

# **The Portland State University Task Force on Asian-American, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Success**

## **Final Report**

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### **Chairs of the Task Force**

Betty Izumi, Associate Professor, OHSU-PSU School of Public Health  
Toeutu Faaleava, Assistant Professor and Director, McNair Scholars Program

### **Members of the Task Force**

Alma Trinidad, Associate Professor, School of Social Work and BUILD EXITO Faculty  
Christina Sun, Assistant Professor, OHSU-PSU School of Public Health  
Herico Aiten, Student and EMPOWER Mentor  
Kanani Porotesano, Assistant Director, Campus Visitations and Events, Admissions and New  
Student Programs  
Lifia Teguh, Student and Indonesian Student Association  
Lisa Kwon, Student and Korean Student Association, Associated Students of Portland State  
University, Equity and Empowerment Mentor  
Makerusa Porotesano, Program Coordinator, Pacific Islander, Asian and Asian American  
Student Center (PIAAA) Student Center  
Masami Nishishiba, Assistant Professor, Department Chair, Hatfield School of Government:  
Public Administration  
Matthew Sagayaga, Counselor, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships  
Michelle Lee, Coordinator, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Services  
Moti Hara, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Education  
Patrick Villaflores, Executive Assistant to the Vice President, Global Diversity & Inclusion  
Renjeng Su, Dean, Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science  
Sheena Ino, Assistant Director, Women's Resource Center  
Virginia Luka, Academic and Pre-Professional Student Group Advisor of Student Activities and  
Leadership Programming (SALP)

### **Research Assistants to the Task Force**

Eliza Alvarez McBride, Graduate Research Assistant  
Tiffany Amber Ganir, Undergraduate Research Assistant and Kaibigan, EMPOWER Mentor,  
BUILD EXITO Mentor

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During spring 2016, Portland State University (PSU) President Wim Wiewel created the Task Force on Asian-American, Asian, and Pacific Islander Student Success to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for PSU in continuing to serve the broad range and diversity of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students. The Task Force was charged to make recommendations to the President and university on how PSU can best serve the higher education needs and aspirations of students from these communities.

The Task Force met twice during spring 2016 and monthly from September 2016 through June 2017. The co-chairs and research assistants met weekly to discuss progress and logistics. Task Force responsibilities were distributed among four subcommittees, which met outside of Task Force meetings, to discuss subcommittee topics: student recruitment, student retention, faculty recruitment and retention, policies and practices at comparable institutions that may serve as models for PSU. Task Force activities included analyzing student, faculty and staff data, facilitating and participating in student forums to learn more about Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander student needs, reviewing existing PSU programs that serve these students, conducting relevant literature reviews, conducting interviews with individuals at academic institutions with Asian-American Studies programs, and meeting with PSU administrators and faculty.

### ***Recommendations from the Task Force***

The Task Force makes the following eight recommendations for how the University can better serve the higher education needs and aspirations of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students:

1. Create an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program within the next five years.
  - a. Provide funding to offer the three existing courses that focus on Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander experiences during the 2017-2018 academic year.
  - b. Form a committee, which includes community representatives, to develop minors and certificates during the 2017-18 academic year in Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies to temporarily meet the curricular needs of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students.
  - c. Provide funding for administrative support (.25 FTE) and a tenured faculty member (.5 FTE) to oversee the development and growth an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islanders Studies program; the tenured faculty member would also contribute to the program by teaching courses.
  - d. Provide \$10,000 to fund a convening of national, regional, and local Asian-American and Pacific Islander leaders, scholars, community partners, students, and businesses to build a blueprint for the Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies programs at PSU.

2. Increase scholarships and retention programming for Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students.
  - a. Provide full scholarships for 300 or 15% of undergraduate and graduate-level Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students in order to encourage their enrollment and retention.
  - b. Support scholarships with retention programming through the EMPOWER Program and the Pacific Islander, Asian and Asian American (PIAAA) Student Center.
  - c. Double EMPOWER Program funds and staff FTE to increase the program's capacity to advance retention and elevate success among Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students. Provide the EMPOWER Program with funds to establish a student lending library.
  - d. Provide the PIAAA Student Center with additional space and staff FTE to support the growing Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander student body and respond to requests from the 17 student organizations that identify as part of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander communities.
3. Collect demographic information from PSU students and employees that includes separate race and ethnic categories for subgroups of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islanders so that disaggregated data can be reported to reduce and prevent repercussions of model minority stereotypes.
  - a. Add racial and ethnic subgroups to Banweb for self-identification among current students and employees by Winter 2018. Include these subgroups in the next Portland State University application.
4. Increase the number of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander tenured and tenure-track faculty and staff.
  - a. Double the number of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander tenured and tenure-track faculty and staff (e.g. advisors, mental health counselors, academic support specialists) over the next five years in order to better meet the needs of the growing Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander student body.
5. Increase efforts to recruit and matriculate undergraduate and graduate-level Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students.
  - a. Hire an admissions counselor (1.0 FTE) responsible for recruitment and outreach to Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander students, with an emphasis on serving students in the Portland Metro area.
  - b. Collaborate with high schools and community colleges whose students may want to transfer to Portland State and co-sponsor college recruitment events for Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander communities.

6. Expand culturally responsive resources for PSU employees.
  - a. Create an online toolkit to support the development and growth of Employee Resource Groups, including the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group.
  - b. Develop mandatory training to promote cultural responsiveness and stop microaggressions among Portland State employees.
7. Apply for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Designation and Grant Program, which supports a wide range of projects, including curriculum development or improvement, establishing programs designed to improve academic success and student well-being, and faculty development.
8. Establish a committee made up of faculty, staff, students and community members to oversee and ensure that Task Force recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

## INTRODUCTION

Portland State is consistently ranked as one of the most innovative and diverse colleges in Oregon and in the nation and has long supported student-led movements to further promote diversity and inclusion within the Portland State community. As PSU continues to progress towards becoming a more inclusive environment for its diverse student body and faculty, task forces have been created to address specific needs of growing communities.

President Wim Wiewel created the Task Force for Asian-American, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Success in spring 2016 to assess strengths, needs and opportunities in continuing to serve Portland State's Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander (AAAPI) communities and to make recommendations to the President and the university for how best to meet the needs of its AAPI students (see Appendix I). AAPI students make up the second largest racial/ethnic minority group at Portland State; 9.3% of undergraduate and 5% of graduate-level students identify as Asian or Pacific Islander (see Figures 1 and 2).

The Task Force met twice during spring 2016 and monthly from September 2016 through June 2017. Additionally, members of four subcommittees -- student recruitment, student retention, faculty recruitment and retention, policies and practices at comparable institutions that may serve as beneficial models for PSU -- met separately to discuss specific topics and Task Force co-chairs and research assistants met weekly to discuss progress and logistics. Task Force activities included:

- Attending subcommittee meetings, weekly co-chair and research assistant meetings and monthly task force meetings throughout the 2016-17 academic year.
- Analyzing data related to recruitment and retention of AAPI students, faculty and staff.
- Reviewing literature about and gathering data on AAPI student success programs and best practices at other similar institutions.
- Facilitating and participating in student forums, including the Task Force Student Forum, to learn about AAPI student needs.
- Engaging with faculty and staff to discuss histories, success, opportunities and cautions relevant to Task Force focus areas.
- Creating recommendations for Portland State University based on Task Force activities.

### ***Recommendations from the Task Force***

The Task Force presents the following eight recommendations for how the University can better serve the higher education needs and aspirations of its AAPI students:

1. Create an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program within the next five years.
2. Increase scholarships and retention programming for AAPI students.



