

# Office of the Vice President for Communications

*Amended 7/11/2018, 9/17/2018, 7/8/2019*

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan FY19 Actions, FY20 Plans, Five-Year Strategic Objectives and Measures

### I. Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan: Overview

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#### INTRODUCTION

In the President's Charge to the U-M Community, he stated:

“From being one of the first universities to admit women in 1870 to our historic defense of race conscious admission policies at the U.S. Supreme Court in 2003, the University of Michigan has had a fierce and longstanding commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. This commitment rests upon our recognition of the history in the United States of racial, ethnic and gender discrimination as well as our understanding that our progress as an institution of higher learning will be enhanced with a vibrant community of people from many backgrounds.”

In his statements on diversity, equity and inclusion in *On the Agenda*, President Schlissel noted:

“We cannot be excellent at the University of Michigan without being diverse in the full sense of that word, and leveraging the experiences and perspectives of the broadest possible diversity of students, faculty, and staff. We also must ensure that our community allows all individuals to thrive.

“When we engage across difference as an academic community, we expand our opportunities to learn from one another – inside and outside of our classrooms. Research demonstrates that we also achieve better learning outcomes and produce more creative and important new knowledge and levels of understanding.”

The Office of the Vice President for Communications (OVPC) plays a pivotal role in conveying both the ethos of the University of Michigan and information about its achievements and contributions. The commitment to engage and convey differing perspectives is a key underpinning of our work. Within OVPC, this strategic plan will advance that commitment, ensure that we live the principles ourselves, and guide us as we seek to operate at maximum effectiveness into the University's third century.

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Additionally, OVPC's central role compels us to develop a new template, new metrics and best practices for ourselves and the University community as a whole. These new tools will enhance our capacity to advance and advise on items of institutional and leadership priority in service to the campus community and beyond.

OVPC is committed to meeting its complex set of internal and external responsibilities with a mindful and forward-looking vision, persistence and hard work.

### **PLAN GOALS: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

**Diversity:** We commit to increasing diversity among OVPC staff—and, indirectly, throughout the University—in myriad forms, including race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, language, culture, national origin, religious commitments, age, (dis)ability status, and political perspective. So-called “Common knowledge” among communications professionals is that there is a very small, inadequate pool of qualified diverse candidates. Conversely, recent hires in Public Affairs and at the Wallace House seem to reinforce President Schlissel's observation that lack of diversity is an issue of access, not ability.

**Equity:** We commit to actively challenge and respond to bias, harassment, and discrimination. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital and/or family status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, weight, or veteran status. Furthermore, we commit to support and advance, through service and leadership, the University's quest for an increasingly equitable community.

**Inclusion:** We commit to deliberate efforts that will ensure OVPC's work environment and our campus as a whole are welcoming to differences, listen respectfully to different perspectives and ideas, and convey to every individual a sense of belonging and inclusion. We know we can more effectively leverage the resources of diversity to advance our collective capabilities by building a critical mass of diversity on campus and creating a vibrant climate of inclusiveness.

### **Rationale: Mission, Vision, and Values**

We seek to build a staff that represents the population we live in and serve, and a work culture that understands and celebrates differences. These actions will boost creativity and the exchange of ideas, and will ensure we are prepared to advance the university's standing among the world's great institutions of higher education, to carry forward leadership's priorities, and to draw the best students, faculty and staff who will significantly impact our complex world.

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### **II. FY19 Highlights and Planning Process Used**

This year's planning process was conducted by the OVPC Planning Team, which meets monthly. The team considers activities and practices, and input received from the OVPC office results to the Climate Survey. We also held an all-staff meeting to consider better methods of inclusion, including a new onboarding process. From the ideas proposed at that meeting, the team has developed a plan.

Learning from our Climate Survey, we saw that fair compensation is an equity issue with our people. We undertook a salary review, and raised salaries that were 20% or more less than the median appropriate for that position's pool (usually regional), where equity was the sole issue and no performance matters were present. We also developed, approved, and published a [compensation philosophy](#). Although budget constraints are always a consideration, we have a goal of setting salaries that are competitive for comparable jobs within the relevant labor market. Salaries also reflect work performance, experience, complexity of the role and market factors.

Our successful "speed dating" event at our cross campus Communicators' Forum meeting was repeated again this year. An entire session was dedicated to listening, learning, networking with one another in short speed date style sittings.

We reaffirmed our open door policy, and communicated to all staff their opportunities to talk to managers about anything on their minds. Managers periodically remind staff about this policy.

