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Continuing the Cultural Competence Conversation – Voting Results

Western Libraries Diversity Committee

Rebecca M. Marrall

Western Washington University Libraries, rebecca.marrall@wwu.edu

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Rebecca Marrall

Western Washington University, rebecca.marrall@wwu.edu

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Note on Document Organization:

This document is a compilation of the priorities voted upon during the “Continuing the Cultural Competence Conversation” event. Attendees chose to recommend enacting the strategies found within this document, many of which were gathered from the “Understanding the 21st Century Library Patron” event. Furthermore, attendees suggested additional considerations on how to pursue and/or improve the recommendation.

This document is organized by ACRL Standard (Two through Eleven). It reflects the identified (i.e., voted for) priorities, along with additional notes or suggestions associated with that specific recommendation.

Note about Voting Methodology:

During the “Continuing the Cultural Competence Conversation” event, each attendee was able to vote for one Top, one Second, and one Third priority during a designated time early on in the event. After selecting three recommendations, the group then shared their rationales for why the Libraries should pursue this particular recommendation.

Appendix & Addendum: Please refer to the end of this document for a visual map of voting results and a brief statement on the language used in this document.

Standard Two Statement: Cross-cultural knowledge and skills – Library professionals shall have and continue to develop specialized knowledge and understanding about the history, traditions, values, and artistic expressions of colleagues, co-workers, and major constituencies served.

Identified Priorities:

- Revisit invitation to bring something from our culture to staff potluck. Invite fusion food.
 - *Votes:* Third Priority Votes (2).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues reiterated their interest in fusion cuisine as an educational opportunity
- Understand other cultural practices and negotiate/accommodate them when appropriate.
 - *Votes:* Second Priority Votes (4).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues shared anecdotal examples of students seeking private spaces for prayer, which calls for an awareness of religious holidays and library space.

Standard Three Statement: Organizational and professional values – Library professionals shall develop and support organizational and professional values dedicated to culturally competent service.

Identified Priorities:

- Sponsor continuing series of workshops within the Libraries.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Vote (1).

- *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Upon further discussion, a colleague voted for this recommendation because it stresses the importance of continuing this conversation.

Standard Four Statement: Development of collections, programs, and services – Librarians and library staff shall develop collections and provide programs and services that are inclusive of the needs of all persons in the community the library serves.

Identified Priorities:

- Need to understand ourselves better as an organization, including the multiple dimensions of identity (and look beyond race/ethnicity as the most easily “visible” dimension of diversity).
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (4); Third Priority Votes (3).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Many colleagues voted for this recommendation, highlighting the need for many of the statements found in ACRL Standard One (Cultural Awareness of Self and Others).

Standard Five Statement: Service delivery – Library professionals shall be knowledgeable about and skillful in the use and provision of information services available in the community and broader society, and shall be able to make appropriate referrals for their diverse constituencies.

Identified Priorities:

- Discuss methods and best practices for performing targeted services for specific needs (i.e., gender neutral restrooms).
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (2).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Two colleagues shared that they would like to see practical (i.e., “How To”) recommendations for best practices in serving all demographics at Western Libraries.
- Incorporate some of the workshop recommendations into the current Western Libraries Diversity Plan.
 - *Vote:* Third Priority Vote (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Much of the content generated by these recent events (“Understanding...” and “Continuing...”) should be incorporated into the current Western Libraries Diversity Plan.

- Capitalize on the tools offered by Rebecca and Human Resources, in order to raise awareness and continue the conversation.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority Votes (5).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Human Resources offers an array of workshops, trainings and more, and many colleagues recommended to raise awareness about these tools and/or tailor an event for the Libraries.

Standard Six Statement: Language diversity – Library professionals shall support the preservation and promotion of linguistic diversity, and work to foster a climate of inclusion aimed at eliminating discrimination and oppression based on linguistic or other diversities.

