

# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021







## ORIGINS

In 2017, Emporia State University (ESU) expanded the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) plan via the support of more than 50 students, faculty, staff, and community members. This group of dedicated individuals came to be known as the University Diversity and Inclusion Alliance (UDIA). The voiced and written comments this group shared regarding diversity practices on campus prompted the President to commit ESU to the pursuit of incorporating Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) into campus policy and practice by establishing DEI as a new strategic priority designated as Goal #5 in the ESU Strategic Plan.

In 2019 specific actions in support of Goal #5 (“Become a model for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion”) were taken to advance ESU’S commitment to DEI. The decision to add an inaugural Senior Director of Diversity and appoint a designated Title IX Officer reflect a few of those actions. Increased diversity initiatives within the curricular and co-curricular experiences, thematic learning communities in the residence halls, enhanced marketing materials, and signing of the NCAA diversity pledge were all first steps in support of accomplishing this new commitment by ESU.

Over the past year we have added three critical campus-wide groups that have provided infrastructure and leadership in ESU’s DEI space. Those groups include the Basic Needs Coalition, LGBTQ+ Advisory Council, and Multicultural Student Outreach Team. The charge and leadership of these entities will serve to collaboratively create an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated and recognized as a source of strength.





## OBJECTIVE

Emporia State University (ESU) is committed to creating and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment that is supportive of, and committed to, the success of all members of the population that it serves, a population that reflects the broad diversity of the human experience.

This diversity includes, but is not limited to, differences in culture and subculture, socio-economic class, race, ethnicity, nationality, language, disability, ability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, political and social ideologies, family background and structure, veteran status, and age.

We expect that students, faculty, and staff at ESU will understand, respect, and appreciate that other people's perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own and recognize this as a source of strength.





## MISSION AND VISION

### Mission

The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) mission and vision emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning, adaptive leadership and inclusive excellence, making a positive impact on society. Elevating DEI as core strategic priorities from the executive suite signals a strong commitment to the advancement of adaptive leadership through diversity and inclusive educational excellence.

ODEI seeks to empower all ESU communities to engage in continuous improvement by making excellence inclusive. “Making Excellence Inclusive is the Association of American College & Universities (AAC&U’s) guiding principle for access, student success, and high-quality learning. It is designed to help colleges and universities integrate diversity, equity, and educational quality efforts into their missions and institutional operations.” <http://www.aacu.org/making-excellence-inclusive>

ODEI serves as a primary partner for facilitating increased understanding and value of diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and physical and cognitive abilities. By intentionally coupling adaptive leadership and inclusive excellence we will achieve transformative outcomes.

### Vision

We strive to develop and foster an inclusive, compassionate and courageous campus community that honors the humanity of every individual where all members feel valued and empowered.





## GOALS

The ODEI has five goals in place to improve diversity practices:

- Improve university access and persistence to increase the diversity of the ESU community
- Identify and enhance students' diversity-related educational opportunities and experiences
- Ensure that all students graduate with core cultural competencies necessary for living and working effectively as members of a diverse, global community.
- Ensure DEI plan accountability by assessing, adapting and implementing improvement strategies with the intention of sustainability.
- Develop and maintain a campus climate and culture in which embracing DEI is a core value lived by all members of the ESU community.



# EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES







## MEET THE TEAM

The office of Diversity, Equity consists of the following team members (pictured left to right):

Aswad Allen, PhD | Chief Diversity Officer

Jasmine Gonzalez | Undergraduate Assistant

Micheal Torres | Graduate Assistant

Bella Gallegos | Undergraduate Assistant

Carlos Bautista Toloza | Graduate Assistant

If you would like to reach out to the team, please visit our office located in Plumb Hall 202 or call us at (620) 341-5551.





## INITIATIVES

### **“Humanity First” brave space for conversations**

Designed to create brave spaces for difficult social justice dialogues, this important initiative was launched in June 2020 as a response to the George Floyd murder. This series has brought local focus on the impact that national current events and issues may be having on our community. Thought-provoking conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni, community and special guests discuss various topics such as racial equality, systemic racism, the global pandemic’s exposure of health disparities, as well as personal leadership and self-accountability. This space has served as a spring-board for community engagement and strategic action during periods of chaos and uncertainty. The average attendance was 160 participants.

