

Feedback on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004-09
Division of Student Affairs
Mid-Term Progress Report
Spring 2007

The Division of Student Affairs' program initiatives address a multitude of diversity issues and concerns. The Division is proactive in its planning and implementation of a number of innovative programs and is especially strong in bringing students together.

Despite these strengths, the Division makes little, in any, mention of disability, veteran status, and geographic origin/cultural background throughout the report, even though these areas are identified as being part of the unit's diversity concept. In addition, the update fails to provide sufficient demographics or analysis of the most/least successful programs and strategies. While the appendices are interesting, the update would be much stronger if it included a discussion of these items. For example, are there overriding themes and implications from the Appendices that help shape future direction of the Division?

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The reorganization to align the advocacy centers has strongly enhanced the visibility of available services to targeted underrepresented/underserved populations and given the students a "voice" by strengthening the communication between students and administrators/staff.
- ❖ There appears to be very strong alignment of Student Affairs staff with student groups. However, faculty involvement and support of student groups seem surprisingly light. Increased communication with academic units may lead to similar utilization of faculty.

RESPONSE: Student Affairs shares the goal of increasing faculty involvement with student groups. Intentional efforts are underway to involve faculty members with the Greek-letter organizations and to form partnerships with faculty in a number of areas including the creation and use of the multicultural competency certificate. In addition, our assessment efforts include measures of faculty interaction with students outside of the classroom in an effort to both measure what is occurring and to stress the importance through the dissemination of such data.

- ❖ The Division is encouraged to focus upon dissemination of information regarding its many program opportunities; establishing measures and using results to guide further efforts in this area is crucial. In addition, the Division's mission may also require methods to reach prospective and newly admitted students.

RESPONSE: The Division is constantly looking for new ways to disseminate information regarding its programs and services. Podcasts and other forms of technology are being explored. Numerous Pulse surveys include marketing questions. In addition, we are in the process of developing the outcomes and measures for many of our programs. For example, our ongoing educational workshops and presentations are now catalogued with descriptions and stated outcomes. We have also taken the leadership in defining the cocurricular outcomes for the university and various efforts are underway to map programs to these outcomes and assess their effectiveness.

- ❖ The role of a diversity committee is undefined. Who comprises the committee; what is the reporting structure; who is tasked with overseeing diversity initiatives and budget (\$40,000) commitments? Answers to these questions will help determine the extent to which diversity is embedded within the Division's structure.

RESPONSE: Currently, the directors of the three advocacy centers and their respective Associate Vice President oversee the diversity initiatives and budget. However, Student Affairs is in the process of creating a division-wide committee with representation across the major departments.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The Division has a thorough plan and numerous initiatives in place for creating and supporting a welcoming campus climate. However, as observed in the previous feedback report, the effectiveness of these programs cannot be assessed without outcomes and measures.
RESPONSE: Student Affairs has a number of measures for evaluating the overall climate for the University. Recent projects include the Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Pulse survey, the Community Values Pulse survey, the New Students Pulse survey, the Spirituality, Ethics, and Religious Services Pulse survey, and others. All Pulse projects also include some basic comparisons to see where differences may occur between groups. These data provide a lens from which to see where there may be issues based on age, sex, race/ethnicity. The Student Satisfaction Survey also provides us with data that can provide greater detail. Each campus and UP college now has the ability to view their data by various categories. In addition, Residence Life conducts an annual Quality of Life Survey that includes an assessment of underrepresented groups. When differences are found, there may be qualitative efforts to learn more about the experiences of students.
- ❖ Efforts to use surveys to guide programming are commendable. There is some question about the comprehensiveness of the surveys; the reviewers are concerned about replication of services to the same core of students and suggest more inclusive demographics.
RESPONSE: All Pulse surveys and other projects draw from a random sample taken from the student database. The demographics change depending on the data needs of the requestor. Because of the sensitivity of some questions and issues of length we choose not to ask a full cadre of demographics for each project. However, for the Student Satisfaction Survey the sample is large enough that subgroups are better represented allowing for a deeper understanding of students. This survey includes a section on the use of and satisfaction with a list of student services. In addition, several units are using the student database and, at times, student IDs to track the demographics of the students using their programs and services such as Career Services, Counseling and Psychological Services, University Health Services, and certain programs such as the Tunnel of Oppression.
- ❖ The reviewers commend the Division's efforts to expand selected services to numerous campuses such as the Pulse Survey, supporting the administration of the Student Satisfaction Survey, LGBTA Student Resource Center resources, Career Services funds and resources, and committee inclusion.