3. Collect demographic information from PSU students and employees that includes separate race and ethnic categories for subgroups of AAAPIs so that disaggregated data can be reported to reduce and prevent repercussions of model minority stereotypes.
4. Increase the number of AAAPI tenured and tenure-track faculty and staff.
5. Increase efforts to recruit and matriculate undergraduate and graduate-level AAAPI students.
6. Expand culturally responsive resources for PSU employees.
7. Apply for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) Designation and Grant Program, which supports a wide range of projects, including curriculum development or improvement, establishing programs designed to improve academic success and student well-being, and faculty development.
8. Establish a committee made up of faculty, staff, students and community members to oversee and ensure that Task Force recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Student Demands and the Five Pillars of AAAPI Student Concerns***

To contextualize the task force recommendations, it is imperative to recognize the groundwork that AAAPI students at PSU have laid over the past several years. The Task Force recommendations align with AAAPI student demands and affirm the necessity for intentional and meaningful changes that support AAAPI students, faculty and staff at PSU.

Coalition for Asian Pacific American Studies (CAPAS) was a student organization recognized under Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP) from 2012 until 2015. CAPAS had two goals. The first goal was to advocate for Asian-American and Pacific Islander curricula at PSU. CAPAS leaders noticed PSU had an Asian Studies program that had a focus on international experiences in China, Korea, and Japan but no curricula that focused on Asian-American and Pacific Islander history, identity, and culture. Using funding from the Organization Budget Council, CAPAS held several workshops (e.g. Asian-American and Pacific Islander Identify, Asian-American and Pacific Islanders in the Media) to gauge student interest in taking courses related to AAAPI experiences. CAPAS also created a petition that was supported by student organizations, student leaders, staff, and community members. The 41-page petition requested the creation of an Asian-American and Pacific Islander Studies Program and was submitted to the PSU President, Provost, Chief Diversity Officer and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences on January 25, 2013 (see Appendix II).

The second CAPAS goal was to hire a recruitment and retention specialist for students who identify as Asian-American and Pacific Islander. CAPAS leaders saw that the Diversity and Multicultural Student Services employed recruitment and retention specialists for students who identified as Native American/Native Alaskan, Black/African American, or Latino/a, but that there was no such specialist for Asian-American and Pacific Islander students.

On December 1st, 2015, Portland State students organized Student of Color Speak Out, a day-long event held at PSU during which students shared personal experiences of racial injustice on campus and advocated for a more inclusive campus climate. During this event, AAAPIs students presented the five demands (also known as the Five Pillars of Asian-American and Pacific Islander Student Concerns) they had been pursuing for several years: 1) a recruitment and retention specialist for AAAPIs students, 2) an AAAPIs Cultural Center, 3) an Asian-American and Pacific Islander Studies program, 4) creation of scholarships for AAAPIs students, and 5) cultural competency training for PSU faculty and staff. During summer 2016, Diversity and Multicultural Student Services hired an AAAPIs retention program coordinator, and in fall 2016, the Pacific Islander, Asian, Asian American (PIAAA) Student Center was opened.

### ***Dismantling the Model Minority Myth***

The task force recommendations provide a framework for dismantling the Model Minority Myth and for creating effective programs for AAAPIs students. The needs of AAAPIs students have been historically overlooked and misunderstood, in part, due to the persistence of the model minority myth. The model minority myth is the racist stereotype that defines AAAPIs as a “monolithically hardworking racial group” (Poon et al., 2016), that are generally law-abiding, courteous, and quietly living among other US citizens ((Wu, 2014). The model minority myth leads to insidious comparisons, pitting Asian Americans against other ethnic groups (Poon et al., 2016); and fosters structural and institutional racism, where dominant racial groups use the achievements of AAAPIs to deny systemic racism and to avoid responsibility for addressing racism or the damage it continues to inflict (Chow, 2017).

The model minority myth persists partly because of the lack of disaggregated data. AAAPIs are lumped together, giving the appearance of overall racial minority group success, but masking economic disparities (Chow, 2017), and diverse experiences and cultures within racial and ethnic groups (Long and Sedlacek, 2003). Intentional use of specific panethnic terms in research and academia; for example, specifying “Korean-American” instead of “Asian-American and Pacific Islander” would highlight group diversity against the monolithic model minority (Poon et al. 2016).

The diversity of AAAPIs communities is reflected in the range and scope of differences in socio-economic, linguistic and college readiness among AAAPIs students. Some AAAPIs subgroups have very low college attendance and persistence rates (Yeh, 2004, Teranishi & Nguyen, 2010), and there are diverse cultural expectations (Yeh 2004) and socio-economic factors associated with lower persistence and completion among AAAPIs students (Ratliffe, 2010). Although AAAPIs appear to have household incomes higher than the national average, certain subgroups have extremely high levels of poverty (CAPACD, 2012, Ramakrishnan & Ahmad, 2014).

The increasingly diverse AAAP1 students struggle with racial and cultural demands of identity development, college access and retention, and campus racial climate due to invisibility in educational policies and within institutions (Ng, Lee and Pak 2007). AAAP1 students' struggles to feel welcomed on campuses are particularly difficult because of the lack of appropriate programs, resources and tailored advising (Samura, 2016); their struggles are compounded by racism, slurs, bullying, isolation, marginalization, and the "perpetual foreigner" label (Museus and Park, 2015).

Sense of belonging is closely linked with academic achievement, retention, engagement, student life and overall well-being and is important for academic success and retention of AAAP1 students. Asian-American and Pacific Islander Studies programs create a campus climate that is culturally relevant and responsive and helps with recruitment and retention of AAAP1 students (Wells & Horn, 2015). Ethnic studies programs, in general, are linked with academic success among students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (Castillo, 2014; Cabrera, Milem, Jaquette, & Marx, 2014). Castillo (2014) found that students who took Mexican-American Studies courses had a higher likelihood of academic success; cultural relevance and identity development were identified as important factors for retaining students and increasing graduation rates. AAAP1 curricula similarly hold important cultural and historical relevance for AAAP1 students (Fang, 2015).

Studies have shown that cultural representation among faculty and staff on college campuses is needed to prevent and reduce the negative effects caused by the model minority myth and to increase sense of belonging among AAAP1 students (Yeh, 2004; Poon et al., 2016). Meaningful relationship and interactions with faculty, for example, has been shown to be a predictor of academic success (Lundberg & Schreiner) and to be associated with a broad range of positive outcomes, including above average college GPA, social and civic ability, academic satisfaction, and political engagement (Kim, Chang & Park, 2009). When compared to students from other racial/ethnic groups, however, AAAP1 students tend to have lower rates of interaction and were less likely to have high-quality relationships with faculty (Kim, Chang & Park, 2009). Language barriers and lack of cultural connection have been cited in the literature as reasons for low student-faculty interaction among AAAP1 college students.

In addition to increasing the rate and quality of student-faculty interactions, studies also emphasize the need for greater cultural representation in campus retention services (e.g. counseling, tutoring, advising) to promote the success of AAAP1 students (Samura, 2016). AAAP1 advisors, for example, can help students navigate university requirements and move effectively and efficiently toward graduation and ensure students receive culturally responsive resources and support. Such resources and support may be particularly helpful for first-generation AAAP1 college students.

## TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force presents the following eight recommendations to better serve the higher education needs and aspirations of AAAPI students at PSU.

### **RECOMMENDATION 1: *Create an Asian-American Studies Program and a Pacific Islander Studies Program within the next five years.***

**The Task Force recommends that PSU create an Asian-American Studies program and Pacific Islander Studies program, which focus on the histories, identities, cultures and politics of Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders and provides opportunities for students to participate in culturally-relevant scholarly activities, research efforts and creative endeavors.** This recommendation responds directly to several years of AAAPI student activism and the 2013 petition requesting such programs that was led by CAPAS and signed by 158 students and supported by various API student organizations, student leaders, staff, and community members. An Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program would reflect Portland State's commitment to social justice and equity and align with its strategic priorities to develop academic programs that are informed by faculty expertise and student needs and to enhance the ability of faculty to deliver culturally responsive pedagogy.

