**PLA Guide**

**Diversity in the Workplace**

**How to Use this Guide**

This guide is meant to help you understand the knowledge and skills typically expected of someone who has a college-level understanding of Diversity in the Workplace.

This guide is also meant to help you go through the processes of thinking about your learning and writing your Prior Learning Request by answering the following questions, which will be explained more fully in the section Writing your PLA Request:

1. Describe what you do.
2. Compare a real and hypothetical situation in this field.
3. Identify informal “rules” in this field.
4. Examine the role of a professional in this field.
5. Apply your knowledge in a problem-solving situation.
6. Identify critical issues in the field.
7. Teach others.
8. Offer additional information or evidence of your learning.

**Typical Learning Experiences**

The following list is not all inclusive; you may have learned in other ways.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Chief Diversity Officer | Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator |
| Human Resource Manager, Specialist | Diversity Trainer or related learning professional |
| Manager/ Supervisor | Workplace Training |
| Military Experience | Personal or professional travel |
| Immersion in another Culture | Awareness, sensitivity and inclusion of diversity through work experiences |

**What is Diversity in the Workplace?**

Diversity in the Workplace involves understanding the complexities of a labor force consisting of people (employees) from a wide array of backgrounds; these employees will also possess differences related to their identities. Students may apply this knowledge to recruit, select, manage, and retain employees from a variety of backgrounds and who possess a range of cultural, social, and demographic characteristics.

The diagram below identifies many aspects of learning in this field. Your learning may fall within some areas and not others, based on your personal experience, and that’s okay. You can consult other guides or use the general guide, if they are more appropriate to your learning.

**Writing Your PLA Request**

Please answer the questions below to the best of your ability.

1. In your own words, *What is diversity*? How do you see diversity as a workplace issue?

1. Describe an event in your professional career which involved a diversity issue; what actions you took; what were the outcomes?
2. What are the characteristics of a workplace that is diverse and inclusive? What are the problems that a workplace faces when it is not diverse and inclusive?

4. Your organization has decided to create an office for Diversity and Inclusion. You have been tasked with developing the charter for this new office. In your charter, be sure to include the following:

1. The mission of the office
2. A brief glossary of terms
3. Resources and relationships that the office will engage with
4. List some of your proposed initiatives
5. Explain the full scope of responsibilities of this office:

5. Think about and then respond to two or three of the following questions:

1. Why might it be difficult to create a comprehensive list of all dimensions of diversity?
2. Why is workplace diversity such a complex issue?
3. To what extent is the workplace a microcosm of society?
4. Why do stereotypes and prejudices persist?
5. Use the knowledge in a problem-solving situation

You have just begun a new job at a new organization. How would you discern the extent to which the organization is committed to a diverse and inclusive environment?

1. Teach others

Describe the elements that you would infuse into a proposed training program to ensure that participants of the program acquire knowledge, awareness, and understanding of diversity.

6. Offer any additional information or thoughts on this topic that you would like to discuss as part

of your PLA evaluation.

**Information to Help You Decide Credit Specifications for Your Request**

College-level learning means that you can talk about what you know in some detail, come up with some general insights and “rules” about the topic, and apply those insights and rules to new situations.

* **Introductory/Advanced**: Diversity in the Workplace is typically introductory or advanced. The topic could be either, depending on the depth and breadth of the student’s knowledge
* **Liberal/Non-Liberal**: Diversity in the Workplace could be liberal. If the student demonstrates an understanding of concepts, history, theory, then the knowledge can be considered liberal. For example, if the student understands the history of the women’s movement, and can trace the trajectory of civil rights and gender issues; or the history of race in the U.S., and can trace the history of race issues; the learning could be considered liberal.

Alternatively, if the knowledge is focused on rules, laws, and compliance, the knowledge is likely to be applied.

* **General Education**: Diversity in the Workplace typically does not fulfill a General Education requirement. However it could fulfill, depending on the depth and breadth and focus of the student’s knowledge, the General Education requirement for Social Science.

**Number of Credits**To determine the number of credits to request, think about your experience using this guide. If you answered most of the questions easily, and feel that you can confidently discuss areas related to this topic, you may want to request 3-4 credits, which is the equivalent of one college course. After your discussion, your evaluator will have the opportunity to recommend fewer or more credits based on his/her evaluation of your learning.

**Level of Credits**To determine the level of your request think about your comfort level answering the questions. Did you feel confident answering the questions that asked you to interpret, analyze, compare, or generalize? Reflect on your learning in light of the information below to help you determine whether to request introductory or advanced-level credit. If you aren’t sure, discuss this with your mentor.

**Introductory college-level learning** (freshman/sophomore) means that you understand:

* Basic concepts, theories, and principles of a topic.

**Advanced college-level learning** (junior/senior level) means that you understand the topic more broadly and deeply. You may understand:

* What the broader field is about, based on your experience.
* Why something is done in a certain way.
* What you, yourself, think about the topic or field, as a result of blending others’ perspectives with your own understanding and judgment.
* How to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information more abstractly, applying methods usually used in that field.

**Examples of General PLA Topics and Level of Learning**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PLA Topic – Building** | **PLA Topic – Project Management** | **PLA Topic – Spanish Culture** |
| **NOT college –level** | Know how to put up wallboard | Work to complete items on a checklist given to you | Traveled in Spain twice, for two weeks each time |
| **Intro. college-level** | Understand why walls are constructed a certain way | Create a timeline and supervise the completion of tasks | Understand trends and practices related to daily life, holidays, food, religion, etc. Understand some Spanish history related to contemporary attitudes and practices |
| **Advanced college level** | ***Intro level plus:***  Understand how to design a building so the walls stay up | ***Intro level plus:***  Work to create cooperation of all parties concerned with the project; analyze problems or issues and amend the plan; evaluate the outcome of the project | ***Intro. level plus:***  Understand nuances related to attitudes and practices. Know of and understand sub-groups within the overall culture. Understand more fully Spanish history related to contemporary attitudes and practices. |