

Strategic Action Diversity Plan
School of Architecture and Allied Arts (A&AA)
University of Oregon

Submitted by
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The Equity and Diversity Committee

June 15, 2007

A&AA Mission

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts is dedicated to advancing the understanding, value, and quality of visual culture and the built, natural, and social environments through excellent and distinctive teaching, research, and creative endeavors. Grounded in a unique multi-disciplinary structure, AAA is a diverse, collegial learning community of faculty, students and staff. We seek to enhance the lives of individual and communities through endeavors that stem from intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and broad inquiry, rooted in the inter-relatedness of theory, history, and practice.

In support of this mission, AAA affirms the following values:

EXCELLENCE

Supporting and celebrating a culture that promotes rigor, encourages risk-taking, and challenges standards in creating, composing, and presenting ideas.

OPEN DISCOURSE

Fostering the open exchange and critique of ideas in an environment that welcomes a diversity of views.

INCLUSIVENESS

Actively encouraging the presence and participation in the School of individuals with differing backgrounds, experience and world-views.

COOPERATION

Working together in shared efforts to teach, learn, understand, and create.

INTER-DISCIPLINARY EXPERIENCE

Engaging multiple disciplines to expand our perspectives and enrich our teaching, research, and creative practice.

RESPONSIBILITY

Recognizing our accountability for the impact of our actions on environmental, social, and cultural systems.

Diversity Value Statement

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts promotes and maintains an academic community that values equity and diversity and in which all staff (academic, oa, classified, graduate assistants and work study) and students, regardless of their individual race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and/or cultural traditions, have an equal opportunity to develop professionally and/or academically.

Organizational Structure of A&AA

A&AA is comprised of the Departments of Art (ART), Architecture (ARCH), Art History (AH), Landscape Architecture (LA), Planning, Public Policy, and Management (PPPM), and Programs in Arts and Administration (AAD), Historic Preservation (HP), and Interior Architecture (IARCH). In addition to these Departments and Programs support services are provided by Computer Services, Facilities, Accounting, Development, Communications and Outreach, and the office of Professional Outreach and Development for Students.

History of Diversity Efforts in A&AA

Attention to issues and best practices associated with equity and diversity are not new to A&AA. Significant is the work that takes place in this regard within departments and programs. Exemplary efforts include the large number of study abroad programs associated with the school, the internship programs associated with the Arts and Administration Program and Planning, Public Policy, and Management, the numbers of courses in A&AA offered to undergraduate students to meet the multicultural requirement, and the association of faculty and students with the Museum of Natural and Cultural History. However, in recent years attention to issues and best practices associated with Equity and Diversity have become coordinated at the school level through the Dean's Office. Initiatives include website development, formation of an Equity and Diversity Committee, and a survey of students, faculty, and staff.

Website

In the Fall 2004 A&AA hired a web manager to re-design the website associated with A&AA. It was expected that this website be fully accessible and meet nationally recognized requirements of web accessibility. This has been achieved and until the implementation of the new UO website was the most extensive website on campus to achieve this goal.

The Equity and Diversity Committee

In the Fall 2004 Robert Melnick, Dean of A&AA, established a school wide committee charged with advising the School of Architecture and Allied Arts in promoting and maintaining an environment that values equity and diversity and in which all staff (academic, oa, classified, graduate assistants and work study) and students, regardless of their individual race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and/or cultural traditions, have an equal opportunity to develop professionally and/or academically. Members of the committee can include faculty, staff, officers of administration, and community members (Note that one of the action items for 2007/2008 is to add student members to the committee). Members of the committee serve a two year term. The committee is expected to proactively educate departments, programs, institutes, and centers about equity and diversity issues. This committee is responsible for facilitating efforts to recruit and retain diverse students and staff in order to expand and enrich the School of Architecture and Allied Arts and its academic programs.

In its first year the committee met with representatives of Student Life, Affirmative Action and other campus resources, as well as Greg Vincent and Carla Gary, to determine what resources are available on campus with regards to issues of equity and diversity and how best to education A&AA faculty, students, and staff about these resources. The committee also began to develop a survey to be distributed to faculty, staff and students in Fall 2005 for the purpose of gathering information regarding equity & diversity issues in the School.

Survey of Students, Faculty, and Staff

In the Fall 2005, the Equity and Diversity Committee surveyed faculty, staff, and students to gauge the current perceptions regarding equity and diversity. Survey participants were asked to respond to the following questions or statements on a 10-point scale of agreement to disagreement.

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts is inclusive and welcoming.

Have you experienced or witnessed bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability, or cultural orientation at the UO?

I know whom to contact if I experience bias.

I feel confident in addressing issues of equity and diversity in the workplace.

