

2009 Update: A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State

Submitted by: Penn State Wilkes-Barre

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Introduction

Penn State Wilkes-Barre has had significant changes in administrative leadership over the last two years, including:

- Newly created position and Director of Enrollment Management
- Newly created position and Chief Financial Officer
- New Director of Continuing Education
- New Director of Development

Additionally, the campus has also expanded its enrollment management efforts by hiring two new (last two years) admission counselors and a new public information coordinator. It has strengthened its counseling and advising capacity by moving its personal counselor from part-time to full-time status. Likewise, the position of DUS advisor is now served by a single full-time employee.

The campus has also created a new Mission statement, its first ever Vision statement, and a set of underlying Value statements as well as a new Strategic Plan that recognizes the importance of attracting and retaining under represented groups. A new set of campus teams has also been created including a campus-wide admissions team and a campus-wide retention team. With all of these changes, Penn State Wilkes-Barre has a renewed energy to attract and retain students from all backgrounds and orientations, and provide them with the tools to be successful.

Specifically, to address those action items listed in the challenges of Penn State Wilkes-Barre's "A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State," the following accomplishments are noted:

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

Accomplishments:

- Maintain visibility and credibility of CET – The CET continues to be an integral part of the campus environment. Annually, they carry out a variety of programs that bring awareness to Diversity issues such as racial, economic, age, and religious diversity. CET is funded from various administrative budgets and student fees.
- Maintain membership in NEPDEC and Intercollegiate Leadership to insure broad diversity programming – After a short period of non-membership in NEPDEC, the campus has renewed its active participation in NEPDEC, including hosting a program on minority relationships with law enforcement during 2008-09. The

- campus also participates regularly in Intercollegiate Leadership and the Chancellor serves on the Board of Leadership Wilkes-Barre.
- Reinforce campus commitment to diversity agenda – With the creation of the new campus-wide Admissions Team there is focus on recruiting under represented groups to the campus. This team has already begun the development process to design campus brochures aimed at these groups.
 - Nominate CET for University and College Awards – CET regularly communicates its programs to the campus, and one of the co-chairs of the 2008-09 CET was selected for a Chancellor's recognition called the Attitude Award.
 - Post Diversity Statement and PSU Principles in every building and in Student Handbook and Orientation materials – The campus has not explicitly accomplished this action, but has instead reflected its desire to be inclusive in its new mission, vision, and value statements. It has set specific enrollment goals for the campus and for under represented groups.
 - Expand campus and CET website to include more instances of diversity on campus – There are now rotating pictures on the campus website which include members of under represented groups in situations that reflect learning and success.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

Accomplishments:

- Implement findings of Faculty/Staff Satisfaction Survey (2004) – Implemented as appropriate by previous CEO.
- Implement findings of Campus Climate Survey (2003) – Implemented as appropriate by previous CEO.
- Continue NEPDEC and CET programming – The campus has continued the programming of both entities and as noted above has hosted NEPDEC programs.
- Insure handicapped access to all buildings as far as possible – The campus has worked hard to make all of its space accessible to those with handicaps. The only space that remains difficult to access is the upper floors of Hayfield House, but they can be accessed via a work elevator with advanced planning.
- Expand current mentoring programs for new faculty and staff to insure adequate assistance for those with non-traditional experiences – Mentors are now beginning to work with all new full-time faculty as the needs of the faculty member dictate. There is a focus of working to insure their understanding of Penn State's broad approach to and support of diversity both in and out of the classroom.

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

Accomplishments:

- Expand recruitment partnerships with high schools and community colleges – The campus has restructured the entire enrollment area. Prior to 2008-09, the campus operated with a DSES and the enrollment team that reported to that position included a campus admission officer, a 75% time admission counselor, and a 50% adult recruiter. The area was then split with the existing Director become a DSA

and the position of Director of Enrollment Management (DEM) created, the 75% admission counselor was moved to Registrar (which had been manned at 50% time) and 2 full-time admission counselors were added. The DEM also retained the admission officer and the 50% adult recruiter. The net effect was to double the positions focusing on recruitment. The net effect is that high schools are visited more frequently and more stable relationships are being established with high school administrators and guidance counselors.

