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DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, & BELONGING COMMITTEE TOOLKIT



HARVARD OFFICE FOR DIVERSITY,
INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

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Pursuing Inclusive Excellence

What is Inclusive Excellence?

A community that draws on the widest possible pool of talent to unify excellence and diversity. One that fully embraces individuals from varied backgrounds, cultures, races, identities, life experiences, perspectives, beliefs, and values.

The aspiration to achieve inclusive excellence moves beyond the goal of nondiscrimination and toward an embrace of the value that flows from bringing diversity of experience and thought to campus, and the rich and varied forms of excellence that can emerge from that diversity.

Click [here](#) to learn more about inclusive excellence at Harvard and the Harvard Office for Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging.

Purpose of this Toolkit

To achieve inclusive excellence campus-wide, it is imperative to empower local change makers. This toolkit was created to support local unit diversity, inclusion, and belonging (DIB) committees, whether the "unit" be a campus office, department, program, school, or academic unit. Below, we outline a workflow for DIB committee creation, planning, and implementation.



At A Glance

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People
Scope and Charge

2

Assess Your Environment

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Identify Current Strengths, Gaps, & Needs
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3

Develop a Plan

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Identify Partners
Write a Strategic Plan
Develop a Communication Plan

4

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Assemble Your Team

People

Establish a committee that is reflective of the stakeholders present in your unit. The size of the committee is dependent on your unit, but 10-15 members with varying influence, expertise, experience, and perspective is recommended (Williams 2013). Consider who in your unit is already engaged in diversity, equity, and inclusion work.

Scope and Charge

Define the scope and purpose of the committee. If possible, senior leadership should be involved in determining the scope, responsibility, and accountability of the committee (Leon and Williams 2016). Consider the following questions:

- Who does this committee serve?
- What is the committee charged with? What does this committee seek to accomplish? What is the "end-product?"
- How does the unit and committee define diversity and inclusion?
- What are the boundaries of the committee's work?
- What is the timeline for the committee's strategic planning and implementation phases? How often will the committee meet?
- What is the reporting structure? Who does the committee report to and how often?



Assess Your Environment

Gather Campus and Unit Data

Compile past and current university-wide and unit-specific data, including demographic and climate survey data. Be sure to include information on staff and faculty hiring and student admittance if applicable for your unit. If not enough data is currently available, prioritize the strategies outlined in the Engage Stakeholders section.

In addition to survey data, it will be helpful to compile information on diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts already underway in your unit, including the type, timing, people involved, and funding source.

Identify Current Strengths, Gaps, and Needs

To help your committee develop goals and plans, it is critical to assess what is currently working well, what challenges you might be facing, and where there is most need for intervention. Complete the **Self-Assessment Guide** included in the Appendix. Additionally, identify where your unit is in your DIB journey using [this guide](#). Consider the following questions in 4 distinct areas: Infrastructure, Climate, People, and Community.

Infrastructure

- Do my unit's diversity and inclusion goals and efforts reflect those of Harvard University as a whole?
- What are some common DEI-related barriers or challenges my unit must overcome?
- What current structures are in place to support culture change?

Climate

- How is my unit ensuring that all people feel welcome?
- How can people in my unit increase knowledge and build skills for creating an inclusive campus environment?
- If applicable, how does my unit promote inclusive pedagogy, curriculum, and classroom environments?

People

- How do our hiring and admission practices promote equity and inclusion?
- How is my unit contributing to building pathways of talented candidates in our field?

Community

- Is my unit's commitment to diversity and inclusion visible to those within and outside of our community?
- How does my unit engage with and value the local communities of the Greater Boston area?

Engage Stakeholders

Listening to stakeholders directly can be critical for understanding the strengths and challenges they see in your unit. Additionally, listening to stakeholder groups such as senior leadership will provide information on your unit's infrastructure and priorities. Their perspectives can provide deeper insight into the effectiveness of current efforts, the feasibility of implementing change, and the needs of particularly marginalized groups such as racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with disabilities.

Additionally, their buy-in will be critical in helping your committee create and implement change. Engaging stakeholders early in the process can help establish rapport and trust. For detailed information about engaging stakeholders during the assessment and planning phases, see Stakeholder Engagement Models on page 30 of [this guide](#) from the UC Berkeley.

Review and Look Ahead

After gathering information and conducting a thorough self-assessment, consider the following reflection questions:

1. What are some common themes that emerged? On the other hand, what was distinct about each stakeholder group?
2. What are some known barriers and challenges your committee will need to consider moving forward?
3. What will success look like?
4. Who's engagement, buy-in, or investment will be critical to have to be successful? On the other hand, what are some possible actions every individual can do right now?

