DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS
Weekly Newsletter for the Office of University Community at the University of Oklahoma

The Office of University Community

Our Vision
To become the leading voice in inclusive excellence. We aspire to be the pacesetter institution in our commitment to building and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community where diversity is embraced, celebrated, and equity and inclusion are weaved into the fabric of our university community.

Read our weekly newsletter to know how people bring diversity and inclusivity into life in our campus every day.
Diversity and Inclusivity at the University of Oklahoma
Our Goals and Commitments

Our Mission

Our mission is to enhance the University of Oklahoma’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to recognize and respect the essential worth of each individual and value differences amongst groups.

We commit to building a welcoming and supportive campus environment where each individual feels welcomed, valued and supported for success.

Our Goals

- To cultivate an inclusive university climate
- To improve recruitment, hiring, and retention of faculty and staff from historically underrepresented groups in support of the Affirmative Action Plan
- To improve recruitment and retention of graduate and undergraduate students from historically underrepresented groups
- To create an enhanced learning environment based on diversity and inclusion
- To strengthen institutional shared infrastructure to achieve diversity goals

Our Commitment

The University of Oklahoma is committed to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and fairness in all forms through embracing and utilizing the unique and various backgrounds of our community.

The University of Oklahoma Norman, Tulsa, and the Health Sciences Center recognize that fostering an inclusive environment enhances the OU experience for all students, faculty, and staff.

We are committed to eliminating discrimination and exclusion based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, genetic identity, gender expression, age, religion, disability, political beliefs, or status as a veteran.
**Diversity Events: Norman**

**Bags, Beads and Books**  
April 30, 9-4  
Collins Hall Lawn - South Oval

The Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education presents a pop-up shop featuring the works of Uganda women. There will be handmade purses, necklaces, bracelets, and books for sale. All proceeds will be in support of the Grassroots Women's Peace Conference in Gulu, Uganda.

**Judaic Studies Lunch with Jesse Weinberg**  
May 1, 12-1pm  
Oklahoma Memorial Union Frontier Room

As a part of the JuSt Lunch Lecture Series, the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies will be hosting the lecture "The Farhud in Baghdad: An Iraqi Porgrom", presented by Jesse Weinberg.

**Selma Merbaum - Songs from a Life Cut Short**  
May 2, 7pm  
Pitman Recital Hall

The Weitzenhoffer Family College of Fine Arts, the Schusterman Center for Judaic and Israel Studies, and the Helmerich School of Drama present a lecture and recital in honor of Selma Merbaum, a Jewish-Romanian poet who died in the Holocaust.

Her works will be performed by Lorne Richstone, Dan Schwartz, Nicole van Every, Maddison Breedlove, and Alysa Fantel.
Diversity Events: Tulsa

A Growing Minority: Myanmar Health Needs in the Tulsa Community
May 2, 12-1pm
Learning Center, Room 231

OU Tulsa will present a panel discussion on the thriving Myanmar community in Tulsa, home to a large group of Zomi people, an ethnic minority from Southeast Asia.

Panelists include:
Htoi Sum Lut, LPN
Mary Liannu, Patient Translator
Joyce Mang, Patient Translator
The panel will be moderated by Jennifer Fought.

Graduation Reception for Racial & Ethnic Minority Students
May 3, 5-7pm
OU-Tulsa Faculty Staff Lounge (Admin Bldg)

The Students of Color Association at OU-Tulsa invites you to celebrate the graduating racial and ethnic minority students. It is a come-and-go event. Light snacks will be served.

Diversity Events: Norman

African American Achievement Celebration and Black Graduation
May 10, 2:30pm
Reynolds Performing Arts Center

The African American Programs and Services presents the African American Achievement Celebration and Graduation for African American and Black students. Family and friends are welcome to attend.
Diversity Events:
Upcoming and Ongoing

Testimony: The Life and Work of David Friedman
January 25 – May 26
Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art

The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art is featuring an exhibit titled "Testimony", which is focused around the life and career of David Friedman (1893 – 1980).

