

2020-2022

# EQUITY ACTION PLAN

*Reviewed by Board of Trustees, May 2019*

Roger Williams  
University



Dear RWU Community:

It is an incredible honor and opportunity to be early in my presidency as we formally launch and present this Equity Action Plan. Advancing underrepresented community members and supporting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) have been hallmarks of my career. So this opportunity to lead the implementation of the plan for Roger Williams during my tenure is very exciting.

During the search process and during my listening sessions, I heard a sense of urgency related to diversity, equity and inclusion matters. I was moved by the experiences of minoritized members of our community, past and present, and the obstacles they face. In this work there will always be a tension between what has not yet been done and what we hope to be. The campus has my full commitment to equity for all members of the community; we must see and hear the reality of the current experience while we stretch toward our aspirations and goals. This Equity Action Plan will guide our work and also serve as a compass for our institutional strategic planning efforts in years ahead. The plan includes elements that both help us catch up to our peers and aspirant groups and also provides elements that will be distinguishers for us.

DEI work is strategic and complex; it takes longer and is harder than we might like, but we must persist through challenges and get up after our inevitable mistakes and missteps and press forward. This is how we will grow into a community where all our members thrive. DEI work takes the entire village; I ask you to partner with me in this work as we build the university the world needs now: a university community that is equitable.

Sincerely,  
Yannis

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ioannis N. Miaoulis'. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'I' and a long, horizontal stroke.

Ioannis N. Miaoulis  
President



Dear Colleagues:

I begin with thanks to the hundreds of you who helped shaped this plan. Your work, starting with the January 2018 summit and the multiple touch points after that, created this living document that can reshape our institution and our future if we bring the same will, passion, and tenacity to implementation that we brought to its creation. Extra special thanks go to the members of the five taskforces, listed at the end of this document, and the taskforce co-chairs for their leadership during the iterative process that created the plan.

## SOME KEY CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN:

**Framework:** The plan is organized around a five-dimension framework that blends the AACU's Inclusion framework and Daryl Smith's framework to foster diversity and inclusion. The five dimensions are Student Access, Success and Equity; Employee Access, Success and Equity; Climate and Intergroup Relations; Education, Scholarship and Service; and Leadership and Infrastructure.

**Goal:** To create the conditions for transformation by focusing on three key areas:

**Critical Mass:** We must increase demographic representation in the faculty, staff and student body and commit to increasing access in order to reach critical mass.

**Capacity Building:** To reach and sustain critical mass, all members of our campus community must develop their intercultural fluency through a variety of relevant strategies suited to different stakeholder groups. The plan also focuses on the support, empowerment and advancement of minoritized students and employees.

**Culture Change:** A focus on communication, leadership practices, talent development, resource allocation, institutional policies and the built environment and accessibility, is designed to drive equity and inclusion at the institutional, and not just the individual, level.

**Timeline:** In recognition of the rapid demographic and technological changes happening in the external environment, the timeline for the EAP plan is 3 years: Calendar Year 2020 to 2022.

**Implementation:** We have created a detailed matrix that assigns cabinet members as champions for our various action items. Partnering with you, the primary agents and drivers of our success, senior leadership will ensure our goals are met by embedding them into divisional, departmental, and individual plans to drive progress and will support capacity building, recognition and accountability.

**Our Progress:** The metrics that have been identified by the task forces, from a review of the the research, and best practices will form an evaluating equity scorecard that will be updated and disseminated on an annual basis to the University community. A central part of the scorecard will be the Equity Index, developed by the Center for Urban Education which focuses on measuring representational equity at every stage of our institutional pipeline or processes.

**An Intentional Decision:** Members of the taskforces can bear witness to the challenging conversations had over the course of creating this plan. What we have heard over and over from minoritized members of our community, especially people of color, is that their needs and stories have always been decentered in favor of what is comfortable for dominant groups. Our institution exists in a local and national context where people of color have long been disenfranchised and the last few years has seen a rise in activism for equity on college campuses and in communities across the nation. Additionally, we are in a time of rapid demographic change fueled by a growth in people of color and a corresponding decline in white people. We are also living at a time where hard won civil rights are being rolled back for many amidst a rise in hate groups and hateful rhetoric. We work with a generation of students that is very interested in social justice and prioritizes racial equity. Finally, over the past year, RWU has been a member of the Leading for Change Diversity Consortium and the 24 institution group has urged member campuses to intentionally focus on racial justice and racial equity and many national higher education bodies and corporate entities are leaning afresh into these matters.

The convergence of these historic and current, local and national factors have caused us to intentionally choose to center racial equity in our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work. It is critically important to note that this approach does not seek to marginalize, ignore or underserve other minoritized groups, or indeed any member of our community. I am a cis woman, an immigrant, temporarily able bodied, a mother and a Vice President, as well as black, so my daily life is intersectional and influenced by my multiple identities and experiences and how they interact.

