

College of Communications

DIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN

2004 – 2009

September 2004*

The Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) notes: “While race and gender are not the only factors important in protecting and advancing a diversity of opinion and information, they contribute heavily to the divergent views in a multicultural society. Central to the mission of journalism and mass communications is the preparation of students to serve such a diverse society. Because of this important role, journalism and mass communications educators must emphasize the importance of diversity and the roles of women and minorities in teaching students to understand, communicate about and relate to a multicultural society.”

Diversity—of faculty, students and curricula—long has been a College priority. Indeed, during the College’s six-year national review in 2000-2001 by ACEJMC, the site-visit team wrote: “The message is loud and clear: inclusion is the goal for faculty, staff, student body and curriculum.” The review singled out for praise the College’s Office of Multicultural Affairs, the dramatic increase in scholarships for students of color, the cultural heritage activities and the curriculum. The report cited “the exceptional job the College has done in its diversity initiatives.” Similar praise was included in the 2001 *Graduate Program Review and Assessment Report*, issued by Penn State’s Graduate School, which concluded: “[T]he College’s emphasis on and success in enhancing diversity in graduate education provides a role model for other colleges.” The 2001 *Feedback of Progress Implementing A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State* noted the College had “made a clear and public commitment to diversity” and that it had “successfully [increased its] numbers of students and faculty from underrepresented groups [and contributed] in thoughtful ways to the diversity agenda for the University community.”

That said, the College recognizes that it can do better. Faculty and staff value the richness of diversity. The Office of Multicultural Affairs actively engages in the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body; provides extensive academic, personal and career counseling; helps coordinate a full array of student organizations; oversees a two-week summer workshop for high-school students of color; regularly coordinates trips to minority student job fairs; coordinates cultural awareness heritage lectures and receptions; and coordinates the Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP), which brings talented minority undergraduate students to campus who are then matched with research mentors from the faculty.

* Latest iteration built from consistently updated previous plans that date to the early 1990s.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs -- headed by the assistant dean for multicultural affairs and a full-time staff assistant -- assumes much of the responsibility for daily and sustained leadership and oversight of the College's diversity efforts. That office is the centerpiece of broad-based College diversity efforts that systematically involve the Office of Academic Services, the professional academic advisers, the Office of Internships (its director and staff assistant), the Office of the Dean and faculty advisers from each of the four departments in the College.

Challenge 1: Developing A Shared And Inclusive Understanding Of Diversity

Strategy: Communicate clear and consistent descriptions of the University's and the College's diversity, cultural and sexual orientation objectives and initiatives.

Outcome: The College's assistant dean for multicultural affairs conducts regular diversity scholar, ambassador and general student meetings to discuss academic requirements, cultural heritage activities, semester special events, leadership achievements and personal concerns. Through these meetings, where printed materials that pertain to inclusivity often are distributed, our students, faculty, staff and constituents come to value the College's commitment to diversity -- which has a positive effect on the climate.

Outcome: Dedicated bulletin boards in College high-traffic areas contain constantly updated information on orientation sessions, social events, student organizations and student accomplishments.

Outcome: Common space shared by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Office of Internships and the Office of Academic Services contains diversity brochures, resume booklets, scholarship information and culturally-themed magazines.

Outcome: A College diversity website is maintained by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the coordinator of College relations.

Strategy: Appoint a diversity committee that is well-defined, proactive, involved in appropriate policy recommendations and that uses a variety of approaches to communicate within the College. The committee would have a diverse membership, including the dean, the assistant dean for multicultural affairs, faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students.

Outcome: The committee informally assesses the climate of the College, addresses and evaluates goals in the University’s “Framework to Foster Diversity,” discusses general matters of inclusivity, provides the dean and assistant dean for multicultural affairs input on faculty, staff and student issues and, periodically, considers surveys to determine perceptions of climate.

Strategy: Conduct periodic climate assessment surveys to determine faculty, staff and student views; act appropriately on areas that show need for improvement on negative perceptions.

Outcome: Examine results from College climate survey conducted in 2000 and results from the comprehensive University-wide Faculty/Staff Survey conducted in 2004. Results were positive. For example, some 82 percent of the College respondents in the 2004 survey agreed that the unit “is welcoming for employees from underrepresented groups;” 66 percent agreed that “acceptance of diversity in the workplace has improved in the past three years;” and 78 percent agreed that the unit “proactively addresses issues related to race.”

Strategy: Sponsor regular diversity-themed lectures to enhance awareness and understanding and schedule a variety of diverse speakers into classes throughout the curriculum.

Outcome: Three special lectures are planned and conducted annually by the College’s Office of Multicultural Affairs during Hispanic Heritage Month, African-American Heritage Month and Asian-American Heritage Month. Faculty members constantly are looking for guest speakers from underrepresented groups.

