

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

Penn State DuBois has had both successful and less than optimal results in its efforts to pursue campus diversity. DuBois' accomplishments are, for the most part, focused on successful incorporation of diversity and educational equity into the curriculum. Results have been less satisfactory in attempts to recruit students from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, despite several innovative programs. Obviously, the typical applicant pool and campus location are major constraints, but continuing efforts are encouraged. The directed scholarships and Diversity Advocate Program are constructive in this regard. Leveraging the impact of DuBois' diverse leadership team, including an African American woman as chancellor, should be a top priority. Finally, the next update should provide more data to substantiate key points.

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ It is commendable that the Campus has an aggressive diversity program in place, as evidenced by the Midpoint Response Matrix, and that a broad definition of diversity is included.
- ❖ The use of campus leadership teams to discuss diversity initiatives is laudable.
- ❖ A diversity committee with a good cross-section of personnel exists; however, its functions and activities in support of diversity goals should be further described.

Response: The primary purpose of the Diversity Committee is to ensure that diversity, with all of its complexity is part of the fabric of the campus. We have many diversity events on campus, but on occasion, they conflict with one another or are not well publicized. The Diversity Committee serves as the group that solicits planned events, then coordinates, and markets them. Examples are events for Women's History Month or Black History Month. In an effort to further improve coordination of events around a certain topics, the committee has recommended that a particular country or region be the focus in the 2007-2008 academic year. The specific regions selected are South and Central America for the fall and the Middle East for the spring. The committee will coordinate campus activities and identify off-campus speakers for the fall and spring. The Diversity Committee also addresses issues of campus climate and plans to address, using various methods, the topic of "Civility" with faculty, staff and students. Finally, the Committee also serves as an advisory to the Chancellor on issues identified by the Chancellor.

- ❖ More specifics on initiatives and mechanisms in this area would be helpful. For example, does the Campus integrate diversity into faculty/staff meetings?
- ❖ Diversity related brochures are sent to St. Mary's Outreach Center regularly. Are they sent elsewhere?
Response: [The St. Marys site is noted because it is an off-campus site. However, brochures are distributed throughout the units on the DuBois campus, the campus advisory board, the Rotary Club and other community organizations or individuals depending on the focus of the brochure.]
- ❖ It is noteworthy that the Campus collaborates and plans diversity events in coordination with class work outlined by faculty.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The Campus leadership seems firmly committed to diversity efforts, listing several sponsored events.
- ❖ The Campus proactively identified women and employees from diverse racial/ethnic groups for leadership positions and promotions. Challenge 6 highlights this point again.
- ❖ It is positive that leadership attends diversity events on campus and that the Chancellor is an adviser to one of the student groups.
- ❖ The review team is concerned that no major climate issues are reported on Campus and suggests a closer look into how issues are reported.
- ❖ Several approaches are utilized to encourage faculty to participate in diversity related activities.

- ❖ It is commendable that the Campus completes climate surveys for staff and students on a regular basis; the review team recommends more in-depth follow up.
- ❖ Access issues are addressed impressively.

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ While the review team recognizes the difficulties pertaining to recruitment and retention – location, housing, and other factors – the Campus is encouraged to continue its efforts to broaden the applicant pool.
Response: We feel that the campus location is fine. It is conveniently located between two exits on I80, 65 miles from State College, offers a full array of shopping, restaurants, movie theatre, indoor and outdoor recreational activities, a nationally ranked regional hospital with 1500 employees, employers for internships and jobs, and beautiful outdoor scenery. Adequate housing in the community is definitely the challenge.
- ❖ The Campus has a World Culture Club and an All Come Together Club, both well received by students.
- ❖ Attempts to recruit from the Pittsburgh and Harrisburg Recruitment Centers are worth noting.
- ❖ Potential best practices: The Dual Enrollment agreement that the Campus has with four service area high schools is outstanding; data focusing on who has been attracted by the program would be a plus. The focus on increasing Adult Student Recruitment as well as outreach efforts at St. Mary's and Clearfield are commendable; again, data to evaluate program impacts are needed.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ Professional development opportunities are promising, with increasing attendance of women and employees of color. It is unclear if the development programming includes diversity topics.
Response: The majority of professional development topics have been focused on technology. Keeping employees, the majority of whom are women, current on various technology tools is important and necessary to retain and promote them. However, a two-part workshop was held on "Customer Service" to address fostering a welcoming climate for all.
- ❖ It is commendable that mentors are assigned to all new full-time faculty and staff members in academic affairs and that this program is intended to be expanded this year to the entire Campus.
- ❖ Potential best practice: A Diversity Advocate who can provide input to search committees, as is the case for all campus locations.

Education and Scholarship

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

- ❖ Examples cited in this Challenge are far-reaching and impressive. Developing processes to track students when they leave and compiling data on which minors students graduate with should be a priority.
- ❖ Course abbreviation lists that address diversity issues can be insightful; however, including a brief course description would be a useful supplement.
- ❖ Specific examples of courses addressing issues of diversity in the classroom are impressive, particularly Occupational Therapy's requirement that students assume a disability for a day.
- ❖ Worthy of mention is the focus on minors that embrace diversity – Gerontology and Women's studies.
- ❖ Diversity issues are addressed in the Occupational Therapy program. How cultural diversity is incorporated into student written feedback reports from their supervisors in OT could also be reported.
- ❖ Guidelines for class discussion involving respect of others were created by faculty members teaching diversity related courses. Classroom behavior standards are included in faculty syllabi, and this strategy appears positive. An example syllabus included in the update would be helpful.
- ❖ The review team would appreciate more information on metrics used to assess the impact of Hispanic Heritage Month.

- ❖ Potential best practices: The broad spectrum of diversity courses and International Education Week, which encourage international study and understanding and complements the multicultural curriculum via lectures, exhibits, and presentations.

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ Leaders participate in a wide variety of diversity events on campus and fully support recruitment and retention efforts.
- ❖ The update appears to be less positive about DuBois' success under this Challenge than necessary. The Campus leadership is diverse, both from the standpoint of gender and racial/ethnic diversity. Undoubtedly, low turnover is a factor that the Campus will need to deal with for some time. Still, progress to this point has been substantial.
- ❖ Potential best practice: The diversification of the Campus leadership team and their engagement in the process to foster diversity at all levels.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ The Campus appears committed to incorporating diversity into every facet of campus life. The update specifically cites the general DuBois Strategic Plan, Goal #3, which promotes civility and mutual respect along with strategies to achieve its goals: action, accountability, and celebration.
- ❖ An Enrollment Management team and Marketing team – both of which are in the process of developing their programs – are not described in enough detail to be included among the “most successful strategies.” However, the review team looks forward to future data on these programs to hopefully validate this claim.
- ❖ It is positive that full-time faculty and staff are annually reviewed for involvement of diversity issues.
- ❖ The Student Activities Office has been proactive in attracting diversity artist programs – Shavers Creek, United Soul Ensemble, Dr. Thomas Poole, and Simple Gifts – and is to be commended.
- ❖ Potential best practice: Actively providing Professional Development Programming has resulted in an increased number of participation from women and racial/ethnic employees.

Response: Steps will be taken in the fall 2007 by the Diversity Committee to determine appropriate measures of success for all areas identified in this document as lacking data or other appropriate information.