

## Diversity, Access, and Inclusion Strategic Plan Leonard Davis School of Gerontology 2017

### INTRODUCTION

#### Charge from the Provost

In November 2015, Provost Michael Quick initiated action to improve **diversity, access, and inclusion** across the USC campus. In February 2016, a joint Provost/Academic Senate retreat was held to discuss opportunities to improve diversity, access, and inclusion with more than 150 USC leaders, faculty, and staff in attendance. A key recommendation arising from this retreat was the need for each school or department to develop a diversity strategic plan to address these efforts. Guidelines for developing diversity strategic plans include: 1) transparency in current data and 2) delineated goals and strategies for improving diversity, access, and inclusion as well as overall climate. The schools also were charged with forming a Diversity Committee, comprised of all level of stakeholders—faculty (tenured, tenure track, and RTPC [research, teaching, practice, and clinical]), staff, and students—to guide this initiative.

#### Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Mission

The mission of the USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology is to promote healthy aging for diverse individuals, communities, and societies through leadership and innovation in research, education, and practice.

This mission is carried out by a faculty that is highly interdisciplinary, approaching aging from diverse areas such as neurobiology, molecular biology, biodemography, cognitive psychology, sociology, urban planning, and health services research. This expertise has earned the USC Leonard Davis School an international reputation for its strengths in basic biological, social behavioral, and policy science. It also has a long history of applied research designed to systematically test program effectiveness. Cross-disciplinary applied and translational research is conducted in a number of areas related to aging, including family studies, housing, long-term services and supports, fall prevention, elder abuse prevention, caregiving, and technology and aging.

In addition, the school serves as a focal point for faculty and students from throughout the university to collaborate on basic and applied research in aging fostering partnerships through collaborative centers and institutes, joint appointments, and dual degrees. With the USC Leonard Davis School as the hub of aging research, and with additional strong programs throughout the university, USC is leading the way in defining the field of gerontology. Transdisciplinary relationships within the school and with colleagues throughout the University will take USC Leonard Davis research to the next level and more firmly establish USC as the world leader.

### *How Diversity Fits within our Mission*

Diversity is an integral component across research, practice, and education within the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology. Our faculty conduct innovative research aimed at understanding and bridging ethnic disparities among older adults in health and wellness, quality of life, longevity, and other factors related to quality of life. Our Family Caregiver Support Center serves the neighboring ethnically diverse community of USC. Our courses integrate issues of diversity where possible. Through this plan, we aim to further weave diversity throughout all aspects of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

### **Diversity Committee**

The USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Diversity Committee, chaired by Associate Professor Susan Enguidanos, PhD, is comprised of diverse students, staff, and faculty representatives. These members have contributed to the development of the Climate survey and participated in the development of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Diversity Strategic Plan for presentation to the Dean and Faculty. Diversity Committee Members include:

- Cleopatra Abdou, PhD, Assistant Professor
- Donna Benton, PhD, RTPC Associate Professor
- Jim deVera, MA, Student Advisor
- Zach Gassoumis, PhD, RTPC Assistant Professor
- Todd Morgan, PhD, RTPC Professor
- Catherine Perez, PhD Student
- Yujun Zhu, Master's Student

### **Definition**

The term **diversity** refers to underrepresented groups within academia. Typically, these groups have included Black/African Americans (hereafter “AA”), Hispanic/Latinos (hereafter “Latinos”), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN). However, for the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, we also include other groups, based on gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability, and first-generation college students within our definition.

**Inclusion** is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive university promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the cultures, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of all its members. In our effort to promote inclusion among all underrepresented groups, we include international students in our focus.

