

# A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State University Libraries Strategic Plan 2004 – 2009

The Libraries are committed to:

- Respecting individual contributions to the academic environment
- Providing equitable access for all to information resources
- Fostering diversity in the workplace and the campus environment

The University Libraries will address and aspire to resolve the following challenges. In some cases activities are continuations of current work where we have already made significant efforts.

## **Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity**

### **Objectives:**

- Foster and promote the broad and inclusive definition of diversity within **all** aspects of the Libraries' operations, including collections, services, recruitment and retention of employees, and overall Libraries' climate.
- Integrate University Park Libraries' personnel with Campus College Libraries' personnel in diversity efforts and assessment of diversity progress.
- Encourage dialogue among employees on diversity-related subjects and inclusion of diversity in library activities.
- Improve data collection methods used to monitor and assess the impact of diversity activities.

### **Strategies:**

- Conduct regular communication regarding diversity initiatives with **all** colleges and campuses.
- Encourage and support participation of Libraries' employees on diversity-related committees and University commissions.
- Demonstrate diversity in Libraries' promotional and informational materials (e.g., *Guide to the Libraries*).
- Sponsor diversity-related speakers and programs.
- Provide training and professional development opportunities to Libraries' employees.
- Request standardized diversity reports from **all** Libraries' locations.

**Outcomes:**

- Inclusion of diversity in library discourse and inclusion of diversity in daily activities.
- Comparative reports from **all** Libraries' locations, using the same metrics and standards of detail.
- Ongoing and regular educational opportunities for **all** levels of faculty and staff on diversity issues.

**Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate****Objectives:**

- Commit to the goals outlined in the Framework for Diversity to foster a positive climate for diversity within the Libraries.
- Assess climate and explore new methods of assessment.
- Collaborate among units within the Libraries, the University, and other consortia (e.g., Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), Association of Research Libraries (ARL), etc.) initiatives relating to diversity and climate.

**Strategies:**

- Research and revise climate assessment methodology and repeat climate assessment in 2006.
- Spearhead collaboration efforts at the national level through the Dean's Library Council.
- Analyze and act on climate issues identified through assessment.
- Benchmark with other units at Penn State, CIC, and ARL that are working on similar efforts.

**Outcomes:**

- Improved method of assessing climate initiated for the 2006 climate survey.
- Establish and adopt 'Best Practices' from among ARL, CIC, and other units of the University.
- Achieve a climate in the University Libraries that promotes civility and mutual respect.

### **Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body**

#### **Objectives:**

- Contribute to student retention efforts through diversity outreach efforts.
- Explore the possibility of establishing partnerships with colleges that have student programming aimed at creation/retention of a diverse student body.
- Devise instructional and outreach programs in support of the University's diversity plan.
- Expand existing programs and resources for returning adult students and international students to increase student participation, and create similar programs for other groups of diverse students (e.g., LGBT community, etc.)
- Support University efforts to encourage secondary school students from underrepresented groups to attend Penn State.
- Maintain or increase diversity in the Libraries' student workforce.

#### **Strategies:**

- Support events organized by various diversity student groups by sponsoring/co-sponsoring.
- Seize opportunities to mentor students from diverse cultures.
- Develop instructional programs and expand classroom teaching to support and promote the Libraries' diversity-related collections.
- Provide outreach efforts and programs designed for special groups, such as international students, adult learners, etc., and for diversity-related courses.
- Devise outreach efforts and programming that reach secondary school students from underrepresented groups.
- Consider the special needs of the disabled in the design and development of library technologies, access to Libraries' Web resources and new technology classrooms throughout the University Libraries.
- Devise recruitment efforts to reach student job applicants from underrepresented groups.

#### **Outcomes:**

- Ongoing interaction with and support to diverse student groups and prospective students.
- Increased visibility of the Libraries in University-wide support for diversity.
- Support of students through employment, assistantships, and internships.
- Creation of a library environment that is welcoming and accessible to all.

## **Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce**

### **Objectives:**

- Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse and highly qualified faculty and staff with the expertise and skills necessary to provide the services and collections expected of a technologically advanced, nationally ranked research library.
- Create a system of accountability for diversity recruitment of Libraries' staff similar to the system used in faculty recruitment.
- Explore the need for and possible creation of a residency program for a minority faculty member.
- Increase diversity recruitment efforts.
- Strategically use Libraries' scholarships and grant opportunities to encourage people of diverse backgrounds into the field of librarianship.
- Use internships and graduate assistantships to bring students into the library arena.
- Review staff job descriptions and maximize opportunities presented by Penn State's new broadbanding efforts to ensure that library positions are competitive and attractive to potential applicants.

