ANNUAL COLLEGE/UNIT STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLAN REPORT

Name of College/Division: Academic Affairs
Unit: Equal Opportunity Programs/University Compliance
Date Submitted: 07/14/2014; Submitted by: Gwendolyn Hood

Goal 1: Communicate The University of Alabama’s commitment to diversity as part of its educational mission.

- The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs facilitated the review and update of the President’s Statements on commitment to Diversity, Equal Opportunity & Nondiscrimination, and American with Disabilities Act, posted the updated statements to the EOP website.

- The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs reviewed undergraduate and graduate recruiting materials (applications, handbooks, etc.) to ensure that these materials included the University’s most current statement on equal opportunity, nondiscrimination/harassment, and diversity.

- The University Compliance Officer/Director provided leadership and liaison support to the Equal Opportunity Committee (EOC), a university standing committee designed to advise the administration on equal opportunity issues. The Committee identified and is pursuing the following initiatives: (1) developing a mission statement and establishing priorities for the committee; (2) inclusion of a required diversity workshop into the Spring Orientation program for new students; (3) including diversity courses as part of the Core Curriculum, and (4) identifying and expanding scholarship opportunities for a more diverse pool of students; and (5) exploring need for an office of diversity/chief diversity officer at the University.

- The University Compliance Officer/Director attended the “Second Annual ALAHEDO Diversity Conference” in conjunction with the Association for Black Culture Centers annual conference, “Culture Centers in the Academy: From Civil Rights to Inclusive Excellence, held October 31 – November 2, 2013 at Auburn University. Educators, researchers, and practitioners made presentations about their research and best practices in diversity to a highly interactive group of conferees.

- The University Compliance Officer/Director served as the institutional representative on the Alabama Association of Higher Education Diversity Officers (ALAHEDO). ALAHEDO is charged with developing workshops, conferences, and other activities to promote diversity within its member institutions. Gwendolyn Hood, University Compliance Officer/Director of Equal Opportunity attended the annual meeting on October 31, 2013 at Auburn University.

- The University Compliance Officer/Director is currently serving as lead organizer for the Third Annual ALAHEDO Comprehensive Diversity Conference to be held November 13-14, 2014 at The University of Alabama. The goal of the conference is
Goal 2: **Create and sustain an inviting, respectful, and inclusive campus environment that enhances awareness and appreciation of cultural and individual diversity, promotes community and tolerance, and prepares students for the global society in which they will live and work.**

The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs facilitated and participated in the webinars, workshops and discussion groups to provide training to the campus on equal opportunity, prevention of illegal discrimination and harassment, and affirmative action/diversity. The training targeted designated EO coordinators in the various colleges and administrative units, as well as administrators, managers, supervisors and others responsible for implementation of the University’s equal opportunity and affirmative action policies. Training on equal opportunity, nondiscrimination, harassment, disability and diversity included the following sessions:

1) **Title IX and the New Federal Guidance on Campus Sexual Assault**
2) **Retaliation in the Workplace**
3) **Section 508-Accessible Web Content**
4) **Harassment Prevention**
5) **Child Protection Policy**
6) **EEOC Technical Assistance Multi-Issues Seminar (Discrimination, Retaliation, ADA/FMLA, Complaint Investigation)**

- University Compliance Officer/Director served as a member of the Campus Accessibility Team (includes representatives from University Facilities, the Office of Disability Services, Transportation, Office of Information Technology, Center for Instructional Technology, Housing and Residential Communities, Athletics and the Office of Counsel) that conducted assessments of campus facilities for ADA compliance and prioritized planned improvements. Activities included reviewing the Campus Accessibility Map for updates on location of accessible buildings, passages, and parking; prioritizing identified campus accessibility projects; and surveying, reviewing and facilitating solutions to accessibility issues on campus.

Goal 3: **Increase diversity within the University’s faculty and senior level administration to ensure that students are exposed to and learn from individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experience and, consequently, graduate with a better ability to understand, appreciate, and contribute to a global society.**

- To ensure currency on best practices for increasing diversity in outreach, recruiting and retaining diverse students/faculty/staff, the University Compliance Officer/Director participated in the National Association for Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE) and the Disability Student Service Officers in Higher Education (DASOHE).
listservs, and maintained membership in the following organizations: American Association for Affirmative Action (AAAA), Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM), and the Alabama Association of Higher Education Diversity Officers (ALAHEDO).

- The Office of Equal Opportunity Programs facilitated the annual update of the University’s Affirmative Action Plan (AAP). Preparation of the AAP report was facilitated by EOP with input from the AAP Team which is made up of representatives from EOP, Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and Legal. ERS Group, a recognized expert in Affirmative Action Consulting conducted the workforce statistical analyses. Workforce and recruitment analyses were reviewed and evaluated to be reflected in recruitment strategies as warranted.

Goal 4: **Increase diversity within the University’s student body to enrich the learning environment, foster more informed and open perspectives, promote community, and better prepare our students to live and work in an ever-expanding global environment.**

- The University Compliance Officer/Director served on the ADA Technology Compliance Work Group to develop a plan for compliance with Section 504 and ADA regulations for accessible technology (e.g., web-based materials, software applications and operating systems, video and multimedia products, computing equipment). The Group developed a accessibility plan that was approved and implemented by the University. ADA Technology was officially included in the overall mission of Campus Accessibility and representatives from the Center for Instructional Technology, and the Office of Information Technology were added to the Campus Accessibility Committee.

Goal 5: **Annually review goals and assess effectiveness of action steps and initiatives in enhancing diversity within our educational mission.**

- The University’s commitment to diversity as part of its educational mission was effectively communicated by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs/University Compliance by posting the equal opportunity policies/statements in a variety of venues (websites, direct mail, handbooks, catalogs, recruiting materials) and through discussions with various campus groups and individual faculty/staff/students. *(Goal 1)*

- The education, training, and consultation provided by the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs to promote awareness and understanding of the University’s equal opportunity obligations to prevent discrimination and harassment within the University were effective.

- The training targeted for EO Coordinators in the various colleges and administrative units as well as administrators, managers, supervisors and others responsible for implementation of equal opportunity and affirmative action policies were very well attended and generated salient questions and rich discussions on the various subjects. The leading of functional work groups on various accessibility
compliance issues has facilitated timely resolution of immediate campus access problems and enhanced strategies for addressing long-term campus accessibility goals. (Goal 2)

• The annual update of the University’s Affirmative Action Plan was completed and reviewed by the AAP team. Also, the participation in listserv/discussion groups and in professional organizations by the Compliance Officer/Director added to the knowledge base of best practices for providing equal opportunity, access/accommodation and increasing diversity among students, faculty and staff. (Goal 3)

• The participation of faculty, staff and students in various seminars, workshops, and programs on equal opportunity, access, diversity/inclusiveness provides experiences that foster an enriched learning environment for students and cultivates more informed and open perspectives throughout the university community. (Goal 4)