

University of Georgia Libraries Diversity Plan 2013

INTRODUCTION

The University of Georgia Libraries, including the UGA Press and the Georgia Review, support the University's core values with respect to diversity and inclusion. We strive to create an environment of acceptance and respect in which all students, faculty, staff, and visitors feel welcomed and included at the University of Georgia. Education at a university occurs in more settings than classrooms and within more individuals than students. Libraries are often described as the heart of an academic community, a characterization that continues to be valid in an increasingly digital age. Therefore it is especially important that the UGA Libraries embody and uphold the University's commitment to diversity. The more we all interact with a variety of individuals, the better prepared we will be to thrive in a world whose diversity will only continue to expand.

The University defines diversity as including, but not limited to, the following factors: groups defined by race, nationality, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, disability and/or health status, gender identity/expression, veteran status, geographic origins, and socio-economic status. However, the ideal of diversity, or pluralism, can encompass much more. Every person is a complex individual with multiple overlapping identities rather than an easily categorized member of monolithic majority or minority groups. Diversity extends beyond definitions of personal differences to include past experiences, attitudes, speech, demeanor, actions, and work roles. Diversity is an ever-changing tapestry rather than a static list.

The healthiest workplace is one that provides a safe, positive, and nurturing environment in which differences may be acknowledged, explored, respected, and embraced, an environment where commonality then arises through dedication to a shared mission rather than through individual uniformity. The UGA Libraries are committed to creating an inclusive community grounded in respect and appreciation for all individuals who work in any locations of the UGA Libraries.

The UGA Libraries' Diversity Plan provides the basis to foster and support a culture of diversity and inclusion within the UGA Libraries' workforce, its collections, and services to users. The UGA Libraries' Diversity Plan is an evolving document: as initial goals are reached, others will be developed based on ongoing assessment of progress. The UGA Libraries' Diversity Task Force will conduct a yearly assessment of the plan, making appropriate updates. The University Librarian and Associate Provost will include the UGA Libraries' major accomplishments in reaching our diversity goals in the annual report to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

To expedite this plan, the University Librarian and Associate Provost, Deputy University Librarian, and the Diversity Task Force along with all faculty and staff commit themselves to achieving the following goals:

1. Make diversity and inclusion an integral part of the UGA Libraries' stated mission and goals.
2. Enhance and sustain a climate in the UGA Libraries that values and welcomes diversity and inclusion.
3. Recruit, retain and support advancement opportunities for a more diverse faculty and staff.
4. Integrate diverse/multicultural perspectives into the UGA Libraries' outreach activities and instruction sessions.
5. Enhance the diversification of the UGA Libraries' holdings and broaden access to library materials in support of the University's research, teaching and service mission.
6. Provide universal design and accessibility to UGA Libraries' facilities and holdings by enhancing both intellectual and physical accessibilities that nurture and support academic success for our diverse community.

Progress towards the goals of this diversity plan will be measured by increases in areas including:

- Diversity and inclusion awareness and engagement programs and activities in the UGA Libraries.
- The number of historically underrepresented groups among faculty and staff at all levels.
- The number of partnerships and collaborations both on and off campus that promote and enhance diversity and inclusion in the UGA Libraries.
- The number of orientation sessions for and new collaborations with diverse groups; exhibits that promote the multiplicity of our collections; and continuing education programs for UGA Libraries' staff and faculty.
- Evaluations of library holdings targeted to identify areas where greater collection support for diversity may be needed. Additional funding will be sought to build up any identified areas of weakness.
- The number of wheelchair accessible public services desks and disability awareness and adaptive technology training sessions for employees.

The Diversity Task Force is charged with the responsibility of completing an annual review of the UGA Libraries' Diversity Plan document as well as designing and assisting in the implementation of the Plan's on-going diversity and inclusion strategies. The Diversity Task Force is composed of six representatives selected by the University Librarian to serve for staggered 2-year term. The head of the UGA Libraries' Human Resources Department serves on the task force as an ex officio member.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mission and Vision Statements // Strategic Plan

Goal #1: Make diversity and inclusion an integral part of the UGA Libraries' stated mission and goals.

Who is Responsible: University Librarian and Associate Provost, Diversity Task Force

Short-term initiatives:

- Review and update the UGA Libraries' Mission and Vision Statements to reflect its commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- Post this Diversity Plan on the UGA Libraries' web site.

Long-term initiatives:

- Include the UGA Libraries' Diversity Plan goals in the next five-year strategic plan.

Diversity and Organizational Culture

Goal #2: Enhance and sustain a climate in the UGA Libraries that values and welcomes diversity and inclusion.