Portland State offers a wide range of courses related to Asia. However, the number of courses offered that focus on Asian-American experiences is limited and Portland State offers no courses that focus on Pacific Islander experiences. For the past 10 years, the Anthropology department has offered the course *Asian-American Experience*, with enrollment ranging from 18 to 35 students. The instructor of this course retired in spring 2017. Two other courses focused on Asian-Americans listed in the PSU Bulletin -- *Asian-American Literature and Culture* offered through the English department, and *Asian-American Women's Studies* offered through Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies -- are offered depending on staffing and scheduling and neither were offered during the 2016-17 academic year. *Asian-American Women's Studies* has not been offered for several years. **The Task Force recommends that PSU provide funding to offer these three courses during the 2017-18 academic year.**

Given the dearth of courses focused on Asian-American and Pacific Islander experiences, an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program will take several years to create. **The Task Force recommends that PSU form a committee, which includes community representatives, to develop minors and certificates in Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies during the 2017-18 academic year to temporarily meet the curricular needs of AAAPI students.**

Faculty and administrative support for addressing this curricular gap is strong. During spring 2017, the Task Force queried faculty across campus about their interest in developing a new course or modifying an existing course to meet the curricular needs of AAAPI students and departments about their interest in collaborating to address this curricular gap. More than 20

faculty and staff members responded with a wide range of ideas for how they might contribute to curricula focused on Asian-American and Pacific Islander experiences and over 10 departments expressed support in collaborating to meet AAAPI student needs (see Appendix III). It is likely that an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program would be housed in the School of Gender, Race and Nations (SGRN). Consistent with other SGRN programs, the **Task Force recommends that PSU provide funding for administrative support (.25 FTE) and a tenured faculty member (.5 FTE) to oversee the development and growth of an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islanders Studies program; the tenured faculty member would also contribute to the program by teaching courses.**

Task Force members have engaged in multiple activities to glean lessons learned and best practices for developing Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies programs from colleagues in SGRN and at other institutions. The following key themes emerged these activities:

- Developing, growing and sustaining Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies programs requires dedicated tenure-track and tenured faculty who identify as AAAPI.
- Adjunct faculty, especially those who from AAAPI communities, can make unique contributions to Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies programs, including facilitating networking opportunities for students.
- Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies curricula must be relevant to and reflect the needs of AAAPI communities.
- Aligning Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies courses with other academic programs at Portland State will increase student demand for Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies courses.
- Collaborating with other institutions may offer opportunities for students to study cross-institutionally or participate in student exchange programs. .

An Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program that offers parallel tracks of study would make Portland State a pioneering institution in Oregon, the Pacific Northwest, and the nation, in meeting the curricular needs of AAAPI students. Students and faculty at multiple institutions in the Pacific Northwest have mobilized to offer courses focused on Asian-American and Pacific Islander experiences; such mobilization may offer opportunities for Portland State students to take courses at other institutions in the Pacific Northwest and for students at other institutions to augment their studies with courses at Portland State. The University of Oregon currently offers an ethnic studies program with a limited number of courses related to Asian-Americans or Pacific Islanders. At Oregon State University, one Pacific Islander Studies course is offered, although it is unclear if it will be offered in the future as it is taught by a professor who also teaches at the University of Hawaii in Manoa. At the University of Washington, an Asian-American track is offered through their American Ethnic Studies program. The only Pacific Islander Studies program in the continental United States is offered at San Francisco Community College. **Given the cutting-edge nature of the proposed Portland**

**State Asian-American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies programs, the Task Force recommends that Portland State provide \$10,000 to fund a convening during the 2017-18 academic year of national, regional, and local Asian-American and Pacific Islander leaders, scholars, community partners, students, and businesses to build a blueprint for the Asian-American Studies program and Pacific Islander Studies program at PSU.**

**RECOMMENDATION 2: *Increase scholarships and retention programming for Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islander Students.***

**The Task Force recommends that PSU provide full scholarships for 300 or 15% of undergraduate and graduate-level AAPI students in order to encourage their enrollment and retention.** Portland State has only two scholarships dedicated to AAPI students. Yet a large percentage of Asian and Pacific Islander students received federal Pell Grants, showing high financial need (see Figures 3 and 4). As shown in Figure 5 and 6, the average unmet needs for undergraduate PSU Asian students, ranging from freshman (UG FR) to senior year (UG SR), and including post-baccalaureate students (UG PB-UG) and graduate-level PSU Asian students, ranging from doctoral students (GR GD), masters students (GR GM), and post-baccalaureate students (GR PB-GR) is also high. Figures 7 and 8 show similarly high levels of unmet need for undergraduate and graduate-level Pacific Islander students. Supporting AAPI students with full scholarships elevates student success by helping to contain the cost of completing a degree at PSU and allows students to focus more on their academics and less on the financial stress of staying in college.

Current financial support and retention programming for AAPI students is limited. Two PSU student groups, Kaibigan - Filipino American Student Association and Pacific Islander Club raise funds each year to support their peers with two scholarships, which range from \$500 to \$1000. Both scholarships do not require applicants to identify as AAPI but candidates must show strong understanding of, and desire to contribute to, AAPI communities. The Kaibigan Alumni Advisory Board and the PSU Foundation select the scholarship recipients for both awards. Providing full scholarships for 300 or 15% of undergraduate and graduate-level AAPI students will require coordination between AAPI student groups, Portland State University Foundation, University Communications, Alumni Relations, and Enrollment Management and Student Affairs to raise funds through donations from current and past donors, alumni and community partners .

**The Task Force also recommends that scholarships be supported with retention programming through the EMPOWER Program and the PIAAA Student Center.** Expanding culturally specific supports for students from diverse communities is an evidence-based practice that facilitates student sense of belonging and promotes academic success.

The EMPOWER Program is a Multicultural Services and Retention program designed for first-generation students who identify as AAPI and who are entering Portland State for the first time. This year-long program provides students with financial and academic support during their

first year at PSU. EMPOWER Program students meet with an advisor and a peer mentor on a regular basis and participate in events and workshops hosted by the program. The students also participate in a two-week program prior to starting fall term of their first year; this two-week program engages students in discussion about the challenges that students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds encounter in college and teaches students skills needed for making a successful transition from high school to college. In addition to providing students with financial support and retention programming, the EMPOWER Program contributes to a campus climate in which AAPI students feel a sense of a belonging (see EMPOWER Program student narratives in Appendix IV). To date, 28 students have participated in the EMPOWER Program, and ten have served as mentors. Student participation is limited by funds available to provide them with financial support and staff capacity to advise and mentor students. In addition to providing individual students with financial support, the EMPOWER Program could help to further ease financial barriers among students if the program had the resources to establish a student lending library for items such as textbooks and graduation caps and gowns. **The Task Force recommends that PSU double EMPOWER Program funds and staff FTE to increase the program's capacity to advance retention and elevate success among AAPI students and that it provide the EMPOWER Program with funds to establish a student lending library.**

The PIAAA Student Center opened in November, 2016. The center offers AAPI focused programming and an engaging and accepting space that supports student retention by helping to foster a sense of belonging among AAPI students at Portland State. Between July 2016 to March 2017, students made nearly 5,000 visits to the PIAAA Student Center. Student groups that identify as part of AAPI communities also contribute to a positive and culturally relevant campus climate in which AAPI students feel accepted. There are currently 17 Student Activities and Leadership Programming (SALP) recognized organizations that identify as part of the AAPI community and include the Cambodian Student Association (CSA), Hong-Kong Student Association (HKSA), Pacific Islander's Club (PIC), Kaibigan: Filipino-American Student Association, Japanese Student Society (JSS), and Korean Student Association (KSA). This past year, approximately half of these groups requested to hold events in the PIAAA Student Center. Due space and time constraints -- the PIAAA Student Center is housed in a 833 square foot room and staffed by one full-time employee -- many requests were turned down and groups were limited to one event per year. **The Task Force recommends that PSU provide the PIAAA Student Center with additional space and staff FTE to support the growing AAPI student body and respond to requests from the 17 student organizations that identify as part of AAPI communities.**

**RECOMMENDATION 3: *Collect demographic information from PSU students and employees that includes separate race and ethnic categories for subgroups of Asian-American/Asian/Pacific Islanders.***

**The Task Force recommends that Portland State University expand its race and ethnic categories for AAAP I subgroups so that disaggregated data can be reported to reduce and prevent repercussions of model minority stereotypes.** Such data would provide a more accurate reflection of the racial and ethnic diversity and the needs among AAAP I students, staff and faculty. Disaggregated data is important for recruitment and retention of students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds as such data can help to better understand the unique financial and other needs of students from different subgroups, identify current policies and practices that may be impeding student success, and improve support services (e.g. advising capacity and systems) and programs that are needed for students to progress towards graduation. Disaggregated data may also improve academic success and overall student and employee wellness by increasing inclusion of, respect for, and affirmation of all communities of students. This best practice would elevate student success and advance student retention at PSU by expanding culturally responsive and culturally specific supports for students from diverse communities.