Identified Priorities:

- Promote understanding of written, verbal, and non-verbal communication styles.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority Votes (2); Third Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues supported the idea of having workshops and trainings about the differences in communication styles.

- Develop practices for addressing second/third language needs without being condescending (i.e., effectively and empathetically).
 - *Vote:* Third Priority Votes (2).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues stressed the importance of understanding the power differentials at play when an international student (usually a non-native English speaker) approaches a North American library service point for help and/or assistance, and urged the Libraries personnel to seek out training or resources on this topic.

- Compile a roster of all employees who are multi-lingual, and share internally.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* One colleague suggested that compiling a roster of multilingual personnel would allow us to share our expertise with one another, along with promoting general awareness.

- Develop, and employ universal signage around the Libraries in order to communicate with all patron groups.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority Votes (2).

- *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues emphasized the importance of universality in signage and authentic, accessible communication.
- Partner with relevant organizations on campus in order to pursue these goals.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (4); Third Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues are interested in developing a list of campus stakeholders with whom they partner for specific projects.

Standard Seven Statement: Workforce diversity – Library professionals shall support and advocate for recruitment, admissions, hiring, and retention efforts in libraries, library associations, and LIS programs to increase diversity and ensure continued diversity in the profession.

Identified Priorities:

- Discuss how to address diversity/cultural competency needs in surrounding communities (i.e., community patrons).
 - *Vote:* Third Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Colleagues recommended performing outreach to local community organizations and non-profits as a way of sharing resources with the Bellingham community.
- Address representation, recruitment, and retention among our classified and salary exempt professionals.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority Votes (2); Third Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* One colleague recommended that we – the Libraries – focus on being inclusive of our student personnel.

Standard Eight Statement: Organizational dynamics – Library professionals shall participate in and facilitate the development of organizational dynamics that enable individuals, groups, and organizations to continually develop and exercise cultural competence.

Identified Priorities:

- Reward/highlight non-traditional rock stars who excel in their discipline and/or field.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Vote (1)
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Recommendations included capitalizing on current events for programs and/or exhibits in order to examine cultural, socioeconomic or other factors underlying human activity around the world.

- Bring attention to texts and projects by non-white authors through exhibits, instructional demonstrations, and more. Partner with campus stakeholders for inclusive/representative collection development.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority (1); Third Priority Vote (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Again, recommendations included capitalizing on current events for programs and/or exhibits in order to examine cultural, socioeconomic or other factors underlying human activity around the world.

Standard Nine Statement: Cross-cultural leadership – Library leaders shall influence, support, and encourage the creation of proactive processes that increase diversity skills; empower colleagues, co-workers, and constituents from diverse backgrounds; share information about diverse populations; and advocate for their concerns.

Identified Priorities:

- Let students lead; reach out to the Associated Students Clubs in order to partner with student voices for projects and exhibits.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (1); Second Priority Votes (2); Third Priority Votes (2).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Continuing a consistent theme along the lines of 'partnership,' several colleagues expressed a desire to perform outreach to student organizations and student services departments in order to provide opportunities for student leadership within Western Libraries.

Standard Ten Statement: Professional education and continuous learning – Library professionals advocate for and participate in educational and training programs that help advance cultural competence within the profession.

Identified Priorities:

- Continue this conversation. One method for doing so may include an annual event in order to provide updates on local, state, and national trends.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (4); Third Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* One colleague suggested that Western Libraries host an “unconference” for local libraries, during which these library professionals can share information about what they are doing within their own libraries (regardless of library type) around inclusion and cultural competency.

- Take advantage of different types of trainings and education opportunities, such as the Human Resources workshops, webinars, asynchronous online courses, and more.
 - *Vote:* Second Priority Votes (1).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* One colleague recommended that Libraries personnel look to student organizations, such as the Ethnic Student Center, for opportunities such as the upcoming Ethnic Student Conference.

