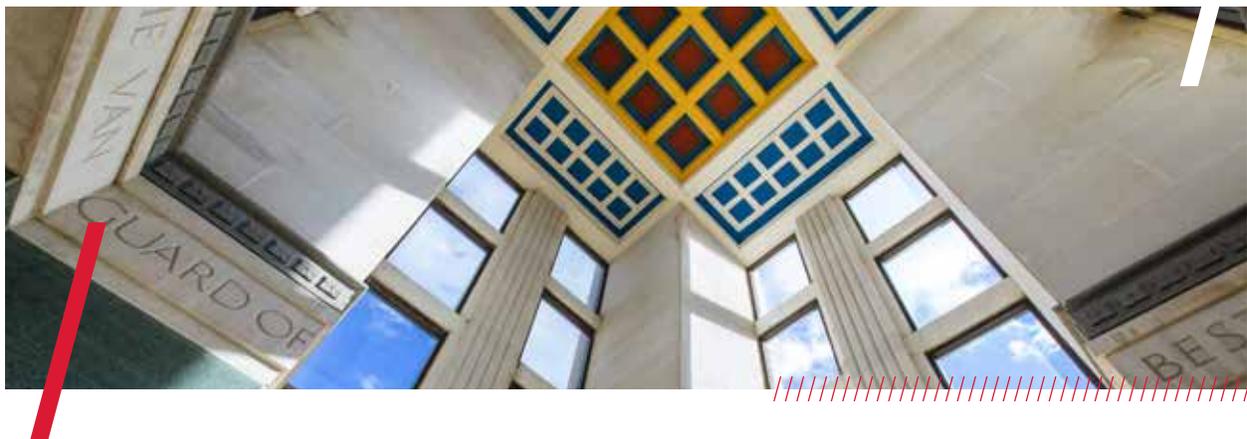


Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: Recommended Next Steps for a Comprehensive Staff Educational Approach



CONTENTS

Executive Summary **2**

Overview **4**

Literature Review **8**

Methodology

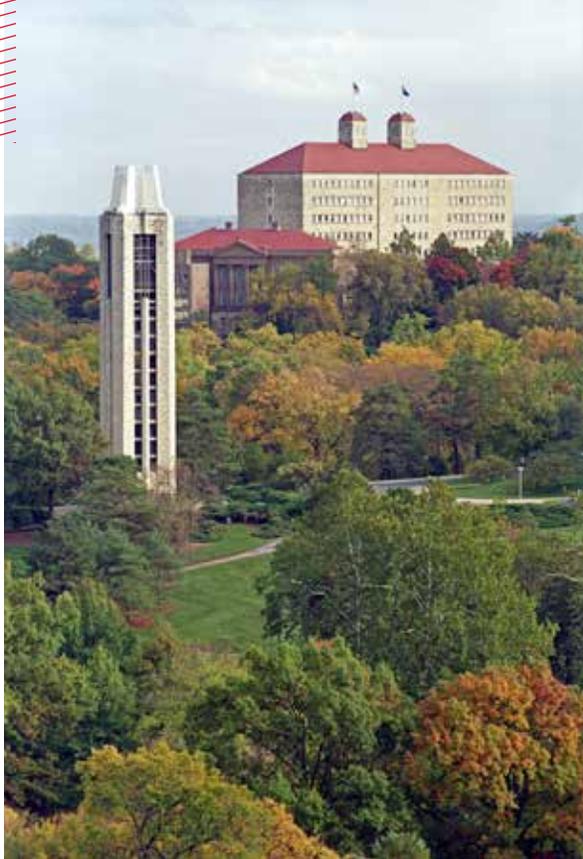
of Research **21**

Data Analysis **24**

Recommendations **28**

Conclusion **34**

Works Cited **36**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IN RESPONSE TO RECENT INCIDENTS OF BIAS

occurring at college campuses across the United States, the University of Kansas (KU) took several steps to examine and evaluate its campus climate. The university administration created a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) advisory group consisting of faculty, staff, and students, while the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) formed its own DEI workgroup. In addition, the 2016-2017 KU Staff Fellows, working with the provost's office and Human Resource Management (HRM), undertook the project to research a DEI training program for staff and to make recommendations for developing and implementing such a program.

The research focused on talking to a broad cross-section of KU employees, as well as having discussions with faculty and staff directly involved in DEI initiatives and trainings. Staff Fellows conducted focus groups and individual interviews to capture the thoughts and sentiments of staff and faculty. Fellows also conducted interviews with other universities and businesses to research best practices and to catalog

successes outside of KU. The results were analyzed using three basic categories of response: psychological, behavioral, and structural. The research team found that the most frequently discussed topics were structure-related.

Staff Fellows also conducted a literature review to provide stakeholders at the university a resource guide and map to previous, present, and future work on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The review examined four overall themes that are related to creating a training program: foundational information, including the historical and legal base for DEI work; best practices within higher education regarding diversity education, social justice education, and intergroup dialogues; theoretical and applicable frameworks that are considered best practices for improving campus climate, specifically related to DEI issues; and research pertaining to mandatory and optional training programs. This literature review highlighted successful work that has been done on assessments of student trainings, as well as the need for more quantitative and qualitative research to be done on employee training programs.

The Staff Fellows recommend three areas of focus in designing and commencing a staff DEI training program:

1. Framework & Structure;
2. Support & Assessment; and
3. Communication & Connection.

These recommendations, listed at the end of this piece, incorporate substantial research of best practices in the fields of higher education and business, as well as insights derived from stakeholders and external organizations.

With the recent implementation of the Talent Development System, as well as KU's existing experts in DEI training and general training, the university is well positioned to move forward with these recommendations. The allocation of additional resources, however, is necessary to maximize and support DEI training at KU. Just as critical is the support and example of university leadership; expanded resources for DEI training will show that the Provost and Chancellor endorse these efforts and are committed to their success. ■



OVERVIEW

IN RECENT YEARS, NUMEROUS HIGH-PROFILE incidents of bias have occurred on and off of college campuses across the United States, ranging from visual displays and verbal comments to overt acts of discrimination and violence against individuals with marginalized identities. The University of Kansas was not immune to these types of incidents. In November 2015, Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little moderated *Race, Respect and Responsibility and Free Speech*, a forum offered in response to several bias-related incidents that had occurred on KU's campus as well as incidents that were making national headlines at the University of Missouri. At the forum, an undergraduate-led activist group of predominately students of color known as Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk (RCIH) took the stage and presented a list of demands, calling for immediate action from administrators to create a safe, supportive campus climate for all students.

The University of Kansas responded by creating a DEI Advisory Group consisting of faculty, staff, and students who were charged with addressing many of the con-

cerns expressed by RCIH as well as other campus climate issues. Additionally, there was an exponentially dramatic increase in training requests to the Office of Multicultural Affairs which, in turn, spurred a larger conversation about creating a training and educational model for all staff in the university community.

