



Triton College Diversity Plan

*Triton's Diversity A³:
Appreciation • Adaptation • Achievement*

Preface

The Triton College Diversity Plan is the result of the collaborative work of a college-wide committee established by Dr. Patricia Granados, President of Triton College, in the Spring of 2005. Between the Summer of 2007 and the Spring of 2008, the existing plan was evaluated and this document represents relevant updates and changes to the original. Members of the Council for Diversity will continue to implement and influence the successful completion and ongoing support of critical elements to enhance and maintain the diversity of Triton College. Members of the Council for Diversity include:

- Lidia Aratyn
- Steve Christiansen
- Elsa Figueroa
- Debra Ford
- Elma Johnson
- Kerrie Lynn
- Larry Manno
- Paul Martinez
- Jeff Sargent
- Ric Segovia
- Amanda Turner
- Brenda Jones Watkins

Humberto Espino and Ileana P. Rodríguez graciously contributed to the update of the Diversity Plan.

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR DIVERSITY

The Council on Diversity Affairs represents, advocates, and assumes responsibility for making the plan come to life. The Council, as a resource and mentor, leads the way in providing a comfortable environment for everyone on Triton's campus.

(as adopted on September 24, 2007)

A Current Picture—Summer 2008

At this juncture, many of the recommendations of the initial Diversity Plan have been addressed, mainly in regards to encouraging diversity training, resources and hiring practices across the institution. The Council for Diversity continues to be a dynamic force in providing ideas for the implementation of key elements to enhance a diversity proposition across the College, yet progress has been slowed due to unforeseen economic factors and a loss of funding and personnel.

With the adoption of a five-year Master Plan approved in June 2008 as well as the anticipation of a completed Strategic Enrollment Plan in FY09, the College is positioned to build upon those Diversity Plan recommendations that are not yet fully evolved as well as incorporate recommendations from this plan into existing task and planning frameworks associated with the Master Plan and eventual Strategic Enrollment Plan. Additionally, in focusing on student recruitment and retention, it was recommended that the Council for Diversity potentially engage CCSSE survey standards for best results.

A subcommittee comprised of original Diversity Plan committee members as well as current members of the Council for Diversity suggest, in accordance with Recommendation 1.1, that the campus community become reacquainted with the Diversity Plan as well as their potential contribution toward continued success of diversity initiatives and climate at Triton College.

Furthermore, it was recommended that the Council for Diversity take a more visible role in communicating the strength of diversity at the College and to more vigorously provide direction, support and oversight where relevant and appropriate in lieu of staff and financial resources.

One of the ways to communicate diversity at Triton College is to provide the campus community with ongoing data and statistics in regards to ethnicity and gender of students and employees. From Fall 2005-Fall 2007, the number of students from Hispanic backgrounds grew, as well as those from non-native countries, including Poland.

In evaluating the ethnic/racial composition of faculty as of Spring 2008, the following percentages applied:

- 4.7 percent Asian/Pacific
- .21 percent Native American
- 10.2 percent African American
- 5.6 percent Latino
- 78 percent Caucasian



The gender ratio of male to female faculty members indicates that male faculty members comprise 53 percent in this area. It is recommended that statistical data be more readily available and communicated in creating a more rounded awareness of the Triton College campus community and reinforce the message of diversity as necessary, consistent, and worthwhile in engendering positive outcomes for teaching and learning success.



Introduction

Definition of Diversity

“Differences among groups of people and individuals based on race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, exceptionalities, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region in which they live.”

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education

Along with the mission of Triton College, the definition of diversity proposed by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education presented above provided a starting point and focus for this Diversity Plan. In continuing this dialogue, a broader context of diversity also considered critical to the educational endeavor includes age, disability status, and ethnicity. The initial goal of the Diversity Plan was to create a coherent framework for action on diversity affairs throughout the institution. A holistic approach to the issue of embracing diversity throughout the institution resulted in the development of the Triton's Diversity A³ concept. The triple A's stand for Appreciation, Adaptation, and Achievement. Triton's Diversity A³ provides objectives that give focus in continuing the approach proposed in this plan.

