

Moving American Dreams to the American Reality

(Including WTCS definition of diversity services)

Submitted by: WTCS Diversity Services Workgroup

Background: Approximately a year ago a Diversity Next Steps Workgroup was formed. One of the tasks charged by the Wisconsin Technical College- Student Services Administrators was to provide a Diversity definition. After several email communications and meetings at the state office facilitated by Tom Heffron, a document was created. The document included the 16 WTCS College's diversity definitions posted on their respective websites. The Diversity definitions varied and none of the definitions were the same; as a result, the Workgroup created one definition that incorporated the various viewpoints. The SSA unanimously endorsed the proposed diversity definition on February 2014 after Tom Heffron and the SSA's reviewed it. The Workgroup consist of 12 districts and is Co-chaired by Gema Garcia and William Green.

Diversity Definition implementation recommendation: "Diversity encompasses an array of experience including, but not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disabilities, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and national origin. An appreciative awareness of diversity provides the foundation for the understanding that individuals are shaped by this array of experience. Diversity services focus on addressing the specific needs of students that identify as members of historically under-represented and/or under-served populations as defined by federal, state, and local law."

Recommended Diversity focus:

- **Vision:**
The Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Diversity consultants' team will be the leaders in Diversity Education to provide State of the art services for diverse students; focusing on a collaborative approach, while framing our implementation strategies by way of data driven and root cause analysis to improve retention and completion of credentials.
- **Mission:**
To facilitate the transition of diverse populations from non-credit, skill-building courses into credit bearing, associate degree, technical degree and certificate programs within the WTCS. The mission of the Diversity Consultant is to improve diverse student outcomes, to help diverse students access, persist, and succeed in college to improve their career potential, to implement policy aimed at redressing inequity as it pertains to diversity.

Implementation recommendation- Re-evaluate annually or as needed:

- Reaffirm diversity services as a necessary/vital function of the college vs. supplemental services and align diversity definition with goals of the college.

- Monitor diverse population data: examine student and staff data from different populations; make this practice a routine part of institutional body of work.
- Embrace diversity definition as context for dialogue with respective administration for current and future funding priorities (State, Federal, private).
- Strengthen faculty and staff diversity as well as cultural competence. Conduct ongoing cultural competence training. Bring faculty and staff from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds strategies for working together.
- Evaluate the return on investment as it pertains to outreach to underserved populations. Allocate increased funding for diversity services for all students.
- Strengthen lines communication between Student Support Services Administrators (SSA) and Diversity Services Workgroup. Attend monthly consultations with Diversity Work Group to discuss effective strategies for working with the diverse student populations and community at large.
- Invite Diversity Coordinators to the table to discuss current and future WTCS initiatives such as but not limited to: Adult and Youth Career Pathways, Business and Industry Services.

Resources:

- A survey was sent to all districts asking for their Campus Diversity Definition.
- Several resources were utilized including researching definitions from other organizations, the WTCS's definition, Affirmative Action, SHRM, NCORE conference, WLDI, OCR training opportunities and UW system.
- Center for Community College Student Engagement-Special Report

District Recommendations	WTCS Recommendation s	(other comments/ideas)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use definition as context for dialogue with administration for funding/proposals (district)/State 2. Reaffirm diversity services as a necessary/vital function of the college vs. supplemental services 3. Use definition to continue to drive our data- 4. Administrators to endorse & approve definition. 5. Keep our group/efforts/services relevant and on the top (priority) to continuously promote deliverables from definitions 6. Strengthening lines of communication all the way to the president(s), starting with key groups like student services administrators 7. Definition directing linked to grant guidelines- the language that supports specific to Student Support Services and Career Pathways 8. Align definition with goals of the college 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use definition as context for dialogue with administration for funding/proposals (district)/State 2. Use definition-state office-to include in strategic direction 3. Including definition in minority performance model 4. Provide Trends and Analysis of Minority growth 5. Recommend further discussions about Affirmative action form the definition of diversity 6. Defining innovation and expansion of programs, with an emphasis on minority populations 7. Regaining focus on our services/objectives vs. socio-cultural programming; peer mentoring and leadership based. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use definition for accountability through the district (services) 2. District ownership of definition 3. Getting administration involved/in the loop 4. Minority populations are growing 5. Administration does not want to recognize minority (success) data to increase funding for minority services 6. Get administration to care about minority services beyond surface level efforts 7. Identity creation- our task group. 8. Transparency in terms of process is needed 9. Holding SSA accountable vs. presenting recommendations (perhaps tasks/expectations 10. Sell the value of minority services by gathering positive media examples; newspaper, articles, web stories, etc. 11. Continually expand the scope of services