My reality, my identity, is an invisible one.... Not having legal status affects every single thing I do, on or off campus. I have learned a lot about the term “diversity” from an international perspective, and from the most multicultural society, which made me think more deeply and critically...

As a Latina, my point-of-view has come a long way from my assumption that being Latin@ meant looking a certain way, sharing traditions, speaking Spanish, and having a similar socio-economic status. That perception has been turned right side-up to the point where I can have genuine interactions with others and not pigeon-hole them into society’s “boxes.”

Why can’t I just be me and stop pretending... Do you even see me?

I never fully understood the concept of “culture-shock” until I attended Humboldt State and lived in the student dorms. I am a student at Humboldt State University. I am contacting you to let you know that I self-identify as transgender....I am asking for protection, a safer space. The lack of diversity taught me how to be the solution, how to not add to the problem. I am no longer afraid of not having a voice.
A complete version of this report is available online at the Office of Diversity and Inclusion’s website:
www.humboldt.edu/diversity

For additional print copies of this report, please contact the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, at
diversity@humboldt.edu, or by phone at 707.826.4503.

Comments, feedback, questions and suggestions on any part of this report are most welcome. Please direct
comments to Radha Webley at radha.webley@humboldt.edu or Melissa Meiris at
melissa.meiris@humboldt.edu.

Suggested format for citation: Meiris, Melissa and Webley, Radha. “Cultivating Diversity at HSU: enriching our educational community.”

Cover design: Melissa Coleman
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**Notes of acknowledgment:**

In preparing this report, we are indebted to the assistance of HSU’s Office of Institutional Research and Planning, who provided us with the data, analyses, analytical tools, and consistent guidance that made this report possible. We likewise send thanks to those individuals within Academic Personnel Services who also made contributions to this report. In addition, we would like to thank all of the faculty, staff and administrators who are working to respond to the concerns contained herein.

We also owe tremendous thanks to the many students who contributed their voices and perspectives via our *Spring 2013 Diversity Art and Essay Contest*, to the staff and faculty members who helped get the word out to students, to faculty members who incorporated the contest into their courses, and especially to our ten *Spring 2013 Diversity Art and Essay Contest* winners, who worked tirelessly to prepare their pieces for publication.
Glossary of Key Terms

First-time students
Refers to full-time students who entered HSU without ever having been enrolled in college before. These students are sometimes called first-time freshmen or first-time full-time undergraduates.

Transfer students
Upper-division transfer students are students who transfer to HSU from another college with two years of lower division college-level work completed. Lower-division transfer students are students who transfer to HSU from another college with less than two years of college-level work completed.

Gateway courses
Used most generally, refers to courses—often introductory courses in a major—that serve as “gateways” to entrance into a particular major or course of study. These courses are either required for completion of a major or act as prerequisites for that major, and are often associated with low success rates. In this report, the term “Gateway Courses” is used specifically to refer to courses that are required for completion of at least one major, had at least thirty total students/grades for the most recent academic year, and had an overall non-success rate of at least 15% in the most recent academic year.

First-generation college students
Students are referred to here as “first-generation students” if neither parent or guardian possesses a four-year degree.

LGBTQ students
Refers to students who self-identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, and/or Queer.

Underrepresented students
The term “underrepresented” refers to ethnic groups that are traditionally underrepresented in higher education. For the purposes of this report, underrepresented students (often abbreviated as URM—or “underrepresented minorities”) include students who self-report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino/a and/or their race as Black or African-American, American Indian/Alaska Native, or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. Underrepresented students also include students who indicate they have two or more races, with at least one from the above categories. Non-underrepresented (non-URM) students include students who self-report that they are White, Asian, or both White and Asian. Students who decline to state, leave the ethnicity and race question blank, or who are non-resident aliens are categorized as “unknown.”

A note on the ethnicity categories used in this report:
In discussing ethnicity, this report aggregates individuals into six broad categories: Asian-American/Pacific Islander, Black, Latino/a, Native American, White, and Two or More Ethnicities. “Asian-American/Pacific Islander” includes individuals who self-identify as: Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Cambodian, Asian Indian, Southeast Asian, Thai, Vietnamese, Other Asian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Samoan, or Other Pacific Islander (note that some of these ethnic groups are considered underrepresented in higher education, and some are not; because of the small populations within these categories at HSU, this report aggregates these populations into one group). “Latino/a” includes: Mexican-American/Chicano/a, Central American, South American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and Other Latino/Hispanic. “Black,” “Native American,” “White” each include individuals who self-identify as such. “Two or More Ethnicities” includes individuals who self-identify as having two or more ethnicities.
**FROM THE PROVOST**

Cultivating diversity at HSU—the promise of change

*Change is the only constant.* How often we hear and repeat these words, all too frequently in moments of frustration, exasperation, or upon realizing that things are not going to be the same as we thought they would be. Less often does this phrase imply a sense of hope, discovery, or inspiration. But for me, in thinking about our work on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion at HSU, “*change is the only constant*” implies nothing but promise—an indication that we, collectively and individually, are working hard to become better.

In this last year, HSU has continued to develop and implement a number of efforts designed to cultivate diversity and equity on our campus. One of the hallmarks of this progress is our new Campus Diversity Plan, which provides a framework for making and monitoring progress toward diversity and inclusive success. Efforts to attain the vision outlined in this plan are already underway, and will continue to build in the coming years. A summary of this plan appears on pages 3 and 4 of this report.

During Spring 2013, two cross-campus working groups developed extensive proposals to address retention and academic advising—areas where we can, and must, do more with regard to inclusive student success at HSU. Actions resulting from the working groups’ recommendations include a comprehensive re-structure, currently in progress, of all retention-related student support units, which will include the creation of multiple, culturally specific Centers for Academic Excellence on campus.

With regard to increasing and cultivating greater institutional diversity, HSU continued last year to implement the campus plan for diversifying our faculty, and preliminary information from the last two hiring cycles suggests that we are continuing to make progress in this area. Using our initial work with faculty as a base, HSU has also crafted a detailed campus plan for diversifying our staff, which will be implemented in the coming year.

These broad initiatives form the foundation and the framework for HSU’s future achievement. Our progress and the success of these initiatives lie in the hands of committed individuals across campus, who are making changes—both small and large—in everything from the way they interact with students and colleagues to how they design and teach their courses.

