University of Wisconsin-Superior

The Equity Scorecard

Executive Summary

June 2011

UW-Superior Equity Scorecard Team

Alvin "Chip" Beal (Diversity Coordinator in Campus Life and Assistant Professor in First Nation Studies; served on the team from May 2008 to July 2010)

Marsha Francis (McNair Scholars Program Academic Coordinator; served on the team from June 2008 to February 2009)

Eri Fujieda (Associate Professor in Sociology; served on the team from May 2008 to July 2010; lead the team since July 2009)

Vicki Hajewski (Vice Chancellor for Campus Life and Dean of Students; served on the team from August 2009 to July 2010)

Wendy Kropid (Associate Professor in English Education; served on the team from July 2008 to April 2009)

Jim Miller (Enrollment Analysis Specialist in the Office of Institutional Research; served on the team from May 2008 to July 2010)

Michael McDonald (Assistant to the Chancellor for Affirmative Action and Diversity through June 2009; led the team from May 2008 to June 2009)

Steven Rosenberg (Associate Professor in Mathematics; served on the team from August 2009 to July 2010)

Gloria Toivola (Professor of Political Sciences through May 2011; served on the team from October 2009 to July 2010)

Greg Lampe (Provost, UW-Colleges; served as a mentor to the team from May 2008 to December 2010)

Elsa Macias (Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California; visited UW-Superior campus in January 2010)

Vicki Washington (UW-System Vice Associate President for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; visited UW-Superior campus in Junuary 2010)

The Equity Scorecard is a comprehensive report that assesses how well our university is serving its students from historically underserved racial/ethnic groups (or "students of color" in the remainder of this summary) in four key areas: access, retention, excellence, and institutional receptivity (Figure 1). Drawing evidence from existing data, a team of appointed faculty and staff members collaboratively identify achievement gaps for students of color and recommend institutional actions to address the gaps. The Equity Scorecard is, in other words, an organizational-learning tool intended to initiate self-assessment and dialogue and to foster evidence-based organizational change with purposeful actions.

Figure 1. Equity Scorecard Framework

An Illustration of the Equity Scorecard Framework
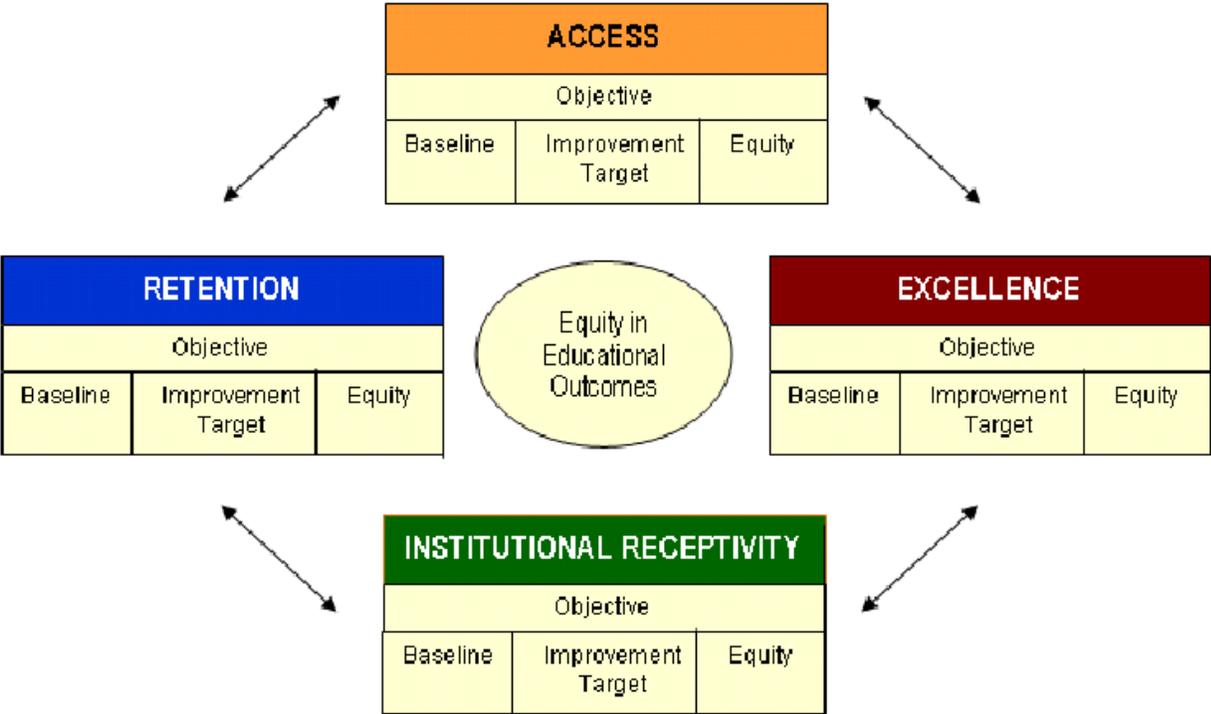
At UW-Superior the Equity Scorecard started when the campus joined the UW-System Equity Scorecard initiative in 2008. An evidence team was appointed by Provost Chris Markwood and sent to a two-day training session with the Equity Scorecard originator Dr. Estela Mara Bensimon (Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California), her staff, and the UW-System Office for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity. Since then, the UW-Superior evidence team met regularly to examine relevant data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, and identified patterns of achievement gaps. The team also discussed why these gaps might exist and be perpetuated by campus culture and practices and made preliminary recommendations for institutional actions to address major gaps found in the evidence.

