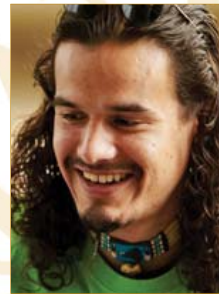# Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Charting the Course for Diversity: Assessment and Priorities for 2014-2015

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The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system is an Equal Opportunity employer and educator.

Environmental Scan
February-May 2014

**Inventory of System Diversity Practices and Approaches**

- Met campus leadership and learned about their diversity practices
- Identified current campus practices and strategies
- Identified current resource needs and areas for additional investment
- Met with key staff related to diversity and affirmative action
- Determined current program alignment with existing needs
- Learned about campus efforts aimed at creating diverse campus environments and support of diverse students, staff and faculty
- Read, updated current documents related to system diversity work
- Sampled campus diversity plans and affirmative action plans

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Observations

Some preliminary observations.

- Broad scope of student diversity programs on campuses

- Campus goals for diversity are differentiated across the system

- Affirmative action and diversity are viewed as distinct from each other

- Diversity professionals on campus function at various levels, have different backgrounds and educational credentials

- Improved diversity at senior staff and administrative levels but lower at faculty level

- Limited integration of community partners

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Employees of color represent an increasingly large percentage of new hires
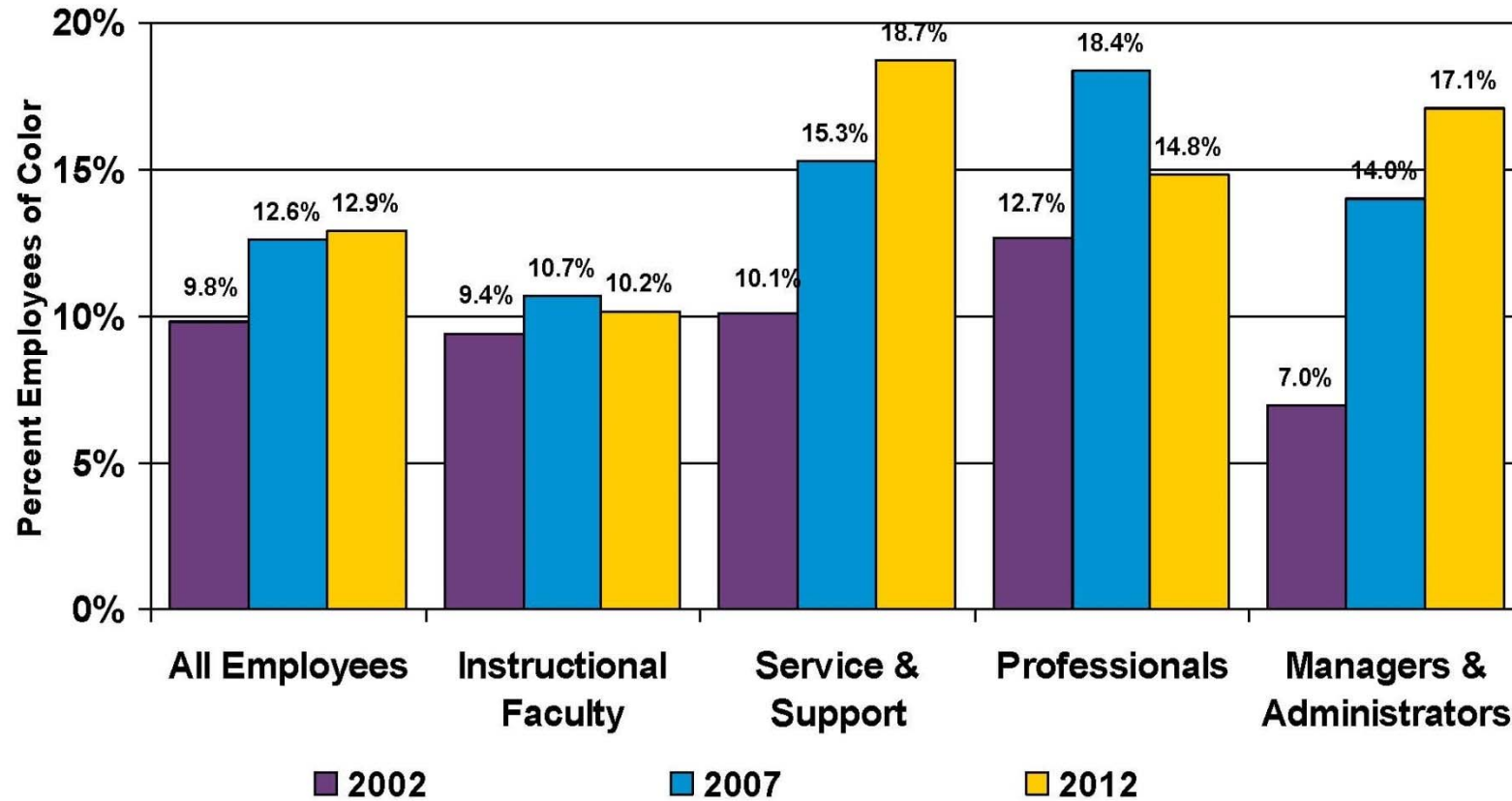
Source: System Office Research, Planning and Policy