APPRECIATION: *Know your community and students and value their contribution to the College.*

ADAPTATION: *Serve and relate to others with their needs, interests, and wellbeing in mind.*

ACHIEVEMENT: *Do your best to contribute to the fulfillment of aspirations and success of all in our College community.*

Following from the three diversity objectives, a Diversity Statement for the institution was crafted to help frame and shape initiatives and actions stemming from this plan.



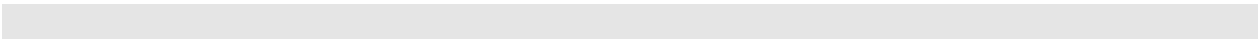
TRITON COLLEGE STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

At Triton College we believe that the future of our nation depends on our ability to prepare leaders that can contribute effectively to a global community. The knowledge and competencies required in the 21st century are best developed in diverse academic contexts. We believe that there are great educational benefits that flow from participating in learning experiences that expand our knowledge of others and ourselves.

Diversity takes many shapes, including but not limited to differences based on race, ethnicity, language, gender, age, socio-economic status, religion, sexual orientation, learning styles and competencies, and disability status. As a College community we are committed to recognizing, understanding and appreciating differences, to institutionally and individually adapting to differences, and to committing our best efforts and resources to the success of all of our students by embracing diversity.

The recommendations generated by the Council on Diversity have been organized into five (5) general areas of integration and application of the Triton's Diversity A³: People, Quality, Climate, Outcomes, and Resources. Each recommendation includes a timeline either congruent to maintaining ongoing support of a particular goal or indicates a specific timeline for goal accomplishment.

The recommendations provide continued direction and definition to activity to ensure that we are embracing diversity throughout the institution. It is expected that areas of responsibility will take the recommendations, elaborate on them and take ownership of them, keeping a focus on the objectives of Appreciation, Adaptation, and Achievement. Members of the Council for Diversity will also be instrumental in continued progress of recommendations in addition to ensuring ongoing flow of integration and support. The Diversity Plan also provides for human resources and collaborative structures that can assist in the process of implementation, particularly in helping College areas of responsibility engage the recommendations and apply them in logical and effective ways.



AREAS FOR INTEGRATION OF TRITON'S DIVERSITY A³

1. **PEOPLE.** The "People" area for integration refers to the human resources, the people that are part of the institution. The recommendations under this area for integration cover issues related to recruitment of personnel and students and well as professional development of the people that form to the institution.

1.1. Customize Triton's Diversity A³ to apply to all members of the College community.

1.1.1. Develop a customized version of Triton's Diversity A3 to apply to each of the College's constituencies, in order to ascertain how diversity affects their work in engaging positive contributions. It is recommended that committees develop the application of Diversity objectives Appreciation, Adaptation, and Achievement to the contexts of each of the internal constituency groups. It is expected that this would be a short-term process requiring one to two meetings for the committees.

1.1.2. Explore how Triton's approach to diversity can be expanded to include relationships with external constituencies, including partnerships and contractors.

1.2. Strengthen Triton's Diversity A³ into the institutional performance standards.

1.2.1. Communicate effectively the institutional understanding of diversity and Triton's Diversity A³.

1.2.2. Continue to provide professional development for new and current employees on Triton's Diversity A³.

1.2.3. Continue to provide professional development for supervisors to support the continuity of the Diversity initiatives and efforts, including training for the assessment of performance of staff on Triton's Diversity A³.

1.3. Support inclusive hiring processes to increase the diversity proposition with enhanced training, resources, and recruitment strategies.

1.3.1. Continue to enhance recruitment strategies for high profile openings such as faculty and administrative positions that incorporate opportunities for diverse candidates.

1.4. Develop an awareness campaign with researched benchmarks for the Diversity Plan and appreciation of the relevance of diversity affairs to the mission of the institution.



