THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE KNOXVILLE
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Diversity Action Plan

Executive Summary

Overview

The University of Tennessee Libraries' Diversity Action Plan is a living document that outlines ways in which the Libraries' will strengthen its commitment to "foster a diverse and inclusive environment marked by integrity and civility".

The plan encompasses the many facets involved in attracting, engaging, and nurturing a campus climate of support for underrepresented populations and helps to establish a foundation for service, creative teaching, and assessment.

The goals and actions contained within this document are a collaborative effort by the entire library community and while some items are specific to our branch libraries, most apply to the university libraries as a whole.

Goal 1: Create and sustain a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive campus **climate.**

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Create professional development and experiential learning opportunities for library employees in the areas of inclusivity and cultural competency.
- Objective 2: Strengthen and unify language, accessibility, and inclusive practices for materials and services available through the library's online presence.
- Objective 3: Complete a baseline assessment of our current diversity, equity, and inclusion practices and establish a timeline to continually measure progress towards our diversity goals.
- Objective 4: Increase the discoverability of scholars and scholarship representing diversity in UT Libraries purchased and digitized collections.
- Objective 5: Counteract histories of exclusion by digitizing and promoting rare materials and archival documents that represent diverse communities.
- Objective 6: Increase visibility of underrepresented artists and composers by diversifying holdings of the DeVine Music Library and developing an outreach program that engages students and others with underrepresented materials and artists.
- Objective 7: Demonstrate our commitment to diversity through a commitment to spend our money with diverse companies.
- Objective 8: Pilot a family-friendly space that allows students and staff to bring their children so parents can have a dedicated space that is comfortable and child friendly for studying.
- Objective 9: Leverage subject liaison program to support Diversity Action Plans of academic departments on campus.

Goal 2: Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from historically underrepresented populations into **faculty, staff, and administrative positions** (particularly department heads, directors, deans, and vice chancellors).

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Commit financial and human resources, toward the active recruitment and retention of individuals from underrepresented groups.
- Objective 2: Create opportunities for informal mentorship for faculty and staff, paying particular focus to underrepresented staff and faculty.
- Objective 3: Create a work culture that supports women and single parents.

Goal 3: Attract, retain, and graduate increasing numbers of **undergraduate and graduate students** from historically underrepresented populations and international students.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Improve user experience with Libraries spaces and services through inclusive needs assessment.
- Objective 2: Adapt some of our study spaces to be more accessible to our patrons with sensory issues.
- Objective 3: Create targeted programs to connect underrepresented groups to Libraries expertise and resources.
- Objective 4: Contribute to the affordability of college life through library programs and services.
- Objective 5: Host *Lunch and Learn Series*, a series of facilitated lunchtime discussions on how to comfortably have dialogue about diversity and inclusion related topics for campus and community
- Objective 6: Make Dean's Student Advisory Committee (DSAC) more inclusive and accessible.

Goal 4: Develop and strengthen **partnerships with diverse communities** in Tennessee and globally.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Develop a collection development strategy to approach issues of access as fundamentally a social justice issue in order to provide equitable access to research for the betterment of our community, the state of Tennessee, and the world. Arrive at a unified understanding as an organization of our philosophy of access and develop a coordinated strategy for implementing that understanding in our processes and engaging, educating, and leading the campus on this issue.
- Objective 2: Strengthen existing relationships and expand Digital Library of Tennessee (DLTN) partnerships with HBCUs, community colleges, or museums in the western part of the state.
- Objective 3: Preserve important materials from underrepresented organizations and community archives.
- Objective 4: Building on the *Certificate in Cultural Competency and Inclusive Teaching* and the *Community College Partners Group,* connect with other libraries in Tennessee who may not have the option to do this on their own campuses.
- Objective 5: Start a fund to support diverse and inclusive collections.

Goal 5: Ensure that **curricular requirements** include significant intercultural perspectives.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Provide training and learning formats about inclusive instruction and what this means in both in person and online venues.
- *This objective will be partially addressed through the continuation of the CCIT program (Goal 1 section).*

Goal 6: Prepare **graduate students** to become teachers and researchers in a diverse world.

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Expand the reach of the Best Practices in Publishing Program to provide formal opportunities for graduate students to discuss research and publishing issues with graduate students and experts at the University, across disciplines. Expose graduate students to some of the complications and considerations that come with publishing one's work and give advice on overcoming roadblocks to becoming successful authors.