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Statement from the President

An Environment for all People

The lead sentence of our mission statement affirms that “West Texas A&M University is a diverse and inclusive student-centered community of learners.” We hold as a core value to have respect for the dignity of all individuals. We embrace diversity and inclusion because one) it is the right thing to do if we truly respect the dignity of all individuals; and two) a diverse and inclusive environment enhances the ability of all of our students to pursue and achieve educational excellence. We teach diversity and inclusion so as to best prepare our students for the workplace and world in which they will be immersed upon graduation. It is important we communicate across cultures and listen for and respect differences.

Our mission statement, which is provided to all students, faculty and staff, is an excellent example of the type of University climate we make every effort to achieve with our diversity efforts. Our commitment to diversity is evident in our actions and accomplishments and is at the center of our University culture at West Texas A&M University.

J. Patrick O’Brien
President/CEO
Introduction

West Texas A&M University is a progressive University that provides a superior academic experience in an engaged, student-centered environment supported by a pioneering spirit that fosters critical thinking and social responsibility.

WTAMU seeks to be a first choice institution – first choice for students, for faculty and staff, for employers, and for graduate schools.

West Texas A&M University’s Core Values of academic and intellectual freedom, pursuit of excellence in all endeavors, creativity and innovation, respect for the dignity of all individuals, cooperation and communication, community service and leadership, exceed expectations of internal and external customers, continuous improvement, integrity, and diversity inspires every member of the University community to develop an appreciation of and commitment to the responsibilities of leadership through people while promoting personal and intellectual growth. While these Core Values remain as relevant today as it has for decades, the context for pursuing these Core Values through individuals, groups, communities, and leadership is noticeably changing as we learn, live, and work in the 21st century.

To continue to embrace our Core Values fully as our inspiration, West Texas A&M University must guide its future so that it will become a University that not only provides access and opportunity, but that also embraces and reflects the diversity of opinions, ethnicities and races, and cultures that will most certainly be our future. Our goal must be to assure that each student’s potential to make positive contributions to our society is not constrained but enhanced by the rich diversity of differences that makes us who we are as a people. The University community must embrace diversity and inclusion in a manner that will cause WTAMU’s students to embrace it as well, thus strengthening their academic and personal skills and competencies so that their Core Values are demonstrated and supported effectively. This is West Texas A&M University’s cultural expectation-this is West Texas A&M University’s vision for the future.
Multiple Aspects of Diversity

Faculty and Staff Excellence with People

• Office for Diversity and Inclusion

Office for Diversity and Inclusion Programs – The Office for Diversity and Inclusion is mandated by the president of the University to develop effective educational programs, seminars, workshops, and trainings for administrators, faculty, staff, and students that deepen community understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of institutional life. The necessary rules, procedures and systems to implement the University’s Excellence Through People 2013-2018 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan have been established. The Office for Diversity and Inclusion, in partnership with faculty, staff, and student departments and organizations, offers an ongoing series of workshops and seminars designed to enhance an understanding of diversity, to develop University-Wide cultural competence, and to inspire every member of the University community to develop an appreciation of and commitment to the responsibilities of leadership through people while promoting personal and intellectual growth. West Texas A&M University Core Values remain as relevant today as it has for decades, and will sustain the University as students, faculty, staff live, and work in the 21st century.

• President’s Office

President’s Diversity Committee– The Diversity Committee assists in the development of plans, strategies, and initiatives to encourage increased diversity in the university. The Committee views diversity from a very broad perspective, which includes diversity in regard to ethnicity, race, gender, and sexual orientation. The Committee is charged with developing recommendations to: create a campus atmosphere of respect and encouragement for people of diverse backgrounds; increase diversity in the student body; and increase diversity among the faculty and staff. The Committee will work with CORE in planning activities associated with Martin Luther King Day and Cultural Awareness Week, among others.

