

Communications Plan to Enhance Diversity



Diversity Communications Plan for UCSF

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Introduction

University Relations was charged by Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost Eugene Washington to develop a communications plan in support of UCSF's efforts to strengthen its diversity efforts. To execute this charge, University Relations teamed with an outside public relations firm, Brazer Communications.

Background Sources

Our work began by first conducting research and analysis of UCSF's history of diversity efforts and communications. We obtained materials from the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor and the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, as well from UCSF's website homepage and its diversity website. The research included reports from the Chancellor's Steering Committee on Diversity appointed in 1995 and the Chancellor's Advisory Committees on Diversity, the Status of Women, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Issues and Disability Issues. We also reviewed the February 2003 Climate for Faculty Report of the Chancellor's Task Force on the Climate of Faculty, the Executive Summary of the 2006 UCSF Professional and Management Staff Climate Survey and the Report of the UC President's Task Force on Faculty Diversity prepared in May 2006. We were also provided with the UCSF Self-Nomination for the OFCCP Eve Award in 2004 that included valuable information about the history of diversity at the university as well as extensive information about the myriad of diversity organizations, initiatives and events at UCSF.

While we are certain we were unable to review all materials related to diversity efforts at UCSF, we believe we were able to review a broad cross-section of materials which provided an overview of how diversity issues are being communicated at UCSF.

Our research also included reviewing brochures and lists describing various diversity programs, marketing materials and other documents created to inform persons both inside and outside of the UCSF community about diversity events, efforts and topics. We also had an opportunity to look at statistical data reflecting the representation of women and underrepresented minorities for UCSF staff, faculty and students and other campuses in the UC system. Finally, we conducted a survey of websites of the nine remaining campuses in the UC system

and the eight public and private comparable schools used in the May 2006 Report of the UC President's Task Force on Faculty Diversity.¹

Analysis of Communications Vehicles and Development of Discussion Group

Guide

The above-mentioned research was analyzed in an effort to develop a discussion guide for Discussion Groups of faculty, students and staff scheduled for September 14 (Faculty), September 28 (Staff and Students in two separate groups) and October 19, 2006 (Faculty). One of the first observations made from our review was that there are a large number of diversity efforts at UCSF spearheaded by a variety of schools, departments, divisions and committees. However, there is no central repository where those interested in UCSF's diversity efforts may obtain information in a quick and concise way. It was also apparent there is no common theme that encompasses the numerous efforts other than some relationship to diversity.

Some diversity entities, furthermore, provided materials that were specific, clear and effective while others did not. For example, materials provided to us that were developed by the Advisory Committee on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Issues included specific information about curricula related to health care for LGBT patients and other efforts the LGBT community made to educate the UCSF community about its issues.² These materials are particularly effective because they included information about resources that members of the community could access to obtain more information and connect with others in the LGBT community.

The website for the Center for Gender Equity also provided information about resources and a clear sense of its mission. The Center's materials contained in a folder were vibrant, engaging, substantive and attractive. However, the [Diversity@UCSF](#) website is outdated, contains limited information about resources and is not designed in a user-friendly manner to allow those viewing the site to obtain information easily. According to the homepage, the site has not been updated since June 2006.

Also, there is no central site where anyone visiting the UCSF homepage or any other UCSF website could obtain information about the myriad of diversity efforts and programs at UCSF. Statistical data also is difficult to access on UCSF's homepage and the [Diversity @UCSF](#) website. In contrast, the most effective websites for other universities had a readily accessible, well-designed central website dedicated to the issue of diversity with links to specific diversity programs and topics.³

¹ The Comparison Eight institutions are Harvard, Yale, MIT, Stanford, SUNY-Buffalo, University of Illinois, University of Michigan and University of Virginia.

² Health Care for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) People (Lecture/Large Group), Ellen Haller, MD; Tasmin Levy, MSI, Genevieve Preer, MS III; Shane Snowden; How to Find Information about LGBTI Resources at UCSF; UCSF "Out List."

³ See, e.g. University of California, Davis Website, Diversity Resources; University of California, San Diego, Diversity Matters @ UCSD; Stanford University, Diversity Works; University of Virginia, Voices of Diversity.

We also reviewed brochures and written materials developed by the Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity. While the materials contained the necessary information, it was provided in a tone that was legalistic and distant. In fact, the tone and appearance of the brochures were essentially the same whether the topic was Training Diverse Teams, Champions of Diversity or the Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity. The tone and appearance of these brochures were similar to those of the Diversity website discussed above.

