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< http://www.equity.psu.edu/framework/updates >

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Progress Assessment
Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003
December 14, 2001

Introduction

The division of Enrollment Management and Administration (EMA) includes the Office of Student Aid (OSA), the Office of the University Registrar (OUR), and the Undergraduate Admissions Office (UAO). EMA has extensive contact with prospective, transferring, currently enrolled, and former students and parents as well as a variety of internal and external stakeholders.

EMA is uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in the administrative coordination of the University's student-centered enrollment model. EMA works closely with the offices of the Bursar, Housing, and the Office of Administrative Systems (all located in the Shields Building) to provide seamless, efficient, and comprehensive administrative services to students and parents so that students can focus their attention on their academic pursuits.

In keeping with the EMA plan to incorporate diversity into the daily operations and activities of the unit, this document presents our assessment of EMA's progress toward implementing the *Penn State University Framework to Foster Diversity*. Based on this assessment, the *EMA Strategic Plan: 2002-03 to 2004-05* includes actions, assessment criteria, and strategic performance indicators related to our continuing implementation of the *Penn State University Framework to Foster Diversity* (www.psu.edu/admissions/ema).

Challenge 1. Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

1. How does your unit define or describe diversity? How is this understanding demonstrated in areas of emphasis within your unit?

Taking a holistic view of diversity, EMA recognizes the importance of providing access and service to all prospective and current students who have the potential to benefit from and contribute to the educational experiences afforded by Penn State. EMA recognizes that diversity includes appreciation of and respect for differences in race and ethnicity, in gender and sexual orientation, in age and life experience, in nationality and language, and in physical capabilities. The division also recognizes that diversity applies to students who are pursuing areas of study in which they have been historically underrepresented (e.g., women in science and engineering). This understanding is highlighted in our communications, our outreach efforts, and our administrative infrastructure.

2. How has your unit distributed and discussed information to staff about the University's diversity initiatives?

The division makes use of several venues to distribute, gather, and discuss information on Penn State's goals to create a diverse learning community.

Directors' Advisory Group: There are bi-monthly meetings of EMA divisional directors and directors of the recruitment centers that focus on new initiatives, updates on enrollment targets and goals, appropriate entrance criteria for all Penn State locations, as well as challenges and current issues related to recruitment and retention of students.

Fall and Spring Admissions Conferences: These yearly events bring together various University faculty and staff involved either directly or indirectly with recruitment of new students. The workshop format includes discussions of diversity strategies (i.e., last spring's conference included a half-day symposium discussion on *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions* by William Bowen and Derek Bok; the fall conference included sessions on issues related to climate facilitated by Dr. Terrell Jones and "Nuts and Bolts" training sessions on the diversity program followed by time for discussion).

Southeast Regional Council: The monthly meetings are used to organize, discuss, and implement recruitment and outreach efforts in the greater Philadelphia region. Membership includes representatives from the Philadelphia Community Recruitment Center, Abington College, Commonwealth College at Delaware, and the Director of Recruitment and Admissions-Penn State Campuses.

Western Regional Council: The meetings are used to organize, discuss, and implement recruitment and outreach efforts in the western regions of Pennsylvania. Membership is comprised of representatives from the Commonwealth College at McKeesport, New Kensington, Shenango Valley, and Beaver; Behrend College; and the Pittsburgh Community Recruitment Center.

Admissions Advisory Committee: With representatives from all Penn State locations, the monthly meetings focus on enrollment issues and customer service.

Philadelphia Council: Representative group with monthly meetings focused on issues related to outreach efforts emulating from the Penn State Philadelphia Resource Center. The Philadelphia Community Recruitment Center is one of the units located at the 4601 Market Street facility and, thus, has representation on the council.

Council of Coordinators and Directors of Multi-Cultural Programs (CCDMP): Monthly meetings involving Admissions, Financial Aid, and minority program representatives from each of Penn State's academic colleges. Recruitment, retention, and financial aid policies as they relate to minority students are discussed and successful ideas and programs are shared.

Campus Aid Advisory Committee: This group serves as the collective voice of campus concerns and serves as a forum for two-way communications between OSA at University Park and non-University Park student aid officers. The group meets five times a year.

Student Aid Workshops and Regional Meetings: These regularly scheduled meetings provide a platform for the dissemination of information and a forum for issues discussions. Diversity-focused sessions are offered as the advisory committee and staff identifies topics.

Commission for Adult Learners: The Vice Provost and Dean for Enrollment Management and Administration is a sponsor of the commission and EMA has representation on the commission.

Despite the many forums and opportunities that are provided to gather information, share ideas, and learn more about the division's role in implementing the Penn State Framework for Diversity, and more specifically the EMA diversity initiatives, there are staff who have not been included in these initiatives.

Recommendation: 1) New staff be given information on the Framework for Diversity and the overall EMA strategic plan and goals. 2) Continue to update staff as goals are worked on and met. 3) Consider moving toward a combined Admissions/Student Aid/Registrar (all EMA) fall conference.

3. Does your unit have a diversity committee? What is its role?

There are no specific groups within EMA that deal directly with issues related to diversity from the perspective of EMA staff. EMA as a division, as well as the individual offices, encourage professional development activities dealing with all aspects of work, but have not required specific programs in diversity for all employees. The most recent diversity program that was offered for all EMA employees was during the 1998-99 academic year.