- 1.4.1. Make the Diversity Plan widely available and provide opportunities for people to learn about the plan and their role in implementation, including articulating in various ways and forums the importance of embracing diversity.
- 1.4.2. Educate the College community on the characteristics of our district and communities and student body to enhance the appreciation of diversity and the relevance of the Diversity Plan to the College's mission.

1.5. Effectively recruit students from diverse backgrounds, including all the dimensions of the definition of diversity: race, socioeconomic status, gender, language, exceptionalities, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic region in which they live. Other dimensions critical to the educational endeavor are age, disability status, and ethnicity.

- 1.5.1. Assess recruitment strategies that work best for different types of students.
- 1.5.2. Customize recruitment strategies for different student groups.
- 1.5.3. Provide basic institutional information and signage (i.e., information that introduces the reader to the services that the College provides) in the languages most dominant in our district.
- 1.5.4. Have resources and mechanisms in place to be able to provide College information in different formats according to the needs and preferences of prospective and current students of diverse backgrounds. Ideas include the development of an institutional list of “on-call” bilingual staff members that can be used as resources as needed.
- 1.5.5. Ensure that the College’s marketing campaign is sensitive to all potential student populations and includes a broad framework for inclusion.

1.6. Ensure that the working environment at Triton College is supportive of all that serve at the College.

- 1.6.1. Explore the cost/benefits to the institution of providing access to benefits to domestic partners of College personnel.

2. QUALITY. The “Quality” area for integration refers to the providing a quality learning and working experience for all. The recommendations under this area include issues related to the quality of the learning experience, student life, and the quality of the working environment and conditions for all the members of the College community.

2.1. Integrate Triton’s Diversity A³ into proactive support programs such as the Ambassador Program and the Student Ambassador Program.

- 2.1.1. Provide opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to serve as mentors and Ambassadors to prospective and current students from diverse backgrounds. A specific idea is to provide the opportunities for students

with disabilities to learn from other students with disabilities how to navigate the College system, resources, and services. The same principle can be applied to other dimensions of diversity, specifically age (i.e., adult students), religion, and sexual orientation.

2.2. Ensure that we are providing excellent resources to support the continuity of student clubs and organizations that contribute to the quality of life of the student at the College.

2.2.1. Help student organizations in the development of succession plans and the development of their membership.

2.2.2. Promote higher involvement in multiple student organizations to give students the opportunity to interact with a variety of students with diverse interests. Communicate to students that short and long term benefits of actively participating in student life.

2.2.3. Facilitate the communication between student organizations and the rest of the College community.

2.3. Promote and support the participation of all in the College community in activities that enhance our appreciation of diversity. The support for participation in diversity enhancing events and programs is to be given a priority and considered part of the Triton experience, both for students and staff.

2.4. Continue to provide additional resources for faculty development focused on the development of diversity sensitive curricula. It is recommended that resources be specifically allocated for the creative and effective support of the integration of diversity into curricula and teaching practices, including invited guest speakers and teaching/learning resources.

2.4.1. Consideration should be given to a train-the-trainer strategy to have faculty work with other faculty and support the long-term implementation of the integration of diversity into the curricula. Faculty small group discussions on diversity issues in the classroom are recommended as a strategy to effectively expand knowledge on the issues.

2.4.2. Develop communications that increase awareness and appreciation of diversity issues in education among faculty. Ideas include a monthly newsletter, testimonials from faculty on issues they have faced and how they have addressed them, and other examples of experiences with diversity in the classroom with a focus on sharing best practices and solutions.

2.4.3. Special training should be provided for the College Curriculum Committee, Academic Deans, faculty and curriculum development support staff to develop knowledge and skills in diversity sensitive curricula.



2.5. Provide the access and opportunity for Triton students to engage in international learning experiences and enhance their exposure to and learning of global affairs.

2.5.1. Provide institutional support to the international learning experiences available to our students. Ideas include the centralization of information and coordination of international learning experiences, including student and faculty exchange opportunities, opportunities to transfer to colleges and universities abroad, and other opportunities for collaboration with institutions around the world.

2.5.2. Develop curricula that develop the knowledge and competencies relevant to being effective members of a global community.