- Further implement recommendations of the Adult Recruitment and Retention Task Force – Adult enrollments have increased as Enrollment Management has worked with Continuing Education and the number of programs has increased. The number of adult community college transfers has remained about constant.
- Insure adequate academic support services for special student populations – The Student Support Services staff has worked to insure the best chance for success for all students who qualify for their remediation and support. They have filed for a renewal of the grant funding their effort. The campus also has a learning center that provides adult and peer tutoring in critical areas such as math, english, and communications. As previously noted, the campus now employs full-time a personal counselor.
- Strengthen relationship with Philadelphia Recruiting Center and other minority outreach organizations – The campus had let its relationships with such entities lapse, however with the reorganization and refocusing of the enrollment management area, there is renewed interest in such relationships. The admissions office did have more frequent communications with the Philadelphia Center last academic year and at one point, a visit by students and parents from the Center was scheduled. Also, one of the admissions counselors has received training and approval as a Penn State out-of-state recruiter. He has visited recruiting fairs in communities that have more diverse populations.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

Accomplishments:

- Insure adequate supervisory training for effective SRDP process – With the replacement and addition of such a large number of Directors has reinvigorated the administrative staff to insure greater focus on creating an environment that accommodates diversity on campus. SRDP's are now able to be completed on-line.
- Conduct several searches for tenure-track faculty with emphasis on finding some from under represented groups – Due to campus enrollment trends and the longevity of faculty in positions, there has been no need to search for tenure-track positions. However, the campus has made an effort to identify and recruit qualified fixed-term faculty when needed.
- Insure successful progress of those hired in the P & T process through mentoring – To date, faculty members up for promotion have been recommended as appropriate. Currently, only one Assistant Professor is seeking tenure. He has been favorably mentored and recommended by both the campus and University College. Two fixed-term faculty have been recommended for promotion to the

- rank of Senior Instructor, one upon completion of his doctorate, and the other in recognition of her leadership and performance.
- Advertise for staff positions in outlets read by a diverse population – The campus makes an effort to advertise positions where a cross section of population may find and respond.
 - Insure successful continuance of employment for staff hires – Where performance is satisfactory, staff has been retained and advanced when qualified. When performance has lagged, staff has been notified following appropriate procedures and given reasonable and appropriate chances to correct their deficiencies.

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

Accomplishments:

- Review FYS syllabi to insure diversity issues are covered – Syllabi are now centrally filed and will be reviewed under the present DAA for coverage of diversity issues.
- Explore opportunities for students to travel abroad with CWC programs – Students have traveled/studied abroad in the recent past, however on a limited basis. To insure a greater international representation, see below.
- Continue to offer campus programming with international and intercultural focus – Penn State Wilkes-Barre is participating in two initiatives relative to an international focus: 1) Several faculty members have explored the possibility of establishing linkages with universities in other countries with MOA's that encourage both student and faculty exchanges. To date, one MOA's has been executed with a university in Ghana. Student courses which include international travel are a part that curriculum. 2) The Wilkes-Barre campus is part of an 8 campus consortium that has entered into a MOA with several Indian Universities that will bring two year IST Indian students to the campus to complete their final two years of study. Students may begin arriving as early as Fall, 2010.
- Continue Service Learning option – Certain courses regularly include a service learning component, such as business and surveying. Surveying students regularly assist with community surveys for non-profit organizations and business students perform certain assessments for the Chamber of Commerce and The Institute for Public Policy and Economic Development. However, this item has not fully realized its potential. There are discussions about how more courses can incorporate community service into their curriculum.

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

Accomplishments:

- Complete search for Director of Enrollment and Student Services – This search was completed by the previous CEO. However, the entire area has since been restructured as detailed in this report's Introduction. Such a split has made both operational areas more effective.

- Recommend nominee for University's Administrative Fellowship – Opportunities for greater professional development are regularly circulated among administrators and faculty. No one has yet demonstrated sufficient interest in the Administrative Fellow program for nomination. However, several administrators have participated in the Management Development programs.
- Review campus committees to insure appropriate representation – A number of new committees have been created and a number of search committees that have operated have included appropriate representation of diverse groups, including the chair of the current Strategic Planning Oversight Team.
- Strengthen search process to insure questions about managing diversity – All search committees have included persons with an interest in diversity whether they have been faculty, staff, or administrative searches.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

Accomplishments:

- Partner with regional PSU campuses to promote diversity programming and opportunities – With the rejoining of NEPDEC, it was done in tandem with the Hazleton, Worthington-Scranton, and Schuylkill, campuses. Several of the campuses have hosted diversity events, and frequently the campuses have issued invitations for the others to participate.
- Reward outstanding performance of faculty and staff in support of diversity initiatives – The campus annually awards faculty and staff for a number of bases. Some awards including the Fran Brown Humanitarian Award are open to members of the Advisory Board and/or community also. In addition, the Chancellor has created a number of awards that reflect faculty and staff efforts on behalf of the campus.
- Insure Strategic Planning goals related to diversity initiatives are well publicized and implemented – As noted, the current Strategic Plan does include a number of specific objectives that relate to under represented groups. The campus is regularly reminded of these goals and will be annually updated on progress toward all goals and objectives at the Strategic Plan Oversight Team's presentation.

Summary

In Summary, the campus has set the stage for improving its diversity focus with administrative changes, a clear statement of mission, vision, and values, specific objectives in the strategic plan, and mechanisms to at least annually report on the progress of the campus toward implementing these visions and plans.