

STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLAN

2018-2023

leading with

BOLD VISION and
MOVES

INSPIRING EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE, EVERY DAY



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Paulette Patterson Dilworth, Ph.D.

Vice President, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Leading with Bold Vision and Bold Moves

A Message from the Vice President

At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, diversity and inclusiveness are at the very core of our shared values and beliefs. Each day, we strive to create an atmosphere that not only fosters academic excellence, but also one that encourages all in our community to practice inclusive excellence. Diversity, equity and inclusion are essential components to the way we work, interact with others and even study here at the university.

The university's Strategic Diversity Plan outlines the goals and actions UAB is committed to assessing and implementing through the year 2023. The core campus-wide strategies include Access and Success, Positive Campus Environment, Diversity Education, Campus and Community Engagement and Communication. With these goals in mind, the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion along with the Equity Advisors assigned to the Equity Leadership Council, have identified key strategies and tactics to address and improve in these areas.

As one of only 14 universities nationwide to be named a 2018 Diversity Champion by INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, we recognize that diversity, equity and inclusion is a continuous improvement process. We must continue to provide equitable opportunities for all students, faculty and staff. We must address issues of inequality as they arise. We must endeavor every day to ensure our campus is a safe environment for all of us to live, work and grow. And, we must continue to inspire inclusive excellence, every day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paulette Patterson Dilworth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



SHARED VALUES

Integrity - We act ethically and do what is right.

Respect - We treat others with courtesy and civility.

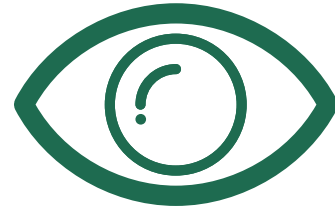
Diversity and Inclusiveness - Everybody counts every day. We actively seek varied perspectives in our decision-making.

Collaboration - We trust each other and work cooperatively across disciplinary boundaries in spirit of shared governance.

Excellence and Achievement - We constantly innovate, solve problems and improve ourselves and others through learning.

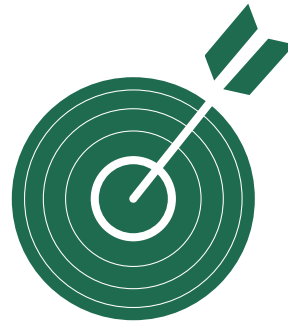
Stewardship - Fiscal and environmental sustainability guide our decisions.

Accountability - We are answerable to each other and act with the best interests of the university in mind.



VISION

UAB inspiring equity and inclusive excellence, every day.



MISSION

Our mission is to champion equity and inclusion and, in particular to advocate for inclusive excellence and equity so that UAB students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners and friends can flourish and excel. Our mission is inspired by what we value, what we learn from research and what we teach and share with the world. It is our goal to motivate our people to take a courageous step to inspire equity and inclusive excellence throughout our state, nation and world, every day.



DEFINING DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT UAB

Diversity is a defining feature of Alabama’s and UAB’s past, present, and future; and refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and more.

Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff in every stage of UAB’s education and career development, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of marginalized groups.

Inclusion is the act of creating an environment at UAB in which any individual or group can feel welcome, respected, supported, and valued. An inclusive climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions so that all people can fully participate in the University’s opportunities.