### **Organizational Accountability**

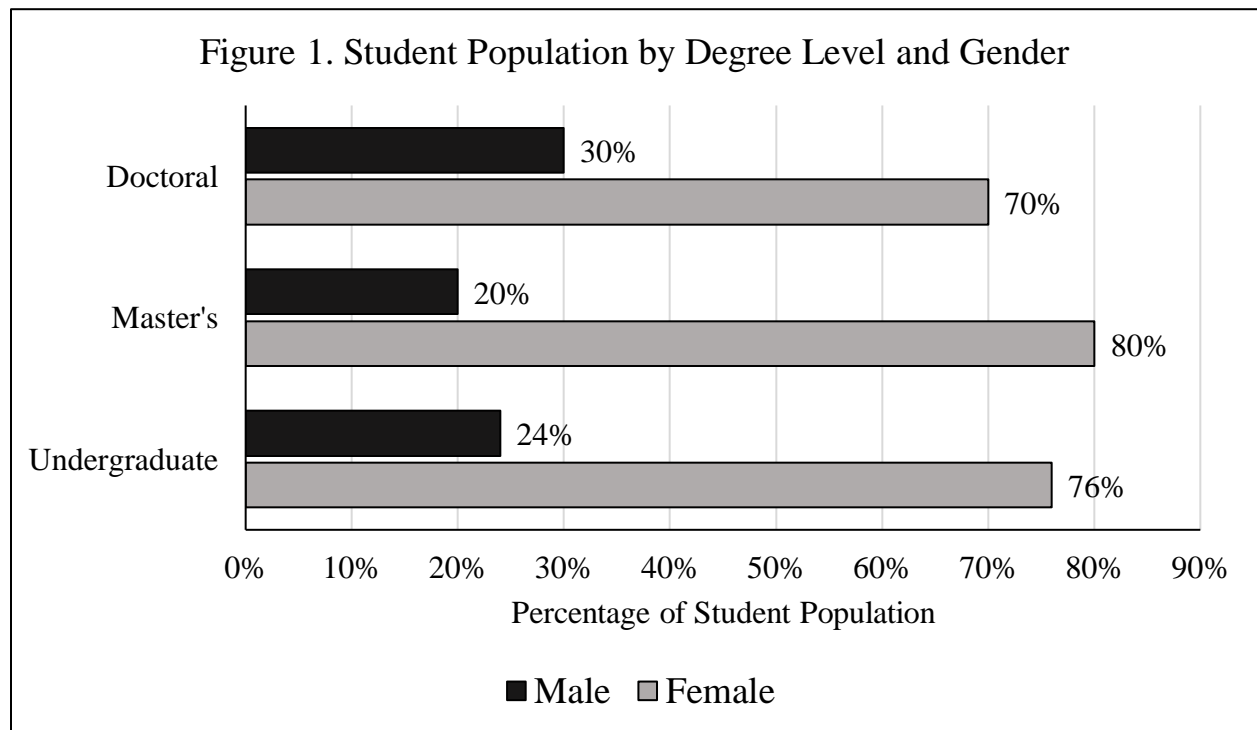
The Diversity Liaison holds an appointment as Assistant Dean of Gerontology and serves as chair of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Diversity Committee. The Diversity Liaison reports to the Dean of the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and also serves as a liaison to the University and Provost, representing the Leonard Davis School in University-wide diversity activities, events, and activities. See attached for the organizational chart.

Additionally, this plan includes goals that require commitment and accountability across all leadership positions. The Dean has provided a budget to support new activities related to carrying out these goals (see attachment).