We continue to deepen our support of our Queer and Trans community and all women on campus; our Queer and Trans Resource and Advocacy Center and Women's Affinity Initiatives are evidence of this. RWU has long excelled in our support of students with disabilities, as well as in our efforts to support the various faith communities on campus. Our University College has a powerful record of innovating to increase access to learners that have been historically marginalized in higher education including low income students, adult learners, veterans and English language learners, a mission our Bristol campus has begun to fully embrace as we have implemented new aid and outreach strategies over the last few years to increase access for low income families. Additionally, centering racial equity does not mean we neglect the priority to become a campus with a critical mass of international students.

All of these great efforts, and more, will continue. What we are saying is this: Race will be the way in, rather than a marginal conversation. There are people of color in every minoritized group and they usually fare worse than their white peers. Racial and ethnic communities are also not monoliths: there is an incredible amount of complexity within and across every racial and ethnic group. In a nutshell, we will do intersectional racial equity work and ensure that all efforts to support minoritized folks make room for the ways that racial identity exacerbates or mitigates the experience of minoritization.

It is also important to note that contrary to popular opinion, a focus on racial equity is not just a conversation about people of color. Race is very much a construction and at the center of that is the invention of whiteness and the ideologies, systems, structures and institutions that uphold it. The process of interrogating these matters can be challenging, but I believe we can do it in ways that honor our collective humanity. This work is not about reinforcing static and binary narratives, or about seeking villain and victim, but rather about staring into the complexity of human history, grappling with its impact in our present day, and intentionally seeking to build a just community.

We know that this approach will be new for some and we recognize that it will make some uncomfortable and feel unfair to others. Let me acknowledge that we are taking a risk as we step out in this way. I invite you into the conversation to unpack and explore the reasons we have made this decision. I encourage you to get involved and see what kind of progress we can make over the next several years with your help, courage and engagement.






It has been an honor to serve as the institution's Senior Diversity Officer over the past two and a half years. I have stretched and grown in ways I would never thought possible and I have been repeatedly awed by the talent, warmth, wisdom, and generosity that is part of our community. I have also been deeply touched by the pain and experiences of marginalization I have heard. I echo the President's sentiments: we need you on this journey to becoming the university we need to be, the University the world needs now. We need your head, heart, and hands to make this plan a reality. We need your courage to look inward, step outward, and take risks. We need your ability to hang on and hang in when it gets hard and we need your ability to come together in service to something greater than ourselves: the best in all of us creating a community that is the best of all us.

Onward!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ame Lambert". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Ame" and "Lambert" being capitalized and prominent.

Ame Lambert  
Chief Diversity Officer

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## FOCUS AREA - STUDENT ACCESS, SUCCESS AND EQUITY (SASE)

**Goal:** RWU will be known as a demographically diverse institution that supports access, achieves equitable outcomes along all critical indicators of success and supports the thriving of underserved students.

**SASE Objective #1:** Increase access to the university for underrepresented and underserved students with a focus on first generation college students, low income students and students of color by removing barriers to enrollment.

**SASE Objective #2:** Provide underrepresented and underserved students with support for a successful transition to college in order to support equitable outcomes.

**SASE Objective #3:** Establish a signature initiative for underrepresented and underserved students that focuses on the development of academic and career skills, socioemotional competencies and cognitive habits that support them in navigating and thriving in a system that was not created for their success.

**SASE Objective #4:** Seek insights from disaggregated data, outcomes based assessments, projections and best practices to continually improve strategies.

## FOCUS AREA - EMPLOYEE ACCESS, SUCCESS AND EQUITY (EASE)

**Goal:** Roger Williams University will be an organization known for its success in hiring, developing and advancing members of minoritized groups. In addition, it will be an employer of choice for talented individuals who embrace the institution's ambitious diversity, equity and inclusion goals and objectives.

**EASE Objective #1:** Enhance practices demonstrating that the University is a leader in workplace conditions related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

**EASE Objective #2:** Institute leadership development and succession planning programs that support pipeline development for minoritized individuals.

**EASE Objective #3:** Develop a recruiting strategy to identify talent that will assist us in achieving our diversity, equity and access goals.

**EASE Objective #4:** Create and support a more fully engaged community with direct and regular access to leadership in order to foster dialog and exchanges of ideas throughout the organization.



## FOCUS AREA - CAMPUS CLIMATE AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS (CCIR)

**Goal:** Roger Williams will create a campus climate dedicated to inclusion, equity and respect, enabling community members to thrive and experience a genuine sense of belonging.

**CCIR Objective #1:** Develop shared common language, verbal and non-verbal and communication practices across the institution, including continued development and implementation of inclusive and appreciative language approaches.

**CCIR Objective #2:** Build and support a safer campus community free of bias and violence, dedicated to elimination of prejudice and supported by informed and intentional intervention strategies.

**CCIR Objective #3:** Develop and sustain systems and spaces for positive identity development and purposeful intergroup relationships by designing and implementing meaningful opportunities to affirm social identities and to hear, and learn from, different perspectives.

## FOCUS AREA - EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE (ESS)

**GOAL:** RWU will be known as an institution that lives up to its educational imperative to interrupt inequity and the injustice that is deeply embedded in histories, legacies and structures of oppression, power, and privilege in higher education through the delivery of programs, courses and pedagogical strategies that foster transformation and effective and positive interactions in a world that is multicultural, global and interdependent.

