

**Feedback on Final Update on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004-09
Penn State Brandywine
Spring 2010**

Penn State Brandywine is a commuter campus proximate to Philadelphia. As such, it is within a very diverse region of the Commonwealth and its diversity numbers are indicative of that. The Campus began the 2004-09 *Framework* strategic planning period with a new chancellor and the plan at that time, formative in nature, reflected that transition. The update acknowledges that the Campus did not realize all of its originally stated goals, and the review team appreciates the transparency with which the Campus reports its shortcomings as well as its successes. Brandywine has begun to address targeted areas of improvement that were identified throughout the spring 2007 midterm progress report feedback document, and the team looks forward to additional reporting in the 2010-15 plan.

In the update's appendices, a great deal of data is presented with little or no direction to the reader. To improve future reporting, the review team strongly suggests seeking guidance from the Diversity Committee to highlight key areas that shed light on campus efforts to enhance diversity. ***RESPONSE: The Diversity Committee will work on determining appropriate matrices and data redaction in future documents.***

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The Campus is commended for its commitment to moving beyond tolerance toward the goal of demonstrating the awareness, values, knowledge, and skills required to interact effectively with all groups and individuals irrespective of differences.
- ❖ The Social Equity Committee was restructured into the Diversity Committee because of its membership composition and inability to make sustainable changes. Details to describe how the newly restructured committee, which now includes senior leadership, will perform differently would be helpful. ***RESPONSE: This committee will have monthly meetings that will focus on fulfilling the new goals of the 2010-2015 plan. The goals of this plan fully align with the campus' strategic plan and will be considered as an important component of the planning for the future of the campus. The addition of division heads (first line staff on the management team) who were specifically selected because of their passion or interest in these issues will help ensure that conversations related to diversity issues will be brought up at the highest levels of the campus. It is our expectation that the Diversity Committee will bring the issues and ideas forward, but the responsibility for change lies with the entire campus.***
- ❖ A clearly stated definition of diversity for the Campus is lacking from the report. ***RESPONSE: We are happy to reinstate our definition of diversity. The campus had adopted the University of Oregon's statement on diversity as our own in 2006. The Diversity Committee reaffirmed that we want to use this statement of diversity. It is as follows:***

The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is about the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

- ❖ The update indicates that the results of the Faculty/Staff Survey were shared during a monthly staff forum, and discussed by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The review team applauds this transparency, but recommends that the results be shared with all faculty and students, as well. ***RESPONSE: As recommended in our new plan, the Diversity Committee will work on a Social Justice/Social Equity website that will include the Diversity Plan, supporting documents, minutes of meetings, as well as the results of any surveys, focus groups, etc... The Diversity Committee has also considered working with our Task Force on Civility to share a "Civility Tip of the Week" or "Civility***

Tip of the Month” with the entire campus community. It is our hope that in by working with the Civility Task Force (which shares some of the same membership) we can continue to promote a welcoming campus environment.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The Campus has strong diversity numbers; approximately 25% of the student body is comprised of underrepresented/underserved populations. These figures did not change significantly from 2005 to 2008. Is there a goal to which the Campus aspires? **RESPONSE: As a commuter campus in a diverse environment, the campus believes that our diversity goal should reflect the diversity of our communities. Delaware County – 25% non-Caucasian; Chester County – 11% non-Caucasian; Philadelphia County – 52% non-Caucasian. Campus enrollments are: 58% Delaware County, 21% Chester County, and 12% Philadelphia County. Based on this formula, we should have had in 2009, 320 underrepresented students. In reality, the campus in 2009 the campus had 367 underrepresented students. The campus goal, however, is to have an enrollment of 30% underrepresented/underserved students by 2015. This 30% goal represents the projected growth of underrepresented students graduating from high school in our region.**
- ❖ It is commendable that the Campus has built specific programs into its Convocation weekend to focus on student inclusion and multicultural awareness. Are these programs assessed? Details would be helpful. **RESPONSE: 2009 represented the first time that two new staff members took part in our convocation activities. Since that time they have worked on specific program outcomes for their entire programming model. At this point they are not assessed as best as they could be. Student Affairs is working on an assessment model as well as learning outcomes for many of our programming initiatives. Convocation weekend events are no exception to this model and we should have feedback regarding satisfaction as well as learning outcomes for the 2011-2012 academic year.**
- ❖ The Campus does not appear to have a dedicated Web site for diversity. Development of an informative, easily accessible diversity Web site is strongly recommended. **RESPONSE: We agree that this is a good suggestion and the Diversity Committee will work on this as one of their top priorities when they reconvene in September.**
- ❖ Data from the 2008 National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) indicate that, on all measures related to diversity, the Campus’ mean was higher than all of Penn State University in general. These data appear to support the statement that Brandywine’s efforts to create a welcoming campus climate are infused into all campus initiatives. The Faculty/Staff Survey data also support the notion that campus climate has improved. The review team notes, however, that the data would be more meaningful if it were disaggregated, and encourages the Campus to pursue implementation of a survey that would yield more in-depth results than the NSSE and Faculty/Staff Survey. **RESPONSE: We would welcome the opportunity to implement a climate survey for our campus. However, we do not feel that at present we have the resources or expertise to implement such an instrument. We look to the Office of Educational Equity to assist us in finding the resources to move forward with this recommendation.**
- ❖ How are incoming students able to identify the “unofficial network of faculty and staff” that filters campus climate concerns? Why is this group informal? Formalization of this network is recommended. **RESPONSE: We share this concern about the informal nature of the network. Currently the campus has a decentralized approach to campus climate concerns. The breadth and depth of dedicated staff does not exist on campus. Because of a lack of a dedicated center, we have relied on faculty and staff to provide support to our students. It is our hope that the new website will help to address some of these issues by providing names of individuals who can work with student, faculty and staff concerns. We do, however, inform new students of resources through displays during Club Rush which is held during Convocation prior to the start of classes and during the first week of classes.**

