

Western Washington University

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“Collective Cultural Competency: Promoting a Dialogue about Diversity in an Academic Library.”

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Collective Cultural Competency

Promoting a Dialogue
about Diversity in an
Academic Library

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Introduction

My name is Rebecca Marrall and my preferred pronoun is she/her. Until recently, I was the Diversity & Disability Services Librarian at Western Washington University Libraries.

- This program begins with an overview of an event, Understanding the 21st Century Library Patron, and how one library increased their collective cultural competency.
- Today's attendees will receive workshop materials and additional resources.
- Apologies in advance – this PowerPoint is text-heavy, and deliberately so in order to serve as a reference after the event.

Today's Agenda

Purpose of Today's Presentation:
Details of One Library's Efforts

- a) Institutional Context: Diversity & Inclusion at Western Libraries
- b) Part One: Understanding the 21st Century Library Patron.
- c) Part Two: Continuing the Cultural Competence Conversation
- d) Part Three: Results
- e) Assessment & Reflections
- f) Questions?



Western Washington University Libraries

Diversity & Inclusion, President
Shepard's Six Questions and
the 2012 ACRL Diversity
Standards.

Western Libraries & Diversity

- **Diversity Resident Librarian:** In November 2010, Western Libraries hired the first -- thus far -- Diversity Resident Librarian. Upon hire, this Resident Librarian went on to chair the Diversity Committee.
- **Committee Charge?** To foster a dialogue, within the Libraries *and* beyond, about diversity through exhibits, events, strategic planning and more.
- **Diversity Strategic Plan:** Spans from 2013 -- 2016, and addresses the following areas...
 - Recruitment & Retention;
 - Employee Development & Training;
 - Outreach & Instruction;
 - Collections & Access.

Shepard's Six Questions

1. What should be our responses to the changing demography of Washington high school graduates?
2. What can we at WWU do to address issues of affordable access to a quality education?
3. How do we make sure that in future years “we are not as white as we are today?”
4. What should our approach be to meeting educational needs off our campus?
5. How is WWU going to play in a future where leading universities, of necessity, are globally engaged universities?
6. What, in the years ahead, are to be the roles of the liberal arts and sciences at WWU?

Are the Six Questions a Good Fit for an Academic Library?

Unlike a student service organization (like the Disability Services office) or a department within a college (like Psychology or Biology), Western Libraries offered our patrons a very unique experience:

- Multiple service types *and*
- Multiple access points, spread throughout the Libraries' physical and virtual environments.
- Thus, we have to ask a different set of questions around service, inclusion, representation, and more.

Six Questions + ACRL Diversity Standards = Just Right

Six Questions on the Future of Western

Thank you for your interest in President Shepard's "Six Questions." Now that the campus has had an opportunity to respond to them, those responses are here collected for review and further reflection. President Shepard will be discussing these responses during his 2014 Opening Convocation address with the hope that the dialogue on these important strategic issues will continue as we work to maintain and enhance Western's excellence.

Please Read: The [President's 2013 Convocation Speech](#)

To read responses to the Six Questions collected over the 2013-2014 Academic Year, please click on the questions below.

Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries (2012)



Image from:
<http://www.mynorthatlantahome.com/2012/02/the-goldilocks-home-buyer-emotionally-just-right/>

Standard One:
Cultural Awareness of
Self and Others

Standard Eleven:
Research

Standard Two:
Cross-cultural
Knowledge & Skills

Standard Ten:
Professional &
Continuing Education

Standard Three:
Organizational &
Professional Values

Standard Nine:
Cross-cultural
Leadership

Standard Four:
Inclusive Collection
Development

Standard Eight:
Organizational
Dynamics

Standard Five:
Service(s) Delivery

Standard Seven:
Workforce Diversity

Standard Six:
Language Diversity





Part One

Understanding the 21st
Century Library Patron

Planning: Philosophy

To integrate the Six Questions with the ACRL professional standards required further brainstorming prior to implementation:

Considerations:

- How do determine the necessary practices to create inclusive and representative environments in all of these locations?
- Who would lead these efforts, while soliciting participation and feedback from all personnel?
- How do we perform assessment?