The work and change required to cultivate a campus community that is truly equitable and inclusive is not always easy, but I believe that the rewards will be great—for our students, and for our campus as a whole. In the midst of this change, I ask for your continuing partnership as we strive to build a university that embodies equity and diversity in every respect.

Robert A. Snyder  
Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Introduction

Last year’s 4th annual *Dissecting Diversity* report presented a retrospective analysis of HSU’s progress towards diversity and inclusive student success, focusing on identifying changes and trends across a range of categories, and providing a baseline for the ongoing assessment of diversity and inclusion on our campus. This year’s report, *Cultivating Diversity at HSU: enriching our educational community*, begins a new series of annual reports that are crafted to provide an update on progress toward these goals, using the 2012 report as a baseline.

As in past reports, Chapter One summarizes the composition of our student body, which continues to grow increasingly diverse each year. Additionally, we examine persistence and success at HSU for students overall, and explore existing (and continuing) inequities. Chapter Two offers a look at the diversity of our staff and faculty, and an overview of the recent actions and future plans to increase the diversity of HSU employees.

Chapter Three continues our tradition of offering a range of student perspectives on diversity and inclusion by highlighting the ten winning entries of our Spring 2013 Diversity Art and Essay Contest. Through a compelling collection of art, essays, and poetry, this chapter provides an alternative avenue for sharing student experiences, which reinforces the focus group feedback we have highlighted in past reports.

As noted in the introduction—and outlined on pages 3 and 4—the new Campus Diversity Plan provides a collaboratively developed framework for making and monitoring progress toward diversity and inclusive student success at HSU. As a means for benchmarking forward momentum on these efforts, readers will note the grey progress boxes that appear in each section of this report, which should be interpreted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="thumbs-up.png" alt="Thumbs Up" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="thumbs-down.png" alt="Thumbs Down" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="sideways-thumb.png" alt="Sideways Thumb" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this system for noting progress does not fully capture the complexities of the Campus Diversity Plan, it does provide a simple visual reference to help readers quickly assess areas where progress has and has not been achieved.

Though the trends highlighted in this year’s report often echo the longstanding challenges we face in terms of equity and inclusion at HSU, also evident are the many efforts across campus that are being taken to further our collective goals. As you browse through the report, you will also see the text boxes in each section that highlight recent trends, and chronicle the many steps underway across campus to effect change in these areas.
In order to uphold Humboldt State’s longstanding commitment to integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into all areas of our work, and to continue our process of institutional improvement and change, in AY12/13, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion was charged with overseeing the collaborative creation of a campus-wide diversity plan, which provides a mechanism for benchmarking and evaluating our success in meeting our stated goals relative to diversity, equity, and inclusive student success.

This comprehensive plan—summarized below—outlines the components, initiatives underway, and strategies necessary to meet HSU’s objective of institutionalizing diversity, equity, and inclusivity as core elements of the HSU mission. This campus diversity planning process is founded on five broad goals, detailed below, that summarize the essence of what HSU aspires to achieve.

**Goal #1: Access to Excellence**  
*Ensuring equality of access to an HSU education*

**Goal 1a:** Ensure equality of access to an HSU education, as evident in a student body that is representative of the population of CSU-eligible California high school graduates, and also representative of the unique role of Humboldt State in serving students from the many tribal communities in our surrounding area

**Goal 1b:** Ensure equity in access to all of HSU’s academic programs

**Goal #2: Inclusive Excellence**  
*Ensuring equity and diversity in the experience of all students*

**Goal 2a:** Foster a campus community that is equally welcoming and supportive to all students, faculty and staff, regardless of background

**Goal 2b:** Acknowledge, support, and infuse diversity in all areas of our work with students (both curricular and co-curricular), as a core part of the educational process that is central to academic success for all students

**Goal 2c:** Eliminate the gaps in retention and in graduation for traditionally underrepresented populations

**Goal 2d:** Ensure equity in all areas of student success (from GPA to career success to leadership capacity)

**Goal 2e:** Ensure equity in student success within all of HSU’s academic programs

**Goal #3: Faculty & Staff Diversity**  
*Ensuring equity and inclusiveness in the workplace*

**Goal 3a:** Institutionalize the capacity to contribute to HSU’s diversity goals as a core element of all HSU staff, faculty, and administrator positions

**Goal 3b:** Increase the proportion of faculty, staff, and administrators from underrepresented groups

**Goal 3c:** Ensure equity in the retention and promotion of faculty, staff, and administrators across underrepresented groups
Goal #4: Community Collaboration

*Developing partnerships with the off-campus community*

Develop infrastructure for collaboration with the off-campus community in addressing issues of inclusiveness in the larger community, in order to best support and retain HSU students, staff, and faculty.

Goal #5: Shared Responsibility and Ongoing Improvement

*Monitoring progress towards our goals*

Integrate progress towards the institutional expectations and goals identified in this plan as a responsibility that is shared across all campus units, and continually monitor progress towards achieving Goals #1-4 according to the benchmarks identified within this plan.

---

**Where do we go from here? Next steps for the HSU Campus Diversity Plan 2013+**

While the core goals highlighted above provide both the foundation and the vision for the *HSU Campus Diversity Plan 2013+*, the real purpose of this plan is not simply to articulate a vision, but to provide a mechanism for bringing that vision to reality. The substance of the plan thus lies in its details.

In addition to the goals outlined here, the plan is structured around benchmarks (or measures of success), strategies, and further actions needed—with additional components that specify the unit charged with leading each effort, as well as the timeline and status of each project. This will allow us to assess our progress as a campus towards reaching these goals, and to inform our ongoing efforts as we move forward in this work.

Reporting to campus on progress towards these goals will henceforth be a key aspect of this annual diversity report. Beginning with this year’s issue—and to be expanded in future issues—this report will be structured around reviewing current progress and documenting action undertaken towards this plan.

Select examples of a few key benchmarks, strategies, and further actions needed from the *Campus Diversity Plan* (all relating to Goal #2) are listed below. Full details are available at: www.humboldt.edu/diversity

- **Example—Benchmarks:** Increase in URM student graduation rates, such that student graduation rates are proportional across race/ethnicity and gender.

- **Example—Strategies:** Develop and sustain targeted student services and programs to support the equitable academic success of underrepresented students.

- **Example—Further Actions Needed:** Complete the implementation of an “Early Alert” mechanism for identifying students in need of support.

