

**CREATING A CULTURALLY ENGAGING CAMPUS
ENVIRONMENT:
UCCS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STRATEGIC PLAN
2019**

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- I. UCCS 2019 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Vision Statement & Priorities
- II. Definitions of Equity, Diversity & Inclusive Excellence
- III. Portfolio of Responsibilities for Principal Diversity Officer
- IV. Current Campus Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Support Services & Programming, Foundational Steps & Current Demographics
- V. Creating a Culturally Engaging Campus Environment: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Goals, Outcomes & Implementation Plan
 - Roles, Responsibilities & Structures of Accountability
Broad Campus Engagement
 - Resources & Support Services
 - Practices & Policies
 - Procedures
 - Strategic Communication
 - Data Collection
 - Community Relations
- VI. Assessment & Accountability
- VII. Summative Statement

Appendix A – References & Resources

Appendix B – Examples of Higher Education Strategic Diversity Plans Consulted

Appendix C - Benefits of Equity, Diversity & Inclusive Excellence

Appendix D – Debunking Myths About Equity, Diversity & Inclusive Excellence

I

UCCS 2019 EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION VISION STATEMENT

The University of Colorado Colorado Springs (UCCS) is a public institution firmly rooted in its commitment to teaching, research and public service. **The UCCS office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion aspires to strengthen equity, diversity and inclusion as integral components of academic excellence; and establish the University as a regional and national leader in preparing students for success in a culturally, ethnically/racially diverse global society and workforce, and improving the quality of life of all campus stakeholders by providing support for a just and sustainable future.** The principle of engagement through inclusion is a core CU value. The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion is, therefore, dedicated to providing opportunities for higher education to the general public and offering critical research and cultural development opportunities for the betterment of the broader public good. In accordance with CU's goals of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence, the office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion strives to be inclusive of our entire community, regardless of social or cultural identity, background, perspective or origin. Our dedication to academic excellence for the public good is inseparable from our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion. It is central to our mission as a public educational institution to ensure that each member of our community has a full opportunity to thrive in our environment and reach their life potential, for we believe that equity, diversity and inclusive excellence are keys to individual flourishing, educational excellence and the advancement of knowledge.

NB. The UCCS Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan is modeled on the State University of New York Campus Guide for Strategic Diversity & Inclusion Plan Development, which integrates recommendations drawn from reports of institutions profiled in the 2007 ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, and Best Practices in Diversity Planning and Assessment.

EDI Strategic Plan Priorities

Primary Prioritized Initiative: Broad Campus Engagement

Goal: Every academic college will create and implement an EDI strategic plan, which includes an inventory of current EDI programming and practices (including mentoring, recruitment and retention efforts) and custom-tailored plans for each respective department/unit/program.

Short-term Goals: Phase I

Goal: Ensure that the 2019 EDI Strategic Plan interfaces directly and concretely with the 2020-20130 UCCS Campus Strategic Plan.

Goal: Develop a campus policy with concrete outcomes tied to the EDI Strategic Plan and the UCCS 2020-2030 Strategic Plan.

Goal: Create a visible campus policy on bullying, which outlines a clear response and process.

Goal: Expand the current faculty and/or staff merit, promotion and award structures in order to recognize and reward individuals, departments, units, offices and programs who have made, or are making, demonstrated progress toward achieving EDI goals.

Short-term Goals: Phase II

Goal: Allocate base budget funds to ensure the future presence of the EDI Diversity Assembly Faculty Fellows positions in each college.

Goal: Create a policy regarding in-person exit interviews for every tenure track faculty member and staff member resigning their posts at UCCS.

Goal: Review campus communications (including web pages, social media, advertising, letters to current and prospective students as well as alumni, early alert emails, etc.) to ensure they are free of bias.

Goal: Create an active communication plan to support recognition of EDI achievements.

Goal: Ensure that campus security and emergency plans address EDI-related activities and crises, student/faculty/staff protests, threat response and discriminatory communications and incidents; and assist and provide specific trainings for Public Safety on implicit bias, mental health first aid, and cultural responsiveness.

Short-term Goals: Phase III

Goal: Commission a monument to underrepresented military service such as the Tuskegee Airmen, the Buffalo Soldiers, or the Navajo Code Talkers; and install it in a central location on the campus grounds.

Goal: Dedicate/name a currently undesignated building to acknowledge the local Indigenous presence (ie. territory acknowledgement). For example, either Main Hall or the University Center—which are the hubs of the campus—could be renamed Tava Hall/Center. Tava is the Ute word for Sun and was the pre-colonial name of Pikes Peak. The Tabeguache Band took their name from Tava. Tabeguache is a Ute word meaning “People of Sun Mountain.”

Goal: Allocate base budget funds to ensure the future presence of the EDI Diversity Assembly Faculty Fellows positions in each college.

Goal: Expand current programming for faculty and staff regarding wellness and successful transitioning to higher education for veteran and active military personnel students; and create a tracking system in which veteran and active military personnel can identify faculty and staff who have received training (much like the Safe Zone training).

II DEFINITIONS OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

The American Association of Colleges & Universities (AACU) defines **Equity** as *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.* <https://www.aacu.org/making-excellence-inclusive>

Grounded in this definition, the UCCS office of Equity Diversity & Inclusion implements a framework for **Diversity** that fundamentally recognizes that historically, certain social groups in the U.S. have been excluded from, and marginalized within, society in general and public higher education in particular, thereby creating legacies of advantage and disadvantage. Although this framework has a domestic focus that highlights the group experience of minoritized and underrepresented individuals with an ongoing history of disadvantage in the U.S., it also acknowledges a broader definition of diversity that is rooted in nationality, religion, and personal experience or perspective. The UCCS office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, moreover, acknowledges that human rights and social justice are directly linked to sustainability, and environmental and climate justice. Sustainability is defined as improving the quality of all life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems; and emphasizes the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for all people.

In the fall of 2016, the AACU commissioned a series of scholarly articles focusing on the theory and practice of **Inclusive Excellence** (IE). The resulting documents are nationally regarded as the gold standard for delineating the meaning of IE within the context of higher education. In these documents the authors delineate how IE differs from traditional or lay notions of diversity. Specifically, they argue that the success of institutions of higher learning pivots on the degree to which they value, engage and include various constituents; recognize the interdependent nature of Inclusiveness and Excellence; and shift the responsibility for diversity and inclusion to all campus stakeholders (as opposed to a single person, office or program).

This comprehensive approach to diversity work requires a fundamental transformation of the institution by embedding and practicing IE in every effort, aspect, and level of the University. In other words, equity and diversity should be visible throughout the institution in multiple areas including (but not limited to) demographics (numbers), curriculum, sustainability efforts, policies, pedagogy, financial resources, leadership, hiring practices, student learning, marketing, technology, teaching, student advising, communications, administration, recruitment, assessment, institutional advancement, tenure and promotion, and evaluation.

III

PORTFOLIO OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRINCIPAL DIVERSITY OFFICER

The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) is housed in the division of Academic Affairs. The Associate Vice Chancellor of EDI is the principal or lead equity, diversity and inclusion officer at UCCS; yet in accordance with the ideal of inclusive excellence, the Principal Diversity Officer (PDO) leads equity, diversity and inclusion efforts on campus, but is not solely responsible for these efforts.

The AVCEDI is primarily responsible for creating a strategic vision for UCCS, which 1.) identifies organizational structures and practices that promote equity, diversity, and inclusion across the University; 2.) builds an inclusive campus-wide culture and community based on the shared principles of broad representation and social, environmental and climate justice; and 3.) creates structures of assessment and accountability at every level in order to ensure constant, sustained, and effective systemic change.

The AVCEDI advances all equity, diversity and inclusion programming on campus (including staff and faculty development, research, and teaching), and supports historically underserved or marginalized campus and community stakeholders (including faculty and staff of all ranks, and undergraduate and graduate students).

The AVCEDI also collaboratively and individually coordinates and facilitates a range of annual/bi-annual programming; serves on relevant campus-wide committees; represents the office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion at community and campus events; and acts as a liaison to counterparts within the CU system, as well as those at local academic institutions in Colorado Springs and the larger southern tier of the Front Range.