3. **CLIMATE.** The “Climate” area for integration refers to the environment, both physical and social that supports a quality learning experience and work environment for all. The recommendations under this area include issues related to the physical characteristics of our facilities as well as the personal and social experience at the College.

3.1. Assess the diversity climate for students and College personnel to establish a benchmark for progress.

3.1.1. Assess the experiences of students at different points in their Triton experience, including registration process, first year experience, and second year experience. These measures are to serve as benchmarks for progress on the quality of enrollment and student services and the overall experience at the College.

3.2. Integrate into the Facilities Plan an enhanced sensitivity to diversity through our physical facilities, including consideration to color, art, furniture, space layout, access.

3.2.1. Showcase the use of flags on campus that represent the welcoming of people from diverse backgrounds and ensuring that first experience at the College is welcoming and easy to navigate.

3.2.2. Consideration should be given to the use of internal or external expert resources in architecture and interior decoration to maximize efforts and impact. Internal experts include our own faculty and students in the architecture and interior decoration programs.

3.2.3. Provide appropriate gathering and socializing environments and events for evening and adult students.

4. **OUTCOMES.** The “Outcomes” area for integration refers to the results of Triton experience. The recommendations under this area include issues related to the learning outcomes of students of diverse backgrounds and overall success of the

institution in providing quality services and resources to all members of the College community.

- 4.1. Assess the performance of students from diverse backgrounds on various measures of academic success, including retention and completion. Build this assessment from current reports such as the Underrepresented Groups report and the Annual Performance Report. The assessment is to serve as a benchmark for progress.**
 - 4.2. Develop strategies to address any inequalities that may emerge from the assessment of performance of students from diverse backgrounds.**
 - 4.3. Provide learning experiences of quality that appreciate diversity and adapt to the needs, interests and goals of the students.**
 - 4.4. Engage an increased focus on assessment with the highest expectations for academic performance of all of our students. Ensure that all students are challenged equally. Have clear and high standards and learning objectives.**
 - 4.5. Communicate more specifically and directly to students the behavioral expectations that the College has of them, particularly as it relates to Triton's Diversity Appreciation, Adaptation, and Achievement.**
5. **RESOURCES.** The "Resources" area for integration refers to the human and materials resources required for the successful implementation of the Diversity Plan. The recommendations under this area include issues related to the effective implementation of diversity initiatives and providing for a continued focus on Triton's Diversity A³ and an effective intellectual capital to inform decisions related to diversity affairs.
- 5.1. Secure the successful continuance of the Council for Diversity Affairs, a college-wide unit appointed by the President of the College to provide support and direction on the implementation of Diversity Plan recommendations and diversity affairs. The Council for Diversity Affairs is to be composed of experts in a variety of dimensions of diversity. Members are to serve a three-year term. The charge of the Council for Diversity Affairs would include:**
 - Providing advice and intellectual support to the divisions of the College in the implementation and ongoing support of the Diversity Plan.
 - Serve as a champion of diversity affairs, including but not limited to the development of strategies to attract and better serve certain student groups and human resources, provide ideas for events and activities to better serve different constituency groups, provide confidential advice and feedback on sensitive diversity related affairs, provide expert insight and feedback on the development of curriculum, services, and programs that are sensitive to



diversity, and proactively support the continued implementation of the Diversity Plan.

- The Council for Diversity Affairs will be charged with the communication of strategic diversity initiatives in a meaningful capacity within their areas of influence. Overall, the Council for Diversity Affairs is to serve as a team of experts that can provide insight into the psyche, social needs, and circumstances of people from diverse backgrounds so that the institution is better informed when engaging in change and enhancing structures and processes.

5.2. Provide staff support and resources for the coordination of events and activities dedicated to the advancement of Triton’s Diversity A³. It is recommended that the staff support and resources expended in the implementation of recommendations of the Diversity Plan be evaluated in FY09 and FY10 in order to fully assess the functional contributions necessary in engaging successful diversity outcomes across the institution.