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**To see the full version of the HSU Campus Diversity Plan 2013+ (including benchmarks, strategies, timeline, and more), please visit** www.humboldt.edu/diversity
Part I: Who are our students?

A snapshot of the overall student population in Fall 2012 indicates that the ethnic demographics of HSU’s student body remain relatively stable, with the exception of a continuing increase in the population of students who self-identify as Latino/a, especially among the incoming freshman population.

The growing population of Latino/a students corresponds with an overall increase in the population of Students of Color (including students who identify as having two or more ethnicities), who comprised 36.2% of the overall student population in Fall 2012 (as compared to 33.0% in Fall 2011), and 52.0% of the incoming freshmen population in Fall 2012 (as compared to 47.0% in Fall 2011).

Table 1: Student composition by ethnicity — Fall 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>All Students</th>
<th>First-Time Freshmen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Floating boxes in Table 1 highlight the percentage point changes (since Fall 2011) in the populations of Latino and White students, which are the populations that have seen the most dramatic changes in the last year.
As of Fall 2012, underrepresented (URM) students comprised 31.0% of the overall population at HSU, an increase of 3.0 percentage points (or 11.9%) since Fall 2011.

Even larger changes were seen in the population of underrepresented students among first-time freshmen: URM students comprised 46.7% of first-time freshmen in Fall 2012, an increase of 6.7 percentage points (or 12.4%) as compared to the incoming class of 2011.

Students with Disabilities

The population of students reporting one or more disabilities remained stable, comprising 5.1% of the HSU student population in Fall 2012.

International Students

During AY 12/13, HSU enrolled approximately 113 “international students” from 25 countries, which is approximately equal to the number of international students who attended HSU in the previous year.

---

Trends of Note

- The overall population of Latino/a students at HSU increased from 19.4% in Fall 2011 to 22.2% in Fall 2012
- Students of Color comprised 36.2% of the overall student population in Fall 2012
- Underrepresented students comprised 46.7% of the incoming freshman class in 2012

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Floating boxes in Table 2 highlight the percentage point changes (since Fall 2011) in each population.
Part II: Inclusive excellence—student persistence, graduation, and course success
Persistence & graduation rates for first-time students

HSU’s overall persistence and graduation rates for our most recent cohorts of first-time students remained stable, still falling well below those of the CSU system overall, and with achievement gaps for underrepresented (URM) students that are consistent with historical trends.

The 6-year graduation rates for URM students and first-generation students fell below the average for all students, by 13 and 8 points, respectively. Additionally, there was a 19 point gap between graduation rates for URM students (.29) and their non-URM peers (.48)—a gap that is equal to the largest achievement gap HSU has seen between URM and non-URM students in the last 10 years.

Table 3: Persistence and graduation rates for most recent first-time student cohorts

(For purposes of comparison, numbers in parentheses within each column indicate the difference between the most recent year’s rate and the most recently reported 5-year average that was presented in the 2012 Dissecting Diversity report.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st to 2nd year persistence rate</th>
<th>2nd to 3rd year persistence rate</th>
<th>6-year graduation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Generation students</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(+2 points )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URM students</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 points below CSU system average</td>
<td>14 points below CSU system average</td>
<td>9 points below CSU system average</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Trends of Note**

The interaction between gender and ethnicity makes HSU’s graduation gaps even more acute. For example, in the most recent year, a male URM student was less than half as likely to graduate in 6 years as a female non URM student.

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3 All graduation rates referenced in this section refer to 6-year graduation rates.
Persistence & graduation rates for first-time students—comparisons across ethnic groupings

1st to 2nd year persistence rates among Black, Latino/a, and White students, as well as students of Two or More ethnicities, fell within 3 points of the average for all students, patterns that are consistent with historical trends. At .83, the 1st to 2nd year persistence rate for Asian/Pacific Islander students was unusually high; conversely, at .57, the 1st to 2nd year persistence rate for Native American students was unusually low.

As is consistent with historical trends, 2nd to 3rd year persistence rates for all groups of Students of Color fell well below the 2nd to 3rd year persistence rate for White students.

Finally, all groups of Students of Color graduated at rates below that of White students. Most notable are the 38 and 29 point gaps in the 6-year graduation rates for Black and Native American students, respectively, as compared to the rate for White students; both of these gaps are markedly lower than historical averages. Also notable is the 6-year graduation rate for Asian/Pacific Islander students, which is not only higher than the historical average for that group, but is also 4 points higher than the average for all students.

Table 4: Persistence and graduation rates by ethnicity, most recent cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st-2nd year persistence rate</th>
<th>2nd-3rd year persistence rate</th>
<th>6-year graduation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps toward change...

In order to improve our ability to support the retention of HSU students, all retention related student support units have recently embarked on a comprehensive reorganization, beginning in Summer 2013. As part of the restructure, HSU has committed to implementing multiple Centers for Academic Excellence, to include four student resource centers: an African American Center, an Asian American/Pacific Islander Center, a Latino/a Center, and a Native American Center. These centers will build on existing initiatives to offer all of our students the opportunity for academic and co-curricular support in a culturally relevant environment.

Because HSU began collecting data on students who identify as having “Two or More” ethnicities in 2009, 6-year graduation rate data for this group is not yet available.
Graduation rates for transfer students—comparisons across ethnic groupings

As illustrated in the below table, 4-year graduation rates for the most recent cohort of transfer students—across all ethnicities—fell below the most recently reported average, indicating a **continuing trend of declining graduation rates for transfer students.**

**Graduation rates for transfer students continued to be more even across most ethnic groups than graduation rates for first-time students.** The exception to this pattern was the graduation rate for Black transfer students, which was 30 points below the average for all students, a gap that is consistent with, though notably larger than, historical trends.

**Table 5: HSU 4-year graduation rates for upper-division transfer students — Fall 2008 cohort**

(Numbers in text boxes within each column indicate the difference between the Fall 2008 cohort’s graduation rate and the most recently reported 3-year average that was presented in the 2012 Dissecting Diversity report.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Difference from Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>-2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>-9 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-7 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>-1 point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>-3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-3 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Steps toward change...**

Through the Residential Academic Mentoring Program (RAMP), launched in AY 12/13, every incoming freshman was assigned a peer mentor, who provided academic support and guidance throughout the year. Though it is too soon to measure RAMP’s impact on 1st to 2nd year retention, early indicators suggest that RAMP may have had a positive impact on academic probation rates. In addition, student feedback about the program was overwhelmingly positive. **RAMP begins its second pilot year in AY 13/14.**

In addition, the latest 4-year graduation rate for underrepresented (URM) transfer students (.51) was 6 points below that for non-underrepresented (non-URM) transfer students (.57), a gap that is 1 point wider than the most-recently reported 3-year average.

