



**Change Your  
Future. Start Today.**  
At John F. Kennedy University

John F. Kennedy University  
**Diversity Action Plan**

Prepared by  
**Diversity Task Force**  
**September 2009**



**JOHN F. KENNEDY UNIVERSITY**  
TRANSFORMING LIVES, CHANGING THE WORLD  
An Affiliate of the National University System

# Diversity Action Plan

September 2009

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Section</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	2
I. Organizational Support	4
II. Campus Climate	5
III. Recruitment	7
IV. Retention	8
V. Curriculum/Education	9
VI. Outreach	12
VII. Budget Implications	13
VIII. Recommended Prioritization	15
Appendix – University Statement on Diversity	16



## INTRODUCTION

John F. Kennedy University is committed to a culture that respects and values all forms of diversity while supporting academic excellence, creativity, collaboration, and leadership.

The Diversity Action Plan will serve to guide implementation of the University Statement on Diversity (<http://www.jfku.edu/dac/>) in order to create an environment of inclusion and respect in which diverse individuals are present and thriving at all levels: A Living Culture of Diversity.

The Diversity Action Plan:

- is the product of a process which included participation of students, faculty, staff, administrators and alumni
- serves as a blueprint to implement the University Statement on Diversity (<http://www.jfku.edu/dac/>)
- parallels other major University initiatives such as the Strategic Plan, the Academic Plan, and the Marketing Plan
- requires the formation of a Diversity Council with strong organizational support
- calls for broad and collaborative inclusion across all parts of the University
- includes mechanisms for accessibility of education throughout the plan
- is a dynamic plan which will be revised as needed and evaluated annually

The plan was developed by the Diversity Task Force, formed in February, 2009 at the request of President Stargardter. In drafting the implementation plan, the Diversity Task Force studied the 2008 Diversity Climate Survey results, work of previous Diversity Affairs Councils on JFKU campuses, and best practices at other institutions. Collaboration with students, faculty, alumni, staff and administrators was integral to the creation of this plan and occurred through several group meetings, on-line surveys and input from University governing bodies. As outlined in "Organizational Support", the implementation of the plan will be guided by the yet to be formed Diversity Council.

The plan is organized in six sections: Organizational Support, Campus Climate, Recruitment, Retention, Education/Curriculum, and Outreach. Each section includes a goal statement, describes where we are now, and lists suggested initiatives to implement the goal. An estimate of the fiscal impact of implementing the initiatives and the Task Force's recommended prioritization of the initiatives are the final documents in the plan.

### **Diversity Task Force Members:**

Anita Korenstein, Staff, OIR  
Jessica Newberry, Staff, GSPP  
Mike Changaris, Student, GSPP  
Joyce Young, Staff, ASC, Lecturer SELA and Alumna SHS  
Nadine Niguidula, Student, SHS  
Randy Hornibrook, Alumnus, SOL  
Eleanor Armstrong, Staff, Career Center and ASC Director

Laura Kay, Staff, OIR  
Sheila Addison, Faculty GSPP  
Jennifer Brown, Student, SHS  
Gisele Fernandes, Faculty, SHS  
Linda Mandel, Chair, staff and Alumna  
Thomas Michahelles, Faculty, GSPP  
Claudia Chester, Staff, JFKU Libraries



## I. ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

### Goal:

The University administration shows a clear commitment to financial and organizational support of diversity initiatives as evidenced by:

- timely implementation of the Diversity Action Plan
- on-going budgetary support to ensure sustainability
- sustained inclusion of diversity initiatives throughout the organization assignment of accountability and regular assessment, on an organizational level, of effectiveness

### Where we are now:

- Senior Administration has voiced support for diversity efforts
- Strong likelihood that funds will be available to support diversity efforts in future
- Exceptionally focused Diversity Task Force has identified needed action
- Excellent University data exists regarding representation and diversity climate
- Diversity competence is not interwoven throughout institutional operations
- Individual schools and programs support diversity in different ways, but wide organizational support is unclear