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ Use of pictures, news articles, and welcome messages in twelve languages are all useful recruitment tools.

- ❖ Summer enrichment and tutoring opportunities provided for at-risk students are commendable. Are these programs assessed? **RESPONSE: We are re-evaluating our Academic Success Centers and summer programs. This re-evaluation will include assessments.** Do the programs produce future Penn State enrollments?
- ❖ Previously reported data suggest lower graduation rates for underrepresented/underserved students. Corresponding data is not reported in the 2004-09 update. Please provide these data. **RESPONSE: We are pleased to report that our retention rates for non-majority students have exceeded those of our majority students starting in Fall 2007. We have also seen significant increase in retention of our underrepresented students (first year retention went from 63% in 2005 to 73% in 2008 – see charts below). We anticipate that for these years, we will also see improved graduation rates. It should be noted that improved graduation rates is a goal for the campus for all students.**

| Starting Campus: Brandywine Minority Students | Starting College: All Colleges | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Fall 2005 | Fall 2006 | Fall 2007 | Fall 2008 |
| #Initially Enrolled in Cohort | 103 | 139 | 114 | 85 |
| Retention to Semester 2 | 84.5% | 84.2% | 88.6% | 90.6% |
| Retention to Semester 3 | 63.1% | 67.6% | 74.6% | 72.9% |
| Retention to Semester 4 | 56.3% | 59.0% | 68.4% | |
| Retention to Semester 5 | 45.6% | 46.8% | 57.9% | |
| Retention to Semester 6 | 41.7% | 42.4% | | |
| Retention to Semester 7 | 35.0% | 40.3% | | |
| Retention to Semester 8 | 32.0% | | | |

| Starting Campus: Brandywine Majority Students | Starting College: All Colleges | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | Fall 2005 | Fall 2006 | Fall 2007 | Fall 2008 |
| #Initially Enrolled in Cohort | 378 | 450 | 424 | 389 |
| Retention to Semester 2 | 87.3% | 86.0% | 85.8% | 88.4% |
| Retention to Semester 3 | 68.5% | 66.4% | 71.2% | 71.0% |
| Retention to Semester 4 | 59.8% | 58.9% | 66.7% | |
| Retention to Semester 5 | 50.3% | 48.4% | 58.3% | |
| Retention to Semester 6 | 46.8% | 45.3% | | |
| Retention to Semester 7 | 42.1% | 41.1% | | |
| Retention to Semester 8 | 41.3% | | | |

