



**DIVERSITY,
EQUITY AND
INCLUSION
PLAN 2020-
2022**

Presented by: The Chief Diversity Officer and
the Diversity Engagement Committee



Lewis University

Lewis University, located near Chicago, is a comprehensive, Catholic university where the traditions of liberal learning and preparation for professional life give the university its educational identity and mission focus. Founded in 1932, Lewis is a dynamic, coeducational university offering 80 undergraduate majors and programs, 35 graduate programs, and two doctoral programs of study. Lewis University is one of many schools sponsored by the De La Salle Christian Brothers, an international Roman Catholic teaching order.

Vision

Lewis University will be recognized as one of the region's leading Catholic universities. It will promote the fundamental dignity of every member of the Lewis community and in keeping with its Lasallian heritage, it will be known for its innovative teaching and its ability to offer all students a learning environment which prizes experiential learning and global awareness.

Lewis will expand its reach, penetrating markets it has historically not developed, and at the same time, will enhance its presence in Will County as it further expands its footprint into Chicago and the metropolitan area, while also connecting with the global Lasallian network.

Enhancing its offerings in health care, STEM, business and transportation programs, Lewis will be known for its agility in responding to the needs of contemporary society. At the same time, the University will reemphasize its commitment to the liberal arts as the foundation which creates graduates who are master learners.

Remaining committed to a diverse array of students who approach their education through varied deliveries, Lewis will commit significant resources to enriching the campus experience for students both in terms of curricular and co-curricular program development.

Lewis will continue to develop its employees and enhance its reputation as an employer of choice in the Chicago region.

Mission Statement

Lewis University, guided by its Catholic and Lasallian heritage, provides to a diverse student population programs for a liberal and professional education grounded in the interaction of knowledge and fidelity in the search for truth. Lewis promotes the development of the complete person through the pursuit of wisdom and justice. Fundamental to its Mission is a spirit of association which fosters community in all teaching, learning and service. These distinctive values guide the University in fulfilling its Mission.

Knowledge

The result of a lifelong pursuit of learning fostered through creative and critical interaction in a community of learners.

Fidelity

The spirit which recognizes God as ultimate reality, unifying the diverse forms of knowledge in the pursuit of fullness of truth, while recognizing the diversity of human experience.

Wisdom

The result of the integration of reflection and action developed through higher learning throughout all of life.

Justice

The affirmation of the equal dignity of every person and the promotion of personal and social responsibility.

Association

A commitment to student learning, development, and success accomplished through collaboration, mutual respect, collegiality, and dedicated service in the spirit of our Catholic and Lasallian Mission.

Mission Integration

Each of the initiatives in Lewis University's strategic plan represents both an institution-wide integration as well as a recommitment to our Catholic and Lasallian Mission. In response to the "signs of the times" and the evolving needs of our students, Lewis University will explore and creatively re-animate our identity and responsibilities as a Catholic and Lasallian institution of higher education in the twenty-first century. We will build upon the strengths of the Lasallian charism – high quality, excellent teaching, use of innovative classroom pedagogies, and an unwavering commitment to student success – while deepening student and employee understanding of our Catholic identity and the integration of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in our curriculum and student life; exploring creative strategies for student affordability and accessibility; and accompanying faculty, staff, and students as they further enrich and develop their understanding of the Mission and its place in their personal and professional lives.

Environmental Analysis and Current Position**Student Demographics**

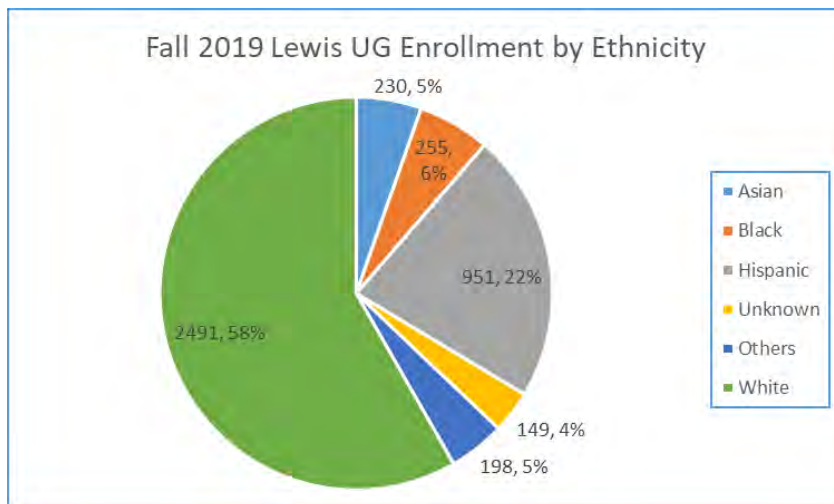
Lewis University undergraduate and graduate students: Lewis University has experienced growth in its student population – from 6,139 students in 2010 to 6,359 in 2019. This growth produced many opportunities including a vibrant campus culture; however, the increase in diversity in the student population has not always been reflected in the curricula. Changing student needs dictate the necessity for varied course delivery options and the integration of diversity and inclusion initiatives into the curriculum.