• Office of the Provost

Office of the Provost Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer College Faculty Liaisons– Each College has appointed a faculty member(s) to assist the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer with academic persistence programs and multicultural program planning for students, faculty, and staff. The Multicultural Program Planning Conference views programs from a very broad perspective and welcomes University-wide campus members. The Conference provides programs that produce positive effects on diverse student retention and success. Through cultural programs and diversity education, the Conference promotes an inclusive environment while cultivating an appreciation for each student.
Multiple Aspects of Diversity

Student Inclusive Excellence

- CORE (Campus Organizations, Resources, and Entertainment) Center

The CORE Office is the center of student life, to help students get the most out of their time at WTAMU through campus activities, student organizations, special events and programs, leadership development and student success resources.

- Campus Organizations

West Texas A&M is home to over 130 campus organizations. Types of organizations include departmental and professional organizations, honor societies, interest groups, religious organizations, recreational and sport clubs, residence hall organizations, and Greek social/service groups.

- Greek Life

West Texas A&M University offers Greek social/service organizations through the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC) and the National Panhellenic Conference (NPC).

- Buff Branding

Music, food, fun, meeting new friends, and much more. Buff Branding is campus life orientation designed to help students transition from high school to college and become part of the WTAMU family.

- Buff Activities Council (BAC)

Buff Activities Council is a great way for you to get involved on campus. BAC gives you the opportunity to decide what programs are held on campus and provides you with hands on
experience of planning events.

**Purpose:**
To provide a diverse range of activities fostering academic integration and personal growth, and to create an engaging and supportive campus community.

**Goals:**

To complement academic programs

- To work to unify the campus community
- To teach promotions, budgeting, networking, and recruiting skills
- To contribute to the recruitment and retention efforts of the university
- To involve organizations in the event planning process to foster organizational growth and success

**To apply to be a member of BAC, pick up an application in the CORE Office, JBK 103**

- **Committees:**

  **Academics**

  The Academics branch of Buff Activities Council will focus on what we are here for in the first place, and that is to get a degree. We will be planning events to motivate students in their schoolwork, and future career goals. This committee will consist of students that are motivated, dependable, and creative. If you are looking for a way to get involved and keep academics number one, this is the way to go!

  **Diversity**

  The BAC Diversity Committee is committed to enhancing the cultural enrichment of students through involving students in activities relating to different cultures, religions, beliefs, and mindsets. Some events coordinated by the Diversity Committee include Martin Luther King Jr Memorial, Taste of Mexico, Mardi Gras, and International Week.

  **International Board**

  The purpose of this organization is to improve the experiences of international students at West Texas A&M University as well as to reach Dr. Patrick O’Brien’s goal of 500 international students by 2018.
Leadership Board

Leadership Board is a student organization that educates through campus programs, leadership retreats and community outreach.

Peer Education (PULSE)

PULSE is a student organization that seeks to educate and support students in making healthy lifestyle choices with regard to important social issues faced by college students. The focus of PULSE is to provide fun, interactive and informative programs and services to students, as well as the external community, that will enhance both personal and academic skills. PULSE is open to any student interested in becoming a resource to their fellow WTAMU students and community.

Research and Evaluation

In order to best provide activities that meet the needs of WT's students, the Research and Evaluation Committee will design and administer surveys on what activities are wanted by students and on how students are affected by campus involvement.

Service

Service plays a huge role in our day-to-day lives, whether it’s helping a friend or someone we don’t even know. The Service Committee of BAC is aimed towards providing fun volunteer opportunities for our students. Since many of our students are not from around the Texas Panhandle, it is important that we provide ways in which they can stay involved and become connected with the area. What better way is there to become connected than to help others around your temporary home? If you are interested in helping others and bettering yourself along with the community, then this is the place for you!

Socials and Entertainment

The BAC Socials and Entertainment committee understands that college life is made more successful by a balanced schedule between academics and a social life. The Socials and Entertainment committee works to provide all students with social opportunities on campus such as concerts, dances, University Sing, and many others. If you enjoy planning fun and interactive events, this committee is the place for you.

Sports and Games

The Sports and Games Committee’s goal is to provide active games for WT Students to participate in and also raise school spirit by connecting more with the sports teams on
campus. These events will include campus-wide scavenger hunts, Midnight Madness, and games you might see on a game show. If you are looking to get involved on campus and maintain an active lifestyle, this one is for you!
Diversity and Inclusion Goals

West Texas A&M University, a member of the Texas A&M University System, 2011-2015 Strategic Plan Mission Statement, is a student-centered, learning community dedicated to educating tomorrow’s leaders through innovative academic and co-curricular undergraduate and graduate programs.