Many of the documents reviewed reflected some of the issues of concern within UCSF's diverse communities. For example, a recurring issue of the discussion groups was the need for greater outreach, the need to update and improve the website and the lack of accountability for meeting diversity objectives. The research also showed that although various committees and groups had made suggestions and recommendations about how UCSF could more effectively achieve diversity, there appeared to be no systems to ensure that they were carried out and no systems for accountability. A clear example of this issue is found by visiting UCSF's Diversity website, where the homepage indicates that it has not been updated since June 2006. The materials also indicated that some groups felt excluded from diversity initiatives within the university and, as a result, there were silos developed according to specific groups even though some of the members of the diverse community might also be included in another diverse group.

The information gleaned from our research served as the basis for the initial two sections of the Discussion Guide used during the Discussion Groups, whose feedback is highlighted below. For example, as discussed above, some groups felt excluded from diversity initiatives and, as a result, led us to the initial questions in the Discussion Groups: what does diversity mean and who is included under the umbrella of diversity?⁴ Consequently, we began the discussion groups with questions to assess how participants defined diversity and who was included in the definition.

We also observed that there were a variety of diversity messages from numerous sources and as discussed above, some were more effective than others. In an effort to assess what messages were most effective and their impact, we asked questions specific to diversity messages participants heard, observed or developed and what made them effective or not effective.

We also found past recommendations by UCSF's various committees and groups related to UCSF's diversity efforts helpful to developing the Discussion Guide. Suggestions such as the update of the website, expansion of outreach efforts and the development of mechanisms to ensure follow-through on diversity initiatives assisted us in developing questions concerning specific communications tools and resources that could most effectively convey the fact that UCSF values and is committed to diversity throughout its community.⁵

Discussion Group Analysis

A separate memorandum on the results of the discussion groups is attached as an addendum. What follows is select feedback from participants relevant to the communications plan recommendations:

⁴ Discussion Guide, p. 1.

⁵ Chancellor's Advisory Subcommittee on Students, Postdocs and House Staff Proposed Diversity Goals; Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Diversity 2005-2006 Executive Summary.

- The discussion groups gave people in all groups the opportunity to get together and provided a successful mechanism to communicate about important issues
- Communication is not just the words, but it's the action – it's showing results and progress to demonstrate commitment
- No clear UCSF “story” about diversity – confusion exists about the diversity mission and its measurable goals
- Integrate diversity into campus activities, projects and messages rather than mentioning it as a separate issue
- Diversity encompasses more than race and ethnicity, and messages should recognize this fact
- Specific, personal efforts by faculty to discuss campus life with student recruits and current students, such as gatherings of faculty of color and gatherings with a diverse group of faculty with potential or current students of color, are a powerful communication tool
- Filling the pipeline is important to all, reaching all the way down to high school or below
- People of like cultural experiences expressed a need to congregate – and need support, such as lists of those in their groups, to fulfill this need. But this is not to the exclusion of cross-collaboration, which also is valued.
- The idea of a central focal point and umbrella for diversity – headed by a strong leader with authority, responsibility and resources to get results – is enthusiastically embraced, as long as individual groups are recognized and encouraged to congregate, participate, become known to each other
- Diverse communities have a difficult time finding those within their own groups and therefore feel isolated.
- Need for more cultural sensitivity, especially around language, cultural norms, ability to speak English
- Diversity needs to be integrated into the day-to-day operations of UCSF, must be institutionalized and people must be made accountable at all levels for diversity efforts. (One way to show that diversity is valued is to make sure it shows up on performance evaluations.)
- Positive feelings were conveyed about Gene Washington's appointment and the diversity message that sends.
- Chancellor, Vice Chancellors, Deans must be present at events – even for a short time -- to have an impact on perception that UCSF cares about diversity. Example given of

Mark Laret's reputation for walking around and being seen – buzz is that he cares about everyone from top to bottom.

- Participants want to hear results of discussion groups – want to know that their voices matter and were heard; they also would like continuous opportunities to be heard
- Prop 209 has damaged UCSF's image
- Active support for diversity (and progress made toward achieving it) varies widely by school
- Faculty not nearly diverse enough and do not demonstrate sensitivity to what it feels like to be in the minority on campus
- Lack of financial resources behind recruitment and retention sends message that diversity is undervalued (and makes achievement of goals more difficult)
- Effective programs like budget from OP for Target of Opportunity FTEs have been cut
- With a highly competitive environment and insecure funding, it creates a challenging environment – even more so for diverse groups -- that makes people feel unwelcome, so diversity efforts feel like a luxury
- Faculty need incentives and encouragement to participate in programs that relate to diversity
- How do we demonstrate that we value diversity beyond words?
- Beyond hiring, we also need retention programs
- Faculty need skills development to do a better job at recruitment and retention