## CURRENT STATISTICS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

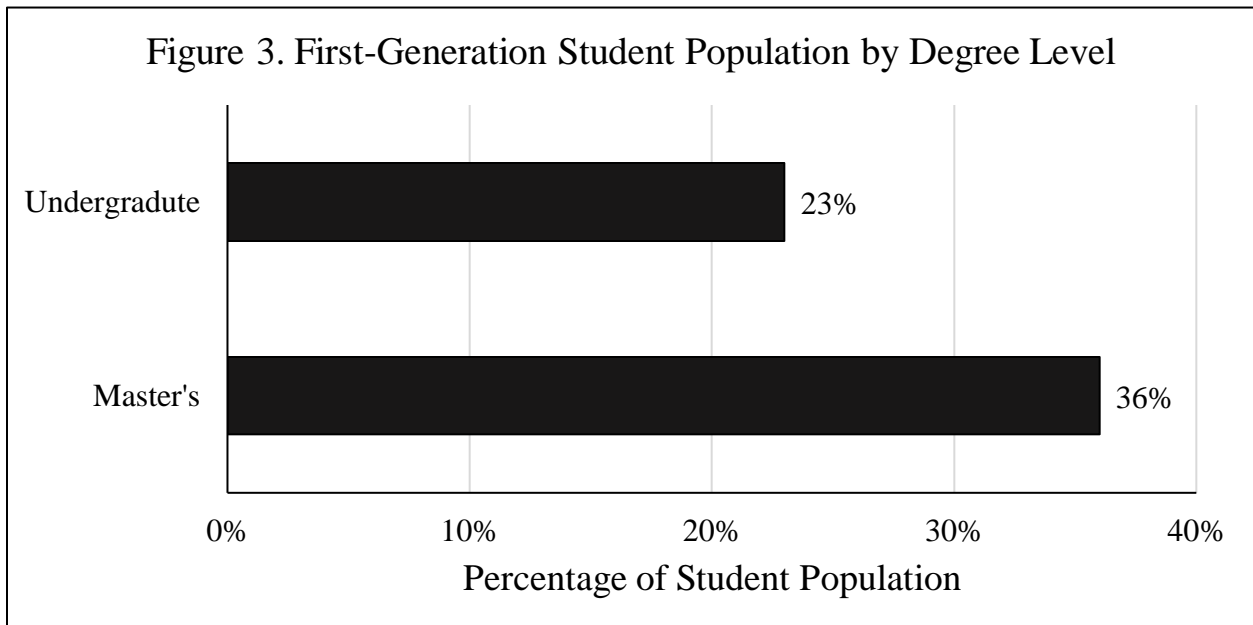
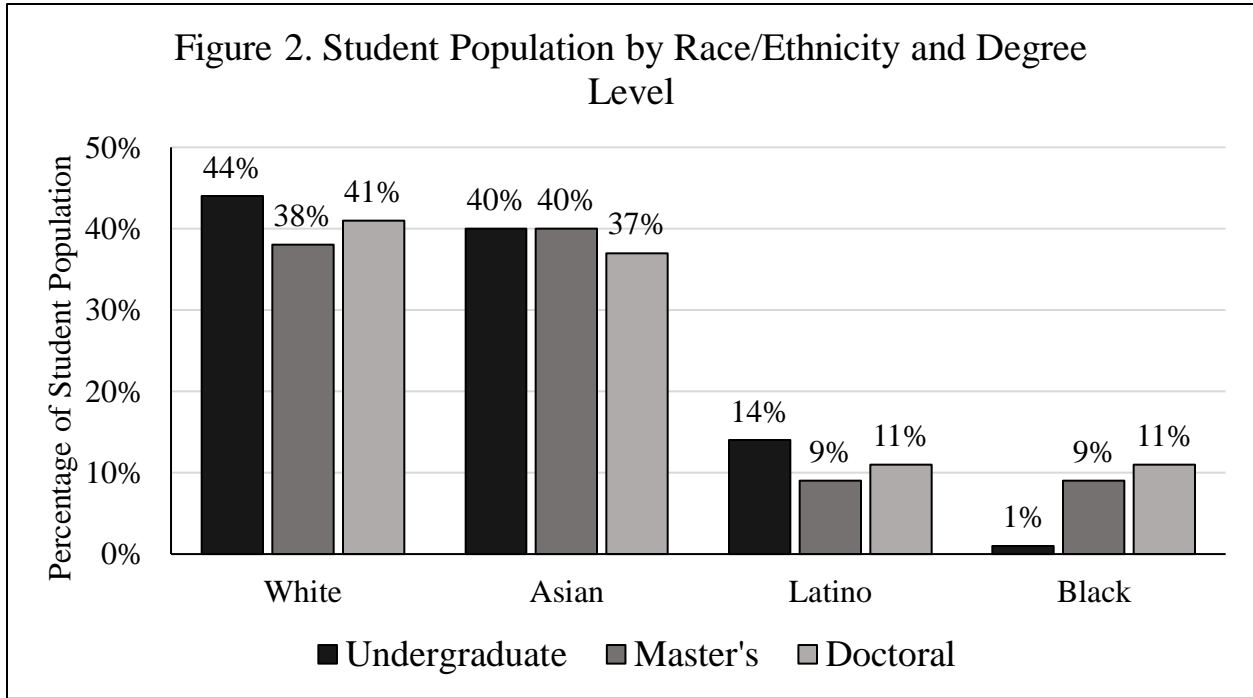
### Students

Our current enrollment in both undergraduate and master's programs reveals a strong enrollment of females, representing at least two-thirds of all students (see Figure 1). In 2016, we had an overall enrollment of 88 undergraduate and 348 master's level students. More than half of our undergraduate- and master's-level students are minorities, most of whom are Asian. We have higher enrollment of Hispanics (13.5% in undergraduate vs. 8% in master's) in our undergraduate program, but lower African American (<1% vs 9.2%) student enrollment as compared with our master's program (see Figure 2). Taken together, 15% of undergraduate and 18% of master's students are members of underrepresented minority groups; these percentages fall below their representation in the U.S. population (29.5% of U.S. population aged 18+ in 2016). Additionally, compared with statistics from the National Center for Educational Statistics (2014) of enrollment in post-secondary education, our combined 15% of underrepresented minority undergraduate students falls below national levels of 29.6% (Note: statistics include trade schools which may have higher rates of minority students). We also fall behind the combined USC underrepresented minority prevalence of 19.8%, which we will use as our beginning benchmark for both our undergraduate and master's level students.