Planning: Pragmatic Concerns

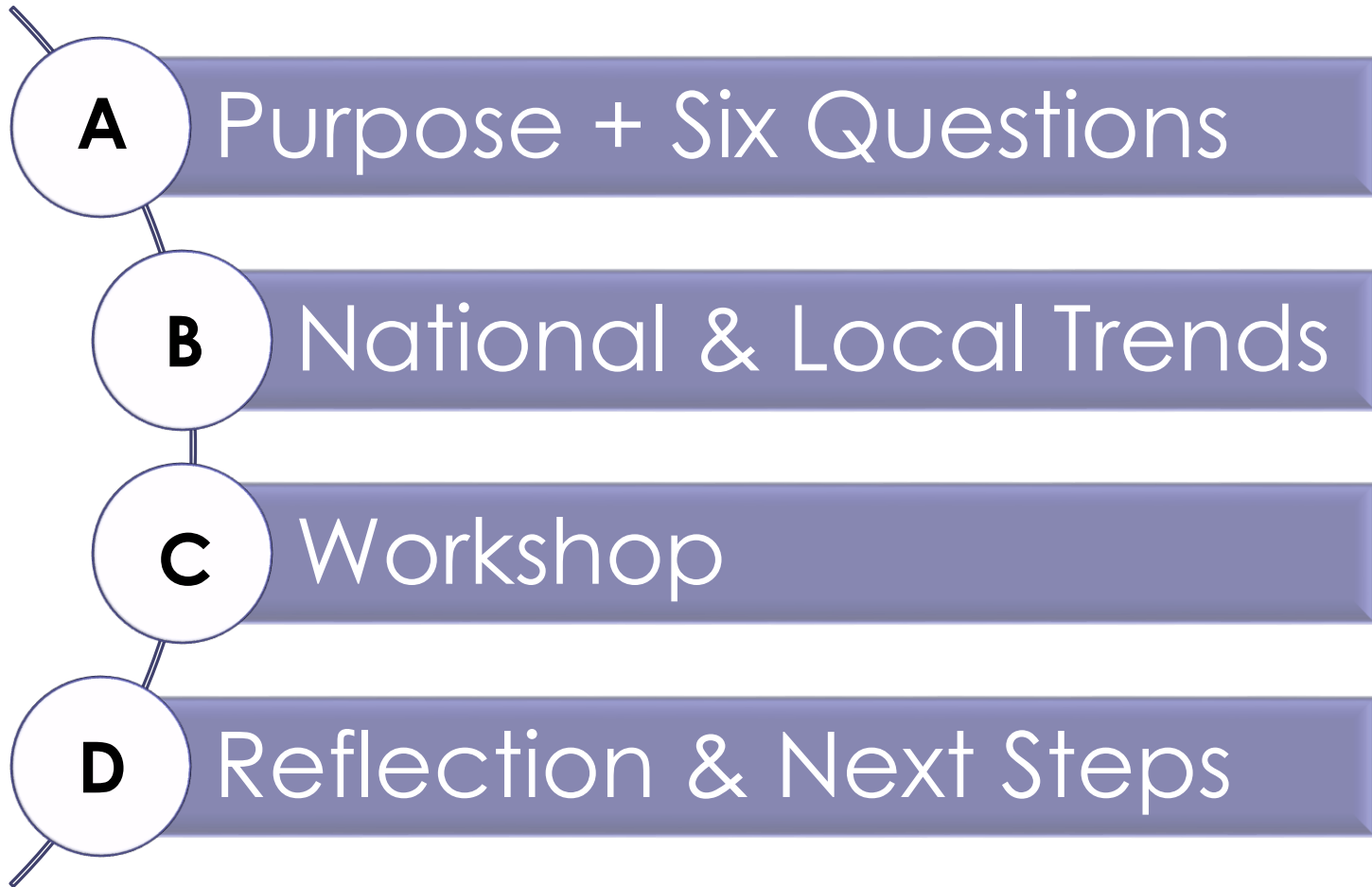
- Planning Partners:
 - Libraries Administration.
 - WWU Human Resources.
 - Diversity Committee Chair.
- Timeline: Three months.
- Resources:
 - Catering
 - Human Resources
 - Clerical Support & Resources
 - Time

Event Goals

Why gather the entire library for a half-day event on this topic?

- a) Opportunity to respond President Shepard's Six Questions.
- b) Compare local enrollment statistics with national trends.
- c) Discuss relevant professional standards with regards to diversity and inclusion work.
- d) Determine how we can incorporate these standards into our daily work.