IV CURRENT CAMPUS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SUPPORT SERVICES & PROGRAMMING, FOUNDATIONAL STEPS & CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2007 UCCS Diversity Strategic Plan was a major planning effort initiated in response to the Blue Ribbon Commission Recommendations on Diversity:

<https://www.uccs.edu/diversity/sites/diversity/files/inline-files/DSPstrategiesgoals.3.pdf>

As one can gather from this document, the University has not succeeded in meeting many of the core recommendations outlined in the Plan. In order to optimize the existing initiatives and programs outlined below in section V, as well as assess unmet equity, diversity and inclusion needs and plans, what follows is a current review of campus EDI support services and programming, current foundational steps that have been taken since January 2018, as well as information regarding current demographics.

SUPPORT SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

UCCS currently has a range of offices and programs that support students across campus:

The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

- The AVCEDI is primarily responsible for advancing all equity, diversity and inclusion programming on campus (including staff and faculty development, research, and teaching), and supporting historically underserved or marginalized campus and community stakeholders.

MOSAIC

- MOSAIC strives to create a safe place that encourages and nurtures connections and engagement across social identities, cultures, international status, experiences, gender identities and sexual orientations.

The Women's & Ethnic Studies Program

- an interdisciplinary program, which offers a stand-alone and 2 cross-listed majors (Sociology & Psychology) as well as a multi-disciplinary undergraduate/Master's certificate in Disability Studies, and undergraduate certificates in 1.) Latinx Studies; 2.) Native American & Indigenous Studies; 3.) Global Studies; and 4.) Sexualities Studies.

The Office of Veteran & Military Student Affairs

- offers programming and support services for all veterans and active military personnel at UCCS.

The Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity & Inclusion

- through programming (such as the annual Knapsack Institute), partnerships, outreach, research, institutes, conferences, leadership coaching, and other diversity services, the Matrix Center bridges the gap between university and diverse communities to examine real-world problems and contribute to the advancement of real-world solutions

Disability Services

- facilitates the journey for students with disabilities toward becoming confident, self-advocating and independent adults.

The Office of Sustainability

- supports the UCCS Sustainability vision and mission to establish the university as a recognized leader in sustainability and climate action in campus operations, campus culture, curriculum and co-curricular education, student recruitment and retention and success, and in the greater community.

The Office of International Affairs

- provides services within the following areas: education abroad; international student programming and support; short-term incoming study programs; campus-wide partnerships; international linkages and international opportunities.

The Office of Institutional Equity

- investigates allegations of discrimination, harassment and related retaliation based upon an individual's Protected Class

The Trauma, Health & Hazards Center (THHC)

- reduces the impact of extreme human events through social science cross-disciplinary scholarship, scientifically informed policy directives, and select educational initiatives across the spectrum of extreme human adversity (i.e., terrorist attacks, natural disasters, mass violence).

The Veterans Health and Trauma Clinic

- helps veterans and active military personnel recover from psychological challenges associated with military service, natural disaster, domestic violence, auto accidents, sexual assault or first responder trauma as well as a broad range of anxiety, mood, and eating disorders.

FOUNDATIONAL STEPS

Several key steps—which align with proven national best practices—are currently in process, or have already been taken to lay the foundation for achieving the goals of the 2019 EDI Strategic Plan:

Establish structures with broad and deep representation of all campus stakeholders. In order to ensure broad participation and a clear communication structure, the AVCEDI assembled representative diversity leaders and constituted the EDI Faculty Diversity Assembly, which met for the first time in August 2018, and an EDI Student Diversity Assembly, which is meeting for the first time in the fall of 2019. The Faculty Diversity Assembly includes representatives from each College, staff fellows, faculty fellows overseeing student mentoring and faculty mentoring respectively, and the Director of the Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity and

Inclusion. The Diversity Assembly fellows were charged with either establishing Diversity Councils in their respective Colleges or affiliating with existing Diversity Committees or Teams (ie. in the Colleges of Education and Kraemer Family Library). The EDI Student Diversity Assembly was established in collaboration with MOSAIC, the Dean of Graduate Studies, Veteran and Military Student Affairs and Disability Services; and includes graduate or undergraduate representatives from each of these offices and the student groups affiliated with MOSAIC.

Increase communication and collaboration across various equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. In August 2018, the AVCEDI charged the faculty Diversity Assembly with creating staff fellowship teams, and either establishing widely representative Diversity Councils in their respective colleges or affiliating with existing Diversity Committees/Teams.

Strengthen data collection relative to current equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and programming. At the behest of the AVCEDI, the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs charged the Deans Council to prioritize a goal outlined in Section V (under the category of Broad Campus Engagement). This goal requires each academic College to create and implement an EDI strategic plan, which includes an inventory of current EDI programming and practices (including mentoring, recruitment and retention efforts) and custom-tailored plans for each College and each respective department/unit/program. This goal will be implemented in three phases: 1.) submit an EDI inventory by 1 November 2019; 2.) submit a College-wide Strategic Plan by 1 May 2020, which includes a diversity & inclusive excellence statement, and identifies a goal, outcome and implementation strategy; and 3.) each department/unit/college will submit an EDI Strategic Plan on 1 November 2020, which identifies an initiative that prioritizes a clear and concrete EDI goal, outcomes and implementation strategy.

Strengthen data collection relative to current campus climate. The incoming CU President recently announced the intention to administer the Diversity Engagement Survey (which was originally administered through the University of Massachusetts) in the fall of 2019. The President expressed that the survey will consequently be administered on an annual basis. During the spring of 2019, the AVCEDI constituted a Campus Climate Survey sub-committee (CCS), which originally worked on creating a custom-tailored survey for UCCS; but based on the President's recent announcement, has begun to review and assess several national surveys. Once the results of the Diversity Engagement Survey are released, the AVCEDI—in collaboration with the office of Institutional Research and the CCS sub-committee—will determine if select modules offered in the national surveys under review can provide more insight into specific areas of focus that call for further examination. (*See section VI for more information.)

Review existing policies to ensure that they are inclusive and free from bias. The AVCEDI is working collaboratively with the office of Administrative Operations to review campus policies when they undergo review at 5-year cycle intervals.

Enhance EDI Teaching & Learning: The Teaching and Learning Conference was developed in collaboration with the office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, the Faculty Resource Center, the Writing & Rhetoric Program and the College of Education. This free, on-campus event enables UCCS faculty, staff, and students from across campus to share innovations and research related to teaching and learning, both inside and outside the classroom. This annual conference includes targeted round table discussions, short TED talk style presentations, and interactive professional development workshops related to all aspects of teaching and learning. This event will also provide an opportunity to connect some of the disparate efforts related to

teaching and learning across campus and raise awareness around the various teacher preparation programs offered at UCCS.

Enhance Undergraduate Student Retention: The *Bridge to Success* undergraduate mentoring program aims to support sophomore undergraduate students. Developed by the AVCEDI and the Diversity Assembly faculty fellow overseeing student mentoring, the program will include faculty-staff mentoring teams, provide a mentoring training program, and outline clear benchmarks for the mentees.

Create a stronger and more visible campus policy on academic freedom, which outlines a clear response process to harassment, etc. The AVCEDI—in collaboration with a representative from AAUP, CU Counsel, the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Marketing and the Director of Communications—are in the process of drafting this policy.

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Students:

As of fall 2018, 34% of undergraduate and 25% of graduate students identify as an ethnic minority (Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, American Indian, or Multi-Ethnic). These percentages increased from 20% and 15%, respectively, since Fall 2009.

The percent of undergrads receiving Pell Grants has averaged 32% since 2012. The number of first-generation undergrads has decreased from a high of 40% to 25% last year; the decline is in part due to changing methods of identifying the population. For more details, please refer to the CU Annual Diversity Report posted online at: <https://www.uccs.edu/ir/data/enrollment>

Projected demographics of campus population for students:

Via a simple linear projection of the last five years cast into the next five years, the office of Institutional Research (IR) projects that in 2023, 39% of undergrads and 31% of graduate students will identify with a minority ethnic group.

Currently, approximately 6% of undergraduate students are registered with the Disability Services Office; IR, therefore, believes the number of students is an undercount that will continue to increase in the next few years.

About 48% of undergraduate applicants, 45% of admitted applicants, and 33% of enrolled admits identify with an ethnic minority group.

Retention and completion data for underserved students:

The six-year graduation rate for minority students has been about five points less than the entire cohort. In 2018, 45% of the 2012 cohort graduated within six years. This varied by ethnicity: 47% for White, 45% for Asian, 41% for Two Plus*, 40% for Hispanic, 33% for American Indian, and 29% for Black students.

The retention rate for minority students (Fall 2017 to Fall 2018) was 62% compared to 67% for the entire first-year cohort.

* Two Plus refers to individuals who have identified with one or more of five racial categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. It is a multi-ethnic race although it excludes individuals who have identified as Hispanic/Latinx and individuals who have a temporary visa.