Approximately 25% of our students are first-generation college students (see Figure 3).

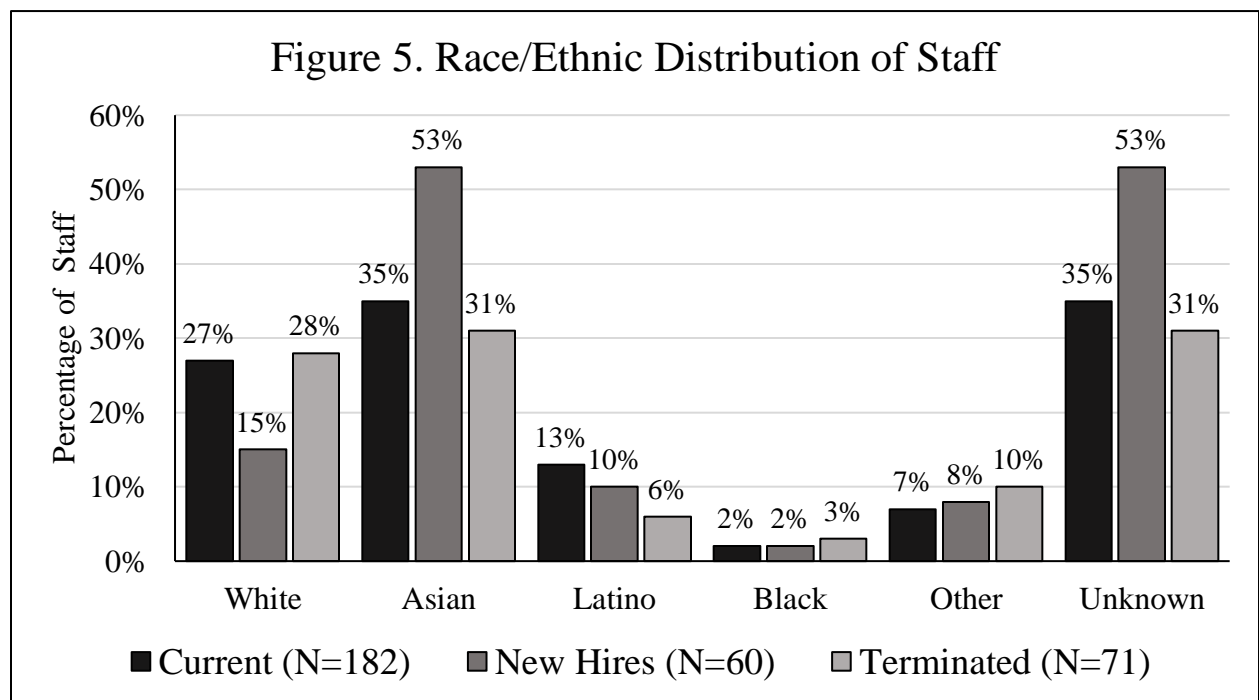
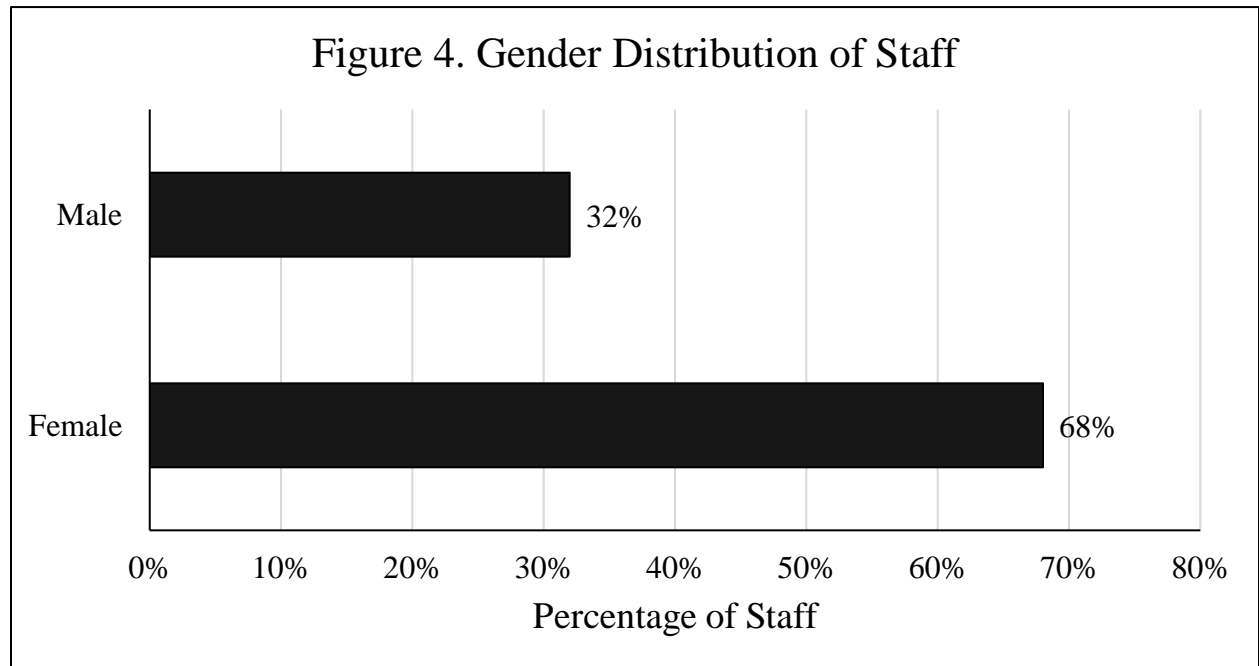
Our doctoral students are extremely diverse; among the 46 enrolled, 59% are non-white minority students. Among these, 63% are Asian, 19% AA, and 19% Latino (see Figure 2).