Portland State University has a reputation for going beyond the minimum requirements to collect data that will allow the institution to promote equity among its student body. Most recently, the Disaggregated Data Subcommittee of Global Diversity & Inclusion expanded choices for gender identity and sexual orientation. **The Task Force recommends that racial and ethnic subgroups of AAAP I communities be added to Banweb for self-identification for current students and employees by Winter 2018 and included in the next Portland State University application.** Implementation of this recommendation will require collaboration between the members of the Task Force, Registrar's Office, Human Resources, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, Global Diversity & Inclusion, and Enrollment Management & Student Affairs.

**RECOMMENDATION 4: *Increase the number of Asian-American, Asian and Pacific Islander tenured and tenure-track faculty and staff.***

The percent of AAAP I faculty and staff at PSU currently does not match the percent of AAAP I students. Whereas 9.3% of Portland State undergraduate students and 5% of graduate-level students identify as Asian or Pacific Islander, only 7.8% of PSU employees identify as Asian or Pacific Islander (see Figure 7). Only 7.1% of instructional staff identify as Asian and none identify as Pacific Islander (see Figure 8). PSU students have reported that this lack of AAAP I representation among faculty and staff has had a negative impact on their overall college experience and on their ability to cultivate a cultural identity. **The Task Force recommends that PSU set a goal of doubling the number of AAAP I tenured and tenure-track faculty**



and staff (e.g. advisors, mental health counselors, academic support specialists) over the next five years in order to better meet the needs of the growing AAAP student body.

**RECOMMENDATION 5: *Increase efforts to recruit and matriculate undergraduate and graduate-level Asian/Asian-American/Pacific Islander students.***

**The Task Force recommends that PSU hire an admissions counselor (1.0 FTE) responsible for recruitment and outreach of AAAP students, with an emphasis on serving students in the Portland Metro area.** As a member of the Admissions and New Student Programs team, the admissions counselor would be responsible for the development and implementation of innovative and effective recruitment initiatives, programs, and procedures to recruit and matriculate AAAP students. The admissions counselor would be responsible for collaborating with key constituencies, including high schools, community colleges and community organizations to make PSU more visible and accessible to AAAP communities.

Currently, PSU does not co-sponsor local events for AAAP communities although the institution does participate in area college fairs and events, such as the Asian American Youth Leadership Conference. **The Task Force recommends that PSU collaborate with high schools and community colleges whose students may want to transfer to Portland State and co-sponsor college recruitment events for AAAP communities.** Building relationships with high schools can make PSU more visible and accessible in communities. Expanding recruitment efforts towards AAAP communities may also inspire more community support and continue to engage PSU with the broader metropolitan community in supporting the University through local revenue generation, scholarships, capital investment, community partnerships and other means.

**RECOMMENDATION 6: *Expand culturally responsive resources for PSU faculty and staff.***

**The Task Force recommends that PSU expand its culturally responsive resources for PSU faculty and staff by creating an online Employee Resource Group toolkit and developing a mandatory training to promote cultural responsiveness and stop microaggressions among faculty and staff.** Resources for employees aligns with PSU's strategic goal to expand the commitment to equity and can foster a more inclusive campus by creating expectations, training and incentives for faculty and staff to regularly participate in culturally responsive education and sharing opportunities and can help facilitate the development and usage of an equity lens regarding campus decision-making.

Employee Resource Groups are integral to the University's desire to adopt best practices for recruitment, retention and advancement of diverse faculty, staff and administrators to better reflect the diversity of the student body. Employee Resource Groups are employee affinity groups that provide intentional spaces for community building, collaboration, awareness, and celebration. Their presence at Portland State demonstrates an institutional commitment to

diversity and inclusion and can play a vital role in recruitment and retention of employees. The PSU Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group was formed by a small group of staff in 2015 and has grown to include 35 members. The members are engaged leaders on and off the PSU campus and serve as mentors for AAAPI students, staff, and faculty, advisors for AAAPI student organizations, and advocates for AAAPI communities at-large. Its mission is aligned with PSU diversity initiatives and goals: to advocate for the diverse needs Asian-American and Pacific Islander faculty, staff, students and alumni (see Appendix V).

When the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group was forming, no formal system for creating an Employee Resource Group at PSU was in place. Since its formation, members of the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group have worked with Global Diversity & Inclusion to identify ways in which PSU can provide support to Employee Resource Groups. **The Task Force recommends that PSU create an online toolkit to support the development and growth of Employee Resource Groups, including the Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group.** An Employee Resource Group toolkit would provide information to clarify the role and availability of such groups for new and potential members and easy-to-access guidelines that describe Employee Resource Group expectations and roles and well as support available through the Office of Global Diversity & Inclusion.

**The Task Force also recommends that PSU develop a mandatory training to promote cultural responsiveness and stop microaggressions among Portland State employees.** Culturally responsive trainings are necessary in order to promote an environment of awareness, inclusion and respect at PSU and should be required of all PSU employees. AAAPI students and employees have noted areas around campus in need of improvement regarding cultural competency and responsiveness. One example includes the multi-language “Welcome” sign on the PSU campus; the greeting in Chamorro is misspelled -- it currently reads “Hafa Aida,” but should be “Hafa Adai.” This has been observed and reported, but has not yet been corrected. There have also been instances where AAAPI students and employees have experienced microaggressions on campus. Microaggressions are comments and behaviors that subtly express prejudiced attitudes towards marginalized groups; these are often unconscious and unintentional, but the negative impact is the same. Some examples include AAAPI students and employees being complimented for speaking English (or met with surprise for speaking English without an accent) or being repeatedly asked where they are from even if they were born in the U.S. These examples stem from deeply embedded social attitudes that AAAPIs are “perpetual foreigners.” Microaggression trainings can aid with helping employees become more aware and inclusive.

According to Portland State University’s Office of Human Resources, the only required training related to cultural responsiveness is the Creating a Culture of Respect module administered through the Office of Global Diversity & Inclusion. The New Employee Onboarding Checklist includes encouraging new employees to become familiar with policies regarding discrimination and harassment, professional standards of conduct and code of ethics. The Office of Global

Diversity & Inclusion also offers voluntary trainings with incentives for faculty members. Employees are expected to abide by all University policies, but there is currently no required training for cultural responsiveness. Required cultural responsiveness training can be achieved through an online module format and face-to-face trainings. Cultural responsiveness and microaggression trainings can be embedded into already existing trainings or through, for example, faculty and staff meetings or annual retreats (e.g. taking one hour to address cultural responsiveness.)

***RECOMMENDATION 7: Apply for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) designation and grant program.***

**The Task Force recommends that PSU apply for the Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) designation and competitive federal grant program for institutions with at least 10% enrollment of AAAP students, a minimum threshold of low-income students, and lower than average general expenditures per student** (Teranishi & Nguyen, 2011). Portland State meets the criteria for AANAPISI designation. The purpose of the AANAPISI grant is to enable qualifying institutions to improve and expand their capacity to serve Asian Americans and Native American Pacific Islanders and low-income individuals. AANAPISI funds can be used for a wide range of projects, including curriculum development or improvement, establishing programs designed to improve academic success and student well-being, and faculty development. The maximum AANAPISI grant award per institution is \$350,000 per year for five years for a total award of \$1,750,000.