**ESS Objective #1:** Provide opportunities to enhance faculty members' intercultural fluency to enhance their ability to develop inclusive pedagogy and curriculum.

**ESS Objective #2:** Transform curriculum across campus to embed intercultural fluency learning goals in preparation, evaluation, and delivery of pedagogy and practices.

**ESS Objective #3:** Increase graduating students' intercultural fluency through curricular and co-curricular scaffolded developmental interventions.

**ESS Objective #4:** Ensure that all university staff and administrators have opportunities to enhance their intercultural fluency to ensure inclusive educational initiatives, policies and practice; have positive, supportive relationships with a diverse student body and employee communities; and support belonging and positive identity affirmation.

## FOCUS AREA - INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP (IL)

**GOAL:** RWU will deepen the university's advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by implementing changes in its culture, leadership practices, leadership composition and institutional policies and systems.

**IL Objective #1:** Implement cultural changes across all sectors of the university as a prerequisite to subsequent diversity, equity and inclusion efforts.

**IL Objective #2:** Strategically allocate and manage the university's financial, physical and human resources to advance diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

**IL Objective #3:** Executive leadership of the university, including the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Board Members, the University President, and the President's Cabinet members will clearly and consistently articulate a vision that integrates diversity, inclusion and equity as a core value.

**IL Objective #4:** Establish RWU as a leader in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts in the state and region.

# THE PLAN

# FOCUS AREA - STUDENT ACCESS, SUCCESS AND EQUITY (SASE)

**Goal:** RWU will be known as a demographically diverse institution that supports access, achieves equitable outcomes along all critical indicators of success and supports the thriving of underserved students.

## **SASE OBJECTIVE #1: INCREASE ACCESS TO THE UNIVERSITY FOR UNDERREPRESENTED AND UNDERSERVED STUDENTS WITH A FOCUS ON FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENTS, LOW INCOME STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF COLOR BY REMOVING BARRIERS TO ENROLLMENT.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**SASE 1.1** Develop an aid strategy that supports access, diversity and revenue goals and increase external funding for students with underserved and underrepresented identities through endowed giving, foundations, corporate-funded scholarships, and granting agencies.

**SASE 1.2** Leverage outcomes of successful support, resource and capacity building programs and centers to attract more underserved and underrepresented students. Utilize new marketing channels, materials and recruiting strategies to reach prospective students of color, and to communicate the resources, supports, and programs the university has to offer.

**SASE 1.3** Establish summer academic pipeline programs and affinity group-based pre-college experiences for first generation, low income students and students of color.

**SASE 1.4** Create access to, and increase representation in, high paying niche majors through outreach strategies supported by market analysis, an understanding of what majors and competencies will be in high demand, how cultural values and major interest intersect and an understanding of major interests of first generation college students, low income students and students of color. Explore strategies that encourage understanding of career outcomes and promote career exploration and readiness.

**SASE 1.5** Establish seamless pathways between University College and Bristol for degree attainment for both UC and Bristol students.

## **SASE OBJECTIVE #2: PROVIDE UNDERREPRESENTED AND UNDERSERVED STUDENTS WITH SUPPORT FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO COLLEGE IN ORDER TO SUPPORT EQUITABLE OUTCOMES.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**SASE 2.1** Support and expand resource transition programs for underrepresented and underserved first year students.

**SASE 2.2** Create Summer Bridge programs for incoming first year students of color, first generation students and low income students with the intent of establishing peer networks and obtaining skills to prepare for the academic year.

**SASE 2.3** Promote comprehensive advising strategies to strengthen a student-centered, culture as asset, approach to support individual students' needs.

### **SASE OBJECTIVE #3: ESTABLISH A SIGNATURE INITIATIVE FOR UNDERREPRESENTED AND UNDERSERVED STUDENTS THAT FOCUSES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC AND CAREER SKILLS, SOCIOEMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES AND COGNITIVE HABITS THAT SUPPORT THEM IN NAVIGATING AND THRIVING IN A SYSTEM THAT WAS NOT CREATED FOR THEIR SUCCESS.**

**SASE 3.1** Increase engagement of underrepresented and underserved students in scaffolded high impact practices by creating culturally relevant research, diasporic study abroad opportunities, and social justice and affinity living learning communities.

**SASE 3.2** Engage alumni as mentors and sponsors with an asset based lens and create opportunities for faculty, staff, alumni, and external community members to interact with students to support mentoring relationships and career readiness by helping undergraduate students understand the hidden rules and norms of college and the workplace that impact success.

### **SASE OBJECTIVE #4: SEEK INSIGHTS FROM DISAGGREGATED DATA, OUTCOMES BASED ASSESSMENTS, PROJECTIONS AND BEST PRACTICES TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE STRATEGIES.**

**SASE 4.1** Develop a culture of disaggregation and intersection for all access and success data to support a robust and nuanced understanding of how underrepresented and underserved students move through the institution and their outcomes after they leave.

**SASE 4.2** Infuse conversations about minoritized students' identity development, cultural self-efficacy and culture as assets/cultural wealth into institutional conversations about retention, wellness and thriving.

