

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

Penn State Schuylkill is commended for addressing the assessment questions for all Challenges and identifying and targeting areas for improvement. It is recognized that this campus is making a strong effort to incorporate diversity efforts into the 2006-09 strategic plan and has noted the importance of diversity to the strategic direction and well-being of the Campus. However, the update is somewhat confusing, referring to cited initiatives developed by the Campus as a stand alone unit and falling back on the Capitol College for initiatives that have not yet been addressed. While its reliance on the Capitol College is understandable given that the Campus has not yet developed its own history in addressing a particular Challenge, clear delineations of evolving initiatives versus adopted interim programs are needed.

The definition of diversity is not clear and relies on the former Capitol College definition. The diversity definition will help determine if programming is reaching the desired populations. **RESPONSE: This will be the #1 priority of the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07** Plans for new leadership (i.e., Coordinator of Student Support Services and Multicultural Affairs) to rework the definition are encouraged. Recruitment and retention efforts, as well as other programs, can then be expanded to include greater diversity and individualized approaches to enhance the overall climate for targeted groups (e.g., adult learners; gender; students with disabilities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons; first-generation students, and others from underrepresented/underserved groups).

**Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations**

***Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity***

- ❖ Efforts to communicate diversity initiatives and programming are notable.
- ❖ Both the Faculty Senate Human Resource & Business Committee and the Strategic Planning Steering Group appear to have joint responsibility for disseminating information to faculty and staff; however, there appears to be a disjuncture between these groups and the acting diversity committee. In addition, no avenue for student input is evident.  
**RESPONSE: This redundancy and confusion will be addressed by forming one Diversity Committee which will include faculty, staff, and student input. This committee will be chaired by the DAA and the DSA**
- ❖ The Campus is encouraged to publish the strategic plan (2006-09) to help to formalize dissemination of diversity initiatives.
- ❖ Currently, the Campus is using the Capital College Diversity and Educational Equity Committee (DEEC) model to serve as its diversity committee. Plans to revisit the role and structure of a new diversity committee in spring 2007 are positive.  
**RESPONSE: This redundancy and confusion will be addressed by forming one Diversity Committee which will include faculty, staff, and student input. This committee will be chaired by the DAA and the DSA**
- ❖ Leadership in the coordinator of Student Support Services and Multicultural Affairs role has great potential for helping the campus strengthen its final report.
- ❖ Potential best practices: The MAEP peer tutorial and leadership development support group.  
**RESPONSE: Under the direction of the new multicultural affairs staff member, a version of this program and many more similar leadership programs will occur beginning in the Fall '07**

***Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate***

- ❖ The Capital College Climate Assessment in 2003 helped identify climate issues, but it is unclear how approaches listed in the update enhance the overall climate or are related to diversity. Plans to explore and adopt its own measures of climate should be given high priority.  
**RESPONSE: This will be one of the top priorities of the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07**

- ❖ The Campus faces a singular challenge with a high residential population of students from diverse racial/ethnic groups (69 percent) in a county that is less than five percent people of color. On-campus recreation programs and Community Days (inviting the broader community onto campus) are positive efforts to help these students feel welcome.  
*RESPONSE: Under the direction of the new multicultural affairs staff member this will be given priority*
- ❖ The campus is commended for offering a wide range of diverse groups including the United Minority Leaders (UML), Multicultural Academic Excellence Program (MAEP), and the Commission for Women.
- ❖ Potential best practices: the First Response Team to Acts of Intolerance and, if continued, the acculturation study of international students by the Faculty Senate Intercultural and International Affairs Committee in 2002.  
*RESPONSE: This will be one of the top priorities of the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*

