

Diversity Criterion: Successful Strategies for Responding & Incorporation in Criteria Revision



Council *on* Education *for* Public Health

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How Did We Get Here?

- Used to have strong focus on structural diversity, counting of individuals
- Now greater emphasis on institutional/programmatic systems and culture
- Expanded focus from race/ethnicity/gender to also consider other categories that fit with SPH/PHP's mission

Data Template

Template 1.8.1. Summary Data for Faculty, Students and/or Staff

Category/ Definition	Method of Collection	Data Source	Target	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3

- Must report at least four lines of data
 - One must relate to students
 - One must relate to faculty
- At least 2 categories must relate to race/ethnicity

General concepts

- Define categories of interest that align with mission, setting, etc.
- Consistently and systematically follow through on commitment to the categories of interest
 - All aspects of activity: student recruitment, faculty recruitment, retention of both, curriculum, research & service focus, etc.
- Demonstrate quantitative evidence for success
- Demonstrate other evidence for success
- Demonstrate commitment to ongoing review & reevaluation as needed

Documentation Requests

- Present a coherent, coordinated approach
 - Don't answer doc requests as if they are independent of one another—requests are intended to be related and complementary
- Answer these questions for site visitors
 - How do/will you know you're successful?
 - Are you doing enough?
 - If not, what are you doing/what do you plan to do to improve?
- Make sure that answers are program/school-specific
 - Fine to use successful university or college-level systems or definitions, but need to evaluate the fit & “make it your own.”

Common Issues

(AKA: Things that annoy site visitors)

- Weak or poorly-explained rationale for chosen populations
 - You know your setting best!
- Use of gender as a category without clear rationale
 - Gender imbalance in PH students typically tilts female, but leadership & senior faculty roles may not
 - May be a meaningful category for you, but need to explain WHY
- Reliance on university- or college-based plans without tailoring or evidence of examination
- Disconnect between data in template and discussion in other documentation requests
 - Happens more frequently than one would expect!

More common issues...

- Broad statements without relationship to chosen populations of interest
 - “Most courses in our curriculum address disparate effects of public health issues and policies on different populations.”
- Long list of links to standard non-discrimination policies
 - This criterion should tell visitors about YOUR school/program, not about verifying existence of formal language that is standard across most universities
- Resting on laurels/perception of complacency
- Lack of evidence that PHP/SPH is responding to data & adapting

Some technicalities

- Some programs have identified legal issues with defining “targets”
- International settings have different diversity frameworks
- Focus on the criterion’s intent & spirit
 - What CAN you do?
 - What is meaningful in your setting, given context & constraints?
 - How can you express accountability & measure success?
 - Criterion is intended to be useful component of self-reflection/self-study

Planned criteria revisions

- Will combine some redundant requests
- More focus on examples rather than the existence of policies and procedures
- Will more explicitly seek rationale for populations of interest – and clear links between these populations and the data presented

Enough abstraction...

What has actually worked? What hasn't?