

**Information Technology Division**

San Diego State University  
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# Information Technology Division Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

## Current Member Contributors

1. Aurora Velasco (Co-Chair)
2. Ed Legaspi
3. Edgar Hodge
4. Jasmine Walker
5. Rick Schultz (Co-Chair)
6. Ryan Smith (Student)
7. Wayne Jackson

## Previous Member Contributors

1. Dania Brett
2. Kelsey Quintanilla
3. Michael Li
4. Sheryl Necochea
5. Tony Chung
6. Zaynab Abdi (Student)

## Introduction

The Information Technology (IT) Division Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee developed the following mission statement and goals, with input from a wide range of IT Division staff, students, and leadership through the Diversity and Inclusion Climate Survey open November 20th - December 6th, 2019, and through two collaborative open forums where all IT Division staff and students were invited to participate. Over the course of nine months, the committee met bi-weekly to draft and refine the plan, with continued feedback from IT Division Leadership and the SDSU Equity Council. The final goal areas of this diversity plan encompass staff hiring/representation, climate, and technology solutions.

This plan also allows for flexibility, as specific metrics and assessments may need to be determined by IT Division Leadership and reassessed over time. The IT Division commits to transitioning its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to a standing IT Division Diversity Council, for continued evaluation and assessment of the Division's diversity plan and goals. The IT Division Diversity Council will open the opportunity for more employees to join on an ongoing basis, and coordinate diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for the unit.

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# IT Division Diversity Mission Statement

Our mission is to seek out and encourage opportunity and competitive advantage for the further advancement of equity, diversity, and inclusion for IT Division leadership, faculty, staff, and students. As our vision, we aspire to increase and retain underrepresented faculty, staff, and students through strategic, equity-minded, and inclusive initiatives. To be impactful, our team will embrace the cultural change in our workplace through the data we use, the innovative technical solutions we provide, and the diverse representation of our Division. Our goal is to build a safe, accepting, and successful environment together. To narrow gaps of diverse representation within our team, we will press beyond mission and value statements and strive towards action and accountability to achieve our goals of continuously improving diversity, and the engagement of our SDSU community.

## Staff Representation by Gender/Underrepresented Minority (URM) Analysis Regarding Representation

The IT Division consists of 25% [URM](#) and 75% Non-URM for 88 represented staff. Non-represented staff were not represented due to a number too low to maintain anonymity. Of the represented staff, 32% were female and 68% were male. Of 18 non-represented staff, 18% were female, and 82% were male.

When compared to other divisions at the University, the IT Division's female representation of 30% represents the lowest female representation of all university divisions. This data also shows that the IT Division's underrepresented minorities representation of 21% is the lowest among all reported university divisions.

The IT Division's gender representation of 75% male and 25% female is off balance in comparison to the current campus student population, which is 58% female and 42% male as shown by SDSU's department of Analytic Studies and Institutional Research. However, it is worth noting that EDUCAUSE featured an article, as did Higher Ed Jobs with data from the CUPA-HR Research Report. According to this report, in the higher education IT workforce 74% of IT professionals, and 73% of IT administrators were male. 79% are white with this discrepancy even stronger in leadership positions, with 88% of all IT administrators identifying as white.

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URM/Non-URM percentages of 25% and 75% (respectively) is out of alignment with the current campus student population, which is comprised of 35% URM and 55% Non-URM as shown by SDSU's department of [Analytic Studies and Institutional Research \(ASIR\)](#) as of Jan 2020.

# Climate Survey Analysis Regarding Representation

The IT Division conducted a climate survey via Qualtrics in November of 2019. There were 53 respondents, out of an IT Division population of 200 employees, for a response rate of 27%. Below are some of the key findings in interpreting the survey data results:

## URM

There is an overall sense of individuals within the IT Division not feeling valued for their presence (19%), expertise (13%), contributions (17%), and/or perspectives (17%) for multiple reasons. Of the respondents, 25% identified as URM. 36% of this group feel their presence is not valued in the organization, whereas only 14.7% of non-URM feel the same. Additionally, 18% of URM “strongly disagreed” their contributions were valued, and only 3% of non-URM felt the same.

## SEXUAL MINORITY

33% of the sexual minority (which refers to LGBTQPA – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Pansexual, Asexual, Other) disagreed that their expertise is valued, whereas only 13% of the sexual majority disagreed. The same 33% of the sexual minority disagreed their presence was valued, and 20% of the sexual majority disagreed.