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5 Because HSU began collecting data on students who identify as having “Two or More” ethnicities in 2009, 4-year graduation rate data for this group is not yet available.
Gateway courses—examining student success for underrepresented and non-underrepresented students

The following section continues HSU’s ongoing examination of asymmetries—or achievement gaps—in student success in “Gateway Courses,” with a focus on comparing success rates of underrepresented (URM) and non-underrepresented (non-URM) students.

“Gateway Courses” in this analysis are courses that meet all of the following criteria:

1. Are required for completion of at least one major;
2. Had at least 30 total students for the year (across all sections);
3. Had an overall non-success rate of at least 15% in AY 12/13.

The table on the facing page illustrates the difference between the non-success rate for URM students and non-URM students for each Gateway Course offered during academic year 12/13. Courses with five or fewer URM students are not included in this comparison.

The courses listed below appeared in the Gateway Course table in the 2012 Dissecting Diversity report (and were offered in AY 12/13), but do not appear this year, an indication that these courses had a higher overall success rate in the most recent year as compared to their overall average success rate in the three years prior. These results might have occurred for any number of reasons, ranging from an anomalous upswing in student performance to intentional efforts implemented with the specific goal of increasing student success. A higher overall success rate in AY 12/13 may or may not indicate a reduction in the achievement gap between URM and non-URM students in these courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTH 105: Archaeology/World Prehistory</th>
<th>ENGR 313: Systems Analysis</th>
<th>MATH 241: Elements of Linear Algebra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 105: Principles of Biology</td>
<td>ENGR 325: Comp Mhds for Env Engrng II</td>
<td>MATH 308C: Math for Elem Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHEM 328: Brief Organic Chemistry</td>
<td>GEOG 105: Cultural Geography</td>
<td>NRPI 210: Public Land Use Policy Mgmt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 104: Contemp Topics in Economics</td>
<td>GEOG 311: Geographic Resrch &amp; Writing</td>
<td>NRPI 309: Environ Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL 328: Structure of American English</td>
<td>HIST 210: Historical Methods</td>
<td>PSCI 220: Intro to Political Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGR 211: Solid Mechanics Dynamics</td>
<td>MATH 240: Intro to Mathematical Thought</td>
<td>TA 104: Story Through Word &amp; Image</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps toward change...

In the last few years, instructors/departments representing several courses on the above list implemented changes intended to improve student success, and these changes may already be making an impact. For example:

- A course transformation in WS 106 included restructuring the curriculum, incorporating active learning strategies, and adding a group teaching project. The overall non-success rate in this course dropped from 18% to 4% over the last 3 academic years.

- Pedagogical changes in CHEM 328 emphasized student engagement and eliminated the course’s heavy reliance on a textbook. The overall non-success rate in this course dropped from 30% to 14% over the last 3 academic years.

- After consulting with experts, the Theater, Film, and Dance Department incorporated new teaching strategies and diversified the curriculum in TA 104. The overall non-success rate in this course dropped from 21% to 10% over the last 3 academic years.

6 See Appendix A for a complete list of Gateway Courses for AY 12/13, including average non-success rates in each course.

7 “Non-success” is defined here as receiving one of the following grades: D, F, NC, or WU.
Table 6: Non-success rates in Gateway Courses for underrepresented (URM) students and non-underrepresented (non-URM) students, AY 12/13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column 1: Greatest Asymmetry</th>
<th>Column 2: High Asymmetry</th>
<th>Column 3: Moderate Asymmetry</th>
<th>Column 4: Equity or Inverse Asymmetry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gateway Courses where the non success rate for URM students is (2x \text{ or greater}) than the non success rate for non URM students</td>
<td>Gateway Courses where the non success rate for URM students is (1.5x \text{ or greater}) than the non success rate for non URM students</td>
<td>Gateway Courses where the non success rate for URM students is (1.25x \text{ or greater}) than the non success rate for non URM students</td>
<td>Gateway Courses where the non success rate for URM students is (\text{equal to or less than}) the non success rate for non URM students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA 452: Cost Acctg, Planning &amp; Control (6:40)</td>
<td>ART 290: Beginning Ceramics (13:21)</td>
<td>BA 252: Mgmt Accounting (30:42)</td>
<td>ANTH 104: Cult Anthropology (28:33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HIST 111: U.S. History Since 1877 (15:23)</td>
<td></td>
<td>MUS 316 Ear Training III (21:0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MATH 109: Calculus I (37:85)</td>
<td></td>
<td>NAS 104: Intro–Nat Amer Stdies (18:14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PHIL 100: Logic (16:29)</td>
<td></td>
<td>PHIL 420: Cont Epistmgy &amp; Metaphys (29:11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 104: Intro Psychology (14:22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>TA 230: Thtr/Film Aesthetics (50:30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSYC 242: Intro Psych Resrch Design (22:39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STAT 106: Intro Stats/Hlth Sciences (20:32)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZOOL 110: Introductory Zoology (30:46)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZOOL 113: Human Physiology (21:35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZOOL 356: Mammalogy (18:34)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How do I interpret Table 6?** The numbers in parentheses (X:Y) refer to the non-success rate for non-URM students as compared to the non-success rate for URM students in each course. For example, in ART 290 (Column 2), 13% of non-URM students did not succeed, while 21% of URM students did not succeed. The non-success rate for URM students is 1.6x greater than the non-success rate for non-URM students, and this course therefore appears in Column 2.

The superscript +/-//= symbols appear next to courses that were included in this table in the 2012 *Dissecting Diversity* report. The symbols indicate change in a course’s achievement gap—and therefore a course’s movement from one column to another—between that reported in 2012 and AY 12/13. For example, in this year’s report, ENGR 225 appears in Column 4 (meaning the non-success rates for URM and non-URM students are nearly equal); in the 2012 report, ENGR 225 appeared in Column 1 (meaning the 3-year average non-success rate for URM students was 2x that for non-URM students). The three ‘+’ symbols next to ENGR 225 indicate that the course moved three columns to the right and tell us that the achievement gap for this course in the most recent year was substantially smaller than in prior years. Courses with ‘=’ symbols had larger achievement gaps in AY 12/13 than before (therefore moving toward the left in the table), and courses with ‘-’ symbols had approximately equal achievement gaps in AY 12/13 to those listed in the 2012 report (therefore staying in the same column).