Challenges for Communications

Based upon input from the discussion groups, new policies and practices are needed to achieve a campus-wide, systemic culture shift that fosters diversity:

- Compared with many of the universities with which it competes for faculty and students, UCSF is not perceived as a campus that is sensitive to issues important to, or welcoming of, those from diverse backgrounds
- UCSF can demonstrate its commitment to diversity by following through on appropriate recommendations made in the past, repeated in discussion groups and contained in this plan
- Responsibility for ensuring that diverse populations are recruited, welcomed and attended to is fragmented throughout the UCSF system – a “central authority” with a specific program to implement the resources to achieve diversity goals will help attraction, retention and meaningful culture shifts and can assure quality and consistency of effort throughout the university and with the tactics below
- There is a perception that faculty members and others with power and authority within UCSF are not committed to diversity; indeed, diversity/inclusiveness appear to be issues that many faculty members don't think about
- UCSF must demonstrate a measurable commitment to diversity and build accountability into achieving its diversity goals throughout the system – e.g., through performance evaluations

Objectives for Communications Program

- Support UCSF's diversity program to attract and retain diverse, underrepresented faculty, students and staff
- Demonstrate accountability by broadly communicating all milestones and successes in achieving goals developed by diversity-oriented committees and individual departments; acknowledge and articulate gaps between goals and progress
- Centralize and simplify access to campus-wide information related to diversity
- Ensure that outreach efforts to internal and external diverse populations are relevant, timely, welcoming and of consistent quality
- Help create a culture that welcomes, celebrates and informs diverse interests and backgrounds

Communications Campaign Theme

To unify the communications efforts made throughout the campus, we recommend creating a campaign theme:

“Many backgrounds – much success. We want you here!”

This theme will serve as a positioning, or unifying, element for all internal and external communications efforts. While it may not always be articulated verbatim, it serves as an underlying message or orientation: communications – whether graphic, interpersonal, event-oriented or written – will underscore the ideas contained within this theme.

Communications Campaign Theme Launch

We recommended the campaign be launched with the debut of an annual event that reinforces UCSF’s mission of Advancing Health Worldwide, and underscores its cross-cultural understanding and advancement. One vision is an annual event for each school (staggered every few months). The event would encompass a daylong discussion about how training, research, clinical care and community service consider or reflect diverse local and global communities and how to provide healthcare across cultures to bolster positive outcomes.

The discussions would feature expert facilitators, as well as internal and external speakers, to spark lively discussion and build in accountability and action steps as a result of the forum. Throughout the year, progress made to accomplish the action plans will be broadly reported, and new and/or updated plans will be developed at anniversary events.

The first event would become the basis for launching a media relations campaign (see media relations section below).

Target Audiences

Primary

- Current faculty, students and staff
- Prospective faculty, students and staff

Secondary

- San Francisco Bay Area residents
- Media: in the Bay Area as well as in markets ideal for recruiting underrepresented faculty and students
- San Francisco elected officials
- State government (elected officials, civil servants and relevant political appointees)

Key Messages

- Diversity is important to us, we are committed to it and we want you to come here and stay here.
- We recognize there are challenges to becoming a truly diverse campus and we are working to overcome them – we are not yet where we need to be and everyone is needed to get there.
- A diverse and inclusive University supports and enhances academic excellence; inclusiveness and academic excellence go hand in hand.
- We appreciate and value those who incorporate diversity into their day-to-day decisions and activities, from hiring to open dialogue and mentoring.

Spokesperson/Leadership Development for Diversity Communications

A successful internal and external communications campaign depends upon credible and articulate spokespersons to reinforce the key messages, as well as to make believable, personal and real UCSF's diversity objectives and cultural shifts.

We recommend that such spokespersons be those in leadership positions throughout the organization and from each campus, including Chancellor Bishop, Executive Vice Chancellor Washington, deans, department heads, and others in positions of influence and authority.

Part of establishing credibility will be if such spokespersons attend diversity-related events, are visible on the UCSF website either through reporting highlights of their relevant activities or bylining short articles, by being quoted in internal and external news stories with diversity messages, diversity content of speeches, communicating to target audiences by email and other means listed below in the tactics section, and by participating in creating a welcoming campus culture both on campus and through external outreach.

We recommend that, if it is not currently in place, UCSF conduct spokesperson training sessions that will cover topics ranging from how to talk to the media to best practices for creating a welcoming culture for those from diverse backgrounds.

