

The following will be helpful in understanding what schools look for when they hire a CDO.

Excerpt from *What Is a Chief Diversity Officer?*

Williams, D.A., & Wade-Golden, K.C. (2006, April 18). What is a chief diversity officer? *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from www.insidehighered.com

The Making of a Good Higher Education CDO

When a higher education institution specifically decides to hire a CDO and develop this new capability, great care must be given to finding the right candidate. This task can be difficult with applicant pools that regularly yield between 120 and 150 persons, and include faculty members with a diversity research agenda, lawyers well-versed in affirmative action law, student development specialists, individuals from the corporate community, and others.

In gearing up for a search, a number of tough issues are often bantered by senior administrators and others designing the position and thinking about the type of knowledge, skills, and abilities that define a qualified candidate. These issues include whether the individual should possess a Ph.D. or other terminal degree; qualify for tenure in an academic department; have a legal background and experience with Federal and state compliance issues; and whether or not the person charged to do the work must be a member of an ethnic, racial, gender, or other minority group, to name a few of the most common challenging topics for discussion.

While these issues remain the source of debate, the ultimate decision must be determined by the institutional context, and predicated on factors such as core job responsibilities, span of units and offices that the chief diversity officer may supervise, and the degree to which the officer intersects with issues such as tenure, promotion, faculty hiring, and curriculum development. To say that a person is qualified simply because he or she is an African American and a tenured member of the faculty in art history, for example, is as inaccurate as rendering an Irish American, with expertise in botany qualified to serve as the department chair for European Studies or as the vice president for information technology. The superordinate goals of providing leadership for diversity and guiding change must guide the selection of the candidate, or institutions run the risk of hiring individuals that are woefully under prepared for the demands of such a complex, high profile, and politically charged position.

Although the exact mixture of degrees, experiences, and qualifications is hard to define, we believe that the most successful officers will illustrate seven key attributes regardless of academic and administrative background:

Technical Mastery of Diversity Issues: The CDO should have an excellent command of all aspects of diversity issues in higher education, including faculty recruitment and retention issues, identity development, access and equity, diversifying the curriculum, assessing the educational impact of diversity, measuring the campus climate, and the policy and legal dynamics of affirmative action and diversity in higher education. Furthermore, a CDO must be comfortable leveraging the social justice, educational benefits, and business case rationales for discussing diversity's importance.

Political Savvy: The CDO must be particularly astute at navigating an institution's political landscape; responding well to politically charged or politically sensitive situations. He or she must possess an ability and willingness to find win-win solutions when contentious circumstances arise, and know how to build consensus, accrue buy-in, and work through competing interests.

Ability to Cultivate a Common Vision: The CDO must be able to develop and cultivate a collaborative vision of diversity on campus. This requires resonating as authentic with students, faculty, staff, and administrators, and being committed to working collaboratively with other senior executives to build positive vision, direction, and results through strategic initiatives that holistically impact diversity.

In-Depth Perspective on Organizational Change: The CDO should possess an outstanding command of the elements and dynamics of organizational change, and also have entrenched experiences having led or been involved with these efforts in the past. Change is rarely easy, and given the inherent difficulties embedded in this often politicized process, the CDO must have a commitment to see the change process through its challenges and rough spaces to effect deep structural change. They must exhibit passion and patience, realizing that change does not happen quickly, and oversee the organizational change process from a holistic point of view — guiding the design, implementation, assessment, and evolution of key milestones over time.

Sophisticated Relational Abilities: The CDO must possess a high degree of emotional intelligence, charisma, and communication abilities. Given that much of the work will be accomplished through lateral coordination, a CDO must have ability to cross numerous organizational boundaries with a fluid ability to adapt language and styles to different audiences.

Understanding of the Culture of Higher Education: The CDO should possess indepth knowledge and experience regarding the culture of the academy. Colleges and universities are different than any other type of organization, and to achieve success, the CDO must understand the culture of shared governance, tenure and promotion, multiple and competing goals, decentralized campus politics, and the unique needs of students, faculty, staff, and executives with respect to diversity.

Results Orientation: Although not singularly responsible for results, the CDO must be results oriented and committed to encouraging the change agenda along to achieve significant results. Consequently, it is fundamental that they illustrate how diversity is a integral component to the successful fulfillment of the institutional mission, and a fundamental aspect of academic excellence in the 21st century.

CDO job description at Robert Morris University

Excerpt from: *Chief Diversity Officer and the Diversity Office* By Sabine Cherenfant and Dr. Rex Crawley
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As previously mentioned, a task force was created to develop the job description of the proposed position of Vice President for Institutional Equity & Chief Diversity Officer (CDO). The primary duties for the CDO position are:

Major Duties and Responsibilities

1. Coordinating, in consultation with Admissions and Financial Aid, those areas that are relevant to increasing student diversity on campus.
2. Consults with faculty to enhance their capacity for addressing diversity issues in the classroom.
3. Coordinates diversity activities across the University by collaborating directly with key functional areas.
(Note: Removed programming)
4. Review and certify the University's contracts and compliance programs for vendors/contractors to assure that their EEO/Diversity plans meet regulations.
5. Ensures ADA and EEO coordination; coordinates with the athletic director on Title IX issues.
6. Engages matters of diversity as a matter of first priority.
7. Provides leadership for the Robert Morris Council on Institutional Equity and its diversity management efforts.
8. Produces an annual report, highlighting the activities and outcomes in support of faculty, staff and student diversity.
9. Collaborates with appropriate offices and departments, including PR, to review materials to promote diversity goals across the campus.
10. Contributes to programs, services and initiatives designed to enhance the recruitment and successful retention of students and/or faculty and staff from diverse and under-represented population groups.
11. Serves on the President's cabinet and keeps its members apprised of how the University is doing in terms of recruiting, retaining and promotion tracking data.
12. Refine and develop systematic structures to recruit, and promote diverse students, faculty and staff.
13. Act as a liaison between the University and community organizations, business and agency leaders; creates connections and partnerships between external clients and University resources.
14. Collaborates with stakeholders to develop and implement strategies, programs and services to support institutional diversity and inclusion initiatives, including but not limited to: increasing diverse faculty and professional staff through recruitment and hiring processes; researching, identifying and scheduling effective training programs; providing staff support for committees dealing with diversity; supporting initiatives to highlight diverse cultures and traditions.

The position creation process was a tedious process that involved a task force made up of faculty, staff and students. Many issues were addressed and responded to in the deliberations engaged in by the task force. The task force had to balance the needs of the entire university and the needs of the existing programs and structures. Specifically, the university already has in place an Office of Multicultural Programs that is responsible for the student affairs programming associated with diversity management. The task force was careful not to overlap roles and responsibilities with this more programming function of the university.

The task force stressed the need for having a CDO who can function as a policy maker and help make diversity a priority for the university even in the face of challenges. The need for a strong CDO was emphasized and included in the job description.