

## **SDSU Strategic Plan Diversity Task Force Final Report**

January 31, 2013

### **Introduction**

SDSU prides itself on diversity and the role inclusion plays in the university's educational, research and community service missions. This report includes recommendations that address SDSU's current and emerging diversity prospects and challenges as a leading diverse public research university. The Diversity Task Force has identified goals and initiatives, set priorities and determined investment opportunities and resource requirements in three critical areas: 1) Recruitment and Retention of Students; 2) Recruitment and Retention of Faculty and Staff; and 3) Cultural Competency.

### **Goal #1: Increase the Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented Students**

Many SDSU programs play a critical role fostering diversity and supporting students who have been under-represented in higher education. The Diversity Task Force recommends strengthening successful existing programs that have helped SDSU improve its retention rates better than any other university over the last decade, while investing in new initiatives critical to campus diversity – particularly those ideas and programs that address significant under-representation in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

**Initiative #1: Prioritize, invest and support University programs geared at increasing the recruitment and retention of a diverse student population.**

#### **Areas of focus:**

- **STEM** – Invest in campus STEM programs and initiatives, including academic counseling, mentorship and career services and tracking post-graduation student outcomes as this is necessary information for renewed federal funding. Under the guidance of the chief diversity officer, pursue community and business partnerships that support and leverage campus STEM programs.
- **African-American student recruitment and retention** – Address SDSU's low rates of African-American students, particularly male students. Strengthen recruitment initiatives (i.e., Harambee Weekend and High School Conferences) and scholarship funds (i.e., Presidential Scholars) that target high-achieving African-American high school and transfer students. Continue to provide critical services that buttress SDSU's improved retention rates including supporting the Africana Studies department and departments with high rates of African American majors and graduates.

## Appendix D

- **International student recruitment** – Bolster partnerships with countries and universities abroad by leveraging university-level initiatives (i.e., transnational triple-degree programs) as well as individual projects that develop connections overseas (i.e., Frontiers in Cardiovascular Regeneration International Symposium). Expand academic/exchange programs that bring international students to SDSU. Work collaboratively with American Language Institute (ALI), Enrollment Services, Study Abroad, College of Arts & Letters and the Graduate Office to enhance our recruitment initiatives.
- **American-Indian student recruitment and retention** – Focus partnerships with local tribal communities and academic programs (i.e., American-Indian Studies) to recruit students to SDSU.
- **Community partnerships** – Under the guidance of the chief diversity officer, strengthen successful existing community programs and partnerships with organizations and communities (i.e., Compact for Success, City Heights Collaborative, Price Community Scholars, SDG&E and many others). Identify new opportunities for community partnerships focused on achieving diversity goals.
- **Other underrepresented groups** – Grow support services for students of all backgrounds and cultures.
- **Develop programming for recruitment partners** – Bring counselors in target high schools and community colleges to campus. Provide campus officials and students to present at their schools.
- **Fundraising and grant identification** – Increase University efforts of identifying sources of funding (i.e. donors, grants, etc.) to be used to support University diversity programs and initiatives.
- **Operationalize HSI status** – Seek out the input of experts such as faculty in Chicano/a Studies. Strengthen multilingual and multicultural education and support for students. Support the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity on and off campus.

### Investment opportunities and resource requirements

While some initiatives require new ideas and/or increased funds, focusing existing resources and sustaining current investments can achieve significant progress for recruiting and retaining diverse students:

- **Re-invest in successful programs** – Focus fundraising campaigns on expanding successful programs that can be used as a template for broader results (i.e., Compact for Success).
- **Leverage communication channels** – Promote diversity programs and initiatives on the SDSU homepage, in news sites and in other communication efforts. Make diversity a part of the SDSU story in research, education and community service.
- **Inventory existing programs and services** – Annually identify all SDSU programs and resources for diverse student communities (i.e., 75 campus mentoring programs). Examine success of each program and prioritize the funding needs of existing and new programs and services based on the annual evaluation.

## Appendix D

- **Increase financial services** – Invest in and leverage community/donor support for increased financial aid, scholarships and other financial resources for high-achieving and high-need students.

### **Goal #2: Increase the Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Faculty and Staff**

SDSU is committed to the principle that diversity among faculty and staff improves the breadth, depth and quality of the university. Research, teaching and service benefit from the variety of experiences, perspectives and academic pursuits. A diverse campus sustains recruitment, retention and graduation of high-achieving diverse students.

#### **Initiative #2: Revise University policy, processes, and employee programs to support University efforts to increase the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and staff.**

##### **Areas of focus:**

- **Hiring, Retention, Tenure and Promotion of Faculty, Staff and Administrators** – Ensure hiring and review committees are diverse. Under the guidance of the University Senate and Chief Diversity Officer, review Faculty RTP processes and policies that support campus diversity efforts. Under the guidance of the Center for Human Resources, the Office of Employee Relations and Compliance and the Chief Diversity Officer, review staff and administrator hiring and promotion processes and policies that support campus diversity efforts. (Also noted in Cultural Competency section.)
- **Expand faculty recruitment communication** – Increase advertising and marketing budgets for faculty hiring committees to reach high-quality diverse candidates.
- **Faculty mentorship** – Establish mentoring program at the department, college and university levels. Pursue fellowships to support mentorship opportunities across all colleges.
- **Faculty Exchanges with Historically Black Colleges and Universities** – pursue a faculty exchange program with an HBCU to increase the cultural competencies of our existing faculty and to bring faculty from diverse backgrounds to SDSU as visiting scholars.
- **Faculty administrative fellowships** – Create training program for half-semester appointments to the offices of the president, provost and vice presidents.
- **Address regional challenges** – Recruitment is severely hindered by San Diego's high cost of living, which is exacerbated among specific diverse populations that do not have a broad population base in the area.
- **Faculty Recruitment** – Prioritize hiring in departments that have been successful at attracting and retaining a diverse tenured/tenure-track faculty. Prioritize hiring in departments that attract and graduate relatively greater percentages of underrepresented undergraduate and graduate students. Prioritize hiring in departments that fully include diversity and cultural competency as core aspects of their curriculum.

