Sinclair College Diversity Audit
Summary Document

Executive Overview

In January of 2017, A. Moore Consulting, LLC was hired to begin the process of assisting the Sinclair Community College Office of Diversity and Inclusion in determining the current status of diversity within the institution. While the initial thinking around this project gave consideration to conducting a series of focus groups to uncover perceptions about Sinclair's efforts in the realm of diversity, continuing conversation revealed that a more fitting place to begin would be with a diversity audit. The belief was that an audit could certainly *include* focus groups comprised of individuals from various levels within the institution, but would go even further to actually assess the extent to which systems, processes, procedures and measurements were in place to truly support diversity as a strategic imperative at Sinclair.

Another focus of the audit process would also be focusing on how well Sinclair is fulfilling the stated diversity goals that were established as a part of the diversity mission and vision statements a number of years ago as follows:

MISSION:

Develop and sustain a supportive community, college-wide, with the intention of maximizing opportunities for the success of a diverse student population:
- Recruit and retain a regionally and internationally diverse student population.
- Recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff committed to the success of all students.
- Create and sustain a culture that values, supports and celebrates the diversity of people and intellectual perspectives.
- Offer a curriculum that requires cultural competency as a learning outcome for all programs of study.
- Ensure that the college's policies, procedures, and day-to-day operations foster cultural competency, social justice and equity.
- Assess the college's progress annually toward the stated diversity mission.
- Review and revise authentically and systematically the needs of internal and external communities.

VISION:

Enable and inspire students to learn about the differing cultural and social backgrounds among their fellow students and in the local community.

Ensure that the college climate is welcoming to all by developing and maintaining a climate of acceptance and inclusiveness among faculty, staff, and students:

- To promote a positive environment in which every student may choose to succeed.
- To continue to offer diverse curriculum and global activities to students.
- To add to the richness and texture of the educational experience by representing, supporting, respecting and honoring diversity.
- To serve as a catalyst for cultural competency, social justice and equity within the institution and the communities with which the institution interacts.

A college diversity definition was also established at some point and reads as follows:

DEFINITION:
Diversity refers to the individual and group social differences that exist among people. It means understanding that each individual is unique and by recognizing these individual differences and similarities, we add to the richness and texture of the educational experience. These can be along various human dimensions, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation/gender identity/expression, socio-economic status, age, disabilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, cultural perspectives, other ideologies, veteran status, and country of origin.

The concept of diversity at Sinclair Community College encompasses the acceptance, inclusiveness, engagement, and mutual respect among students, faculty, staff, administrators, and members of the broader community. Honoring diversity requires a system that represents, supports, and respects these dimensions. This system constructs policies, practices, and structures to prepare students to be successful within the college, local, regional and global communities.

Upon completion of an audit, the determination could be made as to whether or not the mission, vision and values are the right ones for the institution and the degree to which they may need to be updated, or further enhanced, to reflect the current environment and needs of Sinclair – administrators, faculty, staff and students - and the community at large. Furthermore, the audit process would help to more specifically define goals and establish more quantifiable performance measures and sufficient indicators for those goals. In the end, it would be important for Sinclair to clearly define that which would demonstrate that the institution is truly *living* and *fulfilling* its stated mission, vision and values.

The last strategic plan for cultural diversity at Sinclair was for the 2011-2012 year. Eight diversity goals were established as the framework for that plan and have somewhat guided the work of the office of Diversity through this point. Those goals are listed below with a few questions (italicized) that were added for thoughtful consideration throughout as the audit process moved forward.

1. Hire a fulltime Diversity Officer
   - *Was this done?*

- *Is there a clearly defined job description defining the associated responsibilities and expectations?*
- *Has the officer been supported with the tools, staff and resources necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the role?*

2. Retain a diverse student population
   - *What's the definition of "diverse"?*
   - *What's the desired demographic mix? The "there?*

3. Recruit a diverse student population
   - *What systems and processes are in place to make this happen?*
   - *Is HR (or the recruiting entity) on board with this goal?*
   - *Are systems, policies and processes in place to facilitate this?*

4. Develop a Multi-Cultural Center
   - *Did this happen?*
   - *What resources to accomplish this?*
   - *What focus/goal of the Center?*

5. Review and revise college Human Resource policies and procedures to ensure inclusion
   - *Did this happen?*
   - *What does it mean to "insure inclusion"?*
   - *What's the desired outcome and how will it be measured?*

6. Develop a comprehensive Diversity web-site
   - *What content?*
   - *What's a best practice in this area?*

7. Create and foster a climate of inclusion
   - *What is the concrete, palpable and visible evidence of a "climate of inclusion"?*
   - *How will it be measured?*

8. Develop and maintain a culturally competent faculty, staff and student body.
   - *How is "culturally competent" defined? What will you be looking to see and hear in order to know that you've achieved this?*
   - *How will it be measured?*

Lastly, a consultant was hired in the 2006-2007 timeframe, to conduct a diversity audit to "assess how well the college was doing in areas related to meeting the needs of its diverse constituents and to identify factors important to the ongoing achievement of its mission in the 21st century." The specific goals of the audit were as follows:

- Provide in-depth information on the climate of the campus.
- Measure the evidence of diversity within the curriculum and identify strategies to ensure students continue to experience diverse curriculum, global activities, and staff which supports Sinclair's core general education area of Values/Citizenship/Community.
- Identify critical issues Sinclair Community College must address in order to continue to attract and retain a diverse staff and student body.
- Explore how the college can foster and maintain an environment that values and actively works toward fair treatment and effective service to an ever-changing diverse community.