The exhibit features portraits, landscapes, and his series "Because They Were Jews!", which documents his stay at the Lodz Ghetto in Poland and the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Friedman's work highlights the horrors of the Holocaust and the triumph of survival through his own experiences.

The Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art is open 10am-5pm, and is free for all OU students.

Faculty and Staff Multicultural Spring Mixer
May 2, 3:30pm
Scholars Room in the Oklahoma Memorial Union

The Office of University Community is delighted to invite the OU Faculty and Staff to the 2019 Multicultural Spring mixer. This community-building event embodies the OU commitment to nurture a culture of diversity and inclusion. Contact the Office of University Community here with questions or requests about the event.
Community Highlights: Lisa Morales

When a program works well, everyone wants to know what the secret is. Is it the planning? Or is it how decisions are made? Both the process and the decision’s quality play an important role in securing the success of any program. But, so do people.

This week, we spoke with Lisa Morales, Executive Director of the Diversity and Inclusion program at the Gallogly College of Engineering (GCoE) and Mewbourne College of Earth and Energy (MCEE). We wanted to crack the secret and understand how her team enhances the college experience of students and their families.

The Diversity and Inclusion Program (D&I) supports students from diverse backgrounds by connecting them to a larger cultural and professional network that helps them develop a sense of community.

The Vision

When it comes to diversity and inclusion, Morales’ vision is guided by the maxim “Remember the past; honor it, and look ahead, because students are the future.” The D&U program hinges on that idea. The past becomes instrumental in demonstrating current students how those before them achieved their goal to graduate and eventually transitioned into their profession.

The program has effectively supported underrepresented students, and now aims to include all students, faculty and staff, so that everyone may gain a better understanding of diversity and inclusion.

Morales adds, "I think sometimes the classroom just needs a reminder to be understanding, and [that] not everybody comes from the same backgrounds; not everyone comes with the same experiences. I think that [being mindful of diversity] makes for a more inclusive classroom and a more understanding environment for everybody”.

The Diversity and Inclusion Program

The D&I program encompasses students’ recruitment, retention and career promotion. Morales spoke of how Reginna Johnson recruits students by visiting schools, career fairs, college events, and more. Johnson is also the director of the AT&T Summer Bridge, a four-week residential program for freshmen planning to major in a GCoE or MCEE program.
The AT&T Summer Bridge is a program that helps us recruit the whole family to OU," Morales says. Students are given the opportunity to participate in courses, workshops, and activities designed to alleviate the stress of transitioning into college. Parents begin to develop relationships with the staff and witness the D&I’s commitment to provide an inclusive environment for their children.

In addition to the AT&T Summer Bridge, other programs are offered year-round to ensure a dependable source of support for students throughout their college career. The D&I program offers scholarships, tutoring, student organization mentorship, and even an orientation course tailored for a more successful and creative student experience. The BP Diversity and Inclusion Banquet, or the ExxonMobil Multicultural Engineering Mentoring program exemplify the variety of initiatives that the D&I team manages.

Alumni Support and Corporate Partners

Much of the funding for the D&I program comes from alumni and corporate partners. The banquet, the mentorship or the summer program would not be possible without them. Morales is adamant about it. Alumni also act as mentors connecting with students as someone they can relate to and learn from.

Some of these partnerships have a long history with the D&I program, while others are just forming. Yet, one thing they all have in common is their commitment to diversity and inclusion. Morales notes that their support offers an opportunity to students and companies to build a relationship that extends past the college years. "AT&T invests because they see a return on their investment. Students hear about AT&T during the Bridge program; they meet the recruiters; they meet the alumni, and many of them end up applying there."

In the fall, the new learning center will open. Morales conveys the news with excitement: "That is a space for our students. It's important for [them] to have a place to go, even if they are not trying to solve a problem or find an answer to a question. It is a place just to stop in and recharge before getting ready to go back out."