**SASE 4.3** Use an intersectional lens to create the most appropriate, responsive and effective strategies.

**SASE 4.4** Seek ways to assess the outcomes of populations not currently monitored for equity such as students with disabilities, Queer and Trans Students, International students, Commuters and Veterans.

#### **Promising Practices:**

- » Enrollment Management Outreach strategies
- » EY College Map Program
- » Intercultural Leadership Ambassador Program
- » Strive Overcome Achieve Rise Program (SOAR)
- » Black Living Learning Community
- » Global Scholars Program
- » Kinship Collective
- » Queer and Trans Living Learning Community
- » International Ambassadors Program
- » RISE (Research and Industry in Science and Engineering)
- » Pathway to Purpose initiative
- » Diasporic study abroad opportunities

# FOCUS AREA - EMPLOYEE ACCESS, SUCCESS AND EQUITY (EASE)

**Goal:** Roger Williams University will be an organization known for its success in hiring, developing and advancing members of minoritized groups. In addition, it will be an employer of choice for talented individuals who embrace the institution's ambitious diversity, equity and inclusion goals and objectives.

## EASE OBJECTIVE #1: ENHANCE PRACTICES DEMONSTRATING THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS A LEADER IN WORKPLACE CONDITIONS RELATED TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION.

### ACTION STEPS

**EASE 1.1** Foster an Appreciative approach to language and actions in order to promote value for diverse identities and foster a sense of belonging, openness and optimism.

**EASE 1.2** Utilize tools and leverage technology for outreach and evaluation in order to promote and continuously improve the institutional climate for diversity, equity and inclusion.

**EASE 1.3** Ensure that all RWU platforms (website, brochures, communications, job applications etc.) incorporate statement and language that demonstrate the institution's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion at every level of participation—students, employees, administration, faculty, trustees and other stakeholders and partners.

**EASE 1.4** Secure funding sources for ongoing personal/professional development opportunities that build intercultural capacity for faculty and staff at all levels and mandate participation in a select number of activities each year.

## EASE OBJECTIVE #2: INSTITUTE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT FOR MINORITIZED INDIVIDUALS.

### ACTION STEPS

**EASE 2.1** Create a dynamic talent management strategy that fosters the personal and professional growth of faculty and staff. Leverage and advance skillsets to develop diversity at all levels. Strategy should include the creation of a best in class initiative, RGA (retain grow advance), tailored to our organizational culture, to develop and promote minoritized employees with a focus on technical competencies, socio emotional competencies, navigational skills and an understanding of the hidden rules, norms and processes that have traditionally impeded advancement.

**EASE 2.2** Strengthen and support employee affinity groups, creating new groups and modifying others as the university evolves and as needed to achieve diversity goals.

**EASE 2.3** Develop a mentorship program for tenure-track faculty to ensure they understand how to move successfully through the tenure process and have access to critical leadership and development opportunities.

## **EASE OBJECTIVE #3: DEVELOP A RECRUITING STRATEGY TO IDENTIFY TALENT THAT WILL ASSIST US IN ACHIEVING OUR DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ACCESS GOALS.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**EASE 3.1** Identify and implement processes that improve the recruitment and hiring of minoritized and culturally competent applicants including the hiring of a diversity recruiter who would concentrate specifically on training and effectiveness of search committees, outreach to diverse populations, inclusion activities involving all levels of hiring and offer full definition to every step of the recruiting process.

**EASE 3.2** Mandate unconscious bias training as a requirement for anyone involved in hiring processes of students, administrators, faculty, and others, and utilize trained ambassadors on search committees to ensure equitable processes.

**EASE 3.3** Develop a competency based hiring process that includes competencies required to advance our diversity, equity and inclusion goals for all positions.

**EASE 3.4** Reward and Recognize employees for their contributions towards advancing diversity, equity and inclusion goals, seeking ways to recognize additional work done by minoritized employees and incorporating best practices for honoring such labor.

**EASE 3.5** Analyze exit interview data for employees to identify climate improvement themes and barriers to employee retention and engagement at all levels of the institution.

**EASE 3.6** Hire a University ombudsperson position to serve as an informal mediator for identity-based or power-based disputes that do not require a formal investigation process.

## **EASE OBJECTIVE #4: CREATE AND SUPPORT A MORE FULLY ENGAGED COMMUNITY WITH DIRECT AND REGULAR ACCESS TO LEADERSHIP IN ORDER TO FOSTER DIALOG AND EXCHANGES OF IDEAS THROUGHOUT THE ORGANIZATION.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**EASE 4.1** Establish a climate survey that assesses the impact of a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion at the university and measures progress towards creating an overall sense of community that ensures that no one is stigmatized because of their identity.

**EASE 4.2** Regularly review, and seek input on, all university policies and practices related to improving the onboarding process and revise policies that create negative impact on minoritized employees.

**EASE 4.3** Create more open forums, such as town halls and retreats, to support engagement between faculty, staff and University leadership.

