

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

The Campus is creative in both its attention to the local environment and allocation of scarce resources. A particular strength is found in Challenge Five: the Campus has had tremendous success in curricular development. To strengthen its diversity initiatives, York is encouraged to devise diversity strategies for each of the populations mentioned on page 1 of the update. It is also important to be mindful of developing strategies equally for both faculty and staff, and to identify ways to measure progress. Several of the feedback points below are related simply to the way York tells its story; increased attention to details and improved organizational structure could greatly improve the document and reflect positively on diversity efforts.

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ York has implemented a functional solution in place of a multi-cultural coordinator: accountability and roles are shared among a variety of staff (Counselor, Coordinator, and Associate Director of Student Affairs). The need for a multicultural coordinator position is identified in the update.
- ❖ More detailed plans for implementing change in regard to the strategies listed would be appreciated.

Response:

Strategies:

- ***Review campus definition of diversity. Does it say what we want it to say five years later?
The definition is reviewed each year by faculty, staff, and students. It has received continuing approval each year.***
 - ***Faculty messages: re-work Campus senate Diversity Committee
The committee has moved from a spending plan approver to a program developing group. Community service, MLK Day, Black History Month, Women's Month, Hispanic History Month activities are coordinated by this committee. Beginning in fall 2007, it will also sponsor "First Friday" which will be a brown bag lunch presentation/discussion on a topic of diversity.***
 - ***Student messages: ensure that everything that is done includes a diversity message for SGA and other student leaders; recruit students of color for programming assistance. Multicultural staffing: develop goals and outcome assessments.
Everything that is done with and for the students is looked at through a "diverse" lens beginning with New Student Orientation, Academic Convocation, SGA elections, student programming, participation in leadership conferences, membership on committees, etc. In addition, students are encouraged to start clubs and organizations and develop programming that reflect their interests.***
 - ❖ A formal mechanism is recommended for developing a shared and inclusive understanding of diversity for faculty, staff, and students.
- Response: As discussed above, students are formally engaged in diversity efforts from FCAP through NSO, Academic Convocation, classes, internships, workshops, programming, and travel opportunities. Staff and faculty can be involved in classes, workshops, programming and travel opportunities as well. In addition, the campus has hosted workshops through University Park offices which have had required staff involvement.***
- ❖ It is commendable that the Campus considers focusing attention upon students as a priority.
 - ❖ The review team recommends that the Campus focus on the inclusive list provided on page 1 of the update for guidance to enhance future diversity direction.

Response:

What is currently being done:

***Ethnic diversity, including Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American populations – 2.5 staff focus on this; staff and faculty are part of university-wide support groups
International students – responsibilities housed in Student Affairs***

Returning adult students – almost 50% of our population; receive the same services as traditional students; monthly meetings; receive a majority of our academic awards; have a chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda

Urban, suburban, and rural geographic areas

Physical disabilities – responsibilities housed in Student Affairs

Learning disabilities – responsibilities housed in the Learning Center

ESL and ELL - offer 1 section/semester

Differing religious creeds and cultural practices – offer non-credit workshops and programs

Veterans – responsibilities housed in Student Affairs

Sexual orientation and gender identity – Rainbow Paws student organization; staff and faculty are part of university-wide support groups

Women's issues

Age, marital status, and family structure

Varied socioeconomic and educational background and status, including financially disadvantaged and low achievement – EOP program housed in Admissions; targeted efforts in York and Lancaster City Schools

Composition of faculty and staff – addressed in Challenge 4.

