UMSI statement on diversity

The University of Michigan School of Information (UMSI) is a scholarly community of faculty, staff and students who come together from hundreds of unique backgrounds. This diversity is a key advantage of the school. We also seek diversity in our school because doing so helps to build a better world.

United by our interest in making technology and the communication of information between people better, and sharing the belief that our efforts can change the world, we use our many backgrounds, orientations and points of view to shape our research, teaching and learning. Together, we produce better, more creative work than we would have been able to accomplish without so many different, strong contributions. We trust each other’s commitment to the school’s mission, and seek to understand and take advantage of the insights and experiences that make our stories different.

UMSI is unique in how broadly it approaches information problems, bringing together the intellectual diversity of a dozen social and technological sciences. A community of students, faculty and staff that is multicultural, international and representing differences in countless other ways is essential to maintain that edge. We actively work to increase the diversity of our school, and also to make it a welcoming environment for everyone who chooses to share their unique strengths here at UMSI.

What is your story? What do you bring to the table? Join us, and explore the possibilities.

School-wide diversity goal

Full goal (5-7 year):

Make our commitment to diversity part of the fabric of everything we do, visible in our community life, instruction, research and administration of programs and services.

To achieve this goal, we will focus on four concepts: culture/climate (environment), composition (people), capabilities (skills), and contributions (outcomes).

Sub-goals (5-7 year) launching in FY14:

a. Continuously and consistently support diversity by adding support of diversity (broadly defined: many different backgrounds, orientations, life experiences, and perspectives) as an objective in staff performance evaluations and Faculty Activity Reports (FARS). (Contributions)

b. Provide opportunities to bring people from different backgrounds in the school together. (Culture/Climate)

c. Implement additional efforts to reach out to underrepresented populations when recruiting for our faculty, staff and student body. (Composition)
d. Create a teaching and learning environment that takes advantage of diversity in and outside the classroom and in the UMSI workplace. (Culture/Climate)

e. Provide educational opportunities to faculty, staff and students about how diversity can be both encouraged and harnessed; actively encourage faculty and staff participation in campus events, and seek out partnerships with student and campus groups. (Capabilities)

f. Identify and publicize ways that diversity has contributed to the success of UMSI and its community as a whole. (Contributions)

Prepared by: UMSI Cabinet Diversity Committee: Judy Lawson (Chair), Debbie Apsley, Margaret Hedstrom, Heather Newman, Becky O'Brien

Approved by: UMSI Cabinet (with edits), 21 Feb 2013

Approved by: Dean Jeff MacKie-Mason, 15 June 2013