

**UTSA**<sup>®</sup>

The University of Texas at San Antonio<sup>™</sup>

*Transformative Change:  
Instituting New Practices and  
Policies*

Lisa Firmin

Associate Provost for Faculty/Student Diversity and  
Recruitment

## Associate Provost for Faculty/Student Diversity and Recruitment

- Established in 2010; focus on diversity/recruitment
  - Collaborative model
- Mission statement
  - *Strive to create a premier place to learn, work and interact. We utilize targeted recruitment and collaborative partnerships to foster excellence among students and faculty while promoting a culture where diversity is valued and inclusion is practiced*
- Vision
  - *Bringing together bright minds to build an inclusive community*

# Transformative Polices/Practices

- President's Distinguished Diversity Award (2012)
- Gender Identity/Gender Expression (2013)
- Top Scholar Program for incoming freshmen (2013)

# President's Distinguished Diversity Award

- Idea to recognize Diversity & Inclusion efforts across campus with high level award
- Researched other universities, corporate orgs
- Assessed the landscape; sought out allies, champions and any opposition
- Put together team; faculty, staff and grad student
- Created faculty/staff and student categories
- Met with key leadership and gained approval
- Monetary awards, plaques and letters from President presented to winners

# President's Distinguished Diversity Award

- First of it's kind; on same level as other key Presidential awards
- Associate Provost for Diversity and Recruitment chairs selection committee & selects members
- Part of the University Excellence Awards
  - Combined campus-wide annual ceremony
  - Inclusionary ceremony
- Inaugural awards conferred in April 2012
- Nomination process streamlined



# Gender Identity/Gender Expression

- Need identified by a previous committee
- Did research/homework
- Assessed the landscape; sought out allies, champions, and any opposition
- Developed power point that clearly articulated the change and why needed
- Met with stakeholders
- Gained approval from President and exec team
- Change adopted and added to the HOP

# Gender Identity/Gender Expression

- Added to the HOP Nondiscrimination Policy (2013)
  - Could have been added 8 years ago; effort failed
- Coordinated with UT Austin; learned through their efforts
- Collaborative effort
  - Student Center for Community Engagement & Inclusion
  - SGA resolution/LGBTQ student group testimonials
  - HR, Legal, faculty, vice provosts, deans, VPs
- Intentional effort clearly understood
- LGBTQ Faculty Staff Association non-existent; created post policy change
- Work still needs to be done; preferred name policy, gender neutral restrooms

# Instituting Change at Your Campus

- *Do your research and homework*
- *Assess the landscape, know where allies, champions and opposition are & how they can impact your recommended change*
- *Leverage the allies and champions at the right stage*
- *Be clear and concise in what change you want made and why; show how it will help the institution, the students, the faculty*
- *Try to make your proposal as “turn key” as possible*
- *Follow up with stakeholders, allies, champions and key leadership*
- *Take the time to build relationships; they matter*
- *Listen; really listen to others; mutual respect at all times*
- *Be a diplomat; practice the art of diplomacy*



# Top Scholar Program

- Recruit the best and brightest in Texas
  - Top 5% and 1400 SAT or 32 ACT
  - Comprehensive merit-based scholarships with personalized signature experiences
    - Knowledge      Leadership      Service
  - Pilot cohort in 2013
- Diversity issue
  - Academic excellence
  - Students of color, low SES, first gen & others

# Contact Information

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[www.utsa.edu/topscholars/](http://www.utsa.edu/topscholars/)