

February 2009

# **Mississippi State University**

## **Diversity Strategic Plan**

**Prepared by**

**Office of Diversity and Equity Programs  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State, Mississippi 39762**

## Letter to the Mississippi State University Community

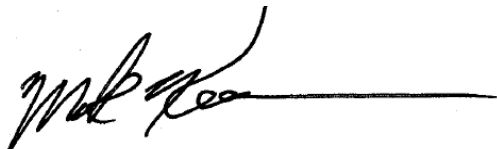
One of the greatest challenges facing colleges and universities today is that of creating and maintaining a campus community that reflects the rich diversity of this country. Mississippi State University (MSU) is committed to being such a campus; a campus where differences are welcomed, embraced, and valued. Not only are we committed to creating a campus that reflects the population of our country, but as leader of this beautiful campus, I am committed to creating a culture and climate where everyone feels included and a valued member of the “Bulldog Family.”

MSU is a place where people from different cultures and experiences learn together, given that its employees and students represent about 70 different countries. Understanding and respecting these differences is critical for the University to be a place of open-minded inquiry where, in challenging the boundaries of knowledge, we include and value all members of our community. Therefore, MSU strives to be a leader within the higher education community regarding diversity and the creation of a campus culture of inclusion. However, progress towards a campus that fully welcomes and respects differences, and embraces the concept of inclusion, is contingent upon each individual’s commitment. All of us must work toward this end.

To facilitate achievement of our desired diverse, inclusive community, a diversity strategic plan has been developed with the collaboration and input from major organizations and units across the campus. This *Diversity Strategic Plan* identifies strategies that are necessary to meet MSU’s goals but it deliberately does not prescribe how units or specific individuals should implement the actions. The campus administration respects the creativity, capacity, and commitment that exist in MSU’s community and believes that the presence of a focused and explicit plan will guide all parts of the university in creating a truly diverse, inclusive educational community. The Office of the Provost, the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs, the Department of Human Resources Management, and the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center are prepared to provide consultation, referrals, and assistance to those units that need support in taking the actions outlined in the *Plan*.

Please join me as we work together to make MSU one of the most welcoming campuses in the country and a model for other institutions of higher education to emulate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark E. Keenum', is written over a horizontal line.

Mark E. Keenum, Ph.D.  
President

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## **DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY FOR PURPOSES OF THIS PLAN**

In this *Diversity Strategic Plan*, diversity refers to the differences or variations of people based on their different backgrounds and experiences related to identification with particular groups or communities. Such identification influences but does not determine individuals' lives. At times, we might not recognize how our group memberships affect our own worldviews or how others will regard or treat us. The university is an ideal setting to develop consciousness of these differences and use them to promote knowledge and cultural understanding.

For purposes of this plan, the term diversity is given a broad meaning and includes, but is not limited to, differences based on race, ethnicity, national origin or citizenship, gender, religious affiliation or background, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic class or status, political affiliation or belief, age, people of different generations, and ability or disability. We recognize the difficulty of using a term like diversity that is subject to multiple interpretations. Our intent is to be inclusive.

While many of the goals and strategies outlined in the *Plan* build on work that has been underway at the university for some time, the success of this *Diversity Plan* rests on the allocation and commitment of resources and efforts. Thus, a visible institutional commitment of resources throughout the university's budget development processes, as well as through allocations for special projects and university-wide activities is fundamental to the success of the plan.

The goals of the *MSU Diversity Strategic Plan* and the strategies that are outlined herein are extensive, but not exhaustive. The *Plan* encourages the development of specific related strategies at the college and departmental levels, which may or may not be listed herein. However, college and departmental plans should be guided by the principles cited below. College, departmental, and unit plans should:

- be consistent with the University's diversity goals,
- adhere to state and federal laws, and IHL and University policies and procedures, and
- provide for an inclusive, accepting work and learning environment for everyone.

## **ORGANIZATIONS, INITIATIVES AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

While MSU is practicing diversity in a broad sense, there is still a need to build a sense of community that is inclusive within the University. We seek to build this community with everyone in a promise of equality, justice, and unprejudiced quest for knowledge. Our commitment to diversity means a commitment to inclusion, encompassing the various characteristics of the people in our community. The University currently has in place organizations, initiatives, and management tools that address diversity and inclusiveness. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to enhance their awareness of the services offered by the organizations, participate in programs, and involve themselves in initiatives that will increase their cultural awareness and sensitivity.