Courses without superscript symbols did not appear in the 2012 *Dissecting Diversity* report. Their appearance in this year’s report can be attributed to one or more of the following factors: a) the course met all of the criteria for a “Gateway Course” for the first time in AY 12/13; or b) the course was new in the last 2-3 years.
As would be expected, the overall composition of HSU’s tenure-line faculty population has seen relatively little change in the past year. As of Fall 2012, 13.5% of HSU’s tenure-line faculty were Persons of Color. There continues to be some variation across colleges with regards to ethnicity and gender of tenure-line faculty, as outlined in the below table.

Table 7: Faculty composition by ethnicity and gender, campus-wide and by college, Fall 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College of Arts, Humanities &amp; Social Sciences (n=92)</th>
<th>College of Natural Resources &amp; Sciences (n=92)</th>
<th>College of Professional Studies (n=47)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.3% Persons of Color</td>
<td>8.7% Persons of Color</td>
<td>17.0% Persons of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54.3% Female</td>
<td>22.8% Female</td>
<td>40.4% Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps toward change...

HSU’s implementation of our campus plan for faculty diversity continued in AY 12/13, with the integration of multiple new outreach and recruitment measures designed to bring the diversity of faculty applicant pools closer to national norms. Although the demographics of our overall faculty composition will necessarily change slowly over time, preliminary data from the last two hiring cycles suggest that the progress in this area, described in last year’s report, is continuing.

As has been the case over the past several years, HSU’s temporary faculty population is similar in terms of ethnic composition to the tenure-line faculty population, with 76.2% of temporary faculty self-identifying as White, and 13.3% of temporary faculty self-identifying as Persons of Color.

In contrast to the tenure-line faculty population, HSU’s temporary faculty are 59.9% Female and 40.1% Male, numbers that are consistent with historical trends.

8 For this analysis, the term “faculty” refers to instructional faculty only.
As illustrated in previous years’ reports, HSU’s full-time non-instructional employee population remains largely White, with very little change in the last year. As of Fall 2012, 15.0% of HSU’s full-time staff population were Persons of Color. The gender split also held steady, at 56.9% female and 43.1% male.

Table 8: Staff composition by ethnicity and gender, campus-wide, Fall 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n= 608

Steps toward change...

During AY 12/13, HSU crafted a detailed plan for diversifying our staff. The plan focuses on many of the same components contained in our faculty diversity plan, including:

- Mandatory training for hiring authorities and search committee members;
- Redesigned outreach and recruitment strategies intended to diversify our applicant pools; and
- Consistent monitoring of progress towards our campus staff diversity goals.

Implementation of the staff diversity plan will commence in AY 13/14.

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These numbers include all non-instructional full-time employees.
Chapter Three
In their own words: students share their experiences and impressions of diversity at HSU
Preface to Chapter Three

As in previous years, this year’s report offers a range of HSU students’ perspectives on diversity and inclusion, both on our campus and in our community. However, this year’s Chapter Three offers a new avenue for sharing student experiences, this time in the form of art, essays, and poetry, which reinforces the focus group feedback that we have highlighted in previous years.

We did this in order to provide students with an opportunity to paint a picture of their stories and perspectives in greater depth than we were able to capture in our focus group summaries, as well as to offer the campus community additional insight into the personal, detailed, and lived experiences of students at HSU.

The pieces that appear on the following pages were selected as the winning entries of the Diversity at HSU: Spring 2013 Art and Essay Contest, sponsored by the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Winning entries were selected by committee from a pool of nearly 80 contest submissions from students across the university (a participation rate of nearly 1%).

The ten contest winners worked over the course of the Spring semester to polish their work and prepare it for publication. In these pieces, we hear from men and women, Students of Color and White students, a student who is transgender, an international student, a former foster youth, and a student who is undocumented. We see how the varying aspects of identity have shaped students’ experiences, and also how each particular element of identity is only a slice of a much larger whole.

While this chapter only begins to explore the complexities of the HSU student perspective, we hope that the following pages will continue to deepen our understanding of the student experience and inspire each of us to engage with students, draw out their unique stories, and find ways to support their success at HSU.

About the Diversity at HSU: Spring 2013 Art and Essay Contest

Eligibility: Open to all currently enrolled HSU students; all types of art and writing considered.

Prompts: Entries responded to one or more of the following questions:

♦ How has your definition of “diversity” evolved through your learning experience at HSU, and how will this impact your future?

♦ Tell us your story (in written or artistic form): How have your own background and life experiences impacted your experience at HSU? How has “diversity” at HSU been a part of your personal experience?

What do we mean by “diversity”? For contest purposes, the concept of diversity encompasses inclusion of and respect for the many dimensions of identity that make individuals unique, including—but not limited to—ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation.

Artist names: Several of the winning entries are published under a pseudonym, by request of the artist.

Full contest guidelines are available at www.humboldt.edu/diversity/art-essay-contest
At first, I was scared
There was color lacking from every place
I was surrounded in a sea of pale skin
And learned what it felt like to be a minority

In every class, I felt alone
As if I were the outsider looking in,
I became uncomfortable in my own skin
Because only I had skin like mine

My virgin ears were filled with ignorance
Spewed from mouths of people who didn’t understand
Going over history they didn’t know

At this school
At this place
Diversity was just a word
And so caught up in the similarities
I could not see the changes that were put in place

My skin, which the sun has kissed into its golden hue
My eyes, which hold the sights of my people’s struggle,
My back, which holds the weight of inadequacy implied

Suddenly there were discussions put in place
To figure out why
Why people felt unequal,
What needed to change?
How can a difference be made?

Suddenly my fear was no longer a problem
My voice spread like fire
The weight on my shoulders lifted

But change is slow
And one voice can only change so much
The definition of minor is “less of.”