Challenge 2: Creating A Welcoming Campus Climate

Strategy: Create a welcoming climate, spearheaded by the Office of Multicultural Affairs, by making available a variety of student organizations that emphasize the importance and value of inclusivity.

Outcome: Scores of students are connected socially and professionally by becoming active members of chapters and clubs such as the National Association of Minorities in Communications (NAMIC); the Penn State Association of Journalists of Diversity (PSAJD); the African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American Student Organization (AHANA); and the Women in Cable and Telecommunications (WICT).

Strategy: Create an environment that cultivates diversity and celebrates differences by sponsoring a variety of cultural heritage recognition events, endowed lectures and other special programs.

Outcome: Hundreds of students, staff and faculty members attend and learn from these special occasions that annually feature prominent media practitioners and scholars.

Strategy: The assistant dean for multicultural affairs conducts informal climate assessments during regular meetings with College's university scholars, the general student body, and at student club meetings and discussions with club officers.

Outcome: Issues and concerns are identified at early stages and discussed and dealt with by taking appropriate steps.

Challenge 3: Recruiting And Retaining A Diverse Student Body

Strategy: Actively recruit undergraduate students of color through personal visits, partnerships with high schools, correspondence and telephone calls coordinated through the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Outcome: Systematically increase minority student enrollment.

	<u>1992</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
<i># students</i>	144	150	163	181	188	216	274	288	322	334	383	384
<i>% change</i>		4%	9%	11%	4%	15%	27%	5%	12%	4%	14.7%	.3%

Strategy: Retain students of color by establishing and maintaining peer support groups.

Outcome: The National Association of Minorities in Communications (NAMIC), the Penn State Association of Journalists of Diversity (PSAJD), the African, Hispanic, Asian and Native American Student Organization (AHANA), the Women in Cable and Telecommunications (WICT) and the diversity ambassadors meet regularly and encourage the academic and professional success of their members.

Strategy: Recruit undergraduates by continuing to hold and enhance annual two-week summer high-school journalism workshops for students of color (launched in 1989); maintain contacts with participants to offer career guidance, scholarship information and advice about college admissions.

Outcome: Through funding from Dow Jones, Gannett and others, enroll up to 20 students each summer.

Strategy: Make maximum use of available College- and University-based funds to recruit top-tier students.

Outcome: Through aggressively judicious use of Knight Diversity Scholars funds and Bunton-Waller Scholarship funds, build an accomplished cadre of exceptional students of color.

Strategy: Build endowed funds and increase annual funds to help diversify the student body.

Outcome: Provide College-based and generated scholarship support for deserving students of color, with the Knight Diversity Scholars Program functioning as a financial anchor.

<u>1995-96</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>1999-00</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>2002-03</u>	<u>2003-04</u>
\$2,775	\$12,535	\$31,185	\$43,290	\$43,500	\$61,723	\$65,000	\$82,000	\$71,415

Strategy: Actively recruit graduate students of color through coordinated personal visits, on-site networking at historically Black universities such as Dillard, Clark Atlanta, Morehouse and Spellman and targeted institutions with substantial enrollments of students from other protected classes, and through systematic correspondence and telephone calls.

Outcome: Systematically increase minority graduate student enrollment.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
# students	4	5	11	12	18	18	15	19
% change		25%	120%	9%	50%	0%	-16.7%	21%

Strategy: Actively recruit international students through networking, correspondence and telephone calls.

Outcome: Maintain significant international graduate student enrollment.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
# students	13	16	20	24	21	26	34	34
% change		23%	25%	20%	-4%	24%	30.8%	0%

Strategy: Through increased scholarship support, advising, involvement in student organizations and peer tutoring, retain students.

Outcome: Keep retention rates in the 90% range for students of color between their freshman and sophomore years and at least in the 80% range for students between their sophomore and junior and their junior and senior years.*

Admit Semester:	<u>FA 94</u>	<u>FA 95</u>	<u>FA 96</u>	<u>FA 97</u>	<u>FA 98</u>	<u>FA 99</u>	<u>FA 00</u>	<u>FA 01</u>	<u>FA 02</u>
# students	25	32	38	33	51	34	43	64	44
<u>% Retained</u>									
After 1 year	100.0	90.6	94.7	93.9	76.4	88.2	90.6	89.0	
After 2 years	88.0	81.2	81.5	96.9	68.6	85.2	88.3		
After 3 years	92.0	75.0	73.6	87.8	64.7	76.4			
<u>% Graduated</u>									
After 4 years	80.0	56.2	68.4	69.6	54.9	52.9			
After 5 years	88.0	71.8	73.6	75.7	62.7				
After 6 years	88.0	71.8	73.6	78.7					

**These data are taken from the University database using the Integrated Student Information system (ISIS) AIDAE-RPM data extraction tool in January 2004. "Regular admit" excludes advanced standing, provisional, non-degree and non-degree to degree, readmit, and reinstate statuses.*

Outcome: Systematically increase the number of students of color who earn baccalaureate degrees.