**Staff**

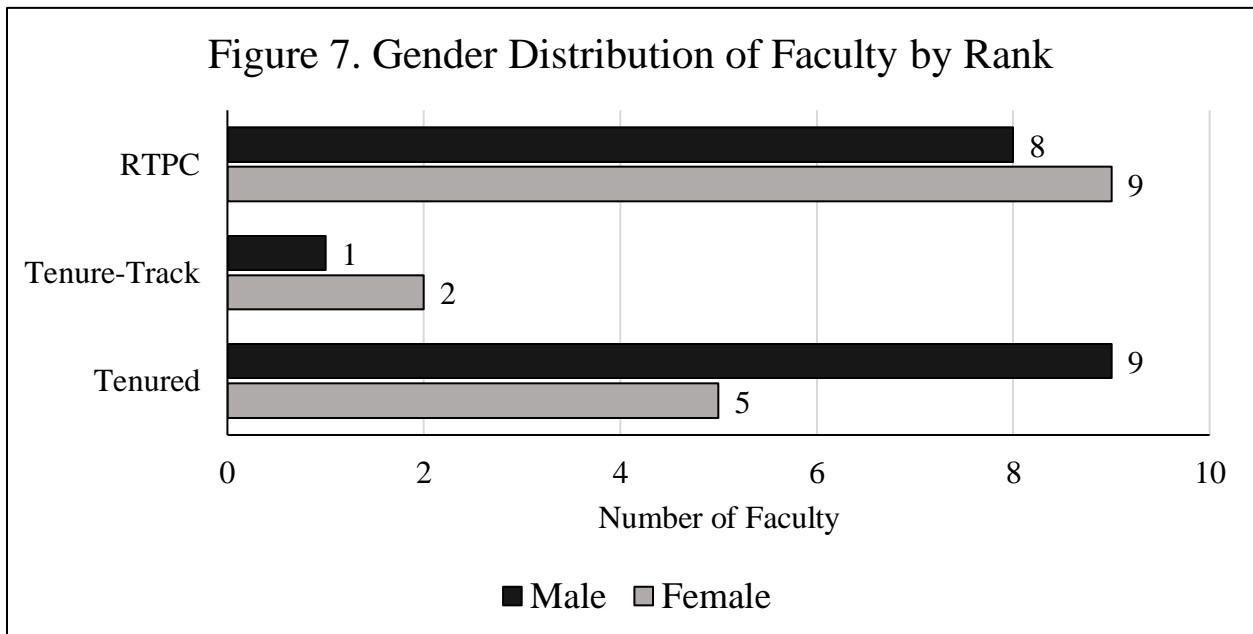
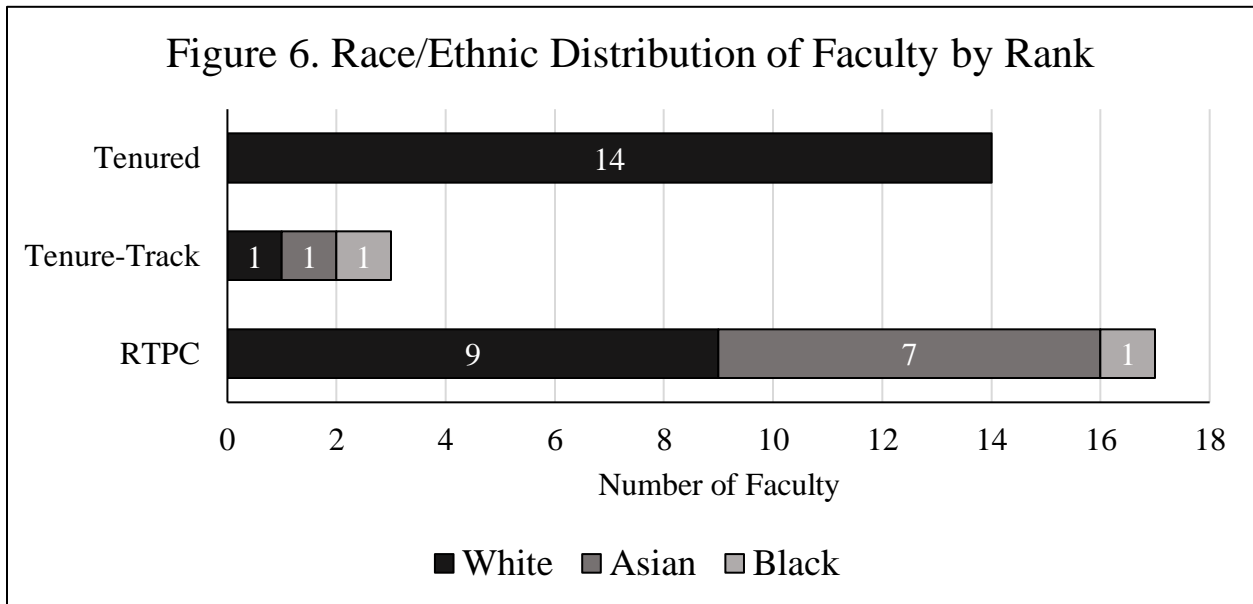
The Leonard Davis School of Gerontology currently employs 182 staff members, 68% of whom are female (see Figure 4). Data obtained from Human Resources indicates that staff is racially and ethnically diverse, although more than one-third of staff have unknown racial/ethnic background, resulting in a rather unclear picture of diversity (see Figure 5). The available data indicate that we have a very small African American staff, as compared with other racial/ethnic groups. Table 5 reflects racial/ethnic distribution of current staff, staff with terminated employment in the last year, and new hires in the last year.

