How did I get here?

Driven by internal and external institutional changes surrounding diversity, new strategic approaches are needed in order to position libraries as diverse and inclusive organizations. As diversity in higher education and libraryland is trending, many libraries have formed diverse committees. What is the purpose of these committees? What is their impact? Have we seen any progress? Or do we look around and say ‘same as it ever was’? This poster focuses on a case study of the UCSD Library. We provide a quick dive into the Librarians Association of the University of California, San Diego (LAUC-SD) Archives to learn more about our past. As our Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee has evolved, we examine what we have accomplished, how we have changed, and what we hope for the future.

Same as it ever was?

Over the years, there has been three distinct periods with repeated diversity efforts by the Committee, especially regarding recruitment and retention, cultural programming, and public education.

In 1990, the Principles of Community were developed by the Diversity Leadership Team comprised of UC San Diego staff, faculty, and department directors, and many other librarians on the UCSD community, including faculty, staff, and students.

The goals of the Principles include:

- Promoting a climate of fairness, cooperation, and respect.
- Emphasizing the importance of diversity.
- Encouraging a welcoming and respectful environment.
- Providing collaborative and cultural experiences.

The UC Diversity Statement, adopted in 2005, expanded the definition of diversity. “Diversity — a defining feature of California’s past, present, and future — refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture, circumstance, and context. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more.”

The UCSD Library Diversity Statement, approved in 2018, expanded the definition of diversity to include “Diversity refers to all of the ways we are different — including race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, socioeconomic status, and geographic region. The diverse perspectives and experiences of our community members shape, and are shaped by, the experiences of others.”

The UCSD Strategic Plan, “Innovate, Transform, Excel: Cultivating a diverse and inclusive university community,” sets an ambitious goal of creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive university community.

Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee

The ad hoc committee became permanent in 1994 as the LAUC-SD Committee on Cultural Diversity.

In 2001, it switched to LAUC-SD Committee on Diversity and received an annual budget.

Over the years, programming started to include Library staff and to address more organizational issues and broader issues like accessibility and social justice. Some of this was possible because of University-wide initiatives.

In February 2012, the Committee received the UC San Diego Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action and Diversity Award in recognition of the Committee’s efforts in developing and implementing cultural programming in the Library and to enhance diversity issues within the Library.

The UCSD Diversity Strategic Plan, approved in 2018, expanded the definition of diversity to include “Diversity refers to all of the ways we are different — including race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, physical ability, socioeconomic status, and geographic region. The diverse perspectives and experiences of our community members shape, and are shaped by, the experiences of others.”

The UCSD Strategic Plan, “Innovate, Transform, Excel: Cultivating a diverse and inclusive university community,” sets an ambitious goal of creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive university community.

Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee

To help assess the climate of the organization, the Library implemented the ClimateQUAL survey in 2012. After analyzing the survey, the change and membership of the LAUC-SD Committee on Cultural Diversity expanded to include Library staff as members of the committee in 2015. It continued to evolve from a committee that focuses on thought-provoking programming and events to a committee that also acts in an advisory capacity on policy matters such as career advancement, inclusion, and professional development.


Library Diversity includes in the list of values the 2015-2016 UCSD Strategic Plan: https://library.ucsd.edu/plan2015

For more information:

UC San Diego Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee

https://lib.ucsd.edu/divic

Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Incorporate social justice themes into all aspects of the organization’s work— instruction, planning, and events, collection development, cataloging, etc.

Going forward:

Keep working—we would like to:
- Deliver our commitment to diversity and inclusion to be a commitment for all departments and processes.
- Build diversity and inclusion initiatives that are grounded in the Library’s mission and core values.
- Promote cultural competence and awareness about our participation in diversity initiatives.
- Incorporate diversity issues into our work, such as including unconscious bias in public service training.
- Include students and staff in all aspects of our work as a library.
- Prioritize the development of diverse and inclusive communities of practice.
- Continue to foster a culture of reflection and self-assessment within our organization.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to promote diversity and inclusion.

Resources:


What have I done?

And you may ask yourself... Am I reinventing the wheel?

