

Statement of Purpose

The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees adopted the following statement on diversity on October 23, 2020:

One of the principal missions of The University of Tennessee is to provide quality educational opportunities for the people of this state. One measure of the quality of an educational experience is the extent to which it enables the recipient to compete and be productive in society and contribute to the quality of life. The Board of Trustees recognizes that diversity in the educational environment, including an outstanding and diverse student body, faculty, staff, and alumni, and an environment conducive to learning, adds value to the educational experience and the degree earned. Interacting with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives augments the curricular experience and affords every student the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be a productive and contributing citizen of this state and nation, capable of competing in a global society. Thus, diversity is fundamental to a sound twenty-first century education. The Board affirms the educational value of a diverse and fully inclusive campus community, one that is enriched by persons of different backgrounds, points of view, cultures, socioeconomic status, and other diverse characteristics. The Board expects the University to engage in a variety of initiatives to advance diversity in all aspects of University life.

Consistent with the Board's statement on diversity, the strategic vision of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as approved by the Board includes a goal of developing and sustaining a nurturing university culture where diversity and community are enduring sources of strength. We are committed to creating inclusive learning and work environments where civility, accountability, cultural competency, and equitable access are hallmarks of the UT Knoxville community. We value and affirm differences in race, culture, world views, beliefs, identities, and abilities. These efforts are indispensable to attracting and retaining the students, faculty, and staff whose energy and commitment fulfill our mission. The strategic vision goal includes to implement, advance, and evolve diversity action plan goals, sharing progress and continuing to solicit feedback and input. The purpose of our long-term diversity action plan goals, listed below, is to meet the UT Board's expectations and accomplish UT Knoxville's strategic vision.

Long-term diversity action plan goals

- Goal 1: Create and sustain a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive campus climate that allows for respectful interaction and viewpoint diversity.
- Goal 2: Attract and retain greater numbers of individuals from historically underrepresented populations into faculty, staff, and administrative positions (particularly department heads, directors, deans, and vice chancellors).
- Goal 3: Attract, retain, and graduate increasing numbers of undergraduate and graduate students from historically underrepresented populations and international students.
- Goal 4: Develop and strengthen partnerships with diverse communities in Tennessee and globally.
- Goal 5: Prepare undergraduate and graduate students to work and to serve in a diverse world by affording them the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be a productive and contributing citizen of this state and nation and capable of competing in a global society.

Haslam College of Business 2022 Priorities

#1: Strengthen continuing emphasis on improving undergraduate student retention for historically underrepresented groups, first-generation students, and students with academic challenges.

Specific Action: Expand breadth and depth of the “Sophomore Mentoring Program” providing second-year students with a framework and support structure for navigating the second year of the HCB curriculum, preparing them for upper-level coursework and internship opportunities.

#2: Increase enrollment in and student matriculation through the HCB pre-collegiate programs.

Specific Actions:

Increase the number of students participating in HCB pre-collegiate programs and the percentage of program completers applying to and enrolling at UTK.

Expand scholarship opportunities of students who successfully complete HCB pre-collegiate programs, focusing first on the Business Education for Talented Students (BETS) program.

#3: Create additional learning opportunities to expand student, faculty, and staff contributions to a more inclusive college community.

Specific Actions:

Hold a college-wide “Diversity Summit” in Fall 2022 aimed at increased understanding of what constitutes a nurturing, inclusive community and how our individual and collective attitudes and actions contribute.

Continue to deliver a college-wide development session each semester directed towards sharing best practices related to inclusion and belonging.

#4: Build partnerships, specifically through more intentional, systematic visits to Historically Black Collegiate Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

Specific Action: Conduct a minimum of two such visits in 2022 to include recruitment efforts, research/program partnership exploration, and advanced degree informational sessions.

#5: Attract and retain greater numbers of historically underrepresented populations into faculty, staff, and administrative positions.

Specific Actions:

Continue to proactively search for talented candidates using resources provided by nationally recognized organizations (i.e., PhD Project, Urban League, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.)

Assign mentor for historically underrepresented hires both faculty and staff by pairing them with senior faculty and staff members