The UW-Superior Equity Scorecard evidence team followed the UW-System classification system in defining "historically underserved students" or "students of color" and considered the following groups of students as students of color: African Americans, American Indians, Southeast Asian Americans,

Asian Americans, and Hispanic/Latino(a) students. International students were excluded from most of the analysis for the Equity Scorecard, for they do not bear the historical disadvantage that is assumed for domestic students of color.

One of the premises of the Equity Scorecard is shared responsibility. All on campus should consider what they can do to eliminate achievement gaps. To facilitate such campus engagement, the team shared key findings with the campus community when appropriate. Interim reports completed in October 2009 (on access equity) and April 2010 (on retention equity) were made available online. The team also presented key findings in the interim reports to key constituency groups, including but not limited to the Chancellors' Cabinet, the Provost's Leadership Team, academic department chairs, and the Faculty, Academic Staff and Students Senates. In November 2010 the team completed the final report and made it available to the campus.

The current document highlights specific findings and recommendations that may encourage self-assessment and dialogue on campus and instigate evidence-based organizational change with purposeful actions. For further information, the full final report is available at the Institutional Research website (http://www.uwsuper.edu/ir/transparency/index.cfm).

KEY FINDINGS

1. General Demographic Observations

- In 2001-2007, UW-Superior has successfully increased the enrollment of full-time students of color. The increase was observed both in persons (from to 88 to 143) and in percentages (from 4.4% to 7%). The rate of increase for all groups of students of color was between 116% and 200%.

- In comparison with white students, students of color (particularly American Indians and African Americans, and in some cases Southeast Asian Americans) were over-represented among transfers, first-generation students, Pell-Grant recipients, and first-year students older than 19. African Americans and Asian Americans were overrepresented among male students.

- White students and students of color were generally similar in their high school rank among the graduating class. The performance in ACT for American Indians, Asian Americans (excluding Southeast Asian Americans), and Hispanic/Latino(a) students was similar to white students. However, more than half of Southeast Asian Americans reported scores in the lowest quartile while African Americans were underrepresented among those who achieved the highest quartile.

2. Access

- UW-Superior's first-year student body was similarly or more white-dominant than high school students in the service area. Furthermore, UW-Superior was less inclusive of all racial/ethnic groups than high schools in the service areas. For example, in 2006-2008, American Indians constituted 5.0% of Superior High School students and 4.4% of 12th graders in the Duluth School District, in comparison of 2.0% of first-year students at UW-Superior. Similar patterns were observed for other groups of students of color.

- Applicants of color were generally less likely to complete the application to UW-Superior. Based on the 2003-2008 data, while the application incompletion rate was 10.6% for white applicants, it was 30.5% for African American applicants, 28.3% for Hispanic/Latino(a)s, 22.4% for American

Indians. Should this inequity have been corrected, 51 (or 16.8%) more applicants of color would have been given consideration for admission in 2003-2008.

- Even when applications were completed, American Indian, African American, and Hispanic/Latino(a) applicants were more likely to be rejected than whites or Asian Americans. In 2003-2008, rejection rates were 15% for whites and Asian Americans and 25% or greater for American Indians, African Americans and Hispanic/Latino(a)s.

- A little difference in the matriculation rate was found between white students and African Americans, American Indians, and Southeast Asians. However, Asian Americans and Hispanic/Latino(a)s had lower matriculation rates.

- Students of color's access to majors was uneven. According to the data on the last declared major in 2001-2008, students of color were better represented in such majors as Social Work, Physical Education/Exercise Science, and Social Sciences. In contrast, they were generally underrepresented severely in Elementary Education (97.2% white, against 93.4% total), and moderately in Arts/Music/Theater (95.2% white) and Business (94.6% white).

3. Retention

- Overall, students of color were retained at lower rates than whites. This applied to both first-year entries and transfers. In 2001-2003, the first-to-second-year retention rates for the first-year entries were 70.7% for white and 68.5% for students of color. For transfers, the retention gap was greater, with 73.3% of white students and 65.1% of students of color retained for the second year.