***RECOMMENDATION 8: Establish a committee made up of faculty, staff, students and community members to oversee and ensure that Task Force recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.***

This ad hoc committee would work with administrators, continue to be made aware of AAAP student and employee needs, and work to ensure cultural relevancy and responsiveness at Portland State University. The Task Force recommends that this committee be staffed with AAAP faculty, staff, students and community members..

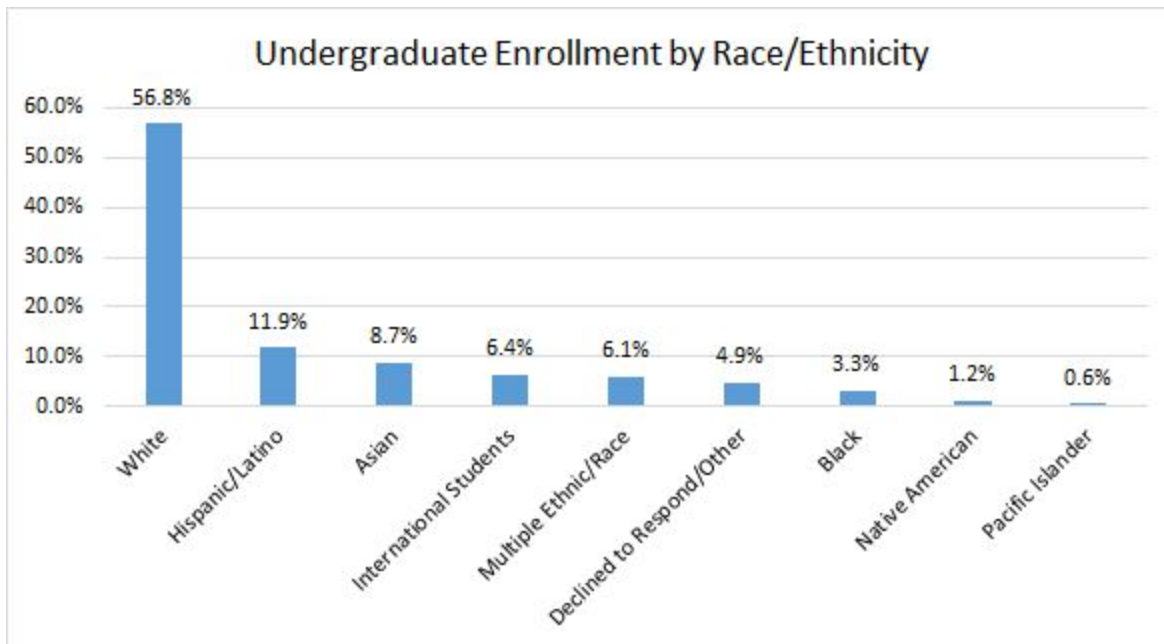
**CONCLUSION**

Portland State is a pioneering institution that values innovation and inclusion. The recommendations made by the Task Force for Asian-American, Asian and Pacific Islander Student Success reflect principles found in PSU's Strategic Plan that aid in making Portland State a more inclusive and welcoming campus for AAAP students, faculty and staff. Some of these recommendations will require time to implement (e.g. creating an Asian-American Studies program and a Pacific Islander Studies program) and some recommendations may be implemented immediately. The Task Force acknowledges that all recommendations will require

committees to oversee implementation and trusts that PSU will fulfill these areas of need. AAAPIs are the second largest community of color on the PSU campus. The Task Force believes these recommendations can bolster recruitment and retention efforts for AAAPI students, faculty and staff, and further enrich Portland State's culture and reputation of innovation and inclusion.

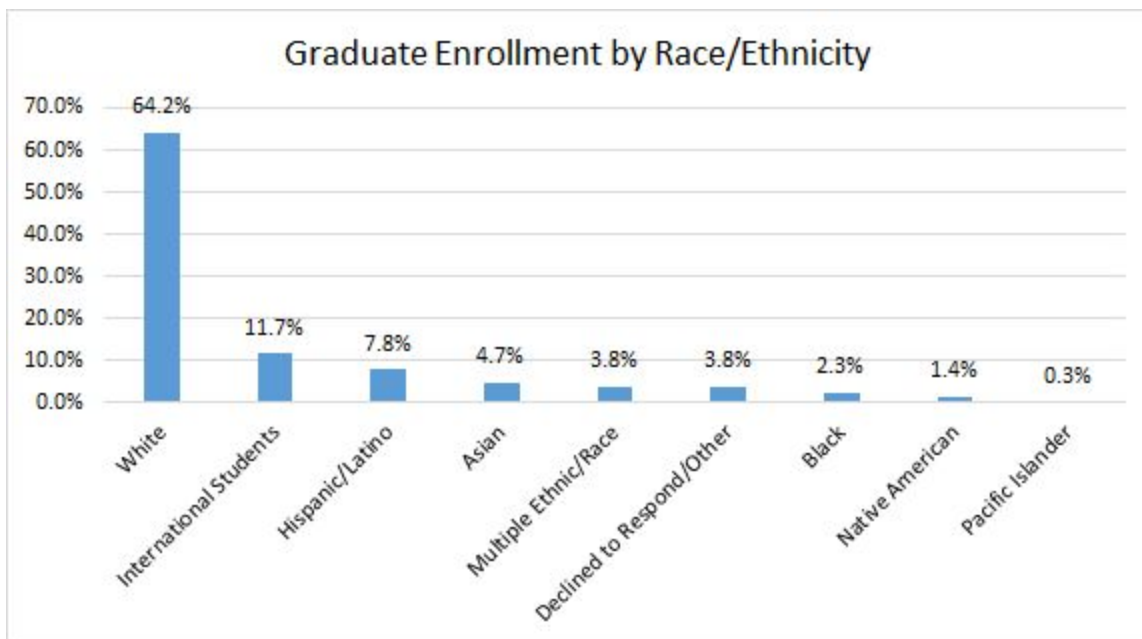
## FIGURES

Figure 1. PSU Undergraduate Student Enrollment by Race & Ethnicity Fall 16, end of term



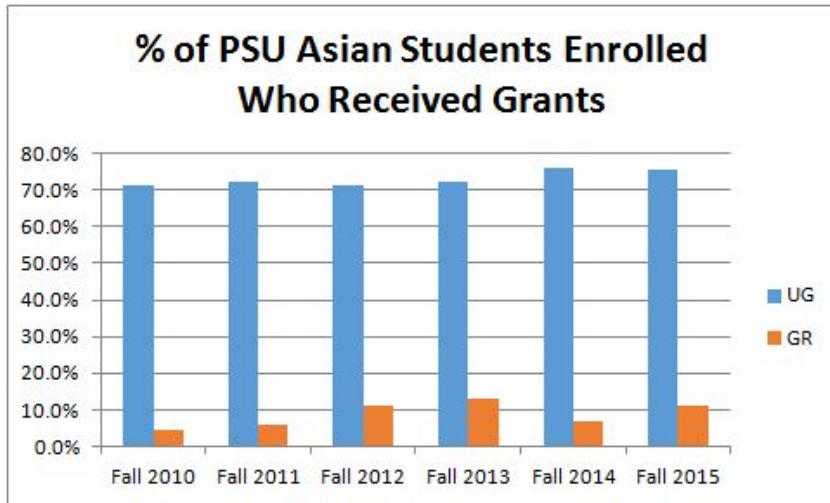
[Source: OIRP]

Figure 2. PSU Graduate Student Enrollment by Race & Ethnicity Fall 16, end of term



