

2023 Institutional Report on Plan of Cultural Diversity

This cover sheet should be submitted along with the institutional report on programs of cultural diversity no later than September 1 of each year, in accordance with statute. Please note that MHEC does not have the statutory authority to grant exceptions to this deadline. If your governing board does not meet during the summer months, please ensure you provide sufficient time for approval prior to this statutory deadline for submission to the Commission.

Name of institution: College of Southern Maryland

Individual submitting report: Trenace Richardson

Title/Department: Human Resources and Organizational Development

Contact phone: 301-934-7735

Contact e-mail: tnrichardson@csmd.edu

Individual certifying approval by governing board: Shawn Coates, Chair

Signature of governing board authority: 
Shawn Coates (Aug 8, 2023 18:10 EDT)

Date of governing board approval: 7/20/23

Please submit this cover sheet, report narrative, and 2022-2023 diversity plan in searchable PDF format at <https://forms.gle/nT31D3sg2ncLLPAU8>, no later than September 1, 2023.

COLLEGE OF SOUTHERN MARYLAND
ANNUAL CULTURAL DIVERSITY REPORT

September 1, 2023

The College of Southern Maryland's (CSM's) commitment to diversity is embedded in our mission, as an open-admissions, comprehensive regional community college, to strengthen the economic vitality of our diverse and changing region and to enhance the lives of all within it. We are pleased to submit, in accordance with § 11-406 of the Education Article, our 2023 Cultural Diversity Report.

I. Summary of Institution's Plan to Improve Cultural Diversity

Pursuant with Goal 2 of CSM's Strategic Plan, CSM is committed to fostering an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of all students, staff, faculty, and visitors. Developing educational programs and services that are grounded in equity not only helps to develop an inclusive culture of belonging among students and employees but it also advances social justice and economic mobility for all Southern Marylanders.

Additionally, Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan emphasizes CSM's belief in fostering and sustaining a high performing employee culture. CSM is developing an institutional culture of employee engagement, life-long learning, and high performance and is woven into the everyday focus of the college.

At the core of each of these goals is the idea embedded within the African proverb that "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." With the onboarding of a new president, CSM began to reframe its cultural diversity work around three major success areas connected to the theme: Building Success Together. They are Student Success, Employee Success, and Community Success and CSM's areas of emphases and strategy for implementation are provided below. Also provided is an explanation of how progress is being evaluated, where progress has been achieved, and where improvements are needed.

Student Success - More Culturally Diverse and Inclusive Programming

After spending assessing the demographic changes in each county within CSM's regional community, CSM began implementing strategies to help increase students' access to and involvement in more culturally diverse and inclusive programming. CSM committed to continuing important programs such as **Men of Excellence** which is a college-wide initiative designed to improve the recruitment, success, retention, graduation, and transfer rates of African American men, especially those who enter as first-time, full- or part-time students at the college. The program is designed to empower students to meet their academic and professional goals and provide an array of services meant to increase student engagement, as well as encourage community-building among all participants. To add to essential work, other culturally diverse student-focused clubs and programs have been implemented. The **Women of Excellence** is modeled after Men of Excellence and supports Black and Brown female students; the **EXITO** (means "success" in Spanish) club

endeavors to provide resources for CSM's Spanish-speaking students to ensure an enriching college experience; the **Sexuality, Alliance, and Gender Equality (SAGE)** club provides a safe space and support for LGBTQ+ college community members and allies; and the **Multi-Cultural Student Alliance** club creates a space for students of different cultural backgrounds to develop a sense of self-worth and belonging.

These clubs and programs, alongside several other student activities and initiatives, are advised by CSM faculty and/or staff and led by students. Students are asked to participate in the **PACE Campus Climate Survey** developed by **North Carolina State University's Belk Center** annually at which time they have the opportunity to provide feedback on CSM's efforts to develop more culturally diverse and inclusive programming. We assess the efficacy of our student-focused programs using a variety of methods, including the **IDEA Center's Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) survey system**, annual assessments of at least one student learning objective in every course, and a five-year cycle of full course reviews.