In Spring 2016, the DEI Advisory Group released a report offering its recommendations. KU's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) followed suit, forming its own DEI workgroup and releasing the CLAS DEI Plan in Fall 2016. This CLAS plan outlined steps the College would take to become "an exemplary diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning and workplace environment for our students, staff, and faculty" (CLAS, 2016). With the creation of these reports, the institution was provided with guidance for responding to campus climate issues. Pennsylvania-based organizational equity advisors Rankin and Associates Consulting, Inc., initiated a university-wide campus climate survey process in Fall 2015 and unveiled its results in March 2017. KU administrators are currently studying the results and will be rolling out responses and plans during Summer 2017.

Continuing this work toward exploring ways the campus climate could improve, the 2016–2017 KU Staff Fellows program worked with key stakeholders to research a DEI training initiative for staff and to make recommendations for next steps needed to design and implement that program. The Staff Fellows are a cohort of current KU employees who apply to the program and are selected to receive leadership training, mentoring, and an expanded view of the university while they work together on a project that benefits the university. The program is jointly coordinated by the Office of the Provost and the Department of HRM. Senior administrators in the Office of Diversity and Equity (ODE) and HRM directly sponsored the work on this report, which began with the first gathering of the Staff Fellows cohort in September 2016, on the Lawrence campus. Preliminary work began soon thereafter. The original project charter was confirmed by the cohort and the project sponsors in November 2016 with a call:

"Evaluate the components of a staff diversity education program that may be implemented as part of KU's broader effort to foster an inviting campus environment at KU that

raises awareness, respects differences and encourages inclusiveness. This may include, but is not limited to: cultural competency educational sessions; existing curriculum enhancement and measures of assessment.”

Two research teams were formed among the cohort to facilitate the research. One team focused on external data sources primarily from peer and aspirant institutions, notable community organizations, and innovative private-sector companies. The second research team focused specifically on the internal environment at KU. More detail about these teams and their research will be presented in the Methodology section of this report (Part 2).

During the program year, it became apparent that a scope change would be necessary in order to make the best use of the cohort’s research and its remaining timeline and to adapt to changes on campus. On February 13, 2017, project stakeholders met and agreed to a revision. The justification for the change is as follows:

“Since the origination of the 2016–2017 Staff Fellows Program, the University has launched several initiatives and filled roles

on campus that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion. This includes the comprehensive climate survey; creation of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; and appointment of diversity and equity positions in schools across campus, each of which are key stakeholders in this effort. While there is a need for a comprehensive educational approach for University staff, it needs to be developed in a consistent and unified way to deliver a single, integrated program of diversity, equity, inclusion and engagement for the University of Kansas.”

Following this justification, the revised project scope read, in part: “The [project] will provide information to guide the University in the development of a comprehensive educational approach for staff by delivering a report to key stakeholders highlighting the key findings of its research.” This new directive dictated the final three months of project work. On April 28, 2017, the cohort presented recommendations to three key stakeholders: Neeli Bendapudi, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor; Jennifer Hamer, Acting Vice Provost for Diversity & Equity; and Mike Rounds,

Associate Vice Provost for Human Resource Management. The cohort delivered a final presentation of its recommendations to KU community members Friday, May 12, 2017, along with distribution of this report. ■



LITERATURE REVIEW

THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS HAS ACCRUED a dynamic history of social activism and change since its founding, and Jayhawks have been at the center of social change during the 20th and 21st centuries. Given the current climate, it is clear that the university and the world are at a turning point: KU must become a leader in the work of creating a more inclusive higher education system for every person. Because one of the objectives of Staff Fellows is to provide evidence-based recommendations for a comprehensive educational approach for KU staff related to DEI and social justice issues, it was necessary to include a review of influential literature within the field as a primary component of this report.

This section will provide a brief overview of the dimensions of DEI and social justice in higher education. As DEI and social justice within higher education is a field of study, it is imperative to note that this will not encompass all aspects of the research, but will focus on those areas that pertain to this project. The themes that will be included in this literature review are: foundational information regarding campus climate and

DEI work throughout the past few decades; current trends and best practices in the literature, specifically diversity education, social justice education and intergroup dialogues; current frameworks and best practices within the field of higher education and the private sector; and current trends and best practices regarding successful types of training models, such as voluntary or mandatory trainings.

PURPOSE

One of the principal purposes for this literature review is to provide an informational resource and guide to stakeholders within higher education. This literature review encompasses relevant information for campus climate research, and foundational work for creating a successful training and education program for higher education staff surrounding the topics related to DEI and social justice.

METHODOLOGY AND ROAD MAP

This literature review covers many topics throughout the fields of higher education and the private sector. It is important to have a road map and layout of the literature review. First, as mentioned previously,

there will be a brief review of the historical and legal background of diversity and social justice education. A review of history is crucial as the context still directly impacts higher educational policies and practices today. Next, there will be a brief review of best practices and current trends regarding social justice and diversity education within higher education. This will include an explanation of diversity education versus social justice education and intergroup dialogues. The next area examined in this review will be a brief analysis of four popular frameworks that are utilized frequently in DEI and social justice work within higher education. The final area to be explored in the literature will be the best practices regarding training model types within the field. The format of topic discussed in the literature review will be as follows: 1) Summary and definition of topic or theme; 2) Relevant historical and background information; 3) Application and practice of the theme; and 4) Limitations, specifically gaps in research and practice.

There is an imbalance within the research being examined for this literature review. For example, a significant amount of research has explored the success of training and curriculum for students around

these topics, but relatively little has addressed university-based professional staff members as recipients of training. Additionally, although there are many frameworks and models that have been created, none can offer data-driven results proving them to be successful. During the research process, searches were conducted for many terms, including social justice education; diversity education; intergroup dialogue; campus climate; cultural competency training models; and diversity training through search engines such as EBSCOhost, ERIC, and JSTOR, as well as electronic and print materials included in the bibliography.

FOUNDATIONAL & HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The foundation of higher education was created without DEI and social justice at its core principles. Higher education has evolved over time, but it is still recognized as an incredibly hostile and biased environment, specifically for students, staff, and faculty of marginalized and underrepresented identities (Astin, 1993; Astin & Oseguera, 2004; Chun & Evans, 2016; Fischer,

2007; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002; Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Hu & Kuh, 2003; Pike & Kuh, 2006; Watt, 2013). As Chun and Evans discuss in their 2016 monograph, the historical and legal foundation of DEI work is directly tied to Supreme Court cases and policy changes throughout the second half of the 20th century. Court cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, *Fisher v. University of Texas*, *United States v. Fordice*, and statutes that were informed by them—Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1965; Title IX; Section 504; and the Discrimination Act of 1975—all shaped educational policies, curriculum, and trainings around discrimination and inclusion within higher education (Gullickson, 2015 & Kaplin & Lee, 2007).