Retention Rate for Minority Students:

Asian	66%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	50%
Black/African American	56%
Hispanic/Latino	60%
American Indian/Alaska Native	71%
Two Plus	69%
Other/Unknown	83%
White	70%
International	86%
Total	67%
Minority Total	62%

Faculty & Staff:

As of fall 2018, 16% of faculty and 23% of staff identified as an ethnic minority.

Approximately 43% of faculty and staff are men. The most male-dominated positions are full professors (71%) and officers (72%). The most female-dominated positions are clinical faculty (87%) and senior instructors (67%).

Based on the information below, and noting that race/ethnicity were categorized differently in 2009 than in 2018, these are some of the changes that UCCS has seen since 2009 for T/TT faculty:

- American Indian from 0.9% to 0.7%
- Asian from 4.4% to 11.6%
- Black from 1.8% to 2.2%
- Hispanic from 3.9% to 4.7%
- White from 83.8% to 73.1%

FALL 2018:	T/TT	Instructors	Other Faculty	Staff
AmerIndian	2	1	1	5
Asian	32	7	9	24
Black	6	2	12	41
Hispanic	13	12	19	95
Pacific	0	0	0	4
TwoPlus	3	5	7	15
White	201	162	257	580
Unknown	18	20	32	27
TOTAL	275	209	337	791

Fall 2009:	T/TT	Instructors	Other Faculty	Staff
AmerIndian	2	1	0	6
Asian	10	6	0	15

Black	4	3	0	30
Hispanic	9	10	4	49
Pacific	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
TwoPlus	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
White	191	117	40	384
Unknown	12	5	10	15
TOTAL	228	142	54	499

A review of regular faculty (instructor, senior instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor) over a ten-year period from 2008 through 2017, Institutional Research notes the following trends:

- **New Hires:** There were, on average, 46 new entrants per year and about 60% of these new entrants were at the senior instructor and instructor rank. Per year, UCCS averaged 28 new senior/instructor, 16 new assistant professors and 2 new associate or full professors (e.g. coming in at rank).

NB. The new hire percentages do not add up to 100% because the remainders were senior instructors and instructors, however, incorporating them into the same group of regular faculty, the percentages of new hires should be 49% white women, 36% white men, 8% women of color, and 7% men of color.

- Among these new entrants, on average, 49% were white women, 16% were white men, 4% were women of color, and 3% were men of color.
- The average number of new T/TT entrants by group was 7.5 white women, 6.6 white men, 1.8 women of color and 1.9 men of color.
- **Exits:** Over the same time period, there were an average of 29 exits per year: 4.4 full professors, 3.1 associate professors, 5.3 assistant professors, 5.2 senior instructors, and 11.2 instructors.
 - Among these exits, on average, 48% were white women, 38% were white men, 6% were women of color, and 8% were men of color.
 - The average number of exiting T/TT by group was 5.3 white women, 5.9 white men, 0.8 women of color and 0.8 men of color.
- **Promotions:** There was an average of 4 promotions to full professor, 9 to associate professor and 10 to senior instructor per year.
 - Among these promotions, 53% were white women, 34% were white men, 7% were women of color and 6% were men of color.
 - The average number of promotions to the T/TT ranks by group was 6.2 white women, 5.4 white men, 0.9 women of color, and 0.8 men of color.

Continuing Action:

The research IR does with patterns of demographic inertia suggest that even if UCCS were to implement policies to equate hiring, promotion, and attrition rates among the four groups of T/TT faculty (white women, white men, women of color, and men of color), it would take 50 years of implementation to reach a faculty population with each group representing 25% of the faculty. Institutions, therefore, need to be diligent about the combination of hiring, promotion, and attrition rates in order to influence the diversity of the faculty. Even with intervention, the pace of change is slow. Without intervention, minimal if any change is expected.

To benchmark some of these statistics against the proportion of PhDs earned in 2014-2015 (a midpoint in our ten-year data set):

32% white women

29% white men

18% men of color

21% women of color

Current plans and strategies for the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and staff at the departmental, program and office levels:

The Diversity Champion training is the only current formal strategy to recruit diverse employees at the faculty, administrative, departmental, program and office levels.

V CREATING A CULTURALLY INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT: EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION GOALS, OUTCOMES & IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The success of the UCCS 2019 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Plan pivots on the premise that by providing leadership and support to our campus in promoting concrete, specific measures that will reduce implicit bias, increase cultural proficiency and positively effect behavioral and attitudinal change, the office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion aims to improve the overall campus climate with the overarching goal of continuous improvement throughout every aspect of campus life including support for a just and sustainable future for students, faculty and staff.

As the diversity plans consulted by the AVCEDI overwhelmingly suggest, a multi-pronged, incremental and structural approach to strengthening EDI is essential for creating a welcoming and inclusive campus environment (see Appendix B). The following EDI recommendations-goals and implementation plan aligns with campus and system-wide core values and priorities, and draws directly on:

- A range of higher education diversity strategic plan templates and resources (see Appendices B and C);
- A review of proven national best practices (see Appendix B);
- The input of a wide range of representative UCCS campus stakeholders.

The UCCS 2019 EDI Strategic Plan establishes:

- Clear and concrete EDI goals and outcomes;
- Specific strategies that will optimize EDI;
- Mechanisms to evaluate progress toward gradual systemic improvement.

In order to establish institutional credibility and create an inclusive climate and work environment, the recommended goals and outcomes delineated below can only be realized if leadership *at all levels* consistently and visibly demonstrates a tangible, consistent and ongoing commitment to the ideals and principles of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & STRUCTURES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal: Ensure that the 2019 EDI Strategic Plan interfaces directly and concretely with the 2020-2030 UCCS Campus Strategic Plan.

Outcome: The most significant concrete and tangible way to demonstrate UCCS's genuine commitment to EDI is to tie it directly to the 2020-2030 Strategic Plan.

Implementation: The Chancellor, Provost and/or Deans will review the campus 2020-2030 Strategic and the EDI Strategic Plan and in collaboration with the AVCEDI prioritize both short-term and long-term goals.

Goal: Administer a Leadership Circle Profile 360 to *all* UCCS leadership and designated supervisors.

Outcome: The Leadership Circle Profile is the only 360-degree assessment that provides focused competency feedback while also revealing the underlying beliefs, biases, and

assumptions—your internal operating system—shaping how you lead. From this profile, you better understand the relationship between how you habitually think, how you behave, and, more importantly, how all this impacts your current leadership effectiveness. After participating in the assessment, you receive a report of discerning quantitative and qualitative insights which you debrief in a 1.5-hour conversation with an executive coach. This confidential, in-depth debrief assists you to transform your assessment insights into specific actions for elevating your leadership effectiveness and thriving overall.

Implementation: The Leadership Circle Profile 360 assessment must be purchased through a licensed provider. Wisdom Works is a reputable local provider and is certified to conduct the assessment debrief. The Chancellor and Chancellor’s Cabinet will work in their respective areas to administer the assessment.

Goal: Ensure that the Principal Diversity Officer (PDO) and faculty and staff diversity experts are consulted about EDI and included in key decision-making and planning committees and activities regarding major University responsibilities, functions, and initiatives (including search committees, institutional development and advancement initiatives and academic and financial plans, etc.).

Outcome: Acknowledging the role of the PDO and faculty and staff diversity experts guarantees that EDI will be woven into all aspects of decision-making and planning. It also affirms the University’s commitment to EDI; and ensures that that all campus planning and resource allocation processes prioritize EDI.

Implementation: The Chancellor, Chancellor’s Cabinet and Deans ensure that the PDO and staff and faculty diversity leaders are recognized for their expertise by including them in key decision-making and planning activities.

Goal: Allocate base budget funds to ensure the future presence of the EDI Diversity Assembly Faculty Fellows positions in each college.

Outcome: Building an understanding of the role of the EDI Diversity Assembly Faculty Fellows as the senior advisors to the deans on EDI ensures that EDI will be woven into all aspects of decision-making in each respective college.

Implementation: The Provost and/or College Deans will prioritize the reallocation of these funds and thereby institutionally validate and dignify the role and function of the Diversity Assembly, and confirm their commitment to EDI.

BROAD CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Every academic college will create and implement an EDI strategic plan, which includes an inventory of current EDI programming and practices (including mentoring, recruitment and retention efforts) and custom-tailored plans for each respective department/unit/program.