## Promising Practices:

- » Established summer flexible work programs.
- » Established systematic outreach to diversity organizations for the purposes of identifying talent and recruiting for open positions.
- » Updated institutional Exit Interview Questionnaire to assess experiences of departing employees concerning strength of community and other issues relative to diversity goals.
- » Revised annual Performance Evaluation instruments to include ratings for Adaptability (working effectively with diverse individuals) and Diverse and Intercultural Understanding (fostering and promoting diversity within the work group).
- » Continuously updating job-posting language that values diversity, inclusivity and equity.
- » Requiring a diversity statement to be included in cover letters for all institutional positions.
- » University and Employment landing pages are more welcoming, more informative, and show more focus on diversity. Also added the EEO Labor Law, EEO Labor Law Supplement, NLRB Employee Rights, Pay Transparency Notice, Non-Discrimination Policy posters to RWU website.
- » Trained and embedded “equity ambassadors” into the hiring process to ensure an equitable search.
- » Unconscious bias training for search committees
- » Established RGA leadership academy. 1st cohort of 25 is 88% women and 27% people of color.



# FOCUS AREA - CAMPUS CLIMATE AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS (CCIR)

**Goal:** Roger Williams will create a campus climate dedicated to inclusion, equity and respect, enabling community members to thrive and experience a genuine sense of belonging.

## **CCIR OBJECTIVE #1: DEVELOP SHARED COMMON LANGUAGE, VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICES, ACROSS THE INSTITUTION, INCLUDING CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE AND APPRECIATIVE LANGUAGE APPROACHES.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**CCIR 1.1** Develop and incorporate institutional inclusive and appreciative language standards into internal and external contracts, when feasible.

**CCIR 1.2** Raise Institutional commitment to inclusive and appreciative language awareness, education and application.

**CCIR 1.3** Encourage adoption of inclusive and appreciative language in course syllabi and scholarship and grant applications.

**CCIR 1.4** Inform invited speakers, vendors, and visiting conferences and associations of the University's commitment to inclusive and appreciative language practices, and invite them to share those values, when appropriate.

## **CCIR OBJECTIVE #2 BUILD AND SUPPORT A SAFER CAMPUS COMMUNITY FREE OF BIAS AND VIOLENCE, DEDICATED TO ELIMINATION OF PREJUDICE THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL AND INTENTIONAL PRACTICES**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**CCIR 2.1** Include expectations in on-boarding of new faculty and staff related to respectful, inclusive and equitable engagement with colleagues and students. Expectations should be reinforced and disseminated through institutional channels such as training programs, the fall faculty conference, the annual performance review process, and institutional documents.

**CCIR 2.2** Require completion of new diversity and inclusion on-line training module for all new entering students through Everfi.

**CCIR 2.3** Create a Bias Education Group constituted of staff and students who will enhance the existing bias reporting system by raising awareness, responding to bias incidents and developing social marketing campaigns, educational initiatives and programs.

**CCIR 2.4** Engage in intentional messaging and programming through student Orientation and First Year experiences.

**CCIR 2.5** Engage in a storytelling campaign that will result in an anthology, which can be used in order to formulate policy change to support students of color and other marginalized communities.

**CCIR 2.6** Create a Bystander, Equity, and Harassment Reduction Program for employees.

## **CCIR OBJECTIVE #3: DEVELOP AND SUSTAIN SYSTEMS AND SPACES FOR POSITIVE IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT AND PURPOSEFUL INTERGROUP RELATIONSHIPS BY DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITIES TO AFFIRM SOCIAL IDENTITIES AND TO HEAR, AND LEARN FROM, DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**CCIR 3.1** Establish an intergroup dialogue program with curricular and co-curricular components that provides a safe/brave environment for deep and meaningful conversations across different identities and on difficult campus, national and global topics.

**CCIR 3.2** Strengthen development and support for student affinity groups in order to develop meaningful relationships.

**CCIR 3.3** Expand Living Learning Community opportunities in identity based and social justice themed areas for residential students.

### **Promising Practices:**

- » Faculty Senate resolution to support preferred pronouns in the classroom and in syllabus statements.
- » Inclusive and appreciative language guide updated, made widely available, and included in new faculty and staff on-boarding, student orientations, and other trainings.
- » Inclusive and appreciative language campus wide campaign created and promoted by students as a mechanism for participation and active voice.
- » Community members are currently able to submit reports online or in person (<https://www.rwu.edu/undergraduate/student-life/about-student-life/bias-incident-response>). These reports are reviewed and remedied in a timely manner by AVP/Dean of Student Life and Director of Student Conduct, in consultation with appropriate faculty, VP for Equity & Inclusion/CDO, Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Student Success.
- » Process for Preferred Personal Information (PPI) was revised, streamlined, and re-branded as Chosen Names Policy.
- » Successful Law School mentoring program.
- » Student Life established bias education group.

# FOCUS AREA - EDUCATION, SCHOLARSHIP AND SERVICE (ESS)

**Goal:** RWU will be known as an institution that lives up to its educational imperative to interrupt inequity and the injustice that is deeply embedded in histories, legacies and structures of oppression, power, and privilege in higher education through the delivery of programs, courses and pedagogical strategies that foster transformation and effective and positive interactions in a world that is multicultural, global and interdependent.