**Faculty**



Data were compiled by the Diversity Committee regarding faculty composition at the end of the Spring semester 2017. At this time, our faculty composition included 14 tenured faculty, three tenure-track, and 17 RTPC faculty. As shown in Figure 6, there is more diversity among RTPC and tenure-track faculty, with no diversity among tenured faculty. Tenured faculty is homogenous, comprised entirely of Caucasians.

Figure 7 depicts faculty gender and tells a similar story to that of ethnicity. While there are more females than males among tenure-track (67%) and RTPC (60%) faculty, the distribution of females to males is inverted for tenured faculty. Among tenured faculty, only 36% are female.



## **CURRENT STRENGTHS IN DIVERSITY, ACCESS, AND INCLUSION**

Our student, staff, and faculty demographics indicate several strengths in terms of diversity and access. First, among both students and staff, we have strong representations of females. In addition, we are successfully recruiting and enrolling first-generation college graduates, both at the undergraduate and graduate level. Likewise, although data are anecdotal, an estimated 20-25% of our tenured/tenure-track faculty is comprised of first-generation college graduates. Although we have a good proportion of non-whites, most of these individuals are not underrepresented minorities. Finally, among our doctoral students, we have strong representation of women and continue to grow our ethnic diversity as well.

This plan builds on the momentum of our efforts over the past decade to grow our student, staff, and faculty to reflect the diversity of Southern California. These efforts are reflected in our recruitment materials, website, and rise in the proportion of minority students and staff over the last ten years. We aim to continue these successful activities and expand our efforts to fill the gaps identified in this plan.

## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

### **Goal #1: Improve diversity of tenure-track and tenured professors.**

**1a. Increase number of AA and Latino tenure-track and tenured faculty members to two by 2021, from one TT/T AA/Latino in 2016.**

**1b. Increase number of AA and Latino diversity of tenured faculty to one by 2022, from zero in 2016**

**1c. Increase number of AA and Latino RTPC faculty to three by 2021, particularly among teaching/instructional faculty, from two in 2016.**

**1d. Increase number of female tenured faculty to six by 2021, from five in 2016.**

### **Notes on Metrics:**

The metrics identified in goal 1 are only reflective of gender and racial/ethnic diversity. Although the Leonard Davis School is committed to improving diversity in other areas (e.g., sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status), it is not currently feasible to include these metrics due to the lack of available data.

