Campus Life, we celebrate and promote safe and healthy community for people of all races, ethnicities, colors, religions, national origins, socio-economic classes, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, physical and learning abilities, and ages. We do this by modeling behavior and articulating expectations that we live and work in one community, bound together by our commitment to learning and respect for one another.

Student Affairs leaders at The University of Vermont remain committed to advancing our diversity efforts within the larger University but especially in the corresponding departments that influence campus programs and the student experience. We have a deep understanding of and commitment to the fact that to be an outstanding division and an excellent university we must be diverse and inclusive in all aspects of our work. It is critical that we continue to communicate our values and expectations clearly.

## Expectations

As members of a higher education institution that values life-long learning, all staff within our Student Affairs departments are hired, trained and supported in their work to achieve the following expectations.

*We will:*

- Examine and adjust our hiring practices to be truly affirmative;
- Model a multicultural and inclusive environment for all students;
- Prepare as best we can for an increase in our ALANA and international student population and;
- Increase multicultural awareness that moves individuals to action.

## Commitment and Accountability

We share our values, expectations, and progress as an outward acknowledgement of our commitment. We are fully aware that as we progress, we will make mistakes and experience conflict. We are committed to adhering to the University's principles of Our Common Ground in order to learn from this conflict and move through it to a place of further understanding, deeper appreciation, and respect. We do not wish to remain comfortable, for comfort will not move us forward. We intend to make progress. The following answers to your questions highlights the efforts within our division to create a multiculturally inclusive organization.

## Requested Information

Your memo dated April 20, 2012 requested information on several areas. You will find a summary of our



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answers to these questions below.

### **Leadership**

*A description of the steps that your unit's leadership will take to implement the plan*

Leadership and advocacy to advance diversity on campus is paramount to our success. Engaging those who are leaders within our division and experts across campus has been a cornerstone to our success in diversifying our staff, promoting their professional development, and retaining a multiculturally competent workforce. Some examples of our commitment include:

- Through our multicultural competency trainings, we have become well known nationally for our extraordinary work in this area. We have partnered with several nationally recognized scholars including Rev. Doctor Jamie Washington (Washington Consulting Group), Dr. Raechelle Pope and Dr. Amy Reynolds (Multicultural Competence in Student Affairs, 2004)
- Institutionalizing diversity throughout our systems and policies insures a steadfast commitment to sustaining open, accepting, and inclusive programs and services
- We partner with staff across the university to create an inclusive climate
- Our departments conduct at least a bi-annual review of policies and procedures through the lens of inclusion and multiculturalism
- Many of our staff members serve as commissioners and chairs for the Presidential Commissions that review and make recommendations to improve the campus climate
- We facilitate and participate in numerous student related programs that support student success to include:
  - The Next Step, a weekend retreat to guide students in their social justice journey
  - Teaching Inter-Group Dialogue courses through the Center for Student Ethics and Standards
  - We sponsor the National Undergraduate Fellowship (NUF) Program at UVM, by providing academic year mentoring for our undergraduate students and summer internships for underrepresented undergraduate students nationwide through NASPA

### **Current Workforce**

*The current composition of your unit's workforce relative to diversity*

This past spring, we initiated a thorough demographic study by way of a division-wide census to evaluate our overall recruitment and retention efforts. As part of the census, we sought information using the broader definition of diversity in order to better understand our community. You will find the results of our census in [Attachment A](#) below and the tool we used as [Attachment B](#).

Because this is our first year conducting the census, we will begin to report this information in our 2012-2013 Annual Report and hope to be able to measure trends in the years to come.

### **Hiring Activity**

*A description of the average annual hiring activity by category of employee to provide a sense of the number of opportunities your unit has to increase diversity each year*

Our unit hires on average 50-60 new employees annually. These vacancies include non-exempt unionized, non-exempt unrepresented, exempt classified, and exempt unclassified staff positions. Since moving to PeopleSoft (human resource system) and PeopleAdmin (recruitment system), we have been unable to secure a comprehensive mechanism to obtain the pool or hiring demographics. We have made several requests to Human Resource Services and Affirmative Action and have been notified that the data will be available at some point in the near future. Until such time, the amount of manual labor involved makes it difficult to track this information in a meaningful way.