Who is Responsible: University Librarian and Associate Provost, Deputy University Librarian, Department Heads, Diversity Task Force, UGA Libraries Human Resources, Professional Development and Research Committee

Short-term initiatives:

- The UGA Libraries will collaborate with the UGA Equal Opportunity Office to provide training for all its employees in the University's Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy. New hires will be required to attend this training when it is offered at the University's Human Resources, Training and Development Center. (By the end of 2012, all current employees will have completed this training).

Long-term initiatives:

- Provide training, workshops, and other educational opportunities that incorporate diversity training that is both instructive and engaging into existing training opportunities.
- Hold forums and discussions that feature participants from diverse communities that would allow employees to ask questions and improve their knowledge of other cultures, backgrounds, and people with disabilities.
- Identify and collaborate with other campus groups with similar missions.

Goal #3: Recruit, retain and support advancement opportunities for a more diverse faculty and staff.

Who is Responsible: UGA Libraries Human Resources, Search Committees

Recruitment

Best practices to continue:

- Post faculty positions to job sites that target minority applicants. (Start date: Spring 2010).
- Include descriptive information about the UGA Libraries, UGA and Athens as recommended in diversity best practices. (Start date: Spring 2010).

Short-term initiatives:

- Explore methodologies for determining current demographics of the UGA Libraries' workforce.
- Identify ways to target students from underrepresented groups in order to develop a program for promoting the UGA Libraries and the UGA Press as a career destination.
- Investigate the costs and effectiveness of residency programs for minority librarians and develop a proposal, if appropriate. The purpose of a residency program is to attract entry-level librarians who are members of historically underrepresented groups to professional learning and service at the UGA Libraries and, ultimately, to a career in academic librarianship.
- Investigate the costs and effectiveness of an internship or fellowship program for minority graduate students at the UGA Press and develop a proposal, if appropriate. The purpose of an internship or fellowship program is to introduce and cultivate recent UGA graduates to a career in scholarly publishing.

Long-term initiatives:

- Develop a program for promoting the UGA Libraries and the UGA Press as a career destination for students from underrepresented groups.
- Develop relationships with multicultural student organizations and Athens community organizations to promote the UGA Libraries and the UGA Press as a place to work.
- Apply for a grant (possibly from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)) to establish a minority residency or internship program, if appropriate.
- Apply for a grant from a foundation or private funder to establish a minority fellowship or internship program at the UGA Press, modeled on existing fellowship and internship programs at other scholarly publishers.

Retention and Advancement

Who is Responsible: UGA Libraries' Human Resources, Diversity Task Force and Professional Development and Research Committee

Short-term initiatives:

- Explore the UGA Libraries' faculty's possible participation in the Diverse Faculty Mentoring Program offered by Office of Institutional Diversity.

Long-term initiatives:

- If participating in OID Diverse Faculty Mentoring Program is determined to be appropriate for UGA Libraries' faculty, incorporate into the UGA Libraries' onboarding process.
- Continue diversity education and programs of the Diversity Task Force as a way of creating a supportive environment for a diverse staff, including exploring the creation of a UGA Libraries' diverse staff mentoring program.
- Incorporate a diversity issues session in the UGA Libraries Supervisor Training Certificate Program.

Outreach and Instruction

Goal #4: Integrate diverse/multicultural perspectives into the UGA Libraries' outreach activities and instruction sessions.

Who is responsible: Public Services faculty and staff

Best Practices to Continue:

- Providing library orientations emphasizing the UGA Libraries' accessibility to a range of UGA programs, including International Student Life; the Graduate School's Summer Bridge Program; the Peach State Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority participation; and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.
- Developing partnerships with K-12 programs that encourage students to work towards college and career awareness including Upward Bound; the Atlanta Public Schools' Project Grad; and Clarke County's Adopt-a-Class. Reference librarians also teach academic research skills sessions to high school groups from throughout Georgia.
- Participating in mentoring programs that encourage positive attitudes towards the UGA Libraries and its staff, including mentoring through the UGA Faculty/Student Mentoring Program at OID and e-mentoring 3rd-6th graders through the In2Books reading program.

Short-Term Initiatives:

- Review existing instructional programs offered to groups outside of traditional classes and identify gaps in reaching the full spectrum of the UGA and Athens communities.
- Examine policies on display spaces at the Main Library, Science Library, Miller Learning Center, and Special Collections Libraries to verify that they encourage displays that celebrate a diverse range of cultures.

Long-Term Initiatives:

- Hold teaching circles or workshops to discuss ways to integrate a plurality of perspectives into instruction sessions where relevant.
- Invite speakers from a variety of populations to speak to UGA Libraries' faculty and staff about cultural differences or physical disabilities which may hinder their use of library resources or services.
- Encourage UGA Libraries' faculty and staff to become advisors to student groups or participate in mentoring programs such as Clarke County Adopt-a-Class or UGA's Office of Institutional Diversity Faculty-Student Mentoring Program.