Faculty, staff and students were also asked to indicate their awareness of the Graduate School Fighting Fund, the Underrepresented Minority Recruitment Plan, Disability Services, Student Life, Affirmative Action, Diversity Education and Support, Conflict Resolution Services, Sexual Violence Prevention, LGBTESSP, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and the Cultural Forum.

Narrative responses were provided for the following questions.

What suggestions do you have for meeting the A&AA's mission to be inclusive and welcoming?

Are you interested in assisting the Equity and Diversity Committee with its mission?

The results, while indicating there were not any critical issues, showed that members faculty, staff, and student populations felt that the school has not met its goals with regards to inclusiveness.

In response to the issues raised in the survey the committee sponsored two "Language and Labels" workshops that were presented by members of the Teaching Effectiveness Program in 2006 and conceptualized a curriculum grant program to motivate faculty to create new or modified courses that attend to issues of equity and diversity.

Process of Plan Development

Dean Frances Bronet charged the members of the 2006/2007 Equity and Diversity Committee with writing the draft of the Strategic Diversity Action Plan. Associate Dean Doug Blandy chairs this committee. Members of the Committee include Chris Wiesemann (Classified Staff, Computer Services), Ihab Elzeyadi (Assistant Professor, Architecture), Janice Rutherford (Assistant Professor, Arts and Administration), Sana Krusoe, (Associate Professor, Art), Jessica Greene (Assistant Professor, Planning, Public Policy,

and Management), Christine Wilson (classified staff, Deans Office), and Daniel Hunter (Landscape Architecture Alum). Committee members were chosen to represent the range of disciplines and fields associated with A&AA; classified and unclassified UO employees; and the community. All of those on the committee are respected within A&AA for their demonstrated on ongoing commitment to equity and diversity.

During the Fall and Winter terms this committee has met every other week for the purpose of developing the Strategic Diversity Action Plan. Committee members consulted widely within A&AA, and with outside campus units as appropriate, to complete the environmental scan, develop goals and propose actions.

In the Fall 2006 the Equity and Diversity Committee asked, and received, answers to the following questions from all A&AA Departments and Programs.

The questions were as follows.

1. What diversity programs/initiatives are currently underway?
2. What is required by your accreditation body or generally perceived as best practices?
3. How effective are the current programs in addressing diversity goals?
4. Where are the gaps in curriculum, initiatives, programs and services?
5. What are the historical conditions that have shaped your unit's responses to diversity issues?
6. What is the internal and external reputation of your unit in terms of its diversity efforts?
7. What concerns about diversity have gone unaddressed in your unit?
8. What is the resource capacity of your unit and unit leadership to address diversity challenges?

Response to these questions provided the following information about equity and diversity within A&AA.

All departments and programs are actively working on one or more specific goals for related to equity and diversity. PPPM is concentrating on obtaining more scholarships and money to bring in a more diverse group of students. ARCH is working on recruiting a more diverse faculty. AAD and ARH are working on curriculum that satisfies multicultural requirements. ART is working on continuing to keep a diverse group of students as well as students doing projects that show the diversity on the UO campus.

ARCH and ART are the two departments in AAA that have an accreditation body. Both departments are working on improving the diversity of their departments with students, curriculum, faculty, and staff. The other departments do not have an accreditation process but all are working towards diversity goals and many are actively involved with committees, professional organizations, or groups to help them achieve their diversity goals.

All departments feel like they could be attracting a more diverse group of students but due to money – scholarships, etc. they are losing out to other schools. AAD and ARH feel that their curriculums in this department are meeting their goals.

ARH, ARCH, and ART all believe that ARCH needs to add a non-western History of Architecture. The three departments see this as a concern but cannot fix the problem due to not having the monetary resources to hire someone to teach the class nor stretch any faculty member to add any additional classes addressing this to the curriculum. A problem all departments and programs are concerned about is getting a more diverse group of students, having money to bring them to the UO, and bridging the gap in some departments and programs of students being overwhelmingly one gender.

Larger departments (ARCH, ART) feel that they have more room to find places for faculty who they think are valuable to their department and can find the resources to entice faculty who are diverse. Smaller departments (HP, ARH) are on the opposite side with no resources or room to address problems their departments have had with diversity. Several departments are trying to break away from the historical trends of their field – ARCH being white males, AAD & IARC being traditionally female.

AAD is the only department or program that is well known internally and externally for its diversity efforts in designing a multicultural and socio-

political curriculum. The other departments are not sure what their reputation is in this regard.

All departments and programs are concerned with the diversity of its current students, recruiting a more diverse group of students, having more diversity in curriculum, and hiring and keeping a more diverse faculty

Most departments and programs feel that it's difficult to address the resource issue for several reasons. Most departments and programs can only address the issue of diversity for faculty when a position becomes available in their department. Most feel like they don't have the resources to recruit a diverse group of prospects and normally lose potential faculty members to other institutions due to the lack of money they can offer. Most departments feel they can address this only as it comes up in the department when a faculty member leaves or retires.

