



National League
for Nursing

Center for Diversity and Global Initiatives

NLN DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TOOLKIT



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Introduction

Given the persistence of health care disparities, cultural competence inadequacies, and extraordinary dynamic demographic changes in our student and patient populations, the case for increasing diversity and inclusion in the nurse educator workforce in schools of nursing has never been stronger. Diversity has been a long-standing [core value](#) of the National League for Nursing. The NLN (2006) defined diversity as “affirming the uniqueness of and differences among persons, ideas, values, and ethnicities.” Integrating diversity and inclusion leads to inclusive excellence that promotes the active review and evaluation of institutional practices and policies that supports an academic environment where diverse faculty, staff, and students can flourish.

The NLN believes that a culture of inclusive excellence encompasses many identities, influenced by the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, or other ideologies. The culture of inclusive excellence addresses behaviors across academic and health care systems. (<http://www.aacu.org/about/strategicplan>).

Diverse voices from governance, faculty, staff, and students allow nurse educators to collaboratively develop policies and practices that benefit all learners and members of the health care system. The current lack of diversity and inclusion in the nurse workforce, student population, and faculty impedes the ability of nursing to achieve excellent care for all. Adverse effects in population health care due to the lack of a diverse workforce that knows how to build inclusive environments are well documented (Institute of Medicine, 2004; Lim et al, 2014).

The initial NLN Diversity Toolkit resulted from the efforts of the NLN Board of Governors’ 2008 Diversity Think Tank, the NLN’s Nursing Education Workforce Development Advisory Council (NEWDAC), and the 2008-2009 Task Group on Expanding Diversity in the Nurse Educator Workforce. Revision of the toolkit followed the work of the 2014 Strategic Action Group on Achieving Diversity and Meaningful Inclusion in Nursing Education and subsequent publication of the 2016 NLN vision statement, [“Achieving Diversity and Meaningful Inclusion in Nursing Education.”](#)

The following set of assumptions, as outlined in the NLN’s 2009 *Reflection & Dialogue*, [“A Commitment to Diversity in Nursing and Nursing Education.”](#) continues to inform the diversity and inclusion toolkit.

- ▶ The higher education community must commit to diverse environments. It will take tremendous effort and a candid examination and assessment of decades of practice and tradition that favored some and excluded others.
- ▶ Injustices flourish where the implicit is not made explicit. Micro-inequities (Hicks 2014) need to be exposed as a pattern of flaws that may (unintentionally) exist in our schools and within colleagues and students. We must commit to exposing subtle gestures, looks, or comments that may create bias or misunderstanding.
- ▶ Quality, safety, and diversity are intertwined. A lack of diversity and inclusion adversely affects quality and safety of patient care. A consequence may be health disparities, especially in access to health care services that preclude quality care for all.
- ▶ It is imperative that colleagues – administrators, faculty, staff, and students – maintain and refine their cultural humility. We must understand that none of us can be culturally competent with every culture. But we should focus on the culture or cultures with which we are primarily involved, learning their histories, communication styles, territorial and space needs, timing issues, social organizations, community concerns, and even food patterns and biological variations (Giger, 2016).

This toolkit provides evidence-based, exemplary practices to inform diversity and inclusion initiatives at schools of nursing. It consists of resources for administrators and faculty to promote a sustainable culture of inclusive excellence within the nurse educator workforce.

Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit resources come from many disciplines, including higher education, nursing education, and other health care professional groups. This revised toolkit provides resources from articles, books, and websites that identify current strategies regarding achieving and maintaining inclusive excellence in the nurse educator workforce and student population.

As the voice for nursing education, the NLN calls for the development of a culture of inclusion and supports all nurse educators in achieving the goals outlined in [“Achieving Diversity and Meaningful Inclusion in Nursing Education.”](#) Consequently, the toolkit is divided into two sections:

- ▶ **Administrative Leadership**

The framework emphasizes diversity and inclusion in the academic mission, leadership, faculty, students, staff and curricula. Questions serve as guidance for intentional strategic planning for inclusive excellence. References are followed by selected resources for strengthening mission, developing leaders,

recruiting faculty, and building relationships reflective of a culture of inclusion. Institutional mission statements from selected universities are highlighted for guidance.

► **Faculty & Staff**

This section deals with efforts to recruit, retain, and engage a diverse student body. In addition, the resources are intended to assist in devising an inclusive curriculum and establishing community partnerships that support diversity, equity, and inclusion. Questions in this section may be used to analyze faculty perceptions about the diversity and inclusion environment.