While these historical court cases were happening, specifically those in the 20th century, the United States experienced massive social change, including the Civil Rights Movement and the Gay Liberation Movement. The world saw the independence of former colonies and creation of nation states all over the world. During this time, scholars witnessed the work of one of the leading authors and founders of ideas in social justice education, Paulo Freire's influential

book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Originally published in 1968, the ideas of this book, including those on popular education and coalition building, greatly impacted social justice education and its curriculum. The social change fueled not only court cases and changes in policies but also a significant increase in research on these particular topics.

By the 1990s, and moving into the 21st century, there was a significant amount of scholarship on postmodernism, specifically Rhodes and Tierney, and the importance of recognizing the different power structures that created different realities for those with different identities at numerous intersections (Gullickson, 2015; Jones & Abes, 2013). Recent research indicates that the United States continues to be incredibly segregated, and the divisions between people by class and race are at similar or more divided levels than during the 1960s (Reardon, 2013). It is important to remember the historical and current contexts as they shape the way in which higher educational institutions function and continually fail to be inclusive for all types of people. Higher education is still seen as a place for innovation as well as a place where many practices and policies of inclusion are tested.

CURRENT TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

Throughout the past 30 years, an expansive amount of research has been conducted to discover the experiences of students, staff, and faculty in higher education. Leading scholars in the field have examined the impacts of overall experiences and diversity experiences (Hu & Kuh, 2003; Kuh, 2008; & NSSE 2013). Surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the College Student Experiences Questionnaire have utilized Gurin's three types of diversity, specifically interactional diversity from their work on intergroup dialogues (Gurin, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002). These surveys have found overwhelming evidence of the strong correlation between cultural competency and the interactional experiences of people from diverse backgrounds and diverse experiences (Hu & Kuh, 2003; NSSE 2014; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn & Terenzini, 1996; & Pascarella, Palmer, Moye & Pierson, 2001). As previously mentioned, Gurin's work on the overwhelmingly positive impacts of diversity in all aspects of higher education has had lasting imprints on the importance of interactional diversity

and intergroup dialogues within the training programs of all fields. Due to the brevity of this literature review, it is important to recognize that not all of the related fields, including critical race theory, can be reviewed and analyzed in this space.

DIVERSITY EDUCATION VERSUS SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION: LANGUAGE AND PEDAGOGY MATTER

To begin this section of the literature review, it is important to discuss the differences between social justice and diversity education. These differences are distinct and profound, and they matter for the future of the higher-education field, specifically regarding training for students, staff, and faculty. A significant amount of research has been dedicated to this topic. In the past two years, there has been an overwhelming increase in research due to the two fields and terms being conflated. For the definition of diversity education, an insightful example is from the works of Chun & Evans (2016) and Pope, Mueller & Reynolds (2004): “We offer a definition of diversity competence that encompasses the awareness, knowledge, and skills needed to communicate and engage with others who are different

from oneself in interactions characterized by reciprocity, mutual understanding, and respect.” Chun & Evans, like many scholars, argue that cultural competence and diversity competence are very similar in that they both are “stripped of its uncomfortable sociohistorical implications of inequality, social stratification, oppression privilege.”

Social justice education’s foundational definition comes from the authors of *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* and *Teachings for Diversity and Social Justice*, with the original edition edited by Adams, Bell & Hardiman. Their definition in the 2007 edition of social justice education is as follows: “The goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society that is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.” The best example that articulates the differences between social justice education and diversity education is from Gurin, Ngada, and Zúñiga (2013):

“ ... teaching students from diverse backgrounds about each other but do so in distinctive ways. Diversity education stresses

relationship building, sometimes with an emphasis on similarities while downplaying group identities and differences, and other times with an emphasis on cultural differences not contextualized in power relations. The aim is to build friendships across differences. Social justice education focuses instead on developing critical consciousness and translating that into action and building alliances.”

Perhaps the clearest difference is in the treatment of power structures. Too often in diversity education, power structures are erased, which directly erases the experiences of students, staff, and faculty. By downplaying group identities and differences, diversity education becomes very similar to color-blind ideology, which continually avoids admitting that there is in fact have a large racial inequality problem within the United States (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

Scholars have reiterated the importance of distinguishing between these two terms, or of finding a common ground between the two that includes exploration of power and privilege (Adams et. al.; Bell, 2013; Castagno, 2013; Hardiman, Jackson, & Griffin, 2013; Nelson Laird, Engberg, Hurtado, 2005; Pasque, Chesler, Charbeneau, Carlson, 2013;

Ross, 2014; Schoorman & Bogotch, 2010; Storms, 2012; Walker, 2003; & Watt, 2013).

While many studies have sought to find common ground and impacts on students, there is a great need for more longitudinal studies on the impact of social justice education and facilitation with staff members.

INTERGROUP DIALOGUES

Intergroup dialogues are an integral part of social justice education and hold their own place within training programs for DEI issues across the country. Patricia Gurin is considered a leading scholar for intergroup dialogues in higher education, as well as Biren Ngada and Ximena Zúñiga. Maxwell, Ngada & Thompson (2011), provide a definition of intergroup dialogues:

“[They] aim to help students gain intergroup understanding, increase positive intergroup relationships and promote intergroup collaboration. They do that by utilizing an explicit pedagogy that involves three important features: content learning, structured interaction and facilitative guidance.”

Intergroup dialogues can trace their origin to the significant amount of dialogue

that happened during the 1950s and 1960s, starting with *Brown v. Board of Education*, (Gurin et. al., 2013; Thelin, 2011). The term is also grounded in Gurin's work on the different types of diversity dialogues, which includes interactional diversity (Cole & Zhou, 2013). The application of this approach to dialogue and interactional diversity is evident in the number of qualitative and quantitative research studies that examined facilitation and peer interaction between students, both in and out of the classroom (Bowman, 2011; Bruch, Higbee & Siaka, 2007; Bryan, Wilson, Lewis & Wills, 2012; Castagno, 2013; Gurin, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Harro, 2013; King, Perez & Shim, 2013; Maxwell, Fisher, Thompson & Behling, 2011; Mayhew, Wolniak & Pascarella, 2007; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn & Terenzini, 1996; Pascarella, Palmer, Moye & Pierson, 2001; Pike & Kuh, 2006; Ngada, Chan-woo, & Truelove, 2004; Ross, 2014; Walton, 2011; Wright & Tolan, 2009). While a number of studies show the effectiveness of intergroup dialogues and facilitation, many are focused on students rather than staff. An implication for future research would be to execute a pilot program that has quantitative and qualitative assessments with staff members participating.