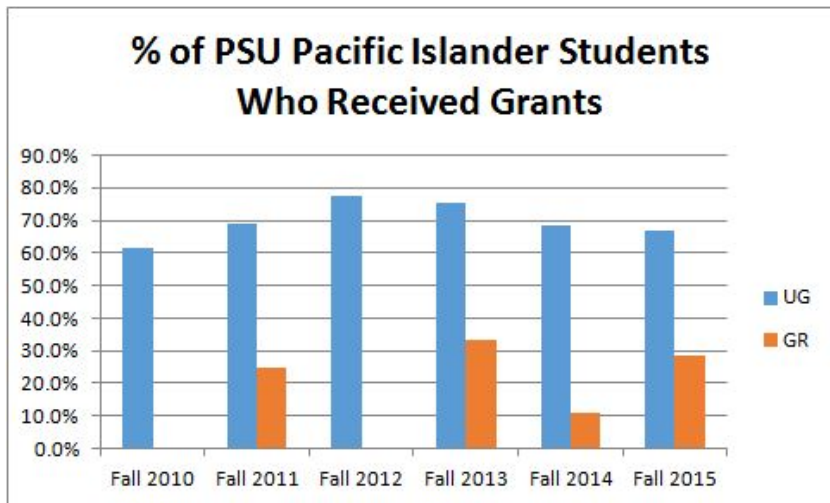
[Source: OIRP]

**Figure 3. Percent of PSU Asian Students Enrolled Who Received Pell Grants, 2010-2015**



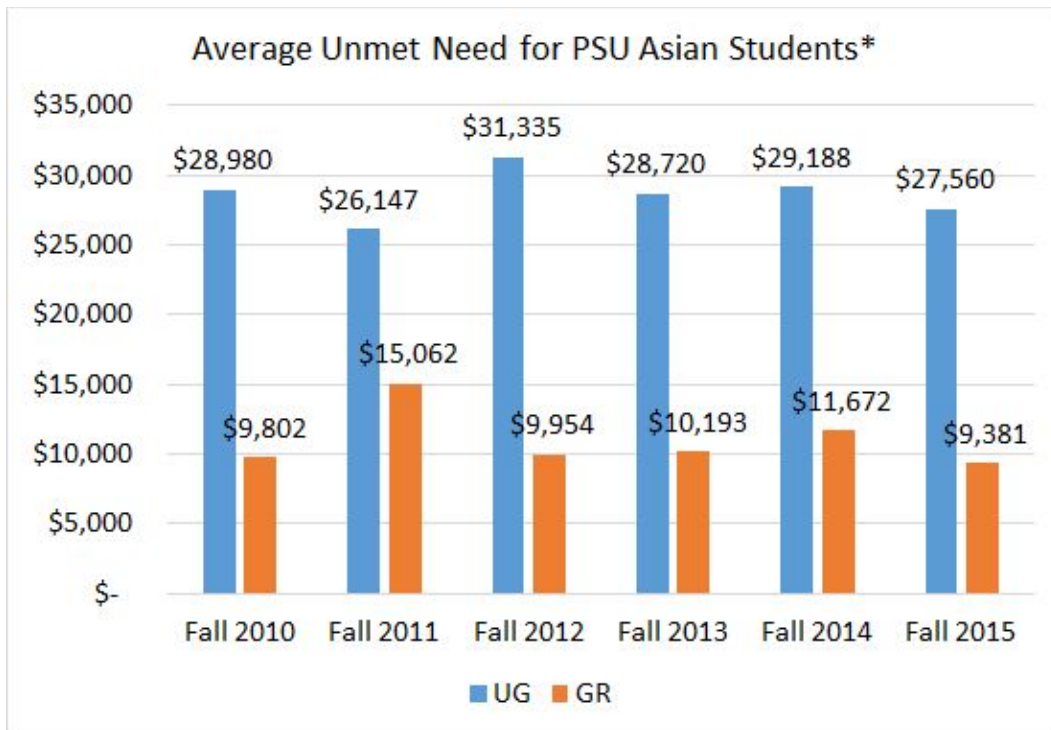
[Source: OIRP, SCARF EOT, Financial Aid ODS]

**Figure 4. Percent of PSU Pacific Islander Students Who Received Pell Grants, 2010-2015**



[Source: OIRP, SCARF EOT, Financial Aid ODS]

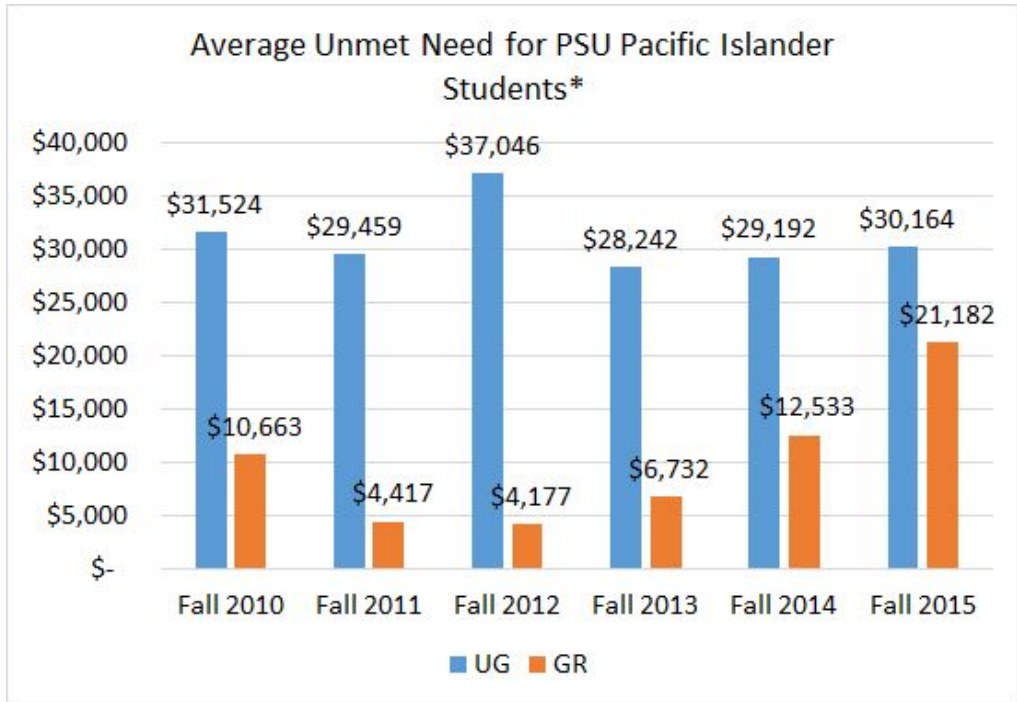
**Figure 5. Average Unmet Need for PSU Asian Students, 2010-2015**



\*Doe not include Post-bac's

[Source: OIRP, SCARF EOT, Financial Aid ODS]