Our targeted goals are reflective of our small faculty and our limited capacity to recruit new TT/T faculty. In Spring 2017, we had 17 TT/T faculty. This small number coupled with limited turnover leaves small margins for making larger inroads in diversifying our faculty.

### **Weakness**

A primary weakness in the diversity of the School of Gerontology lies in the limited diversity of tenured faculty. Although we are doing a good job of recruiting and promoting faculty who are first-generation college students, gender and racial/ethnic diversity are low among our tenured faculty. Specifically, our tenured faculty is nearly two times more likely to be male than female, and all tenured faculty are White. Among tenure-track faculty, we have a larger representation of females than males (two females: one male), and only one faculty member from an underrepresented minority. Note that we recently hired four new

tenure-track faculty members who joined our faculty in Fall 2017, including an African American male. With the addition of these new junior faculty members, the gender distribution of tenure-track faculty will be nearly equal (four females: three males). However, we will need to continue to work toward ensuring that as many female faculty as male faculty are promoted to tenure in order to promote gender diversity, access, and inclusion at the levels of Associate and Full Professor. Further, we need to continue to increase racial/ethnic diversity, access, and inclusion at all levels of the tenure track: Assistant, Associate, and Full Professor.

### **Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Improve recruitment processes to attract and hire diverse faculty, with emphasis on racial/ethnic diversity at tenured/tenure-track level as well as gender diversity at the tenured level.
  - Develop plan for ongoing outreach to female and ethnic/racial minority doctoral students, post-doctoral candidates, and senior researchers at national conferences in aging.
  - Develop targeted outreach material that highlights the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology's cross-cutting commitment to diversity (age, gender, ethnic/racial, disability) in student representation, research, and inclusion.
  - Conduct interviews with current underrepresented faculty to gain a greater understanding of what recruitment strategies are likely to be most effective.
  - Identify best practices among colleges and universities that have produced desired results.
  - Integrate diversity, access, and inclusion language in recruitment material.
  - Extend distribution of faculty recruitment material to include minority-serving institutions.
  - Ensure that job listings and other recruitment materials are distributed to minority leaders in the field of gerontology and/or in the subspecialty sought in specific recruitments.
  - Ensure that job listings and other recruitment materials are distributed to listservs and other groups that promote diversity, access, and inclusion (e.g., the NIA Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research, Division 45 of the American Psychological Association for the study of ethnic minority psychology, the Michigan Center for Urban African American Aging Research).
  - Invite current minority faculty from across the campus to job talks and other interview activities, including one-on-one meetings and dinners.
  - Promote diversity and aging research and services conducted by Leonard Davis School faculty and students through at least four stories each year, including press releases, or other publicity.
2. Develop systems to support and retain diverse faculty and strengthen existing systems to support underrepresented minorities and females in achieving tenure.
  - Strengthen mentorship and sponsorship for tenure-track faculty.



- Continue with the Academic Advancement Forum for junior faculty, including RTPC and tenure-track faculty.
- Develop guidelines for mentorship, including mentorship committees and a primary and secondary mentor, to ensure adequate support is provided to each junior faculty member through the tenure process.
- Hold bi-annual faculty reviews to identify areas for improvement and opportunities to support junior faculty in making such progress.
- Provide leadership training to increase ethnic, gender, disability, and other diversity of faculty in leadership roles and on the School leadership team.
- Work with the University to develop competitive recruitment packages, which include housing assistance, attractive salaries and start-up packages, and signing bonuses.
- Increase School and University awareness of issues that are often specific to minority scholars and research areas in which minority scholars disproportionately work (e.g., works that are specific to ethnic and other [e.g., gender, sexual] minorities tend to be published in lower impact journals—consider the impact journal for that area specifically rather than for the field; self-identified African Americans are 10% less likely to receive NIH funding than Asians and Whites, even after controlling for a number of critical characteristics, including employer type and publication record: see Ginther et al., 2011 in *Science* and Hayden, 2015 in *Nature*).
- Identify opportunities to create junior and/or senior Minority Aging Chairs to demonstrate our commitment to diversity, access, and inclusion.
- Create leadership and service opportunities at the School-level that allow diverse faculty to lead and to assist with strengthening the climate in support of diversity, access, and inclusion.
- Investigate opportunities to develop or partner with existing organizations to participate in diversity and aging symposia, journals, blogs, books, and other publications.

