Crystal Hardeman-Ikem serves as the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Inclusive Excellence in the Office of the Dean of Students. In this role, she serves as a primary diversity, equity, inclusion officer for the Division of Student Life, provides vision, leadership, management, and oversight for the Office of Multicultural Student Life and the Ron and Don Frieson Black Cultural Center. She also develops and maintains internal and external relationships with constituents to promote diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, Crystal Hardeman-Ikem earned a bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis in Education, a Master of Arts in Education (Student Affairs in Higher Education) and a Graduate Certificate in International Student Services from Western Kentucky University. She has been a proud educator in the field of higher education for over 14 years serving in various professional positions including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Residence Life, Leadership, Service, Global Initiatives and Social Justice at several institutions varying in size and location. She is also a member of several professional organizations. Prior to her work in higher education, Crystal served within the non-profit sector working with K-12 and college students. It was through this work that she discovered her passion for working with people and empowering them to find their voice and become their own advocates while also learning to advocate for others. Throughout her life, Crystal’s purpose has been to empower people to be the best version of themselves. She does this by living out her favorite quote “I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Dr. Maya Angelou.