Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion: Charting the Course for Justice & Excellence in Academic Libraries

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EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION
Charting the Course for Justice & Excellence in Academic Libraries

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What We’ll Be Talking About Today

- Introduction – background and current state of diversity in the profession
- Marquette Library’s diversity initiative and activities
- Wisconsin academic libraries’ diversity activities – survey results
- Discussion – successes and challenges, improving diversity in Wisconsin libraries
A Little Inspiration

That was then…

This is now.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0sLdwx9U1I

Katherine Phillips
Senior Vice Dean and Paul Calello
Professor of Leadership and Ethics

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0sLdwx9U1I
Setting the Stage

Challenges

• **Institutional culture** often reflects the identities of its creators.
• **Imbalances of advantage** have historically favored those who are aligned with institutional culture and identities.
• **These asymmetries of power, opportunity, and reward are often invisible** to those who identify closely with institutional culture.

Goals

• **Diversity**: Embodying a multiplicity of cultures and identities and embracing uniqueness of individual.
• **Equity**: Distributing opportunity and reward fairly among all cultures and identities; dismantling marginalization and underrepresentation.
• **Inclusion**: Establishing an environment that values and respects groups from all cultures and identities.

“Diversity is an essential component of any civil society. It is more than a moral imperative; it is a global necessity.”

Diversity Standards, 2012
Association of College and Research Libraries
Progress Report

• 1981: ALA Committee on Diversity
• 1990: ACRL Diversity Committee
• 1997: ALA Spectrum Scholars program
• 2006/7: First ALA Diversity Counts survey
• 2012: ACRL Diversity Standards
• 2017: Diversity in ALA strategic plan
• 2018: Diversity in ACRL strategic plan

Where Do We Stand? Changing Diversity of Library Profession

Statistics from the ALA Office for Research and Statistics
• 2006 Diversity Counts survey
• 2017 Demographic Study
Where Do We Stand?
Library Profession vs. US Population

Statistics from:
• US Census QuickFacts
• ALA Office for Research and Statistics, 2017 Demographic Study

MU Libraries’ Experience – How We Got Here
Mapping Diversity Strategy

Connecting the university’s diversity and inclusion plan with the library’s strategic objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Diversity Plan</th>
<th>Library Strategic Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus composition</td>
<td>Diverse and inclusive workforce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse scholarship and learning</td>
<td>Services and collections/scholarly resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diverse communities</td>
<td>Diverse communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion of campus-level diversity initiatives</td>
<td>Initiative itself and structure/intent of initiative</td>
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A Culture of Inclusion

- Promote and sustain a learning and workplace environment that values and engages all students, faculty, and staff.
Enhance Collections Representing Diverse Cultures

- Dedicate funds to acquire high demand diversity-related resources
- Catalog campus Multicultural Center's collection
- Enhance collection in consultation with the Center for Gender and Sexualities Studies

Strengthen Services to Students and Faculty from Diverse backgrounds

- Create and promote diversity research guides
- Provide instruction and consultations with students from Educational and Health Careers Opportunity Programs, international students, and McNair Scholars
- Celebrate ethnic history and heritage months with speakers, posters and exhibits
- Enhance partnerships with the Office of International Education and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion
Recruit and Retain a Diverse Workforce

- Advertise and promote job opportunities to diverse groups
- Facilitate search committee training on inclusive hiring practices
- Create residency program to increase underrepresented groups in academic libs
- Provide staff development and training including microaggressions workshop, presentation by Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Administer ClimateQUAL to library staff and participate in campus climate survey
- Membership on campus diversity committees

Collaborate with Culturally Diverse Communities in Milwaukee and Beyond

- Cosponsor programming; topics include:
  - Health disparities among minority children
  - African Americans in times of war
  - March on Milwaukee 50th anniversary
  - Native American veterans
  - International poetry reading
- Host annual MLK lecture
- Participate in volunteer activities sponsored by Milwaukee schools
- Sponsor internships for urban youth and international students
- Host Ethnic Alumni Association activities
Measuring Success

Challenges

• Lack of resources – funding and staff
• Taking it for granted vs. being intentional
• Maintaining interest and enthusiasm
DIVERSITY INITIATIVES IN WISCONSIN
ACADEMIC LIBRARIES, THE SURVEY SAYS…

14 respondents – 6 private institution libraries and 8 libraries from UW System

Strategic Plans

Diversity, equity and inclusion is included in the strategic plan of 6 libraries

- “fostering an engaging environment for our diverse community of learners”
- “providing services and resources to individuals of diverse background and needs”
- “Sensitive to personal needs, the library staff serves all members of the University community.”
- “We will continue to work to ensure we provide welcoming and inclusive surroundings for all who wish to take advantage of our spaces and services. Actions meant to hurt, alienate, or divide this community will not be tolerated. We strive to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive work place.”
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Activities

• **Hiring** – equity advocates on hiring committees, blinding of resumes
• **Staffing** - Info Specialist Internship for undergrads from diverse backgrounds, affinity groups, nametags with preferred pronouns, position descriptions including EDI activities
• **Committees** – Inclusive Excellence Council, staff EDI committee for training, collections, services and connecting to campus EDI initiatives
• **Training** – SAFE training for LBGTQIA issues, use of inclusive language, privilege/identity and hidden disabilities

Nametags with preferred pronouns

Noteworthy Activities

Chris Regan
she/her/hers
Noteworthy Activities

- **Collections** – purchase of textbooks as equity issue, diversity audit, non-mainstream book review sources, diversity resource guides
- **Displays** – “Know more now” to address issues in news/pop culture
- **Space** – meeting space, gender neutral restrooms, reflection room with social justice and diversity collection
- **Website and marketing** – inclusive messaging, gender neutral messaging, accessibility

Lawrence University reflection room

Committees/Task Forces

Types of diversity committees (if any) at responding libraries

- Institution: 72%
- Library: 21%
- Neither: 7%
Climate Survey

Types of climate surveys (if any) conducted at responding libraries

Challenges

- Historically low diversity of campus and community, challenging to raise awareness and change demographics
- Small staff size with little turnover, impact on ability to make diverse hires
- Lack of resources (staff and funds) to pursue diversity initiatives
Discussion

What are the notable diversity initiatives at your library?
What are your library’s greatest successes and biggest challenges?
What can we do here in Wisconsin to improve diversity?