INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

OVERVIEW

Inclusive Excellence is a framework designed to help campuses integrate diversity and quality efforts. As a model, Inclusive Excellence assimilates diversity efforts into the core of institutional functioning to realize the educational benefits of diversity. Applying Inclusive Excellence concepts leads to infusing diversity into an institution’s recruiting, admissions, and hiring processes; into its curriculum and co-curriculum; and into its administrative structures and practices. Inclusive Excellence means an institution has adopted means for the cohesive, coherent and collaborative integration of diversity and inclusion into the institutional pursuit of excellence. Accepting the Inclusive Excellence model reflects the understanding that diversity and inclusion are catalysts for institutional and educational excellence, are to be invited and integrated into the very core of the educational enterprise and are not isolated initiatives. The Inclusive Excellence framework provides specific definitions for the terms diversity and inclusion. Throughout this document, we use these terms to mean the following:

Diversity – The term diversity is used to describe individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning and working together.

Inclusion – The term inclusion is used to describe the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity – in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect – in ways that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and emphatic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions. (http://www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/index.cfm)

2010-2015 FRAMEWORK

The 2010 – 2015 Diversity Framework reaffirms RIT’s commitment to growing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive learning, living, and working environment. The university strives to be a 21st century learning community defined by excellence through the affirmation of differences in the composition of its leadership, faculty, staff, and students; the configuration of its policies, procedures, organizational structures, curricula, and co-curricular programs; and the fabric of its interpersonal relationships. This diversity framework expresses a plan for enacting the university’s larger mission and for its values. The plan is shaped by RIT’s core values: student centeredness, professional development and scholarship, integrity and ethics, respect, diversity, and pluralism, innovation and flexibility, and teamwork and collaboration. The plan outlined here is aligned with the university’s goals articulated in the 2005-2015 University Strategic Plan in which RIT vows
[to] engage all members of the campus community in the shared responsibility for an enriching and inclusive experience for all...; [to] have an enriched academic curriculum with courses and programs addressing a broad understanding of global issues and featuring enhanced opportunities for acquiring language skills...; [and to fostering] a learning, living and working campus community environment that supports and encourages cross-cultural understanding and global awareness.

MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The model for Inclusive Excellence is closely aligned with multicultural organizational development literature. Having evolved through three stages of organizational development, the inclusive organization fully embraces diversity and is characterized by an organizational culture that employs diversity and inclusive practices at all levels. This model of organizational development is one way to evaluate and make note of institutional growth and progress. The four stages outlined in the Inclusive Excellence model are: 1) the mono-cultural organization, where diversity is not valued, and compositional diversity is non-existent; 2) the compliant organization, where diversity efforts are motivated by staying out of legal trouble; 3) the multicultural organization, where many diversity activities and celebrations occur, there are visibly committed leaders, and bias is not tolerated, yet the comprehensive effort to weave diversity into the institutional fabric has not yet been fully achieved; 4) the inclusive organization where differences are recognized, valued, celebrated and utilized, there is an emphasis on inclusive practices at all levels of institutional functioning, and all members of the organization are accountable for diversity and inclusion success. RIT will use this framework as a backdrop against which to reflect on its progress in institutional and educational climate and practices.

DIMENSIONS OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

OVERVIEW

The model for Inclusive Excellence at RIT has four dimensions:

1. Access and Success,
2. Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations
3. Education and Scholarship
4. Institutional Infrastructure

This framework should be conceptualized as a matrix of integrated initiatives designed to achieve institutional excellence infused with evidence of diversity and inclusion. Each dimension of the model represents an area in which initiatives are designed to achieve excellence. For planning and implementation purposes, information needs to be collected and
analyzed, and programs and policies need to be modified or developed to address deficiencies within each dimension. The dimensions create a framework that helps the institution monitor the progress of diversity and inclusion efforts to ensure that they remain integrated, intentional and central to the core mission of the university.

The goals, objectives, strategies and indicators outlined below are intended to guide the actions of appropriate university units, including senior management areas, colleges, departments, and programs, in the delivery of initiatives, policies, and practices that advance diversity and inclusion. To coincide with the timeframe associated with the University Strategic Plan, initiatives outlined in this framework include the current year (2010) to 2015. As this framework is implemented, the creation of indicators for each of the four dimensions will result in an annual report to the RIT Board of Trustees that will include accomplishments, deficiencies, and plans for adjustments of efforts. The report associated with this plan will be presented annually, beginning in April 2011, to the Diversity Committee of the Board of Trustees. (The annual census dates for students and employees occur in the fall, and an April reporting deadline would provide time for proper data collection and analysis.)

Indicators included in this plan draw on existing datasets wherever possible, especially those reports submitted to state or federal authorities that use standardized definitions and may allow cross-institutional comparisons. Institutional and national surveys of faculty, staff, and students provide important information for monitoring progress, guiding continuous improvement, and benchmarking against others when possible. Many units on campus participate in collecting and analyzing data cited below, including Institutional Research, Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management, Human Resources, Graduate Studies, as well as the Chief Diversity Office.

