

**UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS**

**MINORITY RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN**

**2022–2026**

prepared for the

**ARKANSAS DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

submitted

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**FORWARD**

This plan is developed in compliance with Act 1091 of the 1999 Arkansas General Assembly, which requires all state-supported colleges and universities to establish programs that enhance the retention of minority students, faculty, and staff. For the purposes of this plan, the term “minorities” refers to African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans.

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## **PART 1: POLICY INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **University of Central Arkansas Vision**

The University of Central Arkansas (UCA) aspires to be a premier learner-focused public comprehensive university, a nationally recognized leader for its continuous record of excellence in undergraduate and graduate education, scholarly and creative endeavors, and engagement with local, national, and global communities.

### **University of Central Arkansas Mission and Core Values**

UCA, a leader in 21st-century higher education, is committed to excellence through the delivery of outstanding undergraduate and graduate education that remains current and responsive to the diverse needs of those it serves. The university's faculty and staff promote the intellectual, professional, social, and personal development of its students through innovations in learning, scholarship, and creative endeavors. Students, faculty, and staff partner to create strong engagement with the local, national, and global communities. The University of Central Arkansas dedicates itself to academic vitality, integrity, and diversity.

### **University of Central Arkansas Diversity Statement**

We are dedicated to attracting and supporting a diverse student, faculty and staff population and enhanced multicultural learning opportunities. We value the opportunity to work, learn, and develop in a community that embraces the diversity of individuals and ideas, including race, ethnicity, religion, spiritual beliefs, national origin, age, gender, marital status, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, physical ability, political affiliation, and intellectual perspective.

#### **Recruitment and Retention**

We actively pursue and seek to retain a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.

#### **Support**

We maintain the highest academic quality and ensure that our programs remain innovative and responsive to the ever-changing and diverse needs of those we serve.

#### **Knowledge**

We seek to enhance interaction and understanding among diverse groups and cultivate enriched learning opportunities in a global community.

### **Affirmative Action Statement**

The University of Central Arkansas is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution dedicated to attracting and supporting a diverse student, faculty and staff population through enhanced multicultural learning environments and opportunities. In keeping with its nondiscrimination policy in employment, admissions and other functions and programs, the university considers employees and students on the basis of individual merit and will not discriminate against a person on the basis of gender, race or color, ethnicity, religion, spiritual beliefs, national origin, age, familial status, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, disability, political beliefs, intellectual perspective, genetic information, military status, or other factors irrelevant to participation in its programs.

## **PART 2: PARTICIPATION AND IMPACT**

### **University of Central Arkansas Diversity Advisory Committee**

The purposes of the Diversity Advisory Committee are to

- (a) Review all policies, programs, and offices of the University of Central Arkansas in an effort to (i) promote and maintain a diverse student, faculty and staff population and (ii) foster an environment of inclusion and diversity.
- (b) Develop and present to the Board of Trustees and the President, (i) plans and recommendations to increase diversity, including but not limited to, staffing, budget recommendations and program changes, if any, and (ii) recommendations concerning language to be included in university publications, advertisements, and other materials on the subject of diversity.
- (c) Prepare and file with the Board of Trustees and the Office of the President, an annual report on diversity initiatives with such recommendations as the committee may deem necessary and advisable.
- (d) Undertake such other activities, studies or initiatives as the committee may, from time-to-time, deem necessary or advisable, as well as conduct any other matters within the committee's jurisdiction as may be requested by the Board of Trustees.

Membership of the Diversity Advisory Committee/Meetings: The Diversity Advisory Committee shall be composed of the following persons who shall each serve terms as set forth below:

- ♦ one member of the university's Board of Trustees, appointed by the Board of Trustees
- ♦ university's chief diversity officer or their designee, chair (ex officio)
- ♦ associate vice president of human resources (ex officio)
- ♦ director of assessment (ex officio)
- ♦ professional development and training coordinator (ex officio, non-voting)
- ♦ two persons appointed by the Board of Trustees, at least one of whom shall be a person holding an administrative position at the university
- ♦ one faculty member from each college appointed by the Faculty Senate from nominations submitted by the dean of each college and one at large faculty member selected by the Faculty Senate from the non-affiliated faculty
- ♦ four persons designated as representatives from the Staff Senate
- ♦ two persons designated as representatives from the Student Government Association
- ♦ one person designated as the representative from the UCA Alumni Association and
- ♦ one person designated as the representative from the UCA Foundation, Inc.

## **Model for Maximizing Diversity**

UCA seeks to foster an environment where everyone feels visible, valued, and validated in an inclusive academic, professional, and social setting that affords goal attainment and University affinity. To fulfill these aspirations, UCA has adopted an expanded outlook for embracing difference that includes the tenets of diversity, belonging, inclusion, and equity (DBIE). A description of these principles follows:

**DIVERSITY** UCA gives attention to representation as measured quantitatively.

**BELONGING** It is the aim of UCA for all individuals to feel welcome across differences.

**INCLUSION** UCA aspires toward inclusive excellence by involving diverse communities in decision-making that have an impact on policies, procedures, and practices of the campus.

**EQUITY** The UCA community collaborates to alleviate gaps, disparities, and disproportionalities, and to remove the predictability of outcomes for historically underrepresented groups.

This organizing model for DBIE at UCA calls for centralized and decentralized, cross-campus collaboration and campus-wide examination of data for quantitative and qualitative insight on its systems and structures. To that end, UCA reviews policies and procedures, through the lens of DBIE, to become aware of and attentive to its gateways and barriers, to improve processes, to increase capacity, to demonstrate institutional commitment, and to produce outcomes that are consistent with supporting students, faculty, and staff who are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC). UCA also acknowledges the intersectionality of identities that influence the experiences of BIPOC.