### Initiatives:

1. By January, 2010, create Diversity Council, an on-going group of students, faculty, staff and administrators who will guide implementation of the Diversity Action Plan, amending and evaluating it as needed. Publish the process by which the Council is chosen and how it will operate. Members from the President's Cabinet to serve in rotation so that senior administration participation is broad and consistent.
2. Create a Diversity Officer (DO) position or role and include that person in all organizational and academic planning. Appoint interim Chair of Diversity Council if DO position cannot be funded immediately.
3. Fund a robust University budget which includes line items requested by the Diversity Council such as:
  - Diversity Officer (or funded role as part of another position)
  - Funds for release time for faculty and staff on Diversity Council and/or stipends
  - Ombudsman funded jointly by student fees and the University
  - Training and education (workshops, professional development, etc.)
  - On-going University-wide events (Diversity Week, forums, etc.)
  - Support for multi-cultural hiring
  - Grants for diversity-based initiatives and research
  - Scholarships for diverse students
4. Include the initiatives of the Diversity Action Plan in the Strategic Plan. Ensure that organizational structure facilitates the construction of networks that work together to advance issues of diversity and inclusion throughout the organization.
5. Support a dynamic Diversity page, useful to students, staff and faculty, on the JFKU website.



6. Continue conducting bi-annual Diversity Climate Surveys and other assessment measures as recommended by the Diversity Council to measure progress over time and implement changes.
7. Include assessment regarding diversity in performance review and promotion processes for faculty, administration and staff. Provide performance incentives.
8. Include assessment of diversity elements in Program Review processes.
9. Develop a University-wide code of behavior to create an environment that is open and respectful and apply that code to all operations. Promote a healthy tension of ideas to provide opportunities for learning and growth.

## II. CAMPUS CLIMATE

### Goal:

To support the continued development and sustainability of a welcoming, respectful and ethical campus climate in regard to diversity, community, and JFKU's core values.

### Where we are now:

- n Dr. Tatman reviewed the results of the survey with the former Diversity Affairs Council in 2008 and reviewed and clarified the results of the 2008 Diversity Climate Survey with members of the newly established Diversity Task Force in 2009. Serious concerns regarding campus climate were reflected in the survey.
- n The DTF is in the process of choosing and purchasing new art that expands the diversity of art available within the building and more accurately reflects the JFKU community and the university's vision and goals for diversity.
- n Currently the various schools/departments at JFK host lecture series, talks, and presentations open to all JFKU members which promote community.
- n We now inform readers of religious/cultural observances in our newsletter, *Kennedy Today*.
- n Nadine Niguidula's proposal for communal gathering space has been presented to the President's Cabinet and is under consideration.
- n Sustainable healing garden/labyrinth was created at PH campus last year as a JFKU community-building project.
- n Student Senate in process of being formed.

### Possible Initiatives:

1. Form Diversity Council (see Organizational Support, page 4).
2. Appoint Ombudsman and develop formal process to meet concerns of students, staff and faculty (see Organizational Support, page 4).
3. Develop and implement Campus Code of Ethics.



4. Make JFKU campuses physically accessible to those with disabilities, focusing on ADA compliance.
5. Make JFKU financially accessible to underrepresented groups/individuals (strategy to be developed as part of Strategic Plan).
6. Consider moving current student lounge to first floor near café to create a locus of gathering or central gathering place for students, staff, faculty, alumni and visitors from the community. This location would be easily accessible to all members of the JFKU community.
7. Provide (and strongly encourage) training of faculty, staff, and students in areas of community building, diversity, discrimination and harassment.
8. Reflect diversity in student body, faculty and staff; support goals of Recruitment (page 7).
9. Host events aimed to include members of surrounding community or “affiliated” communities.
10. Host events for JFKU community that are founded on principles of diversity and a welcoming climate; provide assistance to schools and departments to heighten diversity awareness in the events they hold.
11. Expand seating in existing café area.
12. Make diversity page on JFKU website a “living” site, as defined by the Diversity Council.
13. Create social networking utility on our website.
14. Continue to conduct bi-annual campus climate surveys.
15. Assess any special needs of satellite campuses and programs around community-building and inclusion with foundational diversity principles.
16. Library sponsored book displays.
17. Work jointly with Office of International Education to improve institutional support for international students through mentoring, events, etc. Consider reviving the International Student Network that was originally organized and created by alumna Kyoko Tsuchida as her contribution when she was a recipient of the Alice Walker Scholarship in the 2006-2007 academic year.
18. Continue considering impact of art; make changes, choose themes.
19. Establish guidelines and provide a framework through which students, faculty and staff can submit proposals for community-building, educational/professional events/forums/workshops founded on the principles of diversity and inclusion. These events could allow for cross-disciplinary collaboration within the university community and within the university and the surrounding educational/professional community.