Undergraduate Enrollment: The undergraduate enrollment of Black and White students has decreased while the numbers of Asian and Hispanic students have increased. For

undergraduate enrollment, the number of Black students has decreased from 375 (8.8%) in Fall 2010 to 255 (6.0%) in Fall 2019, and the number of White students has declined from 2,764 (64.9%) in Fall 2010 to 2,491 (58.3%) in Fall 2019.

The number of Asian students has increased from 131 (3.1%)

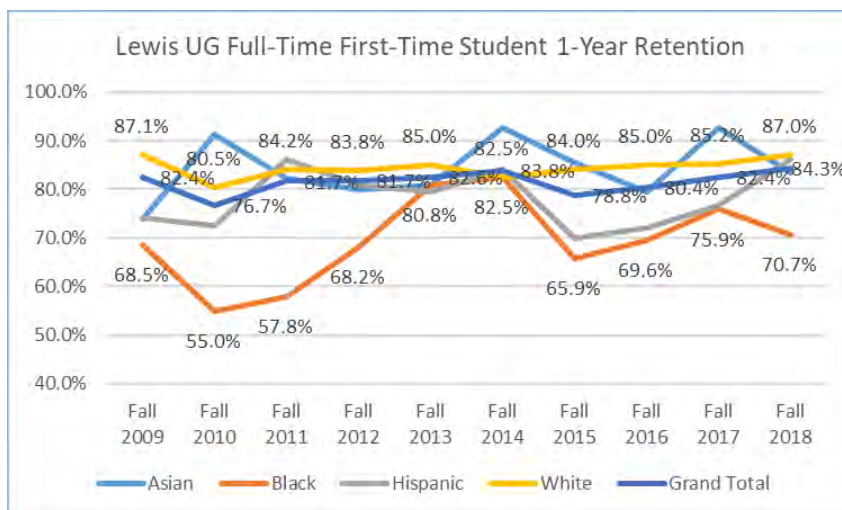
in Fall 2010 to 230 (5.4%) in Fall 2019. The Hispanic undergraduate enrollment has increased from 536 (12.6%) in Fall 2010 to 951 (22.3%) in Fall 2019.



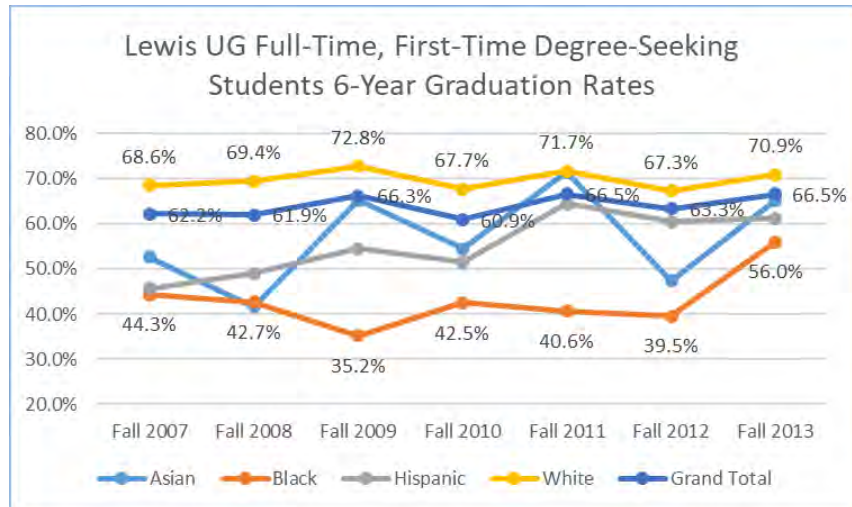
Undergraduate retention: The retention rate of Black first-year students continuing to their sophomore year increased slightly from 68.5% in 2010 to 70.7% in 2019, and the Asian students retention rate increased from