- Partner with organizations on campus in order to provide continuing education/professional development opportunities. One suggested example: Partnering with Admissions to learn more about diversity recruitment for the student body.
 - *Vote:* Third Priority Votes (2).
 - *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Along the same lines as the previous recommendation, a colleague suggested that the Diversity Committee seek out a student voice/representative for service. In the past, “red tape” has been an issue but attendees outlined a way forward on this issue.

Standard Eleven Statement: Research shall be inclusive and respectful of non-Western thought and traditional knowledge reflecting the value of cultural ways of knowing.

Identified Priorities:

- Partner with the International Studies center in order to provide effective and relevant library services to international students.
 - *Vote:* Top Priority Votes (1); Third Priority Votes (1).

- *Additional Considerations and/or Suggestions:* Further ideas for this recommendation included communicating about Western/North American conventions in scholarship (i.e., citations and plagiarism); talking with international students about assignments and expectations; and supporting international student employees (and those units who hire them).

Appendix: Visual Map of Voting

Here are the voting results in table form. I've organized the results by a) Priority of votes assigned to the recommendations and b) Frequency of votes. Measuring the votes in this way will allow the new Diversity Committee to focus their efforts in the most meaningful way.

Votes	Recommendations
Top Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Four: Need to understand ourselves better as an organization, including the multiple dimensions of identity (and look beyond race/ethnicity as the most easily “visible” dimension of diversity) (4). • Standard Six: Partner with relevant organizations on campus in order to pursue these goals (4). • Standard Ten: Continue this conversation. One method for doing so may include an annual event in order to provide updates on local, state, and national trends (4). • Standard Five: Discuss methods and best practices for performing targeted services for specific needs (i.e., gender neutral restrooms) (2). • Standard Three: Sponsor continuing series of workshops within the Libraries (1). • Standard Six: Compile a roster of all employees who are multi-lingual, and share internally (1). • Standard Eight: Reward/highlight non-traditional rock stars who excel in their discipline and/or field (1).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Nine: Let students lead; reach out to the Associated Students Clubs in order to partner with student voices for projects and exhibits (1). • Standard Eleven: Partner with the International Studies center in order to provide effective and relevant library services to international students (1).
Second Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Five: Capitalize on the tools offered by Rebecca and Human Resources, in order to raise awareness and continue the conversation (5). • Standard Two: Understand other cultural practices and negotiate/accommodate them when appropriate (4). • Standard Six: Promote understanding of written, verbal, and non-verbal communication styles (2). • Standard Six: Develop, and employ universal signage around the Libraries in order to communicate with all patron groups (2). • Standard Seven: Address representation, recruitment, and retention among our classified and salary exempt professionals (2). • Standard Eight: Bring attention to texts and projects by non-white authors through exhibits, instructional demonstrations, and more. Partner with campus stakeholders for inclusive/representative collection development (1). • Standard Ten: Take advantage of different types of trainings and education opportunities, such as the Human Resources workshops, webinars, asynchronous online courses, and more (1).
Third Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Two: Revisit invitation to bring something from our culture to staff potluck. Invite fusion food (2).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard Six: Develop practices for addressing second/third language needs without being condescending (i.e., effectively and empathetically) (2). • Standard Ten: Partner with organizations on campus in order to provide continuing education/professional development opportunities. One suggested example: Partnering with Admissions to learn more about diversity recruitment for the student body (2). • Standard Five: Incorporate some of the workshop recommendations into the current Western Libraries Diversity Plan (1). • Standard Seven: Discuss how to address diversity/cultural competency needs in surrounding communities (i.e., community patrons) (1).
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Addendum Statement on Language: Though the ACRL Standards begin with the phrase, “Librarians and library staff...”, this statement isn’t inclusive to the wide array of employee categorizations we have within Western Libraries. Thus, I’ve taken the liberty to change the language – for our internal purposes only – to begin as, “Library professionals...” to better reflect the nature of our personnel.