Develop a Plan

How will your unit bridge the gap between where you are and where you want to be?

Vision and Goal-Setting

Now that your committee has a better understanding of your unit's current environment, it is important to define your committee's vision, goals, and actions.

Your committee can start this process by setting a manageable number of meaningful goals you would like to achieve over the course of 2 to 5 years. Then, you will need to consider the actions and strategies that will be necessary to achieve each goal. Be sure to include a timeline for when goals and actions should be completed. Finally, your committee should be sure to include metrics that can be used to measure success.

This phase of planning is critical. For activities to help in the vision and goal-setting process, use the **Vision and Goal Setting Guide** in the Appendix.



Identify partners

As your committee is developing a strategic plan, it can be helpful to already begin to develop partnerships within your unit and across your university campus. Think about how your committee's goals align with other campus groups, whether or not those groups are specifically diversity-focused (Leon and Williams 2016).

- What resources or support will be useful to implement your plan?
- What offices might be helpful to get feedback from or to learn from their expertise?
- What goals and actions will require buy-in and investment from unit leadership?

Write out a strategic plan

After defining the committee's goals and actions, your committee should draft a written plan that can be shared with unit leadership and your community. This document can take many forms, but it should include the information gathered and generated in the previous sections of this toolkit.

First, start with an introduction and overview of your current environment. Include diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and initiatives ongoing by both your specific unit and the university at large. Next, outline the data and outcomes generated from your self-assessment. Then, detail the committee's vision and goals, followed by action steps, timelines, and metrics.

Develop a communication plan

Once the committee has developed a strategic plan, it is critical to communicate the plan to your community, including the stakeholders your committee will need to work closely with to reach your goals.

Potential ways to communicate your committee's work include:

- Reviewing the committee's strategic plan with your unit's leadership
- Sharing all or parts of your strategic plan by email and on your unit's website, with regular progress updates. The email should come from unit leadership and/or the committee chair.
- Reviewing the plan with individual stakeholder groups. Be sure to highlight the specific goals impacting each particular group.
- Holding an event to introduce the plan to the entire community. This could include a town hall or celebration event with committee members and leadership from your unit.

Take Action & Measure Progress

Define Roles and Responsibilities

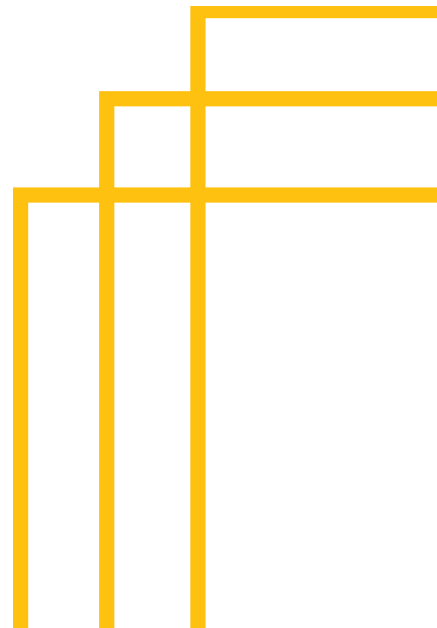
Now it is time to take action and implement the plan. It is important the committee determine the tasks that will be implemented by the committee itself, and those that will be implemented by others based on the committee's recommendation (Leon and Williams 2016). Decide committee member roles and responsibilities moving forward. If necessary, develop subcommittees to work on specific goals.

Share Progress Regularly

Monitor your progress by comparing your actual timeline and metrics to your strategic plan. Continue to foster campus partnerships and leadership engagement with regular progress updates. Be transparent with your community about your efforts and metrics used to evaluate impact and effectiveness.

Check-in and Re-evaluate

Continue to meet regularly as a committee and schedule regular check-ins. Review your strategic plan regularly and re-evaluate if the priorities, action steps, timeline, and metrics are still feasible and appropriate. Work together to troubleshoot challenges and garner support from leadership and the community. Finally, develop a process for evaluating committee membership and bring on new members as needed.



What do successful efforts look like?

Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences DIB Committee

- Embedded the DIB committee in the SEAS DIB Office.
 - Utilized existing infrastructure and institutionalized their work.
- Includes representatives from all stakeholder groups.
- Transparent strategic plan with publicly available progress reports.

Harvard Psychology Department DIB committee

- Embedded their call to action within the Harvard-wide vision.
 - Used the Presidential Task Force Report to guide their goal-setting.
- Developed and implemented PPREP program initiative.

