

**Feedback on Progress Implementing the  
Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003  
Division of Student Affairs  
Final Report**

In general, the Division performs a wide range of programs that forward its diversity agenda both within the Division and in the broader University community. The differentiation between these efforts is still unclear, and may diminish the apparent effectiveness of either effort. While the matrix of programs versus diversity challenges is extremely helpful, there are virtually no associated metrics by which to evaluate program effectiveness.

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

- ❖ The Division's definition of diversity is substantially and thoughtfully defined, and is one of the most inclusive definitions that the Review Team has encountered. The obvious inclusion of LGBT issues and concerns is particularly laudable.
- ❖ It remains positive that several of the Student Affairs Units view their mission as "diversity related". There appear to be three approaches to identifying diversity issues within a given unit: 1) a group of units that are defined as "diversity related", for which no clear instrument is given; 2) units comprising the CCE, with a Division Diversity team, and 3) other units, which may have their own diversity committees. Only units within the CCE seem to have a clear and structured framework for forwarding a diversity agenda. Frameworks for the other approaches should be clarified.
- ❖ The Review Team is unable to discern either the structure, or the potential success of diversity initiatives within the Division's service to the university.
- ❖ Providing extensive and researched training opportunities for members of the Judicial Affairs Hearing Board is impressive and welcome.
- ❖ The review team is not familiar with the role and activities of the Commission for Adult Learners; further information would be appreciated.

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

- ❖ The climate for staff within the Division is relatively uncharacterized and unmeasured.
- ❖ The comprehensiveness and integration of a wide variety of programs and activities across the university is strong.
- ❖ Requiring all staff to annually complete a minimum of three hours of diversity training is a best practice.
- ❖ Student Affairs programs and activities that are classified as service to the University are extensive and measured regularly for effectiveness. Pulse Surveys are a best practice, with 111 surveys completed as of April 2003. Data on presentations, Late Night, and other programs are appreciated.

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

- ❖ Positive structures for retention continue to include those listed during the mid-point review, with the significant addition of materials for international students following 9/11. The Review Team encourages the Division to assess the effectiveness of these programs with a Pulse Survey.
- ❖ It is difficult to interpret the success of a wide variety of programs without recruitment or retention data.
- ❖ The 'Dialogues on Race' is a potential best practice, and the Review Team looks forward to hearing of its success after restructuring.

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

- ❖ Recruitment efforts for student staff members are a best practice.
- ❖ Requests made by the mid-point review team to broaden the exit interview beyond the University mandate were not documented.
- ❖ The data do not reflect any significant progress in the demographic makeup of the Division's workforce, and the lack of metrics does not assist the Division in strategizing for the future.
- ❖ The combination of recruitment strategies that have been utilized has been very effective. These are potential best practices, and their success is quantitatively documented.

***Challenge 5: Developing a Curriculum That Supports the Goals of Our New General Education Plan***

- ❖ Although the Division is not directly engaged in offering academic curriculum, numerous co-curricular efforts are listed, documented (under Challenge 2) with the number of presentations and the number of staff and staff hours involved.

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

- ❖ The data indicate that little change has occurred in the demographic profile of the management team over the past five years (a White female replaced a Black male as Vice President in 2003). There is no indication as to if, and how, the Division plans to increase the diversity of the highest administrator positions.
- ❖ There is a large cohort of female and minority professional staff, but the report does not indicate how this group might be targeted for leadership training and the resulting opportunities that could be available to them.

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

- ❖ The final report did not utilize the recommended wording change in the interim feedback report (substituting "...that affects everyone." in place of "...that respects no ethnic or diversity boundaries.")
- ❖ It is a positive that the report documented the extensive participation of the Division staff in diversity training activities.
- ❖ It is a positive that the Division reports receipt of a grant to address sexual assault; and continued support for the evolution of the LGBTQA resource center.
- ❖ As noted in Challenge 2 above, conspicuously absent is any concern or activities related to climate issues impacting the Division's staff.