

What Can Be Done: Strategies for Increasing Graduate Student Diversity in Compliance with Federal and State Laws

Step 1 – Identify the academic value of diversity

What academic value does diversity have for your department?

- Is it your experience that a diverse group of graduate students adds to the richness of academic discourse in your field?
- Do you feel that values of equal opportunity and access are a component of your department's academic research mission?
- Do you feel diversity is a component of your department's ability to remain competitive and/or responsive to the needs of our increasingly diverse state?

How would you define that diversity?

- Is diversity in terms of gender, race, ethnicity and culture important?
- Is diversity in terms of other factors such as geography, first language, national origin, socioeconomic background, or primary field of interest, important?

Step 2 – Identify the means to achieve those academic values

- While decisions about admission and financial aid cannot be made on the basis of race or gender, departments can consider whether candidates have the ability to serve the University's mission of inclusiveness, diversity and equal opportunity.
 - Ask all candidates about their ability to contribute to research, teaching and service that will enhance diversity and equal access in their field or higher education generally.
 - Evaluate candidates' contributions to diversity in selection for admission and financial support. For more ideas, see: <http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/grad-diversity/documents/diversity-graduate-selection-guidelines.pdf>
 - Consider whether candidates' research interests will serve the needs of our increasingly diverse state, nation and world.
- Outreach and recruitment may be targeted by race or gender as part of broad and inclusive outreach efforts to ensure that women and minorities are not excluded.
- While you can't grant preferences on the basis of race or gender, you can insure that your programs are inclusive by examining and eliminating barriers that may prevent full participation of students of color and women. Mentorship, networking are important.
- Analyze your own departmental data regarding applications, admission, yield to understand where you could be more inclusive and where barriers persist.
- Cultivate an atmosphere of inclusiveness and value on diversity by social events, speakers, awards and recognition to students and faculty doing service in these areas. Word of mouth on departmental culture is important.
- All departmental communications (program descriptions, etc) can reflect a message of the value of diversity and an environment of inclusiveness. Develop a departmental "Principles of Community" that can be posted and distributed.
- Treat complaints of discrimination with respect. Make problem resolution an active part of departmental culture. Provide training for students/faculty/staff on procedures for filing and handling complaints.