## GENDER

In terms of gender, 21% of those identifying as men disagreed their presence is valued, and 18% of women felt the same way. A wider gap was present where 21% of men disagreed their contributions were valued and 11% of women felt the same.

## DISABILITY

Those identifying as having disabilities did not disagree at all that their presence, contributions, and expertise were valued. On the contrary, 20% of those identifying without disabilities disagreed their presence was valued, 12% regarding expertise, and 18% regarding contributions.

## EMPLOYEE RETENTION

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In terms of employee retention, 25% of IT Division disagree there is a demonstrated commitment to retaining employees of diverse backgrounds. Of these, 33% are men, 24% are women, 27% are URM, 25% are non-URM, 33% are the sexual minority, 28% are the sexual majority, 36% are Christians, and 31% are non-Christians.

Taking into account this data, in addition to comments made by members of IT Division within the survey regarding their personal experiences, the IT Division Diversity Council focused on three goals with related interventions as outlined in this plan. It is the hope of the council that implementing these goals will foster a community of inclusion and equity within the IT Division for all employees.

## Goal Area 1: Staff Hiring and Representation

### Problem Statement:

In regards to how the staff representation data above compares to higher education in general, [EDUCAUSE featured an article](#), as did [Higher Ed Jobs](#) with data from the [CUPA-HR Research Report](#). According to this report, in the higher education IT workforce 74% of IT professionals, and 73% of IT administrators were male. 79% are white with this discrepancy even stronger in leadership positions, with 88% of all IT administrators identifying as white.

As of Fall 2020, in terms of overall student population, [ASIR data](#) is as follows:

- 56.6%\* of SDSU overall campus student population is female
- 43.3%\* of SDSU overall campus student population is male
- 36.4% of the overall student population are URM
- 63.6% of the overall student population are non-URM

\*0.1% of SDSU overall campus student population is non-binary

### SMART Objective: Increase Diversity In Candidate Pools For Open Positions

Starting March 2021, establish a process with policies and procedures that measure and evaluate the outreach efforts made by the IT Division to seek out female and/or URM candidates for student, staff, and management job positions in order to move closer towards overall student population ratios each

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year. The process will be reviewed annually for its effectiveness in creating a more diverse candidate pool.

### **Intervention 1:**

#### **Prioritize the use of hiring committee members who have attended implicit bias training.**

Encourage selection of committee members that have attended the University's Implicit Bias training within the last two years in order to serve with awareness of the impact of having implicit bias.

#### **Resources needed:**

This program is funded by the Chief Diversity Officer. IT Division leadership needs to provide time for potential members and candidates to complete the training.

#### **Responsibility:**

IT Division Leadership will encourage each hiring manager/committee chair to attend Implicit Bias training as the hiring committee is formed.

#### **Assessment:**

Increase and maintain the total number of committee members who have attended Implicit Bias training.

### **Intervention 2:**

**Establish meaningful metrics to increase diversity and equity<sup>1</sup> in the hiring process.** Identify qualified female and URM IT candidates through approved SDSU (i.e. in coordination with HR) and non-SDSU professional groups/organizations/websites that specialize in providing female and URM IT candidates for the hiring process. Once the position is either filled or closed, gather the data to create specific metrics to evaluate the candidate pool. Collect pertinent data that shows the diversity of the candidate pool used, and determine if the candidate pool met defined diversity objectives.

#### **Resources needed:**

IT Division Leadership, the IT Division Diversity Council, and hiring committees. Approved groups/organizations/websites to increase the candidate pool. Approved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

#### **Responsibility:**

The IT Division Council, the hiring committee and IT Division Leadership are responsible for the launch of this program.

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**Assessment:**

The outcome of reviewing established metrics should inform the IT Division of what steps can be taken to improve diversity and equity in the candidate pool. Example metrics are: 1) percentage of female and URM candidates for each position closed, 2) list of SDSU and non-SDSU approved professional resources, 3) quality of service provided by approved SDSU and non-SDSU professional groups/organizations/websites, etc., 4) post review of policies and procedures.

**Intervention 3:**

**Increase awareness of available career opportunities within the IT Division.** Compile a list of URM and women, including students, in IT groups for advertising of available career opportunities.

**Resources needed:**

The IT Division HR Liaison will coordinate with Human Resources, IT Division Leadership, and the hiring committees.