West Texas A&M University faculty, staff, and students, consistent with its Excellence Through People 2013-2018 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan Mission Statement, seek to

- develop and sustain an increasingly diverse and inclusive community of learners necessary to accomplish the institution’s academic mission and position the University as a leader in diversity and inclusion;

- provide the infrastructure needed to support diversity in all its forms within and among the teaching, learning, research, scholarly, creative, and service environments that define our campus;

- develop an appreciation for and understanding of the benefits of diverse, inclusive, and cross-cultural perspectives; and

- establish the rules, procedures, programs, practices, and resources necessary to achieve excellence, access, opportunities, and effectiveness in teaching and learning, research, service, leadership, and outreach activities of the University.

West Texas A&M University’s Office for Diversity and Inclusion was established to enhance the University experiences for all students, faculty, staff, and visitors, including those who are multicultural, first generation, female, and LGBTQ.

West Texas A&M University is a University that is open to all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, or veteran status.

The University uses the definitions that the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) created to describe inclusion and diversity.

The AAC&U defines inclusion as "the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity-in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect-in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions".
According to the AAC&U, diversity is defined as "individual differences (e.g., personality, learning styles, and life experiences) and group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations)".

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion is collaboratively implementing programs in the spirit of these definitions in order to promote a supportive environment where all students, faculty, and staff are celebrated and valued and where multiple perspectives are respected and welcomed.

Goal 1  Develop and implement programs, activities, and services designed to increase and enhance student, faculty, and staff diversity in all its forms.

Goal 2  Develop and implement activities and programs that are designed to improve the campus climate for students, faculty, and staff and that are aligned with one or more of the University’s Core Values.

Goal 3  Implement comprehensive educational and training opportunities for students, faculty, and staff that include a review of state and federal issues, best practices, and research related to recognizing, valuing, and effectively managing the many different cultural perspectives that comprise our community.

Goal 4  Design, develop, and implement a comprehensive system of responsibility, accountability, and recognition for increasing campus diversity, improving campus climate, and advancing the knowledge base for creating and sustaining a culturally diverse community of learners, teachers, researchers, and workers.

Goal 5  Develop both internal and external collaborations and partnerships that are designed to build capacity for extending diversity and inclusion education related research throughout the University and to the broader community and other organizations affiliated with and/or serviced by the University.

Goal 6  To provide two $500 scholarships for University students by establishing an endowment for University students who promote diversity and inclusion.

Goal 7  Develop and implement programs, activities, and services in all University units designed to increase a culture of inclusion for students, faculty, and staff.
Diversity and Inclusion Rules and Procedures

Three major campus units will assist the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer in promoting and developing ongoing planning, implementation, assessment, and evaluation of University and unit progress with respect to accomplishing the seven goals of the Excellence Through People 2013-2018 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan 1) The Diversity Committee, 2) WTAMU Faculty and Staff Diversity and Inclusion Council, and 3) a newly established Multicultural Program Planning Conference to produce programs that have positive effects on student retention and success for all students. Through cultural programs and diversity education, the Multicultural Program Planning Conference promotes an inclusive environment while cultivating an appreciation for individual differences.

The Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) is establishing structures, processes, and procedures that help University units and departments establish their own diversity and inclusion plans in accordance with the University’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan, and that monitor the progress of University units and departments in accomplishing their respective diversity and inclusion plans, and suggests corrective action when needed. The CDIO 1) serves as a professional resource for all colleges, departments, offices, and other internal units and groups as well as individuals across the University providing information, expertise and insights, and promoting best practices for increasing diversity and inclusion; 2) collaborates with academic and non-academic units to help foster a participative and inclusive working environment for diverse faculty and staff members and assists with efforts to attract and retain diverse faculty and staff; 5) develops and implements effective educational programs, seminars, workshops, and trainings for administrators, faculty, staff, and students that deepen community understanding and appreciation of diversity and inclusion in all aspects of institutional life; and 6) collaborates with the campus communication/public relations department to inform the general public of the larger community of campus diversity programs and opportunities for diverse students and represents the University at community events that involve diversity.