Well I am a minority
But my voice
Her Voice
His Voice
Their Voice
OUR VOICE
Is loud

Diversity is no longer just a word
It is an action
It is the joining of all to right a wrong
It is acceptance
And it is something that this place
That this campus
That this home
Is slowly becoming

At first I was afraid
To be the only person of my color in class
To feel singled out at questions that seemed
To ask me about my identity
As if I were the unspoken spokesperson
Of my cultures’ identity

At first I used to say I was mixed
Saying that color didn’t matter
But it matters when you feel minor
I even perpetuated some of the stereotypes of my culture
And I was ashamed

I am no longer afraid to have a voice
To be a better person
And to expect more out of myself
To not allow stereotypes to define me

The lack of diversity taught me
How to be the solution
How to not add to the problem
I am no longer afraid of not having a voice.
Mi Rialidad, My Reality

My reality, my identity, is an invisible one. My birthplace has shaped my life. Part of my identity is overlooked because my immigration status is a taboo. I am supposed to be in the “shadows.” Not having legal status affects every single thing I do, on or off campus. While HSU tries to make me feel included, this is not a reality. Little things like community service are made difficult because of background checks that could lead to immigration holds. The fear is real and there isn't one day that my legal status does not affect my academics, my financial situation, my housing, and even my social life.

There are very limited staff and faculty to whom I can disclose my legal status. I can relate to LGBTQ community members and how part of their identity is in a “closet.” Mine is in the “shadows.” Coming out about my status is not an easy or comfortable experience, ever! I let people know about my status out of anger, sadness, joy, anxiety, irritation, and to let people know I cannot do things other students can. I disclose my status because I am tired of lying and hiding such a critical part of my life. There is a bittersweet feeling when I hear friends talk about opportunities like studying abroad, internships, and scholarships for which I cannot even apply.

There is always anxiety whenever I seek a service on campus. I am sexually active and my health is important and I won’t forget the first time I went to get tested. I had saved up to pay for the testing fees, since I thought I wouldn’t be eligible for free testing because of my status. My nurse asked me why I was paying out of pocket if the service was free; all I had to do was fill out a form. I have a fear of forms because most I have encountered require a social security number. The nurse was baffled that I wanted to pay for the tests. I was tired of feeling uncomfortable and I made her feel uncomfortable by letting her know I was undocumented, and therefore did not qualify for government funded programs. There is always either an awkward silence or an “oh” after I let someone know. She stepped outside and came back to let me know I didn’t need a social security number. It made my day, but forms still intimidate me.

My home on campus is the MultiCultural Center. I feel safe. The staff members there have done more for me than anyone else on campus. The staff creates opportunities for me to be more involved in campus activities. They have given me emotional support when all I wanted to do is cry, drop out and just be with my family in difficult times. My immigration status is never an issue; it’s just another aspect of who I am. I was also given the opportunity to be who I am and share it with the world through the Social Justice Conference.

Diversity—along with opportunities—are what students in my situation need. I dream that one day the rest of the campus is as inviting, looking at students as more than a student, a number. I dream of having the same opportunities as other students, regardless of my status.
Color Me

I come from a long line of history, from ancestors that finger paint my world with an array of—food, traditions, language, songs, races, stories, memories, celebrations, and religion—knowledge. Ancestors, who molded and shaped the clay of my mind, encouraged me to look past self-imposed limits and censorship. Their lessons I hold dear. Yet, those lessons which have been passed down out of ignorance, I have learned to unlearn: the self-mutilating hatred towards my hue and the monthly sting of my relaxer for “good” hair.

Good hair is a concept that has plagued communities of color for many generations. In Spring 2013, I had the privilege to be part of a panel—“I’m Mixed, I’m Multicultural”—and hear the struggles that multicultural individuals face. Hair and appearances seemed to be a recurring theme. Allotting an open forum for students to speak and express themselves was a form of healing for me. We came to an understanding of our diversity and despite our beautiful differences we were able to find inclusivity. We realized that we are multicultural and don’t have to choose. We can have it all. We are, as the director of the MultiCultural Center shared, hapa, from the Hawaiian tradition, in broad terms, meaning “mixed.”

HSU, jokingly referred to as hills, stairs, and umbrellas, is a place where I have grown through my interactions. My preconceived notions have been challenged, as I have constantly become aware of the world around me and realized that “not fitting in” is alright. At “Soul Sunday,” a family brunch held during Black Liberation & Heritage Month that allows communities to engage in a discussion about spirituality, the keynote speaker mentioned that you don’t have to try and make yourself fit into the mold and sand down pieces of yourself for others.
Latin@ Peer Mentoring (LPM) helped me define and deconstruct crucial and complex notions about race, gender, and sexuality. As a Latina, my point-of-view has come a long way from my assumption that being Latin@ meant looking a certain way, sharing traditions, speaking Spanish, and having a similar socio-economic status. That perception has been turned right side up to the point where I can have genuine interactions with others and not pigeon-hole them into society’s “boxes.”

I was constantly told to “expand my horizons.” It was a saying that I always heard but never understood until now. My freshman year at HSU, I lived in Laurel/Creek View dorms, where international students are housed. There, I met individuals who shared a wealth of knowledge that I will never forget. I can recall the first time I ever had a hot pot, a chili-base soup you can eat with a variety of items, such as vegetables, fungi, meat, and noodles, lots and lots of noodles. That night, we all sat at the table and gathered around the hot pot, placed food into the soup as we laughed and exchanged stories. It was unforgettable, the food was delicious, and it’s something that I have continued to do because it’s a way to build community.

As the years progress, I realize that there is always room for more—learning, understanding, compassion, inclusion, exposure, races, friends, and appreciation. In an institution that thrives towards learning excellence, there is always room for diversity.
Reeham Ramadan Mohammed

The American Dream, Between Reality and Imagination

Born and raised in the countryside where everyone is dreaming of coming to the United States of America—the place which represents full freedom, developed education, chance for creativity, better future, and many wonderful ideas about way and style of life—from the far Middle East, from Egypt, I come.

Reeham Ramadan Mohammed, an ambitious Egyptian girl, raised in the countryside of Egypt where resources are very limited, then moved to Cairo for my university education, to discover the differences between the countryside and the city in my own country. At that point, a new word was added to my understanding: diversity. Yes, I did not know about diversity until I made it to Cairo, meeting more people, with different backgrounds and differences in religion. This was a turning point in widening my horizons of thinking.

After a couple of years, my ambition led me to come to the United States of America, to achieve steps towards my goals and to live in a place where everything speaks of diversity: classes, campus, events, and my dorm. In this place, with so many different people from different backgrounds: Mexican-Americans, African-Americans, Chinese-Americans, Native-Americans, Black-Americans, and White-Americans. I chatted with my friends, roommates and colleagues in classes about the American society.

