

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLAN

AP Austin Peay
State University
CLARKSVILLE  TENNESSEE

Eriksson College of Education

**IMPLEMENTATION YEAR:
ACADEMIC YEAR 2022 -2023
TO BE REVIEWED ANNUALLY**

**Special Thanks to the
CoE Diversity Council
of 2021-2022:**

Adam Attwood
Zachary Barnes
Laura Barnett
Benita Bruster
Prentice Chandler
Cathi Gatewood-Keim
Moniqueka Gold
Charles H Gonzalez
Hanrui He
Cheryl Lambert
Andrea Lee
John McConnell
Jalesa Parks
Sherri Prosser
Anthony Sanders
Donna Short
Phil Short
James M. Thompson I
Amy Tondreau
Ling Wang
Bing Xiao

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Austin Peay State University's Eriksson College of Education has composed a collaborative and purposeful Strategic Diversity Plan which was developed to expand on the recognized needs and successes of our College. With our self-initiated external diversity report from TECA fresh in our minds, a group of CoE faculty (now known as the first CoE Diversity Council) volunteered in the spring semester of 2021 to work together on cultivating and growing the Eriksson College of Education's engagement with and commitment to diversity. This plan describes the goals, action steps, and projected outcomes that the faculty and staff will strive to reach during the 2022-2023 academic year and beyond.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We acknowledge that we are guests who are gathering and moving upon the ancestral land of the Tsalaguwetiyi People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We give thanks to the larger Cherokee nation and other Native nations for making the presence of this place currently known as Clarksville possible. We acknowledge the legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlements that bring us together here today. We will work towards restorative learning, understanding, and dismantling the truths of colonization that were and are still present in this place, which is an ongoing process. We also acknowledge the capital and infrastructures of this land that were extracted from the nonconsensual work, forced labor, and stolen knowledge and skills of enslaved Africans whose descendants are still awaiting justice. With reverence and respect, we acknowledge the oppressive dynamics that have historically occurred in this place and continue into today, and which make this Strategic Diversity Plan even more relevant and urgent.

Message from the **DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



The document that you are reading is a first in the history of Austin Peay State University and the Eriksson College of Education. Never before has a group of dedicated staff and faculty made such a commitment to the issues of diversity, equity, access, and inclusion in our College. This commitment is highlighted by the fact that our inaugural Strategic Diversity Plan (SDP) was driven and created by our faculty and staff. However, this document is not a panacea. This document is not perfect. There is no document or report that will solve centuries of injustice and inequality. But this document is a necessary step in moving our College closer to the social justice that our profession and our world demands.

As is the case with nearly every other college of education in the country, we were not moving the needle on these important issues facing the field of education. Then something happened that separated us from other colleges and universities. We collectively came to the conclusion that we could do better when it came to this work. In the summer of 2020, amidst the national conversation around race in America, we decided to take an approach that differed from many colleges across the United States. We decided to act instead of talk. The willingness of our faculty to address these issues and have necessary but difficult conversations has made all the difference. Following a collegewide meeting that summer, we decided to engage in a series of actions that have brought us to the present moment: the creation of an Antiracist Study Group, partnering with the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) for an external stakeholder report, naming the first Coordinators of Diversity Initiatives, approving a diversity statement, increasing professional development in DEI, establishing the first BIPOC student group, recruiting more diverse candidates into our programs, and creating the first College Diversity Council. Our faculty and staff leaders have been at the front of this work, changing how these issues are discussed, conceptualized, and addressed in the College. Most importantly, this work has culminated with a living document that has the potential to change the face of our College. This work has been a collective effort, and it is clear that if we get to a better place, it won't be alone – it will be together.

Diversity work is a core part of what we do. In the Eriksson College of Education, this sentiment is now a reality. I fully endorse and support the work of the Diversity Council and the Strategic Diversity Plan in the Eriksson College of Education.

Prentice T. Chandler, Ph. D.
Dean, Eriksson College of Education
Austin Peay State University

"If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together."