## **ESS OBJECTIVE #1: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE FACULTY MEMBERS' INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY TO ENHANCE THEIR ABILITY TO DEVELOP INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY AND CURRICULUM.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**ESS 1.1** Provide training and resources to build faculty's capacity for service learning in order to help students develop intercultural fluency and make connections between community experiences and the larger world.

**ESS 1.2** Build faculty capacity to engage in difficult dialogues around equity and inclusion within classroom settings and with their colleagues.

**ESS 1.3** Expand the Faculty Fellows Programs to mentor faculty in enhancing their intercultural fluency in pedagogical development in alignment with equity and inclusion goals.

**ESS 1.4** Develop mechanisms to recognize and value faculty who engage in teaching, scholarship, and service that foster intercultural fluency in measurements like comprehensive reviews.

## **ESS OBJECTIVE #2: TRANSFORM CURRICULUM ACROSS CAMPUS TO EMBED INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY LEARNING GOALS IN PREPARATION, EVALUATION, AND DELIVERY OF PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICES.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**ESS 2.1** Integrate intercultural fluency learning goals into department, school, program assessment and accreditation – for both external and internal reviews.

**ESS 2.2** Assess how intercultural fluency learning goals are or are not structured into departmental curriculum across the university.

**ESS 2.3** Increase the number of community-engaged courses with a service component aimed at enhancing students' intercultural fluency that include RWU-specific Undergraduate Service Learning/Community Engagement Learning Outcomes.

**ESS 2.4** Develop pre-engagement course for service learning and community engagement to be offered to students and course-specific faculty to prepare students to engage in meaningful service that is reflective of diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

**ESS 2.5** Develop Study Abroad learning outcomes for faculty-led study abroad courses, with assessment, that foster intercultural fluency goals, and include training for faculty leaders, program leaders, and advisors, to facilitate the integration of those outcomes.

## **ESS OBJECTIVE #3: INCREASE GRADUATING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY THROUGH CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR SCAFFOLDED DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTIONS.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**ESS 3.1** Provide scaffolded co-curricular learning experiences for students that foster intercultural fluency through various department initiatives and programs.

**ESS 3.2** Provide training and advising to student clubs and organizations to ensure events and processes are inclusive and welcoming.

**ESS 3.3** Develop scaffolded, ongoing, intercultural fluency assessments to track and evaluate the success of curricular student learning outcomes.

**ESS 3.4** Assess how intercultural fluency learning goals manifest in all areas of student co-curricular life.

**ESS 3.5** Develop an Intercultural Fluency marker on transcripts for students who participate in high levels of co-curricular programming that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion, in order to celebrate and incentivize participation.

## **ESS OBJECTIVE #4: ENSURE THAT ALL UNIVERSITY STAFF AND ADMINISTRATORS HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE THEIR INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES, POLICIES AND PRACTICE; HAVE POSITIVE, SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY AND EMPLOYEE COMMUNITIES; AND SUPPORT BELONGING AND POSITIVE IDENTITY AFFIRMATION.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**ESS 4.1** Develop staff training, and workshops for enhancing intercultural fluency such as Intercultural U, Safe Zone and shorter term workshops.

**ESS 4.2** Provide training, workshops and resources to build staff's capacity for engaging opportunities for students, engaging in difficult dialogues around equity and inclusion issues with students and colleagues.

**ESS 4.3** Develop opportunities for authentic cross cultural engagement.

**ESS 4.4** Develop mechanisms to recognize and value staff who engage in professional development and university service that foster intercultural fluency in measurements like reviews.

### **Promising Practices:**

- » Creation of Diversity and Inclusion Fellows
- » Development and strong attendance at Intercultural U
- » Orientation session for 1st year students focused on building community
- » Student Leader Training for OAs, PAs and RAs
- » Various faculty-driven programs, social justice month, social justice classes, women in Business courses and Racial justice courses
- » Diasporic study abroad course to the dominican republic showed a growth in students' intercultural fluency

# FOCUS AREA - INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP (IL)

**Goal:** RWU will deepen the university's advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts by implementing changes in its culture, leadership practices, leadership composition and institutional policies and systems.

## **IL OBJECTIVE #1: IMPLEMENT CULTURAL CHANGES ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF THE UNIVERSITY AS A PREREQUISITE TO SUBSEQUENT DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**IL 1.1** Develop a common definition of diversity, equity and access for the university.

**IL 1.2** Improve internal campus communications to include clear structures, in multiple channels and forms, across all levels, frequently employed both formally and informally, with regular review of key milestones and progress made on the Equity Action Plan.

**IL 1.3** Implement decision-making processes that consider the impact of decisions on all members of the university community, seek input, utilize affinity groups as consultative voices, and diversify the final decision makers across horizontal and vertical levels.

## **IL OBJECTIVE #2: STRATEGICALLY ALLOCATE AND MANAGE THE UNIVERSITY'S FINANCIAL, PHYSICAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES TO ADVANCE DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION GOALS.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**IL 2.1** Ensure each Division's goals and budgets reflect diversity, equity and inclusion needs, including strategic fundraising targets, as well as spending with vendors/suppliers who also support those goals.