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ The Division provides an impressive number of programs addressing recruitment and retention of students. However, the extent to which these efforts are communicated to prospective and newly admitted students to enhance first impressions (e.g., orientation and FTCAP) is unclear. Lack of measures disallows the analysis of the most/least successful programs.
RESPONSE: Student Affairs uses multiple means to communicate to students the programs and services offered including but not limited to stall stories, involvement fairs, welcome week, FTCAP sessions, Web sites, listservs, Collegian ads, Web event calendars, and others. Student Affairs provides updated information to Admissions for their various publications. In addition, the main new student programs are assessed through the New Student Pulse Survey that includes questions regarding the major goals of each program and event such as New Student Convocation, Real Life Choices (which will now be changed to fit the new Student-to-Student Session), Residence Life activities and others.
- ❖ The Division's collaboration with colleges for selected programs (e.g., First Year Seminars) is commendable. The update would be strengthened by an explanation of how opportunities and/or incentives for such collaborations are communicated to academic units.
RESPONSE: We will address this in the final report. There are multiple ways in which we work with the academic departments which vary by the different units in the Division and the projects.
- ❖ While the appendices include valuable information, the report lacks discussion that demonstrates their connection to the Division's goals. To be most helpful, analyses, with the support of measures, must

describe overriding themes and implications that determine the future direction of the Division. The programs presented are exciting and innovative, but are they working?

RESPONSE: *Many of the measures are included in the appendices. In the final report, the connection to these measures will be better articulated. In addition, the Division will work to improve their outcomes measures.*

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ The diversity training requirement for staff members is commendable; a description of the program(s) and incentives for attendance would be helpful.

RESPONSE: *Student Affairs offers three staff development programs throughout the year. The programs are designed for all Student Affairs staff to attend a half-day program that typically includes a keynote speaker and a breakout session. The May program is University-wide. Recent topics include “Religion: Believe it or Not,” “Transgender 101,” “Communicating Across Cultures,” “The Ethics of Diversity,” “10 Commandments of Communicating with People with Disabilities,” “Students in Distress: Guidelines for Faculty and Staff,” “Islam,” “Race Relations Dialogue,” and “Not by Accident: Intentionally Facilitating Structured Opportunities for Cross-Cultural Learning.” In addition, staff members are encouraged to take advantage of HRDC programs, professional organization opportunities, and online learning modules. Staff are then asked to record their professional development activities (including but not exclusive to diversity-related programs) in an intranet program called the Professional Activities Assistant (PAA). This program provides a progress report related to achieving the requirements for diversity, job improvement, technology, and the minimum hours of profession development. The PAA may then be included in the SRDP process. The use of the PAA and the diversity requirement is dependent on the unit directors/supervisors. In addition, the 2004 Faculty/Staff Survey results reveal that a higher percentage of respondents in Student Affairs attended diversity-related events/programs within the last year compared to the total University.*

- ❖ The Division appears to be lacking in recruitment initiatives; hosting a NASPA minority fellow is the only initiative discussed.

RESPONSE: *Most of our Assistant Director to Director level positions are advertised in The Chronicle of Higher Education, both the publication and the website. We also advertise through NASPA, ACPA, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Higher Ed Jobs online, and other relevant professional organizations. Our AVP searches, as well as other senior-level positions, include seeking nominations of qualified candidates through direct mailings using listings from NASPA and collegiate networks.*

- ❖ The update contains little about retention and/or promotion of staff from underrepresented groups. What have climate surveys revealed about staff members’ views of efforts in this area?

RESPONSE: *The 2004 Faculty/Staff Survey results reveal a positive climate within the Division. For example, a higher percentage of respondents from Student Affairs rated their department/unit as respectful for all of the 14 groups listed on the survey when compared to the total University. As a Division (and consistent with the University-wide data), disagreed most with the item, “Promotions at Penn State go to those who best deserve them.” Females were less likely to agree than were men. Data for Student Affairs were insufficient to make comparisons based on race/ethnicity and disability status. These are the only climate data for staff that are available. However, Student Affairs does conduct exit interviews and an exit survey for departing staff members. These data reveal overall satisfaction with workplace climate.*

- ❖ Gender and racial/ethnic diversity appear to be the only areas addressed in response to this Challenge. To be more inclusive, the final report must also address, for example, persons with disabilities; persons from low-income families; first generation students; non-traditional learners; veterans; and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons. Furthermore, lack of comprehensive data in this area makes it difficult to assess progress in concrete ways.

RESPONSE: *We will address these areas more fully in the final report. Although we do not have the statistics related to sexual orientation, we feel confident asserting that Student Affairs recruits and*

retains a larger percentage of LGBT staff than most other areas at Penn State. It is unclear to us where non-traditional learners, persons from low-income families, and first generation students fit into recruiting a diverse workforce. These seem to be more related to recruiting and retaining diverse students and hence, these areas will be addressed under that challenge in the final report.

