

VA Puget Sound-Seattle Psychology Training Program Diversity Committee

Open Plenary Session

VA Psychology Leadership Conference

May 2021

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Why are Diversity and Inclusion Important?

- ▶ Greater diversity in the workplace is associated with
 - ▶ Greater productivity
 - ▶ Greater creativity and innovation
 - ▶ Improved decision-making
 - ▶ Greater employee engagement and satisfaction
- ▶ Cultural competence - the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact effectively with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own
 - ▶ Associated with improved patient outcomes and reduction in health care disparities for underrepresented groups

Development of our Diversity Committee

- ▶ Fall 2017
 - ▶ VA Puget Sound psychology staff and trainees volunteered to create committee
 - ▶ Met monthly to develop mission statement, goals, and organizational structure
- ▶ Diversity Committee structure
 - ▶ Co-chairs (staff member and postdoctoral fellow)
 - ▶ Subcommittee leaders (typically staff)
 - ▶ Secretary that creates and distributes minutes (typically a trainee)
- ▶ Monthly meetings
 - ▶ Open to entire psychology service line

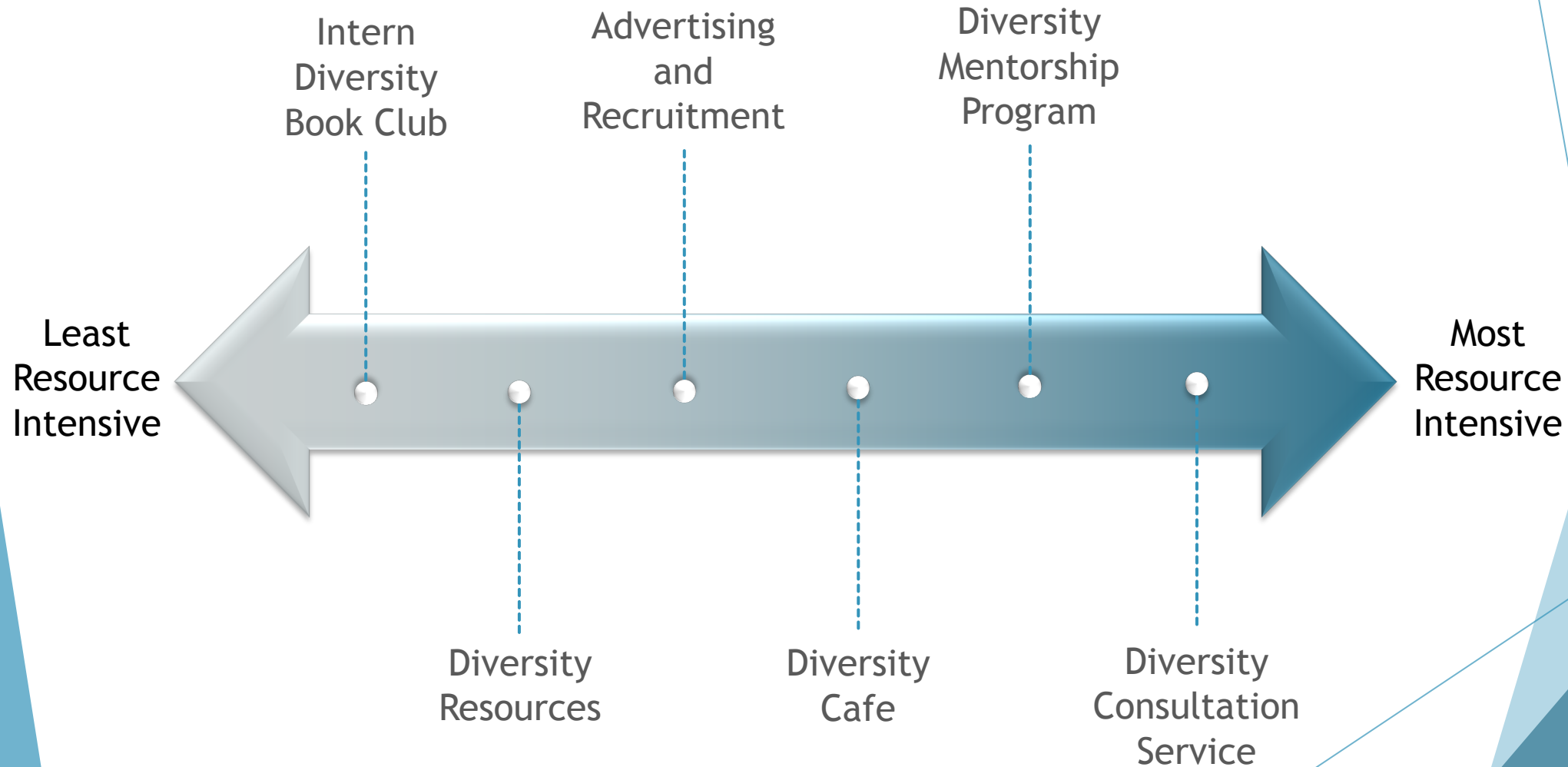
Diversity Committee Mission Statement

- ▶ The mission of the Diversity Committee is to serve in an **advisory role to the psychology training program at the VA Puget Sound - Seattle** and aid in the following accreditation requirements and goals:
 - ▶ Recruitment and retention of trainees and staff with diverse identities
 - ▶ Diversity education, namely promoting knowledge of diversity issues and multicultural competence among trainees and supervisors/staff
 - ▶ Periodic assessment of diversity climate to ensure that the Seattle VA is a positive, inclusive, and supportive environment for trainees with diverse identities

Our Definition of Diversity

- ▶ Consistent with APA standards, the Diversity Committee defines diversity and cultural and individual differences as including, but not limited to:
 - Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Gender Identity
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Language
 - National Origin
 - Educational Status
 - Religion
 - Culture
 - Socioeconomic Status

Current Projects



Overt vs. Covert Curriculum