**IL 2.2** Ensure that diversity, equity and inclusion goals are articulated and considered as part of the Campus Master Planning process. Assure representation from all university community stakeholders in the planning processes.

**IL 2.3** Create physical spaces that are consistent with and support a diverse and inclusive community for students, faculty and staff, including residential, recreational, communal spaces, and affinity student support areas through multicultural student center breakout spaces and multi-faith spaces.

**IL 2.4** Evaluate accessibility of all campus spaces, including those for campus visitors (e.g., Office of the President, Cabinet member's offices, and the Intercultural Center).

## **IL OBJECTIVE #3: EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP OF THE UNIVERSITY, INCLUDING THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, BOARD MEMBERS, THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT, AND THE PRESIDENT'S CABINET MEMBERS WILL CLEARLY AND CONSISTENTLY ARTICULATE A VISION THAT INTEGRATES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AND EQUITY AS A CORE VALUE.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**IL 3.1** Seek demographic representation of the University leadership, especially at the Cabinet Level and within the Board of Trustees that reflects aspirational goals for diversity, equity and inclusion, especially to ensure that diverse perspectives are well represented in decision-making.

**IL 3.2** The President, in consultation with the Executive Vice President, Vice President for Enrollment Management and the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, will determine aspirational student demographic goals that support access, diversity and revenue goals.

**IL 3.3** The Board of Trustees and President's Cabinet will continually build their intercultural capacity to effectively lead the successful implementation of the plan and support the thriving of the institution through significant demographic, technological and business model disruption.

**IL 3.4** Establish an Institutional Equity scorecard, monitored by the Board and Cabinet, that is updated and disseminated annually as part of a comprehensive assessment system designed to support evaluation, refinement and continued progress on diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

## **IL OBJECTIVE #4: ESTABLISH RWU AS A LEADER IN DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS IN THE STATE AND REGION.**

### **ACTION STEPS**

**IL 4.1** Establish a supplier diversity program to support minoritized owner businesses.

**IL 4.2** RWU will be a convener of cross institutional and industry partners committed to advancing shared diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

**IL 4.3** Establish a Committee for Diversity and Inclusion with external stakeholders to assist the university in identifying strategies and resources to execute its Diversity, Inclusion and Inclusion Plan, and to provide guidance and feedback to University Leadership on its efforts.

**IL 4.4** Evaluate current partnerships, experiential learning opportunities and volunteer offerings to align with diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

**IL 4.5** Encourage and incentivize faculty and staff involvement with community service organizations through Board and Volunteer Service.

### **Promising Practices:**

- » Data Disaggregation and intersection
- » January 2018 Summit and Equity Action planning process
- » Development of Institutional equity scorecard
- » Leading for change consortium participation
- » Partnership with Ernst and Young to create a summer college access program
- » Establishment of Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

# EVALUATING OUR PROGRESS

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The implementation of the equity action plan will be supported by an equity scorecard which will be updated and disseminated annually to the campus community. Summative assessments with analysis and recommendations for future progress will be presented at the 3 and 5 year mark.

A sampling of metrics we will utilize for each of our five goal areas is presented below.

## Student, Access, Success and Equity

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- » Disaggregated census and overall student demographic information
- » Disaggregated and intersectional/intersected retention, graduation and employment information
- » Grade distribution and pass rate in foundational courses

## Employee Access, Success and Equity

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- » Disaggregated demographic data
- » Disaggregated termination data
- » Disaggregated promotion and tenure data

## Climate and Intergroup Relations

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- » Disaggregated NSSE data
- » Disaggregated Noel Levitz data
- » Disaggregated employee climate data
- » Participation in cross cultural and intergroup dialogue opportunities
- » Presence, success, and impact of affinity groups

## Education, Scholarship and Service

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- » Presence of, participation in and outcomes of diversity related courses, capacity building experiences, and experiential opportunities
- » Presence of culturally relevant curricular and co-curricular offerings
- » Progress on intercultural development assessment instruments

## Infrastructure

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- » Diversity of Board of Trustees, Cabinet, Deans, other senior leaders, and advisory group members
- » Infrastructure to drive goal accomplishment
- » Indicators of deep partnership with external community such as sponsors roundtable, external advisory board, supplier diversity and convening initiatives

# APPENDICES



The following pages outline two national frameworks that we merged to create our diversity, equity, and inclusion framework.

# A FRAMEWORK FOR FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (SMITH, 1988)

Long established model used by the Penn State University system and other institutions.

## 1. Access and Success

- Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body
- Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

## 2. Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

- Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity
- Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

## 3. Education and Scholarship

- Developing a Curriculum That Fosters United States Cultural Competencies
- Developing a Curriculum That Fosters International Cultural Competencies

## 4. Institutional Infrastructure (Institutional Viability and Vitality)

- Diversifying University Leadership and Management
- Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

# **INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE MODEL (WILLIAMS, BERGER & MCCLENDON, 2005)**

Developed in collaboration with the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) and widely used by many institutions including University of Wisconsin, Framingham State University etc.