Outcome: Creating an EDI strategic plan with concrete goals, measurable outcomes and assessment will create a work and learning environment that encourages all stakeholders to reach their full potential by embracing cultural and individual difference as a basis of creativity, innovation, academic excellence and civic responsibility. The introduction of EDI plans that take the specific needs and talents of each unit into account is necessary for the behavioral and cultural changes to be successful.

Implementation: All administrators and supervisors will be held responsible for setting benchmarks, and ensuring implementation of, and active participation in, the plans.

Each unit will be responsible for substantiating key metrics—which will be reported to the AVCEDI and Provost on an annual basis—as well as evaluating and communicating at regular intervals the effectiveness of their respective plans.

Goal: Recruit and Retain a Diverse Faculty.

Outcome: Ample evidence reveals that those who genuinely value EDI look for visible and tangible manifestations of a commitment EDI in selecting institutions to apply to. Hiring and retaining a diverse faculty is key to creating an inclusive culture and work environment. As numerous studies have demonstrated, diversity in any workplace enhances the professional and personal experience for all stakeholders and increases overall productivity. Given that women currently constitute almost 60 percent of U.S. college students, and minorities will exceed 50 percent of the U.S. population before 2050, hiring a more diverse faculty is pragmatic in that it mirrors demographic changes in society at large. The additional benefits of a diverse faculty are multiple. In general, introducing new ideas, perspectives and experiences inside and outside the classroom is beneficial. More specifically, however, national studies reveal that students are better prepared for *leadership, citizenship, and professional competitiveness*. A diverse faculty also serve as role models for minoritized or underrepresented students and increase their sense of comfort and belonging. A diverse faculty also contribute to recruiting and retaining other diverse faculty as well as students. See Daryl G. Smith, <https://diversity.illinois.edu/SupportingDocs/HowToDiversifyTheFaculty.pdf>; and Orlando Taylor, et al, <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/diversifying-faculty>

Implementation: All units, programs, offices, colleges and departments can realize this goal by establishing some, or all, of the following recommended best practices:

Recruitment

- Require specific training in implicit bias and cultural proficiency of all search committee members;
- Create oversight committees to review the following: a.) job descriptions to ensure they are free from bias; b.) approve interview questions (in order to ensure that selected candidates can articulate an understanding of and commitment to EDI); and c.) review candidate pools; and d.) approve hiring decisions;
- Create a plan and discretionary funds that address the unique challenges of dual career relocation;
- Ensure that all employee search processes include wider dissemination of available openings (including national advertising as well as outreach to targeted graduate programs and local community-based organizations);
- Solicit potential candidates directly through professional networks;
- Build a pipeline of potential candidates through post-doctoral opportunities or visiting faculty positions;
- Establish professional relationships that can help identify candidates pursuing graduate education;
- Develop relationships with other CU campuses that can serve as a potential resource and network for diverse hires.

Retention

- implement best-practice mentoring plans and strategies tailored to the needs of diverse faculty and staff;
- Address and meet the challenges associated with dual-career relocation;
- Model best practices related to tenure track faculty cluster hiring;
- Require implicit bias and cultural proficiency training for all employees who are first points of contact for current and prospective candidates;
- Create dedicated funds and research support (such as the for development opportunities for enhancing the personal and scholarly lives of our faculty and staff, with specific focus on underrepresented stakeholders and protected class employees. (ie. a long-term commitment from the Provost's office regarding renewing UCCS's institutional membership to the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity serves as a concrete example.)

Goal: Improve Recruitment & Retention of Underrepresented Undergraduate & Graduate Student Populations.

Outcome: A student recruitment strategy that includes programs and activities that attract a student population increasingly representative of the diversity of the service region and the state of Colorado as whole ensures the University's commitment to diversity and inclusive excellence. This recruitment and retention strategy should strive to create or expand support and programming that increases the rate of completion for all students, and close any gaps in the completion rates of students from any group when compared with the average campus completion rate and address the challenges of students in transition (such as transfer, stop-out, and international student acclimation).

Implementation: Student Success and the Pre-Collegiate Program can achieve this goal by implementing some, or all, of the following recommended best practices:

- Centralize and develop/expand existing student mentoring programs (first generation; second year students, etc.);
- Utilize enrollment and completion data to inform student support efforts and demonstrate commitment to underserved populations; Prioritize elimination of achievement gaps;
- Review existing student support services for possible gaps (i.e. Expand MOSAIC create an independent LGBT+ Resource Center).
- Extending the summer bridge program;
- enhancing training for, and the availability of, tutoring and other academic supports;
- creating a campus-wide clearinghouse for free or low-cost academic supplies;
- expand efforts to support students who are homeless/food challenged;
- create best practices for departments or individual professors in textbook and equipment management.
- Provide targeted funding sources in order to enable faculty and staff to build their competencies and skills to better serve students whose success at UCCS may require targeted support.

Goal: Require educational workshops that address topics such as trauma and mental health, implicit bias (i.e. any unconsciously-held set of associations about an individual or social group,

which are the product of social conditioning/socialization or culturally learned assumptions), and cultural proficiency—for all new and continuing administrators and supervisors, as well as employee search committee members, and merit and/or promotion and tenure review committees.

Outcome: Create an empathetic, shared understanding of the distinctive challenges facing core constituencies at the University, especially those from historically underrepresented groups.

Implementation: The office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion—in collaboration with Human Resources, the Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity and Inclusion, Veterans and Military Student Affairs, MOSAIC and the Wellness Center—are currently coordinating and facilitating educational workshops and trainings in the subject areas mentioned above and will seek or pool resources in order to prepare and compensate additional trainers thereby expanding upon and develop existing programming.

Goal: Establish implicit bias and cultural proficiency trainings as a required, central aspect of the orientation program for all new employees and supervisors at UCCS.

Outcome: National best practices universally confirm that the first step to achieving and maintaining a positive campus climate is to require employees to take trainings that increase self-awareness regarding social status and implicit bias and promote cultural responsiveness.

Implementation: The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, MOSAIC, Human Resources, the Wellness Center, office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs, Disability Services, International Affairs and the Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity and Inclusion are currently coordinating and facilitating educational workshops and trainings in the subject areas mentioned above and will seek or pool resources in order to prepare and compensate additional trainers thereby expanding upon and develop existing programming.

Goal: Expand current programming for faculty and staff regarding wellness and successful transitioning to higher education for veteran and active military personnel students; and create a tracking system in which veteran and active military personnel can identify faculty and staff who have received training (much like the Safe Zone training).

Outcome: Holistic services and support regarding trauma, de-escalation and understanding Post-Traumatic Stress and disability in general result in demonstrated outcomes regarding higher retention, persistence and graduation rates for veteran and active military personnel students.

Implementation: Office of Veterans and Military Student Affairs, The Wellness Center and Disability Services are currently coordinating and facilitating educational workshops and trainings in the subject areas mentioned above and will seek or pool resources in order to prepare and compensate additional trainers thereby expanding upon and develop existing programming.

Goal: Develop and support mechanisms for cross-pollination and integration between sustainability and EDI strategic planning, leadership, education and initiatives.

Outcome: Achieving this goal will provide inspired sustainability leadership and education, and advance and direct an informed application of social, environmental and economic sustainability measures in all University activities.

Implementation: Create a more integrated and regular collaboration between sustainability staff and provost/AVC of EDI to leverage existing programs and create new ones that serve the campus; Ensure that sustainability is represented within university equity, diversity, and inclusion planning efforts; Develop communication and education strategy for campus

community to clarify and drive home the interdependent connections between sustainability, social and environmental justice, diversity, and equity. Initiate with a white paper that provides supporting evidence of the importance of tackling these issues together and follow-up strategies; Ensure that in the creation of a potential sustainability center at UCCS, that diversity, equity, and inclusion are key actionable tenets in structure and outcome.

RESOURCES & SUPPORT SERVICES

Goal: Create a full-time Organizational Ombudsperson position to support faculty, staff and students; and ensure that eligible candidates for this position are external to the University and fully certified.

Outcome: A certified Organizational Ombudsperson provides confidential, independent and impartial support to individuals through dispute resolution and problem-solving methods such as conflict coaching, mediation, facilitation, and shuttle diplomacy. An Organizational Ombudsperson advocates for the principles of fairness and equity; and will ensure that confidential mechanism for students, faculty and staff to share EDI-related concerns (which fall outside of the responsibilities of the Office of Institutional Equity).