Student Success – Systematizing Supports to Ensure All Students Excel

As of the time of this report, CSM is in its 4th year as an **Achieving the Dream (ATD)** college. ATD is a network of more than 300 colleges in 43 states that are innovating to implement, align, and scale cutting-edge reforms to improve student success. ATD offers a capacity-building framework that allows colleges to pinpoint strengths and areas for improvement across seven institutional capacities, including equity. ATD considers the pursuit of racial equity to be foundational to this work, maintaining that all policies and practices affect racial equity. One of CSM's ATD goals is to identify a clear procedure for a student to follow when in need of any kind of support, to allow them to overcome barriers to completion. This is critically important when creating strategies around cultural diversity and inclusion because in order to see student progression and completion rates increase within CSM's minority student populations, success paths need to be clear, accessible, and equitable. As a result, CSM has implemented strategies such as streamlining **Gateway Courses** to help first-year students be more successful and creating more effective Welcome Centers called **Hawk Hubs** to provide immediate assistance to students no matter where they are located.

The results of these implemented strategies, among many others, have been impressive thus far. Quantitatively, CSM continued to see an **increase in minority student enrollment** compared to services area for both nonwhite credit enrollment and nonwhite continuing education enrollment. The credit number increased from 47.6% to 49.7% and the continuing education number increased from 38.0% to 43.6%. This continuing education number reflects a 5.6% in these student populations. This indicator reflects the hard work the college is doing to recruit and retain students of color. Very positively, **Hispanic Graduate Transfers** within one year increased over 10% in the last year and exceeded the four-year average. The retention rate for male students taking at least one gateway course was higher than that of males that did not take at least one gateway course, 66.1% to 60.5%. The retention rate for **Black African American students** was very similar for both groups (taking gateway compared to not taking a gateway course), 57.5% to 57.7%. Both of these rates are below the overall retention rates (65.9% for those taking at least one gateway, 62.5% for those not taking at least one gateway). As previously stated, we assess the efficacy of our ATD work, Hawk Hubs, and more using a variety of methods, including the IDEA Center's Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) survey

system, annual assessments of at least one student learning objective in every course, and a five-year cycle of full course reviews.

Employee Success – Teaching, Learning, and Training in Cultural Diversity

CSM employees are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion as it relates to their instruction of (faculty) and service to (staff) the students and the community. But in order to do that effectively, it is essential that they situate themselves in settings where they, themselves, are learning and growing in this area. Related to cultural diversity, CSM provides employees several opportunities to learn and grow so they are better equipped to practice equity-centered work.

All employees are offered a plethora of **Diversity-focused trainings** through CSM's learning management system, NEOED Learn. Additionally, all employees who participate in search committees are required to complete a training focused on diversity and implicit biases to ensure our hiring processes are fair, equitable, and inclusive. Most recently, CSM has begun requiring all new hires to take a Diversity course, entitled **Diversity in the Workplace**, that exposes them to implicit bias and other fundamental concepts important to this topic. Further learning occurs for faculty and staff because some have chosen to participate in CSM's newly minted Participatory Governance structure. One of our four governance councils is the **Equity and Inclusion Council**, which is charged with contributing to the development of a college-wide strategy for increasing equity and inclusive diversity at the College of Southern Maryland.

Faculty have participated in a **Diversity Data Summit** conducted by CSM's newly appointed **Distinguished Professor for Equity in Education** and Director of Academic Planning and Assessment to ensure CSM's faculty are making data-driven decisions and implementing best practices in the classroom around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity-centered training is also placed inside the resources' portal of every faculty with the expectation that they are completed and implemented in classrooms. Faculty leadership have been discussing making them mandatory for all faculty in addition to what Human Resources requires of them. In part due to all of this new learning and training, faculty teaching the aforementioned **First Year Seminar course now include a diversity chapter** in the curriculum and require a final paper which offers the students the opportunity to research a diversity topic and present both sides of the chosen topic.

Community Success – Community Partner Engagement

CSM understands their role in the community and will engage new and existing partners in government, economic development, education, and business to develop and sustain a culturally diverse regional workforce pipeline to advance the vitality of the college and the region.

CSM is proud to be a community partner of the **Big Conversation Partners in Dismantling Racism and Privilege in Southern Maryland**. The mission of the Big Conversation Partners in Dismantling Racism and Privilege in Southern Maryland is to cultivate public understanding of the need to uproot racism personally and in the systems that derive benefit, and, therefore, perpetuate racism and privilege. CSM attends their meetings and participates in the sharing of information and the planning and implementation of the Big Conversation's annual community event. We will

continue to participate in an annual survey wherein we get the opportunity to hear from the other partners about the quality of their own and our engagement. Our participation has been valued and we are being asked to participate in an even more substantive next year.