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Association of American Colleges and Universities, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/index.cfm
<http://www.aacu.org/about/strategicplan>

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Resources

Harvard University Project Implicit <https://implicit.harvard.edu>

Hicks, E. (2014). Proactively addressing bias and microinequities in the workplace Office of Workforce Diversity and Inclusion, Cornellcast Cornell University <http://www.cornell.edu/video/workplace-bias-and-micro-inequities-workshop>

Kumanyika, S. & Jones, C.P., (2015). The impact of racism on the health and well-being of the nation. Retrieved from <http://apha.org/events-and-meetings/webinars/racism-and-health>

MacWilliams, B., Schmidt, B., & McArthur, E. (2015). The Wisconsin Diversity Assessment Tool. <https://campaignforaction.org/resource/wisconsin-diversity-assessment-tool/>

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services Office of Minority Health. HHS Disparities Action Plan <https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=2&lvlid=10>

Yassmin Abdel-Magied: What does my headscarf mean to you? www.ted.com/talks/www.youtube.com/watch?v=18zvlz5CxPE

Section I. Administrative Leadership

A. Diversity and Inclusivity in the Academic Mission

The institution's positive view of diversity issues influences the campus climate. Guidelines should be developed that form the foundation for creating an academic environment that respects the participation of the entire campus population, irrespective of cultural backgrounds, characteristics, and differences. This would include the creation of an office to assist in developing and providing oversight regarding strategies, programs, and activities on campus-wide diversity initiatives; and the dedication of resources for the support of inclusive excellence initiatives. With increased knowledge regarding the need to facilitate meaningful inclusion, the administrator's role has moved beyond creation of a mission statement to development of a full diversity plan, which includes evaluation of its effectiveness. The plan is then integrated into the larger college or university diversity program.

It is important for educational institutions to support interactive strategies that acknowledge the needs of diverse populations and value their unique contributions to society. Research suggests that diversity and inclusion could be more clearly understood under the scholarship of mainstream leadership literature ([Research Center for Leadership in Action, NYU Wagner](#) 2011). The center operates according to the belief that diversity in leadership leads to organizational excellence.

Questions about Diversity and Inclusion in the Academic Mission

1. Are there a clear and comprehensive diversity and inclusivity statement and commitment to diversity and inclusion in the academic mission, leadership, faculty, students, staff and curricula?
2. What is the plan to actively recruit and retain administrators, faculty, staff and students from diverse backgrounds?
3. How does the administrative leadership demonstrate support for diversity initiatives?
4. How does the administration assess and monitor environmental climate issues? What successful approaches have been developed that resulted in a positive campus climate?
5. How are the outcomes of the plan measured?
6. What types of assessments or strategies are still needed
7. Does the institution have a dedicated office or center that coordinates diversity initiatives on campus?
8. What is the function of the diversity center/office or diversity committee and its composition?
9. How does the diversity center/office or diversity committee* communicate information about diversity initiatives? Is there a formal strategy for conducting the diversity discussion with the students and faculty?
10. Are there specific processes and procedures in place to measure the outcome of success in achieving the institutional diversity mission, goals, and objectives?
11. Are resources allocated to support diversity initiatives?

References Regarding Program Mission and Operations

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Hall, JM and Fields, B. (2013) Continuing the conversation in nursing on race and racism. Nursing Outlook 61:164-173. doi: 10.1016/j.outlook.2012.11.006. Epub 2013 Feb 16

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Resources Regarding Program Mission and Operations

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Cross Cultural Health Care Program (2009). Resource Guide. Retrieved November 18, 2016 from www.xculture.org/Reccommendedlinks.php

Duke University School of Nursing (2017). Bringing our commitment to diversity to life. Duke Nursing Magazine, 13(1). 16-21. www.nursing.duke.edu

Flinders University Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practice
www.flinders.edu.au/CDIP

Sample Mission Statements

National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE)
<http://www.nadohe.org/vision-a-mission-statements>

University of Pennsylvania
<http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/diversity/our-commitment/>

http://provost.upenn.edu/uploads/media_items/diversity-plan-brochure.original.pdf

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
<http://diversity.unc.edu/our-committment/>

The Ohio State University
<https://www.osu.edu/initiatives/diversity.html>

Penn State University School of Nursing Framework to Foster Diversity
http://equity.psu.edu/updates-10-15/pdf/colleges_frmwrkplan/framework_plan/Nurs_plan_10_15.pdf

B. Creating a Diversified Administrative Leadership

It is essential for the institution to commit to the objective of establishing diversity leadership in order to project a broader range of perspectives, insights, and approaches to better serve the diverse population of faculty and students. One of the many outstanding approaches to developing diverse leaders that has proven successful throughout the country is the development of minority nursing leadership institutes. Research suggests that attaining organizational goals for diversity requires vision, leadership, and resources from the top leadership of the university (Bensimon, 2004).