- Students of color tended to go missing not only at the end of the first year, but also at the end of their second and third years. Even though white students showed the similar pattern, retention rates were however slightly lower for students of color throughout the six years. Hence our student body became less diverse by the time of six-year graduation. In 2001-2008, students of color had a share of 5.8% when they enrolled as first-year students, but this share shrank to 4.4% by the six-year graduation. Transfers also had a 1.0% decrease in the share of students of color, from 5.2% to 4.2%.

- No particular socio-economic factors explained the generally lower retention rates for students of color. Entry status (first-year or transfer), age and sex/gender made a difference in first-to-second-year retention rates, but the direction and degree of difference varied by the racial/ethnic group context. The influence of Pell Grants eligibility or first generation status to the retention rate was less clearly observed among students of color than among white students.

- Academic preparation as indicated by the ACT score and the high school class rank did *not* predict students of color's successful retention and graduation. However, academic preparation was a strong predictor of white students' retention and graduation.

- Living on campus is often assumed to have a positive effect on student retention, but evidence to support this theory was found only with Asian American and Hispanic/Latino(a) students, but not for any other groups.

- GPA at the end of the first year was for all students positively correlated to the first-to-second-year retention, and to a lesser degree, to the six-year graduation. However, students of color generally earned a lower GPA at the end of the first year in comparison to white students. In 2001-2008, 17.1% of first-year students of color (in comparison to 10.6% of white first-year students) earned

the GPA lower than 2.0 at the end of the first year. Among transfers, 18.3% of students of color (in comparison to 12.1% of white students) earned lower than 2.0. The achievement gap in the first-year GPA is thus a much more plausible explanation for the lower first-to-second-year retention rates for students of color.

- An analysis of students' course-level performance indicates that, in comparison with white and other students, students of color were overall less successful in achieving A/B/C grades. In particular, in such general education gateway courses as ENGL 101, ENGL 102, MATH 090 and MATH 095, students of color received A/B/C grades at a rate much lower (by 10-20%) than white students. Considering the gate keeping function of these core courses, the generally lower performance of students of color is significant in light of considering how to improve retention equity.

4. Excellence

- The existing data allowed us a very limited examination of Excellence.

- The study of 2003-2009 GPA at the time of graduation generated mixed results. On one hand, American Indians' achievement was similar to white students. Over 65% of students in these groups earned a graduating GPA of 3.0 or above. On the other hand, Southeast Asian American students, despite their persistence at the highest rate, graduated with a GPA between 2.0 and 2.99 in a much higher proportion (71.4%) than average (24.8%). Other groups of students of color fell in between these two patterns.

- Graduation with honor (or with a GPA of 3.4 or above) is a measure of Excellence commonly employed.   Applied to UW-Superior graduates in 2003-2009, this measure left mixed results. The higher percentage of American Indians (46.4%) and Asian Americans (50%) graduated with honor than white students (39.3%). However, African Americans (11.1%), Southeast Asian Americans (14.3%), and Hispanic/Latino(a)s (21.4%) were underrepresented among the graduates with honor.

- When analyzing honor graduation by race/ethnicity and academic subject area, no obvious correlation was found between students of color's attainability of honor graduation and the overall accessibility to honor graduation.

- UW-Superior McNair Scholars Program plays a critical role in the promotion of post-graduate studies among students of color as well as first-generation low-income students. While students who enrolled in this program graduated at a much higher rate (93.7%) than non-McNair students, students of color in this program still lagged behind white students when it comes to the graduate program enrollment. While 41.7% of white students pursue graduate programs, 40% of African Americans and 33.3% of American Indians enrolled in graduate programs. This gap does not negate the program's major contribution to the advancement of historical underserved racial/ethnic minorities, but it is worth investigating why the gap exists.

5. Institutional Receptivity

- The existing data are too limited to thoroughly examine institutional receptivity.

- The analysis of the racial/ethnic composition of UW-Superior employees from 1999 through 2009 indicated the general increase of diversity in almost all employment types. In particular, the faculty has become much more diverse over the decade of 1999 (5.5%) to 2009 (11.7%).

- Asian Americans were overrepresented among the faculty (3.5% in 2009) and the academic staff (4.5% in 2009), while American Indians were most represented among the classified staff (4.2% in 2009). Other groups were underrepresented in all of these employment types.

- Among the faculty, racial/ethnic minorities were more concentrated among assistant professors (6 out of 12 minority faculty), while full professors were a largest group with the smallest proportion of racial/ethnic minorities (2 out of 12 minority faculty). The impact of this rather uneven distribution of racial/ethnic minorities on retention and promotion needs to be carefully monitored.