(<http://www.ombudsassociation.org/>)

More than 200 colleges and universities in North America employ a certified ombudsperson, according to a 2012 article in the Marquette Law Review UCCS has never had a fulltime, certified Organizational Ombudsperson. See R. Spanheimer's "Justification for Creating an Ombudsman Privilege in Today's Society":

<https://scholarship.law.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=5157&context=mulr>

Implementation: The Chancellor will consult with the Office of Institutional Equity, University Counsel, Chancellor's Cabinet members and the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in order to prioritize this goal.

Goal: Address the current gaps in the Office of Disability Services by creating a full-time ADA Coordinator.

Outcome: A full-time ADA Coordinator:

- Receives, tracks, investigates, responds to, and acts as a facilitator in complaint resolutions from under Title II of the ADA.
- Facilitates technical assistance from various departments across campus
- Facilitates awareness training and technical assistance workshops for achieving and maintaining compliance with ADA
- Serves as staff liaison for new builds and renovations.
- Assists departments with methods for providing modifications and accommodations to ensure meetings, events, and classrooms are accessible and access issues are integrated into daily operations, policies, education, and public information.
- Reviews and develops relevant policies, practices, and procedures to create or maintain compliance with disability-related laws. Makes recommendations for actions to overcome identified issues and establishes goals to ensure implementation.
- Develops and maintains relationships with local disability advocacy groups and the local disability community.
- Provide appropriate resource referrals.
- Provides written and oral reports as needed.

- Handles sensitive and/or confidential matters.

Implementation: The Disability Services Director, Director of the Faculty Resource Center, key faculty members in the College of Education, WEST and the Department of Sociology, the office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, the Senior Executive Director of Student Life & Leadership and the Vice Chancellor of Student Success will collaboratively form a strategy for achieving this goal.

Goal: Address the current gaps in the Office of Disability Services by creating a full-time Accessibility Coordinator, which could be placed in either in OIT or Compliance in order to serve the entire campus.

Outcome: A full-time Accessibility Coordinator will:

- Educate the university about accessibility requirements;
- Monitor for state and federal compliance;
- Identify tools and resources that can help;
- Collaborate on ideas for future solutions, and support efforts to make information and services accessible;
- Ensure accessibility standards and processes are applied to the design and development of programs and courses;
- Reviews and develops relevant policies, practices, and procedures to create or maintain compliance with disability-related laws regarding web compliance, procurement and other EIT accessibility requirements;
- Provide consultation throughout the College on universal design, social construction of disability, and intersections of disability with campus environments;
- May participate on College committees, task forces; network and serve in a liaison role with other departments.

Implementation: The Disability Services Director, Director of the Faculty Resource Center, key faculty members in the College of Education, WEST and the Department of Sociology, the office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, the Senior Executive Director of Student Life & Leadership and the Vice Chancellor of Student Success will collaboratively form a strategy for achieving this goal.

Goal: Expand the Family Development Center (FDC) by creating a short duration child-care drop-off program in affiliation with certified, local third-party contracted services.

Outcome: Currently no universities or colleges in Colorado offer short duration drop-off childcare. The FDC cannot accommodate short-duration childcare, which poses a great challenge to students, faculty and staff primary caretakers seeking minimal childcare on campus.

Establishing such programs on campus would demonstrate strong and visible support for students, faculty and staff, and enable them to utilize this service to study/research, participate in on-campus events, work on projects and/or participate in recreation services and facilities. It would also allow students matriculating in early childhood education, pediatric nursing and adolescent/youth development programs valuable internship opportunities.

Implementation: The Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Success, Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities, Director of the Family Development Center and Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion can collaboratively investigate and pursue this possibility.

Goal: Create Lactation Rooms in every campus building.

Outcome: Currently there are two lactation rooms on campus—one in the University Center and one in the ENT Center. A third lactation room will be constructed in the Hybl Sports Medicine building. Although lactation rooms are not required by code, designating spaces in existing buildings or incorporating lactation rooms into all new facilities plans would demonstrate strong and visible support for student, faculty and staff women on campus.

Implementation: The Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Success, Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities, and Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion can collaboratively advocate for this.

Goal: Expand the Faculty Resource Center by creating a dedicated position to assist faculty and staff aspiring toward Universal Design (UD).

Outcome: Universal Design (UD) is a framework for improving and optimizing teaching and learning for all students. UD simultaneously aims to provide a safe and supportive work environment where all campus stakeholders will thrive and reach their potential:

www.ncsu.edu/ncsu/design/cud/pubs_p/docs/poster.pdf Applying universal design within the postsecondary education setting ensures that all students and faculty, including those with disabilities, can fully participate in all educational offerings, including lectures, discussions, visual aids, videos, printed and online materials, labs, and fieldwork. While the Faculty Resource Center staff members are familiar with UD and introduce it in various certificate programs, it is not a primary function of their positions. Having a dedicated expert in UD would be of great benefit to all faculty, staff and students. This position will focus on developing instructional methodologies that acknowledge and accommodate cultural diversity and historically underrepresented students, as well as differences in learning styles and approaches to learning.

Implementation: The Provost, Disability Services Director, Director of the Faculty Resource Center, key faculty members in the College of Education, WEST and the Department of Sociology, the office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, the Senior Executive Director of Student Life & Leadership and the Vice Chancellor of Student Success will collaboratively form a strategy for achieving this goal.

Goal: Create a clearinghouse and support for staff and faculty to comprehensively practice EDI in both the content and form of their teaching and research, through workshops, individual consultations and resources for the development of syllabi and new courses.

Outcome: This goal establishes the University's commitment to EDI and encourages and supports faculty who wish to contribute to the new curriculum and represent innovative cross-campus learning initiatives. According to the American Association of Colleges and Universities, *As institutions seek to improve all students' success, the inclusion of people with diverse backgrounds, ideas, and methods of teaching and learning is an educational imperative. Such inclusion simultaneously (1) creates more equitable opportunities for students from marginalized groups to participate in higher education and (2) promotes the kinds of outcomes for all students that employers and society need, such as complex thinking skills, the ability to work across difference, increased civic participation, and decreased prejudice* (see, for example,

National Leadership Council 2007). The AACU recognizes that diversity and inclusion are the *key[s] to learning*: <https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2014/fall/nelson-laird>

Implementation: The Faculty Resource Center, the office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the Matrix Center for the Advancement of Social Equity and Inclusion currently coordinate and facilitate workshops that focus on integrating EDI into the curriculum and/or research, and will seek assistance from the Provost and deans to additionally provide professional development funds to accommodate more faculty and staff.

PRACTICES & POLICIES

Goal: Develop a campus policy with concrete outcomes tied to the EDI Strategic Plan and the UCCS 2020-2030 Strategic Plan.

Outcome: An EDI campus policy or mission statement identifies EDI as essential aspects of campus strategic planning, and as indispensable characteristics of academic excellence; An EDI campus policy will establish UCCS as a global and national EDI leader. The policy will aim to improve services and support for all UCCS stakeholder groups; ensure that UCCS's student, faculty, and staff populations mirror that of Colorado; and establish and ensure that UCCS is committed to the ideals of diversity and inclusive excellence.

Implementation: The AVCEDI—in collaboration with the EDI Diversity Assembly—will draft the campus policy and circulate it through the proper channels for approval.

Goal: Review existing practices to accommodate all minoritized or underrepresented students (i.e. bathroom policies etc.) according to established best practices.

Outcome: Taking concrete and visible steps to meet the ideals of inclusive excellence and universal design sends a clear message regarding the University's commitment to EDI.

Implementation: The AVCEDI will form a taskforce, which will include key campus constituents in Facilities, Student Success and MOSAIC, etc., to review existing practices and make specific recommendations.

Goal: Create a visible campus policy on bullying, which outlines a clear response and process.

Outcome: The CU Staff Council and Faculty Council passed a systemwide policy on workplace bullying on 1 June 2019. This policy *prohibits conduct that does not constitute unlawful harassment or discrimination*. UCCS faculty and staff have expressed the desire to create a custom-tailored policy that aligns with the CU policy in order to further confirm UCCS's commitment to foster a climate where workplace bullying is discouraged and *prohibit all forms of abusive workplace behavior, including conduct that is threatening, humiliating or intimidating, as well as work sabotage and any related retaliation*.

Implementation: The AVCEDI will form a task-force, which will include the Chair of Faculty Council and Staff Council, the EDI Diversity Assembly, Human Resources, the Ethics Committee, University Council and the Office of Institutional Equity, to draft a campus bullying policy and circulate it through the proper channels for approval.

Goal: Create a policy regarding in-person exit interviews for every tenure track faculty member and staff member resigning their posts at UCCS.