Questions for Creating a Diverse Administrative Leadership

1. What percentage of the institution's administrative leaders is represented by nurse educators from underrepresented groups?
2. What strategies are employed to identify underrepresented groups with leadership potential and the necessary qualifications to achieve leadership positions?
3. What strategies have been most successful in identifying and developing diversity leadership? What have been least successful?
4. What strategies are used for assessing outcomes of diversity leadership?
5. What are the strategies in place to retain diverse leaders?
6. What leadership training and mentor programs are available for diverse faculty?

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Wojciechowski, M. (2017) The perceived stigma of male nurses. Minority Nurse. <http://minoritynurse.com/the-perceived-stigma-of-male-nurses/>

Resources for Diversified Leadership

AONE Guiding Principles

<http://www.aone.org/resources/diversity.pdf>

Minority Nurse Leadership Skills

www.minoritynurse.com/minority-nurse-leaders/leadership-skills-minority-nurses

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

www.rwjf.org Increasing Gender Diversity through Innovations in Nursing ...

<http://www.rwjf.org/en/culture-of-health/2012/01/increasing-gender-diversity-through-innovations-in-nursing-education.html>

C. Program Planning for Recruitment and Retention of Students

The development of a comprehensive plan to recruit, retain, and graduate diverse students is paramount to achieving a diverse nurse workforce. For maximization of results, a plan needs to be integrated into the larger diversity efforts at the parent institution. The use of benchmarks and metrics shared through regularly scheduled communications such as dashboards and scorecards may be helpful in keeping the faculty informed in real time of progress towards the larger goals. Documentation of the challenges faced by the implementation of the plan through appropriate metrics may be helpful in soliciting support and resources for appropriate problem-solving.

Specific strategies such as pipeline programs should be identified; appropriate metrics should be employed and (volunteer champions) identified for the implementation.

Questions for Program Planning

1. What plan is currently in place to achieve diversity in nursing education and how is it evaluated?
2. What grievance policies exist for faculty, staff, and students?
3. How do faculty and staff feel about progress?
4. How is faculty being made aware of current issues in diversity in nursing education and practice?
5. What specific training addresses the facilitation of success of students with diverse backgrounds?
6. How are nursing diversity mission and goals coordinated with diversity mission and goals in the university or college?
7. What has been the trend of recruitment and graduation of diverse students in your school? \Who is directly responsible for the oversight of diversity in nursing education?

Resources for Program Planning

AONE Guiding Principles for Diversity in Health Care Organizations
<http://www.aone.org/resources/diversity.pdf>

Cornell University
<http://irp.dpb.cornell.edu/university-factbook/diversity>

Penn State University
http://equity.psu.edu/updates-10-15/pdf/colleges_frmwrkplan/framework_plan/Nurs_plan_10_15.pdf

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation www.rwjf.org Increasing Gender Diversity through Innovations in Nursing Education
<http://www.rwjf.org/en/culture-of-health/2012/01/increasing-gender-diversity-through-innovations-in-nursing-education.html>

University of North Carolina
<http://nursing.unc.edu/office-of-inclusive-excellence/>

University of Pennsylvania
http://provost.upenn.edu/uploads/media_items/diversity-plan-brochure.original.pdf

University of Washington

<http://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2013/04/Diversity-Blueprint-Dashboard.pdf>
<http://www.washington.edu/diversity/files/2015/02/Diversity-Blueprint.pdf>
<https://nursing.uw.edu/about/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>

Texas A&M

<https://accountability.tamu.edu/All-Metrics/Mixed-Metrics/Student-Demographics>

The Ohio State University

<https://www.osu.edu/initiatives/diversity.html>

D. Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Educational Workforce

The recruitment and retention of a diverse educational workforce is key to increasing the population of underrepresented nursing students. This requires nursing programs to utilize creative and innovative strategies that will attract underrepresented faculty to their institutions. Included in recruitment and retention efforts are structures that support new faculty in navigating an unfamiliar academic system and, most importantly, provide guidance through the tenure process. One strategy, supported in the literature as effective in retaining qualified faculty, is mentoring (Billings & Kowalski, 2008; Garbee & Killackey, 2008). Equally important to retention and success is the appropriate evaluation of diverse scholarship within the tenure and promotion process.

