

2015 NCSU-CVM Strategic Inclusion & Diversity Plan Summary

Introduction

North Carolina State University-College of Veterinary Medicine (NCSU-CVM) strives to be the premiere institution for training and preparing future leaders in the veterinary profession. We are committed to excellence. Inclusion and diversity are essential aspects of excellence not only for their intrinsic value but also vital to meet the needs of a changing population. The decreased enrollment of underrepresented students and recent communications with alumni, students, faculty and staff clearly indicate the serious need for improvement in the college's inclusion and diversity efforts.

On July 31, 2014, the Diversity Strategic Planning committee was created by NCSU-CVM Dean Paul Lunn, and tasked with developing a strategic inclusion and diversity plan to create change at the CVM. The primary charge was to create a plan that would comprise three to four strategies for the CVM to focus its efforts. There were several ideas discussed that were similar to those expressed by CVM diversity committee and points presented at the CVM diversity retreat. The committee chose to perform their own thorough review before deciding on the selected strategies. We adopted the name Strategic Inclusion and Diversity Working (SIDWG) and the group met 8 times over the course of fall 2014. We reviewed the December 2013 Faculty Committee on Diversity report on Diversity Matters at NCSU-CVM and the CVM Diversity mission and vision statements. The committee received reports on current and historical efforts to enhance diversity, metrics for organizational change and common process questions cultural change efforts encounter. We engaged in a benchmarking process, identified the most important questions likely to arise during our deliberations and read relevant articles on diversity in veterinary medicine. The committee performed a SWOT analysis and received a report from the student diversity group, VOICE. In October, the committee identified three viable strategic initiatives and broke up into small groups to develop each strategic initiative. Tables detailing components of each initiative are presented.

This strategic plan will serve as the platform for 1) improving our community's awareness and cultural competency to create a positive inclusive environment, 2) attracting and retaining underrepresented students and faculty and 3) creating pipelines and partnerships to ensure a future of diversity. We are committed to sustaining a culture that celebrates inclusion and diversity of all students, faculty, and staff at the College of Veterinary Medicine.

CVM Strategic Inclusion and Diversity Committee Mission & Vision Statement

North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine strive to be the premiere institution for training and preparing future leaders in veterinary medicine and research sciences. We are committed to excellence. Diversity and inclusion are vital to our goal. We recognize that a diverse community generates diverse thought necessary to successfully create relevant and effective solutions to complex challenges. We choose to be a culture that values diversity, inclusion, respect, empathy and equality for all.

Diversity at North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine is defined as the active incorporation throughout our college of people from various backgrounds, perspectives, thoughts and beliefs. Diversity is not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or physical ability but rather represents the wide range of visible and invisible differences and similarities that make each of us unique.

Inclusion at North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine is defined as the practice of intentionally building a culture that values diversity of people and ideas and embraces the meaningful participation of all.

At North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine it is our vision that the positive lessons of valuing diversity and inclusion will extend well beyond our college community and have broader far reaching impacts on the future profession of veterinary medicine. We welcome the excellence of diversity at our institution.

Strategic Initiatives

Commitment of resources and active administrative support will be essential to the successful implementation of significant and sustainable inclusion and diversity initiatives. To effectively develop, coordinate, administer, evaluate and sustain our efforts we feel that the creation of an Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence will ultimately be required. Sufficient infrastructure and accountability are prerequisites for success in this momentous endeavor.