I have been hearing a lot of stories about racial discrimination, and how people are fighting for their rights, asking for equality and being considered as Americans, apart from their color. The American society is not really the ideal society, as so many people think about it; it has many internal conflicts between races. I was amazed at how American people in the United States, the country the most known for its freedom, judge people depending on their color and not their way of thinking and their behaviors. I realized that we should get involved in societies if we want to know them well.
I have learned a lot about the term “diversity” from an international perspective, and from the most multicultural society, which made me think more deeply and critically about issues that show up around us. Now, I know more about freedom, the way people think, behave and live.

I have learned that diversity is not just about race and color; it is also in religion. Coming from a country where there are just Muslims and Christians to a country where I have friends that do not believe in God or high powers, friends that follow different kinds of Christianity, and friends with many different religions around the world has helped me learn more about cultures and different beliefs. With respect to all beliefs, this experience makes me love my religion more. This diversity changed my personality so that I am better able to accept different opinions. With my friends, we discuss, argue and talk about different issues, but we still love and respect each other.

Another part of diversity is knowing people who are lesbian and gay. In my culture, such a thing is totally prohibited and not accepted at all, but now I have gay and lesbian friends and we also argue and discuss things, but we are still friends and respect each other. I have become a more open-minded person, which I consider an important change in my personality.

With all the international people I know now, different cultures, languages, ways of thinking, personalities and religions, the world has become a very small place. It is easier to move around it, being familiar with different cultures and knowing more about diversity.

When I think about how I was a year ago, and how I have changed, I feel proud of myself. This interaction with diversity gives me a push forward to get to know more about the world, the cultures, the countries and the people.

When I go back to Egypt, I will try to transfer the idea about the American society from my own experience, work on having a great impact on the society, and plan for more travels around the world to discover more and more.
Down the Rabbit's Hole

I chose HSU for all the right reasons
Not to drink or smoke, but for small classes
Teachers 'love' to help if you simply ask them
A teacher said black people only sing depressing music

My parents separated when I was very young
Moving from place to place, countries outside the States
Being called a cotton picker from Tennessee, ignorance
Ridiculed by everyone different from me

I hear that I'm wrong; I can't speak English;
My opinions are off; I'm less than;
But remember I'm not a second class student.
I chose HSU for all the right reasons
Not to drink or smoke, but for small classes
Teachers 'love' to help if you simply ask them
A teacher said black people only sing depressing music

You see how teachers grade
Having to defend myself in race questions, is exhausting
Why can't I just be me

Do you even see me?
I hear that I’m wrong; I can’t speak English;
My opinions are off; I’m less than;
But remember I’m not a second class student.

I chose HSU for all the right reasons
Not to drink or smoke, but for small classes
Teachers ‘love’ to help if you simply ask them
A teacher said black people only sing depressing music

Getting beat up......................... all the time
I’m not blaming you
It’s just me, myself, and I
Sometimes I’m just so blue
I’m gonna change the world today
So tomorrow’ll be brand new
Chaos can’t be allowed to shine through

I chose HSU for all the right reasons
Not to drink or smoke but for small classes
Teachers love to help if you simply ask them
A teacher said black people only sing depressing music

I got the power to break these chains
And I’m on my way
Yes, I’m on my way

To listen to a sound recording of this piece, please visit: www.humboldt.edu/diversity/reports.html
When I began my education at Humboldt State University four years ago, I thought I was a well-rounded individual. I assumed that because I didn’t say racial slurs or use “homophobic” language, that I was an ally for marginalized groups. As I continue my education at HSU, the more I become aware of the hypocrisy I had in my own life. I believed that I was helping marginalized groups, while instead I was waging war against groups of people by appropriating their culture for my own convenience. Four years later I see the world differently. I can’t eat in the depot or work in the library without considering the gender and racial roles and stereotypes that are at play.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience at HSU. However, after being here for four years, I believe that covert racism and cultural appropriation are problems on our campus. I see and hear white identified students speaking in class and they remind me of where my mindset was at the beginning of my education: good intentions, but a narrow focus of what it means to be racist. I, too, was blissfully unaware of the ways I was appropriating other people’s cultures.

Covert racism is woven into institutions, trends, language, and HSU. So many of us with privilege—and particularly white privilege—at HSU think we know about diversity and assume that we have credibility because we took a Diversity and Common Ground (DCG) class. Taking a DCG class can act as a diversity Band-Aid for a student; passing the class doesn’t mean we become exempt from racist thoughts and actions. In some cases, these classes can turn overt racism into covert racism: students might assume that because they suddenly know more about the struggle of a black identified woman, they know about all oppression and stop there. The work to stop racism must continue beyond this initial step.

My freshman year, I dressed as a “Native American” for Halloween. At the time, I had no idea of how offensive that was, and I’m ashamed of myself because I didn’t take the time...
to think before I bought the costume. I assumed that because you could buy the costume and all of my white friends thought it was cute, that it was okay. I picked it out in a sea of geisha girl and “Mexican” costumes. I was like the majority of the white population on campus: uninformed, but assuming that because I was a student at a liberal school I couldn’t be a “racist.” The campus is flooded with white students wearing Navajo print clothing and Rastafarian colors without realizing that they are hijacking another culture’s traditions and consuming it as part of the masses.

I want to help educate the white population at HSU. I want the 50% of students on our campus who identify as white to be even more aware of covert racism. Some think that because they have dreadlocks, they are more enlightened than their classmate who wears a camouflaged hat. Students hang Tibetan prayer flags in their dorms and on their porches when they don’t understand what they represent and how offensive it may be for students from Tibet. The majority of people doing these things have no idea what they are doing and don’t realize how offensive it is. The school addresses overt racism, but the examples I listed above are rarely discussed.

Humboldt State is a great example of an organization labeling itself as diverse and assuming that people will change; and the white population can help or hurt the problem. As the majority group, white people should address covert racism and work with students who are under-represented and un-heard to improve the situation for all students on our campus. Covert racism and cultural appropriation need to become a larger part of our campus dialogue, and we should utilize this dialogue as a helpful tool when working to understand the roles we play, either as victims of cultural appropriation or as the perpetrators. Real, lasting diversity requires constant thought, consideration and a change in the mindsets and hearts of people.
I understood early on that ultimately getting to college would be my only ticket out of eventual poverty. It was inherent. It was evident. It was an Epiphany I had so I stuck with it, and I went for it.