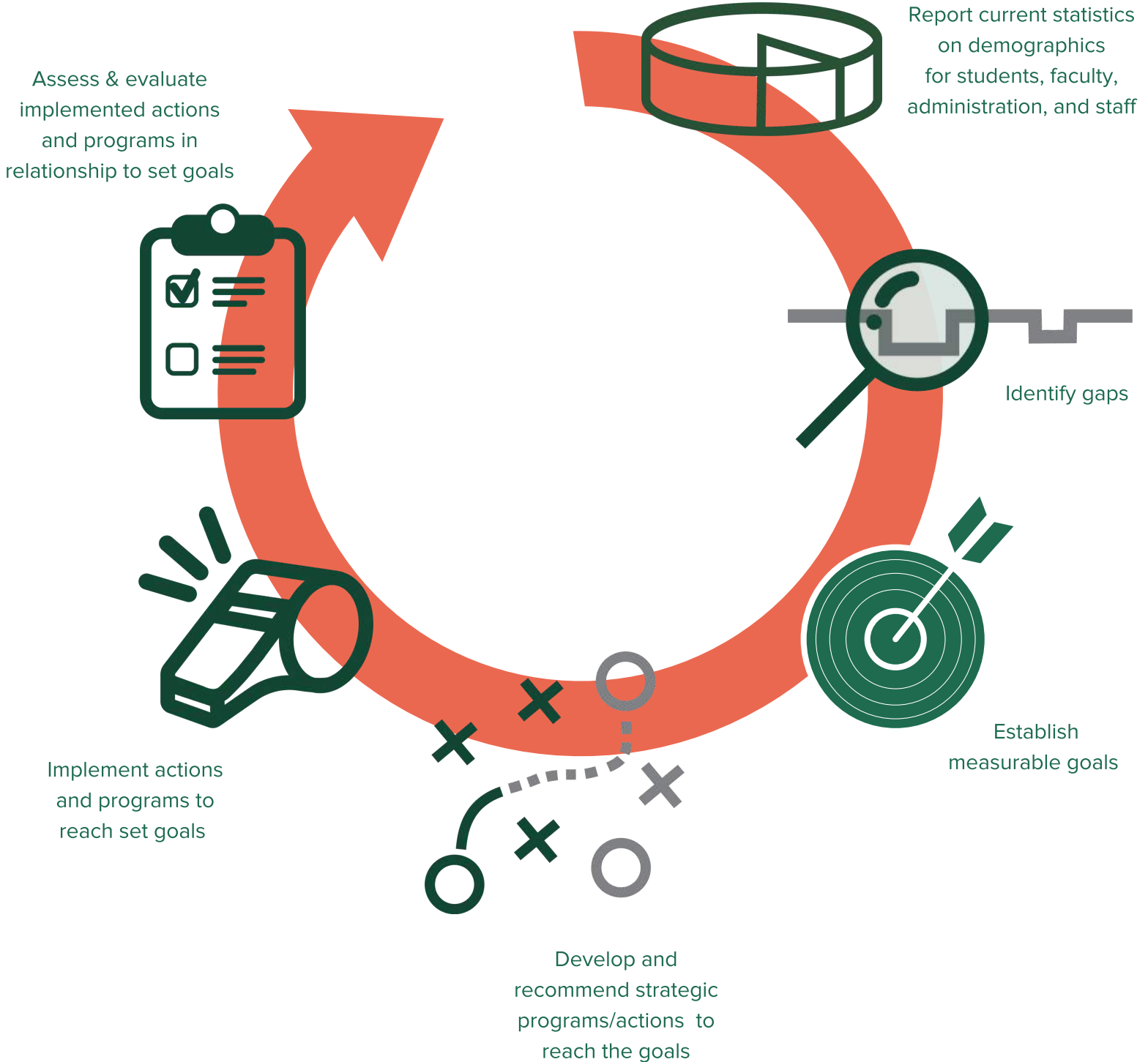
BUILDING A COMMUNITY AT UAB THAT VALUES DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND, INCLUSION

In order for our students to thrive in an increasingly diverse and complex global world, UAB must assist them in developing their abilities to communicate, understand, and work with people who are different from themselves. Building a community at UAB in which every member is welcome, supported, and valued is an essential foundation to education and learning, and therefore is central to our identity and mission. At UAB we strive to prepare our students not just to participate, but to lead, and effective leadership in the 21st century requires the skills to build productive partnerships in contexts and institutions that are increasingly diverse.

As we work to meet the goals outlined in this strategic diversity plan, UAB will continue to be a leader in preparing students for success, and UAB—through the work of its faculty, staff and students—will have a major impact on economic innovation and renewal in our state and region, and in maintaining our quality of life.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

continuous improvement process



We will work to develop and sustain a diversity, equity and inclusion continuous improvement process to support a campus community that is diverse, inclusive and is more than a series of education sessions or events. At UAB, our efforts will focus on ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion are woven throughout our DNA and is anchored in how we do our work. Creating a just and inclusive campus community is central to our planned, intentional organizing effort to ensure we have the ability and capacity to respect and welcome variety in cultures and differences and incorporate those differences into innovative research, teaching, and service practice, every day.

Through a process of continuous improvement, we are striving to lay the foundation for increasing the diversity and inclusion relational skills of the UAB community.

A PROCESS OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WILL SUPPORT OUR EFFORT IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

- It will **encourage** everyone to use the same language. This is key to deploy lessons learned and best practices across academic and administrative units, processes and business practices. Formalizing documents, procedures and work instructions will make it easier to facilitate the development of a shared understanding.
- It will **foster** an inclusive excellence mindset. Instead of viewing continuous improvement as something to restart with every new project, a formalized and consistent approach to continuous improvement teaches our people that equity and inclusion is inherent to how UAB functions as a diverse enterprise. Foremost, diversity, equity and inclusion is not something you add to how you work — it becomes how we work, every day.
- It **makes people accountable** to UAB and each other. When continuous improvement permeates throughout all levels of our enterprise, diversity stops being one person's job and becomes part of everyone's job. Knowing that our diversity and inclusion efforts never stop evolving will help the UAB faculty, staff, students, alumni, community friends and partners see where they can be active participants in continuous improvement.
- It **reinforces** the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion. Today, in a higher education environment it is very easy to get lost in what is currently trending with diversity speak, and institutional slogans. A diversity and inclusion continuous improvement process should be treated as an integral foundation for UAB and formalizing how we approach this process makes it more concrete.