- Students' responses to the National Survey of Student Engagement provides such insights as:
  - Over two-thirds of students perceived that UW-Superior provides sufficient academic support.
  - Campus effort for diversity education may have more impact on students of color than on white students, allowing white students to experience less experience of diversity. (For more details, see Figure 10 in the final report.)
  - Respondents, regardless of their racial/ethnic backgrounds, perceived the campus not providing enough support to help students with non-academic responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To Improve Access Equity

- UW-Superior must strive to increase the actual number of students of color. Only with the substantial enrollment of students of color, the institution can monitor and address achievement gaps from an institutional perspective, rather than as incidental problems due to individual students' situations. More intentional recruitment and admission of students of color is critical.

- One way to increase the number of students of color at UW-Superior is to explore more opportunities to build more relationships with K-12 institutions in the service area and to strengthen the pipeline to UW-Superior particularly for underrepresented student groups in the service area.

- Another approach to increase access equity is to address the uneven application completion rates among racial/ethnic groups. The admission office and others that are involved in promotion of the application completion, particularly but not exclusively among the applicants of color, might want to consider such strategies as more thorough application follow-up strategies, more effective and proactive support for applicants who need assistance in completing the forms, and the more effective promotion of the application fee waiver program.

- To increase the acceptance rate for applicants of color requires conscious efforts to improve applicants of color's access to admission procedure. One plausible action can be to provide strategic assistance to those who may not have access to programs or individuals that support the application process.

- Investigating lower matriculation rates for Asian Americans and Hispanic/Latino(a) may help clarify what UW-Superior can do to improve them.

- To address uneven access to majors, each academic program should assess how inclusive its requirements, curriculum and climate are, particularly from the perspective of the students currently underrepresented in the program.

To Improve Retention Equity

- A study of academic challenges for new students will provide necessary knowledge to improve our method of outreach to first-year students, particularly those from racial/ethnic minority groups, and help them persist into the second year.

- Studying the experience of students of color in general education gateway courses is critical to understand their less than per achievement in these courses.

- A study of the post-first-year experience of the students of color will help identify the retention barriers in curricular and co-curricular programs that students of color face after the first year.

- Strategies for the improvement of retention equity, with focus on both diversity and inclusivity, should be reviewed and refined.

- Curricular and co-curricular programs to both first-year entries and transfers must be reviewed and refined for its cultural inclusivity, but with consideration of age and sex/gender diversity within each racial/ethnic group.

- The residential policy may need to be reviewed to assure inclusivity and diversity.

- The weight put on the high school rank and ACT scores in comparison with other holistic admission criteria should be reevaluated.

To Improve Excellence Equity

- To understand why students of color are less likely to attain honor graduation, a study of the climate, curriculum, pedagogy and advisement in each academic subject area is recommended.

- More data on Excellence must be collected and analyzed to identify plausible achievement gaps for students of color. Specifically, institutional reports in the following areas should regularly include data disaggregated by race/ethnicity.
   - Self Study of Continuous Improvement by academic departments
   - Assessment of student learning outcomes corresponding to the UW-Superior's institutional five Liberal Education Learning Goals
   - Assessment of activities outside of classroom, including first-year seminar, study abroad, academic service learning, co-curricular learning activities offered through Campus Life, student organizations, residence halls, athletics, and other units on campus, also needs to include race/ethnicity as a category when collecting participants' information.
   - Study of UW-Superior graduates' occupation, income, and advanced degree attainment.

To Improve Institutional Receptivity

- It is imperative to collect data to assess the strengths as well as the weaknesses of our institution's receptivity. Such data includes:
   - The Diversity Climate Assessment Study (scheduled in Spring 2011)

- Regular reporting on the attrition as well as promotion/tenure pattern for senior administrators, administrators, faculty, academic staff, and classified staff, disaggregated by race/ethnicity
- Periodical assessment of the impact of "diversity" programs on student learning, analyzed by race/ethnicity
- Periodical assessment of academic advisement quality, disaggregated by race/ethnicity
- Periodical assessment of the beneficiaries of non-academic support programs related to students' social and economic responsibilities (e.g., on campus employment opportunities, child care support, non-academic-based scholarship programs.) disaggregated by race/ethnicity

NEXT STEP

While the evidence team has been disbanded as it completed the final report, the Chancellor's Inclusive Excellence Task Force (CIETF) is in charge of following up on the Equity Scorecard findings and implementing the evidence team's recommendations. The August 2010 CIETF report "Making Excellence Inclusive at UW-Superior: Planning/ Implementation Report" already identified the campus-wide response to achievement gaps found in the Equity Scorecard as one of the five-year goals. During the summer 2011 the CIETF will develop and present a more detailed plan for the campus to realize this goal.