Harvard Molecular and Cellular Biology Department Community Task Force on Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging

- Launched a new website to publicize their efforts
- Developed a workflow to ensure stakeholder representation on the committee

Harvard Earth and Planetary Sciences Department Committee on Diversity and Inclusion

- Used stakeholder feedback from a community town hall to identify key priorities and goals
- Created subgroups to work on specific priorities
 - Developed DIB mission statement and Shared Values document

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Dean's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (DACDI)

- Created a formal committee structure involving senior leadership and representatives from all stakeholder groups.
 - Utilize sub-committees for topic-specific efforts.
- Transparent publicity of progress reports and meeting minutes.
- Developed and implemented bias-related incident reporting workflow.

References

1. Williams, D. A. (2013). Strategic diversity leadership: Activating change and transformation in higher education. Fairfax, VA: Stylus.
2. Leon, R. A. and Williams, D. A. (2016). Contingencies for Success: Examining Diversity Committees in Higher Education. Innovative Higher Education, vol. 41, no. 5, pp. 395–410., doi:10.1007/s10755-016-9357-8.
3. [University of California, Berkeley Strategic Planning Toolkits](#)
4. [University of Texas Diversity Planning Tools](#)
5. [Association of American Medical Colleges Diversity and Strategic Planning Toolkit](#)
6. [University of Chicago Diversity and Inclusion Planning Toolkit](#)
7. [University of Dayton Diversity Toolkit](#)
8. [Boston College Strategic Planning Toolkit](#)

Harvard Resources

1. [Harvard ODIB Inclusive Excellence Self-Guided Planning Toolkit](#)
2. [Harvard Center for Workforce Development Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Toolkit](#)
3. [Harvard FAS Departmental DIB Committee Resource Guide](#)
4. [Harvard ODIB Foundational Concepts and Affirming Language Guide](#)
5. [Harvard Inclusion and Belonging Pulse Survey Data](#)
6. [2019 Harvard Faculty Climate Survey](#)
7. [2019 Harvard Department of Psychology Climate Survey](#)
8. [2018 Harvard Department of Government Climate Survey](#)
9. [Harvard University Program on Survey Research](#)
10. [Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging](#)

Citation

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Self-Assessment Worksheet

This Self-Assessment Worksheet can be used to identify current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges that exist within your unit's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. The following pages are intended to start dialogue and inspire goals for later on in the strategic planning process. This is not intended as a formal evaluation or to "score" the unit's efforts.

Directions:

- For each statement, circle the response that best reflects your perspective of how the unit is doing.
- At the bottom of the page, include any thoughts or questions.
- The last page can be used to further summarize the unit's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.
- It is recommended that this assessment is completed individually prior to being discussed as a group.

A. Vision, Leadership, and Messaging

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat,
DK = don't know, N/A = not
applicable

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. Our unit is actively committed to issues of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. The unit's mission and vision include goals relating to our equity and inclusion values. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. Unit leadership helps set the tone for creating an engaging and inclusive environment for all groups. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. Our equity and inclusion values are reflected in internal and external communications, such as program descriptions, outreach materials, and our website. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat, DK = don't know, N/A = not applicable

B. Faculty

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. Our department actively values and seeks out faculty with diverse racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, immigrant, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and religious backgrounds. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. Current faculty demographics reflect or exceed the diversity of our students. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. Our faculty search and hiring processes employ best practices in the area of equity, inclusion, and diversity, such as: defining searches broadly, appointing diverse search committees, actively reaching out to scholars from underrepresented groups, using clear evaluation criteria, being open to candidates with non-traditional backgrounds, etc. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. Faculty searches in the department regularly attract a diverse pool of highly qualified candidates and/or attract a pool that represents the availability of PhD's in this field. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 5. We have a strong faculty mentoring system which is effective in supporting all faculty members in the tenure and advancement process, as well as in expanding their academic and professional growth. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 6. The department provides a supportive and welcoming environment for all faculty members to pursue their careers as teachers and scholars. Faculty from groups historically underrepresented in the field and/or in society are fully included in the intellectual life of the department. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 7. All faculty in the department are comfortable and knowledgeable about working with diverse student populations. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 8. The department encourages and rewards faculty members' contributions to equity, inclusion, and diversity. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

C. Students

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat, DK = don't know, N/A = not applicable