Education and Scholarship

Challenge 5: Developing a Curriculum That Foster Intercultural and International Competencies

- ❖ The Division's creativity in developing the Multicultural Competency Certificate is commendable.
- ❖ Metrics are essential to determine the efficacy of the described programs; the lack of such data makes it difficult to determine the value of continuing such initiatives.

RESPONSE: The Division continues to work on these measures. We are in the process of creating an assessment plan for the Multicultural Competency Certificate based on the intended learning outcomes and the various experiences. The assessment plan, which will be similar to the plan for the Career Planning Certificate, will include pre- and post-tests of knowledge acquisition based on the core content of the certificate, reflective writings, and a qualitative component (i.e., interviews or focus groups).

- ❖ The Division's online learning module could be a potential best practice if it can be expanded to include other underrepresented/underserved groups.

RESPONSE: The Multicultural Competency Certificate includes education on a wide-range of diversity-related issues and is not limited to race/ethnicity. The core content includes an overview of multicultural competency and modules on power and privilege; prejudices and stereotypes; isms; and social justice. The examples used in these workshops covers issues related to gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, class, level of education, age, ability, religion, and nationality, Electives included in the certificate cover the following topics: international cultures; sexual orientation; ability; ethnicity, culture and race; class and society; spirituality; and gender difference.

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ The mentoring/buddy program appears to be a very proactive initiative that may be worth extending to a more formalized programming (e.g., a six-week mini fellowship offered during the summer).
- ❖ A proactive program such as the career panel discussion should be taken to state and national conferences or similar venues.
- ❖ The update provides no information about search procedures nor approaches to identification/development of staff from underrepresented groups. This area merits further development.

RESPONSE: As mentioned above, our senior-level positions are advertised in The Chronicle of Higher Education. Other means of advertising include Diverse Issues in Higher Education, Higher Ed jobs online, and formal and informal networks through professional organizations such as NASPA and ACPA. We are currently providing the OHR, "Hire Power" training to all our search committees. This training provides tools to search committees to select and interview candidates based on job-related competencies.

Student Affairs has supported the administrative fellow programming with Vicky assuming responsibility for a fellow, Angelique Woodward, several years ago and with Kathy Dufour serving as an administrative fellow this coming year with the endorsement and support of Jack Rayman.

Student Affairs also hosts a program on Careers in Student Affairs for graduate and undergraduate students and works closely with the CSA program to attract diverse students to the program.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ Although the Division has demonstrated excellent implementation of selected aspects of this Challenge, no information is provided regarding budgetary commitments or systems of accountability and rewards, nor measures of success.

RESPONSE: Student Affairs will continue to commit budgeted funds to support staff and programs focused on advancing the Division's diversity goals. In addition, staff are, and will continue to be, encouraged to include professional development goals related to diversity during the SRDP process. The Division's Diversity Committee will meet twice each semester to review the Division's goals within the Framework to Foster Diversity and to provide internal accountability for the implementation of the plan.

- ❖ Collaboration with academic units (e.g., Honors College, International Language House) has served to bolster this Challenge.
- ❖ Organizational realignment of the advocacy centers is an excellent approach to embedding diversity as a priority in the Division.

Response: See pp. 6-8 below for an addendum to this report.

**Addendum to the Feedback on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004-09
Division of Student Affairs
Mid-Term Progress Report**

Additional comments discussed during debriefing meeting on June 19, 2007
Dr. Terrell Jones and Dr. Rodney Erickson:

- Provide more information about the educational programs sponsored by the PRCC.
RESPONSE: During the 2006-07 academic year, the Paul Robeson Cultural Center sponsored 11 educational programs reaching approximately 4,610 people. These events included the Sisterhood Retreat, the Brotherhood Retreat, The World Cultural Festival, the Diaspora Institute (2), the Popular Culture Education Series, the Bed Spoken Word Lounge (2), the Taste of Diaspora, the Cultural Spring Break Abroad, and the Tunnel of Oppression (a week-long event). The Diaspora Institute has an enrollment of 20 and meets once per week for the entire spring semester (17 sessions) and also includes a weekend exchange at Rutgers University. The Pop Cultural Education Series (Collective Energy) has an enrollment of 10 and meets once a week all year.
- Provide assessment information about art gallery exhibits – e.g. number of student attendees.
RESPONSE: An estimated 5,000 people attend each exhibit at the HUB Art Gallery.
- CERA Code of Ethics and SA's Prejudice Free Zones are potential best practices.
- The report does not mention services targeted at transfer students – especially students of color. These students can have academic adjustment challenges. Can SA collaborate with the MRC? Contact Marcus Whitehurst to discuss this.
RESPONSE: Student Affairs is willing to work on this. Most likely, such a project would be the responsibility of the Coordinator for New Student Programs. We will suggest she contact Marcus.
- It appears the Dialogs on Race program has received less funding of late.
RESPONSE: This program is funded through the tuition received per enrolled student (via Continuing Education). The course is offered in fall and spring semesters with Spring 2007 having 50 students enrolled compared to Spring 2006 having 44 enrolled students. Prior to 2003-04, the course was offered over the summer as well.
 -
- Highlight the enhancements to the FTCAP program – e.g. the new 'Student to Student' session.
RESPONSE: Three years ago the opening session of FTCAP was revamped to include introductory remarks by a high-ranking member of the Penn State community. The Penn State Principles are emphasized, and a diversity video was added. In addition, the President's Convocation was also restructured to include the Penn State Principles.