### **Recruitment**

*A description of the specific strategies that have led to success in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce in your unit*

Our recruitment process begins long before a position is vacated. Through purposeful networking and conference attendance, we cultivate candidates over a multi-year process. Once a position is vacated,



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We are then able to place numerous calls to encourage potential applicants. The attached PowerPoint presentation titled *URCL Affirmative Recruitment* represents our division's procedures and practices. This presentation is provided several times throughout the year to both division staff and University-wide educational initiatives. A few highlights from the PowerPoint are found below:

- As a division, we have chosen to rewrite our position descriptions to include multicultural basic responsibilities and specific functions in an effort to eliminate the "add on" perspective and institutionalize our work in this area
- Bias is always present during searches and we seek to minimize the impact through awareness training
- We have added "demonstrated comfort with and commitment to issues of diversity and social justice" to the minimum qualifications statement for all positions
- Interview screening includes questions related to diversity and social justice
- We offer informational interviews to potential candidates and maintain a potential candidate resource file in the Dean of Students Office for future vacancies
- We weigh the benefits and drawbacks of making interim hires and the impact it may have on the final successful candidate
- We take advantage of "opportunity hiring" when the position and people are most appropriate.

We also partner with the Higher Education and Student Affairs program to recruit and retain a diverse graduate class through the graduate assistantship program. Historically, our efforts have yielded a class of more than 40% people of color.

#### Climate and Culture

*A list of the actions that your unit will take to create a climate and culture supporting the retention of a diverse workforce*

Education and training to become multiculturally competent professionals is a core component of our division's plan. All levels of our staff are included and the topics address key concepts such as power, privilege, and oppression as well as focus on identity group awareness (LGBT, Race, Ability, etc). Some examples of this effort include:

- The Division hosted a forum with UVM's Chief Diversity Officer to discuss with results and recommendations of UVM's Climate Survey.
- To create a base line of multicultural community standards and expectations, our division offers a biannual training titled *Understanding our Differences; An Introduction to Multicultural Competencies at UVM*. All new staff and those seeking a refresher course attend this full day session to gain the basic awareness, knowledge and skills necessary to be a member of our community
- Our Division asks all staff to attend several full- and half-day diversity professional development sessions each semester to increase their multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and competence
- Many of our staff serve as trainers or facilitators of diversity sessions both internal and external to UVM
- While attending conferences, it is expected that every staff member will seek out and attend sessions related to multicultural competence
- Many of our staff have written or presented on the topics of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice both locally and nationally
- Staff have been represented and recognized through: the American College Personnel Association, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education, Translating Identity Conference, Jossey- Bass Publications, and many other venues

#### Accountability



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*The accountability and progress benchmarks that you have established to achieve diversity goals in your unit*

We infuse our multicultural values into our systems and structures on a daily basis. We promote the values of strong interpersonal skills, collaboration, inclusiveness, and accountability into everything we do. We measure this by continuously assessing our programs, services, and the environment of our facilities in order to improve the climate for staff and students.

- We instituted the Divisional Diversity Council to conduct comprehensive multicultural competency assessment every three years within all student affairs departments throughout the Division of University Relations and Campus Life
- Conduct an annual divisional census to review recruitment and retention outcomes
- We advocate for and incorporate gender-neutral bathrooms into our departmental spaces
- We are proponents of Universal Design when remodeling or building new facilities
- The Davis Campus Center embodies a mission of social justice
- Our residence halls provide living environments that encourage respect and promote learning about differences and social justice
- We incorporate multicultural competence into staff performance appraisals
- We set affirmative hiring goals and measure progress annually
- We design decision-making processes and meetings to be intentionally inclusive
- We hold ourselves and our leaders accountable
- All divisional staff is afforded the opportunity to participate in ongoing multicultural competency training, assessment and divisional goal setting processes.

**Challenges, Opportunities & Proposed Strategies**

*A discussion of the challenges and opportunities that you have identified relative to diversification, and your proposed strategies to address both*

As noted above, we have been engaged in this work for just over ten (10) years. We have learned a lot. Over time, we have come to realize that this work is a journey. As with any journey, there are always challenges and opportunities. Below is a chart outlining our current challenges, opportunities and the strategies we are using to address both.

| Challenge  | Strategy  |
|--|---|
| <b>Affirmative Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We continue to challenge ourselves to deconstruct bias in our hiring practices</li> <li>• We believe that interim hires disproportionately advantage a candidate in the hiring process</li> <li>• We need to remain mindful to include multicultural competencies in the individual position descriptions</li> </ul> | <b>Affirmative Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will include bias awareness activities in our Affirmative Recruitment presentation</li> <li>• We need to take a critical look at interim hires</li> <li>• The Assistant Dean will act as a stop-gate when position descriptions are being submitted for review or recruitment to ensure multicultural competencies are included</li> </ul> |
| <b>Time Prioritization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is often difficult to balance the daily workload needs of various departments with our desire for all staff to attend our divisional diversity series</li> </ul>  | <b>Time Prioritization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are reviewing our overall series session offerings attempting to diversify the time offerings to meet the various needs</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Finances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the recent budget cuts, our departments are unable to attend national conferences and professional meetings to conduct the much needed networking as part of our affirmative recruitment commitment</li> </ul>   | <b>Finances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We continue to prioritize the funding of this important work and strive to minimize the cuts in this budgeted expense</li> <li>• We are offering a division level funding option for staff to attend national conferences for purposes of individual</li> </ul>  |