Strategic Initiative 1: Strengthen the Environment of Inclusion and Cultural Competency at the College of Veterinary Medicine

In order to foster an environment that is open and welcoming to individuals both within and outside of the CVM, we must be intentional in creating a strong sense of community and inclusion within the existing college. This will require a wide range of activities and opportunities to cultivate a new level of cultural proficiency and awareness. With this in mind, we propose the following action items:

- Develop communication strategies to highlight CVM commitment to diversity and make our developing culture of inclusion more visible to the CVM community and the public
- Create and curate links to inclusion and diversity programs on our main website
- Recognize members of the CVM community who make outstanding contributions to the inclusion and diversity efforts
- Recognize holidays and events celebrating or honoring various groups
- Designate days to celebrate and honor diversity and to build community through special events, educational opportunities, service, and outreach activities
- Create a college-wide mentoring program open to all members of the CVM community
- Create new training and service expectations for students, faculty, and staff to increase cultural awareness and foster a sense of community
- Interface with existing campus programs to provide training modules and expand cultural experiences
- Hold quarterly orientation sessions for new hires at the CVM and include inclusion and diversity programs

Strategic Initiative 2: Expand the Diversity at the College of Veterinary Medicine and Strengthen the Infrastructure for Inclusion

Recruitment and retention efforts should be more successful if genuine and sustainable improvements are made in the levels of cultural competency and climate of inclusion at the college. These advancements will enhance the overall sense of community and make the NCSU-CVM a more attractive organization not only to underrepresented populations. Outward visibility of these achievements will be critical for the recruitment process. We propose the following action items to expand diversity.

- Expand recruitment efforts locally and nationally of students, faculty, administrators, and staff who enrich the culture of inclusion and diversity
- Recruit to the “critical mass” concept
- Include diversity representative on admissions and search committees to better coordinate Human Resource, Director of Diversity and Faculty Committee on Diversity efforts
- Request statement on inclusion and diversity philosophy from potential candidates
- Expand and publicize the availability of full or partial scholarships
- Improve the CVM visitation for all potential DVM and PhD students
- Implement CVM transition programs targeting student success and mentorship to ensure retention of underrepresented students
- Assess and acquire diversity training for key personnel in policy making positions
- Periodic Department level reports on inclusion and diversity activities
- Create cabinet seat for Director of Diversity
- Provide sustainable budgets
- Establish an Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Excellence to implement programs
- Provide periodic internal and external assessment of inclusion programs for continuous quality improvements

Strategic Initiative 3: Build Pipeline Programs and Partnerships

One of the greatest opportunities that we have as a college is the ability to share our passion for research, clinical practice and public service with those who are underrepresented and underserved in the field of veterinary medicine. Successful growth and sustainability of this CVM inclusion and diversity initiative is dependent upon fostering positive relationships with current and future students. Creating pathways that lead these students to careers in veterinary medicine is the primary goal. To this end, we propose the following action items:

- Expand existing and develop new pipeline programs for underrepresented students (DVM and PhD) from NCSU and other in-state and national undergraduate programs
- Increase involvement with NCSU and community diversity organizations to augment and support our CVM programs and initiatives
- Partner with the North Carolina Association of Minority Veterinarians for mentorship
- Develop a program with surrounding counties for underrepresented students to shadow

- veterinarians in private practice and faculty at the college
- Partner with institutions and organizations that have established effective recruitment and retention programs to exchange best practices
 - Host regional and national meetings for diversity in veterinary medicine
 - Expand and enhance K-12 outreach programs
 - Create Vet Camps for K-12 students from under-represented groups
 - Utilize existing programs such as Open House to foster and bring underrepresented students to the CVM from local schools

Conclusion

Embracing inclusion and diversity is an integral component of our commitment to excellence in training future scientists and professionals in the field of veterinary medicine. We must first strengthen the current climate by raising the levels of awareness and cultural competency within our institution. By doing so we will create an environment of inclusion and sense of community that will support recruitment and retention efforts. The key to success is executive ownership and a strong infrastructure to support inclusion. To sustain our future as a diverse institution we must develop more partnerships and pipelines to attract interest in our program locally, nationally and internationally and to create a virtuous cycle to further expand our recruitment, retention, and outreach efforts. We are aware that these initiatives will require major commitment and significant allocation of resources; however, it is our vision that the effects of this plan will position our college as a top-choice institution for students, staff, and faculty from all backgrounds, and set standards for professionalism in veterinary medicine.