**Responsibility:**

The IT Division HR Liaison and the hiring committee will ensure advertising and awareness of career opportunities reach URM and women in IT groups.

**Assessment:**

An increase in the number of identified female and URM members in candidate pools for open positions each year with a target to be representative of the campus student population.

**Intervention 4:**

**Recruitment documentation includes diversity & inclusion requirements.** Ensure all recruitment documents (i.e. job description/listing, interview questionnaire) use language that reinforces the unit's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

**Resources needed:**

The IT Division HR Liaison, Human Resources, IT Division Leadership, and the hiring committees.  
Time to create and edit verbiage for documents.

**Responsibility:**

The IT Division HR Liaison will coordinate with Human Resources, IT Division Leadership, and the hiring committee to review all recruitment documents ensuring they have appropriate verbiage for diversity & inclusion objectives.

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**Assessment:**

100% of all hiring documentation includes diversity & inclusion verbiage requirements starting in 2021.

## Goal Area 2: Climate

**Problem Statement:**

The climate survey results (53 respondents out of 200) in November 2019 identifies there is an overall sense of individuals within the IT Division not feeling valued for their presence (19%), expertise (13%), contributions (17%), and/or perspectives (17%) for multiple reasons (e.g., length of service, race, sexual orientation, gender, disability, and/or religion).

**SMART Objective: Training Opportunities**

Provide all staff and student workers in the IT Division with new opportunities each year to increase awareness of the importance of having a diverse and inclusive environment, resulting in greater retention of URM.

**Intervention 1:**

**Provide training sessions.** Promote diversity training offered by SDSU and present a choice of optional training sessions each year. Currently, only 5% of IT Division staff (including student workers) have been identified as participating in Implicit Bias training.

**Resources needed:**

Leadership works with appropriate SDSU group(s) to provide and track training/events (i.e. - Use Canvas, or other software that tracks staff training such as they do with sexual harassment, data security and FERPA).

**Responsibility:**

IT Division Leadership, and the IT Division Diversity Council.

**Assessment:**

Send out an annual survey created by the IT Division Diversity Council OR receive an update from Human Resources or the Equity Council regarding IT Division attendance at optional DEI trainings to show year over year increase in Implicit Bias training.

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## Intervention 2:

**Guest Speakers.** Invite at least one guest speaker (i.e. - from other Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), faculty, external) to speak on a topic of diversity, equity & inclusion to any IT Division event, (i.e. - All Hands Meetings) at least once per year.

In regards to speakers, the IT Division Leadership, and the IT Division Diversity Council will be taking an audience-centered approach. After the Diversity plans are approved, the IT Division Diversity Council will create a survey for the IT Division to gather information about the type of diversity topics the IT Division would like to learn more about. Once a speaker and topic are selected in coordination with other diversity efforts across campus, pre and post event surveys will be established by the IT Diversity Council, in unison with the event speaker, for event participants to complete. The pre event survey will be used to provide current IT Division diversity data, and anonymously establish participant perceptions, attitudes, and level of knowledge regarding the selected topic.

During the event, but after the event presentation, activities will be suggested for participants to improve their understanding of the selected diversity topic, and provided in a format in which they can reference going forward. Up to four weeks following the event, a recap of the discussion and suggested activities will be provided with the established post event survey to participants of the event to assess the impact of the event presentation in relation to the pre event survey established benchmark(s). For every speaker event, a summary of the event topic and suggested activities, along with both survey results will be shared with the IT Division.

### Resources needed:

IT Division Leadership providing events. Participation by auxiliary groups and guest speakers.

### Responsibility:

IT Division Leadership, and the IT Division Diversity Council.

### Assessment:

Each year, review anonymous post event survey data with anonymous pre event survey data to show any level of improved participant knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, understanding, and or behaviour related to the DEI event topic.

## Intervention 3:

**Open Forums.** Collaborate/partner with internal and external resources (i.e. Educause, SDSU groups), and promote at least two existing DEI forums/events each year to encourage a safe space for discussions on diversity, equity & inclusion at least once per year.