Outcome: A genuine commitment to EDI requires that the University gather data regarding why employees leave the institution in order to determine areas of concern or improvement. As research reveals, in-person exit interviews *offer a deeper look at your workplace culture, day-to-*

day processes, management solutions, and employee morale. When completed in a consistent and standardized way, these interviews can help you foster positive relationships and a welcoming working environment: <https://www.hracity.com/blog/importance-of-exit-interviews>

Implementation: The office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will form a taskforce, which will include key campus constituents including Human Resources, University Counsel and the Office of Institutional Equity, etc., to draft a policy and circulate it through the proper channels for approval.

PROCEDURES

Goal: Expand the current faculty and/or staff merit, promotion and award structures in order to recognize and reward individuals, departments, units, offices and programs who have made, or are making, demonstrated progress toward achieving EDI goals.

Outcome: Rewarding faculty and staff for their teaching, research and/or service in EDI not only validates EDI efforts, but creates what Damon Williams and Charmaine Clowney refer to as “pull strategies,” because as a critical mass of employees are recognized for their efforts, they tend to motivate others to become similarly engaged. (ie. Creating a UCCS Staff Award for Outstanding Contribution to Diversity & Inclusiveness, which would parallel the faculty sward, provides an example.)

Implementation: Vice Chancellors, in collaboration with the AVCEDI, will work with key supervisors to acknowledge and reward EDI efforts by integrating this priority into RPT and annual merit evaluations, departmental by-laws, and annual goals, etc.

Goal: Expand the effort to address the problem of bias in FCQ student evaluations by eliminating the requirement in all RPT criteria for faculty to achieve a specific score regarding global student evaluation questions such as rating the instructor or course overall.

Outcome: The Faculty Assembly argued to remove global questions from the current FCQ during a redesign process during the 2018-2019 academic year. However, several units continue to integrate global questions because their RPT criteria specify that faculty have to achieve a specific score on those questions. Research reveals that bias is especially problematic in global questions. Eliminating these questions from both the FCQ’s and all RPT criteria would measurable reduce the degree of student bias.

Implementation: The Faculty Assembly, in collaboration with the Provost and the AVCEDI, will work with Deans, Chairs and Directors to achieve this goal.

Goal: Ensure that campus security and emergency plans address EDI-related activities and crises, student/faculty/staff protests, threat response and discriminatory communications and incidents; and assist and provide specific trainings for Public Safety on implicit bias, mental health first aid, and cultural responsiveness.

Outcome: Given the current rise of violence and social unrest on University and K-12 campuses, coupled with the increasing concern regarding mental health and wellness, preparedness at preventing or responding to crisis situations requires implicit bias, mental health first aid, and cultural proficiency training, and a clear protocol and communication structure in order to ensure the University community’s safety.

Implementation: The AVCEDI will form a taskforce, which will include key representatives from Public Safety, the Wellness Center, the office of Veteran and Military Student Affairs,

MOSAIC, University Relations and Marketing & Communications, in order to review current emergency plans and explore the possibility of providing targeted trainings.

*NB. This goal may also fall under the category of communication.

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Goal: Review all campus communications (including web pages, social media, advertising, letters to current and prospective students as well as alumni, early alert emails, etc.) to ensure they are free of bias.

Outcome: A review of all campus communications at regular intervals will ensure that UCCS's stated commitment to EDI is evidenced by something more than images and words.

Implementation: The AVCEDI will form a taskforce, which will meet on an annual basis and include key representatives from IT, Marketing and Communications, to review all campus communications.

Goal: Create an active communication plan to support recognition of EDI achievements.

Outcome: Creating an active communication plan to support recognition of EDI achievements will further ensure that UCCS's stated commitment to EDI is evidenced by something more than images and words.

Implementation: The AVCEDI will form a taskforce, which will meet on an annual basis and include key representatives from IT, Marketing and Communications, to create the EDI recognition and achievement communication plan.

DATA COLLECTION

Goal: Expand data collection to:

- Include measures of the extent of bias and prejudice towards any group;
- Evaluate current marketing and recruitment strategies (for students and employees);
- Create and post/distribute an annual Affirmative Action report;
- Highlight geodemographic information regarding students, which can potentially capture sociological aspects of EDI;
- Create a more comprehensive data collection of recruitment and retention of faculty and staff of color;
- Create a more comprehensive data collection of people with disabilities;
- Include more emphasis on socioeconomic class as measured by income, which can also crisscross with data regarding other demographics, financial aid, cost of attendance, etc.

Outcome: Strategic, effective and consistent monitoring of data reveals best practice as well as institutional gaps or shortcomings, and ultimately ensures equity, diversity and inclusion.

However, aspiring to reach EDI goals requires something more than a process of identification and implementation. Monitoring the short- and long-term effectiveness of these goals is critical to determining whether they are strategic.

Implementation: The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion will work collaboratively with key campus constituents from Institutional Research, the Office of Institutional Equity, Student Services, Financial Aid and Human Resources, etc. to collectively realize this goal.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Goal: Develop and expand community relations in the areas of equity, Diversity and inclusion.

Outcome: Given that UCCS is a public institution, a central mission of the University is to serve the community by preparing students for *leadership, citizenship, and professional competitiveness*. Community relations, therefore, is a strategic imperative for the University.

Implementation: The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion will work collaboratively with key campus constituents, such as Alumni Relations, Deans' Council, University Advancement, etc. to foster extended partnerships to support the needs of diverse administration, faculty staff and students to serve as resources in times of crisis by implementing some, or all, of these recommended best practices:

- Engage a broad public in the dialogue on diversity and inclusion to strengthen recognition of these efforts and their significance in an increasingly diverse society;
- Engage diverse alumni in current activities, recruitment and capital campaigns to help fund non-traditional students from minoritized or underrepresented populations;
- Identify diverse community leaders who are willing to serve as student, staff, and faculty mentors;
- Identify a diverse pool of potential donors;
- Identify diverse community leaders who are willing to serve a resource to administrators (i.e. create external advisory boards);
- Develop ties with community-based organizations in order to develop relationships with prospective students and families.

Goal: Dedicate/name a currently undesignated building to acknowledge the local Indigenous presence (ie. territory acknowledgement). For example, either Main Hall or the University Center—which are the hubs of the campus—could be renamed Tava Hall/Center. Tava is the Ute word for Sun and was the pre-colonial name of Pikes Peak. The Tabeguache Band took their name from Tava. Tabeguache is a Ute word meaning “People of Sun Mountain.”

Outcome: Such a gesture would send a clear signal of welcome and inclusiveness to our community and campus stakeholders that the University recognizes and is committed to its diverse citizenry and is mindful of the history of the region.

Implementation: The Chancellor, in collaboration with the AVCEDI, the Planning, Design and Construction staff and local Indigenous community members can collaboratively achieve this goal.

Goal: Commission a monument to underrepresented military service such as the Tuskegee Airmen, the Buffalo Soldiers, or the Navajo Code Talkers; and install it in a central location on the campus grounds.

Outcome: The impact of this segment of our community and student population both at the University and across the nation is growing. An increasing number of colleges and universities, therefore, have a visual representation of military service on their campuses:

<https://www.mtsu.edu/military/memorial/index.php> Commissioning a permanent art installation or sculpture of this nature would provide a clear message of welcome, and serve as a visual representation acknowledging the University's appreciation for and recognition of military service to our community and to our nation, but would simultaneously acknowledge the diversity of military members, veterans and their families in our community.

Implementation: The Office of Veterans and Military Student Affairs—in collaboration with the Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, GOCA and University Development—can

collaboratively identify potential donors—as well as a local artist—who would wish to see such a monument to military service on our campus.

Goal: Develop and expand community, alumni and donor relations in the areas of equity, diversity and inclusion.

Outcome: By connecting with the community and alumni on EDI at UCCS, we can expand and diversify funding streams to advance EDI. Such efforts can lead to increased funding opportunities for scholarships and EDI programming, and can expand student mentorship opportunities, positively influencing underrepresented, underserved or minoritized student retention.

Implementation: The Office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion will work collaboratively with key campus constituents, such as Alumni Relations, Deans' Council, University Advancement, etc. to foster extended partnerships to support the needs of diverse administration, faculty staff, alumni and students by implementing some, or all, of these recommended best practices:

- Engage a broad public in a dialogue about equity, diversity and inclusion to strengthen recognition of these efforts and their significance in an increasingly diverse society;
- Invite Alumni Relations and the Development Office to join this dialogue as well as other Equity, Diversity & Inclusion meetings and events to promote collaboration;
- Work with Alumni Relations and the Development Office to engage alumni and community members in current campus activities and fundraising efforts to support multicultural or diversity-focused programs and/or non-traditional students or students from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Work with the Development Office on fundraising efforts for diversity-focused programs and/or scholarship opportunities, which can require unique legal and administrative considerations;
- Identify diverse community leaders willing to serve as resources to administrators (i.e. create external advisory boards and or assist with alumni focus groups);
- Develop ties with community-based organizations in order to develop relationships with prospective students, families and donors.