**Figure 6. Average Unmet Need for PSU Pacific Islander Students, 2010-2015**

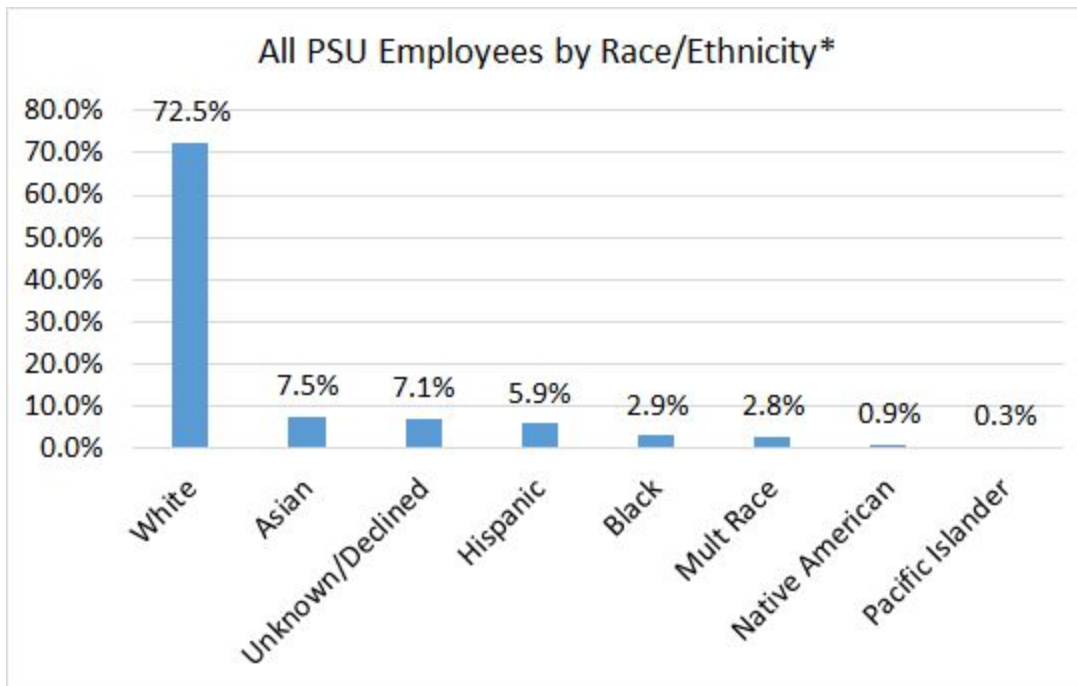


\*Doe not include Post-bac's

[Source: OIRP, SCARF EOT, Financial Aid ODS



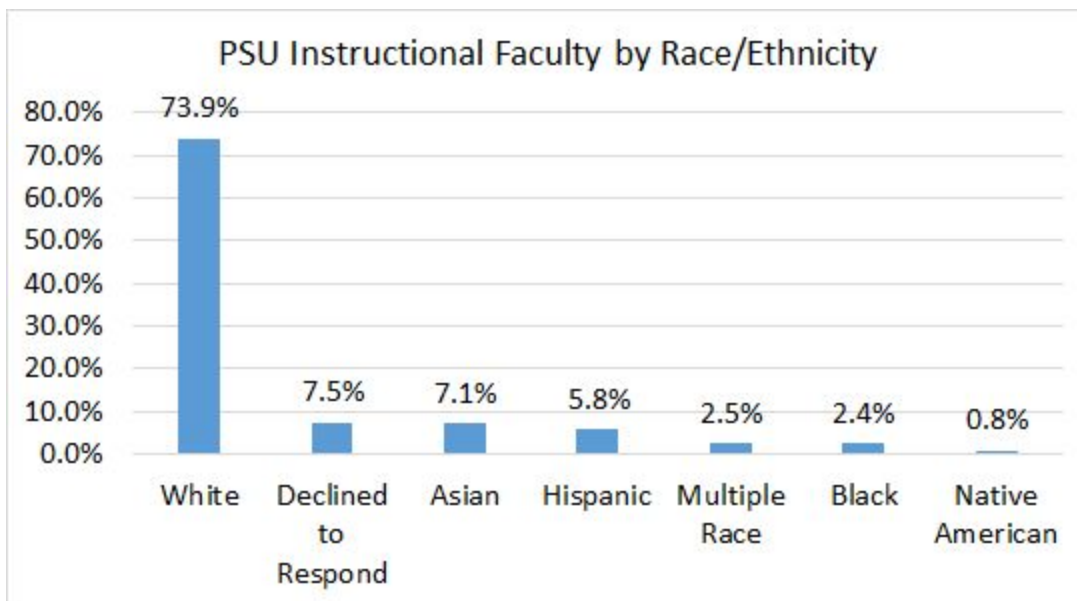
**Figure 7. All PSU Employees by Race/Ethnicity, 2016-17**



\* Includes Instructional Faculty, Non-Instructional Faculty, Classified Employees, Unclassified Employees, Temporary Employees.

[Source: OIRP/HR-PSU Employee Extract - Nov 2016]

**Figure 8. PSU Instructional Faculty by Race & Ethnicity, 2016-17**



[Source: OIRP/HR-PSU Employee Extract - Nov 2016]

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## APPENDIX I

### Task Force on Asian American/Asian/Pacific Islander Student Success Charge:

The Task Force on Asian American, Asian, and Pacific Islander (API) Student Success at Portland State University will assess the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for PSU in continuing to serve the broad range and variety of Asian American, Asian, and Pacific Islander students. The Task Force will provide guidance to the President, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, the university leadership team, and all PSU faculty and staff for engaging with and serving Oregon's diverse and growing API communities. The intended outcomes of establishing the Task Force are recommendations to the President and university on how PSU can best serve the higher education needs and aspirations of API students. The Task Force will focus on the following broad areas in the context of PSU's strategic plan.

- PSU academic offerings, degrees (major/minors), and certificate programs related to API culture and history.
- Recruitment and retention of API Faculty and Staff.
- Identification of existing and new community organizations for mutually beneficial and sustainable alliances that address higher education needs and aspirations of API students;
- Continued improvement of retention and graduation rates among API students, differentiating by relevant cultural subgroups;
- Partner with existing API internal organizations (API Employee Resource Group, API Student Organizations, and API Cultural Center)
- Create an audit of already existing PSU programs that serve API students, including
  - Pre-college pipeline programs;
  - Current admission recruitment programs (including pathways-through-college programs, scholarships, and financial aid programs)
  - Retention programs (including academic support, student leadership development, mentorship, co-curricular activities, career advising, culturally competent climate)
  - PSU cultural programming (student organizations events, cultural center and departmental programming)
- Assisting Student Affairs leadership in developing the strategic goals, structures and activities related to API student services:
  - Research programs and practices at other institutions, especially those similar to PSU.
  - Inviting current PSU resource centers to share history, successes, opportunities and cautions.

Task Force activities will likely include:

- Reviewing best practices of other similar institutions
- Providing counsel on strategic opportunities, relationships, and actions
- Identifying emerging issues
- Recommending new university initiatives that support API student success

The Task Force will start its work in the spring of 2016 and finalize its work by the end of the

2016 – 2017 academic year.

The Task Force will include students, faculty, staff and community members who are broadly representative of the diverse API community and/or have relevant expertise. It will be chaired by a member of the PSU faculty and staff support will be provided by the office of the Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

## APPENDIX II

Link to petition requesting the creation of an Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies Program: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9I2ir6Inja3bDloTnEwM3Rmc0U/view>



### APPENDIX III

#### Faculty and Staff Interested in Contributing to an Asian-American Studies Program and a Pacific Islanders Studies Program

1. Toeutu Faaleava, Director of McNair Program
2. Betty Izumi, Associate Professor, OHSU-PSU School of Public Health
3. Alma Trinidad, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, BUILD EXITO
4. Sri Craven, Assistant Professor, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
5. Roberta Hunte, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
6. Beth Hutchison, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
7. Junghee Lee, Associate Professor and Doctoral Program Director, School of Social Work
8. Marie Lo, Associate Professor, English
9. Lea Millay, University Studies
10. Oscar Fernandez, University Studies
11. Leanne Serbulo, University Studies
12. Anmarie Trimble, University Studies
13. Michael Lupro, University Studies
14. Vivek Shandas, School of Public Health
15. Sharon Gibson, School of Public Health
16. Jon Holt, Associate Professor of Japanese (WLL/CLAS), Dept. of World Languages and Literature
17. Marcus Ingle, Dept. of Public Administration
18. Suwako Watanabe, Associate Chair, Dept. of World Languages and Literatures
19. Jason G. Damron, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
20. Mak Porotesano, Coordinator for PIAAA Center
21. Michelle Lee, Coordinator for API Student Services
22. Virginia Luka, SALP Advisor
23. Patrick Villaflores, Executive Assistant to the Vice President, Global Diversity and Inclusion
24. Kanani Porotesano, Assistant Director, Admissions and New Student Programs
25. Stacie Taniguchi, Assistant Director for Cultural Resource Centers and Multicultural Student Center Program Coordinator

## APPENDIX IV

### EMPOWER Student Narratives

#### ***Student 1: C.A., 2nd year, Child and Family Studies major with Early Education minor***

"I am currently the first in my family to attend college. My parents migrated from Chuuk in order to give my siblings and me the work and education opportunities that they were never given access to. College has always been one of my main goals in life in order to expand my knowledge on how to help not only my family but my community.