### III. RECRUITMENT

#### Goal:

By June 30, 2012, the faculty, staff, administrators, and students should reflect the demographics of those employed at or attending “schools like us”. By June 30, 2012, develop a plan to increase representation in alignment with University diversity goals **as proposed by the Diversity Council**.

#### Where we are now:

- n Schools and programs have individual criteria and processes about hiring and recruitment.
- n HR and the Admissions Office receive minimal guidance regarding diversity and recruitment
- n Ethnicity data generated by Office of Institutional Effectiveness is available.

#### Initiatives:

##### A. For students, faculty, staff, and administrators (all):

1. Gather data from schools and departments regarding current strategies for diverse hiring and student enrollment.
2. Provide funding to support diverse hiring and student recruitment.
3. Determine diversity training needs of those hiring and recruiting; fund training if needed.
4. Link campus climate initiatives to attractiveness of environment for new hires and students from diverse populations.
5. Seek out field-relevant conferences and graduate school fairs on diversity-related topics. Increase the number of both booths and attendance of marketing staff at these conferences by 50% in 2010 and by 100% in 2012.

##### B. For students only:

1. Include multi-cultural enrollment strategies in the University Marketing and Enrollment Plans (branding, marketing and recruitment conducted with a goal of increasing diversity).
2. Include current students and alumnae in recruiting efforts directed toward prospective students from under-represented populations.
3. Regularly assess recruitment and retention strategies/programs to insure the inclusion and effectiveness of diversity objectives and application of diversity principles.

##### C. For faculty, staff, and administrators (employees):

1. Create University policy statement requiring that at least one candidate interviewed for each position must be of diverse origin, unless an exception is granted by the University President.
2. Provide funding for attracting diverse staff, administrators and faculty, including adjunct faculty (higher salaries/benefits).
3. Diversity Office collaborates with HR in developing position descriptions.
4. Diversity Office collaborates with Admissions Office in locating diverse advertising opportunities.
5. Create ESAR: Employee Search Activity Record to track candidates and interviews, for accountability. Assign responsibility for ESAR.



## IV. RETENTION

### Goal:

The University shows a commitment to increasing the diversity of student, staff and faculty by increasing the retention rate of these groups

### Where we are now:

- n The 2008 diversity climate survey revealed a level of dissatisfaction concerning the diversity of the student, staff, faculty, and administration representation.
- n The University as a whole is lacking in regular diversity training.
- n University resources are inadequate to meet the needs of underrepresented and international students.
- n Diversity representation is not consistent within different schools.
- n The new VP and Dean of Students has a strong commitment to retention of all students and increased representation of the underrepresented.

### Possible Initiatives:

1. Hire an ombudsman to handle student grievances (see Organizational Support, page 4).
2. Hire more faculty, staff and administration from underrepresented population to serve as role models.
3. Implement peer advising and mentoring for all students including degree audit. Increased commitment to quarterly advising from faculty adviser for each student.
4. Have information on scholarships easily available on the website, copies of which will be distributed at student orientations.
5. Improve all facilities to enable access for all students (e.g., automatic door openers in all rooms).
6. Continue collecting current demographic data of students, faculty, administration and staff and compare with the diversity groupings in the Greater Bay Area. Extend collection of data beyond the 'schools like us' group that has been used (use this group and additional institutions).
7. Establish and support currently existing student support groups administered by the student association or other university bodies (i.e., Latinos, international students, etc.).
8. Hold regular community-building multicultural activities, events, forums, and celebrations.
9. Conduct a university-wide orientation with all student services representatives presenting their services (i.e., career center, academic support center, disability, library, etc.) and school/program-specific orientations as well.