Questions for Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Faculty and Staff

1. What are the marketing and advertising strategies employed in the recruitment of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups?
2. What strategies are used to improve the assessment of credentials for the purposes of hiring and promotion of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups?
3. What retention strategies have been implemented to retain and promote the success of diverse faculty and staff?
4. Which recruitment and retention strategies have been most successful? Which strategies have been the least successful?
5. Is there an assessment procedure in place to gauge the outcomes of the recruitment and retention process?
6. Is there a formal mentoring program for diverse faculty?

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Resources for Diverse Faculty Recruitment and Retention

Association of American Colleges & Universities: A Voice and a Force for Liberal Education in the 21st Century. <https://www.aacu.org/resources/diversity-equity-and-inclusive-excellence>

GLMA, Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
www.glma.org

Minority Nurse Mentoring Office of Minority Health
www.minoritynurse.com/faculty-opportunities/recruiting-and-retaining-minority-nursing-faculty

National Coalition of Ethnic Minority Nurse Associations
www.ncemna.org

National League for Nursing Position Statement, Mentoring of Nurse Faculty
http://www.nln.org/aboutnln/PositionStatements/mentoring_3_21_06.pdf

National Organization of Nurses with Disabilities
www.nond.org

Section II. Faculty & Staff

A. Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Student Population

Despite reports that increased acceptability of services by minority populations, with accompanying language and cultural compatibilities, occurs with greater numbers of minority nurses, a lingering underrepresentation of practicing nurses from diverse backgrounds remains and contributes to the nation's persistent racial and ethnic health disparities (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, 2014). [Recent NLN data](#) also show no significant movement in the percentage of racial-ethnic minorities graduating from pre-licensure RN programs between 2006 and 2007. The rationale for increasing diversity in the nursing student population and health care workforce is clear: increased diversity can improve the overall health of the nation (Sullivan Commission, 2004). Recruiting and retaining nursing students from diverse backgrounds is, therefore, paramount.

Unfortunately, qualified youth who successfully complete high school and motivated adults from varied backgrounds who desire a nursing education often encounter multiple barriers accessing programs. Moreover, significant obstructions exist upon school entry. Retention and program completion rates for students of diverse backgrounds remain disproportionately low (Loftin, Newman, Dumas, Gilden, & Bond, 2012). Findings suggest that nursing education has also failed to provide a welcoming environment for recruiting and retaining male students for future roles as nurses (O'Lynn, 2004). Between 2000 and 2004, for example, the proportion of male RNs only grew from 5.4 to 5.7 percent (NACNEP, 2008).

Initiatives to strengthen recruitment and retention include summer and bridge programs that focus on academic enrichment and adjustment to college. The development of partnerships for mentoring, leadership development, and public awareness promotion among schools of nursing, professional organizations, community stakeholders, and high schools serving underrepresented populations should be encouraged. Schools of nursing can also consider the following questions for enhancing diverse student achievement and successful graduate entry into the health care workforce.

Questions Regarding Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Students

1. How are students from the underrepresented groups recruited, admitted, and retained in the nursing education program?

2. What student recruitment and retention strategies have been most and least successful?
3. Does the program assure that standardized tests used with students are developed to be psychometrically sound, including measures to control for cultural and linguistic bias and control for differences between the statistical minority and the statistical majority?
4. What strategies do we have in place to assure broad and ongoing assessment of teaching and learning in classrooms and clinical environments?
5. What strategies do we have in place to promote more holistic admission processes?
6. What strategies do we have in place to reduce disparities in documented admission, retention, and graduation rates?
7. What strategies have been established for collaboration with funding and scholarship organizations?
8. How are priority outcomes measured in relation to institutional diversity goals and objectives?
9. What evaluative processes and incentives have been developed to measure success in achieving student diversity?
10. Do nursing programs preparing students for initial RN licensure and RN-BSN programs encourage nursing students to be active members of the [National Student Nurses' Association \(NSNA\)](#), and engage in the [NSNA Breakthrough to Nursing](#) program?

