



**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Operational Plan: 2021 - 2025**  
Revised June 2021

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Operational Plan was revised in June 2021 in order to reduce redundancy with the University’s strategic plan and to eliminate those objectives that either have been achieved or are no longer relevant.

The timeline for the plan was likewise modified so that it coincides with the strategic plan’s timeline.

Additionally, the operational definitions of “diversity,” “equity,” and “inclusion” were changed to reflect the definitions advanced by the New England Resource Center for Higher Education on its *Self-Assessment Rubric for the Institutionalization of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education*. These definitions, which originated with the American Association of Colleges and Universities (<https://www.aacu.org/making-excellence-inclusive>), are as follows:

*Diversity:* Individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origins, physical or cognitive abilities, and cultural, political, or religious affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning.

*Inclusion:* The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical). This engagement with diversity has the potential to increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

*Equity:* Creating opportunities for equal access and success for historically underrepresented populations, such as racial and ethnic minority and low-income students.



The overarching goal of the DEI Operational Plan is to develop a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive climate at Utica University (*Utica University Strategic Plan: 2020 – 2025*).

**Goal: Create a sustainable infrastructure that supports an equitable and inclusive living, learning, and working community.**

- Assess the institution's systems, structures, and services that impact equity and inhibit inclusive excellence.
- Develop and strengthen a framework and infrastructure to sustain efforts on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Goal: Establish collaborative relationships among and between student groups and resources in the Utica University and the greater Utica community to enhance educational, professional, and social opportunities.**

- Strengthen and utilize affinity relationships with alumni, especially alumni of color.
- Create authentic opportunities for students from diverse groups to interact meaningfully with one another and foster feelings of belonging.
- Develop effective strategies to engage co-curricular and student support operations in promoting greater collaboration among diverse student groups to enhance educational, professional, and social opportunities.
- Create opportunities for students from diverse populations to develop the leadership skills and abilities that transfer to the world of work.
- Promote community engagement by facilitating connections between university student groups and resources in the greater Utica community.

**Goal: Develop ongoing, professional development for faculty, staff, student organizations, and student leaders beyond that which is required for compliance.**

- Promote training and professional development opportunities on topics pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Embed Inter-Group Dialogue (IGD) pedagogies in curricular and co-curricular activities and continue to train faculty, staff, and students in IGD.

**Goal: Support efforts to develop curricular offerings and innovative pedagogy that reinforce the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

- Support efforts of curricular leaders in the development and implementation of curricula that prepare students for a racially diverse, global world.
- Create professional development opportunities for faculty to develop pedagogies that best support the 21<sup>st</sup> century learner.

**Goal: Develop effective communication strategies to promote the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

- Ensure that diversity is well represented in university promotional materials.
- Develop effective mechanisms and strategies to communicate progress on DEI initiatives and report on areas of concern.