

HSU University Senate

2021-2026 University Senate Anti-Racist Strategic Action Plan

Submitted by the Senate Executive Committee
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Background

Shared governance is a model of organizational action planning, prioritization, and decision making. In higher education, descriptions of shared governance often center the role and responsibility of faculty in this process. In 2011, the Academic Senate of the Humboldt State University adopted a mixed-role model of university-wide shared governance in passing a resolution that revised its constitution and created the HSU University Senate. While faculty retain a majority of the 33 HSU University Senate seats, students, staff, and administrators are enfranchised members of the body.

Most often the Senate plans and deliberates within parameters prescribed by federal and state law, policies of the California State University, and contractual agreements of labor unions. Still, the HSU University Senate has a good deal of discretion, and related responsibility, in establishing priorities for any given period of time. This document represents the culmination of academic year 20-21 engagement with development of a 5-year plan for shared governance priorities. While many other actions will pass through the Senate in any given year, this plan sets the stage for a focused set of particular anti-racist priorities linked to institutional goals noted within. A brief description of the processes through which this plan was developed is found at the end of this document.

Vision

The HSU University Senate will be a model for shared governance that shapes an outstanding college experience inclusive of all students. Anti-racism and a commitment to equity will inform all dimensions of our collective work: representation, outcome prioritization, and processes for deliberation and discussion. Students, Staff, Faculty, and Administrators will experience shared governance spaces as welcoming, accessible, and critical to the overall campus vision for inclusive excellence. Engagement with the University Senate and its standing committees will contribute to collaborations that build relationships across campus and with the broader community.

**University Senate Anti-Racist Strategic Action Plan:
Targeting Three HSU 2021-2026 Strategic Plan Goals**

Academic Roadmap Goal 3: Retain Faculty and Staff - Support the success, advancement, and retention of all faculty and staff. This includes: providing faculty and staff opportunities to serve as members of meaningful work teams and co-creators of programs and activities that promote diverse perspectives; fully supporting free inquiry honoring diversity across all dimensions; incentivizing interdisciplinary collaboration; modeling and promoting human dignity in all interactions and organizational culture.

Employee Engagement Goal 1: Foster Inclusive Employee Community - Foster an inclusive campus community that values and promotes openness, respect, understanding, and ongoing self-reflection and critique, and attracts and retains employees who broadly reflect intersections of identity, centering individuals from minoritized communities.

Resource Stewardship and Sustainability Goal 1: Prioritize Student Need - Demonstrate decision making that prioritizes the alignment of resources with demonstrated positive impact, growth, and diverse student needs including basic needs, safety, belonging, quality education, and career success.

21-26 University Senate Overall Outcome

That the actions and priorities of the University Senate reflect the needs of the campus community and our commitments as an Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution.

21-26 University Senate Objective 1 - Leadership Diversity

The percentage of BIPOC elected and appointed senators and committee members equals BIPOC representation in the respective faculty and staff campus populations.

21-22 Strategies & Tactics

1. (Re)structure AEC practices to support BIPOC leadership recruitment and strategic advancement of new and middle-level leaders (AEC Chair)
 - a. Schedule monthly AEC meetings and ongoing leadership recruitment plans
 - b. Formalize linkages between AEC, DEIC Professional Development, and the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL).
 - c. Formalize Staff Council AEC Member as Ex Officio Staff Council Governance Designee
 - d. Invite faculty and staff leadership as meeting guests to support outreach
 - e. Collaborate with the CTL to create, maintain, and leverage a leadership investment and interest repository from which to systematically identify and support faculty and staff into (continued) leadership engagement and advancement
 - i. Student Success Network (SSN) “Middle Leadership Academy” Teams
 - ii. SSN Topical “Convening” Teams
 - iii. Equity Fellows
 - iv. Dean Fellows
 - v. Other HSU Faculty & Staff Leadership Investments
2. Collaborate on and align recruitment and communication on leadership and shared governance opportunities (Senate Chair, Staff Council President, and AS President)
 - a. Invite new staff and faculty to the Senate to formally introduce them to campus. Include small group welcome forums and invite them to stay for the meeting.
 - b. Schedule and host annual leadership opportunity forums with DEIC and others
 - c. Students: Create formal linkages for outreach through existing bodies/offices (e.g. Career/Service Learning; Centers of Excellence)
 - d. Staff: Collaborate on outreach and education with supervisors about ways to support leadership and shared governance engagement for staff
3. Mentor new and middle leaders in shared governance (Senate & AEC Chairs)
 - a. Spring new Senator Lunch and Orientation (Senate Chair)
 - b. New(er) Senators Monthly Check in (Senate Chair - Rotate w SenEx Leaders)
 - c. General Leadership Mentor Pairing (AEC Develop & Offer; Respond to Requests)

21-26 University Senate Objective 1 Measures

Objective 1 will be benchmarked and measured with annually published university faculty and staff demographic data and self-reported Senator demographic data.

Table 1: Tenure-Line Faculty Leadership and Campus Demographics

	BIPOC Senate	BIPOC Campus	Female Senate	Female Campus
19-20 Senators				
19-20 Committees				
20-21 Senators		19%	53% (9)	50%
20-21 Committees		19%		50%
21-22 Senators				
21-22 Committees				

Table 2: Lecturer Faculty Leadership and Campus Demographics

	BIPOC Senate	BIPOC Campus	Female Senate	Female Campus
19-20 Senators				
19-20 Committees				
20-21 Senators		34%	66% (2)	62%
20-21 Committees		34%		62%
21-22 Senators				
21-22 Committees				

Table 3: Staff Leadership and Campus Demographics

	BIPOC Senate	BIPOC Campus	Female Senate	Female Campus
19-20 Senators				
19-20 Committees				
20-21 Senators			75% (3)	
20-21 Committees				
21-22 Senators				
21-22 Committees				

21-26 University Senate Objective 2 - BIPOC Student-Centered Actions

At least one third of University Senate actions center BIPOC students' needs.