– AFRICAN PROVERB

Statement from the

CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER OF AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY

Greetings!



Serving the Austin Peay State University campus community as the inaugural chief diversity officer is an honor and privilege. In this role, the goal is simple: establish a campus environment where diversity is natural and business as usual. It is not required or meant to cause resentment. Diversity will connect to oneness and fairness, not be a bridge to acrimony. Austin Peay is where we all work together, yet we experience life differently. We hope our campus members, especially our students, have an opportunity to see life from a new perspective and experience a new world they did not see before.

Following a lengthy planning process, the College of Education (COE) has launched its five-year strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), filled with a blueprint for resources and access. This plan signifies a renewed pledge to developing a diverse COE learning community while creating an inclusive and equitable campus environment for all. The College of Education is building on the premise that diversity is an action, inclusivity is cultural, and belonging is a feeling. During the implementation of the plan, there will need to be an understanding that the contributions of students, faculty, and staff will be essential in helping to guide the DEI process towards creative and successful outcomes.

As the demographics of our world become more diverse, institutions of higher learning must reflect this diversity. The first step we need starts with acknowledging that some change is necessary. Along with change, significant work has been done so far at Austin Peay State University; however, much more is to come! With the five-year strategic plan in full force, the COE will be able to provide resources that better equip students, faculty, and staff with information that matters and helps to promote transparency in their DEI work.

The COE has made several commitments to make the College a more inclusive, equitable, and diverse community. Diversity enhances the learning experience for all campus members by exposing and challenging us to reflect, assess, and value the opinions, experiences, and practices of others different from ourselves. The College strongly believes that we must create the best possible educational environment for students whose lives will likely be significantly changed during their time at Austin Peay State University. As the Chief Diversity Officer, I fully support the five-year strategic plan. I will continue to be interested in and partner with the COE as they keep our campus apprised of their progress and their work aligns and advances these critical DEI efforts across the campus community.

Sincerely,

LaNeeça R. Williams

Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator
Austin Peay State University

OUR TRAJECTORY

So Far

June: CoE kicked off Anti Racist Book Study; open call to faculty & staff for facilitators

July: AAPN facilitated panel on Racial Equity

Aug: Anti Racist Educators Book Study facilitators meet

January: Drs. Thompson and Gonzalez named first co-coordinators of Diversity Initiatives for CoE.

March-April: Book Study members suggest a CoE Anti Racist Statement for syllabi and website; committee formed to discuss and compose

Sept.-Dec.: Book Studies resume their meetings;

Diversity Council meets monthly to brainstorm potential strategies for each area of focus

