

**Diversity Plan for the  
School of Journalism and Telecommunications,  
an academic unit of the  
College of Communications and Information Studies,  
and the University of Kentucky**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The University of Kentucky is committed to creating a diverse, multicultural community of scholars and learners. It strives to be a model, for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, of a truly diverse society that celebrates human differences, promotes fairness and equity in policies and practices, and upholds basic principles of social justice. It is within this framework that The School of Journalism and Telecommunications has conducted a dedicated and on-going program to make diversity central to its curriculum, activities and staffing. It also is committed to educating its students about the value of diversity to them, the university, and greater society; and through this plan, the school works toward these goals.

**SECTION I  
Statement of Diversity**

Diversity is defined as embracing differences between people and promoting increased understanding regarding age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, military service, physical disabilities, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic condition, and thought with the purpose of creating an inclusive community. This definition of diversity values an institutional commitment that actively contributes to academic excellence through its inclusive institutional culture, academic programs, and co-curricular activities that prepare students for active, global citizenship. This commitment further allows for an educational process that fosters growth among all members of the academic community by including a wide array of talents, and recognizing that human differences are organizational strengths.

The faculty and administration of the School of Journalism and Telecommunications fully endorse the goals and plan for diversity by its parent institution, the University of Kentucky, and we are committed to making the study of integrated strategic communication, journalism, and telecommunications available to all segments of our society.

The School of Journalism and Telecommunications is committed to policy of equal opportunity in education and employment without discrimination or harassment, based on age, ethnicity, gender, marital status, military service, physical disabilities, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic condition, and thought. Within our primary mission to promote academic excellence, the School's faculty and administration seek to accomplish its goals for diversity through fair processes, equality of opportunity, and sensitivity to the needs of its students and all other people and outside organizations with whom it

interacts.

The School of Journalism and Telecommunications recognizes that its domain of media has a transcendental effect on society, and that media play a pivotal role in the way people think about diversity and the respect for individual differences. Further, our school has a critical responsibility to prepare its students to be active and tolerant participants in this increasingly diverse society. We also believe that people of traditionally under-represented and new groups in our society need to be significantly included in the fields of integrated strategic communication, journalism, and telecommunications, because not only they but also society will benefit.

To these ends, the School of Journalism and Telecommunications is guided by the following plan.

## **SECTION II**

### **Recruitment and Retention of Faculty and Staff**

**Objective 1:** Increase diversity in the faculty and staff by recruiting members of under-represented groups.

**Strategies:** Identify and recruit members of under-represented groups through:

1. Calls for applications in appropriate academic journals, newspapers, magazines and newsletters
2. Contact with colleagues at other universities, including institutions that have traditionally served minority students
3. Contact with alumni, industry representatives and UK minority faculty members and staff
4. Contact with potential candidates at professional conferences, research meetings and industry association meetings. The names and addresses of potential candidates will be relayed to the school's director, who will maintain a file and contact these individuals, when a position opens, to encourage them to apply.

**Objective 2:** To retain all faculty members and staff, including those in under-represented groups.

**Strategies:**

1. The school's director will advise all faculty members in achieving promotion and tenure and enhancing their professional development.
2. The school's director and the College of Communication and Information Studies' Dean's Office will keep junior faculty members informed about the possibility for research grants, research collaborations, teaching support, and other ways to enhance career development.
3. The director will seek to ensure that all faculty members of the same rank, seniority, quality of service, and quality and quantity of scholarly achievement

- will have the same opportunities for advancement.
4. All non-tenured faculty members will be evaluated once a year by the school's director and during the second, fourth and sixth years by the Promotion and Tenure Committee. Non-tenured faculty will be given a copy of these evaluations and provided the opportunity to respond. The school will keep all evaluations and responses on file.
  5. The director will work with staff members to support and encourage professional development and appropriate compensation.

### **SECTION III**

#### **Recruitment, Education and Retention of Students**

**Objective 1:** To recruit students who are members of under-represented groups for careers in integrated strategic communication, journalism, and telecommunications.