Specific to Community Outreach and Impact CSM accomplished the following in FY22:

- Implemented four new memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with local partners to expand the **education-to-industry pipelines** in the trades, energy, and healthcare sectors.
- Piloted new **work-based learning programs** to provide more experiential learning opportunities for students in their areas of study.
- Developed and began awarding new **micro-credential and digital badges** in high demand skill areas.
- Improved **prior learning assessment (PLA)** policies and processes to expand opportunities for students with prior learning experience to more rapidly complete courses and credentials.

II. Efforts to Increase Traditionally Underrepresented Groups at CSM

In an effort to recruit and retain traditionally underrepresented groups, several innovative initiatives have been implemented. This section outlines some of those initiatives geared toward student, administrative staff and faculty.

Student Efforts

CSM has offered courses in shortened formats for almost 20 years. From weekend courses to 1-week and 3-week winter sessions, there have been a variety of offerings. However, in the past, there has never been a systematized implementation. Starting Fall 2021, at least 80% of course offerings were in a 7-week format, allowing students to focus on just a few courses at a time and potentially complete their degrees faster. CSM continually assesses student success in each different term length, including the 7-week sessions.

In an effort to recruit and retain more students, CSM also implemented the following:

- Provided over 400 students with laptops and other technology to ensure equity for all learners
- Translated Financial Aid information to Spanish to support non-English speaking students
- Increased minimum wage for all CSM Student Assistants and Work Study Students to \$15
- Extended hours and coverage for student computer labs and WiFi Cafés
- Expanded Hy-Flex course offerings to almost 200 sections in FY22 to allow more flexibility in the mode of learning chosen
- The financial aid website was updated and streamlined to make the process for applying for student aid less cumbersome.
- The financial aid website now utilizes a Chatbot feature (Ask Talon the Hawk) to provide students with immediate access to their requested information.
- Utilized student survey information from focus groups to refine the type and frequency of information distributed to students

- Support students and families by providing essential resources to smooth the transition and decision-making process. CSM stocks Hawk Food Pantries on three of the campuses, increased counseling and mental health services, and ramped up mentoring opportunities for any students who needs support.
- Ran a Pilot Program in support of Achieving the Dream to over 80 incoming students. The program intentionally included full-time tuition and fees, books, and a laptop as well as increased communication and mentoring from Academic Advisors.

Administrative Staff and Faculty Efforts

Workforce shortages have forced CSM to cross-train and create new workflow opportunities for staff. Additionally, the institution has increased efforts to retain high-quality employees by providing incentives such as the **CSM Employee Retention Program** which includes a bonus for employees who were with the college on July 1, 2022 and remain with the college until July 1, 2024.

CSM has implemented **mandatory hiring committee training** to promote equitable hiring practices which will in-turn increase diverse hiring. CSM remains committed to reconceptualizing where and how they work and ensuring that the workplace environment is inclusive, participatory, and encourages employee engagement at all levels. To this end, CSM successfully completed their first full-year of active **Participatory Governance**. Establishing a Participatory Governance process at CSM allows employees to contribute more broadly and recommend new and innovative ideas. In addition, CSM also hosted a successful **Hawk Pitch** event where several employees ‘pitched’ their innovative ideas ala Shark Tank style. This work has been expanded to include students.

Other efforts made to recruit and retain administrative staff and faculty:

- Launched the Future State of Work initiative to streamline processes, create efficiencies, and improve collaboration.
- Expanded telework opportunities for college employees.
- Operationalized participatory governance to encourage more employee engagement at all levels of the organization.
- Utilized NEOED Learn, Human Resource’s new online learning management system, to provide more employee training and professional development opportunities

III. Efforts to Create Positive Interactions and Cultural Awareness at CSM

CSM so values building a positive diverse culture that several initiatives and programs have been created to bring students, faculty, staff, and the community together. CSM maintains a **Heritage and Cultural Awareness Challenge** on the Equity and Inclusive Diversity public webpage so that anyone can access this. This site provides 11 5-day cultural awareness challenges that invite you to learn about and immerse yourself in several different cultures throughout the year. Some of the challenges are as follows: Women’s History, Jewish American Heritage, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Disability Awareness, Native American Heritage, and more.