March: BIPOC Student Group emerges

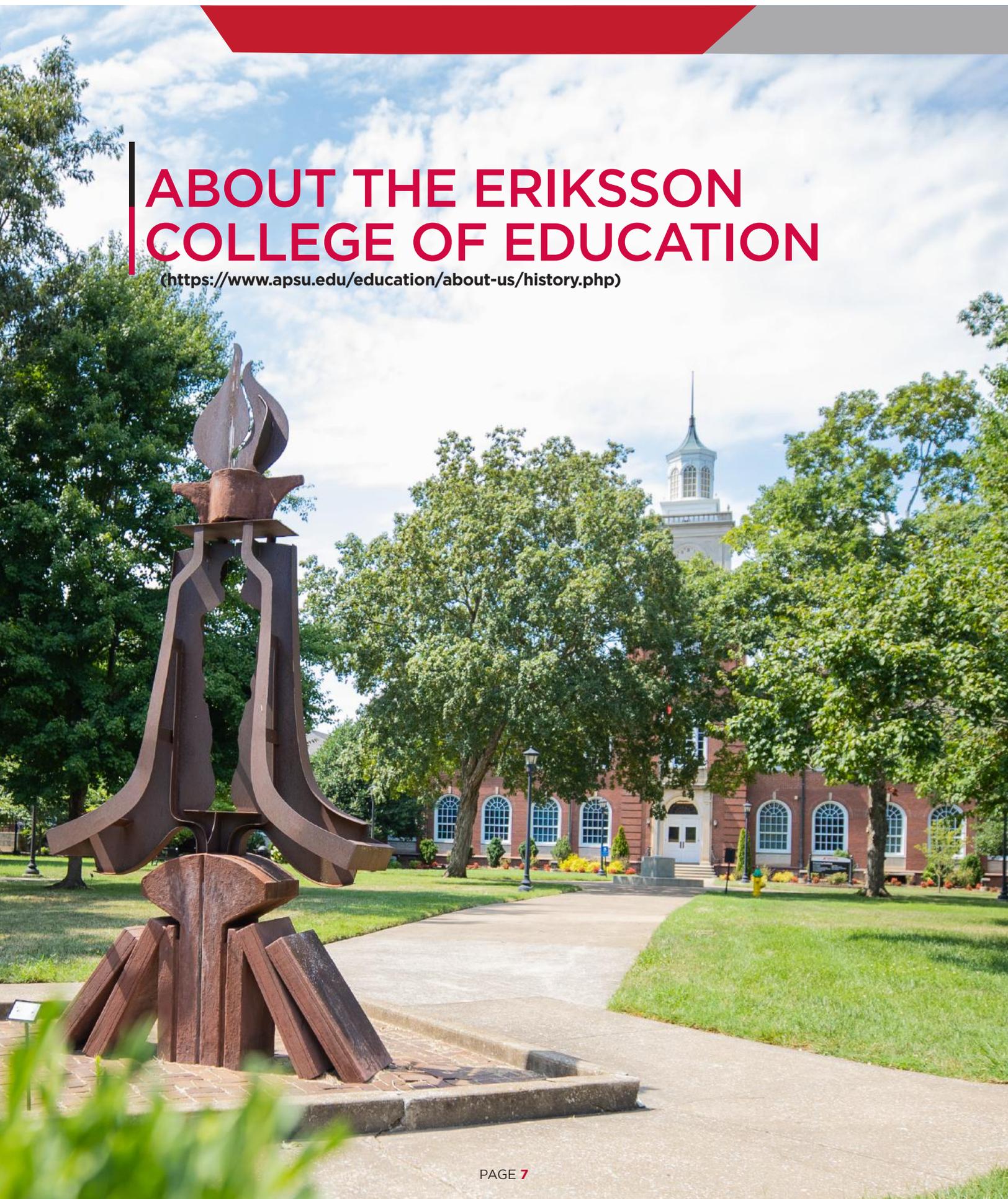
May-Aug.: Core group of Diversity Council members finalizing the initial version of the SDP;

Roll out the SDP



ABOUT THE ERIKSSON COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

(<https://www.apsu.edu/education/about-us/history.php>)



Vision Statement

The Eriksson College of Education prepares dynamic teachers and educational leaders to positively impact communities and schools in the 21st century.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Eriksson College of Education at Austin Peay State University is to prepare educators who are ethical, engaged, and effective leaders. We do so by modeling reflective practice and connecting theory to student-centered learning. We leverage the strengths of our community to foster continuous improvement to reimagine how schools can work.

Commitments

Promote Curiosity through Experiential Learning

Our student-centered programs, practices and curricula foster intellectual curiosity, problem-solving, and inquiry based on research and theory.

Support Reflective Practitioners

Our faculty and students engage in honest self-reflection and strive to meet the needs of a diverse society.

Empower Change Agents and Ethical Leaders

We are deeply committed to social justice.

Value Diversity and Equity

We seek opportunities to learn from multiple perspectives and diverse voices.

Foster Campus and Community Relationships

Our partnerships extend within and beyond the campus to build collaborative relationships with school districts and community leaders.