73.9% in 2010 to 83.3% in 2019. The White students' first-year to sophomore retention rate has remained above 80%, averaged at 84.4% in the past ten years from 2010 to 2019, with the retention rate being 87% in 2019. Regarding Hispanic students, from 2010 to 2019, the first-year to sophomore retention rate has increased by 12 percentage

points from 74.2% in 2010 and 86.2% in 2019.

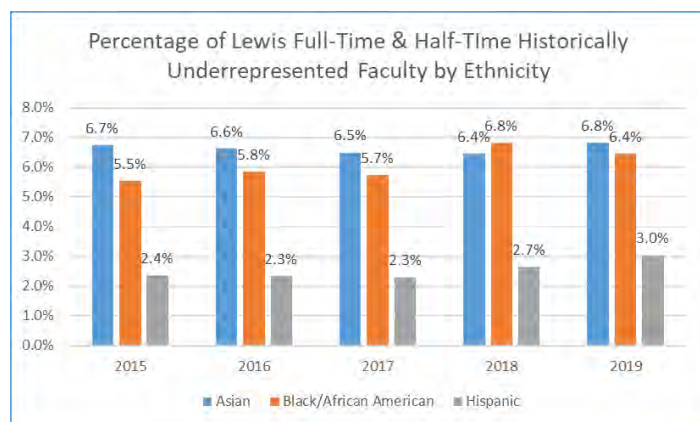


Undergraduate 6-year graduate rate: The 6-year graduation rate of the undergraduate full-time, first-time degree-seeking students is a strong indicator of the educational outcomes and effectiveness of Lewis University. As indicated on the chart below, overall, the University's 6-year graduation rates have been increasing steadily from 62% for the Fall 2007 cohort to 67% for the Fall 2013 cohort. White students have stayed on the top of the trend, with a 6-year graduation rate increasing from 69% for the Fall 2007 cohort to 71% for the Fall 2013 cohort. The graduation rates of the underrepresented student groups have been improving. According to the analysis, though the 6-year graduation rates of the Black students have been the lowest, it has increased from 44% for the Fall 2007 cohort to 56% for the Fall 2013 cohort, with some fluctuation between the two cohorts. Additionally, the analysis has found improved 6-year graduation rates for the Asian and Hispanic student populations, with Asian students' graduation rates increasing from 53% for the Fall 2007 cohort to 65% for the Fall 2013 cohort, and Hispanic improving from 46% for the Fall 2007 cohort to 61% for the Fall 2013 cohort.



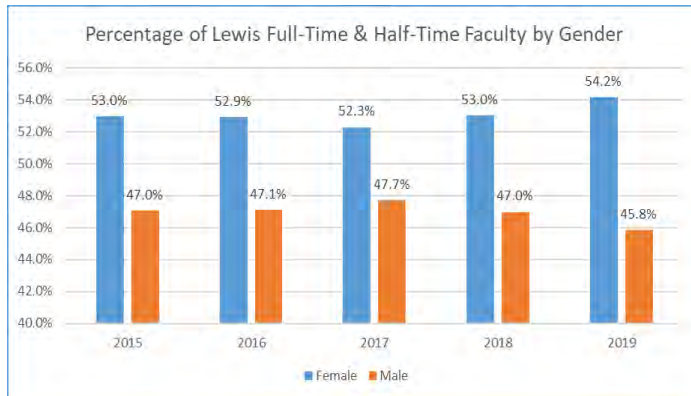
Staff and Faculty Demographics

Lewis full-time and permanent half time faculty by race/ethnicity: According to the statistics from the Human Resources Office at Lewis University, in Fall 2015, there were 253 full-time and permanent half time faculty at the university, of whom 6.7% were Asian, 5.5% were Black or African American, 2.4% were Hispanic. Five years later in Fall 2019, Lewis' total number of full-time and permanent half-time faculty had increased to 264, of whom 6.8% were Asian, 6.4% were Black or African American, and 3.0% were Hispanic. Overall, this is a 4.3% increase over 5 years, regarding the total number of full-time and permanent half time faculty, from 253 in Fall 2015 to 264 in Fall 2019. Ethnically, however, the total number of full-time and permanent half-time faculty of Asian, Black, and