The **Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Faculty Leadership Team** collaborated with **CSM's Global Initiative Committee** to host an **International Dinner** that included food, a guest speaker and a workshop. Ten (10) people attended the dinner. Additionally, DEIB conducted a **Walk a Mile in Our Awareness Conference** wherein attendees participated in workshops, discussions, and activities centered around inclusion and belonging. Fifty-one (51) people attended the conference. An incentive that will soon be created to promote attendance and participation to DEIB events in the future is Badges. For every event attended and for every initiative an employee participates in, they will receive a digital badge that can provide extra points connected to performance evaluations and during promotion or tenure reviews.

IV. Currently Underrepresented Emerging Populations in Higher Education

CSM will continue to pursue traditionally underrepresented populations such as African American males. Additionally, as mentioned previously, CSM has experienced a slight increase in the representation of **students of Hispanic descent**. We will continue to use the aforementioned strategies in Section II to attract this underrepresented population.

APPENDIX

**College of Southern Maryland
Plan for Cultural Diversity and Institutional Equity 2022-2023**

Approved by the Board of Trustees

College of Southern Maryland
Plan for Cultural Diversity and Institutional Equity
2022-2023

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is an open-admissions, comprehensive regional community college and strives to enhance the lives and strengthens the economic vitality of a diverse and changing region by providing affordable postsecondary education, workforce development, and cultural and personal enrichment opportunities. Recognized once again in 2023 as one of the top online colleges in Maryland by Intelligent.com, a trusted resource for program rankings and higher education planning. CSM ranked 15th out of 18 college and universities and was the only community college on the list. CSM stands ready to support its diverse population of students, employees, and community members in achieving their academic and career goals. CSM's core institutional values - diversity, equity, respect, and integrity – are woven into the work of every division, department, and program.

CSM has integrated into its Board-approved 2021-2024 Institutional Strategic Plan (ISP) four strategic goals, heavily focused at promoting cultural diversity and institutional equity. These four strategic goals form the basis of CSM's Plan for Cultural Diversity and Institutional Equity (CDIE). These goals are supplemented by strategies and action items that form the essence of the CDIE. In addition, the CDIE plan specifies which of the three areas of success are affected based on the new president's theme, Building Success Together – Student Success, Employee Success, and Community Success.

In this plan, cultural diversity means the inclusion of racial, ethnic, and other groups that have been underrepresented in higher education (Code of Maryland, Education Article 11-406). Institutional equity refers to the intentional design of the CSM experience to treat each student, employee, and visitor with respect, consideration, appropriate support, and fairness.

CSM STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 1: Improve student progress and completion.

CSM recognizes that, while many things affect students' abilities to complete their programs in a timely manner, we must reduce all barriers within our control to ensure the best student outcomes possible.

STUDENT SUCCESS		
<p>Strategy 1.1: Clarify the paths: ensure students have the information and resources they need to achieve their academic and career goals.</p> <p>Strategy 1.2: Systemize the supports; each student will have appropriate and timely support to achieve their educational goals.</p> <p>Strategy 1.3: Demystify the finances; ensure students fully understand the cost of attending college and payment/financial aid options available to them.</p>		
Action Items	Offices Responsible	Deadline
<p>1.1: Gauge the effectiveness of Hawk Hubs, Hawk Food Pantry, and other similar programs designed to ensure students have the information and resources they need to succeed via the PACE Survey</p>	<p>SES, CWD, DOL, HRO, PIER</p>	<p>December 1, 2022</p>
<p>1.2: Gauge the effectiveness of ATD work, including Gateway Courses, such as the First Year Experience via IDEA Center's Student Ratings of Instruction (SRI) survey system, annual assessments of at least one student learning objective in every course, and a five-year cycle of full course reviews</p>	<p>SES, CWD, DOL, HRO, PIER</p>	<p>December 1, 2022</p>
<p>1.3: Gauge the effectiveness of culturally diverse, student-led clubs and programs for increasing equity in student access to support, inclusion, and belonging</p>	<p>SES, DOL, CWD, HRO, PIER</p>	<p>December 1, 2022</p>

CSM STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 2: Ensure Equity in All Programs and Services

CSM is committed to fostering an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and respectful of all students, staff, faculty, and visitors. Equity is at the core of such an environment. Equity is grounded in the principle of fairness and is achieved by providing each individual with the opportunity, resources, and access needed to be successful.