Onboarding for new employees: There was wide participation to help develop an onboarding process for new employees. We want everyone to feel welcome and have the information they need for success at U-M.

The DEI team created a [website](#) and set of activities that will help orient newly hired colleagues in OVPC. Recognizing that some of this information can be useful to even a long-term employee, we are calling it our Employee Handbook. It covers resource links to many things, such as the university's staff handbook, MHealthy, parking information and maps, and dining options. It explains policies, our role in the university's mission and some pointers on how the university works. The content will change and grow over time.

Finalized and launch mentorship program: Managers worked with their direct reports to map a career path, so that there is more transparency in which career possibilities exist within a job type and what needs to do to be considered for advancement. Based on interests and experience, we

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will work to identify pathways within OVPC. If pathways that match your goals do not exist in OVPC, we will help you identify other places in the university that may be next steps for employees to consider. Our team in OVPC is extraordinary and we want to help them attain their career goals – wherever those take them.

We continued to use diverse job boards to increase where our jobs are posted, making it more likely to attract a diverse candidate pool. We are also committing to reporting out the makeup of the pool of candidates interviewed for new positions. The intent is to hold ourselves accountable for putting enough effort into recruiting a diverse candidate pool.

We continued to work with all Fleming Administration Building staffs on our Fleming DEI Committee, which produced events and speakers.

The OVPC DEI Committee was pleased to announce and begin the “Expanding Horizons DEI Series.” These events will be scheduled approximately quarterly and offer varied DEI related speakers, workshops, and films in a format where other business does not limit the time. All managers are asked to be flexible with release time for these events.

Event #1 in the series took place March 14 and was titled “Spectrum Center Workshop: Inclusive Communication” and was presented by Will Sherry, Director of the Spectrum Center.

Event #2 took place May 13 and was titled “Generations in the Workplace: Celebrating Difference!” and was presented by Tina Jordan.

Event #3 is planned to take place in August or September and will be a screening of the film “Me, the Other.”

Institutional DEI communications support began in 2015 and continues. In addition to our committee work that supports our own staff, all of our work teams (including Michigan News, Public Affairs, Internal Communications, Michigan Creative, Photography and Media, the Freedom of Information Office, Strategic Initiatives, Web Strategy and Executive Communications) have actively worked to include DEI concepts in the overall institutional messaging and images since the inception of this effort. Support included:

- Photographed 12 institutional events. When considering shots or hiring models for print materials, we always seek diverse representation across a variety of dimensions.
- Lauren Love in our Public Affairs office keeps the DEI website updated, and handles social media channels on behalf of the central cause.
- Michigan Creative, which produces much of the university’s outward-facing material, has a variety of practices designed to advance university DEI messaging and outreach:

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- Develop communication plans that consider how marketing objectives and goals, messaging, outreach and distribution can reach the intended audiences and convey the university's dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion;
- Identify different ways to reach target audience members through a variety of traditional and innovative channels;
- Consider how broad and diverse audiences may require multiple touchpoints to deliver messages successfully;
- Follow accessibility requirements and standards in the design and development of website projects to ensure online resources are available to the widest possible audience;
- Consider how to portray a wide range of people and places for images used in design work to illustrate diversity and inclusivity.
- Our Public Affairs Office has a dedicated person who did the following last year:
  - Regularly updated DEI leads on university-wide key issues
  - Wrote 9 stories that highlighted the university's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion for posting on the DEI website, and 25 stories for posting in The University Record.
  - Managed media inquiries on issues that impact our cultural climate and our DEI initiative, such as the Trotter Multicultural Center Opening, articles about money and staff for DEI, Title IX, and principles for writing and declining student requests for recommendation letters.

### **FY 2020 Plans**

In FY 2020, we have plans to continue to advance both our own division's DEI awareness and activities, and to continue our work on behalf of the entire university's DEI efforts.

We will continue to use the climate findings to strive to make this division a place where all feel their work is rewarding, fairly assigned and compensated, and a place where they can grow. Making this a place where everyone feels respected and like they belong are our highest priorities.