### **Strategies:**

- Explore in collaboration with appropriate units at Penn State, a revised system to review staff applicant pools that ensures documentation of diversity that parallels the faculty hiring processes already in place at Penn State (e.g., collaboration with the Affirmative Action Office, access to affirmative action data, and information on representation of underrepresented groups in the job class).
- Continually review the expertise and skills needed by the Libraries and revise positions, recruitment methods, training programs, and reward systems accordingly.
- Assess the need for a residency program for minority faculty members.
- Create/formalize a mentoring program for Libraries' faculty.
- Adopt guidelines for incorporation of diversity in the interview process currently being piloted.
- Enhance scholarship experience or work experience of those employees interested in entering the profession to include mentoring and shadowing opportunities that will provide students with a better understanding of the field.
- Increase the diversity of applicant pools by recruiting and mentoring undergraduates and current employees.

**Outcomes:**

- Better recruitment/retention strategies for minority faculty and staff.
- Implementation of an accountability system that monitors and reports on diversity recruitment practices and efforts in the Libraries.
- Hiring of personnel with interest and commitment to diversity.
- Increased diversity in applicant pool through recruitment and mentoring of undergraduates and current employees.
- Enhancing the existing highly qualified employee pool by increasing the number of Libraries' faculty and staff from underrepresented groups.

**Challenge 5: Developing a Curriculum That Fosters Intercultural and International Competencies****Objectives:**

- Support of the University's diversity plan by integrating concepts of diversity within collections in all disciplines and strengthening subject expertise in diversity studies.
- Standardized use of diversity codes when ordering items for the Libraries' collections.
- Adoption of teaching methods that incorporate multicultural and diverse learning styles.
- Design services and resources to accommodate the various learning styles and skill levels of the diverse university community.
- Publicity that informs the Penn State community of any specialized diversity collections acquired by the Libraries.
- Encourage diversity-related research within the Libraries.

**Strategies:**

- Improve guidelines for applying diversity codes and for reporting diversity-related purchases.
- Publish regular bulletins highlighting diversity collections purchases.
- Develop instructional materials and training programs for instructors that demonstrate how to incorporate multicultural and diverse learning styles into instruction.
- Develop instructional modules and expand classroom teaching to support and promote the Libraries' diversity-related collections.
- Explore possibility of offering funding for diversity-related research.

**Outcomes:**

- Contributions to diverse curricula at Penn State.
- Improved availability of data on diversity of collections and improved tracking methods.
- Increased use of collections/resources supporting diversity.
- Improved instructional methods that support the University's Intercultural/International Competency requirement.
- Increased understanding of diversity through research efforts and increased presence of the University Libraries in the body of research.

**Challenge 6: Diversifying University Libraries' Leadership and Management****Objectives:**

- Provide diversity training for all leadership positions.
- Mentor personnel from underrepresented groups for potential leadership positions.
- Improve inclusiveness of underrepresented groups in Libraries' taskforces and committees.
- Increase the number of managers from underrepresented groups as vacancies occur.

**Strategies:**

- Develop the syllabus for diversity training based on identified climate issues.
- Encourage leadership to mentor personnel from diverse backgrounds.
- Encourage administrators to attend/participate in diversity programming.
- Aggressively build candidate pools when vacancies occur in management positions.

**Outcomes:**

- Leadership that is knowledgeable and fully engaged in promoting all aspects of diversity.
- Participation of personnel from diverse backgrounds in Libraries' management activities.

## **Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change Within the University Libraries to Support Our Diversity Goals**

### **Objectives:**

- Seek stable funding for diversity initiatives.
- Facilitate and enhance coordination of diversity efforts and initiatives between University Park Libraries and Campus College Libraries.
- Enhance/establish outreach programs targeting diverse groups of students, faculty, and staff.
- Integrate diversity throughout the Libraries' strategic plan.

### **Strategies:**

- Explore alternative sources of funding for the positions that support diversity.
- Emphasize diversity as a strategic priority in all Libraries' plans.
- Standardize diversity reporting across **all** campuses.

### **Outcomes:**

- On-going funding for diversity initiatives.
- Integration of diversity throughout the Libraries' programs and initiatives in collections, services, technology, and outreach advancements.
- Availability of standardized diversity reports and data collection.