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. Our department actively values and seeks to enroll students with diverse racial, ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, immigrant, international, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and religious backgrounds. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. Our outreach and admissions processes employ targeted practices for attracting diverse populations. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. Our applicant and admit pools reflect or exceed the diversity in the availability pools of our feeder institutions. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. Students of all identities and experiences are valued by faculty and staff, and everyone has a place in departmental study groups, labs, project teams, etc. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 5. Our students engage in scholarly inquiry about topics related to diversity, inclusion, equity, and public service as appropriate to their chosen field of study. This kind of inquiry is actively supported and valued. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 6. We have a strong mentoring system, which is effective in supporting all students both academically and professionally. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 7. Extra support is provided, where needed, to ensure the success of students from underresourced backgrounds, students with disabilities, students whose first language is not English, students with limited financial resources, and those facing other academic or social challenges. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 8. Success rates within the department are comparable across students of all identity groups and backgrounds. This includes both degree completion rates and job placement. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat, DK = don't know, N/A = not applicable

D. Staff

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. Our department actively values and seeks to hire a diverse staff. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. We employ best practices for fair and inclusive hiring and advancement, such as: active outreach to underrepresented communities, appointing diverse hiring committees, using clear hiring criteria, supporting professional development and career advancement for current staff, etc. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. Staff from underrepresented identity groups are proportionally represented in leadership and management positions as compared with their overall numbers in the department. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. Staff members engage in professional development and/or dialogue about topics related to diversity, inclusion, and equity, and include attention to these issues in their work. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 5. All staff have departmental support to continue their professional growth and career advancement. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 6. We provide staff with opportunities to engage in community-based learning and public service. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat, DK = don't know, N/A = not applicable

E. Teaching and Research

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. The department supports a research, teaching, and public service agenda that is responsive to the needs of our increasingly diverse state, national, and global context. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. Course offerings include explicit attention to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as they relate to our field(s) of study. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. The department's curriculum includes elements related to public and/or community engagement. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. Teaching practices throughout the department are culturally relevant, accessible, and inclusive for all groups. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 5. Our program offers students from all groups – and especially those from groups that are underrepresented in the field – the opportunity to engage in research and other scholarly activities. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 6. Faculty research agendas address issues of equity, inclusion, and diversity as related to our field(s) of inquiry. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 7. To the extent that the department holds internal and external speaker events, lecture series, colloquia, and/or conferences, these events include speakers from diverse and underrepresented groups. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

Y = yes, N = no, S = somewhat, DK = don't know, N/A = not applicable

F. Climate

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| 1. Visible images and materials throughout the department are welcoming and inclusive to diverse groups – for example, they include positive multicultural images, reflect the experiences of multiple communities, and/or showcase the department's equity efforts. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 2. All department-sponsored events and activities are physically accessible to participants with disabilities. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 3. There is a clear culture of respect, collegiality, intergroup dialogue, and collaboration across differences in all levels and positions of the department. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 4. The department provides opportunities for students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented or marginalized groups to connect with others who share their backgrounds and affiliations. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 5. If issues of insensitivity, exclusion, disrespect, or harassment arise, they are addressed directly and in a timely fashion. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 6. The department provides a comfortable environment for discussion of personal and academic topics related to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability/disability, nationality, and other areas of diversity. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 7. Departmental services, courses, meetings, and administrative practices reflect sensitivity to all groups and are conducted in culturally competent ways. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |
| 8. In my opinion, all students, faculty, and staff feel comfortable and welcome to be their full selves within the department. | Y | N | S | DK | N/A |

Comments, ideas, questions:

| | Strengths and Opportunities | Weaknesses and Challenges |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Vision, Leadership, Messaging | | |
| Faculty | | |
| Students | | |
| Staff | | |
| Teaching & Research Fellows | | |
| Climate | | |

Strengths

What do we do exceptionally well?
 What knowledge, skills, or resources do we have?
 What do you feel most proud of?

What are emerging trends or events that we can capitalize on?
 Are there untapped resources or partnerships we can leverage?
 Can we adapt or scale up already ongoing initiatives?

Opportunities

Weaknesses

What could we do better?
 What are our vulnerabilities or limitations?
 What frustrates you?

What internal and external roadblocks block our progress?
 What are other universities or units within our university doing that may impact us?

Challenges

Vision and Goal-Setting Guide

The Vision and Goal-Setting Guide is designed to help committees identify and develop key priorities, measurable goals, and specific action steps.

Brainstorm Your Vision

First, begin by thinking 3-5 years in the future. Envision your hopes for your unit in relation to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Consider:

- What do you hope to achieve in that time? What do you hope the environment and culture will be in your unit?
- What will success look like? Think about areas such as research, teaching, recruitment/retention, belonging/climate, stakeholder engagement/investment.
- What do you want your unit to be known for in terms of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging?