Overall, when considering the best practices regarding facilitation and trainings in higher education, it is clear that social justice education and intergroup dialogues are the present and future. There is a strong push away from solely focusing on diversity education, and an integration of the foundational work within diversity education into social justice education. Anecdotal evidence of social justice education and intergroup dialogues is no longer enough for the field of higher education: quantitative and qualitative assessments are absolutely essential for the future of training curricula for staff training programs.

CURRENT FRAMEWORKS AND BEST PRACTICES WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

During the process of creating an educational approach for staff around issues of DEI and social justice, it is necessary to consider what frameworks are currently being used at a larger scale within higher education. When observing frameworks with a wider perspective, one is able to see the holistic environmental view in which the training would be operating. The third focus within this literature review considers a few frameworks that

utilize best practices in the realm of higher education around campus climate.

I. A FOUR- AND FIVE-DIMENSIONAL DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK - HURTADO, MILEM, CLAYTON-PEDERSON, AND ALLEN (1999); MILEM CHANG & ANTONIO (2005)

In their 2014 book, *Diversity and Inclusion on Campus: Supporting Racially and Ethnically Underrepresented Students*, Rachele Winkle-Wagner & Angela Locks present an invaluable review of current frameworks that have been directly applied to campus climates. The first is a Four-Dimensional Diversity framework first proposed by Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson and Allen in 1999. There are four different areas within this framework: Historical Legacy of Inclusion and Exclusion; Structural Diversity; Psychological, and Behavioral. There are subcategories and questions that are applicable to all aspects of campus climate within each of these four areas (Hurtado et.al, 1999). The second framework was built by Milem & colleagues in 2005, which added an additional dimension of organization and structure to the Four-Dimensional Model of Hurtado & colleagues. As

Winkle-Wagner and Locks (2014) explain, the addition of this fifth dimension was crucial because “in doing so, they named actionable areas on which institutions could consider working to create better campus climates—the diversity of the curriculum, tenure policies, organizational decision-making policies, and budget allocations and policies.... This organizational dimension of diversity was designed to capture the institutional policies and practices that support racial and ethnic diversity and was a way to deliberately connect the theoretical ideas of accepting campus climates with practical applications” (101).

II. THE INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE CHANGE MODEL BY WILLIAMS, BERGER, AND MCCLENDON & WILLIAMS & CLOWNEY

As with other frameworks, this model is a combination of the work done by a wide variety of scholars, particularly the work of Hurtado et. al 1999, and Bensiom’s Scorecard. In 2005, Williams and colleagues developed an “Inclusive Excellence Scorecard,” where institutions could address four specific areas related to DEI and campus climate issues (Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014):

- Access and equity: Focusing on the area of admissions to the institution and in how students are treated once they enroll;
- Diversity in formal and informal contexts: Centering the compositional diversity both in and out of the classroom on campuses (e.g., in student organizations, on committees, in informal spaces such as unions);
- Campus climate: Stressing the importance of students, staff, and faculty perceptions of racial and gender experiences on campus;
- Student learning and development: Considering how diversity at the institution can affect how students engage in their education and develop in their identities (103).

In 2007, scholars Williams and Clowney expanded this model to include three more areas: social justice, educational value, and business case (Winkle-Wagner & Locks, 2014). These models have been widely applied at institutions across the country. However, one area that these models are still lacking is perhaps what the next frameworks address: the environmental factors that impact campus climate.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORKS

Many scholars including Chun & Evans (2016) have argued over the past decade that, while many surveys and studies such as NSSE and the College Student Questionnaire show the impact of diverse learning experiences and Gurin's interactional diversity, they do not adequately take into account the environmental and contextual factors (Hamrick, Evans & Schuh, 2002; Tanaka 2002, Tierney 1992, 1999 & Rendón, Jalomo & Nora, 2001). Frameworks that are influenced by Bronfenbrenner's 1979 and 2006 Ecological Theory & Model—such as the Multicontextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012) and the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments by Museus in 2014—take into account the power structures that dramatically impact campus climates and the experiences of marginalized and underrepresented members of the university community.

This model (Fig. 1.1) was the base for the second environmental model by Museus in 2014. As with other frameworks, the second model built upon the work of Hurtado et. al 2012 to be a better tool for working specifically with diverse populations (Chun

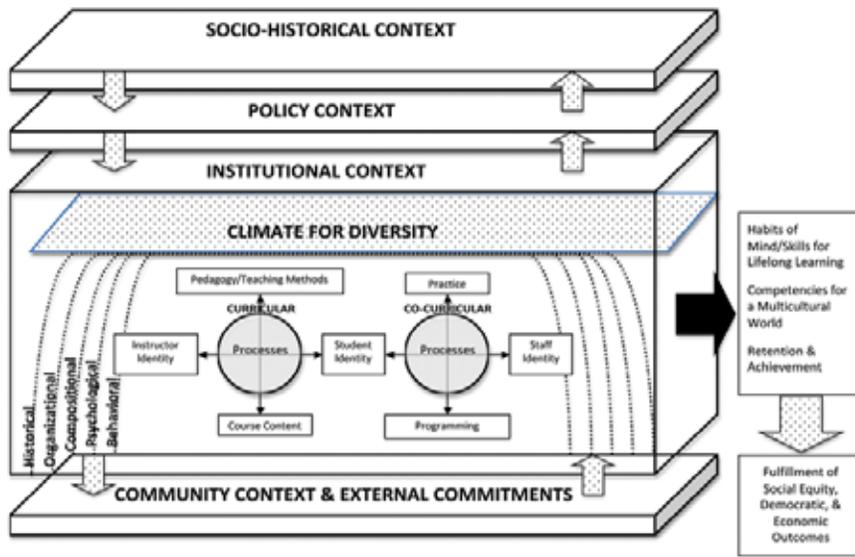


Fig 1.1 Multicontextual model for diverse learning environments.

& Evans, 2016; Museus, 2014). Nine factors were developed with the ultimate goal of addressing campus climate issues within each system. The nine factors, according to Museus, 2014 & Museus & Yi, 2015:

- Cultural familiarity or the extent to which students can interact with faculty, staff, and peers from common backgrounds
- Culturally relevant knowledge or the opportunity to sustain and increase knowledge of cultures and communities of origin
- Cultural community service or the ability to give back and transform students' cultural communities
- Cross-cultural engagement or purposeful, positive interactions with diverse peers
- Cultural validating environments or the

extent that institutions and educators convey that they value diverse identities and cultural backgrounds

- Collectivist and cultural orientations or the proposition that students who experience institutional environments based on more collectivist orientations are more likely to succeed
- Humanized educational environments in which institutional agents develop meaningful relationships with students
- Proactive philosophies and practices of engaging with student populations
- Availability of holistic support that provides access to faculty and staff who can offer help or connect students with resources and information

There are limitations to the application and implications for future practices with

every framework. While many institutions across the country have utilized both of the frameworks (Chun & Evans, 2016), universities must make the environmental scans a priority if they are going to be successful. Many institutions of higher learning do not want to admit that they have specific issues because of the implications that it would cause for their brand, reputation, and ultimately their sources of revenue. Lastly, much of the campus climate research and frameworks, as mentioned previously, focuses on students. There is a gap in the literature pertaining to university staff and its impact on campus climate.