## Appendix D

- **Faculty Research** – Cultivate and invest in departments and programs with demonstrated excellence in diversity research and teaching.

### **Investment opportunities and resource requirements**

- **Recruitment/advertising budget** – Establish diverse faculty recruitment fund to augment department advertising budgets and salary scales.
- **Release time** – Authorize college/department administrators to provide release time for mentorship opportunities.
- **Develop affordable short-term housing near campus**

### **Goal #3: Increase the Cultural Competency of Students, Faculty, Staff and Administrators**

SDSU's diverse campus requires cultural competency among its administrators, faculty, staff and students to understand and better serve its community and prepare students to excel in the diverse world beyond the campus borders.

**Initiative #3: Institutionalize cultural competency as a value and priority for the University and its community and create a culture of inclusion across the campus.**

#### **Areas of focus:**

- **Cultural Competency** – Under the guidance of the University Senate and the Office of Intercultural Relations and the Chief Diversity Officer, establish guidelines for including cultural competency as a component of the Retention, Tenure and Promotion process. In collaboration between the Division of Business and Financial Affairs and bargaining units, develop more specific criteria for evaluating cultural competency as part of the staff and administrator hiring and review process.
- **LGBT services** – Under the guidance of the Division of Student Affairs and Student Life and Leadership, identify space and funding support for LGBT center.
- **Disability services for students/faculty/staff** – Increase funding to support services provided to the campus' growing population of students with disabilities, including funding to provide more sign language interpreters, alternative curriculum materials and technical support/training.
- **Review of the Cultural Diversity Academic Requirement** – Regularly review what courses qualify to fulfill the cultural diversity academic requirement and evaluate the course content to ensure that the content increases a student's awareness and understanding of cultural competency. Regularly evaluate whether there are any deficiencies in course offerings relating to different cultural groups. For example, at the present time, there is a lack of courses relating to the culture of disability.
- **Web accessibility** – Provide additional resources to the existing ATI Committee to help the campus meet its existing ATI responsibilities.

## Appendix D

- **Support and increase cultural programs and awareness** – Identify and grow successful existing cultural competency programs and departments. Support the development of a disability studies program and the development of an interdisciplinary disability curriculum.
- **Increase collaboration** – Identify opportunities and provide incentives for the campus on diversity inclusions initiatives , (i.e., athletics, career services), to work together (i.e., the chief diversity officer and the Cross Cultural Center).

### Investment opportunities and resource requirements

- **LGBT center** – Identify University funds and/or donors to fund staffing for the center and center programming. Staffing needs for an LGBT center would include a center coordinator and assistant coordinator. Salary costs for these two positions is estimated around \$90,000 plus benefits annually.
  - **Rationale** – Our vision is to create a climate that will support and encourage SDSU departments, administrators, staff, faculty and students to become more sensitive and knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of the LGBT community by maintaining and promoting a safe and supportive campus environment. This will create a campus where LGBT students can value their own stage of development and appreciate the cultural and social diversity that the SDSU LGBT community has to offer. The LGBT Resource Center will serve the entire campus population, not just LGBTQ-identified students, faculty and staff. Additionally, the Center will be actively engaged in the broader San Diego community and seek opportunities for partnerships with other institutions and organizations.
  - The mission of the LGBT Center is to encourage academic and personal achievement, leadership and professional development, student welfare and support, campus outreach and education, and student advocacy to the estimated 4,000 to 5,000 LGBTQ students, faculty and staff on campus.
  - The Center will support academic and personal achievement by encouraging LGBT students, faculty and staff to expand their educational, professional and personal opportunities at SDSU. The Center will also support and encourage the infusion of LGBT issues into the curricula. Leadership and professional development will be fostered by the development of student leadership skills, while organizing social, cultural and educational programs and activities that address concerns of the LGBT community. The Center will provide informational services and resource referral to all students, faculty and staff, in order to enhance their educational experience and address individual needs and concerns.
  - The LGBT Resource Center will support efficient use of resources by developing collaborative programs with other campus departments, including, but not limited to, Counseling and Psychological Services and LGBT Studies.

## Appendix D

- **Student Disability Services** - Increased funding for Student Disability Services to provide necessary services including sign language interpreters and alternative curriculum materials.
- **Release time** – Authorize college/department administrators to provide release time for information technology professionals to serve on a web accessibility committee.

### **Initiative #4: Creation of a Diversity Initiatives Coordination Council.**

#### **Areas of focus:**

**Council Responsibilities** – In consultation with the President or designee, Council would be charged with the annual review of diversity initiatives across campus, the setting of diversity priorities for the campus, the assessment of diversity goals, and making recommendations regarding the resource allocation for diversity initiatives and programs. The Council would work collaboratively with other diversity committees and offices across campus to ensure consistent goals and practices, to create efficiencies and to ensure the strategic use of resources.

#### **Investment opportunities and resource requirements**

**Council** – No additional monetary resources are anticipated for this council.