THE PLAN

Definitions

Action Steps – actions that can be accomplished individually or collaboratively

Measurable Steps – statistical benchmarks that we can determine and track

OVERALL GOAL: Compose and implement a Strategic Diversity Plan (SDP)

Action Steps: to be done individually or collectively

- Focus on four distinct yet overlapping areas of attention within the College of Education – outreach, curriculum, professional development, and recruitment and retention

Measurable Steps:

- Make SDP available online
- Review SDP and goals every semester and revise as necessary
- Annual review and revision of actions and program accreditation requirements



COMMITMENTS - BIG IDEAS

1 To develop and preserve a culture where differences are recognized, welcomed, and valued and positive change is supported and embraced. [outreach, recruitment & retention]

GOAL: Build the capacity for diversity awareness, appreciation, and implementation among faculty, staff, and students

Measurable Steps:

- Analyze the attrition rate of the Untenured Faculty Organization
- Assess the number of grants acquired
- Determine the retention stats for the student BIPOC group
- Create/calculate metrics from DSIR for AAPN & ELTR
- Assess CTE enrollment numbers

At-A-Glance Action Steps	Individual	College	Beyond CoE
Explore conference opportunities and faculty-led workshops for students	X	X	X
Learn alongside students and model behaviors we wish to see	X	X	
Participate in community-building exercises in a way to get to know someone new - understand that their life experiences and position are likely to change beyond our initial perception of them	X	X	X
Collaborate with groups outside of CoE	X	X	X
Find and write for grants/funding to continue residency programs each year	X	X	X
Plan, create, and implement a "Hattie Walker Wilhoite Week of Service" during or around her birthday - November 17th	X	X	X
Promote constructive feedback collection, analysis, and implementation to address diversity issues within the College or to ask questions about aspects of diversity	X	X	

2

To eliminate opportunity gaps and systemic barriers for marginalized students. [recruitment & retention, curriculum]

GOAL: Create routine programming, collaborations, and feedback opportunities to promote diversity within the College

GOAL: To recruit and retain marginalized faculty, staff, and students by eliminating opportunity gaps and systemic barriers

Measurable Steps:

- Obtain student and instructor feedback via surveys on levels of confidence, activities, needs related to diversity
- Continue the upward trend of recruiting and retaining diverse students, pre-service teachers, doctoral candidates, faculty, and staff
- Analyze and distribute needs assessment data based on faculty and student feedback
- Assess the student and faculty PD hours and commitments

At-A-Glance Action Steps	Individual	College	Beyond CoE
Engage in productive research efforts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with diverse students on perspective • Panel of Diverse Leaders on (Dr. Roz Evans, Kevin Stacey, and Dr. Diarese George) • CoE Alumni and Student Webinars • What's attractive (or not) about APSU? • Focus group discussions or quantitative data collection on the topics of Hiring, Retention, and Mentoring 	X	X	X
Promote the COE's diversity initiative via a booth for Mayor Summer Nights, Read Across America, Fright on Franklin, and in the Governor's Square mall	X	X	X
Continue Residency programs		X	
Procure and maintain physical bulletin boards - diversity events, student group activities, etc.		X	
Create an early warning system for retention		X	
Announce and hold TESOL Meetings		X	
Hold Faculty speaker series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown Bag and/or work-in-progress and/or "job talk" share-outs • Coordinate with LaNeeça Williams' office to determine possible upcoming programming 		X	
Engage students in professional development opportunities (a fair, speaker event, or mini / local conference)		X	X
Promote CoE via social media coordinator that represents our current faculty, staff, students	X	X	
Encourage Mentorship (ex: Dr. He's research); quality of interaction beyond academic advising	X	X	X
Create a Pipeline for Ed.D. - work with admissions for department-level recruitment plans for Ed.D. pipeline		X	X
Host student-led ACT/Praxis/Teacher prep workshops and preview days in collaboration with the Governor's Educational Leaders (G.E.L.) Program and the Student Tennessee Education Association (STEA)		X	X

3

To rebuild our curriculums so that they do not uphold white supremacy, intolerance, and bigotry and so they are culturally relevant, historically responsive, and anti-racist. [curriculum, recruitment & retention, PD, outreach]

