

Diversity Core Initiative

Program Components

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) proposes developing a new initiative, the Diversity Core Initiative, to help strengthen institutions' existing diversity efforts and assist them in making diversity core to their missions. This initiative would provide tools, assessments, guidelines and definitions which institutions can customize for implementation. Institutions may choose to adopt some or all of the programs outlined within this proposal, depending upon their mission. The primary goal is to supplement and strengthen institutions' existing initiatives rather than to replace them.

A number of projects under the Diversity Core Initiative would provide medical schools with assistance around their diversity infrastructure, climate and culture, and medical education, as well as provide resources for pipeline programs. Below are some examples:

Resources for Pipeline Programs

Mentoring Students

Partnering with Open Study™, an online tutoring and mentoring resource funded by The National Science Foundation and The National Institutes of Health, the AAMC would sponsor a study group for pre-medical students on the Open Study™ site. Given the popularity of social-media and text-messaging with younger generations, online or virtual mentee-mentor relationships provide students with instant one-on-one as well as one-to-many connections to “experts” who can give reliable and accurate information to students. Open Study™ is a high-caliber, online, interactive, member-based academic community with existing study group sponsors that include: MIT, Yale, University of California, Berkeley, Tufts University, and Johns Hopkins University, in a variety of science-based subjects (2,000 courses and 9 million users). The site has an average of 4.7 users who answer each question and 90 percent of questions are answered (www.openstudy.com).

Tracking Participants

Historically, due partly to lack of resources and required technology, tracking has been challenging for pipeline programs. Therefore, the AAMC would partner with XXX to design an innovative method of tracking that would continue to track students beyond their medical school application, whether or not these students become practicing physicians.

Program Evaluation

Evaluation is a key component to assessing the efficacy of pipeline initiatives. As part of the Diversity Core Initiative, the AAMC proposes to offer assistance with program evaluation to institutions that wish to evaluate their pipeline initiatives. This service would include the use of Podcasts, Webinars, and additional online resources to enhance the understanding of a program's effectiveness. Assistance with both process and outcome evaluation would be provided. For example, process evaluation will assist programs in determining to what extent the institution's

pipeline program is being implemented as intended and to gather information on the challenges and lessons learned in reaching full implementation. Process evaluations are helpful in making early adjustments to program interventions to maximize the implementation of the model, resulting in more reliable outcome study findings. This process may involve working with multiple partners to determine what components of the program work best.

Pipeline Program Database of Promising Practices

Using research from pipeline program studies and learning from the evaluations of pipeline programs that use the Evaluation Design and Interpretation service, the AAMC will develop a database of promising practices to which institutions can subscribe. The database will be modeled after the peer-reviewed MedEdPORTAL® program of the AAMC which currently is partially funded by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA). The promising practices identified in the database could also serve as benchmarks for institutions and would include lessons learned. The Pipeline Program Database will become a pool of knowledge for educators and administrators, to assist institutions with implementing effective programs to increase diversity within medicine or other disciplines.