As we looked through the Archive, we were surprised that much of the recommendations and initiatives have remained the same over the years. However, this work is ongoing. We must reflect and refine procedures as organizations change over time. Many of the policy initiatives, educational and social programming started by the initial ad hoc committee still continue today.

And you may ask yourself... Am I speaking to the choir? Library Diversity isn’t stagnant. As the community changes with time, we must constantly work to broaden the base, addressing new and ongoing issues and approaches in order to reach different climates.

Diversity committees alone will not solve problems. Changing the organizational culture requires leadership not only from administrators who are appointed to sit on committees but everyone to advance diversity and inclusion.

The purpose of diversity committees should be to push change, engage across the organization, and build leadership. Movement to improve diversity is a commitment to administrative, bureaucratic, and structural change.

To make progress toward a diverse & inclusive organization:

- Empower employees to identify diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their work, not just recruitment and retention.
- Sustain funding in order to provide adequate and consistent programming and support for professional development.
- Build diversity and inclusion initiatives across the functions of the Library.
- Align to campus diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Link to local community and regional and national diversity initiatives.
- Balance community building activities with policy advising.
- Hold the organization and individual accountable by reporting out annually on progress.
- Use communication tools like Slack (instant messaging service) and LinkedIn (internet wiki & blog) to assemble and share information, and the message comes from peers rather than just coming from the top.
- Recruit members, including managers, librarians, and staff, to allow everyone leadership and service opportunities, and to broaden our base as diverse ideas are brought to the table and shared at all levels of the organization.
- Incorporate social justice themes into all aspects of the organization’s work— instruction, planning, and events, collection development, cataloging, etc.

For more information:

UC San Diego Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee

https://lib.ucsd.edu/divic

Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Incorporate social justice themes into all aspects of the organization’s work— instruction, planning, and events, collection development, cataloging, etc.

Going forward:

Keep working—we would like to:
- Deliver our commitment to diversity and inclusion to be a commitment for all departments and processes.
- Build diversity and inclusion initiatives that are grounded in the Library’s mission and core values.
- Promote cultural competence and awareness about our participation in diversity initiatives.
- Incorporate diversity issues into our work, such as including unconscious bias in public service training.
- Include students and staff in all aspects of our work as a library.
- Continue to foster a culture of reflection and self-assessment within our organization.
- Continue to develop and implement strategies to promote diversity and inclusion.

Resources:


What have I done?

And you may ask yourself... Am I reinventing the wheel?

As we looked through the Archive, we were surprised that much of the recommendations and initiatives have remained the same over the years. However, this work is ongoing. We must reflect and refine procedures as organizations change over time. Many of the policy initiatives, educational and social programming started by the initial ad hoc committee still continue today.

And you may ask yourself... Am I speaking to the choir? Library Diversity isn’t stagnant. As the community changes with time, we must constantly work to broaden the base, addressing new and ongoing issues and approaches in order to reach different climates.

Diversity committees alone will not solve problems. Changing the organizational culture requires leadership not only from administrators who are appointed to sit on committees but everyone to advance diversity and inclusion.

The purpose of diversity committees should be to push change, engage across the organization, and build leadership. Movement to improve diversity is a commitment to administrative, bureaucratic, and structural change.

To make progress toward a diverse & inclusive organization:

- Empower employees to identify diversity and inclusion in all aspects of their work, not just recruitment and retention.
- Sustain funding in order to provide adequate and consistent programming and support for professional development.
- Build diversity and inclusion initiatives across the functions of the Library.
- Align to campus diversity and inclusion initiatives.
- Link to local community and regional and national diversity initiatives.
- Balance community building activities with policy advising.
- Hold the organization and individual accountable by reporting out annually on progress.
- Use communication tools like Slack (instant messaging service) and LinkedIn (internet wiki & blog) to assemble and share information, and the message comes from peers rather than just coming from the top.
- Recruit members, including managers, librarians, and staff, to allow everyone leadership and service opportunities, and to broaden our base as diverse ideas are brought to the table and shared at all levels of the organization.
- Incorporate social justice themes into all aspects of the organization’s work— instruction, planning, and events, collection development, cataloging, etc.

For more information:

UC San Diego Library Diversity & Inclusion Committee

https://lib.ucsd.edu/divic