10. Create a social room where students can have their own space to gather. Expand the café and combine it with the student lounge by breaking through S104. To replace S104, convert two smaller rooms elsewhere and install removable dividers. Convert current student lounge to another classroom or office. (See "Campus Climate" p. 7)
11. Organize an annual diversity award to recognize individuals/groups for work or service in diversity efforts.
12. Conduct diversity training for all university constituents.
13. Investigate multiple avenues for academic support services for underrepresented students. Expand the academic and student support services currently provided to ELL, International, and ODS students as well as those provided to all students. Provide consistent, in-depth, professional development for ASC and ODS staff so that these departments can be as skilled and knowledgeable as possible. Support staff in staying up-to-date with the literature, research and best practices in the field.
14. Conduct customer service training for all staff and administration ("customer first", i.e., student first).
15. Liaison with other university and college clubs and forums (e.g., UC Berkeley I-House, DVC).
16. Use results of the student survey and the institutional satisfaction survey in performance evaluation and remuneration of administration and staff.

## V. CURRICULUM/EDUCATION

### **Curriculum Goal:**

Background: Education curriculum includes didactic information, practical skills, class assignments, discussion and modeling. Effective diversity-rich curriculum would include diversity at all levels of instruction. Although free to establish their own curriculum, it is recommended that instructors include diversity-relevant course materials of their choosing in all classes including books, journal articles, videos, didactic materials, guest speakers, and interactive discussions. Equally important is that instructors and students constantly challenge themselves to maintain open, inquiring and sensitive minds to recognize and accept various aspects of human diversity each educational setting includes.

Goal statement: Respecting instructor autonomy and academic integrity, JFK University will have diversity-rich curriculum integrated into all classes as appropriate, by Winter Quarter, 2012.

### **Education Goal:**

Background: In order for faculty to make culturally-competent curriculum decisions, a commitment from JFKU at the administrative level is required to support education, mentoring and providing resources.

Goal statement: The University will provide on-going training, education and mentoring for faculty to gain skills about diversity as it pertains to educational materials, classroom management and interaction, assignments, and curriculum building.



**Where we are now:**

- n The Office of IR has reviewed all course descriptions and has been reviewing syllabi for inclusion of diversity.
- n No formal training has been provided recently to build classroom diversity awareness skills, but training occurs at the school and program level.
- n Supporting diversity studies is a priority for the JFKU Libraries.
- n Library budgets are limited and the university intranet is not robust enough to allow streaming video to support online learning. Not all videos are available in closed captioned or electronic format.
- n JFKU/NUS affiliation contract requires NU to share their existing online resources and purchase resources needed to support research at JFKU. NU is exploring the licensing issues involved.
- n Faculty members collaborate with librarians to build collections supporting diversity. Research supporting diversity studies is challenging due to its interdisciplinary nature.

**Possible Initiatives:****A. Curriculum**

1. Analyze and use the review of course descriptions and syllabi to identify needs and action steps.
2. Include diversity/cultural competencies in program review and assessment processes.
3. Include diversity related questions in student evaluations of courses.
4. Send key faculty to diversity training focused on curriculum design.
5. Follow suggestions in Appendix A for books, materials, lectures, assignments, and course development.
6. Support diverse topic for Education/Social Initiative.

**B. Education**

1. Conduct needs assessment of training needs of faculty.
2. Schedule and fund periodic training of faculty, including adjuncts. See Appendix B.
3. Provide incentives for faculty to present diversity related topics at conferences.
4. Create mentoring program for new faculty which includes diversity and cultural competencies. See Appendix C suggestions.

**C. Resources**

1. Purchase and make available more videos and other resources which support diversity studies and training, and which are in ADA compliant formats; pursue access to NU online resources.
2. Explore means of licensing and distributing digital media content.
3. Expand faculty/library collaboration in building research collections supporting diversity studies.