### **University Website Updates**

Starting in August 2020, the website updates inspired a series of changes in the way ESU serves and supports students. Editing over 45 pages, updating key student resource information, identifying and listing relevant student support sources, and designing more effective ways to communicate to a variety of populations across campus has been the priority. We used our website redesign project to create community and promote a shared understanding of what diversity, equity and inclusion work entails has been a central goal.





# INITIATIVES

## **Diversity Inventories**

Beginning in February 2020, Diversity Activity Inventories served as a vehicle for identifying all diversity activities across the university. In preparation for initiating this project, time was spent clarifying purpose of these inventories. ESU deans, directors and department heads have recognized the initiative's value and have supported the purpose of improving DEI effectiveness through building networks and collaborations. Ultimately, these inventories have great potential to promote a culture of shared learning, shared responsibility, and shared rewards regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

## **Campus Pride Index**

Our most recent Campus Pride survey was completed in 2017. As a result, the ODEI began exploring the necessary steps to update the Campus Pride Index in January. We have assigned the LGBTQ+ Advisory Council Chair as the official point of contact, with the expectation the campus community will cooperate in completing the survey on a regular basis. We are looking forward to providing new information regarding the LGBTQ+ experience at ESU to our leadership and broader community.

## **Insight into Diversity HEED Award and Health Professions HEED Award**

Starting in September 2020, the ODEI worked toward attaining the Insight into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award and Higher Education Excellence in Diversity for Health Professions Award for the overall university and Nursing school.





## INITIATIVES

### **University Diversity Alliance Inclusion (UDIA)**

Since its origins in 2015, UDIA has been an integral part of DEI initiatives at ESU. This year, some of the biggest contributions of UDIA included new academic advising and tutoring services, First Gen Programming, mental health brave spaces, Corky's Cupboard food pantry updates, new housing assistance, updates to Corky's Wallet financial literacy program, new meal plan assistance for food insecure students, diversity mentors, canvas and SharePoint resource sharing, collective diversity calendars of events, and a discussion platform for resources and guidance.

### **Basics Needs Coalition (BNC)**

The BNC, composed of key representatives from across campus, has played a major role in educating the campus community on student food, health, and housing insecurities. In addition to assisting students who are food insecure or need access to housing or emergency funding assistance, BNC information regarding healthy eating, community gardening, and updates to Corky's Cupboard food pantry, all contribute to creating campus change. The BNC is also in the process of developing a strategic campaign to share research and results of the #RealCollege Survey regarding food insecurity and housing insecurity rates of ESU students. Also a review of ESU peer institutions is underway to determine how campuses are informing their communities about student basic needs and providing resources. Additional next steps include developing a syllabus statement, reporting institutional findings to the ESU community, and soliciting input on the BNC action plan.





## INITIATIVES

### **LGBTQ+ Advisory Council**

The LGBTQ+ Advisory Council has established itself as a vital contributor toward enhancing DEI practices at ESU. In addition to launching a focused strategic planning process, the council serves in a consultation capacity specific to inclusive teaching practices and effective action steps in response to issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community. The council is a participating partner in support of the Gender and Equality in Kansas Conference, the Tilford Conference, the Iota Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society, and the creation of a new website focused on LGBTQ+ individuals' needs. The council is a core partner with Diversity Advocates (DAs). The DAs host professional development experiences, workshops, discussions, advocacy for safe inclusive spaces on campus, the development of an LGBTQ+ Alumni Group, and the re-introduction of the Campus Pride Index regular reporting and outreach process.





## PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Similar to all face-to-face higher education institutions, ESU experienced a tremendous need to meet the multitude of new challenges resulting from the 2020 global pandemic. Issues specific to the return to campus, curriculum delivery, accommodations for safety, mental health, and student success were all priorities. ESU's method for engagement adjusted to virtual, blended, remote, and hybrid, with minimal face-to-face interactions.