TRAINING PROGRAMS:

MANDATORY OR OPTIONAL?

The majority of the research into stand-alone diversity training programs has focused on compliance-based models that are one-time activities generally instituted following an incident, or cabined programming that does not involve a broader commitment from the organizational body. While the research on diversity training programs has been somewhat ambivalent about their value, a limited amount of research has shown positive results for

programs that are integrated into a system of other diversity-related activities. There is room for additional research exploring the relationship between integrated training and the issue of institutional commitment to diversity objectives. In other words, can the integrated training model in and of itself indicate the level of commitment to diversity objectives on the part of organizational leadership? This could be an important question, as a significant body of research has suggested that institutionalized support for diversity training (things like managerial commitment, high strategic priority, the presence of durable responsibility structures, and diversity-supportive policies) was a strong predictor of training success. Thus, the literature suggests that the impact of diversity training is related to its integration into other organizational initiatives and unambiguous signals from senior administrators that it is a priority for the organization.

The research supports both mandatory and voluntary training models. The challenge is identifying specific conditions when voluntary training is better than mandatory or vice versa. For example, mandatory management attendance was positively associated with the perceived success of diversity

training. When reviewing the literature, it becomes clear that the specifics of diversity training can and should vary according to the needs of the organization. In other words, the research supports the view that an effective diversity training program can and should look different in each organization, but that look should depend on the following factors: the organization's history and structure, diversity needs, program objectives, and resources.

Conducting a needs assessment is a recommended step for deciding the structure of an organization's diversity training program. However, Roberson et al, argue that an analysis of institutional climate is insufficient for providing direction regarding the design of diversity training programs:

"A culture audit may reveal issues or concerns to address in training, providing broad clues about the kind of training needed. But the design of a training program involves answering many specific questions regarding training content and participants. The typical results of an organizational analysis alone cannot answer these questions, nor were they intended to do so. Thus, we argue that the current emphasis of needs assess-

ment for diversity training on organizational analysis for baseline data and issue identification has led to the neglect of other kinds of needs assessment data that can be used to address common design questions." (151)

In particular, there are controversies in the literature about whether diversity training should be focused on developing trainee skills (targeting behaviors, focusing on communication skills and conflict management or resolution), awareness (raising awareness of diversity issues and revealing unexamined bias), or both; as well as whether training should focus on a broad (range of demographic differences) or narrow (for example, race and gender) definition of diversity. A needs assessment of the organization's motivations for diversity training, as well as employee attitudes toward diversity (including how deeply those attitudes are engrained), helps determine which will be more effective. For example, if the organization is reacting to a controversy or legal action and has employees who lack the critical behavioral skills necessary to avoid illegal discrimination, it may be better served with skills-based training and may find little benefit in a training program focused on awareness.

When thinking about the structure of effective diversity training, the literature generally recommends the following elements:

- Training should have among its objectives the encouragement of behavioral changes in the workforce (and in order to determine the rate and amount of change, training efforts should be measured and have clear goals)
- Diversity training should not be simply integrated into other diversity activities, but instead “systematically embedded throughout the organization, customized for different work functions and inclusive” (Cocchiara)
- Training should be transferrable to job functions
- Training should emphasize continuous skill building
- There should be accountability for individual learning and behavioral change

Overall, optimizing diversity training opportunities seems to depend critically upon the following factors: how deeply embedded the program is within the organizational structure and activities; understanding the needs of the organization and its staff; and the level and visibility of leadership’s commitment to diversity training

and objectives. These elements are regularly mentioned as fundamentally important to the success of diversity training initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The field of DEI and social justice has evolved throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. Looking to the future of the field, one sees the strong influence of revised frameworks and curriculum with the ever-changing campus and environmental climates at all levels. There is a great need for more quantitative and qualitative research for staff members, as well as more studies examining the impact of campus climate theoretical models and whether they work for staff as they do for students. Now that our literature review is at a close, we move to the methodology of our report. ■



METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

THE STAFF FELLOWS RESEARCH FOCUSED ON

talking to as many KU staff members as could be reached, as well as having discussions with faculty and staff who have been working on DEI initiatives at the university. Additionally, fellows reached out to peer and aspirant universities and influential businesses and non-profit organizations that are utilizing some of the most innovative training concepts in practice today to find out what efforts have been successful elsewhere.

The external research group interviewed key DEI-related stakeholders at businesses and organizations in a range of fields. The interviews took place over the phone, email or in-person. Fellows also spoke with senior administrators in diversity and equity offices at peer and aspirant institutions of higher learning. For purposes of data quality, many of the questions asked during these interviews were similar or identical to those asked of the internal interview lists, although some questions or follow-up questions were specific to the interviewees' role or organization. Finally, fellows spoke to a KU-based expert currently engaged in Kansas City-based workforce DEI training programs.

Internally, the research team conducted eight focus groups of between 5 and 15 participants (66 total participants). The team began with a pilot focus group to test the questions and better anticipate possible responses. Questions focused on staff training; experience and identity; and campus climate. The internal research team used the feedback from the pilot group's responses to make changes in its approach where necessary to gather more detailed information. Then the team conducted seven additional focus groups, loosely arranged by classification or level of experience: one group for administrators; two for non-administrative staff; one for KU Edwards Campus staff; one with participants in campus DEI work; one for Facilities and Operations; and one self-selecting group at the Staff Leadership Summit.

At least 167 KU staff members were invited to focus groups, and hundreds more were invited to attend the focus group session offered during the KU Staff Leadership Summit (SLS) on February 16, 2017. Invitations for focus groups were distributed via email. Lists were compiled based on recommendations from the Staff Fellows cohort and its program coordinators, as well as

from key stakeholders. In some cases, lists were also populated based on job titles (KU administrative focus group) work responsibilities (KU DEI staff), or work location (Edwards Campus staff). Invitations to the SLS focus group were extended via handout materials, email communication, verbal announcements, and a listing on the summit's website. Fifteen SLS attendees participated in the focus group session, which was the largest number of participants for any of the focus groups. Overall, the participation rate was 30.5 percent of invitees (51 participants out of 167 invitations sent), not counting the summit focus group.

To gather more in-depth feedback from key stakeholders and experts in DEI and staff training, the research team conducted 18 individual interviews. Most interviews were between 30 and 90 minutes, and they covered many of the same questions asked in our focus groups regarding staff training initiatives and the campus climate. Additional questions specific to the interviewees' role or position were also included.