Event Overview



Local & National Trends

- **Local:** Began with an overview of changing student and faculty demographics at Western Washington University over the last two decades.
 - Data came from WWU's Office of Institutional Research.
- **National:** These trends were also juxtaposed alongside national trends for a comparison.
 - Data came from National Center for Education Statistics.
 - Upon examination, it was clear that WWU enrollment trends clearly mirrored the national trends.
- **Data Points:** These demographics ranged from race/ethnicity, sex, veteran status, immigrant status, disability status, faculty of color, and much more.

Data Limitations

- **Limitations:** Prompted a short discussion of the usual limitations in large sets of data.
 - Lack of granularity (i.e., the difference between Chinese Americans vs. Asian Americans categorization)?
 - Complete absence of representation (i.e., where were the Middle Eastern populations in higher education statistics?).
- **Take-away?**
 - Overview: Provided a snapshot of trends.
 - Representation: Absence prompted a discussion about who is being heard and how we could be better.

Then, Now, and ...the Future?

- However, despite the usual limitations of large data sets, these same statistics were valuable for examining general trends in student, staff, and faculty demographics in higher education.
- This overview created a shared platform for understanding the projected changes over the next seven years.
- Data came from the 2021 Projected Trends in Education (again, from the National Center for Education Statistics).
- Created space to discuss **necessary** changes.



The second half of the event was devoted to the workshop portion. Here is an outline:

- **Instructions:** All participants were divided up into five groups and given a packet with questions.
 - Led by a facilitator assigned to each cohort, these five groups examined two Standards each.
 - Answered given questions to prompt discussion.
 - Encouraged to develop subsequent recommendations based on these discussions.
- **Demonstration:** Brief demonstration of how the workshop questions applied to the Standards, all attendees divided into five groups.



Group Share & Recommendations

- a) Is this Standard relevant to any of President Shepard's Six Questions? If yes, how so?
- b) Read over the interpretation. Do you think the interpretation is thorough? What else should be considered here?
- c) Read over the strategies listed for developing a culturally competent organization, and then consider these questions:
 - a) What are we already doing, as an organization?
 - b) What practices could we adopt? And what is the best way to do that?
 - c) If so, which ones should be our priorities?

Schedule

8:30 a.m. – Coffee & Pastries

9:00 a.m. – Brief Introduction & Agenda for the Morning

9:05 a.m. – Changing Demographics at WWU, WA State, and More

9:45 a.m. – Brief Break

10:00 a.m. – ACRL Standards for Cultural Competency in the Profession: Introduction, Overview & Relevance to President Shepard's Six Questions

10:10 a.m. – ACRL Standard One: Examination & Example

10:20 a.m. – ACRL Standards Group Work: Examine first assigned ACRL Standard

10:40 a.m. – ACRL Standards Group Work: Examine second assigned ACRL Standard

11:00 a.m. – Each Group Reports to the Entire Group

11:30 a.m. – Wrap Up & Next Steps: What do we plan to do with this information?

Next Steps?

Each group reported a synopsis of the discussion, and a condensed list of recommendations.

The enthusiastic response to the workshop prompted several subsequent events...

- The first of these was a direct follow-up to the 'Understanding the 21st Century Library Patron' event, which focused upon identifying priorities among the recommendations from the event.
- Diversity Unconference (More on that later).
- Series of Workshops(More on that later).



Part Two

Continuing the Conversation:
Recommendations + The
Next Steps

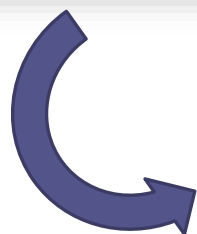
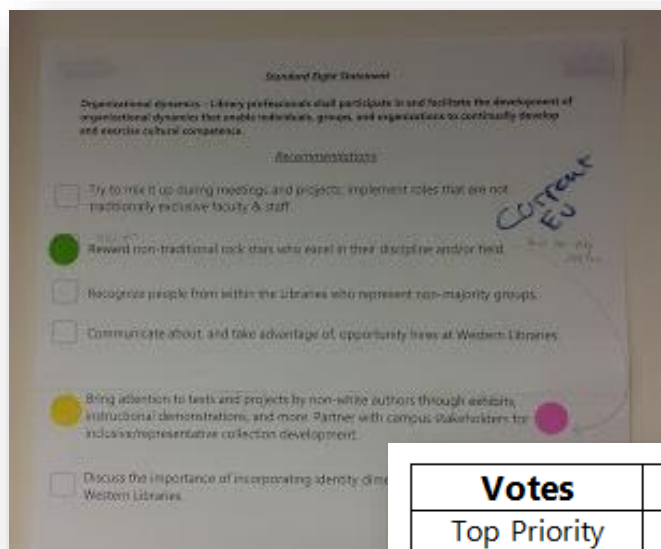
Continuing the Conversation

- **Event Overview:**

- Hour-and-a-half event invited colleagues to vote for their top three priorities from the recommendations from Ut21stCLP Event.
- Share with the attendees their rationale for choosing those three recommendations.