Portland State was actually my last option for schools due to how close it was to home. I chose PSU at the end of my senior year because of the financial aid package that they offered me. I hated the city life and did not want to be a part of it, but overtime I have grown to love the city and can proudly say that I am a Viking.

Transitioning to college was scary and unreal. Some of the challenges I faced was just the process and flow of college. I was worried about the big campus, the location, the classes, and everything in general. I was mostly worried that I would not be able to adjust well and not make any friends. I was able to overcome these challenges by being a part of the EMPOWER scholarship program. Through EMPOWER, I was able to form friendships that made me feel at home and welcome at PSU. EMPOWER also helped me come out of my bubble through the help of my mentors who encouraged and introduced different clubs and organizations on campus. That ultimately helped me create a support system and school family.

I have many highlights here at PSU but one that stands out the most to me is my involvement on campus. From being a peer mentor through the EMPOWER program, a student mentor in the MAPS program, and the co-marketing director for BPAT (Body Politics Action Team) through the Women's Resource Center, I have able to learn more about our world and the different people that are a part of it. Through these experiences I found my passion for advocacy and helping my community.

EMPOWER means many wonderful things to me, but to sum it all up EMPOWER is my family. A family that supports me to be the best person that I can be and a support system that will always be there through thick and thin.

I would love to see more of my community in higher education, more resources available to AAPI students, an AAPI Studies program, but also more PI students, staff, and faculty."

***Student 2: K.B., 2nd year, Microbiology: Pre-Medicine with Chemistry Minor***

“The one reason that I came to college was to become a doctor. I knew I would not be able to achieve this without going through undergraduate classes and medical school. I chose PSU since most of my credits would transfer and I would be able to stay home and attend college. Coming to PSU was also a financially good decision.

The transition to college was fairly simple for me since I took college classes in high school. The only difficult part I had with coming to PSU was adjusting to the course load. I was not used to this even with the college classes that I had in high school. It took time for me to adapt to the new changes that happened. The only way that I could overcome this was to work as hard as I possibly could, which is what I did. Within a month, I had adapted to the course load. I am also a first generation student so my family is fairly new to the college system. I am here making sure that I am doing what I am supposed to do. I am also learning about navigating college, improving on any weaknesses and letting my family know so that my brother and sister won't have the same problems that I had.

One of the best highlights that I have experienced here at PSU is being a mentor for the EMPOWER program. This was a great way for me to step out of my comfort zone and talk to people. I have made many great friends and connections that I will keep for life. EMPOWER is a community that I feel comfortable in at PSU. As I said in the last statement, I have made connections and friends that I will keep for the rest of my life. I had originally planned on coming to class and then going straight home once I was done. EMPOWER changed that for every good reason possible. I also love being a mentor for the program. It allows me to help first year students who are coming in with anything that they need. My mentees specifically have also helped me by keeping me on track and making sure that my self-care is good.”

***Student 3: N.S., 1st year, Biology major***

“College has always been a large stepping stone to becoming a doctor. I needed the education to get where I needed to be, but also I had the expectations from family members to be the first in the family to go to college. So in a way, college was for me but was also for my family. Portland State was actually the most affordable place for me. Originally, I had not received any scholarships in time for college decision day. I was enrolled to get tested for the Navy. However, I was contacted about receiving scholarships before school ended, and along with the aid Portland State offered me, I was able to attend Portland State without worrying too much about funds.

Transitioning was very hard for me. Neither of my parents attended college, so the workload was very foreign to them. I found myself putting my family before my workload while not knowing very well how to manage both equally. I felt very drained and stressed daily. To

overcome this challenge specifically, I had to stay out later to get my studying done before I came home. Another challenge I had was the pace. In smaller classes, you can ask for teachers to repeat things or even walk you through it. In large STEM classes, I felt as if I didn't have much support from the professor, but from the TA. I began going to TA office hours and formed study groups to help with this challenge.

Joining EMPOWER has definitely been a highlight of my time here at PSU, as well as the connections the Pre-Med mailing list gave me to give me an opportunity for an internship at OHSU. EMPOWER to me, really means just that. I felt empowered by this group of amazing individuals. I never felt comfortable around the Asian-American community. I grew up outed from my own Lao community growing up due to my parents' divorce, so being exposed to the API community in such a friendly, safe environment where I could grow was like a dream come true. So EMPOWER gave me a family and a place in the community. I really appreciate all that EMPOWER has done for me.

***Student 4: T.G., 4th year, Community Health Education major***

At first, I wanted to become a Primary Care Physician, so that I could help people be healthy. I impulsively chose to attend PSU because I wanted to explore outside of my home in Hawaii (and also because I crashed my first car...) I chose to attend PSU because Portland is a city with a small town feel, a variety of programs, cost of living is affordable, great public transit system, so much to do outside of campus and it's only an hour or so from Mt. Hood and the Coast. Basically for all the reasons on the admissions brochures.

Coming from Hawaii, it was my first time visiting the "mainland", so it was a big cultural shock from the food, to the people, and the temperature. I was homesick, but I knew that I had to open my heart to a new experience, and to get involved so that I could find a community to belong to. I was awarded work study during my first year and was hired to work at University Success before I landed in Oregon. Through this job I met other students who were new to PSU, and befriended the Learning Community Assistants who helped tutor me and gave me college advice. There are a lot of resources at PSU, and it can be a little tricky to navigate, so I made sure to ask people for help instead of trying to learn on my own.

Right now I am a Student Ambassador, a part of Kaibigan and the Body Politics Action Team. I am also an EMPOWER mentor and being mentored by Michelle. I've never really had a mentor who would advocate for me the way Michelle does and makes me feel proud of my own accomplishments. I love Public Health and all of my classes like Human Sexuality, Marketing Public Health, Program Planning and Marriage and Intimacy. EMPOWER is a permanent community and home I've found on campus.

I would say that what would have made my time at PSU better was if the PIAAA center was made earlier, if EMPOWER was created earlier so I could have been a mentee, and if we had multicultural health counselors.

## APPENDIX V

### Portland State University Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group

#### Mission, Values, Vision, Activities

##### *Mission:*

The Portland State University (PSU) Asian-American and Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group (API ERG) provides an inclusive space to advocate for the diverse needs of PSU API faculty, staff, students and alumni; including, but not limited to:

- Supporting and empowering API students
- Recruitment and retention of API faculty and staff
- Facilitating professional development
- Promoting API educational, cultural and social awareness

Our mission aligns with PSU's diversity initiatives and goals, as well as provides leadership regarding PSU API faculty, staff, student, and alumni issues.

##### *Values:*

- Connection & Community
- Professional Development
- Advocacy
- Social Justice

##### *Vision:*

The vision of the API ERG is to create an inclusive community at Portland State University that supports API employees so that they can feel valued, happy, and healthy.

In February 2017, the API ERG board leaders met with Carmen Suarez, Vice President for Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) and Lisa Grady-Willis, Director of Diversity Education and Learning to discuss a support system for all ERGs on campus. The following was offered:

1. Professor Grady-Willis will be a liaison between all ERGs and Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI).
2. Through Professor Grady-Willis, ERG's can draft emails to be sent to PSU employees who self-identify within their affinity groups once a year.
3. A web page will be create for ERG's to share contact information and content housed within the GDI website.
4. Depending on funding availability, ERGs have the potential opportunity to collaborate with GDI to sponsor events

Additionally, on February 27, 2017, GDI hosted a Winter Reception & Affinity Group Meeting to allow for PSU professionals of color to network and create other culturally-specific affinity groups. Other than the API ERG and the Queer ERG, there are now ERGs for PSU staff and faculty that identify as Black, Indigenous, Latino/a, and Multiracial.