While the results of the audit revealed that Sinclair was "responsive to the needs of the varying constituents and provided a climate that respects and promotes diversity", areas for improvement were also highlighted. After meeting with a group of administrators, faculty and staff to review the audit findings, the framework for a strategic plan for diversity was created but specific strategies and tactics were not established.

In addition to the things that have been previously stated, the current Chief Diversity Officer, Michael Carter, was placed in the role after the position had been vacant for more than a year and a half. Mr. Carter has been tasked with the responsibility of establishing a plan to take the diversity initiative forward, assessing the current state of diversity at the college. While a formal job description for the role does not exist, his general responsibilities were broadly summarized in 6 succinct bullet-points as part of a power-point presentation given by the president. They are as follows:

1. Our representative to the Ohio Department of Education and to the Ohio Board of Regents on school/college partnership policy, laws and funding.
2. Our national representative on school partnership issues to our U.S. Senators and Congressional Delegation and to the American Association of Community Colleges in Washington D.C.
3. Serve as a lead in taking our Strategic Diversity Plan to the next phase.
4. Process the parent/student complaints that come to the Board of Trustees and to the president.
5. Help develop and implement a world-class approach to improving African American male success.
6. Present community briefings on Sinclair to community groups across the region.

Under the direction of the Chief Diversity Officer, Michael Carter, a tremendous amount of work has been done to drive more awareness, understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion at Sinclair. This has primarily been done through a number of events including, but not limited to, private viewings of movies, a speaker series featuring high-profile, well-known speakers from across

the country, plays, MLK programs and events, the establishment of clubs, and many other special days and events to highlight African American history, diverse individuals of notoriety and also many others who are lesser known. These events and activities are well documented by the Office of Diversity. A Diversity Committee in place and comprised of faculty, staff and administrators. Lastly, Brother to Brother/African American Male Initiative is in place to provide support for men of color. The aforementioned things represent the three key diversity and inclusion elements that the Office of Diversity is most well known for driving throughout the college.

In beginning the work of the audit, the consultant first worked closely with the CDO and other individuals as required:

- 19 interviews were conducted over a period of six weeks, beginning February 23 through April 7, 2017. The interview participants included 9 members of leadership (including the board), 4 directors, 4 members from staff and security, and 2 students. Each participant was asked to respond to 8 questions that would help to assess the state of diversity at Sinclair.
- A comprehensive audit document was developed by the consultant for the purpose of gathering data and assessing 19 audit categories through the submission of information in response to 128 questions, all with associated secondary questions.
- Key department leaders were brought in on the audit process and briefed on the audit document as well as their role.

With the audit process now complete, this summary document will begin to guide the work as the Office of Diversity moves forward to further build upon the initiatives that have been in place through this point.

Observation

As the audit document will reflect, Sinclair has "good bones" upon which to continue to build and strengthen diversity and inclusion as a true business imperative. While the responsibility for this work has largely rested on the shoulders of the Chief Diversity Officer through this point, others must now be brought to the table to work with the Office of Diversity in a more collaborative way. While there are many exceptional things taking place all across the campus, as one interviewee accurately stated, "There are different silos. …It's not a cohesive effort; we're all over the place. The effort is not top-down driven. All of the initiatives are not connected or universal. Everyone is doing their own thing…" The CDO will truly need to take the reins at this point, in order to lead a more aligned and cohesive diversity and inclusion effort for the college.

Recommendations

1. The first thing that must occur is that everyone must have a clear picture of a diversity and inclusion effort that is being led from the top. This would be President Johnson, the Sinclair Board of Trustees, and the President's Cabinet/leadership team. A clear, bold message must be sent from top, letting everyone know that diversity and inclusion is valued at Sinclair. This could

be done through a joint video-message, featuring the President and the CDO that is posted to the Office of Diversity web-page and readily accessible for viewing by all.

2. Training must be positioned as a requirement versus an option. Without every employee and student understanding the value of diversity and inclusion and what that means in terms of how they are expected to interact at Sinclair, it's simply being left to anyone who comes to Sinclair each day, bringing all of their biases and prejudices in tow, to simply use their best judgment and do whatever makes sense to them.

3. The Office of Diversity should be fully staffed with full-time personnel sufficient to support the associated duties and responsibilities. In order to determine what would constitute adequate staffing, two things should occur:
   - The development of a robust job description for the CDO, fully detailing the scope of authority and responsibilities.
   - The completion of a strategic plan, along with strategies *(What needs to be done)* and associated the tactics *(Specifically how the strategies will be executed)*. The mission, vision and values statements would also be reviewed as part of the planning process.

4. In conjunction with the development of a strategic plan, metrics should be established for all strategies and tactics in order to monitor the work on an ongoing basis. The Office of Diversity should have a scorecard/dashboard that effectively utilizes data to determine how the college is performing on key performance indicators. This information should be reported to the president, leadership and the college-at-large, as appropriate and on at least a quarterly basis. The diversity effort needs to be demonstrated in facts and figures, which generally translates to dollars and cents.

5. The diversity and inclusion initiative should be expanded to drive a greater sense of inclusion across all groups. There is tremendous energy and hype around the African American Male Initiative, and rightfully so, given the focus on working to improve completion rates. Much less seems to be occurring with other ethnic groups, however, which could drive a belief that some groups are not as important as others. This would be an opportunity for the Office of Diversity to work more closely with other departments to truly insure that no one is being left out or overlooked.

6. The Diversity Audit Data Collection Guide should now be used to review each audit area and shore-up any that need to be strengthened, or even initiated. Given that there were many areas of opportunity identified, it would be a great exercise for the Diversity Committee and Audit Leads to meet to review and discuss the results, and establish a plan and timeline for next steps. The audit document will also be helpful in establishing the strategic plan.