## Organizations

- **Admissions and Scholarships Office** -- Places special emphasis on recruitment and enrollment of minority students. Recruiters are present in predominantly minority high schools across the state and in adjacent states. They are also present at college fairs around Mississippi and in adjacent states, delivering the message about Mississippi State University. In addition to these efforts, a special event, **Minority Student Recruitment Day**, is hosted on the campus each year. Students and parents from around the state are given a series of briefings, a tour of the campus, and lunch. MSU faculty members, staff and students participate in making this day a success. The efforts the university has invested in recruiting minorities have allowed MSU to have the highest percentage of minority student enrollment in the Southeastern Conference.
- The **Bagley College of Engineering's Diversity Program** has a mission to increase the participation of minorities and women in the field of engineering. The program has been extremely successful in the past few years placing the Bagley College of Engineering in the top 15 institutions of higher learning in terms of graduating minority engineers.

Through the diversity office, students have the opportunity to join a number of groups that promote diversity and enhance the experiences of minority and women students throughout their college career. These programs include, but are not limited to the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Society of Women in Engineering (SWE), and the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP). Each of these programs strives to create an educational environment of inclusiveness and high academic excellence that will continue to succeed in graduating and preparing minority students and women for engineering careers.

- **Holmes Cultural Diversity Center (HCDC)** – Named in honor of Dr. Richard E. Holmes, the first African American to attend Mississippi State University, the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center serves as a liaison between minority students, international students, the faculty and administration. The Center encourages, through sensitivity training and programming, the development of a climate in which all cultures, especially minority and international students, are appreciated as valued members of the campus community. It provides support and encouragement for all minority and international students to assist them in achieving academic efficiency, making a smooth transition to college life, and to growing in their awareness and appreciation of different cultures. The HCDC Peer Counselors each year mentor approximately 850 freshman and transfer students who are African American, Native American, Hispanic/Latino American, Asian American, and international. Each year the Center also brings to campus keynote speakers who are national and international leaders of various races and cultures to address and motivate students. Past keynote speakers have included Martin Luther King, III, Bapsi Sidhwa, Tonya Lee Lewis, Morris Dees, Gloria Steinem, Vanita Gupta, Anita Hill, Coach Ken Carter, Simon Estes, and John McClendon, to name a few. During the 2007-2008 academic year, the Center coordinated and/or sponsored over 100 culturally diverse programs that were educational, informational, and/or social in nature.

- **Human Resources Management** – Manages all employee personnel issues. Develops and delivers training programs and services designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of university employees. Training initiatives include Supervisor training program and Clerical Professionals training program. Human Resources Management coordinates both programs and partners with the Office of Diversity & Equity programs to deliver appropriate diversity training for new and existing supervisors and new and existing clerical professionals. Emphasis is placed on creating an inclusive work environment and promoting cultural understanding. During New Employee Orientation, Human Resources Management and the Office of Diversity & Equity Programs work together to ensure that all new MSU employees understand the university's commitment to upholding anti-discriminatory laws and to creating a respectful work environment for all individuals.
- **Office of Diversity and Equity Programs** – Promotes a working and learning environment free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation or group affiliation, age, disability or veteran status (veterans covered under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 as amended by the Jobs for Veterans' Act of 2002); ensures that the University complies with all federal anti-discrimination laws; and provides harassment, diversity, and other types of training relevant to federal anti-discrimination laws. This office is a major vehicle through which the President communicates to students and employees his commitment to diversity and expectations of members of the University community. This office also provides the University with a proactive, comprehensive training program that includes (1) a series of workshops each semester that are conducted by internal and external facilitators, (2) online training modules, and (3) one-on-one training when appropriate. The training keeps all employees and students informed of management's expectations concerning diversity and equal opportunity and treatment.
- **President's Commission on the Status of Minorities** –Serves as an advisory body to the University President on all existing and proposed policies, procedures, practices and programs relating to or affecting diversity, equal opportunity, or affirmative action at MSU.
- **President's Commission on the Status of Women** – Advises the University President on issues affecting the status and role of women on campus; conducts, sponsors, or encourages studies regarding the status and role of women; sponsors informational education programs; works to improve the campus climate and conditions for women; and publicizes information of interest to women.
- **Sonny Montgomery Center for American's Veterans** – Provides American's veterans (who are students) with education and leadership growth opportunities; addresses veterans' employment opportunities and provides a welcome-home environment for America's veterans and their families.
- **Student Support Services** – After students are enrolled at Mississippi State, the University provides services to retain them through graduation. Mississippi State's freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 81.5 percent and six-year graduation rate of 58 percent are highest among the state's public universities. Our **Student Support Services** department

provides supportive services for low income and first-generation students to enhance their academic skills, increase their retention and graduation rates, and, as appropriate, facilitate their entry into graduate and professional programs. Student Support Services also works with students who have disabilities (as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