**Goal #2: Increase number of underrepresented minority students from the pool of admitted undergraduate students by 30%. We will increase the number of underrepresented minority students at the master’s level by 10 percent by 2021.**

While our long-term benchmark is to surpass the prevalence of underrepresented minority students at USC, we feel our five-year goal represents a realistic and achievable aim. In order to increase student diversity at all academic levels, increased targeted efforts are needed to reach underrepresented minority students. Particular areas of focus identified through our student data include African American and American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) undergraduate students and Latino/Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) graduate students.

**Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Meet with central USC Office of Admission to identify strategies for outreach to undergraduates.

2. Conduct focus groups with groups of diverse students to identify opportunities to expand outreach and strengthen retention of underrepresented minority students.
3. The Leonard Davis School's Development Office will work with the central University Advancement to secure scholarship funding for specific underrepresented minority students.
4. Expand Master's and doctoral level recruitment and outreach to minority-serving institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and other institutions with high enrollment of underrepresented minorities (e.g., the California State University campuses at Los Angeles, Dominguez Hills, and Riverside).
5. Work with the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology's Development Office and the Cal States to identify opportunities for foundation-funded (e.g., NSF) training programs for underrepresented minorities in research.
6. Work with Leonard Davis School of Gerontology's Development Office to identify opportunities to develop and implement scholarship campaigns for minority students.
7. Staff and graduate students will attend community educational conferences/fairs among local Latinos and AA high schools (eg, Adelante Mujer Latina Conference)
8. Partner with multi-cultural fraternities and sororities to conduct outreach to local high school students.
9. Develop/expand pipeline program (NIH/NSF/Foundation).
10. Promote diversity and aging research and services conducted by Gero faculty and students through at least four stories each year, press releases, or other publicity.

**Goal #3: Assess resources needed to improve support for diverse and international students by May 2018.**

In order to successfully recruit and retain underrepresented minority students, we must demonstrate adequate resources, support services, and integration programs for diverse, broadly defined, domestic students as well as international students.

**Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Maintain a diverse student support staff.
2. Conduct focus groups with diverse students to identify mechanisms to improve socialization, integration, and support for diverse domestic and international students.
3. Work with our Andrus volunteers to provide international students with opportunities to improve cultural integration.
4. Investigate opportunities to expand integration opportunities for international students through campus-based student groups, our internship programs, and other School-specific activities and initiatives.
5. Develop implementation goals and action steps to respond to needs identified.

**Goal #4: Improve student, staff, and faculty education on ageism, ethnic and cultural sensitivity, and all types of harassment through completion of three new sensitivity training courses each year.**

**Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Maintain a workplace and classrooms that respect and embrace diversity, access, and inclusion.
2. Strengthen cultural sensitivity, sexual harassment, and ageism training via appropriate pedagogical and curricular routes (e.g., Global Diversity and Aging and Women and Aging courses).
3. Develop a Leonard Davis School of Gerontology Diversity, Access, and Inclusion Statement to be included in key places and in key materials (e.g., appropriate location on our website, application materials for undergraduate, Master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral studies).
4. Integrate Diversity and Inclusion Statements within every course syllabus.
5. Invite at least two colloquium lectures each year on issues of diversity and inclusion.
6. Work with curriculum committees at all levels to identify opportunity to integrate D&I curriculum within courses as appropriate (including gender, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, disability, and first-generation college students)
7. Provide targeted semi-annual staff and faculty training to improve awareness of cultural sensitivity, harassment, and ageism. (e.g., microaggressions, bullying, or otherwise).

**Goal #5: Provide leadership in issues of University-wide leadership in issues of age discrimination and ageism through the development of informational material.**

**Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Develop and make available to USC students, staff, and faculty an introductory video to ageism and age discrimination.
2. Develop a brochure for Gerontology students that includes information on age discrimination and ageism and resources to support older students.
3. Address issues of ageism at Leonard Davis School of Gerontology and USC conferences, meetings, and lectures.
4. Present on issues of ageism at the 2019 University's Diversity and Inclusion Training Week.

**Goal #6: Assess progress and revise Strategic Plan at minimum every two years, based on findings and progress. Continue to work, as a Committee and a School, to identify other areas to improve diversity, access, and inclusion.**

**Specific Objectives/Action Steps**

1. Conduct Climate survey among students, staff, and faculty.
2. Discuss survey findings at faculty meetings and generate additional goals and objectives in response to survey findings.

3. Revise Diversity Strategic Plan in response to survey findings and retreat discussion.