Interviewers and focus group facilitators collected the responses of interviewees after obtaining consent to do so. The most common format for collecting responses was

by typed or written note taking and subsequent transcription. The research teams chose not to use video or audio equipment during our focus groups and most interviews. If audio was used during an interview, the interviewee obtained consent to do so prior to beginning the interview. Some interview subjects chose or opted to give general comments rather than direct statements, and some requested anonymity for this report.

Finally, to contextualize the work and provide sufficient background, members of the research team conducted the literature review found earlier in this report. Recommended readings and steps for further research are included after this report's concluding section. ■



DATA ANALYSIS

ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW AND FOCUS

group response data was conducted via a coding worksheet (refer to Appendix A) created specifically to transcribe and categorize the notes. Guided by the coding worksheet, the interviewers coded the transcripts by listing the key points discussed (i.e., the “code” in the worksheet); counting the frequency of the points mentioned or discussed; providing examples from the transcripts to support them; and classifying them to three climate categories—behavioral, psychological, and structural. Key points that belong to the behavioral category include interaction; communication; interpersonal dynamics; support; participation; and leadership. Points that belong to the psychological category include attitudes; perceptions; values; culture; and philosophy. Points that belong to the structural category include barriers; training types; curriculum; delivery method; and assessment.

Summaries of the coding worksheets were entered in Excel. Then the data were further coded to provide richer information—the name of the interviewer; the type of interview conducted; the number of

participants (for focus groups); key points in the notes; the frequency of key words; the climate category in which each of the points belongs; the frequency of each climate category; the interviewee's organization or affiliation; and the method used to conduct the interview.

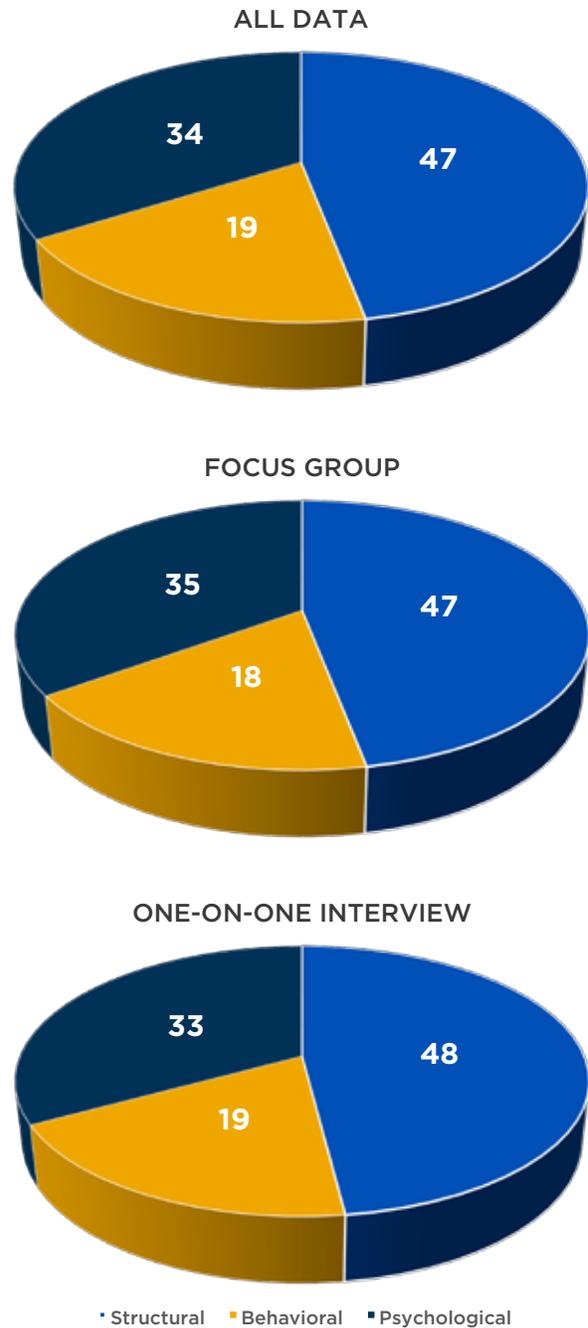
DISTRIBUTION OF CLIMATE CATEGORIES

Overall, the analytical results show that 34 percent of the summarized information falls in the Psychological category, 19 percent in the Behavioral category, and 47 percent in the Structural category. When data from the focus groups and interviews were analyzed separately, the same pattern applies. That is, the most frequently discussed topics are related to structure. This climate category received the most attention from the organizations involved in this study. On the contrary, the behavioral climate seemed marginalized in these organizations. A detailed summary is as follows: Overall: Psychological = 34%; Behavioral = 19%, Structural = 47%

One-on-one interview: Psychological = 33%; Behavioral = 19%, Structural = 48%

Focus group: Psychological = 35%; Behavioral = 18%, Structural = 47%

Pie charts below visually present these findings. The first uses data from both the focus groups and the interviews; the second only uses data from focus groups; the third only uses data from one-on-one interviews.

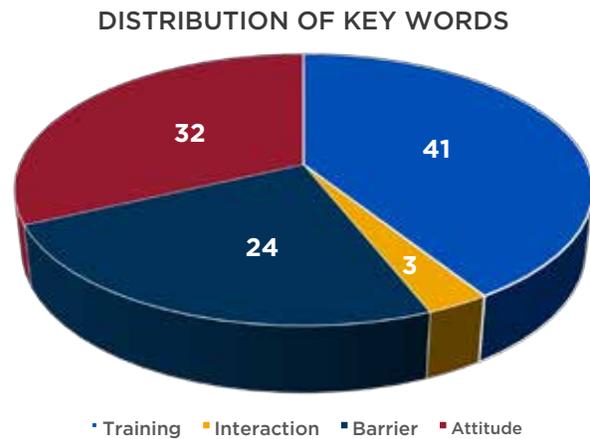


ANALYSES OF KEY WORDS

In total, more than 130 unique key words (i.e., words listed under the “code” column in the coding worksheet) were provided by the interviewers in their coding worksheets. However, many key words carried similar or identical meanings to other key words (i.e., multiple interview subjects may have used different words to refer to the same idea). Therefore, a further classification gave us about 10 main key word themes. They are: assessment; attitude; barriers; culture; curriculum; delivery method; interaction; leadership; perception; purpose; and training. After a closer look, the teams noticed that there were content overlaps among different key words. For example, some interviewers coded a certain word as “Training,” while the information details were about delivery methods. Some interviewers coded words as “Curriculum,” but the information details were also about delivery methods, and so on. To reduce the confusion and make the findings more interpretable, the researchers finally grouped the key words into four overarching key word themes: Attitude, Barrier, Interaction, and Training. The following table is a summary of the frequency and percentage of

these four key word themes; the pie chart visually presents the percentage.