- ❖ Potential best practice: publicizing the creation of a budget devoted to diversity initiatives demonstrates leadership commitment.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The update includes excellent documentation of the variety of projects and events that demonstrate support for diversity.
- ❖ The Campus is encouraged to report more specifics about surveys and results.
Response: York was the first campus to participate in the university climate survey in spring 2000. Results showed:
 - 1. 55% indicated never hearing an insensitive or disparaging comment from students over the past three years and 83% reported never hearing such comments from university faculty, staff, or administrators.*
 - 2. 71% indicated that they had not felt discriminated against on campus.*
 - 3. Of those who felt discriminated against, most of the feelings of discrimination were due to race/ethnicity (41%), gender (41%), and age (24%).*
 - 4. While harassment and inappropriate behavior in the workplace were not frequently reported, when they did occur, they did so most frequently based on gender (18), race/ethnicity (10%), and sexual orientation (10%).*
 - 5. 50% of the respondents reported that the campus thoroughly addresses diversity issues.*
 - 6. 85% of the respondents indicated that workshops to help members of the University community become more aware of the needs of various groups would not change or only slightly improve the campus climate; 80% indicated the same regarding classes that focus on issues, research, and perspectives of various groups; and 83% indicated the same regarding more art, music, and cultural events which recognize distinctive cultures, distinctive sexual orientations and people with disabilities.**No other formal surveys have been completed.*
- ❖ It is unclear whether or not a specific plan is in place for responding to problematic climate issues or specific incidents. The review team suggests there be a strategy in case an issue should arise.
Response: Climate issues are handled as are all issues that effect or have the potential to effect the campus community. They are first discussed at a first line staff meeting and then by a smaller group consisting of staff from Student Affairs and Safety and Security, representatives from the Student Government Association, representatives from the Campus Senate and other areas as appropriate.
- ❖ More information on communication between the Campus and the community would be appreciated.

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ Monthly adult student meetings are laudable.
- ❖ The Campus is encouraged to create an action plan for retaining and engaging enrolled students
Response: As the result of a Town Meeting in April, an Enrollment Management Team is being formed to address retaining and recruitment issues identified at that first meeting.
- ❖ Attention should be given to the diverse populations noted in the comprehensive definition of diversity given under Challenge One.
Response: Ethnic diversity, including Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American populations – targeting high schools with high minority enrollments
International students – agreement with India will bring in 10 students/year over three years; potential of collaboration with the University of the Sacred Heart in Puerto Rico being investigated in July, 2007.
Returning adult students – host two adult open houses and information sessions during the summer, transfer agreements with Harrisburg Area Community College for their Nursing program are in place; investigating agreements with Bradley Academy and Stevens Tech; do evening adult orientation.
Students with physical disabilities – campus has been updated and is currently handicap accessible.
Students with learning disabilities - provide on-campus testing and analysis for LD; Learning Center is the liaison between student and faculty.
ESL and ELL - offer 1 section/semester
Veterans – we do the allowed one mailing/year to follow-up on the mailing done from University Park.
Sexual orientation and gender identity – campus information is visible to those looking for a safe environment.
Women – host “Pathways to your Future: Exploring STEM Careers” and do follow-up mailings to the eighth grade, female participants
Varied socioeconomic and educational background and status, including financially disadvantaged and low achievement – EOP program housed in Admissions; targeted efforts in York and Lancaster City Schools
- ❖ The review team recommends the Campus report specific data to substantiate its claims. For instance, the “high percentage rate of faculty participation” in the On-line Progress Reporting should be indicated by stating the exact percentage rate.
- ❖ It is commendable that the Campus is partnering with area post-secondary institutions and organizations working with high school students. It was not clear if underrepresented groups are a focus in this effort.
Response: The York Diversity Consortium, annual meetings with local after-school program coordinators, Penn State in Town: Walk-in Wednesdays, after school tutoring in York City school district and York Spanish American Center, summer work study opportunities with South George Street Partnership, Hispanic Coalition Scholarship awarding, Quantum Opportunities Program, and the Project Talent Connections weekend program are all aimed at underrepresented groups, academically, economically, ethnically, and racially.
- ❖ The Campus might consider the co-curricular aspects of engaging and retaining students in addition to the educational initiatives that are emphasized.
Response: As discussed above, students are formally engaged in co-curricular diversity efforts from FCAP through NSO, Academic Convocation, classes, internships, workshops, programming, and travel opportunities. Student clubs such as Black Student Union, Hispanic Student Association, and Asian Culture Club sponsor events in addition to the cultural programming done through the Student affairs Office, Diversity Committee of the Campus Senate, and the Pullo Family Performing Arts Center. Students are invited to participate in Community Outreach, international travel, and small group guest speaker discussions, in addition to How To Succeed Lunches, Honors Lunches, and Take a Faculty to Lunch events. A complete listing of offerings is found on the Campus web calendar.