The Campus Safety Network (CSN), which was born out of this need, focused on addressing issues impacting our most marginalized populations. This network initiated and facilitated proactive campus wide emergency response planning for the Black and Brown student populations. COVID-19, campus safety, and DEI issues were strategically addressed once every two weeks during the 2019 and 2020 year.

Diversity Student Programs partnered with Counseling and Mental Health Services to provide in-depth feedback regarding student mental health and student non-therapeutic support. Racial Healing Circles and Extension Counseling for Students were additional initiatives offered during this period. This group promoted basic information sharing between our executive cabinet members and our front-line professionals.

Civic engagement and community based work was also severely impacted, particularly by those who may have limited access to the internet and the necessary hardware. Many negative factors also influenced our college going rate and return rate, particularly those students from first generation, low-income, and Black and Brown populations.





## PANDEMIC RESPONSE

In response, the Multicultural Student Enrollment and Retention Outreach Team was formed in Fall 2020. This collaboration, led by 26 faculty and staff volunteers, organized a direct student outreach campaign and contacted over 600 students from Black and Indigenous populations. These efforts, in conjunction with the Retention Action Team, contributed to an 86% BIPOC student population return rate in Spring 2021.

Finally, ODIE served as a DEI thought leader as a member of the Future Planning Group. This group is designed to vet issues, needs, concerns, and strategies for action regarding COVID-19. Contributions included support for comprehensive communication specifically shared during ESU Townhall dialogues, Hornet Announcements, President's Council conversations, Provost Council discussions, Student Affairs Divisional meetings, Foundation and Alumni Association newsletters and general correspondence. The UDIA and BNC, both composed of representatives from across campus, served as a source for information sharing and campus community support.



A photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there is a large, leafy green tree on the left and a concrete walkway leading towards a red brick building in the background. The sky is blue with some light clouds. A semi-transparent grey banner is overlaid at the bottom of the image, containing the text 'PANDEMIC RESPONSE'.

## PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Student responses indicated the following impacts:

- Developing widespread communication on important issues that impact the entire campus community
- The importance of educating ourselves and adapting to a new environment for students, faculty, and staff
- Crucial skills needed to leverage technology and enact change in the classroom environment
- Finding new methods in interacting when moving from face-to-face interactions preventing delay of communication when sharing out information via new channels, creating better accessibility
- Creation of campus programming that is adapted to a virtual space, but that maintains impact for the university
- Improvement of training practices across campus
- Provision of scholarships, food and housing assistance, and outreach opportunities to assist students in being successful at the university
- Development of brave spaces to better connect with students and provide a space for discussion on important topics and issues diverse groups encounter in their daily lives
- Awareness of events inside and outside the university



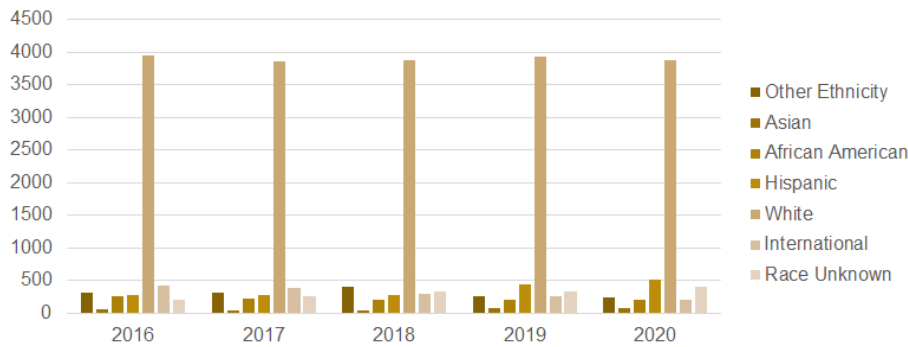


# ASSESSMENT

The ODEI continues to work with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to regularly review data and information about our students, faculty, and staff. Some of our most commonly reviewed data typically includes disaggregated counts by major, race / ethnicity, and gender. During the 2020-2021 academic year this information has been used to guide strategic thinking of our President, Provost, Enrollment Management, School and College Deans, UDIA, and Kansas Board of Regents Council of Chief Diversity Officers. The following charts outline key performance indicators typically considered.