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Resources for Recruitment and Retention of Diverse Student Population

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Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. (2013). National healthcare disparities report. Retrieved from <http://www.ahrq.gov/research/findings/nhqrdr/nhdr13/chap11.html>

American Association of Colleges of Nursing Diversity Resources
www.aacn.nche.edu/Diversity/index.htm

American Association of Colleges and Universities Diversity (AACU)
<http://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy>
<http://www.aacu.org/resources/diversity-equity-and-inclusive-excellence>
<http://leap.aacu.org/toolkit>

AACU Student Development
http://diversityweb.org/diversity_innovations/student_development/index.cfm

Minority Nurse Associations.
www.minoritynurse.com/associations-organizations

National Institutes of Health Recruitment & Retention Initiatives
www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/Diversity

National League for Nursing. (2009). A Commitment to Diversity in Nursing and Nursing Education. *Reflection & Dialogue*
www.nln.org/aboutnln/reflection_dialogue/refl_dial_3.htm

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National Student Nurses' Association. Breakthrough to Nursing Program, established in 1965. Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.nсна.org>.

Virginia Tech. InclusiveVT. <http://www.inclusive.vt.edu/>
Unfinished conversation with Master Diversity Trainer Lee Mun Wah
<http://inclusive.vt.edu/LeeMunWah.html>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_81DwriCNc

B. Practicing Inclusive Pedagogies

Greater attention has been paid in recent years to student engagement and student-centered pedagogies. As nursing students in the 21st century hail from increasingly diverse backgrounds, the demand for pedagogical approaches that are theoretically appropriate, equitable, inclusive, and responsive to diverse perspectives has grown. Transformative learning theory, for example, recognizes the importance and use of personal experience and reflective discussions as critical in transforming learning

about issues by both faculty and students (Warren, 2009). Accordingly, transformative pedagogies emphasize wholeness, multiculturalism, and contemplative practices (Rendón, 2009). Alternatively, antiracist pedagogies in nursing education explore systems of oppression that marginalize some and privilege others (Hassouneh, 2006). Enhancing faculty awareness for the need to incorporate diverse student experiences into new pedagogical approaches is an initial step. Consequently, many college and universities have developed centers and websites for inclusive teaching to address the diversity of cultures, academic skills, language backgrounds, learning styles, and academic preparation levels among students today.

Effective strategies for teaching nursing were identified as nursing's signature pedagogies. These include case studies, simulation, coaching, role-modeling, and integrative teaching practices, linking our knowledge base to intellectual, ethical, and clinical judgment development (Carnegie Foundation, 2007). In addition, the first nursing pedagogy, narrative pedagogy, has emerged from 20 years of scholarship listening to the shared stories of students, teachers, and clinicians (Diekelmann & Diekelmann, 2009). Narrative pedagogy and other interpretive pedagogies, critical, feminist, and postmodern, are transforming teaching and learning practices by addressing the most salient concerns in contemporary nursing education and practice, including teaching for diversity and inclusion. The following questions can be helpful in eliciting these courageous conversations:

Questions for Practicing Inclusive Pedagogies

1. What knowledge, skills, and attitudes are desirable for redesigning and creating new responsive and inclusive pedagogy and curricula?
2. What strategies are currently employed at your school of nursing to create and support an inclusive and responsive instructional environment?
3. Which strategies have been most successful? Which have been least successful?
4. What role do faculty play in accountability for inclusive pedagogy and curricula?
5. In what new ways can students, faculty, and our partners in health care interact with one another to co-create inclusive pedagogies?
6. How does the administrative structure provide assistance to support new teaching?
7. What procedures have been designed to evaluate the practice of inclusive and responsive pedagogies?

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Resources for Inclusive Pedagogy

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- NYC Health + Hospitals. (2011). LGBT Healthcare Training video: To treat me you have to know me. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NUhvJqvgAac&feature=youtu.be>

C. Community Partnerships

Innovative community partnerships are being developed as a new frontier in diversity learning (Irizarry, 2007). Multicultural communities serve as the real-life laboratory for students and faculty alike, and the potential for building mutually supportive relationships that enhance student skills and competence becomes evident (Stolder, Rosemeyer, & Zorn, 2008).

Questions for Engaging Community Partnerships

1. Is there an established relationship with local diverse community organizations to support student learning experiences?
2. What strategies are employed to maintain relationships with community organizations?
3. How are the outcomes of partnerships with the community organizations evaluated?
4. What outreach is being done in the community to make sure the mix of nurses matches the mix of the population being served?

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Resources for Partnerships

American Organization of Nurse Executives
www.aone.org/aone/advocacy/npec.html

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health, Promoting Health Equity & Social Justice
<https://ccph.memberclicks.net/resources>

Diversity Web Community Partnerships

http://diversityweb.org/diversity_innovations/campus_and_community/handbooks_guides_organizations/index.cfm

PRISM diversity inclusion results
www.prismdiversity.com

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