
Action Project

Title: Hiring for Faculty Diversity

Version: 2

Institution: Lewis University

Submitted: 2010-03-15

Status: Completed

Category: 4-Valuing People

Timeline

Planned project kickoff date: 2008-08-01

Target completion date: 2010-09-30

Actual completion date: 2010-11-30

Project Detail

Project Goal

Describe this Action Project's goal in 100 words or fewer

The goal is to improve the diversity percentage of full time and regular part-time faculty.

Reasons For Project

Describe briefly your institution's reasons for taking on this Action Project now -- why the project and its goals are high among your current priorities

Lewis University has maintained a student diversity percentage at or near 30% for several years. However, the faculty diversity percentage has rarely reached above 10%. Efforts have been made to recruit and maintain diverse faculty, but have not been as successful as desired. The issue has been raised in the Vital Focus Project 2005 and in unit plans of the 2011 Strategic Plan as well as the initial Systems Portfolio. Faculty agree that now is the time for a centralized project to seek new ways to pursue the benefits of a higher level of diversity among the faculty.

Organizational Areas Affected

List the organizational areas -- institutional departments, programs, divisions, or units -- most affected by or involved in this Action Project

Faculty among all departments and colleges; Human Resources

Key Organizational Process(es)

Name and describe briefly the key organizational process(es) that you expect this Action Project to change or improve

Hiring - advertising processes that bring faculty openings to the attention of diverse candidates; interview processes by search committees; Retention - develop ways to foster a climate of collegiality; mentoring processes

Project Time Frame Rationale

Explain the rationale for the length of time planned for this Action Project (from kickoff to target completion)

The project activities include researching resources and professional organizations; finding best practices at other institutions; synthesizing successful processes done in particular units; conducting focus groups of diverse faculty who have stayed at the University; conducting diversity hiring workshops; revising hiring policy manuals. Some creative solutions will need time to be accepted and implemented.

Project Success Monitoring

Describe how you plan to monitor how successfully your efforts on this Action Project are progressing

1. Monitor attendance at workshops and search committees for inclusion of faculty who have completed workshops.
2. Summarize research findings.
3. Review "creative" practices.
4. Propose revised and/or new policies.
5. Communicate policies to all involved in the faculty hiring process.

Project Outcome Measures

Describe the overall "outcome" measures or indicators that will tell you whether this Action Project has been a success or failure in achieving its goals

Increase in the percentage of diverse faculty hired. Increase in the number of diverse faculty who remain at the University. Increase in the percentage of faculty who have completed workshops.

Annual Update

Project Accomplishments and Status

Describe the past year's accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project

Internal: Efforts to provide diversity training for current employees.

The Action Project Team reviewed the *Search Procedures and Hiring Manual* and made the following changes: new questions to identify a candidate's commitment to diversity and provide an opportunity for the prospective faculty member to share ideas for promoting multiculturalism. Following some editing, these will be added to the Manual.

Twenty-five faculty, staff, and administrators attended a performance of "Black Jew Dialogues" in Chicago to experience issues of navigating cultural difference and participate in a discussion following the performance. The actors are being contracted to this performance to the Lewis University campus.

External: Efforts to make Lewis known as welcoming diverse faculty.

Two Action Project Team members attended the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE) in May 2010 to gain new knowledge for increasing diversity across campus. They gathered best practices on issues of recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse faculty. Lewis was able to distribute the color, tri-fold diversity brochure that the Team created last year to present Lewis as "An Employer of Choice."

Improvement Achieved: An upward trend in Faculty Diversity.

2008 (First year of Project)	2009	2010 Current
9.66%	10.24%	11.76

Although, this percentage does not approach our student diversity (31.4%), the trend for faculty diversity is going in the right direction.

Institution Involvement

Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project

The Project Team members are drawn from faculty, staff, and administration who have experience and expertise in multicultural issues. A faculty member and the Associate Vice President co-facilitate the team and ensure that this project is a supported priority. The Team members have set up conversation stations with displays at the annual AQIP Open House to engage attendees for new ideas and share the status of the project. The Team remains motivated by clarifying separate aspects of the projects to break tasks into manageable activities such as creating the brochure, holding training sessions for hiring, revising the manual, etc.

Next Steps

Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project

This Project is scheduled for retirement after its review. The next steps will be to review the Project outcomes and to incorporate the practices resulting from the Project into regular institutional processes and systems for hiring and retaining a diverse faculty. This will include further diversity training to increase sensitivity to cultural issues; to work with College Deans to foster plans for increasing faculty diversity; to focus more attention on retention of new diverse hires.

Maintaining and furthering the achievements of this Project is vital to the Mission of Lewis University which includes “*Fidelity: The spirit which recognizes God as the ultimate reality, unifying the diverse forms of knowledge in the pursuit of fullness of truth, while recognizing the diversity of human experience.*”

Resulting Effective Practices

Describe any "effective practice(s)" that resulted from your work on this Action Project

One effective practice was to have diverse members on the Project Team, but not restrict membership to diverse members. Including white faculty as members works to dispel any misconception that diversity hiring is a problem only for people of color.

Project Challenges

What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project? This is an opportunity to get constructive, actionable feedback and advice from our review process. Use this question to specify where your blocks, gaps, sticking points, or problems are. If you have already fashioned strategies to deal with any challenge you face, share both the challenge and your strategy for meeting it. If you would like to discuss the possibility of AQIP providing you help beyond the review process, explain your need(s) and tell us whom to contact and when

Since the Project will be retired soon, the remaining challenge is to continue the momentum into regular hiring practices.

Annual Update

Reason for completion

What is the primary reason for closing this project?

The project accomplished its goals of developing a diversity training program for faculty searches, created a diversity brochure to distribute at conferences, and increased the percentage of diverse faculty.

Success Factors

What aspects of this project would you categorize as successful?

Including white faculty members on the project team helped foster the belief that diversity is a concern for all faculty. Many practices developed by the team were institutionalized as standard practices.

Unsuccessful Factors

What aspects of this project would you categorize as less than successful?

The rise in percentage was not as high as desired, but did show positive growth.
