



Inclusive Excellence Strategic Planning Forum

On December 17, 2020, UNO students, faculty, staff, and community partners participated in the Strategic Planning Forum on Inclusive Excellence: Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEAI). In total, there were 198 participants in this forum.

The Inclusive Excellence Forum was the first Strategic Planning Forum solely focused on the importance of Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion, and marked the start of a campus-wide discussion around Inclusive Excellence, its importance, and the pathway to achieving it. The Forum included two panels. The first panel consisted of faculty, staff, students and community partners discussing UNO's commitment to equity, culture/structures that empower marginalized populations, and obstacles in the pathway to inclusivity. The second panel consisted of community members and focused on the community imperative around DEAI.

Each panel set the stage for discussions on how to foster a supportive, inclusive environment for UNO employees, students, and community partners. A few of the key takeaways included:

- Training and professional development in DEAI for faculty, staff, and students.
- Having intentional, ongoing conversations that last weeks, months, and years.
- Being aware of diversity that is not readily visible.
- Recognizing that diversity is intersectional and often situational.
- Focusing on an end goal of equitable outcomes, rather than short-term actions.
- Being able to shape on-campus DEAI programs to meet community needs.
- Creating a space where community members can openly express their needs to campus leaders.

In this forum, there were three virtual breakout sessions that allowed for participants to engage in meaningful debate and provide input on vital strategic questions. Each question allowed the participants to focus on a subset of our community. Question 1 was focused on fostering an equitable and inclusive environment for faculty and staff; Question 2 was focused on students; and Question 3 was focused on fostering an inclusive ecosystem within the community.

In total, we received 428 comments and suggestions. Prominent themes in the campus' feedback include:

- Tokenism
- Recruitment and Retention (RPT process, pay equity, internal caste system etc.)
- Representation (class, faculty, committees, leadership, signage, artwork, etc.)
- DEAI Training and Resources (to reach everyone)
- Bias to Action (including genuine commitment to DEAI and transparency on actions)
- Culture of trust/safe spaces/listening
- Microaggressions and implicit bias
- Mentoring (including empowering stakeholders)
- Community Engagement (equity in partnerships, internships, asset-based lens, gaps, city locations, sustainability, etc.)
- Accessibility (physical, linguistic, barriers including policies and structures, prerequisites, pre-conceived notions of quality, inclusive holidays, etc.)
- Curricular Diversity



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Next Steps

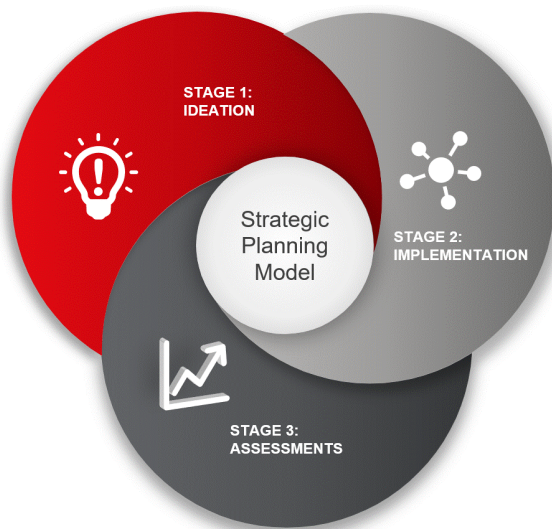
The input and feedback provided continues to be analyzed and used to inform implementation teams. Immediate next steps include:

- **Strategic Investment related to Race, Class, Inequality, and Social Justice:** UNO is accepting proposals supporting this strategic investment and has outlined the process for assessing the proposals and awarding resources.
- **Launch of the Academic Review of Buildings, Spaces, and Statues initiative:** UNO has established a committee to examine opportunities to recognize members of the extended UNO community that express UNO values and aspirations as an inclusive institution.

Updates on these initiatives, as well as other initiatives formalized based on input received during the Inclusive Excellence Forum can be found on the Strategic Planning website: plan.unomaha.edu. In addition to the new initiatives that will result from this Forum, it is important to recognize the ongoing efforts by the campus community. In 2020-21, 282 Operational Strategic Initiatives were recorded in UNePlan. These initiatives reflect ongoing efforts by campus units, including colleges, academic affairs, student success, and business affairs, in support of DEAI.

The Strategic Planning Model

There are several stages to the Strategic Planning Process, including: Ideation, Implementation, and Assessments. Strategic Planning is a dynamic and iterative process, in which we go through the stages on multiple occasions ensuring success in our [strategic priorities](#), such as DEAI, and create an action-focused approach to our planning efforts.



The Strategic Planning Forum on Inclusive Excellence marked the first step in our Strategic Planning process – it was an opportunity to bring constituencies together to engage in the Ideation stage. The input received will allow UNO to transition the Strategic Priority of DEAI into multiple concrete ideas and initiatives.

Based on this input, several implementation teams will be created that will develop and operationalize actionable plans. In addition, every unit must consider what actionable plans can effect real change.

The action plans derived from this forum will be assessed. The Strategic Planning model is dynamic and iterative, as such assessments inform the ideation stage and input/data is systematically used to inform the implementation teams. At the next Forum on DEAI, the campus will be well poised to discuss the various initiatives supporting our DEAI efforts - putting actions to our aspirations.