Communications Tactics

We are recommending a range of communications tactics UCSF may choose to undertake to meet the objectives and address the challenges above. We encourage the University to assign quality control over the communications – even if they come from various departments, schools, and organizations within the university – to a person or department to ensure consistency and quality of content, message, design, effectiveness, etc. We learned from our research and the discussion groups that some of the negative messages that are inadvertently being sent relate to insensitivity toward certain groups in communications content, and inconsistency of quality, tone and message (e.g., LGBT materials vs. EEOC office as mentioned above). The central “quality assurance” person(s) also would oversee and edit diversity content on the website and ensure its

consistency, placement and frequency, as well as be the champion of disseminating messages related to diversity in major leadership speeches, recruitment outreach efforts, etc.

Website

As the committees concerned about diversity and the discussion groups have identified, the UCSF website is a powerful tool for effectively disseminating information about campus diversity for all audiences.

On issues related to diversity, the website currently is weak and sends negative messages because:

- Diversity topics are in disparate locations – links are not easy to find
- Pages related to diversity are not regularly updated
- Quality of information related to diversity varies

We recommend the following for the website:

- Create a diversity homepage that offers easy-to-identify links to all relevant information/subsites/pages; create link to this resource on UCSF homepage
- Highlight a topic/link related to diversity DAILY on the UCSF homepage; all links to diversity allow easy linkage to a diversity homepage
- Ensure accountability for updates, timeliness and completeness of information by assigning responsibility for such to a webmaster and/or staff who can gather up-to-date stories and information/content
- Create a variety of feature stories related to diversity that touch on all sectors (e.g., color, ethnic identity, language/culture, gender, LGBT, disability, etc.); post stories on UCSF homepage at least once per week on a consistent basis. Stories can include events, awards, outreach programs and progress, personal anecdotes and features, best practices, reprints or rewrites of compelling news stories, coverage of speeches by spokespersons, etc.
- Each year when the diversity committee(s) and university departments and schools articulate their goals, report on the goals – then demonstrate accountability by posting periodic progress (or not) on the realization of those goals

Media Relations

- As part of the campaign launch event, arrange editorial board meetings with the *San Francisco Chronicle* where Mike Bishop and Gene Washington articulate how UCSF will be advancing world health, the importance of diversity on campus and their plans to ensure that UCSF is a campus that exemplifies a welcoming campus for diversity. As the schools develop and implement their action plans, they will report annually on progress.

- Pitch feature stories to Bay Area media – print, electronic and online – related to UCSF's efforts to create a more diverse campus. Story ideas can be consistent with those identified above for the website
- Pitch feature stories in markets that are hunting grounds for diverse faculty
- Place articles bylined by UCSF leadership related to diversity in publications/blogs/on websites that reach target audiences for recruitment, retention and public opinion
- Draft op-eds related to diversity; place in markets that are essential for recruitment and retention

Personal Testimonials

Perhaps few communications are as compelling or effective as individual stories. We recommend continually interviewing a range of students, faculty and staff to reveal interesting stories about their sociocultural backgrounds, challenges they've faced (and conquered), thoughts on being at UCSF, interesting cultural experiences, what diversity means to them, etc.

Such testimonials can be developed into news stories for placement internally (website, publications) and externally (media relations), along with candid and engaging photos of the storyteller. Excerpts can be posted throughout the UCSF website to demonstrate pervasive and consistent attention to issues related to diversity.

Events

Many events already take place at UCSF that celebrate diversity. Events are essential for fostering cross-cultural understanding. Such interpersonal activities help create a positive culture that supports faculty/student/staff attraction and retention. They also provide an important platform for spokespersons/campus leadership – such presence is essential to sending the message that “we welcome you here – and want you to stay.”

Special events should take place on all UCSF locations to be most inclusive (perhaps ongoing events can rotate locations); they also can take place both during the day and at night to accommodate various schedules and the ability or inability of some to leave their workplaces.

Based on feedback we received during the discussion groups, some events should be targeted toward specific groups included under the diversity umbrella to foster their getting to know each other; we also encourage a central office to take responsibility for creating (voluntary, pre-approved) lists and contact information for members of each group to make congregation easier. While there may be events targeting specific groups, events should be open to all and outreach to publicize the events should be broad.