	<u>1997-1998</u>	<u>1998-1999</u>	<u>1999-2000</u>	<u>2000-2001</u>	<u>2001-2002</u>	<u>2002 -2003</u>
# graduates	30	61	75	83	75	90
% change		103%	23%	11%	-11%	20%

Challenge 4: Recruiting And Retaining A Diverse Workforce

Strategy: Actively recruit faculty of color through personal contacts, networking, advertising and appropriate minority media and academic organizations.

Outcome: Systematically increase the number of full-time faculty members of color.

<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
5	7	6	6	6	8	9	10	11	11	11

Strategy: Actively recruit female faculty through personal contacts, networking, advertising and appropriate media and academic organizations.

Outcome: Systematically increase the number of full-time female faculty members.

<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
15	15	18	16	21	20	21	22	20	19	24

Strategy: Improve the success of search processes in identifying and assessing the credentials of women and minority candidates by including the assistant dean for multicultural affairs in all faculty searches and ensuring that committees are diverse.

Outcome: Diverse search committees, coupled with charges that include the importance of inclusivity, ensure that the broadest possible pools are sought and considered.

Strategy: Further diversify the staff by actively recruiting staff members of color through personal contacts, networking and appropriate organizations.

Outcome: Systematically increase the number of full-time staff members from protected classes.

<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Strategy: Actively recruit female staff members through personal contacts, networking and appropriate organizations.

Outcome: Systematically increase the number of full-time female staff members.

<u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
20	19	18	16	19	18	21	22	23	23	22

Challenge 5: Developing A Curriculum That Supports The Goals Of Our New General Education Plan

Strategy: Develop a curriculum that fosters intercultural and international competences by offering courses in each major that incorporate diversity modules where relevant.

Outcome: Introduce students to inclusivity and diversity components, impact and ramifications in scores of conceptual and technique course sections.

	<u>2000 - 2001</u>	<u>2001 - 2002</u>	<u>2002 - 2003</u>
<i># course sections</i>	60	73	85

Strategy: Prepare students to work and live in today's multicultural world by offering stand-alone diversity-focused courses.

Outcome: Expose students to the historical, economic, legal, political, social and international implications of the relationship between women, minorities and the mass media in at least three different courses devoted primarily to these issues.

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership And Management

Strategy: Support the personal and professional growth of all our employees and seek varied opportunities for them to expand their skill sets and exposure to leadership and diversity activities.

Outcome: By recommending and funding faculty and staff participation in leadership development programs such as the Penn State Leader; the Penn State Management Institute; the Penn State Leadership Academy and Mastering Supervision, our colleagues are prepared to assume leadership responsibilities.

Outcome: Require that all of the College's newly hired staff members attend the Affirmative Action Office program, "Understanding and Valuing Diversity," during their first month of employment. This program helps provide the tools our staff needs to work effectively in a multicultural organization.

Strategy: Diversify the leadership of the College of Communications.

Outcome: The College has appointed one of its senior female faculty members to the position of associate dean for undergraduate education, effective July 2005. An African-American male serves as assistant dean of multicultural affairs. A female faculty member directs the newly created Jimirro Center for Media Influence. Two minority faculty members and one female faculty member serve as co-directors of research institutes. A female faculty member directs international programs.

Outcome: The electoral processes we use to select individuals for key roles in the College governance structure has led to the appointment of faculty members from underrepresented groups to key leadership positions. The faculty elected a female as ombudsperson in 2003. A female faculty member chaired the College curriculum committee in 2003-04, and two-thirds of its members were from underrepresented groups. In 2003-04, a female faculty member chaired the department promotion and tenure committee and 60 percent of its members were from underrepresented groups.

Outcome: The majority of the dean's leadership staff is comprised of women, two of whom are from protected classes: director of development, director of human resources, director of operations, facilities manager and financial officer.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change To Support Our Diversity Goals

Strategy: Build broad-based diversity efforts, with the College's Office of Multicultural Affairs functioning in tandem with several faculty, staff and students.

Outcome: Coordinated diversity efforts involve systematically intertwined work of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the director of academic services, professional advising staff (who see virtually all of the students from underrepresented groups on a regular basis), the director and staff of the Office of Internships, and College administrators -- all of whom function in geographical proximity to one another.

Strategy: Recognize and value faculty research that examines the experiences of underrepresented groups in the United States as well as the impact of international media coverage.

Outcome: More than one-third of all faculty link their research and teaching to infuse a multicultural and international foundation in their courses.

Strategy: The assistant dean for multicultural affairs serves on the College's executive committee with department heads and the academic deans.

Outcome: College leaders are systematically and actively involved in discussing, working toward and achieving the unit's inclusivity goals.