Collections and Access

Goal #5: Enhance the diversification of the UGA Libraries' holdings and broaden access to library materials in support of the University's research, teaching and service missions.

Who is Responsible: Reference Department, special collections departments, Collection Development Department

Best Practices to Continue:

- Collecting practices designed to maximize diversity, including selection assignment of all Library of Congress classifications to subject specialist librarians; approval plans and standing orders for blanket coverage of key publications; library web site where library users can recommend purchases; liaison relationships between librarians and academic departments to improve communication; and active solicitation of special collections from traditionally underrepresented groups or with content supporting research related to such groups.
- Active programs that digitize special collections from libraries and archives across the state of Georgia, many of which highlight traditionally underrepresented groups, and programs that provide digital repository space for nontraditional forms of publication by UGA faculty and staff.
- Variety of tools created to help library users locate appropriate materials for research and teaching, such as database guides for gender studies, Latin American Studies, African-American Studies, and a Multi-Search option that promotes discovery across traditional disciplinary boundaries.

- Membership in cooperative organizations such as GALILEO and the Center for Research Libraries that enable access to a broader range of resources than individual libraries can provide on their own.

Short-Term Initiatives

- Review collection development policy to see if language supporting diversity can be strengthened.
- Review UGA Libraries' wish list for major purchases to identify collections that would enhance diversity.

Long-Term Initiatives (note that if gaps or inadequacies in the UGA Libraries' holdings are identified, new funding will be required to address them)

- Analyze use patterns at a more granular level in diversity-related areas to determine if greater support is needed.
- Monitor establishment of new majors and degree programs to determine if the UGA Libraries' collections are adequate.
- Review database guides to determine if new areas should be covered to increase diversity of access.
- Continue to develop cooperative initiatives such as GALILEO, the Digital Library of Georgia, and the Georgia Knowledge Repository.

GOAL #6: Provide universal design and accessibility to UGA Libraries' facilities and holdings by enhancing both intellectual and physical accessibilities that nurture and support academic success for our diverse community.

Who is Responsible: University Librarian and Provost, Diversity Task Force, UGA Libraries Human Resources, Public Services faculty and staff

Best Practices to Continue

- Web pages and Employee Handbook that inform users and employees of UGA Libraries' accessibility and accommodations for people with disabilities.
- Collaboration with Disability Resource Center, University Architects, and appropriate groups to improve accessibility to information content, web sites, library services, and physical facilities (including campus classrooms within library facilities).
- Purchase of adaptable software and equipment to provide an inclusive environment for work and learning.
- Captioned videos and transcripts for library-produced materials.
- Public services desks that are wheelchair accessible.

Short-Term Initiatives:

- Regularly review the UGA Libraries buildings, web content, service policies, and literature to make them accessible to people with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- Investigate options for increasing expertise in adaptive technology within the UGA Libraries.
- Provide training to all UGA Libraries faculty and staff to foster individual responsibility for maintenance of a supportive and safe working and learning environment.
- Hold forums and discussions that feature participants from Disability Resource Center and participants with disabilities that would allow UGA Libraries staff to ask questions and to improve their knowledge of and service to people with disabilities.
- Purchase of one to two wheelchairs for use by patrons in the Special Collections Libraries.
- Install public service desks at the Main Library and Science Library that are wheelchair accessible.

Long-Term Initiatives

- Move towards meeting 100% of accessibility standards in all UGA Libraries' web pages.
- Include accessibility needs in budget planning; procure accessible information technology products and electronic resources when possible. If an accessible product cannot be found, ask vendors about their plans for making future versions of their products accessible and let them know that accessibility is a consideration for purchase.
- Provide training to UGA Libraries public services faculty and staff in awareness of what adaptive technology can do.
- Work with content providers to make their materials accessible and to expand awareness of vendors about accessibility issues for purchased or licensed information resources; work with campus units, such as the Disability Resource Center, for captioning videos, screen readers, and other resources.
- Collaborate with groups that serve and produce or distribute content for people with disabilities.
- Promote an inclusive and supportive workplace culture for recruiting and retaining faculty and staff with disabilities.
- Develop and implement ongoing staff training in order to improve staff members' abilities to provide excellent service, especially with regards to primary language barriers and physical/mental disabilities.
- Support patron requests with flexible solutions, such as paging/photocopying materials from any service desk, document delivery, and access for proxies for patrons who have difficulty coming to the UGA Libraries facilities.
- Work with focus groups of people with disabilities to identify issues related to access, collection content, work environment, programming.
- Showcase and promote the diversity of the UGA Libraries staff through programs and publications throughout the organization, i.e., UGA Libraries Development newsletter, UGA Libraries exhibits, and *Columns*.

Approved by the UGA Libraries' Department Heads Group, February 27, 2013.