

# XCEL Points

For Leadership Success

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Campus Center and Student Activities Department

# Diversity

## What is Diversity?

Diversity may be seen as how we distinguish a particular group of people or what defines us as individuals. Diversity can be found in race, gender, age, sex, religion, color, nationality/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or physical/mental ability. When running a student organization, it is important to be as diverse in your membership as you can, because the wider the range in perspective your group has will determine how well rounded your group will be. WPI students come from a number of different backgrounds and cultures who are all here for the common purpose of obtaining a degree.

## Reaching Out

To attract students from diverse backgrounds to your organization, try to convey to the WPI community that you are open to growth and change. Students may not feel comfortable stepping into an organization if they do not feel accepted. You may find that students from different backgrounds may contribute thoughts, ideas, or perspectives that some members may not necessarily understand. At times, this can cause conflicts between the members within the organization. Ensure positive communication and show that your organization is open to new perspectives and ideas. If you have a new member from a unique background, foster a welcoming environment and allow them to freely speak their mind. You can do this by including them in conversations and asking them to share their opinion.

Show your support by having your group organize an educational diversity or awareness program, or offer to co-sponsor a program with one of the groups listed in this handout. Your group can also demonstrate that you encourage *inclusiveness* by putting on a campus wide diversity program. Take advantage of the various funding programs the Campus Center and Student Activities Office has to offer such as SOAP and the Speakers Fund, if your budget does not allow you the opportunity to do so.

## Encourage Diversity

Showing that your organization supports diversity does not always have to be reflected outside of your regular meetings. The topic of diversity education and *inclusiveness* should start from within your organization. Not only is diversity education a great opportunity for your organization to show you care, but it is also a great way to increase the awareness of the WPI community. Embrace new members into your organization, have them share their thoughts and ideas with the group, and always be willing to try new things.

**“Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without.”**

**- William Sloane Coffin, Jr**

Campus Center and Student Activities Office (3rd Floor of the Campus Center)  
<http://www.wpi.edu/+SAO> Phone: 508-831-5291  
For additional information e-mail us at [ccsainfo@wpi.edu](mailto:ccsainfo@wpi.edu)



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## Listing of Cultural and Religious Organizations

Bisexual, Lesbian, and Gay Alliance	Korean Student Association
African Percussion & Dance Ensemble	Muslim Students Association
Black Student Union	National Society of Black Engineers
Chinese Student Association	Newman Club
Chinese Students & Scholars	Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers
Christian Bible Fellowship	Turkish Student Association
Hellenic Student Association	Unitarian Universalist Campus Fellowship
Vietnamese Student Association	Hillel
Indian Student Organization	
International Student Council	

*\*A complete listing of student organizations can be found at the Student Activities Office website:  
<http://www.wpi.edu/+SAO>*

### Inclusiveness:

**Going *beyond* toleration to understand what makes us unique and what unites us as human beings.**

## Helpful Links and Resources on Diversity

<http://www.calvin.edu/admin/provost/multicultural/documents/campusdiversity.pdf>  
[http://www.equity.qut.edu.au/publications/resources/Celebrating\\_diversity\\_2005.pdf](http://www.equity.qut.edu.au/publications/resources/Celebrating_diversity_2005.pdf)  
<http://www.ilstu.edu/home/diversity/>  
[http://diversity.fullcoll.edu/classroom\\_resources.htm](http://diversity.fullcoll.edu/classroom_resources.htm)  
<http://www.hermanmiller.com/CDA/SSA/Category/0,1564,a10-c656,00.html>

## Looking for more information?

Office of Diversity Programs  
Campus Center, Room 233  
Phone: 508-831-5796

E-mail: [diversity@wpi.edu](mailto:diversity@wpi.edu)

Web: <http://wpi.edu/Admin/Diversity/>

Oasis Cultural Center  
20 Schussler Street

Web: <http://wpi.edu/Diversity/OASIS/index.htm>

*\*Additional resources are available through the Student Activities Office*

**“There can be hope only for a society which acts as one big family, not as many separate ones.”**

**- Anwar Sadat**

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