VI ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY

As proven national best practices confirm, one of the most impactful initiatives to foster a sustainable and culturally inclusive campus is to require that every academic College create and implement an EDI strategic plan, which includes an inventory of current EDI programming and practices (including mentoring, recruitment and retention efforts) and custom-tailored action plans for each respective department/unit/program. This goal is currently being implemented, and will be realized in three phases, beginning in the fall of 2019. As described in Section V, it will yield an EDI Inventory, and include both College-wide and department/unit/program EDI strategic action plans, which will identify concrete goals and include benchmarks that are assessed on an annual basis.

The EDI Inventory will enable the Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion and the Provost to monitor and assess EDI efforts in Academic Affairs, and:

- establish shared goals, parallel initiatives, and complementary practices;
- identify specific and shared needs;
- prioritize and develop specific and shared initiatives, programming, and development trainings;
- create a grassroots EDI communication network that will connect faculty, staff, students and/or community;
- streamline or centralize equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and programming across the campus and/or in the community, and thereby maximize time, energy and funding;
- and monitor Regent and system-wide EDI metrics.

Updating the EDI inventory annually will potentially enable to the AVCEDI and the Provost to assess:

- The effectiveness of current campus programming, curriculum and activities related to EDI;
- Whether EDI efforts are coordinated;
- Whether the same individuals or groups of employees lead these efforts and/or participate in planning, coordinating and facilitating events;
- If there are visible campus investments in training on social justice, implicit bias, bullying, mentoring, cultural proficiency, and EDI in general;
- If CU/UCCS recognizes and rewards those who have taken leadership roles in EDI efforts;
- Which Colleges, departments/programs/units have instituted best practices;
- If unit/program/college/department communications, websites, promotional materials, policies, etc. are inclusive and free of bias;
- If there are college-wide policies, department/unit by-laws and/or general practices that support the needs of diverse stakeholders;

- The current placement/reporting structure/scope of responsibilities of individuals responsible for EDI; and if these individuals are involved in key decision-making, especially at the level of administration.

CU Climate Survey:

As referenced in section IV, the incoming CU President recently announced his intention to administer the Diversity Engagement Survey (which was originally administered through the University of Massachusetts) in the fall of 2019. The President expressed that the survey will be administered on an annual basis.

During the spring of 2019, the AVCEDI constituted a Campus Climate Survey sub-committee (CCS) to explore the possibility of creating a custom-tailored campus climate survey. Based on the President's recent announcement, the CCS sub-committee has begun to review several national climate surveys. Once the results of the Diversity Engagement Survey are released, the office of Institutional Research will work with the AVCEDI in analyzing the data generating a report that identifies areas of focus that need further examination. The AVCEDI, Institutional Research and the CCS sub-committee will consequently determine if select modules offered in the national surveys currently under review can provide more insight into specific areas of focus that call for further examination.

The AVCEDI is hopeful that the CU climate survey will identify current strengths, needs and gaps, provide current benchmarks, and project future challenges. It will also help focus UCCS's efforts to meet the current and future challenges associated with building a more equitable, diverse and inclusive environment; and assist the AVCEDI in determining ways to continuously improve the general campus climate for all UCCS stakeholders. Creating concrete priorities, goals and anticipated outcomes will enable UCCS to determine if the university is attaining its outcomes or requires corrective action in the implementation of the EDI Strategic Plan.

Accountability:

The Associate Vice Chancellor of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion provides regular updates and annual reporting to the Provost regarding progress toward the EDI office's current initiatives and goals. In adherence to the ideal of inclusive excellence, the plan outlined in this document fundamentally acknowledges that in addition to the AVCEDI, leadership at all levels must be visibly committed to, and supportive of, the ideals and principles of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence in order to create an atmosphere or work environment receptive to change.

In order to develop and implement organizational structures and practices that promote EDI across the University, and build an inclusive campus-wide culture and community that is based on the shared principles of EDI, UCCS must implement, and thereby institutionalize, structures of accountability at every level in order to ensure sustained, effective and measurable systemic change. The long-term success of achieving the overarching and specific recommended initiatives and goals delineated in the 2019 EDI Strategic Plan pivot on the evident and tangible evidence that at all levels of the institution UCCS is genuinely committed to EDI.

VII SUMMATIVE STATEMENT

In order to demonstrate a visible and tangible commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity and social and environmental justice, EDI efforts need to be centered in every aspect of UCCS's institutional mission and practice. The recommendations outlined in this document represent a starting point for that timely and ambitious project. The only way to move forward is with strong support from leadership at all levels, including involvement from the Chancellor, all members of the Chancellor's Cabinet, the Associate Vice Chancellors and Deans, and all staff unit/office supervisors. Importantly, the success of this mission requires the re-allocation of existing, and cultivation of new, financial and human resources. To this end, the final recommendation is to prioritize UCCS's EDI mission in the UCCS capital campaign and launch a next stage targeted fundraising effort.

Within these broad objectives described above, the AVCEDI and the EDI Diversity Assembly has identified specific recommended initiatives, actions and strategies that, when implemented together, will yield the highest outcomes in respect to altering individual behavior, attitudes and campus culture and thereby improving morale and ultimately increasing productivity. Creating a more inclusive campus climate will not only strengthen UCCS in an accreditation process, but also enable the University to recruit and retain a more diverse administration, faculty, staff and student population.

There is clear evidence that achieving EDI goals leads to organizational growth and success. The proposed incremental steps and measures described above have the potential to transform UCCS into a more equitable, representative and inclusive campus; and tangibly demonstrate the University's core commitment to the principle of inclusive excellence. **Through the implementation of this plan, UCCS will rank among other institutions of higher education in leading the national dialogue about equity, diversity and inclusive excellence.**

APPENDIX A

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APPENDIX B
EXAMPLES OF HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLANS
CONSULTED

- University of Arizona
 - Barnard College
- University of Denver
- University of Idaho
- University of Maryland
- The State University of New York
- Clarion University of Pennsylvania
 - Penn State University
 - University of Toledo

APPENDIX C

BENEFITS OF EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion is committed to cultivating an intellectual environment at UCCS that is inclusive of all stakeholders in order to overcome the historical legacies of exclusion. The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion promotes the principles of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence not only to enhance the University's service to the public, but also to contribute directly to the work environment and the quality of learning for *all* who participate in higher education both inside and outside the classroom. When we as an institution of higher education recognize, value and embrace these principles and ideals, we are recognizing, valuing and embracing the uniqueness of all individuals.

Campus Climate

Strategic equity, diversity and inclusive excellence initiatives, programming, curriculum and support services do not solely benefit individuals and groups who have historically been excluded, marginalized and disadvantaged; rather, these collective and interrelated efforts simultaneously contribute excellence to the education and experience of *all* campus stakeholders. Developing an EDI Strategic Plan with concrete measurable goals and an implementation schedule that is supported by upper leadership at UCCS will not only visibly improve the overall campus climate but will also advantage UCCS in the accreditation process. To realize this potential requires more than seeking to diversify the composition of UCCS's student population, staff, faculty and administration along ethnic and racial lines. An equally important challenge is for members of the University community to undergo an educational process of awareness about self and others; and, consequently, engage fully across social, cultural and national or global differences, and integrate lessons from distinct cultural perspectives into their development of knowledge, skills and character.

Cultural Proficiency & Self-Awareness in the Workplace

Demographic changes in the U.S. population and increased global interconnections have drawn broad attention to the need not only for a diverse administration, faculty, staff and student body, but also equity, diversity and inclusive excellence strategic initiatives, programming and corresponding curriculum and support services within institutions of higher education. Acquiring the cultural proficiency to work effectively with people representing diverse backgrounds and experiences requires an informed understanding of others and, perhaps most critically, an informed and complex understanding of the privileges and disadvantages resulting from one's own social, cultural and national origins. In other words, cultural proficiency is based on integrating the awareness, knowledge-base, and learned skills required to effectively and sensitively educate, supervise, work with and serve people from diverse backgrounds and social identities; and empower a diverse population of students to succeed not only in the workforce, but also in an increasingly challenging world.