Additional plans include:

- Continue to utilize a DEI project coordinator to track that we accomplish more of our plans; continue to retain Michigan Creative to complete various communications projects, including onboarding.
- **Schedule quarterly facilitated DEI events (Expanding Horizons DEI Series).**

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- We made progress with a mentorship program last year, but this year we will do year one learning evaluation and further rollout of the program.
- Complete development and rollout of improved onboarding process.
- Inform staff about the mediation program offered through HR to resolve conflicts.
- Continue our annual cross division review of all materials we produce to see how we are implementing the principles in practice.
- Organize a facilitated meeting for our staff with the lowest scores on the cultural survey to dig deeper into some of the causes.
- Require some management training to enhance DEI-related knowledge and skills. For example, require that managers take courses to develop skills in reflective listening, collaboration, positive leadership and others to strengthen their ability to encourage an inclusive workplace.
- To enhance a feeling of belonging, **explore employee interest in starting groups of common interest, such as book clubs.**
- **Organize service projects** and encourage everyone in the division to participate, drawing them together and enhancing a sense of belonging and inclusion.
- **Develop a “Passport” of growth opportunities and destinations around campus that can increase awareness.** Reward participants at year-end.
- **Add DEI related experiences that can be completed remotely. Begin by curating video training from Organizational Learning.**
- Develop feelings of inclusion by having **each unit host an all-staff lunch or other gatherings each year.**

The OVPC DEI committee is shown below

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**Planning Lead:** Christopher Billick

**Planning Team:** Cherie McBride  
Kerri Pepperman  
Hanna Quinlan  
Ellen Perry  
Margie Gonzales  
Liza Mondro  
Austin Thomason

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### III. Data and Analysis: Key Findings

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We have replaced our 2015 demographic data previously shown, with the more recent data from the Climate Survey. Although they don't directly track one another, the more recent

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data shows that we have fewer white employees, and more of other races and ethnicities than before.

Average Age	44.7
Gender Identity	
Female	57.4%
Male	40.4%
Other gender ID	---
Race/Ethnicity	
White	84% (compared with 96% in 2015)
Other Races/ Ethnicities	6.4%

*Although we have African American, Asian and Hispanic employees, the percentages are too low to be separately captured.*

Religious Affiliation	
Christian	50.5%
Agnostic/Atheist	19.4%
None	17.2%

*The percentages of Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist employees was too low to be captured.*

Political Orientation	
Conservative	11%
Moderate	16.5%
Liberal	70.3%

Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	85.5%
Gay/Lesbian	8.5%
Other	6.4%

Education	
High School	-----
Associate's Degree	6.6%
Bachelor's Degree	64.8%
Post Graduate	27.5

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### **IV. Strategic Objectives, Measures of Success and Action Plans\***

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*\*All strategic objectives and related actions will be pursued in accordance with the law and University policy.*

#### **IV. A. Recruitment, Retention and Development**

Constituency: OVPC staff and University as a whole

*Five-Year Strategic Objective 1*: To achieve a substantial increase of diversity of all sorts among OVPC staff, across all divisions and at all levels, from non-exempt staff to leadership

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 1)*: HR human capital data. **Self-analysis of applicant pool after each posting is closed.**

*FY20 Actions*: Institute policy that all senior staff purposefully expands their professional networking at conferences and other relevant gatherings to reach out proactively, including to underrepresented populations (gender, ethnicity, race, disability, etc.).

Include this requirement as a performance point.

As a part of our overall job posting strategy seek to communicate the desirability of working at the University of Michigan in channels that under- represented populations read and attend.

Develop a task force team to examine this issue, including participants outside of our division, since this is a common issue.

Seek to communicate the desirability of working at the University of Michigan in channels that under-represented populations read and attend.

Develop a task force team to examine this, including team members from more than our division (Perhaps with HR and Fleming DEI Group).

**Utilize central HR resources for promotion of postings to diverse groups on campus and in the community.**

Develop and implement fresh approaches to develop diverse applicant pool— meet and greets, in person and via Skype, webinar-type information sharing sessions, Twitter chats, Snapchat Q&As, etc., with prospective applicants.

Institute OVPC-based orientation/on-boarding process for new OVPC hires.



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*Primary DE&I Goal:* To engender a more diverse and creative workforce and work environment, thereby increasing our capacity to serve our several constituencies.

*Other applicable domain:* Service

### **IV. B. Education and Scholarship**

*Constituency:* OVPC staff and University as a whole

*Five-Year Strategic Objective 1:* To raise substantially: a) understanding of, ability to work with, and openness to DEI-related goals and objectives; b) management and communications skills and knowledge among OVPC staff managers and senior staff.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 1):* Staff climate survey, which may be refreshed in 2020; completion of suggested training; identify and select effective intercultural sensitivity tool to assess progress in these realms.

*FY20 Actions:* Activate new incentives for completion by all staff and managers a minimum of two relevant training opportunities per year.

Require that managers take courses to develop skills in reflective listening, positive leadership and others to strengthen their ability to encourage an inclusive workplace.