Centralized planning, capacity-building, operationalization, and implementation are employed by the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion (IDI), the Office of Diversity and Community (ODC), and the Office of University Training (UT). The initiatives of these units cultivate DBIE capacity by raising DBIE awareness, education, and professional development to model these ideals; by elevating DBIE as a core institutional value; by building the DBIE infrastructure; by leading DBIE strategic planning and assessment; and by increasing overall DBIE success.

Decentralized efforts are put forth by individual departments and divisions specific to their unique institutional purposes. These combined efforts transcend administrative and institutional boundaries to make a collective, positive impact on diversity, belonging, inclusion, and equity at UCA.

## **PART 3: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Diversity Goals**

Following from the university's diversity statement, three diversity goals provide specific objectives related to the recruitment and retention of minority students, faculty, and staff.

Goal 1 – Recruitment and Retention. We actively pursue and seek to retain a diverse student body, faculty, and staff.

1. Increase recruitment and retention efforts to seek and retain a diversified student body.
2. Increase recruitment and retention efforts to seek and retain a diversified staff.
3. Increase recruitment and retention efforts to seek and retain a diversified faculty.

Goal 2 – Support. We maintain the highest academic quality and ensure that our programs remain innovative and responsive to the ever-changing and diverse needs of those we serve.

1. Increase support promoting innovative and responsive programmatic offerings that serve historically underserved members of the student body.
2. Increase support promoting innovative and responsive programmatic offerings that serve historically underserved staff members in each division, college, and department.
3. Increase support promoting innovative and responsive programmatic offerings that serve historically underserved faculty members in each division, college, and department.
4. Increase support of diversity in the greater UCA communities.

Goal 3 – Knowledge. We seek to enhance interaction and understanding among diverse groups and cultivate enriched learning opportunities in a global community.

1. Increase participation in learning opportunities that enhance interaction and understanding among diverse groups within the student body.
2. Increase participation in learning opportunities that enhance interaction and understanding among diverse groups of staff.
3. Increase participation in learning opportunities that enhance interaction and understanding among diverse groups of faculty.

### **Diversity Strategic Plan**

As an inclusive community, UCA students, faculty, staff, and administrators commit to a comprehensive and inclusive definition of diversity that acknowledges the importance and presence of diversity, belonging, inclusion, and equity within the broader educational mission of the university. The UCA community implements applicable change efforts considering the contexts, cultures, politics, and economics of campus diversity. The UCA community accepts responsibility to advance a positive and inclusive campus climate for diversity, to show respectfulness for the contributions of all students and

employees in all capacities, and to model and endorse the principles and practices of inclusive excellence. As a result, each year departments, units, programs, colleges, and divisions engage in planning and actions to support the university's DBIE goals. They also report their activities for inclusion in the annual, campus-wide Diversity Strategic Plan report.

### **Assessment**

Act 1091 requires the university to submit an annual report of its activities and a report of its progress toward the goals set forth in the plan. In alignment with the focus areas of the university's diversity statement, the Diversity Advisory Committee identified Diversity Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by which to monitor and measure the university's progress toward greater diversity, belonging, inclusion, and equity. These KPIs will be assessed annually via data collected through the Diversity Strategic Plan Report and other internal reports. Progress will be monitored for effectiveness.

#### Goal 1 – Recruitment and Retention KPIs

1. Admissions demographics for undergraduate and graduate students mirror state racial and ethnic percentages.
2. Faculty and staff interview and hiring processes and data are reviewed every two years to monitor proportional representation.
3. Faculty and staff career advancement data are reviewed every two years to monitor proportional representation.
4. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), retention rates, graduation rates, and DFWI rates of various demographic groups (i.e., first generation, Pell-eligible/low income, gender, ethnicity) are reviewed annually to monitor proportional representation.
5. Campus Climate Survey and National Survey of Student Engagement evidence data are reviewed upon analysis of results.

#### Goal 2 – Support KPIs

1. Number of internal grants and contracts awarded to faculty and staff that examine or focus on diverse issues or populations.
2. Department / Division / University funds supporting/promoting cultural/diverse issues, events, and/or activities.
3. SGA funding awarded to Registered Student Organizations supporting/promoting cultural/diverse issues, events, and/or activities.
4. Number of minority vendors contracts.
5. Community education and development initiatives focus on cultural/diverse issues or populations.

### Goal 3 – Knowledge KPIs

1. Percentage of employee groups completing University Training courses.
2. Percentage of course offerings and experiences that provide cultural awareness.
3. Participation rates of students, faculty, and staff in Study Abroad, National Student Exchange, and Global Learning initiatives.
4. Service-Learning participation rates of students, faculty, and staff.

### **Budget**

DBIE efforts occur throughout the campus. Some units forge partnerships. Other departments receive external grants and foundation funds to support the work of DBIE. All the same, dedicated funds are provided to the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of Diversity & Community, and the Office of University Training totaling \$677,849 for departmental, campus-wide, and community programming as well as salaries and fringe benefits. Going forward, the Diversity Strategic Plan report will capture investments in DBIE from units that report diversity activities.

### **Timeline for Implementing Strategies**

UCA has embarked upon this 2022–2026 plan. The university’s diversity goals are consistent with the overarching strategic plan of the university and its timeline. Strategies to realize the university’s diversity goals are implemented annually and measured each year by way of the Diversity Strategic Plan and the Diversity Key Performance Indicators.