**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON SCHOOL OF LAW**

2017-2018 DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This plan is a response to the following mandate from President Schill issued on November 7, 2016:

*Provost Coltrane and I will ask each dean and vice president to immediately begin conversations within their schools and departments with our faculty members, students, and staff members of color. The IDEAL plan calls on each school to develop plans on an annual basis. I will ask that each school and administrative unit accelerate the process and report back to me in 90 days with a set of steps they plan to take to promote diversity, combat racism in their units, and promote inclusion.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

The law school’s response to the mandate builds on work done over the years by the law school’s Community and Inclusion Committee and incorporates the law school’s current draft Diversity Strategic Action Plan,[[2]](#footnote-2) which includes this statement:

Diversity, equity, and inclusion help make the University of Oregon School of Law a competitive, world-class public law school. Thus, the School seeks to strengthen its diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of its overall effort to achieve excellence as an academic institution. The aim is to cultivate opportunities relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion so that the School and the broader community can benefit from them.

The presidential mandate provides the law school with an opportunity to realize its vision in this area by embracing practical short- and long-term strategies and tactics. Over the course of the past 90 days, Dean Moffitt has directed and coordinated a multi-pronged approach to developing the law school’s action plan. The Community and Inclusion committee has played a central role in these efforts. The committee held several meetings open to a broad section of the community to receive ideas and discuss the action plan. A subcommittee led by Nicole Commissiong, Assistant Dean of Students and Emily Farrell, Associate Director of Career Planning and Professional Development, drafted the report. The report has been sent to the faculty and staff for comments.

While the JD program remains central to the mission of the law school, the law school has developed other robust programs: Undergraduate legal studies, LLM, and Conflict and Dispute Resolution. The most recent JD class is composed of 54 percent women and 21 percent students of color. Women presently comprise 50 percent to the total faculty and 74 percent of officers of administration of the law school while faculty of color comprises 15 percent of the total faculty and 18 percent of officers of administration. All of the law school's associate deans are either women or people of color.

The action plan incorporates strategies and tactics designed to rapidly improve the numbers of members of underrepresented communities within the faculty, staff, and student body and to make the institution a more welcoming and inclusive place for all. The plan also calls for ongoing, dynamic, evidence-based programs and actions that will support the school’s long-term inclusion and diversity goals. The following are some of the specific tactics endorsed by the DAP:

\*Recruitment and hiring of additional faculty competent in subject areas of particular concern to members of underrepresented communities.

\* Improved recruitment practices for faculty and staff that would minimize implicit bias.

\*The development of a mandatory first year law class designed to engage difficult issues related to inclusion and diversity.

\*Faculty incentives to promote considerations of cultural competency in all academic offerings.

\*Fundraising to support the development of a pipeline scholars program for law students named after former deans Rennard Strickland and Derrick Bell.

\* Improved and more focused mentorship programs for students to promote academic and professional success.

\* Improved and more focused mentorship programs for faculty and staff to promote professional development.

\* Annual individual and unit reports as well as surveys to evaluate success of initiatives related to diversity and inclusion.

In the course of responding to the presidential mandate, the law school faced several difficulties and learned critical lessons. Understandably, as a component of a vibrant intellectual environment with diverse stakeholders, it experienced the challenges relating to reaching agreement on strategies and tactics. This is especially so when it became necessary to operate within a compressed timeline. Further, the structure required for the plan suggests an inflexible approach. Perhaps this was not intended. Given the diversity across units, each could be given appropriate flexibility to achieve centrally defined goals.

Finally, the law school was forced to confront structural problems with regard to the diversity goal for which it could not reasonably provide sincere answers. It is undeniable that the law school’s inability to attract members of some minority groups as students have much to do with structural constraints that are largely outside the power of the law school to remedy to any appreciable degree. Regardless, the law school will undoubtedly continue to strive to improve in this area.

GOAL #1 **INCLUSION--THE LAW SCHOOL WILL WORK TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS, FACUTLY, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS.**

**Strategy 1-** Examine and adjust aspects of the law school that shape-both positively and negatively-how welcomed, included, and respected community members and visitors feel.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 Institutionalize faculty and staff education around racism and other types of discrimination by employing routine seminars, workshops, & study groups. |  | Available law and university faculty and staff expertise as well as appropriate outside consultants. | Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Associate Dean for Finance & Operations (HR) |  |
| 1.2 Redesign and implement mandatory first-year law class: change current required, one-credit, first-year professional development course to make it a two-credit course that incorporates meaningful coverage of cultural competency, both to educate students on difficult conversations around racism and other forms of discrimination and to prepare them for successful professional life. |  | Law faculty and Career Planning & Professional Development professionals; Curriculum Committee. Additional funding to compensate experts to consult on appropriate curricular change and/or to serve as guest speakers. | Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Assistant Dean for Career Planning and Professional Development. |  |
| 1.3 Provide funding to support student organizations that work collaboratively to advance school’s inclusion strategies and goals. |  | Existing mix of funds allocated for student organizations as well as philanthropy. | Law Dean, Development Director, Associate and Assistant Deans of Student Affairs. |  |
| 1.4 Provide additional incentives to faculty to engage in necessary conversations on difficult issues and to incorporate cultural competency into course materials; require specific reporting annually. |  | Merit raises and summer support. | Law School Dean. |  |
| 1.5 Review all institutional documents and communications to ensure that language promotes institutional goals of inclusiveness and diversity. |  | Program Managers, Career Center, Communications, Human Resources, and Student Affairs | All Associate Deans and Director of Communications. |  |
| 1.6 Create a position for a member of the Minority Law Student Association (MLSA) on the Dean’s Student Advisory Council and on the Law School’s Community and Inclusion Committee. |  | None. | Law School Dean. |  |
| 1.7 Develop a survey, in conjunction with other university departments, to be administered to students annually to help the law school measure progress toward goal of inclusion. |  | Law School and University. | VPEI, Law Dean, Community and Inclusion Committee, Associate & Assistant Deans of Student Affairs, I.T. Team. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual surveys; departmental and faculty reports. |

