

Feedback on the Diversity Strategic Plan
Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004-2009
Penn State Great Valley School of Graduate Professional Studies

Although Penn State Great Valley (PSGV) suggests targeted areas for improvement, relatively few actions are identified in the plan. It is unfortunate that recommended actions provided in Appendix A of the 2003 Feedback Report information were not incorporated into the 2004-2009 Diversity Plan. The lack of adequate metrics to assess the outcomes of the strategies suggested in the proposed plan make it difficult for the team to provide an effective review.

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The Great Valley Diversity Action Council (DAC) will continue to remain the primary advisory group for all diversity-related campus activities.
- ❖ Adding a diversity component to the Web site redesign will actively support the stated goals and officially reference PSGV's understanding of diversity.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The plan to use the Diversity Action Council to develop mechanisms for assessing current student, faculty, and staff views on various campus climate issues related to diversity and inclusion is commendable. The use of identified metrics would be useful.
- ❖ It is positive that the Diversity Action Council will revise the current web site in order to more effectively emphasize its mission to serve all members of the PSGV community.
- ❖ More specific methods for assessment of climate would be useful.

RESPONSE: We look forward to receiving the results from the recent University-wide survey of staff and faculty to assist us with respect to assessing various climate issues.

Representation (Access and Success)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ PSGV will continue to strengthen its association with INROADS as a means to increase student body diversity.
- ❖ The continuation of existing collaborations with HBCUs in the greater Philadelphia region may present increased recruitment opportunities.
- ❖ It is commendable that several academic divisions are working on the delivery of programs to nearby companies who employ relatively diverse workforces. Measured outcomes would allow this to be noted as a best practice.

RESPONSE: The delivery of these programs on-site at nearby companies has only recently been revived. Once this has been in practice for a period of time, we will more easily be able to measure the broader effects of this strategy.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ No planning goals were included for this Challenge.

Education and Scholarship

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

- ❖ It is positive that funding faculty and staff travel expenses when attending diversity-related conferences and workshops will continue.
- ❖ A revised Diversity Action Council web site will more effectively communicate its mission to serve all members of the PSGV community.
- ❖ Courses already identified as having a diversity focus will continue to be offered. It is unclear how PSGV assesses the percentage of diversity content in each. There does not appear to be a plan to assess the impact of diversity content in these courses.
RESPONSE: This is a very difficult issue to address with the broad array of courses offered in the various academic divisions at Great Valley. However, this item will be presented to the Diversity Action Council for the upcoming year as an item for them to work on with the faculty.
- ❖ PSGV is commended for its on-going collaboration with local companies and school districts to identify multicultural competencies for employees. The implications for curriculum development are very important and PSGV is providing leadership in this area.
- ❖ The Review Team recognizes the breadth and depth of faculty research and publications in such areas as cultural competence, gender and disability studies, international issues and adult learners. These research projects will enhance and facilitate the integration of diversity content in PSGV's curriculum

Institutional Viability and Vitality

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ PSGV will develop and implement strategies to identify, recruit, and promote qualified administrators, faculty and staff from underrepresented groups.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ PSGV will continue to preserve the strength and commitment of the Diversity Action Council, a standing campus committee with a representative membership from all PSGV stakeholders.
- ❖ The suggested strategies appear to be a continuation of pre-existing initiatives. It would be helpful to provide more specific information (e.g. target dates, metrics) in regards to accomplishing the initiatives.
RESPONSE: While no specific target dates are mentioned, these strategies are ongoing each year at Great Valley and will continue to be high priority items.
- ❖ It is unclear how the strategies identified in the plan will be implemented if the Multicultural Coordinator position remains vacant.
RESPONSE: Great Valley is currently experiencing a downturn in enrollments. Once this situation improves, we would hope to fill this position once again and work on implementing these strategies in a timely manner.