For summer of 2007, the Student to Student FTCAP session is framed in the context of the Penn State Principles. In this interactive session, current student leaders dialogue with incoming students about the expectations and responsibilities of being a Penn State Student. Topics addressed in the session include: transitioning to the differences between High School and College, living and learning in a diverse community, making responsible choices and accepting all consequences for one's actions, establishing healthy relationships, utilizing campus resources, and the importance of getting involved in the Penn State community.

Students are also informed about the Report Hate Website in the session as well several other campus resources (CWS, LGBTA, PRCC, MRC, Police Services, Residence Life, UHS, CAPS, Lion Support,

Centre County Women's 24-hr Resource Center, etc.). In collaboration with seven other units, the Division of Student Affairs developed a new Parent and Family Guide for distribution during the FTCAP Parents and Family Members session. The Penn State Principles are listed on the back cover of the publication as a way to introduce new parents and family members to the expectations of the Penn State community.

- Specify the number of minority staff in SA vs minority staff at PSU – the difference is noted in the report but not the actual numbers.
RESPONSE: Based on the data received in 2006, there were 32 (9.6%) staff people in Student Affairs who identified themselves as being American Indian, Black/African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Hispanic/Latino/a. Across all academic and administrative support units (including Student Affairs), there were 262 (4.4%) of staff who identified themselves as being of color.
- Describe both staff development and student educational programs about or for first generation and/or low income students. For students, in particular, note credit card education programs that were offered.
RESPONSE: Student Affairs collaborated with Cooperative Extension, the Alumni Association, and Penn State Bookstores in the creation and publication of the educational brochure on credit cards.
- Add mention of LGBTQA Student Resource Center's national ranking.
RESPONSE: In 2006, Penn State was selected as one of the top 100 schools for LGBTQA students by The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students; moreover Penn State was among the top 20. The ranking is based on the resources and positive living and learning environment provided for LGBT students. Specific topics included policies, institutional commitment and support, academic life, housing, student life, counseling and health efforts, campus safety, and recruitment and retention efforts.
- There are concerns with students of color pledging fraternities and sororities during their first semester of study.
RESPONSE: By national policy, the NPHC chapters are not permitted to take students in their first semester. A student has to be in their second semester or in some cases their sophomore year before they can participate in intake. However, for students of color pledging an IFC of PHC organization, they can pledge their first semester. With regard to organizations that comprise the Multicultural Greek Council, the policies differ from chapter to chapter. Some allow first semester membership, and others do not.
- Add more information about the special interest houses in residence life.
RESPONSE: All Special Living Options promote diversity and multiculturalism through the programs that are provided to students. Diversity issues and awareness are woven into many of the opportunities provided to students living on the floors. All students participate in the Prejudice Free Zone program. In this program the Resident Assistants discuss the principles of the university with each student individually, along with a conversation about respect for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

Some more specific Special Living Options working with diverse populations include the following:

First Year in Science and Engineering (FYSE) is a program working with science and engineering majors many of whom are from underrepresented groups. The focus is on providing an opportunity for students who are academically excellent in high school to excel and become successful at college. This program provides tutoring and many other programs to assist in the students' acclimation process.

College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) is a program providing children of migrant workers and first generation students with an opportunity to be successful in the college environment. CAMP is a structured program that provides tutoring and an opportunity for first-year students to meet and be mentored by upper-class students who also came through the CAMP program.

International Language House (ILH) is a house which provides students with an opportunity to live on a floor and learn about world cultures and receive special assistance with their language skills. There are graduate students from the Spanish Department, German Department and French Department who live on the floor, to assist students in improving their understanding of languages and cultures. There are many programs to expose students from the U.S. and international students to other cultures of the world.

Discover House provides students with an exposure to all the different majors in the university. This house is focused on exposing students to many career opportunities available with each major. Many of the programs show students how the global society is interconnected and encourages students to explore and learn new information about people and cultures at every opportunity.

- Could admissions create a new brochure that would highlight PSU services related to the advancement of diversity and support for students from underrepresented groups?
RESPONSE: The Division agrees this brochure would be helpful and will provide information to the Admissions staff if they choose to advance this project.