

President's Cabinet Actions to Support Diversity and Anti-Racism Initiatives 2021

Introduction

University of Puget Sound believes that diversity in all of its forms is an essential foundation for a broad and stimulating liberal arts education. Our [university diversity statement](#) articulates this commitment:

We Acknowledge

- the richness of commonalities and differences we share as a university community.
- the intrinsic worth of all who work and study here.
- that education is enhanced by investigation of and reflection upon multiple perspectives.

We Aspire

- to create respect for and appreciation of all persons as a key characteristic of our campus community.
- to increase the diversity of all parts of our university community through commitment to diversity in our recruitment and retention efforts.
- to foster a spirit of openness to active engagement among all members of our campus community.

We Act

- to achieve an environment that welcomes and supports diversity.
- to ensure full educational opportunity for all who teach and learn here.
- to prepare effectively citizen-leaders for a pluralistic world.

Each member of the campus community has a responsibility to promote and support this commitment. The President's Cabinet acknowledges and appreciates the longstanding leadership and tireless work of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, Intercultural Engagement, Race & Pedagogy Institute, University Chaplain, Student Accessibility & Accommodation, Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Officer, and many others to help achieve our shared goals. We also recognize the important role that the university's senior leadership has in visibly advancing this work. To help focus and support our institutional efforts until the Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity is hired, and in consultation and partnership with our respective divisions, the President's Cabinet has developed overarching strategies, actions, and initiatives to which we have committed. Within the context of the racial reckoning taking place nationally, locally, and on campus, the President's Cabinet recognizes the need to emphasize strategies, actions, and initiatives that respond to and address concerns related to individual, ongoing, and systemic racism at Puget Sound.

Guiding Framework: Leadership for a Changing World, Diversity Strategic Plan and Statement Against Racism and Discrimination

The university's strategies, actions, and initiatives are informed by our guiding institutional documents, and are intended to meaningfully activate our institutional Statement Against Racism and Discrimination. Relevant excerpts from these documents appear below:

Excerpt from the university's Strategic Plan, [Leadership for a Changing World](#)

Goal 2: Enrich our learning environment through increased diversity, inclusion, and access: We will more fully develop a welcoming learning environment through initiatives that increase and support equity, inclusion, access to, and successful graduation from Puget Sound.

1. Align institutional efforts to increase and support equity, diversity, and inclusion
2. Develop the Legacies Project, a university-wide set of activities, practices, and curricular initiatives that will empower students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the broader community to understand and learn from the diverse histories that have shaped our region, and to acknowledge the role that the university has played
3. Continue efforts to substantially increase, across all measures, the diversity of students, faculty, and staff

Excerpts from our Diversity Strategic Plan, [Threshold 2022: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusive Excellence](#)

Conceptualizing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: We at Puget Sound intentionally conceptualize and view diversity as a matter of equity and inclusion. In doing so, we aim to understand and actively respond to the ways organizational aspects of our society and of our own university often work against those principles, excluding some groups and individuals from our community while including others. The work of diversity, accordingly, seeks to account for and redress deeply embedded historical practices and legacies, forms of cultural and social representation, and institutional policies and processes that can systematically exclude groups or individuals from full participation in higher education and the considerable benefits it offers.

1. Recruitment and Retention. We continuously work to increase the structural diversity of the Puget Sound campus community.
2. Campus Climate Cultivation. We continuously work towards intentionally fostering and sustaining a welcoming campus community that strives for structural diversity, cultivates a culture of inclusive learning, supports systemic transformation, and is based on the principles of equity and inclusion.
3. Community Connections and Engagement. We continuously work to develop, strengthen, remake and repair relationships with diverse constituencies from Tacoma and the broader regions, and to build mutually beneficial collaborations that promote just transformation and further educational and civic aims of the campus and broader community.
4. Alumni Outreach and Connections. We continuously work to develop opportunities for alumni to contribute in multiple ways to increase access, cultivate a culture of inclusive learning, support systemic transformation, and strengthen relationships with alumni from underrepresented and minoritized groups.

Excerpt from [Statement Against Racism & Discrimination](#)

Accelerating our work to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion: Our mission and values of justice compel us to be more assertive in our pursuit to stamp out systemic racism and to create an institution and a society where everyone is respected and valued.

The President's Cabinet will work closely with our campus colleagues on these important strategies, actions, and initiatives. Key priorities appear below (in no particular order), mapped to the strategic plan goals that they support.

No.	Goal							Strategies, Actions, and Initiatives
	Leadership for a Changing World			Diversity Strategic Plan				
	2.1	2.2	2.3	1	2	3	4	
1.	X				X	X	X	Accelerate our work to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our mission and values of justice compel us to be more assertive in our pursuit to stamp out systemic racism and to create an institution and a society where everyone is respected and valued. This includes a special focus on addressing anti-Black and anti-Semitic acts, attitudes, and other expressions of harm.
2.	X				X			Utilize inclusive language. We will ensure the use of culturally appropriate and inclusive language, and accurate and aspirational representation of the campus community.
3.	X				X			Be engaged and accountable. Cabinet meetings will include, at minimum, quarterly discussions on achievement of our university-wide diversity goals, including updates on how divisions are advancing their inclusion, diversity, equity, access and antiracism goals, and discussion and reflection on learnings, progress, and hurdles.
4.	X	X			X	X	X	Convene a President’s Advisory Panel on Racism. We will bring together campus leaders to focus on implementation of initiatives to support the Leadership for a Changing World strategic plan. This work may include supporting the development of the Legacies Project, a university-wide set of activities, practices, and curricular initiatives that will empower students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the broader community to understand and learn from the diverse histories that have shaped our region, and to acknowledge the role that the university has played.
5.	X	X			X	X		Analyze our practices around renaming of university spaces and buildings and taking appropriate action. We will support the formation of the Committee to Recommend Principles on Renaming University Buildings and Spaces, which was deferred in spring 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic.
6.	X		X	X	X	X	X	Conduct a national search for a Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity. To focus, support, and champion our efforts campus-wide, a search for this new senior leadership role will begin in fall 2020 with a goal of having the new vice president in place by summer 2021.
7.	X		X	X	X			Actively advance our statement against racism and discrimination. We will incorporate the university’s statement against racism and discrimination into university trainings and communications, including orientation programming for faculty, staff, and students.
8.	X					X	X	Advance underrepresented and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (“BIPOC”) individuals as partners to and affiliates of the university. We will reinforce the importance of advancing opportunities to engage underrepresented contractors, performers, speakers, vendors, and other campus partners. We will continue to seek out BIPOC and underrepresented voices and perspectives for campus performances, lectures, and presentations. In selecting external vendors and partners to produce our work, we will advise them of the university’s statement against racism and discrimination and choose firms that share our values.
9.	X			X	X			Engage in and support education and professional development. We will work with the interim Chief Diversity Officer, Human Resources, President’s Advisory Panel, and others to offer a range of internal training opportunities for faculty, staff, and students related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and antiracism. In addition, each division will identify and undertake professional development, trainings, or other learning opportunities specific to their area to build competencies, broaden awareness, and effect positive change on our campus and in the broader community.