21-22 Strategies and Tactics

1. The Senate will collaborate with DEIC to train leadership on assessing and building policy applying a racial equity lens.
 - a. Secure funds for campus training
 - b. Schedule training during first senate meetings
 - c. The SexEx will apply a DEI lens in assessing and prioritizing biweekly action

2. The Senate Chair will structure opportunities for Senators, faculty, staff, and students to engage with the broad planning processes for annual agenda creation and prioritization
 - a. Develop, maintain, and share a system for action planning
 - b. Schedule and structure agenda time for sharing collecting feedback on annual agenda

3. The University Senate will increase constituency awareness and engagement on actions
 - a. General Faculty President bi-monthly highlights email to faculty and sharing with Staff and AS Presidents (for tailoring for their constituencies)

- b. Senators will structure regular communication and at least one open forum each term for direct engagement with their constituencies

21-26 University Senate Objective 2 Measures

Objective 2 will be benchmarked and measured through a Senate Executive end-of-year audit of academic year action items: resolutions, presentations, and discussion items.

19-20: % (N) agenda items that explicitly centered BIPOC students

20-21: % (N) agenda items that explicitly centered BIPOC students

21-22: % (N) agenda items that explicitly centered BIPOC students

21-26 University Senate Objective 3 - Welcoming & Inclusive Shared Governance

At least 90% of University Senators and committees committee members report that their experiences in senate/committee spaces were “almost always to always” welcoming, as well as respectful, and inclusive, in discussions.

Strategies and Tactics

1. The Senate will institutionalize practices that are welcoming, adopt a range of dialogue models, and demystify processes.
 - a. University Senate meetings will open with 5-10 minutes for small group social interaction.
 - b. The Senate Chair or a Senator designee will welcome the community to meetings, review processes for engagement during the meeting, and set the stage for a supportive space where questions about process are welcome.
 - c. The University Senate will openly reject the weaponization of parliamentary procedure. The Senate will limit strict reliance on parliamentary rules: when the senate moves to formal rules, the Chair or Parliamentarian will demystify the process by explaining to everyone the rules of the situation and actions that will happen next.
 - d. The Senate Chair will regularly integrate other models, such as break outs, and spotlights on community action, for community conversation, deliberations, and broader input on shared decision making.

2. The Senate will adopt practices to support anti-racist dialogue

- a. The Senate and each Senate subcommittee will identify at least one equity advocate from appointed and elected members.
- b. The Senate will advocate for 100% senator and committee member participation within the first 2 weeks of the terms of at least one anti-racist campus or professional association workshop (e.g. microaggression training, bystander intervention, anti-racist pedagogy).
- c. The Senate commits to disrupt racist, sexist, transphobic, and homophobic language and actions.

21-26 University Senate Objective 3 Measures

Objective 3 will be benchmarked and measured through a Senate Executive developed end-of-year survey of all Senators and Senate Committee Members.

20-21 Survey Outcomes Senate (aggregated data for confidentiality)

- % “almost always to always” welcoming space
- % “almost always to always” respectful discussions
- % “almost always to always” inclusive discussions

20-21 Survey Outcomes Committees (aggregated data for confidentiality)

- % “almost always to always” welcoming space
- % “almost always to always” respectful discussions
- % “almost always to always” inclusive discussions

Background on the Development this Plan

In May 2020, amidst national and local organizing and protest against racialized violence, the University Senate Executive team committed to and released a [Statement in Support of Black Lives](#). The statement put in motion the building of a Senate academic year action agenda that prioritized anti-racist and social justice goals across multiple dimensions of shared governance. The leadership team began the work of evaluating (senate) structure and policies with an equity lens.

During the University Senate meeting on October 27, 2020 this work engaged the broader community in this process of shared governance evaluation and possibilities for change. More than 50 senators and senate guests participated in 3-4 person zoom breakout group discussions. We invited participants to turn a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens on the University Senate and shared governance, discussing and making anonymous notes on three key questions:

1. White Supremacy by Design: What are some examples of white privilege or white supremacy in the culture and practices of the Senate?
2. Belonging: Are there particular ways or times that have made you feel like you do belong? Do not belong? How might those experiences be related to your racial identity?
3. Change: How can the Senate be reorganized/restructured to better challenge white supremacy?

The 2021-2026 University Senate Anti-Racist Action Plan grew out of these and other consultations and collaborations across the academic year. For example, we collected direction on the Vision Statement during the University Senate meeting on December 1, 2020. More than 35 senators and guests participated in 2-3 person breakout sessions. In March 2020 the Senate Executive committee invited comments on this document from the Senate, the campus community, as well from Associated Students and Staff Council.

This is a living document prescriptive for AY 21-22 University Senate work, as well as broadly guiding each consecutive year evaluation of and commitment to new or continued strategies and tactics for the 5-year planning period. The final version was presented to the University Senate on April 13, 2021 as part of a Sense of the Senate resolution affirming the University Senate commitment to the plan.