



COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

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# Diversity Plan

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The School of Media & Strategic Communications at Oklahoma St. University is committed to vigorous pursuit of diversity in its employment, its educational programs and its activities. This commitment is based on the school's dedication to educational justice and the promise of each individual as well as the adherence to federal and state civil laws and University policies and procedures. In November 2012, voters of the state passed State Question 759, a measure that eliminated affirmative action programs in the state. The measure deals with three areas of government action. These areas are employment, education and contracting.

In these areas, the measure does not allow affirmative action programs. Affirmative action programs give preferred treatment based on race, color or gender. They also give preferred treatment based on ethnicity or national origin. Discrimination on these bases is also not permitted.

The measure permits affirmative action in three instances. 1. When gender is a bonafide qualification, it is allowed. 2. Existing court orders and consent decrees that require preferred treatment will continue and can be followed. 3. Affirmative action is allowed when needed to keep or obtain federal funds. Though these changes may affect how we obtain a diverse population they in no way inhibit the school's commitment to diversity.

The School sees diversity as an understanding that each individual is unique and the recognition and respect of these individual differences. Diversity can manifest as dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs as well as other ideologies. In addition to these, the School also sees the diversity of professions (ie. Journalism, Strategic Communications, Broadcasting, etc.) as important to the overall culture of inclusion.

The commitment to diversity is driven by the school's curriculum. To ensure diversity in its curriculum it is important to recruit both domestic and international minority and women faculty members with a commitment to diversity; actively recruit minority students and maintaining targeted advising and retention plans; integrate contributions of women and minorities to journalism and strategic

communications in the School's programs; and ensuring that students are prepared to work in a multicultural, multiethnic, multi-racial and otherwise diverse and global society.

Our diversity initiative responds to the new media environment that requires our students to communicate in a widely diverse, global marketplace. Issues involving race, gender, sexual orientation, politics, religion, as well as issues involving segmented populations (ie: special needs) are now a mainstay of our multi-cultural society and have to be addressed by a knowledgeable workforce. These issues therefore has to be addressed in the SMSC curriculum.

As a public institution, we also seek to mirror the socioeconomic makeup of our state. In Oklahoma, 24.2 percent of the population is minority (including those of American Indian decent) and just over half (50.5%) of the population is female. At Oklahoma State University in the fall of 2011, 29.04 percent of the student body was identity as minority and/or international and 48.3 percent of the student body was female. Enrollment in the School of Media & Strategic Communications (majors and pre-majors) in the fall of 2012 was 25.1 percent minority and 63.1 percent female. While the numbers are slightly lower than the University's in minority representation and exceed the gender statistics, we realize that our efforts to recruit, retain and graduate a fairly equal number of qualified women, men and minorities is a goal that must continue.

The composition of our faculty needs to reflect the realities of our multicultural society and an increasingly global marketplace. The school believes minority hiring not only be done as a collective whole but that each individual sequence contains diverse faculty to better serve our students needs. We have a long tradition of hiring women out of both the academic and professional fields as professors and educators. In addition we've made strong inroads in hiring qualified Asian, Gay and Disabled faculty and staff members over the last few years. While our diversity standards meet or exceed patterns in the industry and in the general population, we nonetheless continue to seek qualified women and minority applicants for each position in an effort to maintain our programmatic diversity.

To carry out our commitment to diversity in faculty/staff employment practices, student recruitment, educational programs and our departmental culture, the OSU School of Media & Strategic Communications has adopted the following plans of actions and goals for achievement:

#### ACTION PLAN 1.

**In an effort to strengthen diversity, the School must continue to actively recruit and provide mentorship for women and minority faculty and staff members through personal contacts, networking and contact with appropriate academic institutions and academic and professional organizations. Work to retain faculty through departmental and campus**

**mentorship programs.**

**Outcome 1.1:** Maintain a minimum goal of 40% women faculty and staff members.

**Outcome 1.2:** Maintain a minimum of 25% minority faculty and staff members.

**Outcome 1.3:** Provide diversity-training seminars on a yearly basis to both faculty and staff.

ACTION PLAN 2.

**Actively recruit minority students to the School.**

- Through the OSU Foundation, furnish funds for up to 10 scholarships to minorities to attend the various Journalism and Sports media workshops each summer. Scholarship students and other members of minority groups, economically challenged and at risk prospective students who attend the workshop and other on-campus events will be invited to later visit OSU and be given consideration for scholarships should they decide to attend the school.
- The School's faculty members will conduct regular visits to high schools in Oklahoma with significant minority enrollments each semester. Minority students will be encouraged to attend both OSU and OSU-Tulsa and apply for School scholarships.
- Establish an advising plan aimed at minority, economically disadvantaged and at-risk student retention.

**Outcome 2.1:** We want to see a significant increase in overall student diversity in the School, and we pledge to redouble our efforts to attain this goal.

ACTION PLAN 3.

**Our policy requires reflection of cultural sensitivity and inclusion of the contributions of women and minorities throughout the curriculum. We pledge to continue academic programs that acknowledge the contributions of minorities and women and prepare students to work in a multicultural, multi-ethnic, multiracial and otherwise diverse society.**

**Outcome 3.1:** Syllabi for classes in the School of Media & Strategic Communication should include diversity-related material and support this standard in one of three ways: 1) as a learning objective, 2) as a statement of support for diversity in the classroom or 3) actual course content that covers multicultural subjects.

**Outcome 3.2:** Offer MC 1143 Media in a Diverse Society on regular basis, every semester

**Outcome 3.3:** Develop a course in Race, Class and Gender in the Media for upper-class and Graduate students.

**Outcome 3.4:** Strive to bring in a myriad of guests and visitors to the School that promote diversity on many levels.

**Outcome 3.5:** Address courses and enrollment at the OSU-Tulsa campus.

ACTION PLAN 4. **Establish and maintain equivalency between genders**

**and minority groups in terms of peer support groups in the School.**

**Outcome 4.1:** This initiative will aim to assist student journalists in joining and attending conventions for a minority-centered organization of their choice, including: National Association of Black Journalists, Asian American Journalists Association, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Native American Journalists Association, National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association and the South Asian Journalists Association. The School will either facilitate their own chapters or will serve as a central organization that encourages students to join national associations and work to bring national representatives from these groups to campus.

**ACTION PLAN 5. Monitor the School's diversity efforts.**

**Outcome 5.1:** Establish a diversity committee that will be appointed by the Director each year, and will review diversity activities within the School and report its findings at least once a year.