- ▶ The Diversity Committee aims to infuse diversity into the overt and covert trainee curriculum
 - ▶ Overt (Explicit) Curriculum - The explicit, intended lessons in an educational program
 - ▶ Covert (Hidden) Curriculum - The unwritten lessons, values, and perspectives learned in an educational program
 - ▶ Examples
 - ▶ A standing committee makes a statement to staff and trainees about the centrality of diversity (in concert with science and ethics)
 - ▶ Diversity Committee provides multiple experiences in learning leadership and administrative competencies, especially for trainees with diverse identities

Intern Diversity Book Club

- ▶ Goal: To provide a forum for building multicultural awareness and introspection
- ▶ Target audience: VA Puget Sound psychology interns
 - ▶ Staff and postdoctoral trainees also encouraged to read the book club selections
- ▶ Book club selection examples
 - ▶ Past training years
 - ▶ *The Center Cannot Hold* by Elyn Saks
 - ▶ *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond
 - ▶ *Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic* by Sam Quinones
 - ▶ 2020-2021 training year - Focus on racial diversity
 - ▶ *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson
 - ▶ *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* by Heather McGhee

Diversity Resources

- ▶ Goal: To provide accessible and centralized diversity resources and information for the VA Puget Sound community
- ▶ Target audience: VA Puget Sound psychology trainees and staff
- ▶ Resources for domains correspond to the ADDRESSING model
- ▶ Monthly emails sent about VA and community-based events/didactics on diversity-related topics, which include:
 - ▶ Didactics
 - ▶ Empirical and theoretical articles
 - ▶ Presentations
 - ▶ Community events

Advertising and Recruitment Efforts

- ▶ Goal: To recruit trainees (and staff) with diverse identities
- ▶ Target audience: Broader psychology community
- ▶ Activities include:
 - ▶ Amending our informational brochures to highlight diversity-related opportunities on each clinical rotation and to describe the role of the Diversity Committee in the training program
 - ▶ Recruitment at conferences (e.g., ABCT Conference Internship Fair)
 - ▶ Having representatives from the Diversity Committee speak at our internship Open House about diversity-related projects and the culture of DEI at the Seattle VA