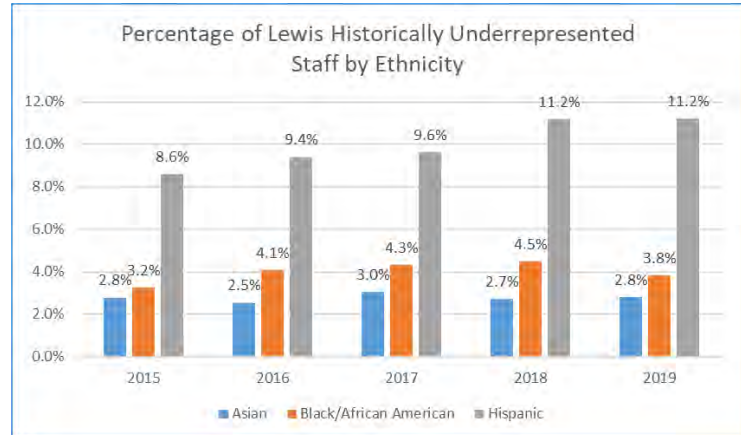


Hispanic origins had increased by 16.2%, from 37 in Fall 2015 to 43 in Fall 2019. Proportionally, the growth of the historically underrepresented faculty surpassed the overall growth of full-time and permanent half-time faculty at the University over the past 5 years.

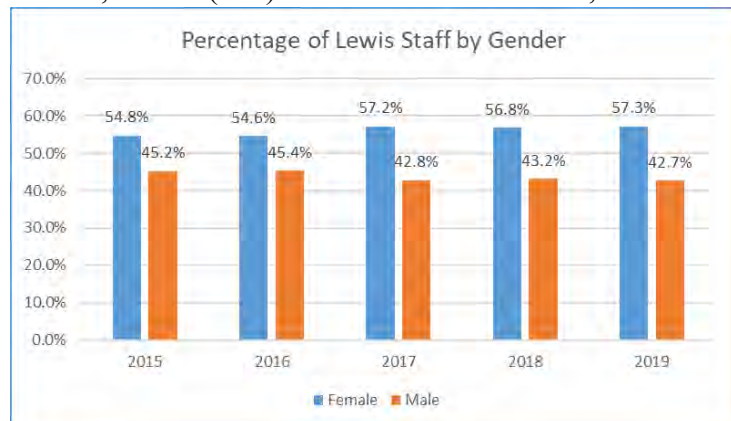
Lewis full-time and half-time faculty by gender: Of the 253 full-time and permanent half time faculty in Fall 2015, 53.0% were female and 47.0% were male, and in Fall 2019, of the 264 full-time and permanent half-time faculty, 54.2% are female and 45.8% are male, with the percentages of female faculty being always higher than those of the male faculty every year. Over the last 5 years, the number of female faculty has increased by 6.7%, from 134 in Fall 2015 to 143 in Fall 2019, and male faculty has grown by 1.7%, from 119 in Fall 2015 to 121 in Fall 2019.



Lewis staff by ethnicity: In Fall 2015, Lewis hired 431 staff, both full-time and part-time, of whom 63 were of Asian, African American, and Hispanic origin, which is 14.6% of the total. In Fall 2019, there are 393 staff at Lewis University, of whom 70, or 17.8%, are Asian, Black or African American, and Hispanic, increased by 3.2 percentage points compared with the Asian, Black, and Hispanic staff in Fall 2015. Over the last 5 years, from Fall 2015 to Fall 2019, the total number of staff at Lewis decreased by 8.8%, while the number of Asian, Black or African American, and Hispanic staff increased by 11.1%. Additionally, as illustrated in the chart on the right, there is an uprising trend line for Hispanic staff from 2015 (8.6%) to 2019 (11.2%).



Lewis staff by gender: As illustrated in the chart on the right, 54.8% (236) of the staff were female in Fall 2015, and 5 years later in Fall 2019, 57.3% (225) of the staff were female, while 45.2% (195) and 42.7% (168) are male staff, respectively in Fall 2015 and in Fall 2019. Overall, although the total number of staff decreased from 2015 to 2019, proportionally female staff increased by 2.5 percentage points, while male staff decreased by 2.5 points. Furthermore, for all 5 years, the percentage of female staff each year is larger than that of the male staff.