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ The appointment of a diversity advocate on all faculty search committees is a positive step.
- ❖ The update states that the chancellor requires that the composition of faculty and staff search committees be diverse, but it is unclear what steps are being taken in order to ensure diversity in applicant pools. ***RESPONSE: We advertise nationally and we utilize minority-focuses listserves.***
- ❖ Between 2005 and 2008, the Campus experienced a 4% decrease in underrepresented staff, and a 1.5% decrease in underrepresented faculty. How does the administration propose to reverse these trends? ***RESPONSE: We agree that this is a challenge and a concern for our campus. We have found that although we are able to attract a more diverse applicant pool, there is also more competition for talented candidates. We will continue to work at diversifying our staff and faculty to better reflect the composition of our student body.***
- ❖ The update states in Challenge Four that the Diversity Committee is comprised of division heads, but in Challenge One, the membership is defined as faculty, staff, and students. A broad representation of all campus constituencies is important; please clarify the membership of this committee. ***RESPONSE: The membership on the Diversity Committee includes: Nyia Carter, Staff Assistant; Paul deGategno, Director of Academic Affairs; Deborah Erie, Director of Enrollment Services; Barbara Gottlieb, Instructor in Education; Tia Kim, Assistant Professor of Health and Human Development; Joel Koshy, student; Ronika Money, Coordinator of Student Involvement; Jim Morgan, Director of Information Technology Services; Mehak Qadeer, student; Matthew Shupp, Director of Student Affairs, and Lisa Yerges, Director of Business Services. Division Heads are the senior management leadership team for the campus. Those on the Diversity Committee include Paul deGategno, Deborah Erie, Jim Morgan, Matthew Shupp and Lisa Yerges.***
- ❖ There is no evidence of retention efforts for staff in the update. Perhaps a mentoring program could be considered. ***RESPONSE: The campus would appreciate support on this goal from the Office of Educational Equity.***
- ❖ Potential best practice: Advertising nationally for full-time staff and faculty positions and targeting minority databases. Does the geographic diversity of final candidate pools reflect these efforts to attract applicants from a broad base? ***RESPONSE: Yes, our candidates are reflective of diversity in gender, ethnicity and geography.***

Education and Scholarship

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

- ❖ The Campus is to be applauded for its strong diversity offerings in the curriculum, including the International Studies minor.
- ❖ The Campus has responded well to inter-group disparities in mathematics course outcomes through the use of specialized summer programs and increased tutoring.
- ❖ How many students at Brandywine study abroad annually? ***RESPONSE: Between 60 and 80 students travel annually.*** Are any from underrepresented groups? ***RESPONSE: Thirty-two percent (32%) of the students travelling annually are from underrepresented groups.*** What data are available to indicate that the study abroad experience “broadens students’ world view and cultural perspective? ***RESPONSE: Our source is anecdotal information from students who have travelled. Their stories that they tell about their experiences whether on Facebook or at an admission event indicate clearly to us that they have been “changed” as a result of their participation in the trip. We have had many students who had never left their neighborhood much less the country participate in these trips. As a result they have often changed their majors, added a foreign language to their curriculum, added the International Studies minor, etc...***

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ The update states that the individuals who hold administrative and executive positions reflect diversity in ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation. What are the exact figures? What is the Campus’ goal for

diversity in leadership and management? **RESPONSE:** *Our Executive Team consists of ten individuals. The Chancellor is a woman. In addition, there are 5 women, and 4 men on the management team. One member identifies as African-American. On member identifies as lesbian. The campus strives to have our leadership reflect the diversity of our campus community.*

- ❖ Is there a multicultural officer at Penn State Brandywine? If so, to whom does the officer report? How does the position function? **RESPONSE:** *There is no multicultural officer at PSU Brandywine.*
- ❖ The initiatives that focus on improvement of the City of Chester school system are positive, but it is unclear how they relate to diversifying campus leadership and management. Please clarify. **RESPONSE:** *We agree that this more closely aligns with Challenge 3.*

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ It is agreed that if the Social Equity Committee was ineffective in making sustainable changes, then a restructure was necessary. How will the new group function differently to ensure positive outcomes? **RESPONSE:** *In its previous iteration, the Social Equity Committee was a faculty committee that changed leadership and membership yearly. The new group is led by staff and includes a commitment to have multi-year commitments from its members. The membership was hand-picked to ensure that the campus goals will be met. Additionally, the increased Division Head participation (as mentioned above, Division Heads are the senior management leadership team for the campus - Paul deGatego, Deborah Erie, Jim Morgan, Matthew Shupp and Lisa Yerges) will help to ensure that important issues reach the campus decision-makers.*
- ❖ It is commendable that executive leadership is involved in off-campus diversity-related activities and hosts numerous groups on campus. What are the goals and outcomes of these activities? **RESPONSE:** *There are multiple goals. One is campus visibility. Another is to show the campus' commitment to issues related to diversity. For example, most recently the campus held a Social Justice Symposium entitled: "Higher Education for a Higher Purpose: The Role of the Academy in Promoting Social Justice." It drew like minds from a variety of disciplines, organizations, institutions and government offices to discuss a variety of issues related to local, national and international social justice issues. . The anticipated outcomes include partnering with Suraya Pakzad on a Department of State Grant for a Women's Leadership Institute, engaging Barbara Shaiman in our goal of increasing civic and community engagement (at the request of the students), and arranging a return campus visit for Senator and Terese Casey(in response to his request). It is our hope that similar diversity related activities will achieve similar goals and outcomes that reach a wide variety of constituents.*