## Appendix A

### 1. Books and Materials

- a. Faculty will integrate, as appropriate and available for the subject matter, relevant diversity rich texts, articles, and readers of their choosing into their curriculum and syllabi.
  - i. Diversity rich texts and readers should include:
    - a) Multiple aspects of diversity
    - b) Course relevant applications of diversity related issues, and
    - c) Clear application to the professional excellence of JFK University graduates.
  - ii. Diversity rich articles should include:
    - a) One or more areas of diversity
    - b) Relevance to course materials, and
    - c) Information likely to increase professional excellence of JFK University graduates.
  - iii. Integration into the curriculum of diversity rich texts, articles and readers is achieved when appropriate relevant readings are included:
    - a) As class assignments
    - b) As a part of multiple course related domains not separate single article or text on the topic
    - c) Diversity materials included relate to key domains of professional excellence for University graduates.
- b. Faculty will include diversity in classroom discussions modeling respect and tolerance for differences of thought and culture.

### 2. Assignments and lectures

- a. Faculty will, as appropriate and available for the subject matter, integrate relevant diversity-rich assignments of their choosing into their courses.
  - i. Diversity-rich assignments will ask students to:
    - a) Seek understanding of the impact of diversity on key course-related domains
    - b) Expand knowledge about a diversity of ideas and thoughts
    - c) Increase understanding of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds
    - d) Aid in gaining competence in course-specific domains
    - e) Learn to reframe their views by recognizing the impact that culture, structure, and politics have on individuals and organizations.
- b. Faculty will, as appropriate and available for the subject matter, integrate relevant diversity-rich materials of their choosing into their lectures and lecture notes.
  - i. Diversity-relevant lectures and lecture notes would include:
    - a) Multiple aspects of diversity
    - b) Course-relevant applications of diversity-related issues, and
    - c) Clear application to the professional excellence of JFK University graduates.
  - ii. Integration into lectures and lecture notes is achieved when:
    - a) Lectures and lecture notes include diversity-related class assignments in course-related domains
    - b) As a part of multiple course-related domains and not merely a separate lecture on the topic
    - c) Diversity-related lectures a lecture notes relate to key areas of professional excellence.

### 3. Course development

- a. Faculty will explore developing cross-disciplinary offerings which include diverse intellectual and cultural learning.



### 3. Course development

- a. Faculty will explore developing cross-disciplinary offerings which include diverse intellectual and cultural learning.

## Appendix B

### Training

1. Program Chairs will provide field-specific opportunities for diversity training for faculty and staff on an annual basis.
2. Program Chairs will seek field-specific training on diversity on an annual basis.
3. Program Chairs and Librarians will offer guidance and support for finding diversity-rich materials for courses. This includes but is not limited to offering references where materials will likely be found, lists of materials that have been included in the past, support faculty to identify course relevant ways to include diversity into existing class materials, and provide helpful guidelines for choosing high quality diversity-rich materials.
4. Program Chairs will support faculty in finding ways to navigate the difficulties of the impacts of diversity on the classroom.

## Appendix C

### Mentorship

1. When hired, new faculty will be provided guidelines for course construction including information related to finding and inclusion of diversity-rich materials in their courses.
2. Program Chairs, as an ongoing aspect of faculty development, will regularly include discussions in faculty meetings about the impact of diversity on their classrooms, class materials, and course construction.
3. Program Chairs will provide feedback to the Diversity Council as appropriate
4. Program Chairs will include diversity competence in ongoing performance evaluations.

## VI. OUTREACH

### Goal:

John F. Kennedy University seeks to “forge bonds of common understanding essential to our global interdependence” (mission statement) and “in the wider social/global milieu... seeks to establish a Living Culture of Diversity” (University Statement on Diversity). Starting July 1, 2010, begin implementing the initiatives below to achieve these goals.

### Where we are now:

- n The Dean of Continuing Education and the Vice President of Student Services develop contacts and communicate opportunities in the local communities to the University.
- n The Director of the Office of International Education develops contacts and provides academic offerings to the global community.
- n *Kennedy Today* (on-line) and other publications reach alumni, but not the public at large in a traceable way.