### **Representation (Access and Success)**

#### ***Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body***

- ❖ The Campus may wish to consider extending programs monitoring the progress of at-risk students beyond the first year.  
*RESPONSE: This will be considered by both the retention group and the Diversity Committee beginning in the Fall '07*
- ❖ Specific initiatives intended to reduce intergroup disparities in enrollment, retention, and graduation rates are not clearly described. An overview of the programs and the demographics of the students involved would be helpful.  
*RESPONSE: This will be considered by both the retention group and the Diversity Committee beginning in the Fall '07*
- ❖ Recruitment and retention efforts do not appear to focus on all diverse student groups.  
*RESPONSE: This will be considered by both the retention group and the Diversity Committee beginning in the Fall '07*
- ❖ Potential best practices: the Center for Academic Achievement (CAA), which employs and trains students from diverse groups as peer tutors (data are needed to substantiate positive retention outcomes); and recruitment in major urban areas in Pennsylvania and surrounding states (increase of students from diverse racial/ethnic populations from 23 percent in 1997 to 40 percent in 2004).  
*RESPONSE: This will be considered by both the retention group and the Diversity Committee beginning in the Fall '07*

#### ***Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce***

- ❖ Retention and promotion strategies for faculty and/or staff from diverse groups do not seem to be targeted toward creating a profile similar to the student population, but this focus seems critical.  
*RESPONSE: This area is focused on in the campus Strategic Plan*
- ❖ Although the Campus exceeds the goal for women in both the executive/administrative/managerial category and the staff category, there is little representation among diverse racial/ethnic groups in this area. Exploring the best practices of similarly situated campuses may provide some helpful perspectives.  
*RESPONSE: This area is focused on in the campus Strategic Plan*

### **Education and Scholarship**

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

- ❖ The Campus' primary substantive curriculum initiatives appear to be multicultural speakers and events and a CIVCOM minor. The Campus is encouraged to develop a comprehensive plan to embed diversity into its curricular offerings.  
*RESPONSE: This will be one of the top priorities of the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*

- ❖ More information is needed regarding the Campus' Faculty Contributions to Diversity/Global/International Research and Scholarship. Including documentation of research and teaching advancing the University's diversity agenda in an appendix would be helpful.  
*RESPONSE: This will be one of the top priorities of the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*
- ❖ Regular involvement of students in external research by social and behavior sciences faculty is commended. Developing ways to specifically involve diverse students in these opportunities will greatly enhance this area.  
*RESPONSE: Currently being done*
- ❖ It is impressive that 40 percent of student organizations are identified as promoting diversity.

### **Institutional Viability and Vitality**

#### ***Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management***

- ❖ The update lacks information regarding leadership's direct involvement in diversity efforts.  
*RESPONSE: This will be studied by the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*
- ❖ It is difficult to discern the unit's diversity profile because administrative, executive, and "professional staff" are listed together.  
*RESPONSE: Executive Level (Chancellor's Cabinet: Men=5, Women=4 (of the 4 women, 1 is a minority))*
- ❖ The update cites advertising openings in publications targeted toward diverse race/ethnic populations as "most successful" for this Challenge while noting this to be unproductive under Challenge 4. Clarification would be helpful.
- ❖ The update would be strengthened by an explanation about how the PSU Leader and Mastering Supervision programs relate to diversity and by information regarding participant demographics and time frames for completion.  
*RESPONSE: This will be studied by the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*
- ❖ The update would be enhanced by including an explanation of how vacancies within leadership positions have had an effect on the Campus and showing an appreciation of the role of leadership in implementing diversity initiatives.  
*RESPONSE: This will be studied by the Diversity Committee in the Fall '07*

#### ***Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals***

- ❖ The campus appears to be making a strong and deliberate effort to incorporate diversity-related programs and services in the 2006-09 strategic plan, including the Retention Work Group, the Campus Working Group, enhancement of diversity-related collections in the Library, and re-establishment of a Diversity Committee.

### ***RESPONSE:***

#### ***Top Five Priorities of the Diversity Committee***

- 1. Formulate/reformulate the PSU-SL Diversity Committee with representation from faculty, staff, administration, and students. This committee would be chaired by both the DAA and DSA.***
- 2. Define Diversity from a PSU-SL perspective.***
- 3. Define, educate, and train the faculty, staff, and administration to understand and embrace the importance of a cohesive philosophy for diversity.***
- 4. Set enrollment, retention, and graduation goals for a diverse student body.***
- 5. Set standards of practice for faculty, staff, and administration around day to day business, recruitment, and selection of faculty, staff, and administration to attract a diverse workforce.***