- ❖ Appendices A and B are cited as measures of success that gauge progress, however no discussion of these data is given to highlight the growth of York's diversity population. The chart provided reflects achievements and the discussion of these metrics would be positive.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ There is a heavy focus on faculty and little attention to staff under this Challenge. For example, the mentorship program, a very good idea, is discussed only for faculty. More information is needed about staff recruitment and retention.
Response: Continued emphasis will be placed on employee recruitment and retention. New employees are often mentored by other more senior employees in their areas when they arrive on the job.
- ❖ Information about student employees could be helpful since the number of diverse student employees at a campus is often significant.
Response: There are very few students on wage payroll. Those who are on wage payroll are usually funded through grant funds secured by faculty and are students in that faculty's academic area. The majority of students working on campus do so through the federal work study program and are selected based on their financial need. In 2006-07, 100 students were offered work study and 44 accepted. Of the 41 who actually worked, 17 were students of color, 20 were non-traditional and 25 were female.
- ❖ Citing and interpreting appendix C would be helpful in this section.
Response: Appendix C states that the 66 staff are 89.4% white, 7.6% Black/African American, 3% Hispanic, and 10.6% multicultural and are predominately female (60.6%).
- ❖ The expansion of contacts to other universities such as Howard University is commendable.
- ❖ It is unclear how often positions are vacant and at what frequency searches are conducted.
Response: Positions are vacant only when staff opt to leave - over the years, this has primarily been through retirements, though more recently, we have had some junior staff members relocating from the area, or opting to resign for positions at other locations. When jobs are vacated, the position is posted internally, and then externally whenever there is not a qualified applicant pool. Every effort is made to develop a pool of applicants that is rich with diversity. We will look at utilizing the Hire Power program training.
- ❖ It is unclear why York is only now incorporating the Affirmative Action Card since that is a known practice and mandatory.
- ❖ The review team suggests increased communication among HR Representatives to ensure a diverse pool of applicants. Utilizing Hire Power training is also recommended.
- ❖ The current tenure and promotion and SRDP processes could be utilized to identify internal candidates who have the qualifications to take on higher level positions.
Response: The SRDP and Promotion and Tenure processes do help us to identify internal candidates who have qualifications for higher positions, and we are certainly considerate of that as we review potential candidates for open positions.
- ❖ Participation in the University's Administrative Fellows Program is encouraged.
Response: Several employees from Penn State York have been approached about participating in the Administrative Fellows program over the years. We will continue to encourage interested employees to apply for the program.

Education and Scholarship

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

- ❖ York is commended for its commitment and progress in the area of curricular development that fosters diversity. The list in Appendix D is commendable.
- ❖ It is laudable that the Campus is planning outreach activities such as BA 321 to promote accounting careers to students in high schools in York, eastern Adams, and Lancaster counties. One of the learning objectives is "to determine how to make careers in accounting accessible to ethnic minorities."
- ❖ The Campus could consider offering more foreign languages crucial to international competency.

Response: In our Strategic Plan for Diversity we identified the only the foreign languages in our resident instruction curriculum, e.g., French, German and Spanish. However, when there is sufficient interest, students at Penn State York can also take language courses via our Continuing Education Division (CE). In the recent past, CE has offered the following language courses: (LA 5113) Brazilian Portuguese I - Introductory Brazilian Portuguese, (ARAB 5000) Arabic I - Introductory Arabic, (CHNS 5001) Introduction to Mandarin Chinese, (CHNS 5002) Chinese II - Intermediate Chinese,(JAPNS 5000) Japanese I- Introductory Japanese,(RUS 5000) Introductory Russian -- Mini Course,(RUS 5001) Russian I. Ultimately, the decision to expand the range of language courses offered at Penn State York is linked to our budgetary capacity.

- ❖ The review team acknowledges York's selection of the CAS major, with its component of international communication. This strategic choice demonstrates how attentive York is to diversity goals.
- ❖ Potential best practice: The array of short term travel abroad experiences is a potential model for other similar Commonwealth Campuses.

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ More information should be provided on how accountability is maintained in management and leadership.
- ❖ Information found in Challenge 4 appears reiterated in this section, such as how diverse faculty are recruited. Strategies for diversifying leadership and management need to be addressed.
- ❖ More information on how department heads are fostering diversity is encouraged.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ The Campus should provide more detail in explaining how strategies and recommendations are being implemented and achieved.
- ❖ York should consider a mechanism for rewarding individuals for their innovation in curriculum planning.
- ❖ York has a commendable strategy of accountability and rewards that support diversity goals; HR, and the DAA are both included in this system.
- ❖ Appendix A reflects positively on increased minority enrollment, which is identified as a measure of progress.
- ❖ It is suggested that performance indicators be developed to more accurately reflect the breadth of this Challenge.