**Strategies:**

1. The School of Journalism and Telecommunications will continue to hold its annual Dow Jones Summer Workshop to give high school students, particularly those from minorities and economically disadvantaged areas, the experience of writing, designing, editing and publishing a newspaper. This workshop is used as a recruiting tool to identify promising students and to encourage them to apply to the university.
2. Students from under-represented groups will continue to be featured in brochures, videos, and other recruiting materials.
3. The school will continue its active support of its chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) through providing an advisor, meeting facilities, promotion support for announcements and opportunities to participate in other school activities or events, especially those that recruit new students to the school's programs.
4. The school will continue to participate in the UK Office of Admissions' Come-See-For-Yourself (CSFY) program that invites high school juniors and seniors from Lexington, Louisville, and greater Kentucky to campus. This program targets those high schools with significant minority populations. School personnel will continue to staff the college's information table at these events.
5. School administrators and faculty members will continue, whenever possible, to attend Preview Nights, sponsored by UK Admissions, at high schools in Kentucky for prospective students and their families.
6. The school will continue to support its director of student and multicultural affairs in outreach efforts, including work with the Central Kentucky YMCA Black Achievers Program and the Lyman T. Johnson Alumni Constituency Group. The YMCA program provides educational, cultural, and social enrichment for African-American middle- and high-school students. The organization has raised \$8.2 million during its previous 22 years of sponsoring annual scholarships. This year, it awarded \$700,000 in scholarships at its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual banquet. Lyman T. Johnson was an African American educator (1906-1997), who, earlier in his life,

- successfully challenged state laws barring racial integration of schools. The constituency group sponsors an annual homecoming banquet that recognizes an African-American alumnus and current student for each college at the University of Kentucky. Whenever possible, both the honored alumnus and student of the College of Communications and Information Studies come from the School of Journalism and Telecommunications.
7. The school will continue to work with the UK Alumni Office to sponsor a reception for incoming minority freshman. This event recognizes the annual recipients of the university's William C. Parker scholarship for minority students.
  8. The school's director of student and multicultural affairs will continue to represent the school at appropriate conferences and meetings, including the Governor of Kentucky's annual diversity conference and other conferences in Kentucky.

**Objective 2:** To retain, educate, and graduate students of under-represented groups, as with all students, through its programs of studies.

**Strategies:**

1. The school will strive to provide an inclusive and motivating academic environment with challenging curricula, sound advising, social reinforcement, and learning opportunities.
2. The faculty will ensure that all students are treated fairly and without any advantage or disadvantage, based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or military service.
3. The faculty will prepare syllabi for all courses that contain statements to promote diversity and inclusion.
4. The faculty will continue to review all courses within the curriculum to ensure that readings and lessons foster perspectives that respect diversity.
5. Diversity will be a subject that is specifically covered in courses about the effects of integrated strategic communications, journalism, and telecommunications on society.
6. The school will continue to offer a Mass Media and Diversity course every semester. This course critically examines the role of the media in representing and communicating social constructions of race, gender and class in society. The course examines how mass media, as social institution, affect society's understanding of different groups of individuals. The class discusses how mass media portrayals and representations reflect reality and how they affect our perceptions and understanding of the world. This course also introduces students to basic theory related to mass communication and cultural studies. This course aims to help students develop a critical eye toward the media's representation of race, class and gender. All students are encouraged to take this course. For journalism students, it is one of the required conceptual courses that students can choose to take to fulfill degree requirements.
7. The school will work to include guest speakers from under-represented groups for its regular classes and special events.
8. The school will monitor the progress and graduation rates of all students, and

particularly those from under-represented groups, providing students with feedback and counsel to achieve the best possible education outcomes.

**Objective 3:** To promote diversity within the School of Journalism and Telecommunications, College of Communications and Information Studies, and the greater UK community, through extra-curricular activities.

**Strategies:**

1. The school will maintain its standing committee on diversity, which will be charged with the responsibility to create and implement an agenda to promote positive attitudes toward diversity. This committee has conducted annual diversity symposiums, which feature noted advocates for diversity from across the United States. These events are promoted through campus and community media to the University and greater Lexington area.
2. The school will encourage all students, especially those in under-represented groups, to apply for internships, scholarships, grants, and awards.
3. The school will regularly communicate with all students to inform them about the school's activities and events.
4. The UK chapter of the NABJ will continue to promote diversity in student-run media organizations on campus.

#### **SECTION IV Monitoring of Progress**

The school's director and its diversity committee will regularly evaluate the progress of the institution toward reaching its objectives through the strategies that have been described in this plan, and the committee will produce an annual report of its findings.