Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan for the University of Oklahoma Libraries

Introduction

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are a priority at the University of Oklahoma. As the hub of the Norman campus, University Libraries is in a unique position to affect change. Although UL already takes part in many activities and initiatives that support EDI, we have no comprehensive plan to organize our efforts, set a unified direction, or institutionalize our endeavors. This plan is intended to guide University Libraries' efforts in building a more equitable, inclusive and diverse OU.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Defined

These definitions are modifications of the definitions adopted by the American Library Association and the University of California San Diego Principles of Community.

Diversity is the presence of difference in a group or community. Diversity does not imply that there is inclusion or equity.

Equity is not the same as formal equality. Formal equality implies sameness; equity recognizes that advantages and barriers exist, and that, as a result, we don't all start from the same place. Equity is a process that begins by acknowledging those inequalities and continues to correct and address the imbalances.

Inclusion means people with different identities are and feel treated fairly and respectfully; the value of their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives is recognized; they have equitable access to resources and opportunities; and they are able to contribute fully to the organization's success. Inclusion is ongoing, responsible adaptation to differences.

Objectives and Goals

The EDI objectives are organized to align with the University Libraries strategic roadmap and provide concrete goals for the upcoming school year that can be completed to advance EDI work within University Libraries. These goals should be integrated into UL's strategic sprints cycle to ensure attention is given to the work. The EDI Plan Implementation Team should annually work with library administration to update the goals for the upcoming year.

Creating Excellent Library Experiences

**Objective:** Incorporate Universal Design and ADA compliance in UL facilities as appropriate and reasonable. [Supports OU De&I Goal #1]
Goals for 2019-20:
- Update libraries.ou.edu to include information about available accommodations and access.

Objective: Ensure that all University Libraries’ signage and wayfinding is accessible and uses inclusive language. [Supports OU D&I Goal #1]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Review promising practices in the field and establish a standard for University Libraries signage and wayfinding.
- Perform an audit on existing UL signage and wayfinding and make improvements as needed.

Objective: Ensure that the University Libraries’ virtual presence is accessible to all users. [Supports OU D&I Goals #1, 4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Update the web content guidelines to ensure they promote using inclusive language on libraries.ou.edu.
- Ask content maintainers to review language on their web pages to ensure it adheres to the new web content guidelines and uses inclusive language.
- Test the redesigned library website with standard ADA compliance tools to ensure accessibility.

Building on Excellence in Special Collections

Objective: Promote the acquisition of materials that represent a variety of perspectives and from authors from traditionally underrepresented populations. [Supports OU D&I Goal #4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Process the George Henderson Collection to make it accessible to scholars.
- Establish relationships with contemporary Native American authors and solicit acquisitions for the Western History Collections.
- Utilize fellows to work with collections from traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Utilize social media and pop-up exhibits to highlight works by individuals from traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Set processing goals to reflect diversity present in existing processing backlog.

Objective: Promote digitizing and providing access to special collection materials that represent a variety of perspectives and is as accessible as is reasonably practical. [Supports OU D&I Goal #4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Increase the amount and diversity of content previously digitized from the special collections to the digital collections.
Ensure that any existing transcriptions are loaded and available with audio content that is loaded into the digital collections.

Supporting Campus Research and Scholarly Communication

Objective: Ensure that general circulating and electronic collections acquired for campus learning and research activities are accessible and support diversity learning and scholarship, as practicable. [Supports OU D&I Goal #4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Review library approval plans to ensure that the Libraries is acquiring appropriate materials in support of diversity learning and scholarship.
- Engage with our consortial partners to address accessibility in resource licensing.

Objective: Ensure that our open access and scholarly communication initiatives serve, support, and reflect accessibility, diversity, and equity in learning and scholarship. [Supports OU D&I Goal #4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Continue to support UL-hosted journals as a way for diverse individuals to have access to the intellectual output of the scholarly community and to amplify voices from communities that may fall outside traditional academia.
- Continue to support Open Educational Resources and affordability initiatives, such as the Alternative Textbook Grant, as a way to widen access and reduce economic barriers to classroom learning materials.
- Create EDI statements for publication on Open Initiatives and Scholarly Communication web pages that address how these departments contribute to the University Libraries and OU’s commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Review existing EDI initiatives and practices that advance inclusivity in the field of Scholarly Communication and Open Initiatives.
- Conduct an audit of current practices in the Open Initiatives and Scholarly Communication units to determine goals for 2020-21.