STUDENT SUCCESS EMPLOYEE SUCCESS COMMUNITY SUCCESS		
<p>Strategy 2.1: Improve hiring practices to ensure equity for all.</p> <p>Strategy 2.2: Use disaggregated data to close equity gaps.</p> <p>Strategy 2.3: Expand digital access and technology to ensure equity for all learners.</p> <p>Strategy 2.4: Strengthen cultural competency among all employees.</p>		
Actions	Offices Responsible	Deadline
2.1: Analyze and evaluate recruitment pipelines for workforce areas and applicant pools in which groups are underrepresented	HRO, DOL, CWD, PIER	December 31, 2022
2.1: Review and revise hiring processes (including search committee training) to improve consistency of practice across workforce areas and to increase hiring of employees from underrepresented groups in workforce areas with underrepresentation	HRO, DOL, CWD, PIER	December 31, 2022
2.2: Implement annually CSM’s Affirmative Action Program, identifying workforce areas in which groups are underrepresented by gender or race	HRO, PIER	June 30, 2023
2.3: Develop and implement strategies to address barriers to the effective retention of employees from underrepresented groups, including limited access to technology and other resources required for tele-working during remote operations	HRO, DOL, CWD, PIER	June 30, 2023
2.4: Gauge the frequency of use and mastery of diversity courses offered through NEOED Learn, both mandatory and voluntary	HRO	June 30, 2023

CSM STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 3: Build and sustain the regional workforce pipeline

CSM understands its role in the community and will engage new and existing partners in government, economic development, education, and business to develop and sustain the regional workforce pipeline to advance the vitality of the college and the region.

COMMUNITY SUCCESS		
<p>Strategy 3.1: Establish the college as the training provider of choice for Southern Maryland.</p> <p>Strategy 3.2: Collaborate with regional and state partners on workforce development initiatives.</p> <p>Strategy 3.3: Provide accelerated learning opportunities that align with regional workforce needs as well as global industry needs.</p>		
Actions	Offices Responsible	Deadline
3.1: Gauge the effectiveness of strategies implemented to achieve a more equitable demographic representation in targeted programs addressing county workforce needs	SES, DOL, CWD, HRO, MAR	December 31, 2023
3.2: Begin and continue conversations with strategic regional and state entities on workforce development initiatives to discuss mutually beneficial partnerships	SES, DOL, CWD, HRO, MAR	December 31, 2023
3.3: Gauge frequency of visits to the Culture and Heritage Challenge housed on CSM’s public website	SES, DOL, CWD, HRO, MAR	December 31, 2023
3.3: Chronicle ways CWD engages the regional workforce in accelerated learning opportunities	CWD, HRO, MAR	December 31, 2023

CSM STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL 4: Foster and sustain a high-performing employee culture

CSM believes that fostering a culture of employee engagement, work-life balance, life-long learning, and high performance is critical to the success of the college’s mission and our ability to serve our students and our community.

EMPLOYEE SUCCESS		
<p>Strategy 4.1: Expand professional development to ensure a high caliber workforce. Strategy 4.2: Reconceptualize where and how we work. Strategy 4.3: Strengthen a culture that incorporates our institutional values in all we do. Strategy 4.4: Ensure a workplace environment that is inclusive, participatory, and encourages employee engagement at all levels.</p>		
Actions	Offices Responsible	Deadline
4.1: Increase the use of NEOED Learn for professional learning among CSM employees	HRO	June 30, 2023
4.2: Develop more flexible strategies regarding work modes and environments	HRO, PRE, OPP	June 30, 2023
4.2: Design and implement a DEI training curriculum that promotes employee attainment of CSM core values, ATD capacity areas, and AACC competencies	HRO	December 31, 2023
4.3: Gauge workplace culture by examining the PACE Campus Climate results for employees	HRO, PIER	December 31, 2023

Key:

- CWD Continuing Education and Workforce Development
- DOL Division of Learning
- HRO Human Resources Department
- MAR Marketing Department
- PIER Planning, Institutional Effectiveness, and Research
- PRE Office of the President
- SES Division of Student Equity and Success
- OPP Operations and Planning