**Develop DEI “passport” or journal for employees to write reflections, record attended events, visits places that enhance their awareness and understanding of DEI-related subjects.**

*Primary DE&I Goal:* Engender a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workforce and environment, resulting in a substantially improved work environment and more effective communications products and leadership.

*Other applicable domain:* Service, Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

### **IV. C. Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community**

*Constituency:* OVPC staff and University as a whole

*Five-Year Strategic Objective 1:* a) To increase measurably fairness and transparency among OVPC staff at all levels; b) to decrease instances of negative comments from constituents about lack of equity and inclusion in OVPC coverage, products, priorities, etc.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 1):* Periodic staff climate survey; random survey of constituents; identify and select effective intercultural sensitivity tool to assess progress in these realms.

*FY20 Actions:* **Create service projects** that all employees are encouraged to join in on, such as Habitat for Humanity, to help develop bonds.

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Poll employees to see if they would like to create **communities of interest (such as book groups)** to feel more connected to one another.

Organize more social events, for example have each unit host a lunch and speaker each year for all.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* To generate a workforce that can both reflect and lead the university's communications community in DEI-related contributions and achievements.

*Other applicable domain:* Service

### **IV. D. Service (as applicable)**

*Constituency:* The University community, the broad community around the state and region; University-wide communicators

*Five-Year Strategic Objective 1:* Demonstratively improve OVPC's and university-wide communicators' ability to work within the parameters of new DEI-related metrics, guidelines and best practices.

*Measures of Success: (for Objective 1):* Results of annual random check of OVPC and other institutional materials.

*FY20 Actions:* These actions will mainly be those that our division undertakes to serve the greater university, by supporting the central DEI effort with communication tools, photography and public affairs issues management.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* To ensure the University walks the walk, consistently operating at a level of DEI-relevant excellence that serves as a model in American higher education.

*Other applicable domain:* All others.

### **IV. E. Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Prevention**

*Constituency:* OVPC staff and University as a whole

*Strategic Objective:* Educate our community on sexual harassment and misconduct prevention in an effort to promote a safe and supportive environment for all members to work, learn, and thrive.

*FY20 Actions:* Support unit-level participation in mandatory training.

*Measures of Success:* 100% completion of training.

*Primary DE&I Goal:* To generate a workforce that is equitable and inclusive for all. To ensure the University walks the walk, consistently operating at a level of DEI-relevant excellence that serves as a model in American higher education.

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*Other applicable domain: All others.*

### V. Goal-related Metrics

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**At the end of FY20, we will evaluate the following metrics in these areas:**

#### **Diversity**

Demographic Composition:

- Headcount
- Race/ethnicity
- Sex
- Age (Generation cohort)
- Feelings of discrimination in work unit

#### **Equity**

Climate Survey Indicators:

- Satisfaction with unit climate/environment in work unit
- Assessment of semantic aspects of the general climate in work unit
- Assessment of semantic aspects of the DEI climate in work unit
- Perceptions of equal opportunity for success in work unit.
- Feeling able to perform up to full potential in work unit
- Feelings of professional growth in work unit

#### **Inclusion**

DEI working group will annually survey staff to measure access, inclusion, and transparency among staff and also will look at presence of elements of inclusion in OVPC and university-wide communications work products and initiatives. If the Climate Survey isn't repeated this year, we will need to do our own to discover whether employees are:

- Feeling valued in work unit
- Feeling of belongingness in work unit

Finally, we will assess the work unit's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion



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## VI. Action Planning Tables with Details and Accountabilities

### VI. A. Recruitment, Retention and Development

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/Persons Accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
OVPC staff and University as a whole	To achieve a substantial increase of diversity of all sorts among OVPC staff, across all divisions and at all levels, from non-exempt staff to leadership	HR human capital data.  <b>Analysis of applicant pool after each posting is closed</b>	Institute policy that all senior staff purposefully expands their professional networking at conferences and other relevant gatherings to reach out proactively, including to underrepresented populations (gender, ethnicity, race, disability, etc.). Include this requirement as a performance point.  As a part of our overall job posting strategy seek to communicate the desirability of working at the University of Michigan in channels that underrepresented populations read and attend. Develop a task force team to examine this issue, including participants outside of our division, since this is a common issue.  Seek to communicate the desirability of working at the University of Michigan in channels that underrepresented populations read and attend.	OVPC HR manager; OVPC staff managers who are responsible for hiring and supervision	Adequate funding to post to a broader selection of external websites and job-seeking searches affiliated with professional associations, including but not limited to those with underrepresented membership.  <b>Coordination to review applicant pools at senior staff meetings.</b>