ACCESS AND SUCCESS

Goal: Achieve a more diverse and inclusive undergraduate and graduate student body, faculty and staff.

**OBJECTIVE 1: TO ACHIEVE INCREASED ENROLLMENTS OF WOMEN, AALANA, DEAF/HARD-OF HEARING (DHH) AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS.**

**Strategies:**
1. Implement selected pipeline initiatives with the potential to make RIT the institution of choice for high-achieving precollege women AALANA, and DHH students.
2. Assess, and where needed, enhance existing pipeline initiatives with the potential to make RIT the institution of choice for high-achieving precollege women, AALANA, and DHH students.
3. Reduce the gap in yield rates for admitted freshmen or transfers of AALANA students, where applicable, through aggressive financial aid packaging, assessment of special initiatives, and broad engagement of
the university community.

4. Develop partnerships and agreements with secondary schools overseas to identify and encourage international student applicants.

5. More fully engage international and domestic alumni in appropriate marketing and student recruitment programs.

Indicators:

1. Number of pipeline program participants who enroll at RIT.
2. Increased yield for admitted freshmen and transfer AALANA students.
3. The number of first-time full-time undergraduate or transfer AALANA students, DHH students, women, and international groups.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO INCREASE THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF AALANA, DHH, AND FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS.

Strategies:

1. Identify specific barriers to the academic progress and achievement of AALANA and DHH students.
2. Enhance advising system for all students with special attention given to AALANA and DHH students.
3. Ensure broad participation of first generation, low-income, DHH, and AALANA students in undergraduate research and experiential learning opportunities.
4. Assess the effectiveness of one or more pipeline or undergraduate academic support programs each year to ensure that efforts and outcomes are aligned with goals, and opportunities for continuous improvement are identified.
5. Implement key AALANA Student Success Tiger Team recommendations.
6. Implement enrollment and retention goals for DHH students as outlined in NTID’s Strategic Decision 2020 manuscript.

Indicators:

1. First to second year retention rates of AALANA and DHH students.
2. The seven -year graduation rates of AALANA and DHH students
3. Comparison of the academic progress and success of AALANA, DHH, and first generation students who participate in selected academic support programs with students with similar entry profile who do not participate.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO INCREASE THE RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESS OF A DIVERSE GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COMMUNITY

Strategies:

1. Continue recruiting a diverse graduate and professional student population with the goal of making RIT the destination of choice for graduate students from diverse backgrounds.
2. Continue expanding graduate education programs, offering more
academic courses that address diversity and global inclusion.

3. Create a benchmark to assess the effectiveness of key graduate student recruitment or retention initiatives to ensure that efforts and outcomes are aligned with goals and that opportunities for continuous improvement are identified.

**Indicators:**

1. Number of AALANA and DHH students admitted to graduate school.
2. Time-to-degree and graduation rates of AALANA, DHH, and women graduate students.
3. The number of graduate degrees awarded to AALANA, DHH, and women students.

**OBJECTIVE 4: TO ACHIEVE A MORE DIVERSE FACULTY AND STAFF**

**Strategies:**

1. Increase the likelihood of diverse faculty and staff applicant pools by developing and implementing a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan - focusing on advertising, job descriptions, career ladders, search committee processes and education, and special faculty recruitment initiatives like “future faculty”.
2. Implement outreach and recruitment strategies to increase AALANA and DHH staff applicants and hires.
3. Implement faculty/staff exit surveys and use the results for identification of issues and opportunities for continuous improvement.
4. Create leadership development and career path programs for faculty and staff (with special attention given to women, AALANA, and DHH faculty and staff to enhance their leadership abilities and opportunities.

**Indicators:**

1. Number and proportion of various categories of women, AALANA, and DHH faculty.
2. Number and proportion of AALANA and DHH staff by and major employee group.
3. New women, AALANA, and DHH faculty and staff hires by type of employee.
4. Voluntary departure rates of women, AALANA, and DHH faculty and staff (or turnover rates as defined by the state for staff) by employee type.
5. Number and proportion of women, AALANA, and DHH faculty members who achieve tenure and promotion by cohort.

**CAMPUS CLIMATE AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS**

Goal: Create and sustain an organizational environment that acknowledges and celebrates diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout its daily operations.
OBJECTIVE: CREATE A CLIMATE THAT IS SUPPORTIVE AND RESPECTFUL AND THAT VALUES DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES

Strategies:
1. Use surveys and/or focus groups to periodically assess student and employee feedback on the climate for diversity.
2. Create meaningful dialogue between and among groups that increases understanding of varied perspectives and the nature of social and economic inequalities.
3. Educate the campus community on the prevention of harassment and discrimination and productive ways to resolve conflict. Effectively address concerns and complaints.
4. Offer educational and celebratory events for students, faculty, staff and the community that recognize, value, and honor diversity and promote inclusion. Evaluate selected programs for their impact on the climate for diversity.
5. Develop and maintain high visibility of RIT Principles of Community including annual on- and off-campus promotions such as student and employee orientations and athletic events and posting the principles in classrooms and offices.
6. Increase recognition programs that acknowledge contributions made to advancing diversity.