GOAL: Develop college-wide curriculums that adequately represent and respond to the lived experiences and needs of diverse people

Measurable Steps:

- Review current CAEP report data (e.g., student teaching survey, etc.)
- Evaluate course syllabi using culturally relevant teaching principles, cultivating Genius framework, or other criteria
- Evaluate comments from survey and interview results from students

At-A-Glance Action Steps	Individual	College	Beyond CoE
Engage in productive research efforts: Revise/update curriculum map and standardize the curriculum maps into one format across the College Revise key assessments in select courses to address DEI	X	X	
Thoughtfully Include traditionally marginalized voices - scholars of color, authors who identify as LGBTQIA+, etc. - how many pieces on my required / recommended reading list are written by white, cis, able-bodied researchers? Did they discover this topic or were they just the most popular?	X	X	X
Celebrate the courage to explore racial bias in all its forms - and avoid "gotcha" moments and good/bad dynamics	X	X	X
Promote faculty self-efficacy		X	
Thoughtfully include field experiences that make sense to the content, our students, and the placement in the curricular map	X	X	
Determine new / varied assessments/assignments in the classes we teach	X	X	

4

To provide continual advocacy for social justice and equity across the College, the university, and in the larger community. [curriculum, recruitment & retention, PD, outreach]

GOAL: Forge partnerships that work to build a sense of community and sustain an initiative for diversity

GOAL: Increase the self-efficacy of College of Education faculty

Measurable Steps:

- Assess the number of partnerships and collaborations between the CoE and local businesses owned by BIPOC
- Assess CoE and community touch points

At-A-Glance Action Steps	Individual	College	Beyond CoE
Forge partnerships and sponsorships with local businesses owned by BIPOC		X	X
Implement <i>Alumni Spotlight</i> profiles to showcase diverse students' backgrounds, lived experiences, and post-graduate accomplishments		X	X
Develop collaborative programs with diverse student groups on the APSU campus and with local/community organizations off campus		X	X
Sponsor school district faculty meetings		X	X
Collaborate with the Imagination Library Board		X	X
Lean into the uncomfortable conversations	X		
Provide space for mentorship		X	
Sharing stories/voice (monthly spotlight; faculty, student)		X	
Be reflective and honest about how your unconscious biases may be at work with respect to race, cultural differences, and historical context	X		
Celebrate the courage to explore racial bias in all its forms - and avoid "gotcha" moments and good/bad dynamics	X	X	X
Find time to have casual conversations	X		
Provide opportunities to share experiences and knowledge from Multicultural Classroom PD to help entire College apply these lessons to our teaching	X	X	
Discover ways to reach out (and help!) to the community, local schools, etc	X	X	X
Focus on building stamina for self-reflection and honor what is discovered, rather than shaming or ignoring these behaviors or actions	X		
Find ways to include field experiences that make sense to the content, our students, and the placement in the curricular map	X	X	

CONCLUSION

These four commitments represent the forthcoming efforts of the faculty and staff of the Eriksson College of Education. To reach the outlined commitments, we will collaborate, engage stakeholders and community partners, and evaluate our individual and collective progress. In sum, implementation of this plan will contribute to Austin Peay State University's institutional objectives and fulfill the goals of APSU's Strategic Plan to prepare students to work and to serve in a global community.







Austin Peay State University

CLARKSVILLE  TENNESSEE

Austin Peay State University (APSU) does not discriminate against students, employees, or applicants for admission or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age, status as a protected veteran, genetic information, or any other legally protected class with respect to all employment, programs and activities sponsored by APSU. Inquiries or complaints regarding Title IX, should be directed to the Chief Diversity Officer and Title IX Coordinator, williamsr@apsu.edu, 931-221-7690, 418 College Street, Office of Equity and Inclusion in Rm116, Clarksville, TN 37044. Other inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, Title IX Deputy Coordinator, Sheila Bryant, bryantism@apsu.edu, 931-221-7178. The Austin Peay State University policy on nondiscrimination can be found at Policy 6:001