## **Initiatives:**

1. Form a task force or sub-committee with the Marketing Director, Director of Office of International Education, and the Dean of Continuing Education to explore regional and global outreach. Include Deans, faculty and staff as appropriate.
2. Conduct a review of JFKU's joint systems of teaching and learning in all schools and departments, including services, workshops, summer programs and other services available to the local and international communities. Reconceptualize our core services to increase diverse offering and provide meaningful access to our learning community.
3. Increase the establishment of field relevant collaborations with Bay Area organizations working on diversity related issues to provide both leadership opportunities for faculty, staff and students by July 1, 2013. Examples could include but are not limited to providing student internships, consultation, supporting underserved populations, primary/secondary and high-school based diversity initiatives.
4. Seek out funding for grant opportunities for faculty and students in areas such as community leadership, research, presentations, and partnering with other institutions and organizations. Offer one or more annual grants starting July 1, 2012.
5. Design annual diversity related events hosted by JFK University and advertise to the public with the first event hosted by September, 2011.
6. Invite public and local communities to design culturally diverse art for JFK University.
7. Diversity Council collaborates with the Marketing Director regarding the publication of the JFKU materials to diverse communities and beyond.

## **VII. BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

Of the many initiatives suggested, diversity training appears most frequently in each section, and holding University wide events placed second. It should be noted that the majority of initiatives do not require expenditures, but rather suggest interdisciplinary and innovative ways of working together.

### **1. Organizational Support Initiatives, by fiscal year** \$45,000

2010-2011:

\$10,000 Training and education (workshops, professional development, etc.)

\$20,000 Funds for release time for faculty and staff on Diversity Council and/or stipends

\$10,000 Ombudsman funded jointly by student fees and the University

\$5,000 On-going University-wide events (Diversity Week, forums, etc.)

(\$20,000) Scholarships for multi-cultural and diverse students—use funds from existing scholarship pools



2011-forward:

- Support for multi-cultural hiring
- Grants for diversity based initiatives and research
- Scholarships for multi-cultural and diverse students

## **2. Campus Climate Initiatives**

\$1,500

2010-2011:

- n Provide (and strongly encourage) training of faculty, staff, and students in areas of diversity, discrimination and harassment. See Organizational Support Initiative above.
- n Host events aimed to include members of surrounding community or “affiliated” communities. See Organizational Support Initiative budget above.
  - \$500 Expand seating in existing café area
  - \$1,000 Continue to place diverse art in common areas

2011-forward:

Consider moving current student lounge to first floor near café to create a locus of gathering or central gathering place for students, staff, faculty, alumni and visitors from the community.

## **3. Recruitment Initiatives**

\$1,000

2010-2011:

\$1000 Participation in diverse recruiting strategies (fairs, outreach)

2011-forward:

- n Funding available to attract minority candidates

## **4. Retention Initiatives**

2010-2011:

- n Hold regular multicultural activities, events, forums, and celebrations. See Organizational Support Initiative budget above.
- n Conduct diversity training for all university constituents. See Organizational Support Initiative above.

2011-forward:

- n Improve all facilities to enable all access for all students
- n Create a social room where students can have their own space to gather. Expand the café and combine it with the student lounge by breaking through S104. To replace S104, convert two smaller rooms elsewhere and install removable dividers. Convert student lounge to another classroom or office.



## 5. Education/Curriculum Initiatives

\$1,000

2010-2011:

\$1000 Purchase multi-cultural videos and other resources

- n Schedule and fund periodic training of faculty, including adjuncts. See Organizational Support Initiatives above.

2011-forward:

- n Provide incentives for faculty to present diversity related topics at conferences

## 6. Outreach Initiatives

2010-2011:

- n Design annual diversity related events hosted by JFK University and advertise to the public with the first event hosted by September, 2011. See Organizational Support Initiative above.

