

Leading with Diversity: UC as a National Model for Cultivating Diverse Leaders

Executive Summary

The 2018 UC-CORO Leadership Collaborative, Northern Cohort (hereafter “the Cohort”) undertook this study at the behest of its sponsors with the goal of surfacing ways of increasing the diversity of senior leaders across the University of California (UC) system. There is no question that there is a lack of diversity among senior leaders in UC, as well as in U.S. higher education across the board. Davis and Maldonado (2015) report that of all U.S. college presidents (including presidents of historically black colleges and universities), only 4% were women of color and only 6% were African American. Wolfe and Dillworth (2015) similarly report that only 9.4% of all administrators in American higher education were African American and that “about 80% of all college and university presidents are White.” Kwon (2016) finds that, in U.S. public universities in 2013, whites comprised 76.6% of full-time managerial staff even though whites comprised only 62.6% of the total U.S. population.

Within the University of California (UC) itself, a study published in 2015 states, “Whites make up 77% of employees in the Senior Management Group (SMG) and 69% employees in the Manager and Senior Professional (MSP) personnel program. And though they comprise 65% of the total UC career staff workforce, women represent only 54% of all MSP employees and only 39% of SMG employees.” In 2017, the population reflecting racial and ethnic diversity (that is, those who are Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian, Hispanic/Latino(a), Black/African/African American, American Indian, two or more/other/unknown, or international) comprised 75% of the UC student population but only 35% of the Senior Management Group (SMG). Ideally, the diversity of UC’s SMGs would reflect the rich diversity found throughout the

State of California and the SMG population should achieve UC’s stated Affirmative Action Goals.

Cohort members gathered information about diversity in academic leadership via a literature survey that included both scholarly and popular sources, conducted sixty-two (62) interviews with both UC administrative and academic leaders as well as leaders from non-UC institutions and private industry, and reviewed documents relating to UC policies and demographic data. The Cohort also identified a number of best practices, some found within UC as well as some from outside, for increasing diversity among academic leaders.

THE COHORT’S FINDINGS ARE SUMMARIZED IN THREE KEY POINTS:

1. There is extensive variation in diversity recruitment practices across UC—some locations do well at fostering diversity among leadership, while others do not. The good news is that, for many locations, diversity is becoming a topic of increasing importance. The bad news is that, in many ways, UC is still just talking without doing much.
2. There is uneven accountability when it comes to increasing diversity among senior leadership.
3. Developing and retaining underrepresented senior leaders in UC is a hit-or-miss proposition.

Based on its findings, the Cohort offers **four recommendations** and issues a **Grand Challenge** to the University of California: Make UC the model for diversity in senior leadership.

THE COHORT RECOMMENDS FOUR ACTIONS TO MEET THIS CHALLENGE:

1. **Create a new senior management group recruitment policy:** The most effective best practices the Cohort identified should be consistently employed to provide systemwide uniformity and equity in hiring of senior leaders.
2. **Promote accountability and recognition for increasing diversity:** There must be greater individual accountability for increasing diversity among academic and administrative leadership in UC. There also must be greater transparency in reporting to the Regents in the area of leadership diversity. The Office of the President should develop incentives, such as presidential awards or other celebratory recognition.
3. **Focus on development, retention, and succession planning/mentorship in future study:** UC should ensure that, once UC has hired diverse candidates, they feel welcome, supported, and appropriately mentored. Best practices for ensuring retention should be in place along with succession planning for each local campus, health center, lab, extension/research sites (e.g., ANR), and the Office of the President.

4. **Employ a standard recruitment and retention tool:** A tool has been developed by the Cohort in the form of a printable accessible guide providing tips and strategies on recruitment and retention basics that help to ensure diverse and inclusive practices.

THE GRAND CHALLENGE:

Make UC the model for Senior Leadership Diversity by:

1. **Setting the culture:** Make a bold statement from the top, creating urgency and demanding accountability—learn from those campuses that are making great progress.
2. **Setting the policy:** Implement the recommended recruitment policy across UC by June 2020.
3. **Setting the expectation:** Measure progress and make it visible.

The Cohort proposes that these recommendations comprise a Presidential Initiative supported by an Executive Steering Committee, an Advisory Committee, and an Implementation and Monitoring Committee. The Cohort is eager to serve within this framework to execute the recommendations of this report.

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