

2022-2023

The President's Council for Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect was formed in July 2020 to ensure that this pillar of NDSU's strategic plan will be factored into institutional decision making. The inaugural Council was established from the existing Inclusion Committee on campus. That committee was formed in 2016 by Vice Provost Bilen-Green to address diversity and inclusion on campus. President Cook has reiterated his support and includes Diversity, Inclusion and Respect as one of his priorities and councils.

Our Vision

The NDSU community prioritizes and values diversity and inclusion. We take collective responsibility for ensuring a sense of belonging, respect, and justice that support the success of each person.

Our Directive

The President's Council for Diversity, Inclusion and Respect received directive from the President to provide NDSU administration with guidance on how to make NDSU a better community for historically underserved populations and to operationalize the diversity and inclusion goal of the strategic plan. A steering committee of members was assembled to further assist with coordinating efforts of the Council.

Leadership

President Cook appointed Dr. Canan Bilen-Green and Phil Hunt as co-chairs of the Council. Dr. Bilen-Green is the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Equity, and began this work with the creation of the Inclusion Committee. Phil Hunt is the University Registrar and Special Assistant to the President, and joined the council as co-chair Fall 2023 as part of his appointment.

Our Work

The work of the PCDIR is informed by a number of NDSU specific sources including the NDSU Strategic Plan, campus climate surveys, student satisfaction surveys, Crisis Response Task Force report, and other diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) related committees.

The PCDIR specifically supports the Diversity, Inclusivity and Respect goal of NDSU's 2021-2026 strategic plan, which is to create and maintain an open and collegial environment to promote inclusivity and diversity as a cornerstone of education, research, and outreach.

Based on the recommendations from an ad hoc committee during the 2021-2022 academic year, the membership of the council moved from open membership to appointments. Once members were appointed, the council began meetings in January of 2023 focused around the strategic plan and defining what diversity, inclusion and respect means on our campus. President Cook attended this first meeting of the Council this academic year to charge the Council.

The specific area goals and sub-goals of the strategic plan that the council focused on include:

Goal: Diversity, Inclusivity, and Respect. Create and maintain an open and collegial environment to promote inclusivity and diversity as a cornerstone of education, research, and outreach.

Sub-goals:

Continuously improve the university climate for students, faculty, staff, and all stakeholders, with additional consideration of underrepresented groups as evidenced by regular assessment.

Strengthen and secure an accessible and equitable university for our diverse body of students, faculty, staff, and administration.

Design and implement additional programming, curriculum, outreach opportunities, and policies that uphold inclusivity, diversity, respect, and connection.

Goal: Student Success and Achievement. Provide transformational experiences for students from diverse backgrounds through high-quality education and opportunities for personal and professional development.

Sub-goal:

Provide inclusive and collaborative opportunities to prepare students to be successful in a diverse and globally connected world.

Workgroups met throughout the semester to discuss strategies and opportunities for deployment to address each of the sub-goals.

The council also worked to define what we mean as a campus when we discuss diversity, inclusion, respect and why diversity matters. The Council helped draft a memo on these items to the President (see appendix).

The meaning of **Diversity**. We are all members of the human family and each of us experiences the world from both personal and group perspectives. At NDSU, valuing diversity means that in addition to valuing the uniqueness that every individual brings, we also explicitly value the diversity that is reflected in the many sources of social group identities such as socio-economic status, veteran status, gender, religion, first-generation student status, sexual orientation, disability, race/ethnicity, nationality, age, citizenship, etc.

The meaning of **Inclusion**. To include is to foster a sense of belonging. At NDSU, inclusion means we value the unique skills, experiences, perspectives, and identities of every individual while continuously improving how we involve, develop, empower, and trust one another as we work together to meet our land-grant mission.

The meaning of **Respect**. At NDSU, we enact respect by recognizing that all of us deserve the dignity of compassionate acknowledgement of our lived experiences. We hold ourselves accountable for 'giving grace' to ourselves and others as we seek to understand our differences. A respectful community is one in which all members' contributions and perspectives are valued as we collaborate to establish a respectful workplace through which we can provide North Dakota with a respectful world-class 21st Century citizenry and workforce.