- **The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision** – Enhances employment and independent living outcomes for individuals who are visually impaired through research, training, education, and information dissemination.
- **T. K. Martin Center for Technology and Disability** – Ensures that persons with disabilities are able to continually benefit from technological solutions and advances in the field of assistive technology; provides services to persons with disabilities regardless of age or diagnosis.
- In its publications, photographs, videos, Web sites, and other media, **University Relations** is committed to reflecting the diversity and the many opportunities for success among those who make up the MSU family. Each product is critiqued in the planning stages to ensure that it represents variety in gender and ethnic background, especially in student life. The office also is intentional in ensuring that projects such as *Alumnus* magazine, the Web feature “Our People” and the nationally televised 30-second university television spot reflect diversity among faculty, staff and alumni represented.

In the last year, the photography area in University Relations has implemented a database that allows designers and writers to search by keyword; diversity is a key category and helps provide representative photographs both for University Relations’ projects and for campus units who choose to contract with external vendors for publications or Web site design.

To improve opportunities for recognizing diversity through University Relations, specific recommendations include:

- Greater use of the university calendar to promote events such as speakers, lectures, workshops, or other public events that highlight diversity (submit items at [://www.msstate.edu/web/calendar/](http://www.msstate.edu/web/calendar/)). These can be submitted by the sponsoring organization.
- Greater use of the “suggest a news item” feature ([://www.msstate.edu/web/news/](http://www.msstate.edu/web/news/)) to highlight newsworthy items reflecting diversity.
- Greater use of the “suggest a profile” for the “Our People” feature on Mississippi State’s Web page ([://www.msstate.edu/web/people/](http://www.msstate.edu/web/people/)). These also will become a standing feature on campus radio station WMSV, with weekly interviews.

To submit suggestions for newsworthy alumni/accomplishments that can be profiled in publications such as *Alumnus Magazine* contact [@ur.msstate.edu](mailto:@ur.msstate.edu). The publication is issued three times each year.

## Initiatives

- **African Americans Studies Program** -- Created in 2007, the program offers students the opportunity to expand their knowledge, worldview, and perspectives about African Americans particularly, as well as African peoples in the Diaspora. The program offers courses leading to a minor in African American Studies. Students from all disciplines are invited to take full advantage of the courses, colloquia, film series, and other programs offered throughout the year. Through its *Lecture Series in African American Studies*, the program also provides students and employees opportunities to interact with nationally and internationally recognized leaders of various cultures and backgrounds.
- **Gender Studies** – An interdisciplinary academic program that examines the construction of gender in a variety of cultures and in different historical epochs. Courses examine gender as a social, cultural, biological and psychological phenomenon and the various ideologies that underpin the distinctions that different societies over time have made between the categories of “man” and “woman.” Mississippi State University offers an undergraduate minor in Gender Studies (18 credit hours) and a graduate certificate (12 credit hours).
- **Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast** -- Started in 1995 and held annually during the month of January to reiterate King’s message of unity. Free and open to all people from throughout the surrounding communities. Attendance normally exceeds 600 people.
- **Diversity Certificate Program** – A 12 semester hour program which seeks to teach workplace success by providing the multi-cultural knowledge and skills necessary to navigate among diverse workforces. At the heart of this post-baccalaureate program is the demand that students learn and think critically about race relations, ethnicity, social class and inequality, religion, and gender. This program aims to produce employees who have the necessary sensitivity and understanding to accept important leadership challenges and to advance themselves and their workplace.
- **Annual Diversity Awards Program and Reception** – Held annually during the month of February and sponsored by the President’s Commission on the Status of Minorities. The awards program is designed to recognize individuals and units that have demonstrated a significant commitment to enhancing diversity at MSU. Diversity Awards are given to a faculty member, staff, student and/or unit of MSU that has actively and positively promoted the concept of diversity and improved cross-cultural understanding through positive interactions with others.
- **Annual Outstanding Woman Awards Program** – Held annually during the month of March and sponsored by the President’s Commission on the Status of Women; recognizes the achievements of women who have contributed significantly to women’s causes on campus.
- **Minority Recruitment and Retention Program** – Housed in the Office of Diversity & Equity Programs, the Recruitment, Retention, and Program Specialist works with search

committees, department heads, deans and vice presidents to recruit minorities and women for employment at the University.

- **Mississippi State University's Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS)** -- The purpose of this student organization is to promote the inclusion of ethnic and cultural groups that are underrepresented in agricultural and natural resources and related fields in all phases of career preparation and participation. MANRRS offers unlimited opportunities for those in agriculture and natural resources or related sciences:
  - Internships and cooperative training;
  - Professional and scholarly development;
  - Inclusion in national student register and professional register;
  - Annual meeting, conference, and career fair;
  - Regional meetings.

A few of the specific accomplishments/activities of the MSU MANRRS group include:

- Developed a chapter website.
  - Attended the National MANRRS conference in the spring of 2007 in Birmingham, AL and exhibited a recruiting display.
  - Attended the National MANRRS conference in the spring of 2008.
  - Hosted the Region III MANRRS workshop on the MSU campus October 19-21, 2007.
  - Participated in the 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Career Fair and Training Conference in Denver, CO.
- **Vice President for Academic Affairs Minority Enhancement Funds** – The Office of Academic Affairs has a pool of funds to be used as incentives and assistance to departments hiring African American faculty members. This fund supports 100% of the salary for the first year, 75% for the second year, and 50% for the third year. After the third year the hiring department is responsible for the total salary.
  - **The Alliance for Graduate Education in Mississippi (AGEM)** is a comprehensive program designed to enhance the entry, retention, and graduation of highly qualified underrepresented students in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) areas, particularly at the doctoral level. The program aims to bring about a systemic change in practices and attitudes of faculty, administrators, staff, and students regarding pipeline issues of underrepresentation. A major initiative each spring is Super Recruitment Weekend, whose theme is IMPETUS-PGE (Increasing Momentum to Provide Empowerment to Talented Undergraduate Students to Pursue Graduate Education). Major retention initiatives are the Summer Graduate Bridge program, a five-week session designed to assist students with making the transition from undergraduate education to graduate education, and monthly First Friday Luncheons that allow for networking among the AGEM scholars, administrators, staff, and graduate faculty. This program has been funded by the National Science Foundation as part of its national AGEP (Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate) program since 1999. The AGEM program is a collaborative effort among the doctoral granting degree institutions in Mississippi. These institutions, in addition to MSU, include the University of Mississippi (lead institution), Jackson State University, University of Southern Mississippi, and the University of Mississippi Medical Center. To date, more than 80 students who participated in AGEM have completed doctoral degrees at our

Mississippi universities and more than 30 of these graduates are working in higher education institutions, primarily in faculty positions.

### **Management Tools**

- **MSU Affirmative Action Plan** – Updated annually by the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs, this plan provides management with information needed to establish placement goals for recruitment of minority and women employees.
- **MSU Diversity Strategic Plan** – Reviewed annually for updates by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, Director of Diversity and Equity Programs, and the Director of Human Resources Management, this plan outlines the diversity goals that MSU strives to meet to create a diverse, inclusive work and learning environment.
- **FutureSTATE 2015** – Reviewed annually by the President and University leadership, this strategic plan sets out goals for the University. Many of the goals address diversity. Read the plan at [://ssl.msstate.edu/web/futurestate/](http://ssl.msstate.edu/web/futurestate/).

### **DIVERSITY GOALS**

Outlined below are Mississippi State University's goals for achieving and maintaining a diverse, inclusive community.

- **Goal I:** Create a campus climate that models respect for differences, recognizes the value of diversity in achieving organizational and academic excellence, and fosters success for all members of the learning community.
- **Goal II:** Increase the enrollment and graduation rate of minority and female students.
- **Goal III:** Increase the employment of minorities and females in administration, faculty and staff positions (EEO 6 Categories 10, 20, and 30).
- **Goal IV:** Enhance the overall curriculum by infusion of content that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding.
- **Goal V:** Increase the use of minority professionals, contractors, and other vendors.

**GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In order to achieve our diversity goals, the following action plan shall be undertaken. Some of the listed strategies are already in place, and these should be continued where proven successful. Data collection will be based on the fiscal year data, using Fiscal Year 2008 as the baseline, except where indicated otherwise.

<b>Goal I: <i>Create a campus climate that models respect for differences, recognizes the value of diversity in achieving organizational and academic excellence, and fosters success for all members of the learning community.</i></b>		
Strategies	Responsibility	
	Implementing Unit	Oversight
1. Provide diversity, harassment, and equal employment opportunity/affirmative action related training and multicultural programming for all employees and students.	Office of Diversity and Equity Programs Office of Human Resources Management Division of Student Affairs Division of Academic Affairs	President
2. Encourage governance organizations for faculty, staff, and students to develop specific strategies supporting diversity initiatives.	Student Association Holland Faculty Senate Professional and Support Staff Advisory Council	VP for Student Affairs VP for Academic Affairs VP for Finance and Administration

<p>3. Provide training to deans, department heads, administrators, managers, and supervisors on legal and policy issues connected to searches and hiring practices, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment laws, ADA reasonable accommodation requirements, and possible consequences for violation of these polices and laws.</p>	<p>Office of Diversity and Equity Programs Office of Human Resources Management General Counsel's Office</p>	<p>All Vice Presidents</p>
<p>4. Engage the campus community in a Town Hall meeting once each semester to discuss the implementation, assessment, and success of MSU's <i>Diversity Strategic Plan</i> and allow for a question and answer session.</p>	<p>Provost and VP for Academic Affairs</p>	<p>Provost and VP for Academic Affairs</p>
<p>5. Develop an online exit survey for students, faculty, and staff. Surveys will be completed by all employees departing the University and students who graduate from the University. Data will be collected, summarized, briefed to the Executive Council during the fall semester of each year, and used to effect campus changes.</p>	<p>All Vice Presidents Office of Diversity and Equity Programs Office of Institutional Research Office of Human Resources Management</p>	<p>President</p>

<b>Goal II: <i>Increase the enrollment and graduation rate of minority and female students.</i></b>		
Strategies	Responsibility	
	Implementing Unit	Oversight
1. Increase minority student enrollment from the fall 2008 level of 23.3%, incrementally beginning in fall 2009 with a .25% increase each year.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
2. Increase female student enrollment from the fall 2008 level of 48.8%, incrementally beginning in fall 2009 with a .25% increase each year.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
3. Continue to enhance our communication campaign using letters, phone calls, e-mails, and postcards for minority populations to increase minority students' interest in Mississippi State University.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
4. Hire, train, and retain a more diverse admissions staff representative of the ethnic populations recruited at MSU to recruit and counsel minority students.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
5. Host a minority recruitment day on campus for students and parents to introduce them to MSU.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
6. Increase MSU's visibility at the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Reservation to make students more aware of opportunities at Mississippi State University.	Office of Admissions and Scholarship	VP for Student Affairs
7. Increase minority student 6-year graduation rate from the fall 2007 (Fall 2001 Cohort) level of 45.1%, incrementally beginning in fall 2008 yielding a fall 2013 graduation rate of 46.5%.	College Deans	VP for Academic Affairs
8. Increase female student 6-year graduation rate from the fall 2007 (Fall 2001 Cohort) level of 58.4%, incrementally beginning in fall 2008 yielding a fall 2013 graduation rate of 59.7%.	College Deans	VP for Academic Affairs

<b>Goal III: Increase the employment of minorities and females in administration, faculty and staff positions (EEO 6 Categories 10, 20, and 30).</b>		
Strategies	Responsibility	
	Implementing Unit	Oversight
1. Develop strategies for recruitment of minority and female administrators (EEO 10 Category) within each division (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Research and Economic Development, Finance and Administration, Development and Alumni, Athletic Department, Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine).	All Vice Presidents and Athletic Director	President
2. Establish an administrative internship program (grow-your-own) within each division to prepare minority and female faculty, academic staff, and professional staff for movement into administrative positions (EEO Category 10).	All Vice Presidents and Athletic Director	President
3. Provide search committees with a pre-search briefing highlighting affirmative action and policies regarding diversity.	Office of Diversity & Equity Programs  Office of Human Resources Management	All Vice Presidents and Athletic Director
4. Establish special incentive funds designed for the purpose of aiding colleges and schools in increasing the number of minority faculty positions. The university currently has a designated fund for African American faculty.	Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Research & Economic Development, and Agriculture, Forestry, & Veterinary Medicine	President
5. Continue and further enhance a faculty mentoring and professional development program at the college level to provide support to incoming faculty during the early years of employment.	Deans	Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Research & Economic Development, and Agriculture, Forestry, & Veterinary Medicine

6. Develop strategies for recruitment of minority and female staff (EEO Category 30) within each division (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Research and Economic Development, Finance and Administration, Development and Alumni, Athletic Department, Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine).	All Vice Presidents and Athletic Director	President
7. Annually review turnover rates for employees (by job categories, gender, and race) in conjunction with the exit survey data (Goal I, Strategy #5). Develop retention strategies, as needed, to address areas where turnover rates exceed the national average.	Office of Diversity & Equity Programs  Human Resources Management  Institutional Research	All Vice Presidents

<b>Goal IV: Enhance the overall curriculum by infusion of content that enhances multicultural awareness and understanding.</b>		
Strategies	Responsibility	
	Implementing Unit	Oversight
1. Promote studies of diversity issues and create opportunities for research programs focused on race, class, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.	College Deans	Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Research & Economic Development, and Agriculture, Forestry, & Veterinary Medicine
2. Expand current programs that address multiculturalism (African American Studies Program, Gender Studies Program, Certificate Program in Diversity, informal multicultural programs provided through the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center, and other Associations). The University currently provides many programs that address multiculturalism. Rather than create additional programs, the University will enhance efforts to expand and encourage participation in current programs.	College Deans  Holmes Cultural Diversity Center	VP for Academic Affairs  VP for Student Affairs
3. Increase the number of programs and encourage students to participate in Study Abroad programs. The University currently offers over 140 Study Abroad programs in over 20 countries.	College Deans  Academic Outreach and Continuing Education	VP for Academic Affairs
4. Expand the African-American primary source collections of the MSU Libraries through the collecting efforts of the MSU Libraries Steering Committee on African-American Resources.	MSU Libraries	Dean , Mitchell Memorial Library

<b>Goal V: Increase the use of minority professionals, contractors, and other vendors.</b>		
Strategies	Responsibility	
	Implementing Unit	Oversight
1. When soliciting bids, Procurement and Contracts will use the internet as well as other resources to seek out minority vendors to send the Invitation To Bid.	Director, Procurement and Contracts	VP for Finance and Administration
2. Departments have been asked to seek quotes from minority and small vendors when getting prices for purchases under \$25,000.	All MSU Departments/Units	Director, Procurement and Contracts
3. Procurement and Contracts will attend vendor forums to meet with minority vendors to advise them on how to do business with MSU.	Department of Procurement and Contracts	Director, Procurement and Contracts

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is the key to success for any diversity plan. Without strong accountability, the University will remain static, with plenty of rhetoric but little progress. Diversity must be embedded within the University's overall strategic planning process and reach all areas of the institution. Individual colleges and business functions will develop plans to support the initiatives of this *Diversity Strategic Plan*. To ensure the success of this plan, there must be a demonstrated commitment to diversity at the University's senior levels. Accordingly, accountability for diversity will be embedded as a primary aspect of excellence in the regular annual review process of every vice president, dean, department head, director, faculty member, manager, and supervisor on campus.

## REPORTING AND UPDATING OF PLAN

### Reporting Process

Each college and/or management unit will develop an action plan to support the goals and strategies outlined in the *MSU Diversity Strategic Plan*. Each year (in June) colleges and management units will submit an activity report to respective vice presidents describing the progress made toward accomplishment of diversity goals. A copy of the activity reports will be filed in the Office of Diversity and Equity Programs. Vice presidents will brief the University President on progress made toward accomplishment of diversity goals during the July Executive Council meeting. A report addressing Goals II through V will be submitted to the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) in the fall of even-numbered years, for example 2010, 2012, and 2014. The report will be compiled by the offices of Diversity & Equity Programs and Institutional Research, and reviewed by the Executive Council during the September meeting.

### Updating of Plan

This is a living document which will be reviewed annually by the Vice Presidents, Director of Diversity and Equity Programs, and Director of Human Resources Management. Revisions, updates and additions will be made as necessary to continue embedding diversity into the culture at Mississippi State University