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In regards to open forum events, IT Division Leadership and the IT Division Diversity Council will be taking an audience-centered approach. After the Diversity plans are approved, the IT Division Diversity Council will create a survey for the IT Division pre and post event surveys for event participants that will be used to gather information about the type of diversity topics the IT Division would like to discuss. Once a speaker and topic are selected, pre and post event surveys will be established by the IT Diversity Council, in unison with the forum presenter(s), for event participants to complete. The pre event survey will be used to provide current IT Division diversity data, and anonymously establish participant perceptions, attitudes, and level of knowledge regarding the selected topic.

During the event, but after the event presentation, activities will be suggested for participants to improve their understanding of the selected diversity topic(s), and provided in a format in which they can reference going forward. Up to four weeks following the event, a recap of the forum discussion and suggested activities will be provided with the established post event survey to participants of the event to assess the impact of the forum discussion in relation to the pre event survey established benchmark(s). For every forum event, a summary of the event topics, discussion, and suggested activities, along with both survey results will be shared with the IT Division.

**Resources needed:**

Meeting space, and members of the IT Division Diversity Council to organize the open forums.

**Responsibility:**

IT Division Leadership, and the IT Division Diversity Council.

**Assessment:**

Each year, review anonymous post events survey data with anonymous pre events survey data to show any level of improved participant knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, understanding, and or behaviour related to the DEI event topic(s).

## Goal Area 3: Technology Solutions

**Problem Statement:**

Some of SDSU's technology solutions have room for improvement as it relates to diversity. For example, it has been complicated for an individual's listed preferred name to synchronize/replicate to other systems such as SDSUId, the Learning Management System, and other accounts. We need to look at how our technologies impact diversity. This is a technical problem related to identity but the lack

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of new solutions speaks to a lack of personnel or a team having a focus in this area. Also, consider the language used in software (e.g., “blacklist”, “master and slave”).

## SMART Objective: Continual Process Improvement

From within the IT Division Diversity Council, form a “sub-committee” (including IT and non-IT personnel) annually to look for ways to improve the inclusiveness of our implementation of various tools and IT solutions. Annually present issues identified and actions taken as a result to the IT Division.

### Intervention 1:

**Develop a framework (i.e. set of questions) that considers what implicit biases may exist in IT solutions.** Consider what can be done to reduce the impact of implicit bias in IT solutions.

### Resources needed:

SDSU Leadership (i.e. Procurement, Faculty), IT Division Leadership, IT Division Diversity Council, Technology Solution Teams, and non-IT groups involved in deciding technology solutions. Time and examples to create a framework.

### Responsibility:

IT Division Leadership

### Assessment:

Document solutions implemented with changes that resulted from a consciousness towards reducing implicit bias and known impacts of those solutions in order to show evidence of improved conscientiousness of implicit bias. For example, identify technical jargon (develop a glossary) that consists of implicit bias language (whitelist/blacklist, master/slave changed to allow list/restrict list, primary/secondary) and track known scenarios where changes were implemented (i.e. working group met to discuss SMTP relay server exception lists and conversation took place to change “whitelist” to “allow list”, which included staff that have not participated in diversity and inclusion forums, etc. yet were very supportive of change of language, and potentially leading to those staff members extending the same conversations with other staff, and so on).

### Intervention 2:

**Promote reading.** Annually encourage IT Division Leadership and the IT Division Diversity Council to read case studies of IT Solutions that have an impact on diversity, equity and inclusion. The readings will be available to all staff on a voluntary basis. For each reading, there will be two sessions. The first session will be for the IT Division Leadership team only. The second reading will be an open invitation

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for staff members and leadership as well. Leadership will have two opportunities to participate in the readings.

**Examples:**

- [A Health Care Algorithm Offered Less Care to Black Patients](#)
- [Dissecting racial bias in an algorithm used to manage the health of populations](#)
- [Schools are using software to help pick who gets in. What could go wrong?](#)
- [Big Data And The Problem Of Bias In Higher Education](#)

**Resources needed:**

Selected reading/case studies. Time for individuals to complete the readings, which can be tracked via a Canvas course. IT Division Leadership and DEI Council.

**Responsibility:**

IT Division Leadership and IT Division Diversity Council.

**Assessment:**

2.1 Propose and approve additional readings each year that cover this topic. Create a Canvas course for selected reading(s), including a quiz at the end of course.

2.2 All members of the IT Division Leadership and Diversity Council participate in group (IT Division Leadership and DEI Council) discussion of approved DEI reading(s).

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Equity should also be looked as being included along with diversity. Equity ensures we are going the extra mile for a certain demographic of candidates.