Lewis University – A “Sanctified Zone”

Guided by its Catholic and Lasallian heritage, Lewis University is firmly committed to fostering a campus atmosphere that is permeated by its Mission-based values of Fidelity, Wisdom, Knowledge, Justice and Association. As such, we seek to be a place and a people United in Diversity. Accordingly, we have declared the University campus to be a [Sanctified Zone](#).

History of Sanctified Zone

At a special Mass during Founders Week in 1997, the campus was first dedicated as a Sanctified Zone as the University declared its commitment to and appreciation for diversity, proclaiming the campus to be a place where respect for the dignity of each person is to be promoted. Members of the University Diversity Council formulated the Sanctified Zone initiative. That group of faculty, staff, administrators and students called upon the entire Lewis community to reflect the Mission values by helping everyone, whatever their personal background, to feel comfortable, accepted and respected at the University. In the Spring of 2017, the original Sanctified Zone statement was revised by the Diversity Engagement Committee (the successor to the University Diversity Council) as part of the 20th anniversary celebration of this important campus designation and the new statement was formally dedicated on April 24, 2017 in a special campus ceremony.

Sanctified Zone Statement

Lewis University, inspired by our Catholic and Lasallian tradition, treasures each member of our community as made in the image and likeness of God, as a person of innate dignity and as a profound gift.

As a Sanctified Zone, we seek to acknowledge, value, and celebrate diversity at Lewis University in our programs and classrooms:

- by hearing each person’s unique stories;
- by accepting each other as individuals and as members of communities;
- by challenging our unexamined assumptions to help us unmask personal, cultural, religious, racial, and systemic discrimination and stigmatization;
- by recognizing that prejudice, ignorance and stereotypes create and sustain privilege and preference for some while marginalizing and oppressing others;
- by educating lifelong learners who will be bridge builders and change agents in our local communities and in the world;
- and by becoming people who are more compassionate, welcoming, hospitable and committed to justice.

The active promotion of diversity and the opposition to all forms of prejudice and bias are a powerful and healing expression of our desire to be “Signs of Faith,” in keeping with the Signum Fidei (Sign of Faith) component of our Mission Statement.

The 2020 – 2022 Lewis University Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan for Lewis University establishes an infrastructure for the next four years and will serve as a guide for institutionalizing and operationalizing diversity and inclusive efforts for our entire community. This framework,

the Diversity and Inclusion Plan, will support the Strategic Plan of Lewis University, Soaring to New Heights, and will help to activate our Mission and its distinctive values.

A Welcoming Culture for Inclusive Excellence

A model for inclusive excellence at Lewis University has four (4) dimensions:

1. Student Access and Recruitment
2. Student Success, Retention, and Integration
3. Curricular & Co-curricular Learning
4. Faculty, Staff and Administrator Access, Recruitment, Retention, and Success

Dimension 1: Student Access and Recruitment

As stated in its Mission, Lewis University provides to a diverse student population programs for a liberal and professional education grounded in the interaction of knowledge and fidelity in the search for truth.

Goal 1. Enhance access for prospective students from a variety of socioeconomic statuses into our undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs.

Action Steps:

- Expand financial assistance programs for parents and students to ensure the awareness of financial assistance opportunities available to all students.
 - Expand the awareness of financial aid and scholarship opportunities for students and parents.
 - Actively identify students who demonstrate financial need to benefit from a grant or aid.
 - Promote awareness of specific scholarships for low-income groups.
- Expand financial aid mentoring programs that provide support and counseling.
 - Conduct financial aid workshops for low-income students in local community settings, such as Joliet and Bolingbrook.
- Promote relationships with professional organizations that represent groups from a variety of socioeconomic statuses.
- Promote awareness of Lewis as an inclusive community.
 - Seek out recognition for commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Desired Outcome:

- Prospective students from a variety of socioeconomic statuses will be recruited and learn that Lewis University is an accessible institution of higher education.