The staff office will also relocate in the same building, positioned right in the middle of the engineering quad. Whereas the old office might have
The Students

The most tangible reward for staff, alumni and corporate friends is the transformative effect that the D&I program has on students. But when the staff understands the mission, that effect surfaces in everything they do. Listening is one example. When students come to the D&I team members with a problem, listening as they talk through it may already lead to a solution. In Morales' words: "We're here to encourage them."

The glue that keeps together scholarships, events, mentoring, and all the other initiatives is a pervasive sense of community. "A lot of the credit goes to the students [...] and the relationships they make," Morales says. She adds that, for students who are struggling with a course or feel lost, having a dependable support system goes a long way. Sometimes all they need is "someone to talk to."

Students inspire faculty and staff as well. "Every day they inspire me to work harder," Morales says. "Some [students] overcome adversity, some of them are the first in their family to go to college, some of them struggled academically. To see them walk across the stage and get a job, [...] it's what gives me hope."

"To understand what happens here, you need to attend our banquet" Morales claimed. So, we did. And we witnessed how the past becomes present, and the present shapes the future. That evening, a contagious energy emerged as the Dean walked down the hall to personally greet the students, parents and guests. The energy only grew when the keynote speaker, an alumnus who distilled professional advice for the audience, took the stage. When it was time for the graduates to go on stage and receive their stoles, that energy became uncontainable as the room was filled with applause and shouts of joy.

That evening, we learned the power of developing relationships across time. We learned what people can do.
Resources

Request a Training
If you'd like to request a training covering unconscious bias, micro-aggressions, or stereotype threats, send your request to university.community@ou.edu.

24 Hour Reporting Hotline
The University of Oklahoma Board of Regents has utilized EthicsPoint as an independent third-party to provide a simple and anonymous way to report incidents or concerns that may be in violation of University policy.

If you would like to submit a report for bias or discrimination, you can call (844) 428-6531, or you can submit a report using the following link: www.ou.ethicspoint.com.

Diversity Enrichment Programs
These programs strive to identify, recruit, and guide prospective undergraduate minority students through the OU admission process. They also provide prospective students with unique views of campus through the eyes of current students and with opportunities for cultural engagement. Contact the Diversity Enrichment Program staff via email at dep@ou.edu to become involved.

Student Resources
To find a complete list of Student Life organizations, click here.

Multicultural Student Programs and Services
- African American Student Life
- American Indian Student Life
- Asian American Student Life
- Latino Student Life

Additional Resources
- LGBTQ Student Life
- Veteran Student Services
- Students with Disabilities
- Project Threshold
- McNair Scholars Program
- Gender + Equality Center
- Registered Organizations
- Greek Life
- Student Handbook (Norman)
- Contact Student Life
About Us: The Office of University Community at the University of Oklahoma

Our Mission

The Office of the University Community at the University of Oklahoma has a two-fold goal: to enhance OU’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to recognize and respect the essential worth of each individual and the value of differences amongst groups. We commit to building a welcoming and supportive campus environment where each individual feels welcomed, valued, and supported for success.

Our Values

- Agility
- Accountability
- Civil Dialogue
- Equity
- Integrity
- Mutual Respect

Do you know of an event coming up that promotes diversity and community on campus? Email us at university.community@ou.edu and tell us about it!
How to Contact Us

OU - Norman

Twitter: @OuCommunity <@OuCommunity>
Website: http://www.ou.edu/community
Email: university.community@ou.edu

OU - Health Sciences Center

Twitter: @OUHSC_Community <@OUHSC_Community>
Website: https://community.ouhsc.edu/
Email: university-Community@ouhsc.edu

OU - Tulsa

Website: http://www.ou.edu/tulsa/about/diversityandinclusion
Email: avery-marshall@ou.edu

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/CommunityOU

Building a More Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Culture