KEY WORDS	FREQUENCY	%
Attitude	146	31.67%
Barrier	110	23.86%
Interaction	15	3.25%
Training	190	41.21%
Total	461	100.00%



CONCLUSION

The focus group participants and internal interviewees expressed passion and enthusiasm for DEI education, and the recent KU climate study supports this finding. Research participants frequently requested additional opportunities to access educational programs. As one participant said, “The mission of the University is to educate student and make the world a better place. DEI training is essential to this mission.”

While participants stated that barriers, such as limited time, insufficient resources, and lack of supervisor support, posed challenges to accessing DEI education, they also believed that a comprehensive educational approach—paired with consistent messaging and reinforcement from leadership—could significantly improve the current campus climate.

Drawing from the internal and external research, the Staff Fellows developed recommendations that take into account key themes from the data analysis. The proposed next steps also incorporate the three climate categories (psychological, behavioral, and structural) that guided the analysis. The recommendations are provided as a starting point for an educational approach, with the expectation that classes, trainings, and related offerings will be reevaluated as DEI and social justice fields advance and the needs of the university shift. To echo the words of another research participant, “Training is a living, breathing thing.” ■



RECOMMENDATIONS

THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS OF a comprehensive educational approach for staff can be divided into three areas: Framework and Structure; Support and Assessment; and Communication and Connection. These recommendations were developed through our research of best practices in the fields of higher education and business, as well as through interviews with stakeholders. Each area of recommendation will include five sub-categories.

FRAMEWORK AND STRUCTURE

The first recommendation area is the framework and structure of the program. There are five subcategories in this area: Use of Learning Management; Mandatory Online Training; Tiered Electives; Faculty and Staff Expertise; and Equity Experts or Certificate Program.

First, it is crucial that this program is housed in the Learning Management System. This is a recommendation gathered from the data, and it is consistent with university-wide efforts to centralize all of the trainings that are being offered in one system. Many of KU's in-state, peer, and

aspirant higher education institutions utilize a centralized approach for their staff training modules. At KU, many training modules, including addressing DEI issues, are already available through the Learning Management System, including the Cultural Competency Symposium, Safe Zone, and HRM trainings.

Next, it will be important for all KU staff to enter this centralized educational approach with a common foundational knowledge base, including awareness of terminology, context for these issues, and other related components. A fully accessible mandatory online training module that educates along this identical baseline would be an ideal starting place for this program and could serve as the beginning of a comprehensive tiered program. This would allow for all participants to build the same foundational knowledge of tools and terminology going into future training modules and educational programs. Participants in focus groups strongly recommended interactive modules, which correlates with the research within the field. It will also add consistency with assessment. Additionally, this training could be infused into the university's core competencies and evaluation processes that already take place for KU's staff.

This educational approach could unfold in a wide variety of ways. One possible way would be to offer a tiered program, similar to other programs already offered at the university. Within this structure, all university staff could start in the same mandatory online training module. After successfully completing the mandatory training, subsequent tiers should allow for staff to self-select modules with specific tracks—a sort of “choose your own adventure” approach—that gives individuals the opportunity to develop their DEI training portfolio according to their interests. Participants within each track should begin with introductory education and advance into equity expert coursework as track modules progress. The practice of offering multiple learning tracks for staff members is in line with current research, as is the importance of environmental factors for each person and their educational journey through the tiers. Consideration for offering modules on both Lawrence and Edwards campuses would allow for staff in both locations to achieve their DEI training goals more resourcefully.

Adequate staffing for this approach is essential for its success. When considering who would instruct the courses or modules

offered in each tier, the fellows generated a few possibilities for implementation. The first possibility would be staffing through the current University of Kansas workforce (i.e., faculty and staff). KU is fortunate to have many faculty and staff members who are recognized as research experts in the fields of DEI and social justice. Faculty who choose to participate in this educational approach should be able to count their time as service to the university, or perhaps they could obtain a course release for the semester of participation or count their involvement as part of their course load. Another option would be to create a monetary fellowship program in collaboration with the Provost's Office and HRM.

Additionally, many KU staff members are also research experts in their own fields. The important caveat of this idea is that people who are doing the work must be compensated in some form, whether it is monetary compensation, valued as part of their employee review, or perhaps recognized in the form of an university-wide honor handed out by a senior administrator. One peer university the external research team contacted has considered using lapel pins for a similar purpose. Another possible option would be

to bring in nationally prominent experts each year to teach a variety of modules and topics. The Edwards Campus and KU Professional & Continuing Education serve as effective models for tapping into adjunct instructors who could also be useful for this approach. The university should also consider experts from influential businesses or government offices in the area who might be willing to instruct a module, and tap into KU's local alumni base if necessary. One possible downside to this option is the obvious monetary cost incurred. A combination of these ideas might be considered a more feasible budgetary option for the program.

The last subcategory of Framework and Structure is a certificate offering or "Equity Expert" status for staff. The Staff Fellows believe a clear end goal is necessary for this recommended educational approach to be successful. The interview and focus group data repeatedly uncovered the need for an approach that encourages continuation of learning rather than stagnation. Offering a certificate or rewarding individuals with the designation "Equity Expert" if they complete all of the tiered modules within a specific track would help to achieve this continuation while providing a clear end goal to

all training participants. The “experts” who complete one track could simply move on to a new track, or they could consider other continuing educational classes and courses after program completion.

SUPPORT AND ASSESSMENT

The second set of recommendations of Support and Assessment has five subcategories: Use of Talent Development System; Policy Examination and Revision; Management Requirement; Leadership Role Modeling; and Professional Development and Tuition Funds Support.

The overall theme of this set of recommendations is transparency. As mentioned in the data analysis, interviewees and focus group participants frequently detailed barriers they faced in seeking training. These barriers came in numerous forms, and the intent with this program is to break down those barriers for staff. Utilizing the Talent Development System with KU’s core competencies would hold staff accountable while also providing the university with a holistic assessment of its workforce’s DEI knowledge base. The core competencies can provide access to accountability measures for all staff members, including mid-man-

agement, which will be discussed in more detail later in the recommendations.

Next, there is a great need for policy examination and revision. Two of the largest barriers are the lack of a centralized location for all professional development opportunities (which will be discussed in the next section) and supervisors’ discouragement of staff participation in training during the workday. There are many inconsistencies between departments and units across campus regarding whether staff members are allowed to participate in professional development opportunities during the workday. Startlingly, the data analysis and informal conversations suggest that many staff members have been told that they are to take annual leave if they want to participate in training, or they are cautioned that “DEI issues have nothing to do with their job.” Therefore, it is necessary to examine KU’s policies related to professional development opportunities for staff members and revise them where necessary.