**Total for FY 2010-11: \$48,500 (does not include Diversity Officer role)**

## VIII. RECOMMENDED PRIORITIZATION

Highest Priority Initiatives:

1. Creation of Diversity Council with Diversity Officer and link to Administration
2. Inclusion of Diversity Action Plan initiatives in refocused Strategic Plan
3. Continuation of bi-annual Diversity Awareness Survey
4. Ombudsman-type position
5. Training of faculty, staff and students
6. Analysis and use the review of course descriptions and syllabi to identify needs and action steps.
7. University-wide diversity events
8. Expansion of Café seating area



# APPENDIX

## John F. Kennedy University Diversity Statement

### **"A Living Culture of Diversity"**

*Developed by the Diversity Task Force in collaboration with the University community  
Approved by President's Leadership Team on June 16, 2009*

This document includes four sections:

- \* Origin of our diversity statement
- \* JFKU's definition of diversity
- \* Vision
- \* Implementation plans

### **ORIGIN**

Our diversity statement originates with these excerpts from the JFK University mission statement (<http://www.jfku.edu/about/mission/>):

"We are a vibrant and humane learning community that embraces all forms of diversity."

"Our culture is welcoming, respectful, and ethical."

"We are committed to a culture that respects and values all forms of diversity and sparks creativity, collaboration, and leadership."

"We respect individual and cultural differences while forging bonds of common understanding essential to our global interdependence."

### **DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY AT JOHN F. KENNEDY UNIVERSITY**

John F. Kennedy University defines diversity across lines of both culture and ideas. Diversity is viewed as differences in multiple dimensions of culture, including the following: race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual/gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, veteran status, linguistic ability, learning differences, age, immigration status, and national origin. John F. Kennedy University recognizes that diversity also includes differences in values, beliefs, ideologies, and political perspectives, all working toward the common goal of a "living culture of diversity." We understand diversity is not a static list of fixed identities but rather is reflective of the changing and interdependent nature of human experience.



## OUR VISION OF A LIVING CULTURE OF DIVERSITY

In service to our mission of academic excellence, John F. Kennedy University strives to embody a Living Culture of Diversity. We recognize that a diverse school environment is one that supports the academic community in gaining the awareness, knowledge and skills to work effectively with all people. We understand that this goal is an ongoing process requiring an active commitment from all levels of our University. John F. Kennedy University is dedicated to developing a supportive, diversity-rich environment. Recognizing the impact of negative attitudes and systemic discrimination at all levels of individual and group interaction at our University, in our local communities, and in the wider social/global milieu, JFKU seeks to establish a Living Culture of Diversity, characterized by these five principles:

1. An ongoing practice of openness and respect for people with experiences, beliefs, and traditions different from our own;
2. An understanding that diverse cultural backgrounds, life experiences, challenges, and values of faculty, students, staff, and administrators creates a dynamic learning community vital for academic excellence;
3. A recognition that, in alignment with our commitment to academic excellence, openness to difference exposes students and faculty to broader perspectives, fosters deeper critical analysis, and opens new vistas for scholarly inquiry;
4. A commitment to eradicating intolerance, oppression, prejudice, discrimination, and harassment in all interactions within the JFKU community in order to impact, through our example, the local, national, and global communities we inhabit. We appreciate the value of self-reflection in reaching these goals;
5. A commitment to supporting and providing accessibility of education and resources to equip the student body, faculty, and administration with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to “work together across our differences to forge the bonds of understanding essential for success in our interdependent global community.”

## IMPLEMENTING A LIVING CULTURE OF DIVERSITY

A multi-step draft plan for implementing this policy will be proposed by the Diversity Task Force by October 2009. In drafting the implementation plan, the Diversity Task Force will be informed by the collective input of the University community, 2008 Diversity Climate Survey results, work of previous Diversity Affairs Councils on JFKU campuses and a survey of best practices at other institutions. The plan will include (but may not be limited to) consideration of the current campus climates, course curriculum, teaching proficiencies, representation in hiring and student recruitment, connecting with our community, student success, systems of administration, and sustainability. Input will be gathered from the entire University community on the draft plan before it is finalized. The plan will include tasks, timelines, responsible persons, and assessment and evaluation criteria.