Priority: enhance the capabilities of system diversity practice

Objective: Develop diversity leadership that is competently provided by professionally trained staff

- Establish a working group and complete a study of campus diversity professionals

- Provide consistent training and support to campus CDOs

- Facilitate regular contact and communication with CDOs through face-to-face meetings, technology (WebEx), and a listserv

- Develop a broad understanding for CDOs and the gradual implementation of strategic diversity leadership

- Develop a working group on quality practices

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Priority: increase diversity recruitment and retention

Objective: Build a workforce with diversity at all levels

- Collaborate with Vice Chancellor for Human Resources to develop and implement a diversity hiring strategy
  - Provide diversity training for system human resources practitioners
  - Work with HR to identify potential candidates
  - Assist with interviews of candidates for president positions

- Explore and build relationships with networks that can help with access to staff and faculty from underrepresented groups

- Assist with the development of strategies to retain diverse faculty, administrators, and staff

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Priority: facilitate strategic diversity leadership

Objective: Collaborate with the Leadership Council through regular training that will build relevant diversity deployment and influence

- Provide training for cultural competence
- Regularly share topics related to diversity and inclusion
- Serve as a resource to presidents to ensure implementation of diversity initiatives
- Provide feedback, assistance to institutional leaders on tracking diversity progress (including planning)
- Provide knowledge and technical support
- Share new initiatives and developments with Leadership Council
- Share insights gained from campus visits with presidents

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Priority: develop tools to assess diversity practice and impact

Objective: Oversee campus diversity and equity progress

- Provide training and technical assistance for CDOs and Diversity Councils on monitoring and tracking of diversity goals

- Develop a system for maintaining accountability and tracking of diversity and affirmative action efforts

- Assist campuses in determining diversity priorities and resource needs

- Introduce and implement diversity mapping on each campus as a way to explore diversity implementation and impact

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Priority: celebrate, reward, and recognize achievements

Objective: Recognize individuals and institutions with exemplary and impactful diversity programs

- Constitute a review committee for diversity awards

- Establish a nominations process for the annual diversity award

- Encourage and recognize innovative programs and campus best practices through mini-grants and recognition events

- Disseminate information about these innovations/best practices to all campuses through their chief diversity officers and presidents

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Priority: community engagement and partnerships

Objective: Increase both internal and external community engagement and partnership

- Serve as stakeholder on boards for diverse community organizations and those who have a diversity mission

  - Attend regular meetings and public events to share MnSCU activities, align mission and gain insights/feedback

  - Provide a diversity platform for system office

  - Network on efforts related to achievement/opportunity gap with community partners and stakeholders

  - Provide regular feedback to leadership

- Maintain a relationships with State Councils for different ethnic backgrounds and disability

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Questions for discussion

1. Are these the right priorities?

- enhance the capabilities of system diversity practice

- facilitate strategic diversity leadership

- develop tools to assess diversity practice and impact

- celebrate, reward, and recognize achievements

- community engagement and partnerships

2. If these are the correct priorities, are there suggestions about strategies that we need to use?

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