



# UP FRONT

## MISSION FULFILLMENT THROUGH INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

*Interweaving diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts into core institutional operations can lead to long-term benefits for students and the university.*

- **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION VIDEO** – Campus Chancellors, President, and Executive Vice President and Provost highlight the importance of diversity and inclusion with a new video.

[WATCH THE DIVERSITY AT NU \(2019\) VIDEO](#)

Shifting demographics and reaping the benefits of a diverse and inclusive campus environment will require us to rethink how we recruit, retain and support student, faculty and staff as well as manage campus culture.

A diverse and inclusive campus environment that leads to equitable outcomes will position the University of Nebraska to fulfill its mission of helping students reach their highest ambitions and aspirations. Shifting demographics will require us to rethink how we recruit, retain and support student, faculty and staff as well as manage campus culture.

Students are better educated and competitively prepared for their professions when they are exposed to diverse perspectives. University of Nebraska President Hank Bounds agrees. "Our strength comes from our diversity. I've seen time and again that personal growth comes from living and working alongside people who don't look or think like us," said Bounds.

The inclusion of diverse perspectives leads to increased innovation and growth in the organizations and industries are taking note.

What's more, a diverse and inclusive campus environment that leads to equitable outcomes will position the University of Nebraska to fulfill its mission of helping students reach their highest ambitions and aspirations.

When students are exposed to diverse perspectives their educational experiences are enriched and they are competitively prepared for their professions where they will work with colleagues from a variety of backgrounds.

University of Nebraska President Hank Bounds agrees. "Our strength comes from our diversity. I've seen time and again that personal growth comes from living and working alongside people who don't look or think like us," said Bounds.

The inclusion of diverse perspectives leads to increased innovation and growth in the organizations and industries are taking note. A recent study by Deloitte indicated that 44 percent of organizations list increased innovation and agility as a reason for investment in diversity and inclusion (D&I). Additional research shows:

- Ethnically diverse companies are 35 percent more likely to outperform their respective peers.
- Gender diverse organizations are 15 percent more likely to outperform their respective peers.
- Organizations with the highest level of diversity bring in nearly 15 times more in revenue.
- Organizations with inherent and acquired diversity are 45 percent more likely to report increased growth and 70 percent likelier to report capturing a new market.



*Association of American Colleges and Universities*

## UNIVERSITY SYSTEM MODELS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

University of Nebraska President **Hank Bounds** has identified top diversity areas that will ensure that Inclusive Excellence is a priority throughout the university system. In the spring of 2017, four D&I priorities were identified at the system level:

- (1) student recruitment and retention
- (2) faculty recruitment and retention/P&T/ non-faculty recruitment and retention
- (3) campus climate
- (4) supplier diversity

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The integration of D&I efforts into core institutional functioning and operations is required for transformational and sustainable outcomes that will benefit students and the university. The pathway forward requires the development of a strategic D&I framework that results in Inclusive Excellence.

D&I policy efforts will be based on Association of American Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) Inclusive Excellence Framework and include four dimensions (1) Access and Success, (2) Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations, (3) Education and Scholarship, and (4) Institutional Infrastructure. The University also defines diversity based on the following AAC&U principles and definitions:

**Diversity:** Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)

**Inclusion:** The active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions

**Equity:** The creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion.

**Equity-Mindedness:** A demonstrated awareness of and willingness to address equity issues among institutional leaders and staff (Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California)

Phase I of developing the D&I policy framework will include the following, some of which have already started:

- **BUILDING A WORKING TEAM** – The Diversity Officer's Collaborative (D.O.C.) was established to maintain an ongoing method of collaboration for system-wide diversity officers. D.O.C.'s mission is to foster collective ownership of diversity access and inclusion efforts across the four-campus system to achieve equitable outcomes for faculty, staff and students. Members of the DOC were appointed by campus leadership. ([LINK TO D.O.C. ROSTER](#))
- **DEFINITION** – Establishing clarity and shared language about the terminology of diversity, inclusion, access, and equity. The University of Nebraska defines diversity, inclusion, access and equity based on AAC&U's framework.
- **VISION AND VALUE** – Creating a clear vision, values and business case for D&I (a core component of the inclusive excellence framework). Developing a vision and values statement that articulates how inclusive excellence meets the needs of the students we serve, the state of Nebraska and beyond.

[\(READ MORE ABOUT AAC&U\)](#)

## INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

On April 6th at the University of Nebraska Visioning Day, campus leaders from across the system identified the seven characteristics of a great university and diversity was among them:

- 1) Learner-focused and experientially infused
- 2) Relentlessly focused on student success
- 3) Research relevance
- 4) Diversity: promoted and encouraged
- 5) Talent leveraged throughout the system
- 6) Local and global relevance
- 7) Purposefully and creatively changing the world