

**Feedback on A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2010–15 and  
2014–15 through 2018–19 Diversity Initiatives**  
Fall 2014  
**Penn State Abington**

Penn State Abington has presented an admirably integrated diversity strategic plan for 2014–15 through 2018–19. Its implementation matrix highlights top leadership accountability. The Appendix B: Diversity Update, which summarizes Abington’s response to the planning guidelines and outlines progress on *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2010–15*, accounts for much of the success of the new plan. **RESPONSE: Based on this feedback, we have incorporated aspects of Appendix B into our Goal 3 of the College’s strategic plan to assure their integration into overall planning moving forward.** Considerable effort spent in implementing and assessing the previous plan has positively impacted current strategies. Assessment based on metrics in the current plan demonstrates advancement of campus diversity goals, and the strategy of addressing all *Framework* Challenges is laudable. While progress is noteworthy, a deeper understanding of the drivers of change as captured by data is needed. Overall, diversity, equity, and inclusion are woven throughout this strong plan. **RESPONSE: This feedback is extremely helpful to us and we will consider how to implement a deeper understanding and awareness of the drivers of change as our planning moves forward.** Conscious effort has been made to infuse the entire Abington enterprise with diversity, from the Advisory and Alumni Board, to the curriculum, and to outreach within the local community. **RESPONSE: We agree that infusion is a strategic tool that needs to be applied intentionally and continually and we have modified our Goal 3 to include infusion as a conscious priority.** The review team appreciates the strategic performance indicators that accompany goals and strategies as well as the breadth of diversity addressed. The current plan builds upon lessons learned by assessing program outcomes in the previous plan, which is admirable and will hopefully continue. This approach offers an opportunity for Abington to think more deeply about the context of the data gathered and how they illuminate goals, objectives, and processes so that data collection becomes less of an end and more of a means to further improvement. Penn State Abington recognizes diversity as a strength and is allocating resources and quality programming to that end.

**Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations**

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

- Diversity is deliberately defined as a core value.
- Goal 3: Diverse, Inclusive, and Welcoming Community lists four strategies with six strategic indicators which reflects thorough planning.
- Best practice: No Place for Hate initiatives.

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

- Potential best practices: Campus Diversity Awards and Diversity Training Sessions for Faculty and Staff.
- Best practice: Center for Intercultural Communication and Global Awareness activities.

**Representation (Access and Success)**

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

- The campus’ signature initiative, “Bond of Brothers” Mentorship Program, is considered a potential best practice; however, future data and outcomes will determine its ultimate status.
- Acknowledged is the increased international student enrollment.
- Best practice: Global Dialogues.
- Best practice: Student-Veterans’ program.

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

- Best practice: Multicultural Committee Member representation on each campus search committee.

## **Education and Scholarship**

### ***Challenge 5: Developing a Curriculum That Fosters U.S. and International Cultural Competencies***

- Potential best practices: Diversity Leadership Retreat, Diversity Collection Development Plan from the Abington Library, and HOF Exchange Program for Business and IST students.

## **Institutional Viability and Vitality**

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

- Under Appendix B: Diversity Update, Challenge 6 lists six action items with five strategic indicators that track positive measurable outcomes.

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

- Penn State Abington is to be commended for a clear and comprehensive Strategy Implementation Matrix, which includes projected time-frames and leadership accountability.
- Also noteworthy is the campus' desire to improve representation from underrepresented/underserved groups on all campus advisory boards to more accurately reflect the diverse student body. The Strategic indicators show promise.