In my mind, I was good at identifying institutions and programs that would help prepare me for the future. Having lived in foster homes since the age of 13, I was used to rules, and living inside of a system. However, nothing I had endured previously had properly prepared me for HSU.

The disparities in my institutionalized housing before I came to Humboldt State were definitely demographic. This had very much to do with the social displacement of African-Americans in poor, inner-city communities. Coming to Humboldt made me better able to recognize and understand the social discourses on race, and overall attitude toward the minority, aka the “other.”

Initially, I wanted to attend a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) because I understood that the whole HBCU experience would be geared towards helping me to develop myself as a Black student and prepare me for society. In choosing to pursue my studies at HSU, I received a totally different feeling and experience. This was due to Humboldt’s lack of diversity.

When I mention diversity, I do not mean a well-proportioned number of students representing each “racial group,” as I had previously believed this term to mean. What I mean is that once these students are all collectively on campus, struggling to share the same space, will there be:

“Inclusion of and respect for the many dimensions of identity that make individuals unique, including—but not limited to—ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation?”

Tina Sampay

The Art of Mastering Humboldt’s Environment

I understood early on that ultimately getting to college would be my only ticket out of eventual poverty. It was inherent. It was evident. It was an Epiphany I had so I stuck with it, and I went for it.

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When I mention diversity, I do not mean a well-proportioned number of students representing each “racial group,” as I had previously believed this term to mean. What I mean is that once these students are all collectively on campus, struggling to share the same space, will there be:

“Inclusion of and respect for the many dimensions of identity that make individuals unique, including—but not limited to—ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation?”

Tina Sampay

The Art of Mastering Humboldt’s Environment

I understood early on that ultimately getting to college would be my only ticket out of eventual poverty. It was inherent. It was evident. It was an Epiphany I had so I stuck with it, and I went for it.

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I never fully understood the concept of “culture-shock” until I attended Humboldt State and lived in the student dorms. I tried my absolute best to adhere to the institutionalized living system. I had to alter ways of myself, so as to not inadvertently confirm stereotypes at HSU, especially in terms of African American achievement in American schools. The task of achievement, I would argue, is distinctive for African Americans, because attending a University requires that you use your mind, and the ideology of the larger society has always been about questioning the mental capacity of African Americans. As a student that identifies as a “minority,” I felt that my lived experiences, my overall success, and myself were not valued as much as those who identify with the dominant race.

I constantly struggled with the concept that even if I commit myself to hard work over time, and no matter what I, or the other members of my ethnic group, accomplish, these accomplishments are not likely to change how I, and other members of my group, are viewed by the larger society. How can I aspire to work towards excellence when it is unclear whether or when evaluations of my work will be taken seriously?

I am not the poster child for Humboldt State; I am just expressing my opinions and experiences. I have never felt so out of place and marginalized in my life as I felt my freshman year attending HSU. I constantly to this day ask myself, “Why am I here?” But I understand it is for a greater purpose of destiny. I believe that Humboldt has prepared me for, and introduced me to, the broader realm of life. If I had attended an HBCU, it would have only prolonged my introduction to White America.

One thing I do appreciate about Humboldt, despite its lack of diversity, is the opportunity and safe space to learn my Ethnic Studies. Most of the students are friendly, even if the institutional realm of the University is not focused on, or constructed around, my success, or me expressing my Black free will. At HSU I have acquired vital insight on achieving and maintaining success, along with cultural-political views about how society is constructed, and how we are taught to perceive one another. This, along with much more insight and knowledge to come, has, and will, effectively prepare me for the future.

Talk about mastering of environment.
Humboldt Help,

I am a student at Humboldt State University. I am contacting you to let you know that I self-identify as transgender. My name will appear on files as Jazmine Cabezas, but I prefer to go by Julian Cabezas and not be outed on the moodle system/discussion boards, and therefore to the other students in my classrooms. I will be putting Julian Cabezas on my assignments and would appreciate it if you could edit my first name on the moodle system. If you have any questions for me regarding this, please don’t hesitate to contact me. My email address is _____.

Thank you in advance.

“I will change it right now, but the system that populates students in Moodle may just change it back.”

Hello, my name is Julian Cabezas
My Student ID Number is **********
I do not exist—
On moodle, my official class roster, and you can’t email me.
I am one of the MANY MANY Students on the Humboldt State campus with documentation issues.

“We would love to help you with this, but we are not in charge of changing user information. There is another system that populates Moodle with user information”

What system is in charge of sustaining cisgender privilege?
On a daily basis, I am out-ed as transgender by this system.
I am not in charge of changing the dynamic, but here is a start.
I am asking for protection, a safer space,
I want to be acknowledged and respected.

Across the campus we are discriminated by gender segregation,
Emails addressed to me use salutations like “Ms.” and the pronoun “she.”
I worry for my life in the restrooms and locker rooms,

And yet, there are so few (gender-neutral) that I am left with a lack of options.

I don't want to be out-ed because my diversity is too problematic
For the system.
This is not asking for much,
This is a request for acknowledgement: we exist.

We are all in charge. Diversify the system. I want this to be known.
Ever since I can remember, elephants have always been my favorite animals. Originally, they were appealing for their large size, but I also admired their tough exterior and silent strength. Part of the reason I liked them so much was because I connected with them on a deeper level. Growing up in East Los Angeles, I had to be strong and tough as well. My family situation was very tumultuous and, due to the pessimism that surrounded me, I bounced from different relatives’ homes, migrating like my elephant counterparts.

I kept this exterior all through high school, as I dealt with violence within my family. Everywhere I turned, negativity was all around. In the presence of my family, friends, and even total strangers, I found it easier to put up a front and roam aimlessly with others who thought and acted like me.

When I started at HSU, that exterior slowly started to chip away. The atmosphere was more positive, and I was able to meet people who were like me, with similar backgrounds and experiences. I came to realize that even though I was physically different, we shared something in common. Through our similarities, I was able to form bonds and relationships with people that I might not have made previously. Attending HSU has allowed me to be a more open person, and I have finally found my own herd that I am proud to call my family.
Lou Martin Sherry

Spring 2013 Diversity Art and Essay Contest Winner

See inside for more winning entries from the Spring 2013 Diversity Art and Essay Contest...