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			<p>Develop a task force team to examine this, including team members from more than our division (Perhaps with HR and Fleming DEI Group).</p> <p><b>Utilize central HR resources for promotion of postings to diverse groups on campus and in the community.</b></p> <p>Develop and implement fresh approaches to develop diverse applicant pool—meet and greets, in person and via Skype, webinar-type information sharing sessions, Twitter chats, Snapchat Q&amp;As, etc., with prospective applicants.</p> <p>Institute OVPC-based orientation/on-boarding process for new OVPC hires.</p>		
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### IV. B. Education and Scholarship

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/Persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
OVPC staff and University as a whole	To raise substantially: a) understanding of,	Staff climate survey, which may be	Activate new incentives for completion by all staff and managers a minimum of two relevant training opportunities per year.	OVPC senior staff, OVPC DEI committee	Funding to cover expenses; e.g., staff time off in



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	<p>ability to work with, and openness to DEI-related goals and objectives;</p> <p>b) management and communications skills and knowledge among OVPC staff managers and senior staff.</p>	<p>refreshed in 2020; completion of suggested training; identify and select effective intercultural sensitivity tool to assess progress in these realms.</p>	<p>Require that managers take courses to develop skills in reflective listening, positive leadership and others to strengthen their ability to encourage an inclusive workplace.</p> <p><b>Develop DEI “passport” or journal for employees to write reflections, record attended events, visits places that enhance their awareness and understanding of DEI-related subjects.</b></p>	<p>revenue-generating units; licensed presenter materials</p> <p>Funding to cover outside experts’ fees and travel.</p> <p><b>Production costs of passport.</b></p>
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### IV. C. Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/ persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
OVPC staff and University as a whole	Create a workplace in which all OVPC employees feel challenged and have advancement opportunities.	Periodic staff climate survey; random survey of constituents; identify and select effective intercultural	<p><b>Create service projects</b> that all employees are encouraged to join in on, such as Habitat for Humanity, to help develop bonds.</p> <p>Poll employees to see if they would like to create <b>communities of interest (such as book groups)</b> to</p>	OVPC Managers; unit HR lead.	OVPC as well as Communications staff across the U

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		sensitivity tool to assess progress in these realms.	feel more connected to one another.  Organize more social events, for example have each unit host a lunch and speaker each year for all.		
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### IV. D. Service

<b>Key Constituency</b>	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b>Measures Of Success</b>	<b>Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)</b>	<b>Group/ persons accountable</b>	<b>Resources needed (if applicable)</b>
The University community, the broad community around the state and region; University-wide communicators	Demonstratively improve OVPC's and university-wide communicators' ability to work within the parameters of new DEI-related metrics, guidelines and best practices.	Results of annual random check of OVPC and other institutional materials.	These actions will mainly be those that our division undertakes to serve the greater university, by supporting the central DEI effort with communication tools, photography and public affairs issues management.	OVPC leadership; OVPC DEI working group	Release time for working group members
	Include diverse sources and story and image choices in publications and other products, also in	Monitor publications and other work products for diverse sources and	Ensure that staff have access to and engage with resources that address ways OVPC can improve its coverage of diverse groups. Apply new metrics, guidelines and best practices.	Director/manager	Adequate funding

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	expert information and guidance provided to other U-M communicators in M19, Communicators Forum, social media collaboration group, etc.	content; annual work product review.			
	Develop effective and proactive outreach to underserved internal and external audiences.	Increased DEI-related content ideas from more diverse sources.	Ask key constituents for suggestions on ways to improve diversity sources, stories, etc, in communication and publications.	Director/manager	

### IV. E. Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Prevention

Key Constituency	Strategic Objective	Measures Of Success	Detailed Actions Planned (measurable, specific)	Group/Persons accountable	Resources needed (if applicable)
OVPC staff and University as a whole	Educate our community on sexual harassment and misconduct prevention in an effort to promote	100% completion of training.	Support unit-level participation in mandatory training.	OVPC senior staff	Release time for training.



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	a safe and supportive environment for all members to work, learn, and thrive.				
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### **VII. Plans for Supporting, Tracking and Updating the Strategic Plan**

Generally: The proposed OVPC DEI working team was constituted to support, track and update OVPC’s strategic plan. The team includes one member from each of OVPC’s departments, recruited by Lee Doyle, appointed by the Vice President and reporting monthly. In the winter all-staff meeting each year, the working team will provide an annual overview of work in this area and propose further actions for staff discussion.