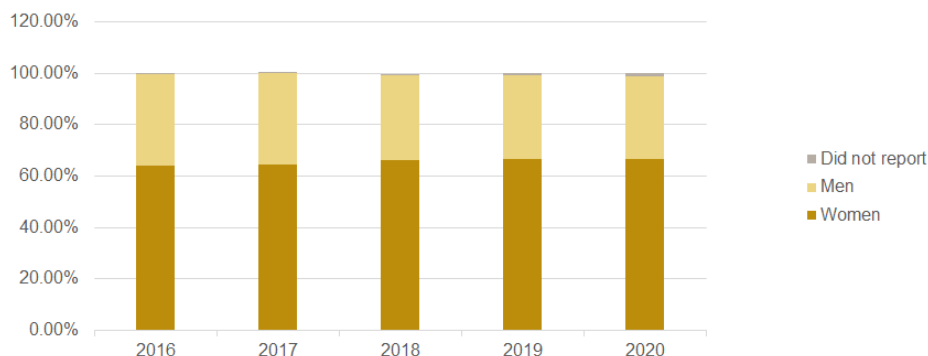
## Identifications of Ethnicity for Students by Percent and Count - FY16 to FY20



Year	Other Ethnicity	Asian	African American	Hispanic	White	International	Race Unknown
2016	5.70%	0.90%	4.60%	5.10%	71.90%	7.80%	3.90%
2017	6.00%	0.90%	4.20%	5.20%	71.90%	7.20%	4.70%
2018	7.40%	0.80%	3.80%	5.10%	71.30%	5.50%	6.20%
2019	4.60%	1.30%	3.80%	8.20%	71.30%	4.60%	6.20%
2020	4.40%	1.60%	3.90%	9.20%	69.70%	3.80%	7.40%

In 2020 ESU enrolled 5550 students compared to 5479 in 2016. This chart indicates the percent of students represented at ESU by ethnicity during this five year period. White and international student populations trended downward (White 71.9-69.7%; International 7.8-3.8%) compared to an upward Hispanic and Asian students trend (5.1-9.2%; .9-1.6% respectively). The African American student population was maintained at a relatively flat rate with a slight decline (4.6-3.9%). We recognize the “Race Unknown” category as worthy of paying close attention to going forward due the aggressive percentage incline (3.9-7.4%).

## Identifications of Gender for Students by Percent and Count - FY16 to FY20

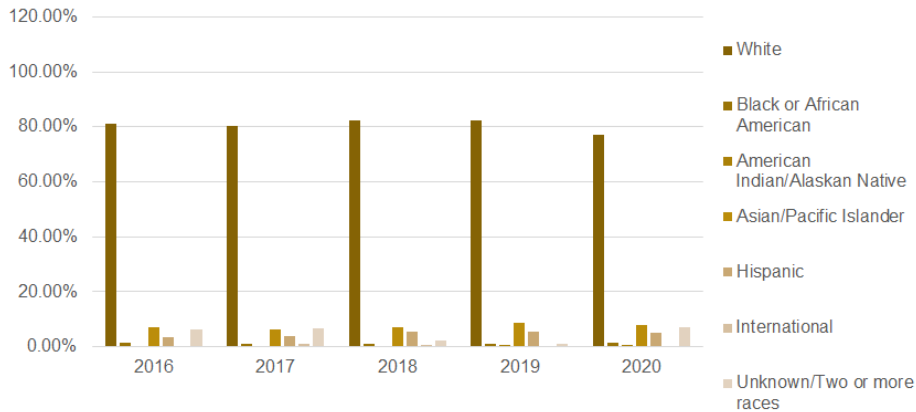


Gender	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Women	64.20%	64.70%	66.20%	66.50%	66.70%
Men	35.60%	35.20%	33.20%	32.60%	32.10%
Did not Report	0.2%	0.10%	0.20%	0.90%	1.20%

Students who identify as women at ESU represented 66.7% compared to those who identified as men (32.1%) in 2020 compared to 64.2% of women and 35.6% of men in 2016. The number of students who did not report a gender increased from x% in 2016 to x% in 2020.