Identify Priorities

Drawing from your committee's self-assessment, identify a few key priorities, challenges, issues, or opportunities you are interested in addressing in your strategic plan. Areas of interest may relate to any aspects of your unit, including faculty, students, curriculum and teaching, research, climate, etc. Most strategic plans focus on 3 to 5 key priorities,

Set Goals, Strategies, Metrics, and Action Steps

Use the worksheet provided on pages A10-A11 to help develop your goals, strategies, metrics, and action steps for each key priority.

Goals

What do you want to achieve or change in regard to each of the priorities you have identified? In the “goals” section of the worksheet, identify the unit’s desired outcomes for each area you have chosen to work on. Goals should speak to where the unit is hoping to go in the next 3 to 5 years, and should be pitched at a fairly general level.

It is useful to test your goals with a set of standards referred to as “SMART.”

Specific – state precisely what you are going to do, for whom, and to what end.

Measurable – able to track progress and have tangible evidence that you accomplished what you set out to do.

Attainable – providing for a level of challenge or growth that is aspirational, yet one that the unit believes is attainable.

Relevant – connect with the overall vision of the unit and the university.

Time-bound – place the effort on a timeline, connected with other activities and benchmarks, and move the work toward completion.

Examples of goals:

- Updating and expanding curriculum to better align with DEI
- Improving outreach and hiring practices to enhance faculty diversity.
- Increasing departmental dialogue on diversity and cultural competence.

Relevant Factors and Assumptions

Take a moment to list relevant factors and assumptions you think exist in relation to the priorities you have chosen. For example: What types of courses have you found to be most successful in addressing issues of diversity and equity in recent years? Do women faculty and students share similar concerns, or are their experiences significantly different? What partnerships might be beneficial in advancing your interests? Will new resources need to be developed in the areas you are prioritizing?

Strategies, Deliverables, Metrics, and Action Steps

Continuing with the worksheet on the next two pages, fill in the strategies, deliverables, metrics, and action steps attached to each goal.

1. List the general **strategies** you will use to achieve the goals your unit has identified. These strategies may reflect “best practices” in the field or be innovative ideas developed by the department. Strategies are higher-level categories (e.g., outreach and recruitment, mentoring, inclusive curriculum design, etc.) as compared to deliverables or actions, which are described below. Several of the Additional Resources from this toolkit offer ideas for strategies – in areas such as faculty hiring, graduate student recruitment, teaching and learning practices, working with K-12 schools and community colleges, and public engagement.
2. For each strategy, develop **deliverables** – these are specific activities, events, practices, programs, or resources you will draw on to implement particular strategies.
 - a. For example, if one of your strategies is to expand outreach among underrepresented graduate student applicant pools, deliverables may include things like: attending certain conferences, creating a new brochure, or building partnerships with minority serving institutions.
 - b. For a strategy on enhanced curriculum, actions and deliverables may include: development of a new American Cultures class, audit of course syllabi, or hosting a series of faculty discussions.
3. Next in the goal development process is identifying **metrics** or how you will measure progress and noting specific data sources you will use to ensure you are working toward the unit’s goals. Be sure to clarify data that will be collected through your efforts directly and data that can be gathered from other campus units or initiatives.
4. Finally, it is important to begin thinking about how the plan for these strategies and deliverables will be implemented. Use the last section to identify who will be responsible for each deliverable or **action step** and when that action should take place in your plan's timeline.

Goal Development Worksheet

Use a separate copy of the worksheet below for each key priority you are proposing to address in your strategic plan. The goals, strategies, deliverables, metrics, and timeline identified will be included in your written strategic plan (See Page 8 for more information on writing a plan).

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Priority to be Addressed <i>What is the opportunity, challenge, need, or new direction you would like to pursue?</i></p> | |
| <p>2. Relevant Factors and Assumptions <i>What relevant factors impact or are related to this priority? Are there any assumptions to consider related to this priority?</i></p> | |
| <p>3. Long-term Goal <i>What do you want to achieve or change in the next 3-5 years?</i></p> | <p>4. Short-term Goal <i>What benchmarks must be met to ensure the long-term goal is met?</i></p> |
| Empty space for Long-term Goal | Empty space for Short-term Goal |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|------------|
| <p>5. Strategies</p> <p><i>What general strategies or approaches will you use to accomplish your goals?</i></p> | | <p>6. Deliverables</p> <p><i>What are some specific actions or resources that you will need to use or develop to implement each strategy?</i></p> | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| <p>7. Metrics</p> <p><i>What information will you track and review to measure progress on your short-term and long-term goals? Where will this information come from?</i></p> | | | |
| | | | |
| <p>8. Responsibilities and Time Frame</p> | | | |
| Deliverable/Action Step | Persons Responsible | | Time Frame |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |