Applying an Equity Lens to Policy Development

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover®

Overview: University of Minnesota

- Mission: Research and discovery, teaching and learning, outreach and public service
- Land-grant University founded in 1851
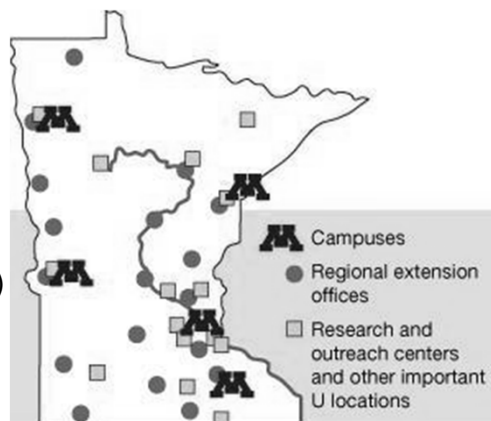- Carnegie classification: Doctoral University - Highest Research Activity (R1)

Overview: University of Minnesota

- Ranks 8th among public universities in research spending at $940M+
- Holds more than 900 issued patents
- 1800 current licenses

Overview: University of Minnesota

- Five campus system
  - Crookston
  - Duluth
  - Rochester
  - Twin Cities
  - Morris
- 17,897 (faculty and staff)
- 47,568 Students
  - 31,535 (undergraduate)
  - 16,033 (graduate)

- **M** Campuses
- ● Regional extension offices
- ☐ Research and outreach centers and other important U locations

Boyd Kumher, Chief Compliance Officer

Boyd Kumher has been the University of Minnesota's Chief Compliance Officer since October 2016. Prior to joining the University of Minnesota Kumher was the inaugural Chief Compliance Officer for Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland Ohio. His past experience also includes positions in risk management and clinical research in a large academic medical center. Kumher holds a B.S.N. from Kent State University, and a M.B.A., M.P.M., and G.C.A. from the Keller Graduate School of Management. Kumher is a Certified Compliance and Ethics Professional through SCCE.
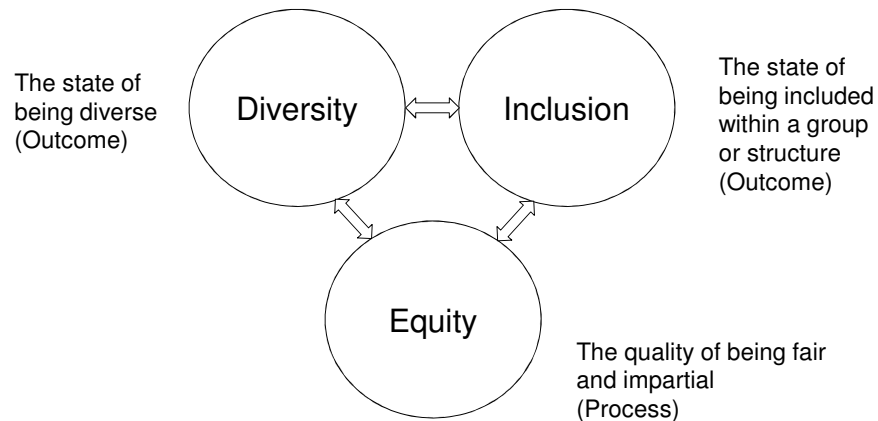
Michele Gross, Director
University Policy Program

Michele Gross has been with the University of Minnesota since 1977 in various roles: Director of Accounts Payable, project manager for several efforts including a 5-year grants management project and discovery phase for the financial system replacement, and is currently the director of the policy program. Gross holds a B.A. from North Dakota State University. Gross is in her 4th year as Chair of the Association of College and University Policy Administrators (ACUPA).

Distinguishing equity from diversity and inclusion

The state of being diverse (Outcome)

Diversity

Inclusion

The state of being included within a group or structure (Outcome)

Equity

The quality of being fair and impartial (Process)

What is an equity lens?

An equity lens is a process for analyzing or diagnosing the impact of the design and implementation of policies on under-served, marginalized, and diverse individuals and groups and to identify and potentially reduce or eliminate barriers.

Impetus for applying the lens

General

- Community values fairness and impartiality
- Community desires to counter the influence of implicit bias, if present

Policy specific

- Enhanced policy effectiveness
- Broader engagement and understanding
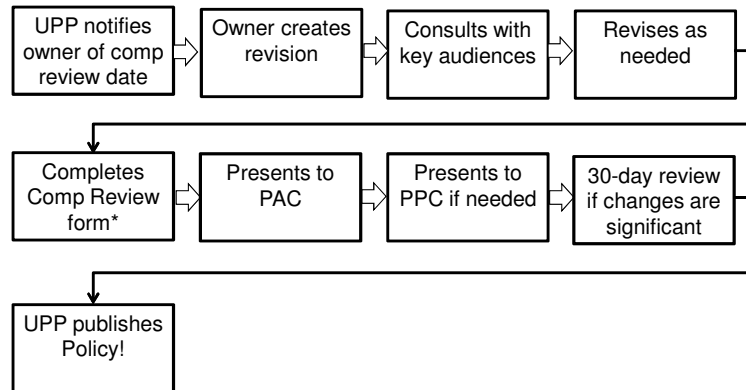- Strengthen and broaden policy impact

The link: unconscious/implicit/unexamined bias

- Unexamined bias is a form of stereotyping that is often unintentional, automatic, and outside of our awareness.
- It is often contradicting to our conscious beliefs
- Also called subtle or implicit bias

Former comprehensive review process

```
UPP notifies        Owner creates      Consults with      Revises as
owner of comp  =>   revision      =>   key audiences  =>  needed
review date


Completes           Presents to        Presents to        30-day review
Comp Review    =>   PAC           =>   PPC if needed  =>  if changes are
form*                                                     significant


UPP publishes
Policy!
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Legend: UPP – University Policy Program
PAC – Policy Advisory Committee
PPC – President's Policy Committee

Enhancing the policy development and review process

- Former process imbedded a focused review for
  - Consistency
  - Clarity
  - Completeness
  - Accuracy
  - Burden and risk
  - Alignment with mission and goals
- As of 5/1, we began applying an equity lens too

The scope of our equity lens

- Race
- Ethnicity
- American Indians and other indigenous populations
- Faith (religious expression)
- Ability - both apparent and non-apparent
- Age

- People who identify as women
- Gender identity and expression
- Veteran status
- Socioeconomic status
- People of color, including underserved groups and new immigrant populations

The start of this path

- Discussion held with the President's Policy Committee (PPC) - December 2016
- Tasked the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) with exploring this lens
  - Potential for providing tools to the University community
  - What training would assist this effort
  - How does it align with the stakeholder engagement we currently have

How we began

- Office of Equity and Diversity held a training session for PAC on implicit bias
- Created four subcommittees
  - Education and communication
  - Committee composition
  - Measuring and monitoring this work
  - Administrative policy development changes (e.g., forms, process)

Discovery phase

- Each subcommittee identified
  - Potential recommendations
  - Labor impacts for each recommendation
  - Potential out of pockets costs
  - Impact on the central policy office
  - Proposed implementation date

Education and communication

- Develop a standard training on equity lens policy review
  - Combination of on-demand and group interactive learning
- Create a one-page reference – also include examples
- Require training (all PAC members, policy owners, and primary contacts)
- Create a "lite" training option for the President's Policy Committee
- Policy Program would oversee the administration of the training

Committee composition

- Add a member to PAC who has equity responsibilities as part of their University role*
- Bring awareness to the PPC members when there is attrition on the PAC
- Specify the criteria for PAC members

Consultation

- Utilize an existing committee to augment PAC when viewing policies with an equity lens
- Chose the Diversity Community of Practice (DCoP)
  - View existing policies when notified that they are up for review
  - Review proposed revisions from policy owners when in the consultative process

Comprehensive review/policy development

- Modify the comp review and admin policy plan forms
- Add new equity questions to the "Conducting a Comprehensive Review" worksheet
- Update the PAC procedures with new process
- Add a definition for equity lens in the glossary
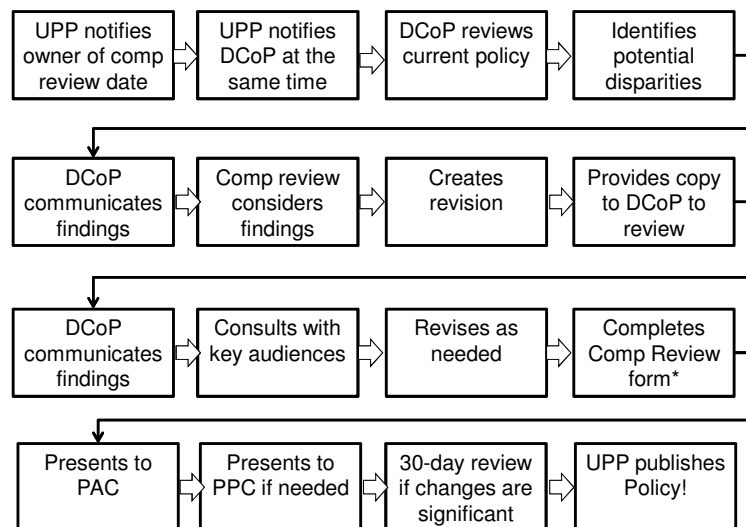- Create a job aid to help policy owners apply an equity lens

Questions to ask

- Who does the policy impact?
- What forces are driving this policy?
- Are there individuals and/or communities that will be disproportionately (and negatively) affected by this policy?
- Does this policy perpetuate or help to dismantle historical, legal, or other barriers set in the past?
- If disparities are identified, how can they be mitigated or eliminated?

Current comprehensive review process

UPP notifies owner of comp review date	UPP notifies DCoP at the same time	DCoP reviews current policy	Identifies potential disparities
DCoP communicates findings	Comp review considers findings	Creates revision	Provides copy to DCoP to review
DCoP communicates findings	Consults with key audiences	Revises as needed	Completes Comp Review form*
Presents to PAC	Presents to PPC if needed	30-day review if changes are significant	UPP publishes Policy!

Parental leave policy: before

- Parental leave
  - Must be employed 9 months
  - 50% appointment or greater
  - Female employees – up to 6 weeks paid leave upon birth
  - Female employees – up to 2 weeks paid leave for adoption
  - Male employee – up to 2 weeks paid leave upon birth or adoption

Parental leave policy: after

- Parental leave
  - 50% appointment or greater
  - Up to six weeks paid leave for birth, adoption, or gestational surrogacy for any employee
  - Benefit available upon hire

Current status

- Training of pilot group occurred on 3/2/18
- Forms and procedures were modified
- Comp review questions were updated
- Charge letter to the Diversity Community of Practice (DCoP) was sent
- Policy owners and primary contacts were notified
- Training is still offered
- Tackling each policy as they come up for review

Current status - continued

- The DCoP has identified potential disparities and are notifying the owners
- Outcomes per policy (changes or no changes as a result of this effort) are now included in the quarterly PPC meetings
- The effort impact of this new work is being captured

In our spare time

- Revised hundreds of references to he/she/him/her to be gender neutral (typically to "they", "their")
- Updated dozens of forms for the same purpose
- Reviewed instances of references to common names as examples in policies or related documents
  - John Doe, Joe Smith

Questions?

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