- **Results?**

- List of **prioritized*** recommendations.
- Call for new participants to serve on the Diversity Committee.
- Announcement of a new internal workshop series.



Each participant got three stickers to use to indicate their top, second, and third priority among the recommendations.

| Votes | Recommendations |
|--------------|--|
| Top Priority | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard Four: Need to understand ourselves better as an organization, including the multiple dimensions of identity (and look beyond race/ethnicity as the most easily “visible” dimension of diversity) (4). Standard Six: Partner with relevant organizations on campus in order to pursue these goals (4). Standard Ten: Continue this conversation. One method for doing so may include an annual event in order to provide updates on local, state, and national trends (4). Standard Five: Discuss methods and best practices for performing targeted services for specific needs (i.e., gender neutral restrooms) (2). Standard Three: Sponsor continuing series of workshops within the Libraries (1). |

Schedule

9:30 a.m. – Welcome & Agenda.

9:35 a.m. – Review of Recommendations (and Affiliated Standards) from the Ut21stCLP Event.

9:45 a.m. – Vote! Attendees will have an opportunity to vote for pursuing three of the recommendations drafted at the Ut21stCLP Event.

10:10 a.m. – Group Discussions: Which recommendations were voted for most frequently? Attendees will be encouraged to share the rationale behind their votes.

10:30 a.m. – What are the next steps?

10:35 a.m. – Call for Volunteers to serve on the Diversity Committee.

10:40 a.m. – Announcement about the upcoming series: Conversations About Cultural Competence.



Part Three

Results: What have we
done with this information?



Conversations About Culture Series

- **Scope:**
 - Series of internal, organizational development workshops for Western Libraries employees.
- **Frequency:**
 - Once a quarter.
- **Topics (Thus Far):**
 - Fall 2014: ACRL Standard One (21 Attendees)
 - Winter 2015: Mental Health on Campus (19 Attendees)
 - Upcoming: Generations in the Workplace
- **Deliverables?** Mental Health Best Practices Document, Further Recommendations.



Diversity in Our Libraries UnConference

- **Scope:**

- Half day unconference titled “Diversity in Our Libraries” for regional library professionals from every library type.
- Lightning Rounds, Best Practices Showcase, and Breakout Sessions.

- **Participants:**

- 35+ participants from across WA State (including some non-library professionals).

- **Results:**

- Building Partnerships
- [Article \(with events schedule\).](#)



Assessment & Reflections

Assessment

- **Quantity:**
 - How many events?
 - Attendees?
 - Resulting documents, policies or practices?
- **Quality:**
 - Surveys
 - Event reports / recommendations
- **Platform:**
 - LibAnalytics
 - Libraries Intranet

Impact: Events, Attendees, Time + Documents

- Fall 2014 ACRL Standard One Workshop, 20, 3 Hours (2 Prep, 1 Event).
 - Deliverable? Shared presentation with colleagues; list of recommendations to pursue.
- Diversity UnConference, 39, 12 Hours (8 Prep, 4 Event).
 - Deliverable? Post-event survey; shared presentations.
- Brown Bag on Instructional Strategies for Disability Accommodations, 6, 1.5 Hours.
- Winter 2015 Mental Health Workshop, 18, 3 Hours (2 Prep, 1 Event).
 - Deliverable? Best Practices for Responding to Mental Health Crises at Public Service Points.

Reflections

Emerging Patterns:

- Cultural Competency: Checklist or On-Going Conversation?
- Organization-wide Understanding: I'm part of the 'diversity' conversation.
- Organizational Tensions: Employee Categorizations.
- Collegial Investment in Collective Competency: My Vote Matters.
- Partnerships: Partner with Administration and Campus Professionals.



Questions?



Interested in these materials?

Go to [CEDAR](#), Western Libraries institutional repository. Additionally, I have template documents for your use at this link.

Additional supporting materials are available here:
http://libguides.wvu.edu/cultural_competency

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