

WILLIAMS COLLEGE CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI) PLAN ACTIONS & GOALS

The staff members of the Controller's Office (the staff) believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion for all persons is a foundation of excellent customer service and appropriate employee behavior. The staff is eager to improve knowledge and skills in the DEI arena. Recognizing that each staff member has their own unique background we appreciate that each of us comes to this process from a different perspective and place along the spectrum of prior experience with DEI.

ACTIONS WE HAVE TAKEN AND GOALS FOR THE FUTURE:

1. DIVERSITY IN THE DEPARTMENT

Historically, and currently, the Controller's Office (14 members) has been approximately 70% female, 30% male. All 14 staff members are white. All four of the support staff employees are female. Turnover in the department is very low with an average length of service of 10 years or more.

When a position becomes vacant our applicant pool is nearly always from the close surrounding area. We will work with HR and OIDEI to achieve the most diverse candidate pools possible utilizing their expertise to advertise in the most productive outlets. We note that diversity may include race, religion, socio-economic background, academic background, as well as other areas.

Also, at times in the past we have had students from MCLA and Williams spend some time with us to gain experience in an accounting office (to date approximately five students have done this, all unpaid). We will explore ways to make this an ongoing opportunity, with the specific hope that we can attract students from a diverse background.

2. SERVING OUR CUSTOMERS EQUITABLY AND WITH AWARENESS

The Controller's Office is a customer focused department. We provide and process financial information and transactions. Each member of the staff interacts with a unique group of customers at every level of the College hierarchy. Traditionally we have had a "treat everyone the same way" policy, no matter their title or position at the College. We are learning that in addition to that philosophy we need to be aware of how various sectors of the College population may interpret or hear what we are saying/doing. We will strive to be aware of how our interactions (verbal, email, etc.) will "land" on the recipient. We will review all of our standard communications (e.g. pcard information requests, late notices, and terminations) to be sure that the communications are clear and that the tone is appropriate.

3. PROMOTE AND ADVANCE DEI IN OUR OFFICE THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND CAMPUS INTERACTIONS

It is important that our staff understands the right questions to ask and the right ways to ask those questions. Having an understanding of various cultural groups at Williams will help our department to do a better job discussing financial matters with them. Perhaps facilitated by OIDEI, we will be seeking interaction with a broad group of employees, so that we can learn more about their culture and how our processes are perceived.

We recognize that the opportunity to learn how to better navigate today's society is a benefit offered by the College and we will work with OIDEI staff to participate in periodic workshops either tailored to the Controller's Office or offered campus wide. We will continue to encourage staff to participate in on-campus events such as Claiming Williams. We will continue to send out emails letting the entire staff know that they are welcome and encouraged to attend as many sessions as they like and to the extent possible there should be no meetings scheduled on that day.

4. INCLUDING DEI IN OUR SELECTION PROCESS FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS AND PRODUCTS

As we engage service providers (accountants, investment banking, etc.) we will include a section on DEI in all requests for proposal (RFPs) and strive to engage firms that are woman or minority owned and firms that show a commitment to a diverse employee base.

Examples include the recent selection of a minority owned investment banking firm for a bond offering (replaced a very large well established firm) and the inclusion of a DEI section in our recent RFP for audit services.

We will strive to purchase products from women or minority owned firms by asking vendors to provide information that allows us to gain more information about the firm.

We will work to improve our reporting capabilities so that we can provide financial information to the campus on progress in that area. We will do this by researching how we can incorporate identifying data into our accounts payable system to assist purchases as they make sourcing decisions.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY FROM OUR SERVICE PROVIDERS

We will require our service providers, specifically auditors and tax advisors, to include a DEI report to the Audit Committee where they will speak to their firm's initiatives as well as our engagement team initiatives in this area.

6. CAMPUS TRAINING

We need to recognize that campus employees arrive with varying levels of knowledge about financial management. We will ask OIDEI to help us create and training programs (in groups or individually) to relieve some of the stress and fear that employees may feel when they interact with the Controller's Office. We will share with the campus community why we require certain

information, ask certain questions (federal regulations, audit requirements, etc.) We will clearly define the terms we use and use those terms consistently.

7. IMPROVE OUR WEBSITE SO THAT IT IS A USER FRIENDLY RESOURCE

We will review our website to ensure that it has current, easy-to-understand information and instructions. We will provide visual as well as written information on how to process financial transactions. College policies regarding finance must be clear, easy to understand, and adhered to consistently. We will cite the reason for the policy (IRS regulation, accounting requirement, etc.) so that employees understand why we are asking them to do a particular task.

8. IMPROVE STANDARD COMMUNICATIONS

We will review our standard communications to the campus,(e.g. Pcard notices, year-end memo, etc.) to ensure that all terms are clear, the tone is appropriate, and requests are well defined.

This document has been shared with the Controller's Office Staff, OIEDI representatives and the VP for Finance and Administration March 2021,