

Advancing Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice: Update on Goals and University Climate

The 2017-18 academic year has launched with incredible enthusiasm for continued advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at Oregon State.

WELCOMING DR. CHARLENE ALEXANDER

In June, Dr. Charlene Alexander began her tenure as Oregon State's inaugural vice president and chief diversity officer. Dr. Alexander arrives from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, where she served as associate provost for diversity, interim associate vice president for community engagement, and as a faculty member in the School of Counseling. Her accomplishments at Ball State include leading successful initiatives to recruit and retain diverse students and faculty, developing a university-wide strategic diversity plan, and creating deep relationships with diverse community partners.

Dr. Alexander spent her first 60 days at Oregon State conducting a wide-ranging listening tour, meeting with students, faculty and staff to learn about the Oregon State community and salient issues driving our efforts around diversity, equity and inclusion. Information gathered during the tour, and through conversations with university leaders, yielded clear focus areas for the 2017-18 academic year.

FOCUS AREAS FOR 2017-18

The Office of Institutional Diversity will focus on five areas during the upcoming year:

1. Engaging OSU students, faculty and staff stakeholders to develop the university's strategic diversity plan in alignment with Strategic Plan 4.0;
2. Enhancing and elevating the role of the President and Provost's Leadership Council for Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice;
3. Creating clear systems of accountability tied to the strategic diversity plan;
4. Examining and enhancing professional development opportunities in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion for faculty and staff; and
5. Developing and deploying strategic communications to highlight the university's process and progress in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.

HARNESSING ENERGY, CREATING ALIGNMENT, SUSTAINING FORWARD PROGRESS

This is a time of incredible opportunity at Oregon State. The breadth of work accomplished and underway in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion – by students, and in academic and administrative units alike – is impressive and wide-ranging. Leveraging and augmenting these accomplishments will be central to the office's success during the upcoming year. The university must also continue to innovate, iterate and improve to ensure that OSU remains at the forefront of advancing equity and inclusion in our local communities, in Oregon, nationally and globally.

The role of the Office of Institutional Diversity in this regard is to harness this energy, create alignment, and develop deep support systems to ensure that the university sustainably advances diversity, equity and inclusion as central components of institutional excellence. This

endeavor necessarily requires continued commitment and engagement on the part of *all* Oregon State community members.

NEXT STEPS

Themes emerging from the CDO's listening tours and focus areas for the coming year will be discussed with the Board at the October 20 meeting.