Indicators:
1. Perceptions of the climate for diversity as measured by relevant questions on the Employment Climate Survey analyzed by race/ethnicity, gender, employee type and senior management area.
2. Awareness and understanding of the Principles of Community as measured by questions on the Employment Climate Survey.
3. Benchmark comparisons of diversity and climate-related perceptions and experiences as measured by national or multi-institution surveys (e.g. National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Profile of Today’s College Student (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators)).

EDUCATION AND SCHOLARSHIP

Goal: Engage students, faculty and staff in learning varied perspectives of domestic and global diversity, inclusion, and social justice.

OBJECTIVE 1: OFFER COURSES, CURricula, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AT THE UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE LEVELS THAT ACHIEVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LEARNING GOALS.

Strategies:
1. Implement the plan for undergraduate curricular transformation (Human
Diversity into curriculum found in the RIT Strategic Plan) and enrich academic curriculum with courses and programs addressing a broad understanding of global issues.

2. Establish incentives for individual faculty and academic units to adapt existing courses and academic programs for global outreach education, and develop new courses and programs as needed.

3. Develop opportunities that help faculty assess the achievement of diversity-related learning outcomes in class or extra-curricular experiences.

4. Hire faculty and staff with content expertise in areas of study that examine diverse identities and cultures.

Indicators:

1. Number of students enrolled in courses with the Human Diversity designation.

2. Number of undergraduate and graduate students engaged in internationalization efforts using measures outlined in Global Society efforts (e.g. number of students participating in education abroad, work abroad, etc.).

3. Increase in students reporting increased dialogue between and greater understanding of other races or cultures on assessment surveys (e.g. NSSE and other relevant surveys of student experiences/outcomes).

OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASE THE MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES AND CAPACITIES OF FACULTY AND STAFF.

Strategies:

1. Establish on-line and in-classroom professional development opportunities designed to improve multicultural competencies of faculty and staff for domestic and global settings.

2. Assist faculty with learning new competencies regarding assessing diversity related learning goals.

3. Assist faculty via education and coaching regarding best practices and relevant pedagogy for students with differing abilities.

Indicators:

1. Participation by faculty and staff in professional development programs related to curricular transformation, diversity and disability awareness, or internationalization.

INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal: Create and sustain an institutional infrastructure that effectively supports progress in achieving diversity goals in the University strategic plan.
OBJECTIVE 1: SUSTAIN AND INCREASE UNIVERSITY-WIDE EFFORTS DESIGNED TO AMPLIFY THE POTENTIAL TO SECURE GIFTS, GRANTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVANCE THE GOALS OUTLINED IN THIS PLAN

Strategies:
1. Incorporate diversity and inclusion interests into philanthropic campaign efforts.
2. Seek corporate and foundation support for key pipeline and academic support programs that serve women, international, AALANA, DHH, and/or students with diverse abilities.
3. Engage women, international, AALANA, DHH, and alumni with diverse abilities in diversity and inclusion efforts (e.g. reunions, yield events, speaker series, recognition events, etc.).

Indicators:
1. Increased funding support for diversity and inclusion initiatives from philanthropic efforts.
2. Increased initiatives aimed at multicultural, DHH, and women alumni cultivation.
3. A dedicated FTE for the engagement of multicultural alumni.

OBJECTIVE 2: ENGAGE KEY LEADERS AND STAKEHOLDERS IN ANALYZING DISAGGREGATED DATA AND SPECIAL STUDIES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND AND ADDRESS LONG-STANDING ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES, RECRUITMENT AND YIELD OF AALANA UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND THE LOSS OF WOMEN, AALANA, AND DHH TENURE-TRACK FACULTY.

Strategies:
1. Schedule regular and on-going meetings with key leaders and relevant university committees and commissions (President’s Commission on Women, President’s Commission on Pluralism and Inclusion, academic advisors, etc.) to review data and reports to increase organizational learning and understanding of significant issues to be addressed.
2. Set expectations that practices and outcomes related to diversity and inclusion are vital measures of institutional excellence. Create a culture of organizational learning and continuous improvement at all levels.
3. Institute systems of reporting and accountability and continuous improvement to optimize the realization of the university’s diversity goals.
4. Develop and report on key areas in all four dimensions of the diversity framework.
5. Increase research and grant funding opportunities which include diversity/inclusion related outcomes.

Indicators:
1. An annual report to the Board of Trustees Diversity Committee on
selected indicators outlined in the diversity framework.

2. Report on Inclusive Excellence goals, objectives, strategies and measures with academic and administrative units, commissions and other bodies as appropriate.