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|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | learning and affirmative recruitment networking  |
| <b>Community Experiences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the University community is committed to multicultural competency, the local community's commitment is not always the same, thus producing challenging environments for our staff outside of the university setting</li> </ul>  | <b>Community Experiences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continue to explore ways to partner with various communities to engage this conversation</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Multicultural Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While our division is committed to deep personal learning, the same level of commitment is not present throughout the campus community. This results in varied experiences for our students and staff as they navigate our campus</li> </ul>                 | <b>Multicultural Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We continue to explore ways to collaborate with campus departments and the Chief Diversity Officer to support efforts to increase the development of multicultural competency across UVM</li> <li>We strongly recommend a University-wide methodology for professional development and trainings thus resulting in a common language and consistent approach</li> </ul> |
| <b>Unionization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pending unionization effort has created many divisions amongst the staff</li> </ul>  | <b>Unionization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If successful, we will need to negotiate these trainings into the contract</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Opportunity</b>  | <b>Strategy</b>  |
| <b>Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We believe that diversity work is an on-going journey and we are committed to continuing this work indefinitely</li> </ul>   | <b>Professional Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have embedded this work into all facets of the workforce including position description responsibilities and overall divisional goals and expectations</li> <li>We will continue to offer our divisional diversity series to encourage personal learning and growth</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Affirmative Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We remain committed to our affirmative recruitment practices and will continue to strive for the most diverse workforce possible</li> <li>Our goal is to hire at least 25% people of color annually</li> </ul>  | <b>Affirmative Recruitment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue our trainings and further develop our bias awareness throughout the process</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Deepen Our Campus Partnerships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Through our regular meetings with the Diversity and Equity and Enrollment Management units, we continue to find new and exciting ways to work together</li> <li>Explore other potential partnerships for the betterment of the overall student experience</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freely share with our colleagues across campus the strategies that have been successful, the lessons learned, and the mistakes made as we have sought to become a more multiculturally competent and inclusive division</li> <li>Continue to collaborate with campus partners to address emerging student issues and implement innovative programs to maximize the quality of the student experience</li> </ul>       |
| <b>National Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are a nationally recognized site for</li> </ul>   | <b>National Undergraduate Fellows Program (NUF)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to build our program and assess</li> </ul>   |



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| <p>NASPA's NUF program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This program often presents admissions opportunities for the University's Higher Education Student Affairs graduate program</li></ul> | <p>its overall success</p> |
|--|----------------------------|

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## Attachment A URCL 2012 Staff Census Data Summary

**Project Name:** Divisional Staff Members Census  
**Target Audience:** Divisional Staff Members  
**Date Administered:** April 2, 2012  
**Format of Assessment:** Campus Labs Online Census  
**Response Rate Info:** 256/ 295 = 87 %

### Assessment Summary

#### **Race**

72% identify as White  
23% identify as a person of color  
Of this population,  

- 7% identify as Black/African American
- 6% identify as Latino(a)/Hispanic/Chicano
- 3% identify as American Indian/Native American
- 3% identify as Asian/Asian American
- 2% identify as Middle Eastern
- 2% identify as Pacific Islander/Hawaiian

2% identifies as other  
3% chose not to answer

#### **Gender**

61% identify as a woman  
38% identify as a man  
1% No response  
0% identified as Transgender

#### **Educational Obtainment**

80% of divisional members holds a bachelor's degree or higher (Master's or Doctorate)

#### **Ability**

15% identify as differently abled physical, cognitively or emotionally  
85% identified as able-bodied

#### **Religion**

64% identify with an organized religion  
20% identifies as spiritual, but not religious

#### **Sexual Orientation and Identities**

78% identifies as heterosexual  
17% identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer (LGBQ)  
5% chose not to disclose

#### **Staff FTE**

87% of the division identifies as full time staff  
12% of the division identifies as less than full time  

- Of this population, 47% identifies as white
- Of this population, 22% identifies as a person of color
- Of this population, 60% identifies as a woman
- Of this population, 39% identifies as a man

### Brief Points to Note:

- Overall, the data shows a more diverse divisional staff than that of the population of students on the University of Vermont's campus.
- About 2/3 of the divisional staff is represented by those who identify as women
- Over 3/4 of the divisional staff identifies with a religious/spiritual identity

### Next Steps:

- Overall, the division should keep in mind the following questions after reviewing the above data:
  - Are the marginalized groups represented in the division, more specifically, in hiring processes?
  - How can retention rates of marginalized groups be maintained/increased?
  - How will the data be used to serve the mission of the division, the students, and the University of Vermont? (Workshops/conversations that address inclusivity, diversity, and those that give space to express various identities)