Goal 2. Actively recruit students from historically-underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Action Steps:

- Develop relationships with community colleges and high schools that enroll significant number of historically-underrepresented students.
 - Participate in high school and college fairs that target and support diversity.
 - Engage with students, families, and high school guidance counselors at current and ongoing DEC events.
 - Develop relationships with high school clubs that focus on diversity. Examples include Gay-Straight Alliance and Black/African American Culture Club.
- Promote relationships with Lewis university student clubs and request student representation on DEC for assistance with recruitment. Examples include Gender Sexuality Alliance and Black Student Union.
 - Invite prospective students and families to university events. Examples include a high school student night at a basketball game, or Peace Teach-In event.
 - Invite guidance counselors from diverse high schools to events that support diversity. Examples include our Lewis University Peace Teach-In event or International Education Week event.
- Collaborate with university admissions for diversity in student recruitment and representation in multicultural committees.
 - Involve students, faculty, and staff in recruitment efforts to collaborate with departments that support diversity.
 - Promote ease of enrollment, such as a “Historically-underrepresented Student Admissions Workshop”, to help students and their families complete financial aid applications.
 - Institutionalize the Summer Program for historically-underrepresented students and first-generation college bound students.
 - Create “Diversity Student Recruitment Committees” where staff members will serve as personal contacts for students and their families. These members would build relationships with students and frequently visit high schools.
 - Create “Student territory managers” where current Lewis University students would build relationships with prospective students.
- Partner with ethnic community organizations in an effort to promote higher education through the co-sponsorship of recruitment activities that outreach to students, parents and alumni. Example organizations include World Relief DuPage/Aurora and Spanish Community Center of Will County.
 - Conduct higher education awareness workshops in the local community in settings of diverse populations such as churches, youth organizations and co-curricular school events. Example communities include Joliet and Bolingbrook.

Desired Outcome:

- Increase the numbers of students from historically-underrepresented and marginalized groups within the student body at Lewis University.

Dimension 2: Student Success, Retention, and Integration

Students who attend Lewis University deserve to be supported. Efforts to ensure their success as well as their satisfaction is an obligation.

Goal 1. Identify and track areas where students need support.

Action Steps:

- Assess and develop strategies for students who are being retained and who are graduating at lower rates than the general student body and/or who lack integration into the campus community.
- Once each college determines the programs with lower retention and graduation rates (data from Institutional Research) they should hold focus groups to determine why directly from the students.
- Furthermore, colleges may also want to identify the courses that students most often fail and include this inquiry into the focus groups.
- Based on the data collected program director/department chair should offer at least two specific action steps to better serve these students. For example, programs might offer more advising and or academic supports such as tutoring with faculty or peers. These college specific action steps should also include integrating students into the campus community.

Desired Outcome:

- Colleges will assess and publish an annual report evaluating the impact of their student retention/graduation strategies.

Goal 2. Collaborate and work together in the spirit of Association to minimize cultural, economic, and political barriers to student success.

Action Steps:

- Events and programs that bring the students, staff and faculty across campus to build community and relationships.
- Provide professional development for staff and faculty on recognizing their own biases and student success.
- Conduct research to determine to what extent do the categories of barriers (cultural, economic and political) impact the Lewis students' success.

Desired Outcome:

- Colleges will evaluate and publish how successful their strategies were in eliminating cultural, economic, and political barriers to student success for their programs based on student survey data and the campus climate survey.

Dimension 3: Curricular & Co-curricular Learning

Multiple perspectives and experiences enhance the learning environment, expand thought, and develop both creative and critical thinking skills. Lewis University will aim to enrich its

community by embracing difference and will foster inclusive practices in intellectual, interactional, and spiritual realms of its existence – in its curricular and co-curricular contexts.

Goal 1. Retain, build on, and expand curricula that integrate diversity, inclusion, and justice which encourages diverse perspectives, research topics and teaching styles.

Action Steps:

- Colleges/Departments work on developing practices and policies for their respective faculty that integrate and embed diversity and inclusion topics into their courses and teaching styles. Some might be general and others more specific. Faculty reports back on the application of those policies. Examples:
 - Looking at each course from multiple viewpoints (age, sexuality, ethnicity, etc) to build an inclusive course and classroom material.
 - Communicate diversity in syllabus through statement and actual activities that relate to the subject matter and promote diversity and inclusion.
 - Encouraging intergroup work and dialogue in each course.
 - Faculty demonstrate cultural awareness and competence in their language and communication.
- Greater emphasis and focus be put on general education courses due to the greater flexibility of the topics as well as the larger number of students.
 - Colleges/Departments revise curriculum to identify opportunities to include specific appropriate diversity and inclusion initiatives in their courses.