Teaching, Research & Service

A UCCS education is a journey of discovery, designed to impart training in scholarly and creative traditions and methods of knowledge acquisition as well as awareness of self and others' perspectives and experiences. The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion engenders critical awareness and empathetic understanding. One of the EDI office's central missions is to enable our students to lead and influence future generations for economic, cultural and societal benefit. The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion welcomes the full exploration of its intellectual

boundaries and supports its faculty, staff and students in the creation of new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas. Teaching is a fundamental purpose of the University at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Research and scholarship are integral to the educational process and to the expansion of our understanding of the natural world, history and culture. Service reflects UCCS's obligation to share the benefits of its research and knowledge for the public good. The University serves the nation's and the state of Colorado's critical needs by contributing to a well-qualified and broadly diverse population, leadership and workforce. In order to reach this goal, the University of Colorado Colorado Springs must create the diverse environment necessary to foster critical skills and perspectives regarding equity, diversity and inclusion in its teaching and research for its students to contribute and succeed in the world of the Twenty-First Century.

These three interlocking elements—teaching, research and service—span all the University's academic disciplines and represent a commitment to lead and serve the state of Colorado, the nation and the world by pursuing and disseminating new knowledge while building upon and expanding the experiences of the past. The office of Equity, Diversity & Inclusion aspires to advance this commitment by strengthening cultural awareness and improving the quality of life of its community, thereby better serving an increasingly diverse populace. The educational benefits that flow from diversity and inclusion efforts, including improved teaching and learning, prepare students for a twenty-first century workforce, and enhance preparation for civic engagement and leadership, among others (Coleman, 2014). These benefits can be gained by stakeholders from all backgrounds and depend on more than compositional diversity or critical mass, which focuses primarily on gender or race and/or ethnicity.

APPENDIX D DEBUNKING MYTHS ABOUT EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

As Johnella Butler observes, “equal opportunity remains our national myth” and “debates about diversity compete awkwardly with debates about immigration, same-sex marriage, environmental justice, poverty, globalization and global conflict – all viewed as separate, unrelated issues despite their connectedness within a multicultural context” (Butler, 2014). In other words, the principles and goals of equity, diversity and inclusive excellence are complementary and interconnected, but they are not the same.

Perhaps one of the greatest myths about equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) efforts are that they spring from a deficit model in which differences from the norm or dominant culture are regarded as a hinderance, a problem or something to be remedied or fixed. On the contrary, the focus of EDI efforts should be in respect to the educational benefits that flow from diversity and inclusion, including improved teaching and learning, preparing students for a twenty-first century workforce, and enhanced preparation for civic engagement and leadership, among others (Coleman, 2014). These benefits can be gained by stakeholders from all backgrounds and depend on more than compositional diversity or critical mass, which focuses primarily on gender or race and/or ethnicity.

According to Mauricio Velásquez, President of the Diversity Training Group, some of the most common myths about diversity are the following:

Myth 1: Diversity is a problem as opposed to an opportunity. Too often leaders assume that emphasizing EDI planning is a sign of weakness, demonstrating to the public that it is something we do poorly and need to work on. The opposite is true, however. Tangibly demonstrating a robust commitment to ongoing EDI planning and assessment is now seen as a positive sign that a University takes these ideals or principles seriously. Those who value EDI look for visible manifestations of EDI efforts in selecting what university to attend, to send their children to, to work at, and to hire graduates from. As Velásquez observes, an EDI strategy and plan provide an opportunity to differentiate an organization or institution from its competition. In effecting behavioral, attitudinal and cultural change, diversity also enhances recruitment and increases workforce and student satisfaction, productivity and retention. EDI practices and programs targeting students are identified as “high impact practices.”

Myth 2: Diversity is a Chief [or Principal] Diversity Officer’s responsibility; and efforts to enhance diversity and inclusion are, and should be, coordinated and deployed by underrepresented groups seeking better representation and voice. According to the ideal of Inclusive Excellence (as discussed in section II) and national best practices, EDI must be treated as everyone’s responsibility; and all leaders, supervisors, staff, faculty (of all ranks) and graduate and undergraduate students play a significant role in successfully achieving the goals of an EDI strategic plan. Leadership at the highest levels is essential to buy-in and success (Lindsey, Robins and Terrell 2009). Achieving EDI goals requires engagement, efforts and contributions from individuals belonging to dominant groups. According to Flaherty, underrepresented faculty are called on to perform most of the *invisible labor* or *unrecognized work* by virtue of their status (2019).

Myth 3: Diversity is just about race and gender. Though the ongoing legacy of racism and/or sexism in the U.S. has yet to be resolved—and as a result women faculty and faculty of color continue to be underrepresented in higher education (especially in the upper ranks of academia and at the level of administration)—an intersectional approach to diversifying a workplace or institution (as defined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989) acknowledges the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, ability, sexual or religious orientation, etc. as they apply to an individual or group. These interconnected social categories create overlapping and interdependent systems of privilege and advantage or discrimination and disadvantage, which shift according to geographical location and historical, political and cultural context.

Myth 4: EDI is about exclusivity [rather than inclusivity]. EDI, Velásquez notes, *is about all of us*. It's not about *attacking the white male*; rather, it's about *creating a culture where everyone (each individual) can thrive and contribute to your organization (integration) and understand and serve your increasingly diverse [students and community]*. (Durer, 2018, Smith et. al. 1997)

Myth 5: EDI is about lowering standards [ie. hiring less qualified candidates/ admitting less qualified students]. There is little evidence to support this claim; nevertheless, it pervades many corporations, organizations and institutions of higher education. In fact, research on faculty hires, for example, find that very basic steps can be taken to create more diverse applicant pools and increase the numbers of qualified minority hires (Smith, et. al. 2004).

Myth 6: There are not enough qualified diverse candidates. Not unlike the fallacy regarding lowering standards, there is little evidence to support this myth.

Myth 7: An approach to hiring that claims to be equitable and 'status neutral', yet employs a narrow definition of what constitutes the 'best' or most qualified applicant and consequently excludes factors such as diversity of experience, especially related to social identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual or religious orientation, age or disability. This approach, which tends to perpetuate cronyism, fails to acknowledge affirmative action initiatives that have traditionally benefited the privileged, and obviates and ignores historical discrimination and the ongoing legacy of disadvantage.

Myth 8: Diversity is just another fad. *If you think it is, Velásquez comments, good luck. Look at your workforce and client marketplace today and compare it with five and ten years ago and try to look five and ten years into the future. Do the same analyses for your [prospective employee and student] base. Have you seen the demographic projections for the future?*

Myth 9: Diversifying an institution is easy. Diversifying an institution requires a great deal of time and effort from all parties involved, including supervisors and senior administration. At the most fundamental level, it requires universal training in implicit bias and cultural proficiency.

Myth 10: EDI only benefits minoritized and/or underrepresented people. Although research overwhelmingly suggests that diverse workplaces and classrooms, as well as EDI curriculum and programming, increase the retention rate of minoritized or underrepresented populations,

majority populations tend to benefit equally from a diverse and inclusive workplace as outlined in the introduction.

Myth 11: Diversity planning always requires paid consultants and trainers and costs large amounts of money. Many institutions have underutilized internal resources. Most universities have a significant number of well-trained diversity scholars, teachers and consultants in a range of departments and units, who are deeply committed to their institutions and are passionate about putting their skills to use to serve the University.

Institutions of higher education, as well as businesses and other organizations, are increasingly facing public scrutiny and consequences when they demonstrate their failure to fully understand equity, diversity and inclusion (ie. Starbucks). On the other hand, there is a growing movement among universities and businesses to make visible and tangible their genuine commitment to these principles. Certified B corporations, for example, are businesses that *meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance a profit and purpose*. B Corps are committed to a global cultural shift *to redefine success in business and build a more inclusive and sustainable economy* [<https://bcorporation.net/>] These institutions of higher learning and businesses recognize that being fully committed to, and accountable for, EDI is cost effective, produces stronger, more innovative approaches and collaborations, and improves job satisfaction and success on a wide range of measures (Lorenzo et. al. 2018). A strong and visible commitment to EDI elevates institutions of higher education. Contrary to the myths discussed above, equity and diversity practices create inclusive learning environments where everyone feels valued, less vulnerable and safe. Members of a university community have higher levels of trust and loyalty when they see that their institution not only “talks the talk” but actually “walks the walk.” Moreover, equity, diversity and inclusion enhance the learning experience of all students and introduce memorable life lessons that cannot be found in any textbook.