STRATEGIC GOALS & ACTIONS

The University's Strategic Diversity Plan serves as a blueprint for the academic and administrative units' strategic plans. The overarching strategies and actions emerged from and reflect the insight and innovation produced by Equity Advisors from those units. They are intended to support and enhance the unit plans. For that reason, they focus on areas where centrally coordinated and supported programs and initiatives will be most effective. The core campus wide strategies will be:



Access & Success



Positive Campus Environment



Diversity Education



Campus & Community Engagement



Communication



Access & Success

Enhance recruitment, retention and graduation rates of students from underrepresented populations. Increase recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion of faculty and staff from underrepresented populations.

1.1: Enroll, retain, support and graduate a diverse undergraduate, graduate and professional student body.

1.2: Ensure that students from underrepresented populations have greater access to high impact learning opportunities.

1.3: Proactively attract, recruit, support and retain a diverse faculty and staff population who have a voice and agency in helping to shape an institutional culture of inclusive excellence.





Positive Campus Environment

Improve and sustain a culture where students, faculty, staff, alumni community partners, friends and visitors feel included and supported.

2.1: Increase opportunities for critical dialogue to discuss current events and issues affecting our national, global and local communities.

2.2: Create and maintain a living, learning, and working environment where everyone feels respected, supported and valued and where everyone has agency and voice.

2.3: Ensure that the buildings and facilities are welcoming and accessible for all people and cultures, and, all members of the UAB community from diverse backgrounds feel welcome and part of a university-wide community.



Diversity Education

Improve and increase diversity education and training opportunities to enhance cross-cultural competency and awareness for students, faculty, staff, and members of the community.

3.1: Increase and assess diversity-rich learning curricular and co-curricular experiences that raise students' critical self-awareness and cultural competency, increase understanding of global diversity, and encourage engagement in the greater community.

3.2: Create opportunities for faculty and staff to engage in efforts that are necessary for the UAB campus to institutionalize the practice of inclusive excellence.

3.3: Increase the proactive, ongoing university support of research, scholarship and creative expression addressing diversity and inclusion issues in disciplinary and interdisciplinary fields, including those initiatives that harness the benefits of diversity in areas not traditionally viewed through a diversity lens.



Campus & Community Engagement

Serve the campus and Birmingham community by seeking, establishing, strengthening and sustaining relationships with diverse groups, businesses, industry, organizations, institutions and community partners to advance and promote equity and inclusion.

4.1: Increase and strengthen partnerships with business, industry, organizations and community-based entities to promote diversity and inclusion.

4.2: Increase opportunities to advance UAB as a national model for the creation of knowledge and promising practices for diversity, equity, inclusion and community engagement through innovative scholarship, teaching, policy development, programs and services.

4.3: Cultivate mutually beneficial community-university partnerships that further the mission of the university to serve Alabama and beyond, with an emphasis on historically and currently underserved and marginalized communities.



Communication

Provide clear, cohesive and comprehensive communication regarding diversity, inclusion and equity to all university stakeholders

5.1: Communicate a clear statement of diversity, equity and inclusion at UAB.

5.2: Develop a communication strategy on diversity and inclusion that includes all forms of media and communication formats for both internal and external efforts.

5.3: Establish periodic formal updates (written and other media and formats) to inform the university community about progress on diversity and inclusion strategic goals.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The outcomes of the Strategic Diversity Plan will be used as feedback for the various academic and administrative operating plans throughout the University. Overall responsibility for implementation of the Strategic Diversity Plan rests with the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Specific implementation strategies will be developed in consultation with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the deans of the various schools and colleges, Staff Council, and other University officers as appropriate. As needed, specific items requiring further discussion or elaboration will be referred to appropriate senate and university committees. The vice president will be responsible for the development of annual operating plans and annual progress reports. A set of metrics will be used to measure progress toward meeting UAB's strategic diversity goals.

OUR METRICS FOR SUCCESS

The following is a list of metrics that guide our assessment and evaluation of how well UAB is doing on its diversity and inclusion program.

Goal 1: Access & Success

- First year retention rates for underrepresented groups (students)
- Compare representation of monitored groups to an identified internal or external benchmark (faculty and staff)
- Compare representation of monitored groups in the applicant pool to an identified benchmark (faculty and staff)
- Compare representation of monitored groups hired or placed to an identified benchmark (faculty and staff)
- Determine whether or not monitored groups are being retained, advanced, etc. at “expected” rates relative to benchmarks.

Goal 2: Positive Campus Environment

- Use of trend analysis or comparison of organizational units to broader institutional benchmarks
- Barriers identified and addressed, including department status, and resource related issues

Goal 3: Diversity Education

- Percentage of employees who have completed education and training opportunities
- Evaluate penetration of diversity-related training, general training participation rates, and demographics of talent pipeline
- Number of curricular offerings related to diversity learning objectives for Dashboard
- Enhanced faculty learning initiatives in educational methodologies that reach students multiple learning styles.

Goal 4: Campus and Community Engagement

- Percentage of campus and community engagement collaborations and partnerships that advance diversity and inclusion

Goal 5: Communication

- Progress reports published and distributed
- Promote strong DEI practices at UAB as an institutional leader
- Increase in percentage of users and engagement with accessibility of website and communications responsive to needs of diverse affinity groups



DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION

The University of Alabama at Birmingham