The Council determined DEI metrics to monitor and assess the status of DIR on our campus:

1. Progress on Strategic Plan Diversity, Inclusivity, and Respect Goal Year 1 Action Items (% completed, %in-progress)
2. DEI related campus-wide workshops, training, and events activities (participation rates, positive impact on awareness and actions)
3. Campus Representation:
 - a. Undergraduate students: incoming student demographics, graduation rates (by gender and underrepresented groups, first generation, Pell eligible)
 - b. Graduate students: incoming student demographics first-year makeup, graduation rates, time to degree (by gender and underrepresented groups)
 - c. Faculty: applicant pools and hires, promotions, awards/endowed positions, attrition (by gender and underrepresented groups)
 - d. Staff: applicant pools and hires, attrition (by gender and underrepresented groups)
 - e. University leadership (by gender and underrepresented groups)
4. Reports of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, sexual misconduct
5. Student conduct reports (academic, campus life by gender and underrepresented groups)
6. Satisfaction with campus climate (by gender and underrepresented groups)
 - a. Student, faculty and staff perceptions of campus support for diversity, equity, access, and inclusion

Additionally, initiatives of the 2021-2022 council continued into this academic year including:

Revise/Enhance Policy 103 (Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings) to require training for all search committee members (not solely the search committee chairs) for both faculty and staff searches, and require candidate pool diversity before a search may progress. This work continues through Faculty Affairs and Equity Currently, search committee training is required for all members of Dean and VP searches, and for the search chair of faculty searches.

Require all performance evaluations to recognize and address contributions to an inclusive and respectful environment. Policy 327 has been revised and now states, "Review criteria will be based on the administrator's job description and shall include commitment to institutional values, including equity, diversity, respect, academic freedom, shared governance, and contributions to creating an inclusive and equitable environment."

Develop statement to be included in position announcements that demonstrate NDSU's commitment to build a diverse faculty and staff. Diversity statements help translate our values and demonstrate that we are committed to an inclusive and respectful workplace. The statement is now available for use in posting templates, is shared at search committee trainings, and is available on the PCDIR and Faculty Affairs websites.

NDSU strives to be a community of belonging, recognizing unique differences as strengths of our university. We seek to recruit and retain a diverse workforce that supports a community in which diverse populations and perspectives will know and learn from one another. NDSU values candidates who are committed to our core values of respect, inclusivity, community, creativity, excellence, impact, innovation, integrity, resilience, responsiveness, and transformation. Successful candidates will be committed to and help advance our strategic goal to create and maintain an open and respectful environment to promote inclusivity and diversity as a cornerstone of education, research, and outreach.

Host an annual event to promote DEI and to highlight the units, programs, and spaces that promote community building, collaboration, and a diversity of voices. PCDIR Members hosted a table at the Involvement Expo for students and hosted the 2022 Advancing Inclusion Award. The Advancing Inclusion Award was presented in October 2022 to the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences at a campus wide celebration and recognition.

Develop ways to show NDSU's responsiveness to feedback NDSU has received from BIPOC and LGBTQ students and other underrepresented or marginalized groups. Based on feedback and survey responses, the work of this work group extended beyond the members of the PCDIR. In response to identified needs, the council has supported and co-sponsored the third annual Talkback to Racism event and the Advancing Inclusion Award. PCDIR supported and advocated for a number of initiatives that were led or facilitated by DEIA focused offices that report to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Equity including the re-establishment of the Bison Bridge Program, three USDA-NIFA New Beginnings for Tribal Students grants and its initiatives and programs, developing and offering a Building Your Bison Community Course for new students, enhancing LGBTQ+ Resource Center initiatives, name change for the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources, and multiple programs of the Office of Multicultural Programs.

The Council also continues to host a website which continues to be updated and utilized for sharing information with campus (<https://www.ndsu.edu/inclusioncouncil/>). The website has information on members, agendas, work groups, Native American initiatives, culturally significant dates, campus DEI events, and a list of key resources on campus.

Our Presentations and Speakers

Throughout the year, the Council invited speakers to meetings to present information. Topics included 2021 Climate Survey Results, utilizing a co-curricular framework, infusing DEI strategies into our priorities, and exploring student recruitment and retention of diverse and underrepresented groups, and information on opportunities for learning and training on campus.

Our Hosted, Sponsored or Endorsed Events

The Council was actively involved with hosting, sponsoring or endorsing events on campus including the following:

- October 5, 2022, 2022 Advancing Inclusion award presented to the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences
- March 7, 2023, Talk Back to Racism

Our Recommendations

The Council presented recommendations to President Cook and the Leadership Assembly in April 2023 which were shared with the campus community. The Council again discussed those recommendations at their May 2023 meeting adding more details and further recommendations as follows.