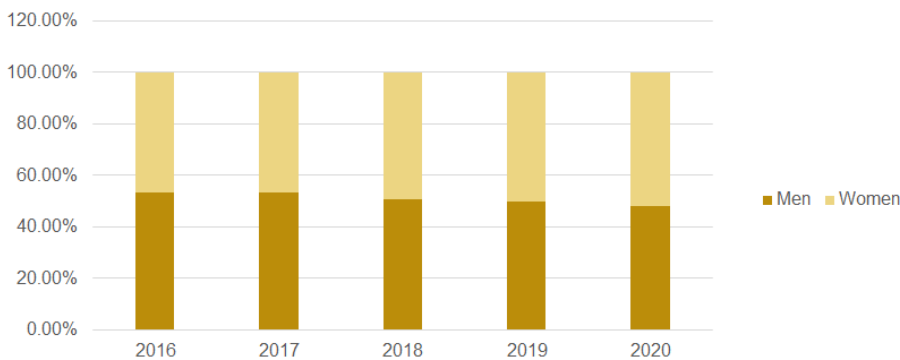
## Identifications of Ethnicity for Faculty by Percent and Count - FY16 to FY20



Race	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
White	81.10%	80.16%	82.19%	82.38%	77.11%
Black	1.57%	1.19%	1.21%	1.23%	1.61%
American Indian Alaskan Native	0.39%	0.40%	0.40%	0.82%	0.80%
Asian/Pacific Islander	7.09%	6.35%	7.29%	8.61%	8.03%
Hispanic	3.54%	3.97%	5.67%	5.74%	5.22%
International	0.00%	1.19%	0.81%	0.00%	0.00%
Unknown/Two or more races	6.30%	6.75%	2.43%	1.23%	7.23%

In 2020 ESU had 249 faculty members compared to 254 in 2016. This chart indicates the percent of faculty represented at ESU by ethnicity during this five year period. The White faculty population trended downward (206-192), the African American and International faculty populations remained fairly the same, and there was an upward trend in the American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian / Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Unknown/Two or more races faculty representation (1-2, 18-20, 9-13, 16-18 respectively).


## Identifications of Gender for Faculty by Percent and Count - FY16 to FY20



Year	Men	Women
2016	53.54%	46.46%
2017	53.57%	46.43%
2018	50.61%	49.39%
2019	50.00%	50.00%
2020	48.19%	51.81%

From 2016 to 2020, we observed a trend moving toward representing a near equal distribution of men and women faculty members.





## SUMMARY AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The ODEI has accomplished a lot in the past year, but it is clear to those in official positions and volunteering their time that there is much more work to be done in maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment that is supportive of, and committed to, the success of all members of the population that it serves, a population that reflects the broad diversity of the human experience. Opportunities include more concrete training and crucial discussions on our community as it relates to diversity; better assistance for students including access to basic needs, mentoring, financial, academic, and leadership support; more widespread support of diversity initiatives and investment in diversity programs and action on campus; involvement in local and nationwide diversity initiatives; and a commitment to hiring, recruitment, and retention of individuals from diverse backgrounds to strengthen and improve our campus climate.

The ODEI has a vision of diversity, equity and inclusion as a way of being, of living, and of engaging others. Leveraging the BNC to ensure our community has an infrastructure to access resources and education on acquiring basic needs; the UDIA to work on initiatives across campus and develop outreach and engagement opportunities for students, faculty, and staff; the LGBTQ+ Advisory Council to bring together allies and students, faculty, and staff in the community; and other training, programming, and initiatives tied to DEI across campus is what we believe will build community and engage others on campus and off campus. We also identify that a designated space and staffing that clearly promotes a sense of belonging for students, faculty and staff is a part of this plan. Together, we will continue to build the framework for these sorts of outcomes to become a reality that can be sustained indefinitely and embedded into our culture.