The Strategic Diversity Action Plan

Following are the goals and actions adopted for 2007. These goals and actions are based on the 2005 survey of faculty and students, the environmental inventory completed in 2006, and the fact-finding efforts of the Equity and Diversity Committee on UO resources beginning in 2004.

It is important to note that this first Strategic Diversity Action Plan is based on what the authors believe can be reasonably initiated and/or accomplished in 2007/2008. The plan does not address all that the survey and inventory suggests. However, the goals and actions associated with this plan will be reviewed and modified each year as appropriate and new actions and goals will be added over time.

Developing a Culturally Responsive Community

Goal: Introduce, orient, and reinforce faculty and staff attention to issues associated with equity and diversity.

Action: The A&AA Administrative Council (Department / Program Heads) and members of the Equity and Diversity Committee will participate with representatives of the Center on Community and Diversity (CODAC) in three four hour seminars on Multicultural Organization with A&AA during the Fall 2007.

- Action: In the Fall 2007 one graduate student and one undergraduate student will be added to the membership of the A&AA Equity and Diversity Committee.
- Action: In the Fall 2007, the 2007 Strategic Action Diversity Plan will be presented to the A&AA Student Advisory Committee. Suggestions and recommendations for the 2008 plan will be solicited.
- Action: The Equity and Diversity will initiate a program to provide funding to motivate faculty to develop new courses or modify existing courses that attend to issues of equity and diversity in 2007/2008. Funding in the amount of \$2000.00 has been secured for this purpose.

Improving A&AA Climate

Goal: Creation of a welcoming environment within A&AA

- Action: The House Committee with assistance from the Equity and Diversity Committee will be asked by the Dean to conduct an accessibility study of A&AA facilities in relation to faculty, students, and staff with disabilities. Study will result in a plan for implementing appropriate improvements.
- Action: The House Committee will continue its efforts to plan and develop clear and accessible signage within A&AA facilities.
- Action: An Equity and Diversity website will be added to the A&AA website. This website will consist of campus and community resources that can inform best practices by faculty, staff, and students associated with the creation of a welcoming environment within A&AA.
- Action: In the Spring 2008 the Equity and Diversity Committee will re-survey the A&AA community to gauge current perceptions regarding equity and diversity within A&AA.

Goal: Development and Implementation of Internal Communication Strategies

Action: In Fall 2007 an OA in the Dean's Office, working in partnership with the AAA web manager will develop and initiate a plan for internal communications among faculty, staff, and students.

Building Critical Mass

Goal: To Diversify A&AA Faculty

Action: The A&AA Dean's Office will work with the Office of Affirmative Action to provide relevant information to Department and Program Heads related to best practices in recruiting for building a critical mass.

Action: A&AA Departments and Programs will be asked by the Dean to assess current recruitment strategies in relationship to building a critical mass within A&AA. Plans for using current or new recruitment strategies will be implemented towards the goal of increasing faculty diversity.

Expanding and Filling the Pipeline

Goal: Improve awareness of A&AA related educational opportunities among Oregon's under-represented groups.

Action: The Dean's office in association with the Office of Admissions will provide Department and Program Heads with information regarding developing and implementing strategies for recruiting under-represented students.

Action: Departments and Programs will be asked to develop and implement plans for recruiting under-represented students.

Developing and Strengthening Community Linkages

Goal: Cultivate links between community based organizations and offices with A&AA students.

Action: The A&AA Professional Outreach and Development for Students (PODS) office will identify and offer internships to A&AA students in offices and organizations with a stated commitment to equity and diversity.

Goal: Cultivate civic engagement by faculty and students within A&AA.

Action: Civic leaders will be invited to attend an A&AA Administrative Council meeting to discuss issues of mutual concern and identify possible partnership opportunities.

Action: One A&AA all school faculty and staff meeting will be devoted to the topic of civic engagement. Faculty and students will be invited to make formal presentations about their work in the community.

Developing and Reinforcing Diversity Infrastructure

Goal: Identify achievable infrastructure improvements associated with facilities.

Action: The House Committee and the Equity and Diversity Committee will hold a joint meeting to discuss and prioritize infrastructure improvements that are congruent with the mission and values of A&AA in relationship to equity and diversity. Each committee as appropriate to their mission will develop a plan for the implementation of priorities.

Goal: Provide faculty and staff with information about the relationship of disability to learning in higher education.

Action: The Office of Disability Services will be asked to provide a workshop to faculty on universal design as it applies to classroom instruction.