Events will include (note – we have not tried to be comprehensive or include the full range of events currently being organized by UCSF):

- Social networking
- Topical discussions with panels and speakers that allow audience interaction – can range from highlighting cultural customs of countries of origin of employees/students/faculty to exploration of best practices for recruitment to diversity-sensitive curriculum development
- Awards programs
- “Town Hall” meetings with leadership to discuss relevant topics, encourage interpersonal interaction
- Outreach activities around the Bay Area and beyond that help with recruitment, public image, etc.
- Arts and cultural activities – performances, visual art, photography contests
- Intimate (no more than 15 people) “coffee chats” with Chancellor Bishop, EVC Washington signed up for on first come, first served basis for open discussion on pre-selected topics or open-ended format; can be facilitated to serve as feedback mechanism for improving University culture of retention
- Special events oriented around successfully achieving diversity objectives -- to celebrate the successes and communicate accountability – e.g. when numbers are up, the website is different, best practices at schools and within department etc. Will show appreciation, highlight and reinforce those who are making a difference. Incorporate into leadership speeches. Disseminate widely

Many of the activities above can be featured on the web site not only for promotional purposes – but to report on what happened, show video of the events, archive speeches, etc.

Special Meetings

- Managers hold meetings once or twice a year involving their staff/reports that deal with a single topic related to diversity – they can choose from among 12 topics and are provided with a discussion guide and may seek advance support on how to best guide the discussion. Self-reporting on the discussion can be submitted to be highlighted on the web site – one per week or day.
- Recruit high schoolers, specific neighborhood residents, to come in and visit various, relevant parts of the University – like Take Our Daughters to Work day. Also has application to recruiting students at undergraduate level – assign them a “buddy,” peer counselor or mentor who is of like background (can be alumni, faculty, staff, students).

- Hold student and faculty recruitment gatherings where recruits meet students and faculty with similar sociocultural, ethnic, racial and other diverse backgrounds.

Ongoing Discussion Groups

The discussion groups we held had several positive outcomes and we recommend they continue on a periodic basis because they:

- Bring people together to talk to each other who enjoy getting acquainted/connecting with each other – as well as discovering colleagues they would not otherwise meet
- Provide important feedback on messages that are or are not being communicated by UCSF
- Offer the opportunity to test messages, tactics, practices to get honest feedback and make “course corrections” on new policies and practices
- Demonstrate UCSF’s interest in what cross-sections of people think

Printed Materials

Because not everyone on campus has regular access to computers or email, printed materials remain important for disseminating information. As stated above, such materials should comply with a standard for quality, tone, message and design. We recommend an easy-to-follow guide be written and distributed to help ensure such consistency, without squelching individual creativity and distinctions.

E-correspondence

Email can be used judiciously to share best practices, timely information related to diversity and alert a broad audience to news and features on the web site, providing links. Emails are most attended to if they come from “the top,” a supervising authority and are kept brief. The diversity “central authority” can ghost write emails that can be forwarded to a list of leaders who then can distribute them from their own signatures.

Calendars of Events Widely Disseminated

Stimulating attendance at events can be challenging – commonly heard is the complaint, “I didn’t know about it.” We recommend current practices for creating and distributing calendars of events be evaluated for effectiveness, frequency and breadth, and their future dissemination be in various formats (web site, emails, printed materials, postings, etc.) , distributed according to optimal frequency and target audiences.

Advertising

We recommend analyzing current advertising (if any is undertaken) and determining what an appropriate advertising campaign would be to support general public awareness of diversity concerns and recruitment.

Toolkits for Do-it-Yourself Communications

Many entities on campus could benefit from a general guide to effective communications that can explain how to use the tactics detailed in this communications plan, and allow groups, schools, departments and individuals to express themselves more effectively and consistently. A companion to the guide could be periodic, one-hour workshops on one or several topics, such as identifying newsworthy story ideas, creating special events that attract and please an audience, public speaking, creating effective printed materials, when to employ specific outreach tools, etc.

Training Programs

Feedback from each of the discussion groups indicated that most are willing to support effective diversity programs, but they feel ill equipped to do so. We recommend programs be developed to share best practices and train faculty, students and staff on such topics as:

- Mentoring
- Cultural sensitivity and how to talk about topics related to diversity
- Effective recruitment to build diverse candidate pools
- Public speaking
- Media training
- Diversity-appropriate curriculum development

Blogs

Blogs have become a highly effective means of broadly communicating ideas and messages. We recommend identifying author(s) for a periodic blog related to diversity topics outlined above; the blogs may be ghostwritten or the subject matter outlined by those who are gathering stories for the web site or the “central authority.” Links to the blogs will be featured on the UCSF home page and in email correspondence. Such blogs are likely to be distributed broadly outside of the university and can contribute to building a positive reputation as a campus that welcomes diversity.

Podcasting

Speeches, meeting results, workshops, presentations all can be recorded for podcasting that can be downloaded from the UCSF web site.

Text messaging

Increasingly, young people (students and junior faculty) rely more on “texting” through their cellular phones than email. Quick messages, announcements/invitations to events, alerts to postings on the web site can be “texted” to a voluntary mailing list.