Diversity Cafe

- ▶ Goal: To provide a forum for the development of practical skills to increase multicultural competence and awareness
- ▶ Target audience: VA Puget Sound trainees and staff
 - ▶ Interprofessional: Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and physicians are invited to attend
- ▶ Monthly presentations
 - ▶ Presenters recruited from within the VA and other institutions
 - ▶ Small breakout groups to foster discussion and self-reflection are encouraged
- ▶ Previous presentation topics include:
 - ▶ Working with patients who are gender diverse
 - ▶ Addressing racism in psychotherapy
 - ▶ Disability cultural competence in healthcare settings
 - ▶ Ethical issues in addressing workplace harassment

Diversity Mentorship Program

- ▶ Goal: To provide a supportive, non-judgmental forum for current trainees to discuss diversity-related issues that are private with trusted health care professionals
- ▶ Target audience: VA Puget Sound psychology trainees
- ▶ Discussion topics can include, but are not limited to:
 - ▶ Managing/responding to microaggressions
 - ▶ Aspects of identity and intersectionality
 - ▶ Professional development related to diversity concerns (e.g., navigating working in VA and with Veterans as a trainee with diverse identities)

Diversity Mentorship Program (cont.)

- ▶ **How does the program work?**
 - ▶ Trainees can pick an informal mentor from a list of mentors
 - ▶ Mentors can be picked based on diversity characteristics
 - ▶ Trainees can have as many mentors as they want and meet with mentors on an as needed basis
- ▶ **Who are the mentors?**
 - ▶ Seattle VA Staff Psychologists
 - ▶ Seattle VA Postdoctoral Fellows
 - ▶ Due to dual relationship complexities, fellows are not to mentor other fellows
- ▶ **Who are the mentees?**
 - ▶ VA Puget Sound - Seattle Division interns and postdocs

Diversity Consultation Service

- ▶ Goal: To offer brief consultation for clinical challenges related to diversity characteristics
- ▶ Target audience: VA Puget Sound psychology staff
- ▶ Collaborated with the psychology service to identify local staff with experience in different areas of diversity
- ▶ Compiled a list of those willing to provide ad hoc consultation that is housed on the psychology service server
- ▶ When to use?
 - ▶ When having a clinical challenge related to a diversity characteristic and consultation would be helpful
- ▶ How to use?
 - ▶ Open the Consultation Service document
 - ▶ Find the diversity area for which you are seeking consultation
 - ▶ Email a staff member with expertise in that area

Consultation Service (cont.)

Diversity Consultation Service Training Diversity Committee of VA Puget Sound Seattle



CLICK HERE
to check out our
Diversity Resources
Folder

RELIGION

[Click here for additional resources!](#)

Name	Specialty	Clinic	Location	E-mail
Staff member		CLC	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member	Judaism	CESATE	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov

RURAL / URBAN

[Click here for additional resources!](#)

Name	Specialty	Clinic	Location	E-mail
Staff member	Rural or remote veterans, including use of <u>telemental health</u>	POC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		Pain Clinic	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		CLC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

[Click here for additional resources!](#)

Name	Specialty	Clinic	Location	E-mail
Staff member		POC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		MHC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		Pain Clinic	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		HSR&D/POC	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		Addiction Treatment Center	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member	LGBTQ+	HSR&D	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		CESATE	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov

SOCIOECONOMIC

[Click here for additional resources!](#)

Name	Specialty	Clinic	Location	E-mail
Staff member		MHC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		CLC	American Lake	xxxxxxx@va.gov
Staff member		CESATE	Seattle	xxxxxxx@va.gov

Organized by topic & listed alphabetically

List of individuals available to consult with. Just click their email!

When available, link will be provided to corresponding resource folder

Recruitment Outcomes

Year Entering	Total Number of Trainees	% Self-identifying as Diverse, per APA Definitions
2013	21	24%
2014	22	23%
2015	24	29%
2016	23	26%
2017	26	27%
2018	26	27%
2019	22	27%
2020	22	45%
2021	23	61%

*Year the Diversity Committee was developed

Thank You!

- ▶ Questions/Comments?
- ▶ For more information about our Diversity Committee, please email:
 - ▶ Kelly Allred, PhD at kelly.allred@va.gov
 - ▶ Yoanna McDowell, PhD at yoanna.mcdowell@va.gov
- ▶ Thank you to the Psychology Training Program Diversity Committee at the Seattle VA and the following people who contributed to this presentation:
 - ▶ Steve McCutcheon, PhD
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