## **Access and Equity**

- The compositional number and success levels of historically underrepresented students, faculty, and staff in higher education.

## **Diversity in the formal and informal curriculum**

- Diversity content in the courses, programs, and experiences across the various academic programs and in the social dimensions of the campus environment

## **Campus Climate**

- The development of a psychological and behavioral climate supportive of all students

## **Student Learning and Development**

- The acquisition of content knowledge about diverse groups and cultures and the development of cognitive complexity

# DEI PLANNING FRAMEWORK

## 1. Access, Success and Equity

- Recruit and Retain a Diverse Student Body
- Recruit and Retain a Diverse Workforce
- Ensure equitable outcomes for students and employees.

## 2. Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

- Develop a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity
- Create a Welcoming Campus Climate/ develop a psychological and behavioral climate supportive of all students
- Foster positive and meaningful interactions across different cultures

## 3. Education, Scholarship and Service

- Develop a Curriculum That Fosters United States Cultural Competencies through curricular and co-curricular content and experiences, with an emphasis on experiential learning.
- Develop a Curriculum That Fosters International Cultural Competencies curricular and co-curricular content and experiences, with an emphasis on experiential learning.
- Ensure that students and employees become literate in their own and other cultures and experiences, and are competent in interacting across difference.
- Foster cognitive complexity and critical thinking [in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion]

## 4. Infrastructure

- Diversify University Leadership and Management
- Build leadership capacity to drive diversity and inclusion strategy and support a welcoming climate
- Coordinate Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals
- Create a structure that supports the implementation of diversity and inclusion goals and the achievement of desired outcomes.
- Become a model for sustained success in the areas of access, diversity, inclusion and equity in our region and among our peer and aspirational institutions

# TASKFORCES

## Student Access, Success and Equity

**Amy Tiberio, Co Chair, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management**

**Tracy DaCosta, Co Chair, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing**

**Zoila Quezada, Co Chair, Director of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Shamika Cameron, Director of Undergraduate Admission Recruitment

Allison Chase Padula, Associate Dean of Student Success

Brian Hendrickson, Assistant Professor of Writing

Cassidy Hammond, Assistant Director of International Student and Scholar Initiatives

## Employee Access, Success and Equity

**Susan McTiernan (Co Chair) Dean, School of Business**

**Thomas McDonough (Co Chair) Assistant Vice President of Human Resources**

Tracy Sartrys, Executive Assistant to the Dean

Lynne Mello, Associate Vice President of Marketing

Laurie Barron, Director of Feinstein Center for Pro Bono and Experiential Education

Amy Lanoie, Employment Specialist

Gena Bianco, Dean, University College

## Climate and Intergroup relations

**John King (Co Chair) Vice President of Student Life**

**Jen Stanley (Co Chair) Title IX Coordinator, Associate Dean**

Andrew Cometa, Class of 2019 - Political Science & Pre-Law Studies

Meghan Hansen, Director of Alumni Relations and Volunteer Engagement – Volunteer

Adrienne Harris, Associate Director of Student Programs, Leadership and Orientation

Lee Jackson, former Professor of Spanish and Portuguese

Kiki Jacobs, Director of Athletics - Intramurals and Recreation

Deborah Johnson, former Director of Diversity and Outreach - School of Law

Barbara Kenney, Instructional Services and Campus Initiatives (retired)

Gabby Porcaro, Assistant Director of Queer and Trans Student Initiatives

Teal Rothschild, Professor of Anthropology/Sociology

Phoebe Thaler, Class of 2019 - Political Science & American Studies

## Education, Scholarship and Service

**Laura D'Amore (Co Chair) Associate Professor of American Studies**

**Avelina Espinosa (Co Chair) Professor of Biology**

Bob Shea, Vice Provost

Jason Jacobs, Associate Dean of General Education

Taino Palermo, former Program Director for Community Development - University College,

1L at Roger Williams University School of Law

Lisa Landreman, Assistant Vice President and Dean of Student Life

Aaron Allen, Assistant Professor of American Studies

Kamille Gentles-Peart, Associate Professor of Communications

Michael Viera, former Major Gift Officer & Parent Relations, Leadership Giving

Diana Hassel, Professor of Law

Kevin Hayden, Director of Study Abroad Programs

# TASKFORCES (CONTINUED)

## Infrastructure and Leadership

**Sue Bosco (Co Chair) Professor, School of Business**

**Lorraine Lalli (Co chair) Assistant Dean of Students, School of Law**

Jake Brostuen, Student

Bob Cole, Professor, Communications

Jennifer Dunseath, Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research

Ben Greenstein, Dean, School of Social and Natural Sciences

Rob Hancock, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management and Retention, University College

Alexander Knights, Assistant Professor, School of Business

Marc Leonetti, Vice President for Accounting and Treasury Management

Christine Parker, Assistant Vice President- Institutional Advancement

Lisa Raiola, Vice President for Institutional Advancement (retired)

Joe Sassi, Co-General Counsel

Stephen White, Dean, School of Architecture, Art and Historic Preservation

Brian Williams, Interim Chief of Staff

Nicole Turner, Controller