Community Engagement

Objective: Create and host exhibits that represent a wide variety of points of view to create a more inclusive OU. [Supports OU D&I Goal #1, 4]

Goals for 2019-20:
- Build our presence within Project STAND and promote it within UL.
- Native Voices: On Bizzell’s main floor beginning in November 2019 through Spring 2020, features the Indians for Indians Hour radio broadcast. There will be a related exhibit in WHC during the Fall 2019 semester.
For spring 2020, UL will host a juried show of student work encouraging students to share their personal stories in the medium of their choice.

**Objective:** Create physical and virtual exhibits that provide access to all by adherence to ADA standards and promising practices in the field. *[Supports OU D&I Goal #1, 4]*

**Goals for 2019-20:**
- Review promising practices in the field and establish a standard for UL exhibit labels, panels, technology, and physical presence.
- Implement promising practices on forthcoming exhibits.

**Objective:** Create and host programs that represent a wide variety of points of view and are accessible to all. *[Supports OU D&I Goal #4]*

**Goals for 2019-20:**
- Implement a widely understood and applied UL Code of Conduct for employees, students, faculty, staff, and other users.
- Support and advocate for EDI initiatives taking place on campus and within UL.
- Leverage *Native Voices* and the *Indians for Indians Hour* digital collection to build relationships with tribes across the state.
- Build awareness of works by researchers from traditionally underrepresented populations during the “Representation in Research” Outreach Sprint during the spring 2020 semester.
- Launch and promote empathy VR training videos in the Edge.
- Provide clear mechanisms for requesting accommodations at all library events and workshops.

**Strengthening Skills and Capabilities**

**Objective:** Increase diversity in hiring through increasing the diversity of candidate pools and reducing the effect of implicit bias in hiring practices. *[Supports OU D&I Goal #2]*

**Goals for 2019-20:**
- Identify and implement training on the impact of implicit bias in hiring for UL hiring managers.
- Create standard language to be included in job postings signaling University Libraries’ commitment to EDI principles.
- Identify platforms for job advertisements that will better reach underrepresented groups.

**Objective:** Develop internal training that builds UL personnel’s understanding and mastery of EDI topics. *[Supports OU D&I Goals #1, 4]*

**Goals for 2019-20:**
● Provide training to UL personnel to ensure a basic knowledge of services and accommodations available within University Libraries.

● Work with the Training Steering Committee to identify, promote, and incentivize training opportunities for UL personnel focused on EDI concepts.

**Objective:** Establish processes to remove systemic barriers to success. [Supports OU D&I Goals #1, 5]

**Goals for 2019-20:**

- Establish and publicize procedures for reporting to EDI issues to the appropriate channels within UL.
- Create and disperse a climate survey to UL employees to assess the current state of EDI issues and identify areas for improvement.

**Assessment and Monitoring**

Progress on UL’s EDI work will be monitored by the EDI Implementation Team. The team will provide quarterly progress reports to UL’s administration in conjunction with senior team’s strategy retreats.

**Appendix: OU Goals for Diversity & Inclusion**

**Institutional Goals for Diversity & Inclusion:**

1. Cultivate an inclusive campus climate.
2. Improve recruitment, hiring and retention of faculty and staff from historically underrepresented groups in support of the Affirmative Action Plans.
3. Improve recruitment and retention of undergraduate and graduate students from historically underrepresented groups.
4. Create an enhanced learning environment based on diversity and inclusion.
5. Strengthen institutional shared infrastructure to achieve diversity goals.

These major goals will provide a vision for how to achieve the following intended **institutional impact outcomes:**

1. A supportive environment that fosters inclusion, belonging and satisfaction
2. Enhanced recruitment, hiring and retention of diverse staff and faculty.
3. Increased undergraduate and graduate admissions, transition and successful degree completion of historically underrepresented groups.
4. Engagement in learning opportunities that promote diversity and inclusion.
5. Demonstrated shared university support for diversity and inclusion work.
6. Utilization of data to inform diversity work.
7. Internal and external funding sources for diversity work.