Desired Outcome:

- Offering a space that promotes intellectual dialogue and debate through diversity of perspectives and backgrounds.

Goal 2. Retain, build on, and expand co-curricular experiences and development of students to educate the whole person

Actions Steps:

- Colleges/Departments identify and encourage students to participate in on-campus and off-campus activities and events that promote topics of diversity, inclusion, and justice. Could be industry specific and relate to the students' field of study or not.
- Colleges/Departments identify and/or create opportunities where they can infuse diversity and inclusion in extra-curricular programs which relate to their field.
- Colleges/Departments collaborate with the Study Abroad office to identify opportunities for study abroad and exchange programs for their students (in their field of study), and promote them.

Desired Outcome:

- Influencing students and challenging their openness to learn about diversity and justice issues, and encouraging them to be more culturally competent. All of which leaves a great impact and manifests in their work beyond campus life.

Goal 3. Retain, build on, and expand opportunities for interdisciplinary research and practice to enhance an appreciation for and understanding of diversity in areas that are curricular and co-curricular.

Action Steps:

- Colleges/Departments should examine and identify opportunities for collaboration among their various programs whether curricular and/or co-curricular.
- The DEC (Diversity Engagement Committee) along with relevant University Centers and/or committees should seek to identify and develop several initiatives that would promote interdisciplinary research and practice that focuses on diversity and inclusion. After which, action steps should be put forth on how to foster such a connection between various university colleges and departments.

Desired Outcome:

- Fortifying the connectedness and interconnectedness of interdisciplinary curricular and co-curricula areas, in a way that would reflect, along the lines of diversity and inclusion, on the overall offerings of the academic programs at Lewis

Dimension 4: Faculty, Staff, and Administrator Access, Recruitment, Retention, and Success

Individuals employed at Lewis University deserve to work in a civil environment. When interacting with students and their colleagues, respect and dignity will be given. Employees of Lewis University will be afforded opportunities for professional development and/or growth. The success of students is dependent on the success of faculty, staff, and administrators who are committed to excellence – curricular, co-curricular, and inclusive.

Goal 1: Develop strategies to increase the number of underrepresented faculty.

The goals and initiatives below are filtered through and monitored by the existing DEC. The DEC is a University-wide committee that includes an undergraduate and graduate student, faculty, staff, and administrators who are committed to implementing diversity & inclusion initiatives throughout the University. The DEC will take the lead on coordinating the inclusive hiring initiatives (with HR and the Provost) and will also serve to formally assess each of the above goals/initiatives to evaluate success, effectiveness, and impact, as well as develop next steps.

Action Step:

- Colleges should come up with 2-4 strategies to increase diverse faculty in their own college for each search committee searching for candidates.

Desired Outcome:

- Colleges will report back how successful their strategies were in increasing diversity in their respective search committees.

Goal 2: Develop strategies to increase the number of diverse staff and administrators

Action Step:

- Colleges should come up with 2-4 strategies to increase diverse faculty in their own college for each search committee searching for candidates.

Desired Outcome:

- Colleges will report back how successful their strategies were in increasing diversity in their respective search committees.

Goal 3: Offer equitable opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators that promote a culture of care and success

Action Step:

- Colleges should develop a mission statement specific to that college about promoting a culture of care, success, diversity, and inclusion in regards to making their colleges more equitable.

Desired Outcome:

- Colleges will report back how successful their strategies were in offering equitable opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators.
 - Every 2-4 years colleges should revise/modify these goals, assessment strategies, and outcomes.
 - These goals can be listed on the college website.

Definitions

Diversity: Individual differences (e.g., personality, prior knowledge, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)

Equity: The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion

Equity-Mindedness: A demonstrated awareness of and willingness to address equity issues among institutional leaders and staff (Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California)

Historically-underrepresented: Groups that are misrepresented in certain societal and political aspects such as education, jobs, and housing, resulting in marginalization for some groups and individuals and not for others, relative to the number of individuals who are members of the population involved. This includes race, ethnicity, and encompasses additional underrepresented identities such as those who identify within the LGBTQ community, those with disabilities, those who represent different religious groups; and those with varying socio-economic backgrounds.

Inclusion: The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions

Inclusive Excellence: A phrase used to describe the quality of academic achievement that can only be realized in diverse communities where all students have equitable opportunities to succeed

Resources

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