The third subcategory within Support & Assessment is the importance of requiring all levels of management to achieve a prescribed level of participation in educational modules relating to DEI issues. Because many power dynamics exist in all forms

in different departments and units across the Lawrence and Edwards campuses, this approach could play a role in equalizing the issues that many staff members are facing within their own units around professional development and issues related to DEI. While it is certainly possible that the power dynamics are still there, this was one of the central recommendations developed from interview feedback.

The fourth subcategory is directly related to the third: leadership role modeling. In every field, whether it is education, business, or engineering, leaders serving as role models for initiatives are vital to the climate and success of those initiatives. For this approach to be successful, it will be pivotal that the university's leadership and administrators at all levels play active roles with their support and participation. This could entail the prescribed level of participation being achieved in this program for middle managers, and then a separate specialized program for senior administrators, with an accountability tool to be developed to assess participation. This would include all campus supervisors, not only those who are already pushing campus to be the best it can be.

The final subcategory is professional de-

velopment and tuition funds support. When considering staff retention, professional development and tuition support play key roles. Due to budgetary cuts, professional development and tuition support funds have been heavily cut in all departments. However, these funds are crucial for creating a sustainable and more experienced workforce. The support of professional development and tuition funds could be created in a variety of ways, including setting professional development funds aside for staff to attend field-specific conferences and the university's continued funding of the tuition assistance program.

COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTION

The final category of the recommendations is Communication and Connection. The subcategories of this final group are: HRM Centralization and Staffing; Cabinet Revision and Update of the Curriculum; The Role of Diversity and Equity; Public Affairs Utilization; Chancellor Affirmation.

As mentioned in the previous section, a large barrier to DEI work is the lack of campus wide training centralization. One of the recommendations is to have all campus training and professional development activ-

ities centralized in HRM. This would include the operation and full-time staffing of the recommended approach to DEI education. The staffing could take numerous forms, such as liaison positions between Diversity & Equity to HRM or other departments. The need for training is so high that success will likely require the creation of at least several new staff positions, perhaps even a division within HRM. It is also recommended that a centralized digital location be created where all DEI-related staff positions—committees, councils, work teams, etc.—on the Lawrence and Edwards campuses can stay informed about events and activities occurring on campus and in local communities.

The second recommendation is keeping the curriculum current. Fellows suggest that a cabinet or advisory council is created to review and update the curriculum of this approach on an ongoing, continual basis each year. Members would be from a variety of departments from all levels of staff, and these staff members should be knowledgeable in the curriculum topics. This advisory council or cabinet will also be responsible for any revisions or recommendations to update the program each year, as environmental factors will directly impact the program.

The third recommendation is the involvement of the ODE, which should have oversight of the education and its modules. It is ultimately up to the Vice Provost of Diversity and Equity how involved the department is and what to mandate for it.

The final two recommendations are connected. The first, utilizing Public Affairs, is essential to marketing the program. By working with Public Affairs, stakeholders can create marketing and messaging around the program that is consistent with other university messaging. The one request for collaborating with Public Affairs is that Diversity and Equity still retain ultimate approval over the formatting, creation and distribution of marketing materials to ensure that all aspects of the marketing remains inclusive. Lastly, the final recommendation is working with the provost's and chancellor's offices to ensure that communication is consistent and that both offices are serving as role models for the university. The specific needs of the Edwards Campus, its employees, and its non-traditional student base should also be considered when communicating about the training. Including Edwards Campus staff as much as possible in the process is highly recommended. ■



CONCLUSION

THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT

are ambitious, but they are not without evidence to support them. Furthermore, it is only with an ambitious approach that transformative change can take place on campus. While implementation of these recommendations is out of scope for the Staff Fellows project, many of the necessary components are already in place to provide structure and resources for a comprehensive educational approach to DEI for KU's staff. For instance, the Talent Development System has been implemented, and staff members and supervisors are beginning to navigate this system. KU also has many experts in DEI education and general professional development who can help implement centralized trainings, evaluate curriculum and keep it updated, as well as work with administrators to ensure access to training for all staff members. They can also help to implement accountability measures for trainees and their supervisors to participate.

The allocation of additional resources will not only maximize and support DEI training at KU, but will also show that

the provost and chancellor endorse these efforts and are committed to their success. The consistent and clear support of university leadership must be the cornerstone of any institutional initiative, especially one that has such wide-reaching impacts on campus climate.

The recommendations outlined in this report are only the beginning; further research can still be done. The field is moving rapidly, and there are things happening across campus that were simply not uncovered during the research window that will need to be considered by others. A significant amount of intelligence can be learned by visiting the campuses of peer and aspirant institutions, and interacting with innovative businesses and influential non-profit organizations to see how their DEI training approaches might inform KU's approach. DEI efforts across KU would also benefit from making use of the Edwards Campus and its active DEI Cabinet not only as a potential model for other cabinet structures, but as an incubator for innovative training approaches.

One of the external companies the research team contacted is a large Kansas City-based healthcare information tech-

nology corporation. When one of the Staff Fellows researchers asked a diversity specialist employed there what the company's DEI training looked like, the emailed response was unexpected: "We do not have dedicated DEI / D&I training." A follow-up question was asked inquiring why a modern, well-regarded corporation would not provide DEI training for its employees. The employee responded, "Our focus is to integrate our support for diversity into everything that we do."

While KU must certainly provide dedicated DEI education modules, there is a lesson from the healthcare corporation—echoed in comments gathered from a senior administrator from a peer institution—that any approach to DEI education must be ingrained in everything KU asks its staff to do. They should see the values of inclusion prioritized by the actions of their supervisors and KU's leaders and reflected in the diversity of KU's workforce. Given that staff interact with everyone who visits the KU campus to learn, conduct research, and work, the Staff Fellows hope that the recommendations included in this report will move KU toward a climate where those experiences are inclusive, fair, and equitable for all individuals. ■

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RECOMMENDATIONS

FRAMEWORK/STRUCTURE

- Use of Learning Management for course administration
- Mandatory, fundamental online training
- Tiered elective course work
- Access to faculty and staff expertise
- “Equity Expert” certification

SUPPORT/ASSESSMENT

- Use of Performance Management for competency measurement
- Policy examination and revision
- Required training for management
- Role modeling by leadership
- Fund-supported professional development

COMMUNICATION/CONNECTION

- Staff centralization within HRM
- Cabinet to oversee curriculum revision
- Provost mandate and oversight
- Utilization of Public Affairs
- Chancellor affirmation

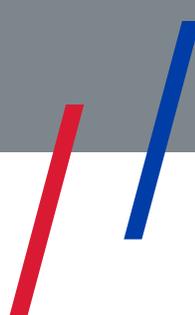
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