**Strategy 2 –** Help all members of the law school to thrive and succeed by incorporating promising practices that minimize implicit bias and combat racism (as well as other forms of discrimination). More specifically, increase equity, inclusion and inter-cultural understanding in onboarding, performance evaluations, tenure and promotion, and other unit processes and policies.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 Provide appropriate mentoring for all faculty and staff to ensure successful onboarding, to facilitate a culture of inclusion, and to ensure retention. |  | Law school, central administration, funds for consultants/trainers. | Associate Deans. |  |
| 2.2 Offer regular training for all faculty, administrators, and staff on evidence-based measures that combat implicit bias, racism, and other forms of discriminatory behavior in employment and promotion decisions; provide specific evaluative credit for attending training. |  | Law school, central administration, funds for consultants/trainers. | Associate Deans. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual surveys and periodic reporting. |

GOAL #2 DIVERSITY—THE LAW SCHOOL WILL WORK TO INCREASE THE REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSE STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
 **Strategy 1 –** Incorporate active recruitment strategies, processes to eliminate conscious and unconscious bias, and other promising practices to recruit diverse staff, faculty, administrators, undergraduate, and graduate students from traditionally under-represented communities.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name/title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 Hire three new faculty to increase law school capabilities in the following areas of scholarship, teaching, and mentoring, which are not currently well represented on the faculty: racial justice and the law, criminal law, criminal procedure, minorities and police use of force, civil rights; and immigration and refugee law. |  | Law school and central administration. | Law Dean, University Provost. |  |
| 1.2 Review Law School’s web page to highlight and improve information on its commitment to inclusion and diversity, and develop a comprehensive communication plan for the law school to better convey the importance of inclusion and diversity in all aspects of institutional life for students, faculty and staff. |  | Law Dean, Communications team, Community and Inclusion Committee, as well as Admissions, Student Affairs, and I.T. teams. | Director of Communication |  |
| 1.3 Highlight the goal of diversity as a specific factor in making decisions on which faculty positions to recruit for; draft all position descriptions in a manner that is as open-minded and broad as possible. Embrace more intentional prioritizing of the longstanding goal to diversity faculty and staff. |  | Law school. | Law Dean. |  |
| 1.4 Require appropriate diversity training for members of hiring committees and consider diversity when building appointment or hiring committees to include within the committee diverse outlooks and appreciation for cultural differences. Recognize the potential to bring unintended biases to the process, and address this by having a clear and open discussion among committee members before beginning the interview process. |  | Law school and central administration. | Law Dean, Associate Dean for Finance and Operations. |  |
| 1.5 Give hiring committees the option to redact names and contact information during initial review process only. |  | Law school. | Associate Dean for Finance and Operations, Hiring Committee Chairs. |  |
| 1.6 Avoid prematurely labeling a candidate as "most promising" until all candidates have been considered to help ensure that all qualified candidates receive equal consideration. |  | Law school. | Law Dean, Associate Dean for Finance and Operations, Hiring Committee Chairs. |  |
| 1.7 Prepare answers to questions that diverse candidates are likely to ask, and be prepared to provide such information even when diversity-focused questions are not asked. |  | Law school. | Law Dean, Hiring Committee Chairs. |  |
| 1.8 Actively contribute to developing pipelines for underrepresented groups in faculty hiring (through hiring Visiting Assistant Professors) and student admission (through, e.g., the McNair scholars program.) |  | Philanthropic gifts to law school. | Dean, Associate Dean for Students, Development. Director, and Director of the Undergraduate Program. |  |
| 1.9 Pipeline for Students: Create and fundraise in collaboration with others within and outside the university for a new initiative to be called the Bell Strickland Scholars Program, to increase pipeline targeting under-represented students in Oregon and the Pacific NW (similar to McNair’s program). |  | Law School, University, professional associations, philanthropy. | Dean, Development Director, Admissions Director. |  |
| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** | | | | |
| Annual survey and unit reports. | | | | |

**Strategy 2 –** Use promising practices and proven strategies to retain diverse staff, faculty, administrators, undergraduate, and graduate students from traditionally underrepresented communities.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name/title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 Conduct exit interviews to ensure that departing employees have opportunities to express concerns relating to inclusion and diversity, and take such feedback into consideration as the law school works to retain under-represented faculty and staff. |  | Law school and University Human Resources. | Associate Dean for Finance and Operations. |  |
| 2.2 Because the law school’s structure, size, and budgetary constraints make upward mobility challenging for its Officers of Administration, help OAs advance within the university.) |  | Law school, University Human Resources. | Associate Dean for Finance and Operations. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual surveys and individual reports. |

GOAL #3 **ACHIEVEMENT—THE LAW SCHOOL WILL WORK TO FACILITATE ACCESS TO ACHIEVEMENT, SUCCESS, AND RECOGNITION FOR UNDER-REPRESENTED STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF, AND ALUMNI.   
  
