

UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AND STUDENT SUCCESS UNITS
Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence for 2023-2025
v.1

Overview

This strategic plan for diversity, inclusion, and equity represents the collective priorities, strategies, and metrics for Undergraduate Education and Student Success Units (UESS) within the portfolio of the Senior Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Undergraduate Education. These units include:

- Academic Navigators Team
- Career Services
- Center for Academic Success and Transition
- Center for Transformative Teaching
- Explore Center
- Learning Communities
- Military and Veteran Success Center
- Undergraduate Education Programs
- Undergraduate Research and Fellowships
- University Advising & Data Systems
- University Honors Program
- William H. Thompson Scholars Learning Community

UESS's aspires to engage UNL scholars from matriculation through graduation with services and resources that support their needs, backgrounds, and educational goals guided by the following:

- We believe all scholars admitted to UNL can succeed in completing their degrees.
- Our staff and faculty are central to developing and implementing all success strategies.
- Our services support scholars' learning, belonging, and engagement.
- We prioritize ensuring all scholars have equitable opportunities and resources to succeed.
- We honor scholars' diverse needs and strengths and use identity-conscious approaches.
- We continually review data to understand and address equity gaps to support success for all.
- We co-create with scholars, integrating their perspectives and feedback in all of our units' work.

UESS collective priorities for AY 2023-2025 include: 1) Scholar Retention and Engagement, 2) Staff Recruitment and Development, and 3) Faculty Engagement and Development. At the end of each academic year, UESS units will report on their progress and contributions in these areas. Because UESS units vary in scope and mission, all units are not responsible for addressing every priority. However, all UESS units are expected to prioritize support, resources, and experiences that cultivate a sense of belonging and inclusion in collaboration with faculty, staff, and community stakeholders.

Priority Area One: Scholar Retention & Engagement

Every year UESS units interact with thousands of scholars through transition and engagement programs including academic advising, career development, undergraduate research, honors seminars, ACE courses, and scholarship and learning communities. We strive for inclusive excellence in every interaction.

Goal 1: Embed developmentally appropriate learning opportunities that model inclusive excellence and support scholars' diverse identities and backgrounds across our services.

Goal 2: Increase participation by underrepresented first generation, ethnic minority, and low-income scholars in UESS programs and services to support their retention and degree completion.

Metrics

- a) Units will report on 1-2 inclusive excellence learning opportunities they provide to scholars.
 - A description of how the opportunity is designed to support inclusive excellence for scholars (and partners on campus and/or in the community as appropriate)
 - A rationale for why and how the opportunity is developmentally appropriate
 - Reflection and assessment on the value/success of the opportunity
 - Demographics of scholars' participation (especially at-promise scholars)
 - Feedback and/or student perspectives on the value of the opportunity
 - Any other data that the unit is using to assess its impact in supporting inclusive excellence.

Priority Area Two: Staff Recruitment & Development

Collectively, UESS units employ 80+ managerial professionals and nearly 100 graduate and undergraduate scholars who serve as teaching assistants, peer mentors, learning assistants, and interns. UESS staff and student leaders provide the bulk of programs designed to support first year scholars' orientation and transition. Thus, it is critical that UESS staff and scholar leaders are equipped with the intercultural competencies, skills, and knowledge to support all scholars' needs and that they model and practice inclusive excellence through every interaction.

Goal 1: Recruit staff who represent our scholars' identities, backgrounds, and experiences through proactive and intentional hiring processes.

Goal 2: Prioritize professional development for staff and student workers that builds intercultural competencies for inclusive excellence.

Metrics

- a) Unit leaders will describe strategies they used for any hiring that year to achieve goal one.
- b) Unit leaders will ask all staff to reflect upon how they supported inclusive excellence in their work through annual evaluation processes.
- c) Unit leaders will report on 1-2 inclusive excellence opportunities in which they and their staff engaged to build intercultural competencies.
 - A description of how the opportunity is designed to build intercultural competence.

- A rationale for why and how the opportunity is appropriate for unit staff/student workers.
- Reflection and assessment on the value/success of the opportunity.
- Feedback and/or evaluation on the value of the opportunity by staff/student workers.
- Any other data that the unit is using to assess impact of the opportunities in building staff/student worker competencies for inclusive excellence.

Priority Area Three: Faculty Engagement, Collaboration, and Development

UESS units collaborate with faculty across the undergraduate academic colleges in support of inclusive excellence, providing services and resources that equip faculty to develop informed and nuanced understandings about scholars' experiences in curricular and co-curricular contexts.

Goal 1: Provide faculty resources and tools they can use to enhance curricular and co-curricular engagement and promote degree completion for all undergraduate scholars.

Metrics

- a) UESS leaders will report on 1-2 services they provide faculty in support of inclusive excellence.
- A description of how the opportunity is designed to support faculty understanding of and/or practice of strategies for inclusive excellence.
 - A rationale for why and how the opportunity is appropriate for faculty.
 - Reflection and assessment on the value/success of the opportunity.
 - Feedback and/or evaluation on the value of the opportunity by faculty.
 - Any other data that the unit is using to assess impact of the opportunities in building faculty understanding/strategies for practicing inclusive excellence.

Operational Process and Timeline

To operationalize this plan, the UESS Directors work in collaboration with a cross-unit implementation committee of between six to eight self-nominated staff members from across all UESS units. The DEI committee is charged with

- Making recommendations to UESS leaders regarding inclusive excellence goals and strategies.
- Developing and implementing professional development opportunities to build a sense of community and collective understanding of how all STT units contribute to the UESS plan.
- Evaluating and assessing the professional development opportunities it organizes and providing feedback to UESS leaders.