

Diversity and Inclusion Committee Background and Charge

After two years of deliberations, the Bemidji State University Diversity Taskforce completed its work resulting in the Diversity and Inclusion Plan for 2016-2019. Taskforce members recognized that diversity exists when the full range of human differences is present and inclusion exists when all members are involved, empowered, valued and respected, and feel a sense of belonging. These can come to fruition as institutional processes and structures facilitate rather than hinder inclusivity. Working toward this goal is everyone's responsibility.

One of the recommendations identified in the plan was developing and charging a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The taskforce envisioned that the Bemidji State University Diversity and Inclusion Committee work in partnership with faculty, administrators, students, staff and the external community to encourage, achieve and sustain diversity and inclusion. The ultimate responsibility for demonstrating and leading the University's commitment to diversity is the President's. The responsibility for the oversight of diversity and inclusion at the university has been delegated to the Chief Diversity Officer (who reports directly to the President) with support from a Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Charge and Responsibilities

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is charged by the President with facilitating and advocating for the institutional support of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan in conjunction with the Chief Diversity Officer. The Committee will serve as a sounding board for the campus community on matters related to the climate for diversity. In that capacity, it will regularly solicit information regarding the campus climate from various campus constituencies and the campus as a whole and issue findings and recommendations for improvement. The Committee will also design and implement its own diversity efforts as well as work with and support the efforts of other campus offices and programs.

The general responsibility of this committee, under the leadership of the Chief Diversity Officer, is to advise the President, the President's Cabinet and Executive Leadership Team on issues relating to diversity for faculty, staff, and students.

Specifically, the Diversity Committee's responsibilities shall be to:

- Assist with the implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Plan and partner with offices and programs as appropriate.
- Assess the campus environment periodically in terms of its attitudes, perceptions, symbols, and institutional practices as they relate to diversity and inclusion, and report findings and recommendations to the campus community.
- Implement and support efforts that foster a sense of belonging for students and employees.
- Offer a broad base of cultural experiences within the institutional community. Programs include examining cross-cultural communication styles, as well as practices that highlight the spectrum of cultural richness
- Support the university in its commitment to recruit, hire, develop and retain the best possible staff and faculty and ensure the welfare of the overall community.
- Seek to engage alumni and community partners in diversity and inclusion efforts, and, when appropriate, to involve them in their planning and implementation.
- Develop and maintain a mechanism that coordinates and promotes the diversity and inclusion events and programs across the university.
- Report on committee efforts along with recommendations for improvement through appropriate channels and summarize efforts in an annual report to the President.
- Design and attend diversity training utilizing consultants as needed.
- Be diversity advocates in their respective units by promoting awareness of policies and support training (workshops, lectures, and seminars) on topics relating to diversity.

Leadership, Membership, and Terms of Service

Campus-wide Diversity and Inclusion efforts are led by a Chief Diversity Officer. The Chief Diversity Officer's duties are broader than the work encompassed by the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. This position reports directly to the President and works collaboratively with all divisions to ensure that the University's goal of embracing diversity and inclusion is realized. This position is responsible for:

- Communicating the University's commitment to diversity and inclusion to the University community;

- Developing and monitoring the University's diversity and inclusion plan;
- Preparing and analyzing reports to monitor success.

The Chief Diversity Officer will serve in an ex officio voting capacity on the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. Two other individuals will serve in an ex-officio voting capacity – the Chief Human Resource Officer, and the Director of the American Indian Resource Center.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will be led by a Presiding Chair. This position shall be elected by the committee. The presiding chair will have a two-year term. The Presiding Chair shall:

- Preside at all committee meetings;
- Oversee the implementation of the policies of the committee;
- Appoint ad hoc committees as needed;
- Represent the committee as needed and fulfill such other duties as may from time to time be authorized by the committee.

The membership will also elect a Recorder who will be responsible for all correspondence including preparation of meeting minutes and agendas.

The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will have approximately 16-18 members, of which three are ex-officio voting members. Employee membership shall be elected from their respective constituencies for two-year terms. These terms will be staggered to provide continuity for the committee’s work. Student membership will be for one year with determinations made each spring for the next academic year.

Chief Diversity Officer	Steven D. Parker	Ex-officio, voting member
Chief Human Resource Officer	Megan Zothman	Ex-officio, voting member
American Indian Resource Center Director	Chrissy Downwind	Ex-officio, voting member
Elected Members:		Term of Service
Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) members or BSUFA	Colleen Deel	1-year term, then 2-year term thereafter
Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) members or BSUFA	Thomas Dirth	1-year term, then 2-year term thereafter
Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) members or BSUFA	Shannon Norman	2-year term
Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) members or BSUFA	Li Zhou	2-year term
Minnesota State University Association of Administrators and Service Faculty (MSUUASF) member	Tori Dahlke	1-year term, then 2-year terms thereafter
Minnesota State University Association of Administrators and Service Faculty (MSUUASF) member	Christian Breczinski	2-year term
2 American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) member	Maria Eastman	1-year term, then 2-year terms thereafter
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) member	Vacant	2-year term
Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE) member	Melissa Columbus	2-year term
Minnesota Management Association (MMA)	Vacant	1-year initial term, then 2-year terms thereafter.
Commissioner’s Plan member	Ashleigh Haugen	2-year term
Student	Crystal Kastl	Elected annually in the spring thru Student Senate
International Student	Vacant	Elected annually in the spring thru Student Senate
Student	Vacant	Elected annually in the spring thru Student Senate