Strategy 1 –** Eradicate any existing gaps in achievement between majority and under-represented students, faculty and staff in graduation rates, tenure and promotion, professional opportunities, leadership opportunities, and recognition.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 Assess relative bar passage and employment results of minority and other diverse graduates compared to overall rates, and develop programs if necessary to improve success rates. |  | Career Center, Curriculum Committee | Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean of Students, Assistant Dean for Career Planning and Professional Development. |  |
| 1.2 Develop faculty and community mentoring programs for all students, with specific attention to placement that would respond to individual needs of students from underrepresented populations. |  | Law school | Associate Deans & Director of Career Planning and Professional Development, Development. |  |
| 1.3 Re-evaluate student academic support and encourage faculty to affirmatively make themselves available to under-represented students, many of whom are less likely to engage with faculty on their own. |  | Law school | Associate Deans & Director of Career Planning and Professional Development. |  |
| 1.4 Develop anonymous feedback processes to encourage staff and faculty to identify aspects of their work experiences that affect opportunities for professional advancement. |  | Law school | Associate Dean of Finance and Operations, I.T. Team. |  |
| 1.5 Periodically assess current student mentorship opportunities to determine whether participation reflects the diversity of the student body, and if it does not, take concrete steps to increase engagement of under-represented students. |  | Law school | Associate Dean of Students. |  |
| 1.6 Continue partnership with Oregon State Bar Opportunities for Law in Oregon program and work to increase participation of minority and other under-represented students. |  | Law school and OSB. | Admissions Team and Student Affairs Team. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual Survey; departmental and individual reports. |

**School, College, Research, and Administration Strategy 2 –** Increase faculty, student, staff, and alumni participation (with special focus on groups that are currently under-represented) in global leadership experiences, research, professional development opportunities, and scholarships (e.g., Rhodes Scholar and Marshall Scholar competitions) as well as other prestigious awards and recognitions.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 Assess who has been receiving awards, both internally and externally; identify programs and provide support for students and alumni to participate in bar leadership and professional development opportunities. |  | Law school, professional organizations. | Associate Deans & Associate Dean for Career Planning and Professional Development. |  |
| 2.2 Create a law school award to recognize professional achievements of under-represented alumni and of alumni who have worked to increase access to justice; Identify and nominate alumni of color for “40 Under 40 Awards” in Portland, and “20 Under 40 in Eugene.”. |  | Law school | Law Dean, Development Team, Assistant Dean for Career Planning and Professional Development. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual reports and individual surveys. |

GOAL #4: LEADERSHIP—LAW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP WILL PRIORITIZE AND INCORPORATE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PLANS AND ACTION.

**Strategy 1 –** Develop and promote programs that support, mentor, and prepare members of under-represented groups for leadership opportunities (i.e. department heads, directorships, deanships, vice presidencies, etc.) at the UO.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
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| 1.1 Develop a mentorship program to assist staff and faculty members to develop in their roles and provide appropriate training to allow them to do so (vertical mobility within the law school administrative community). |  | Law school. | Law Dean, Associate Deans, Human Resources, Supervisors as appropriate. |  |
| 1.2 Support faculty and staff by providing training opportunities to develop skills necessary for growth (e.g. budget management, supervisory experience). |  | Law school. | Law Dean, Associate Dean for Finance and Operations. |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual reports and individual surveys. |

**Strategy 2 –** Utilize philanthropy and other resources to advance the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the law school and across the University.

| **Tactics** | **Target Measures** | **Resources to be used for this tactic** | **Name and title of lead personnel** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 Use the Bell/Strickland scholars program (described above) to support and develop under-represented students and those committed to access to justice in their efforts to thrive and lead within the legal profession. |  | Law school and philanthropy. | Associate Deans, Director of Career Planning and Professional Development, Development Director. |  |
| 2.1 Fundraise to support faculty research focused on access to justice issues as identified by the cluster hire discussed above (Goal 2, tactic #1). |  | Law school and philanthropy. |  |  |

| **Describe the evaluation tool that you will utilize to measure progress and ensure accountability.** |
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| Annual reports. |

1. See President Schill, Action Plan Development Using IDEAL Framework, Nov. 7, 2016. The text is appended for convenience of drafter. It will not be included in the final plan submitted. The due date for plans is March 17, 2017, with implementation to begin to start during the spring term of 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See University of Oregon School of Law, Diversity Strategic Action Plan, May 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)