- Require all search committee members to take search committee training.
- Convert or construct gender neutral and family restrooms - at least one in each building
- Create centrally located reflection and prayer spaces to meet the needs of diverse students, including clean spaces for Muslim students.
- Increase funding support for diversity scholarships (i.e., Tribal students) and programming (i.e., Bison Bridge). Develop full ride scholarship opportunities for Pell eligible Indigenous students from ND. Develop a fundraising strategy to support these initiatives.
- Designate centralized funding for accommodations.
- Create an accommodation specialist for faculty and graduate assistants in the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources.
- Provide additional staff, resources, and space including a Native American Center with kitchen access in OMP to support multicultural students and programming.
- Include VP of Faculty Affairs and Equity on the President’s Cabinet and executive leadership team.
- Create a position in each college to coordinate DIR efforts related to curriculum, training, and programming.
- Increase funding resources to expand our reach to recruit diverse faculty and staff for open positions (i.e., post to diverse job boards).
- Require all performance evaluations to recognize and address contributions to an inclusive and respectful.
- Create a leadership position that is solely dedicated to leading and coordinating DIR efforts at NDSU.

Our Priorities

The Council also presented the priorities they identified for campus to President Cook and the Leadership Assembly in April, 2023.

- Continued work on inclusive teaching concepts and practices for faculty including offering professional development workshops on how to infuse DEI concepts and practices into curriculum.
- Maintain Ombuds Office as a neutral resource to campus.
- Support Colleges in their efforts to create Faculty Success positions. Additional staff and resources to support multicultural students and programming

- Training opportunities for employees for awareness of issues and tools for critical conversations to foster positive work, living and learning environments

Our Membership

Membership during the 2022-2023 year included individuals who were appointed by their college or division and can serve up to three academic years. PCDIR members are expected to attend meetings regularly, to support initiatives developed by the Council to advocate and educate students, staff, and faculty about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). PCDIR plays a critical role in seeing the University's new strategic plan fulfilled, and they play a role in developing initiatives and benchmarking progress toward the plan's DEI goals, and collectively advising the President on the establishment of future directions and activities related to DEI. Members included administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Canan Bilen-Green, Co-Chair, Vice Provost Faculty Affairs and Equity

Phil Hunt, Co-Chair, Registrar and Special Assistant to the President

Sheri Anderson, Strategic Research Initiatives, RCA

Lisa Arnold, English

Ashley Baggett, History, Philosophy and Religious Studies

Erin Bahr, Human Resources

Neely Benton, Graduate School

Emily Berg, Institutional Research and Analysis

Erika Berg, Animal Sciences

Mark Coppin, Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources

Andrew Croll, Physics

Ramona Danielson, Public Health

Heather Gades, Graduate Student

Rajani Ganesh Pillai, Management and Marketing

Jolie Graybill, Libraries

Colleen Heimstead, Athletics

Heather Higgins-Dochtermann, Equal Opportunity and Title IX Compliance

Kayla Jones, Undergraduate Student

Alex Lau, Career and Advising

Seinquis Leinen, Admission

Simone Ludwig, Computer Science

Larry Napoleon, School of Education

Julie Nash, Faculty Affairs

Kristine Paronica, Ombud

Allyson Peterson, NDSU Foundation

Jennifer Quenette, University Police and Safety Office

Joshua Schroetter, Technical Services

Kristi Steinmann, Information Technology

Levi Tronnes, TRIO

Jaclynn Walette, Multicultural Programs

Christian Walth, Undergraduate Student and Student Body President

Ron Werner-Wilson, Human Sciences and Education

Appendix

To: Dr. David Cook, President

From: PCDIR Co-Chairs, Philip Hunt, Special Assistant to the President & University Registrar,
and Canan Bilen-Green, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Equity

RE: Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect at NDSU

Preface: The values of diversity, inclusion, and respect (DIR) are central to NDSU's 2021-2026 strategic plan. As the first of four interdependent institutional goals, NDSU has committed to these values in order to pursue student success, transformational research, and meaningful outreach as we work together to fulfill our land-grant mission. For NDSU students, diversity, inclusion, and respect are inherently linked to student success. For NDSU faculty and staff, valuing DIR supports each individual in bringing our 'whole selves' to work, resulting in increased employee engagement, productivity, and retention, which in turn provides a stable, innovative, and community of support for our students to thrive.

As we set out to achieve our DIR goals, the PCDIR has defined the terms "diversity, inclusion, and respect" at NDSU to create a shared understanding for our internal and external community. In the [NDSU 2021-2026 Strategic Plan](#), diversity inclusion, and respect (DIR) efforts are identified as the cornerstone of our capacities to fulfill our land-grant mission to "serve[s] the state and the region through student education, service to the state, and research and creative endeavors." As an institution, NDSU has committed to "hold ourselves accountable for both individual and collective action to ensure a sense of belonging, respect, and justice that supports each person's success." The following definitions describe some ways that working from the values of diversity, inclusion, and respect can support our success in reaching the goals identified in the Strategic Plan as we provide access to quality education for the state, the region, and the world.

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