

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

The Penn State DuBois (PSD) faculty, staff and students are commended for demonstrating a commitment to diversity and sustaining the University's diversity framework by promoting a welcoming climate, with a mission and pledge to respect the values and cultures of others. The Chancellor's active involvement in the Campus and University diversity initiatives demonstrates the significance of diversity as an integral component of the Campus academic programs. It is positive to note the increasing number of students from underrepresented groups attending PSD. The Campus offers an impressive array of diversity programming and has indicated that it will assess the impact of diversity programming on first-year students at the beginning and end of their first semester. Student retention challenges are noted, especially the shortage of local housing in a fairly homogenous community. Progress in hiring faculty from underrepresented groups in the last five years is also commendable. Retaining these faculty members and fostering their success will be crucial for the long-term viability of PSD's efforts to recruit a diverse workforce. It will be helpful to assess the impact of key diversity programs on faculty and staff perceptions of diversity. The Campus is encouraged to continue efforts to diversify management and leadership.

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The book list for the reading initiative is commendable in its efforts to be inclusive; however, the absence of books concerning the challenges of the LBGTA and disabled communities is noted.
- ❖ Campus leaders may want to consider individual interviews with students to enhance the richness of data from the focus group discussions.
- ❖ PSD is commended for promoting an array of multicultural initiatives that exemplify a shared and inclusive understanding of diversity, including "It's Your Time" student orientation workshop; focus groups with students, faculty and staff; and a town hall meeting with the community.
- ❖ PSD is encouraged to develop means by which to assess the impact of diversity events.
- ❖ In teaching a First-Year Seminar, the Chancellor provides a model of leadership and commitment to diversity.
- ❖ PSD makes good use of both traditional and electronic modes for distributing diversity information. The Campus also has a number of means by which to facilitate discussions about diversity (i.e., First-Year Experience, Safe to Relate, and professional development workshops).
- ❖ The pre- and post-diversity programming survey for first-year students is a potential best practice.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The professional development workshop led by an outside consultant, titled *Affirming a Diversity Friendly Campus*, was laudable.
- ❖ PSD is commended for providing customer service workshops for supervisors and administrators to create and develop the "ROAR" pledge statement.
- ❖ PSD uses a number of ways to identify climate issues, including student satisfaction and faculty/staff surveys. PSD also has a number of ways to respond to such issues, such as campus discussions, mechanism to register complaints with HR, and the Ombudsman.
- ❖ The review team recommends following up on the student satisfaction survey results regarding resources for minority students.

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ PSD is commended for improving the enrollment of multicultural students from 20 in Fall 2008 to 44 in Fall 2009.
- ❖ PSD's partnership with the Pittsburgh Recruitment Center to attract students from underrepresented groups is an excellent idea. In light of challenges with student housing, collaborating with the local

community to locate suitable off-campus housing is an excellent strategy that will also benefit recruitment of international students.

- ❖ PSD is commended for the positive impact of the athletic program, the World Cultural Club, NSF grants, adult student scholarships, and summer bridge programs on recruitment of minority students. The success of the athletics program in diversifying the student body is noted.
- ❖ PSD is commended for hiring the Coordinator of Multicultural and International Student Services, which will increase success in recruiting and retaining international students.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ Data provided suggest retention is a challenge. Community involvement and relationship building might enhance retention strategies for multicultural faculty and staff personnel.
- ❖ PSD is commended for successfully recruiting its first African American academic adviser for the campus advising center. Commendation is also extended to the campus leadership for establishing a mentor program to enhance faculty retention efforts.
- ❖ PSD employs excellent strategies to recruit and retain a diverse workforce including its efforts to widely advertise open positions, use diversity advocates in faculty and staff searches, assign new hires to mentors, link candidates to community resources, and support their professional development.

Education and Scholarship

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

- ❖ PSD is commended for providing more than 30 diversity courses.
- ❖ The numbers of honors students participating in international trips during spring break is very impressive. The Campus is encouraged to develop tools for program evaluation so that the impact of the trips can be measured.

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ PSD might consider conducting exit interviews with faculty and administrators as a method to shed light on any climate issues.
- ❖ PSD is commended for hiring an African American Chancellor, who is cultivating faculty and staff for campus leadership.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ PSD has firmly embedded diversity in its general strategic plan by identifying diversity as an objective in providing access to higher education. The diversity goals in Appendix B of its 2008-13 strategic plan serve as the basis for its 2010-15 *Framework* plan.
- ❖ Campus leaders have been very resourceful their efforts to bring Humphrey Scholars to PSD.
- ❖ PSD is commended for its collaboration with the DuBois Rotary Club which led to students helping victims of hurricane Katrina and the development of the “Club Above Self” student organization.
- ❖ Charging the Coordinator of Multicultural and International Student Services with program assessment will provide critical metrics to measure success. An additional important institutional change to be praised is the establishment of the Enrollment Management and Marketing Teams to enhance the campus diversity goals.