

Context and Mission

Mary Hall

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Underrepresented Groups in Computing

- What is an underrepresented group?
 - Relative to their percentage of some population
- From the NSF CISE 2012 Strategic Plan for Broadening Participation:
 - “women, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and indigenous peoples, and persons with disabilities”
- Sometimes includes people with low socioeconomic status

What is Your Context

Definition from BPC Plan Whitepaper, Appendix B

Context: What is your context in terms of demographics (statewide, university, department)? Include local context (e.g., what are the nearby schools like?)

Why this is important?

- Underrepresented groups in different universities vary significantly
- May have unique groups in your local population that you need or are able to reach
- Statewide is important for state-funded institutions

What is Your Mission

What issue(s) does your department identify as most critical to address, based on your context?

BPC Mission: Articulate the BPC mission. This is a big picture statement that describes the strategic vision for the department. Examples:

- The mission of the Broadening Participation Plan of Mars University is to graduate a diverse group of majors who have a demographic makeup similar to that of our surrounding urban community, which is 40% African American and 20% Latinx.
- The mission of the BPC Plan of the Dept of Information Sciences at University X is to increase the proportion of undergraduate women and students of color who major or minor in computing.
- The mission of the BPC Plan of the CS Department of ABC College is to build computational agency in public school students in the JKL School District.

How to Decide on a Mission

- What group would most benefit from intentional activities to address underrepresentation
 - And where are there opportunities to reach that group
- Capitalize on ongoing activities and resources at your university
 - Easier
 - Probably was started with context in mind
 - BPC Plan then amplifies existing program
- Some faculty (e.g., parents, due to research interests, underrepresented) may be motivated to start new activities with departmental support
 - Ideally, leverage existing programs and create a local instance
- Undergraduate students are a great and scalable resource, too

Example Context: University of Utah

Only Tier 1 institution in a state with the fastest growing tech sector in the US.

Group*	State	University	School of Computing
Women	50	47	16
White, not Latinx	78	68	66
Latinx	14	13	8

Salt Lake City School District

- Majority-minority: 56% of the total 23,410 students in 2018 belonged to a minority group
- 19/37 elementary and middle schools are Title I

* All other groups below 3% of population.

Example Mission: University of Utah

The mission of the University of Utah School of Computing is to substantially increase the percentage of women and underrepresented minorities (with an emphasis on Hispanic/Latino students) among our undergraduate students over the next ten years to better reflect the demographics of the university and local K-12 population.

Steps to Derive Context and Mission

- Collect demographic data to identify what groups are underrepresented
 - Every university has institutional data, most are public
 - Dean's offices (and sometimes departments) collect and disseminate demographic data
 - Other data, about the schools, census data, etc., is public
- What are priorities at your institution, in your local community, in local industry, etc.
- Identify ongoing BPC-related activities and consider how they relate to the demographic data in your context and the priorities