Within UAO and OSA there are work units that have specific responsibilities for the coordination of recruitment, admissions, and retention of underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities. These include the UAO unit for Minority Admissions and Community Affairs (MACA) with three community recruitment centers in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh as well as a regional recruiter in New York City and the OSA Scholarships and Special Programs Team.

Recommendation: More explicit goals for staff development and on-going diversity professional development opportunities.

Challenge 2. Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

1. How does your unit's leadership demonstrate visible support for diversity?

Across all functional areas of the division of Enrollment Management and Administration, division heads and team leaders demonstrate support for diversity in many ways.

Leaders encourage and support staff participation in diversity-focused university events that:

- Celebrate community (annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet)
- Take a stand against hate (Spring Semester 2001 march)
- Provide professional development opportunities (Retention Conference – September 21-22, 2001, sponsored by the University's Act 101 programs and the Penn State Forum speakers series)

Professional development experiences are integrated into unit-sponsored workshops and conferences for University Park and non-University Park staff. In addition, awareness activities and discussions are part of staff training within the division.

Both time and resources are committed to the institution's diversity goals by having designated staff in MACA and Student Aid take leadership roles in meeting these goals while making it a priority for all.

Leaders within the division, in partnership with other Shields Building offices, created a Shields Building Customer Service Team to serve as an advocacy group for the informational and climate needs of students and visitors to the building.

2. How does your unit identify climate issues?

The division conducted an internal climate survey in 1998 and in a revised format redistributed this instrument to all staff in EMA in October 2001.

3. How does your unit respond to climate issues?

As climate issues are identified, a determination of an appropriate course of action is made. Action plans can evolve and be implemented at the individual, team, office, or division-level.

In a self-reported anecdote from the recent climate survey, a respondent offered an example of action at the individual-level when staff members talked to a co-worker about jokes and e-mails that they felt to be offensive, thus modifying this worker's behavior as the individual became aware that the jokes were offensive to others.

4. What unit-wide and individualized approaches have you developed to enhance overall climate and individual's satisfaction with the environment?

The division initiated and participates in a building-wide customer service team that takes a

leadership role in enhancing overall climate and customer satisfaction issues.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate the climate for diversity in your unit at present?

As noted above, the division recently distributed a revised climate survey. Fifty-four percent (98 staff) completed the survey. To ensure confidentiality, all surveys were sent by staff directly to the Office of Educational Equity where the data were analyzed. A summary of the data was returned to EMA. Highlights of the results of the survey follow.

- On average, Enrollment Management and Administration's climate for diversity was rated 3.97 using a 5-point scale where 5 is "high."

- The majority of respondents agree or strongly agree with the following statements:
  - ✓ EMA management demonstrates on-going commitment to diversity.
  - ✓ I understand what EMA's commitment to diversity is.
  - ✓ EMA has made progress in diversifying our workforce.
  - ✓ Sufficient professional development opportunities are provided to help foster understanding of the meaning of diversity.
  - ✓ I am personally supportive of improving the climate within the division and actively participate in such efforts.
  - ✓ There is an adequate means for discussing or addressing issues pertaining to incidents related to diversity.

- Survey respondents were most likely to indicate that they would discuss situations concerning intolerance or insensitivity with their supervisors.

- In open-ended responses, several staff suggested a need for on-going workshops to help prevent negative or unfair situations and improve office climate. Workshops/sessions mentioned included those related to diversity (race, gender, sex, age, appearance, and religion), multiculturalism, and the privileged-white ethnic group.

Challenge 3. Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

The *Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003* directs a specific action to Enrollment Management and Administration: Review the organization and effectiveness of existing efforts to recruit students from underrepresented groups; Improve and expand efforts as needed. The information provided in this section addresses this specific action.

1. Does your unit contribute to recruiting and retaining a diverse student body? If so, how? And, what practices have been most successful?

<u>Admission, Retention, and Graduation Outcomes</u>

A critical function of EMA is the recruitment, retention, and graduation of students. The Office of Student Aid provides special services to meet the financial needs of minority students. In

addition, a liaison is maintained among all EMA units with other University units, programs and locations, such as the Academic Advancement Programs, the Council of College Directors of Multi-Cultural Programs, and the Office of the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education. A strong focus on the retention of minority students is maintained by maximizing and coordinating services and referrals across all of these entities.

The enrollment of minority students has steadily increased over the last several years. For example, African American students admitted into baccalaureate programs at campus locations increased from 179 in the fall of 1994 to a high of 418 in the fall of 2001, an increase of 134 percent. Hispanic American students admitted to University Park increased from 87 students in the fall of 1994 to 224 students in the fall of 2001, an increase of 157 percent. Further details of the admission, retention, and graduation outcomes for African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, as well as for White baccalaureate student populations are available in Tables 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d.

The current trends show an increase in the four-year graduation rates across all populations. However, the five-year graduation and attrition rates for minority students are uneven. Also, the graduation rates for minority students continue to be lower than those for the White student population. EMA continues efforts to improve the retention, graduation, and attrition rates for minority students.

Specific Initiatives

Perhaps the most important investment that Penn State makes to recruit and enroll students from underrepresented groups is the highly personalized contact provided through MACA and particularly through the community recruitment centers (CRCs) located in Harrisburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and most recently a New York regional recruiter. With the assistance of the Office of Student Aid, Campus Colleges, and the Directors of Multi-Cultural Programs within the colleges, extensive outreach efforts are conducted. These include early intervention programs, programs with elementary schools, SAT preparation workshops, admissions and student aid application workshops, campus "open house" activities, and bus trips to visit Penn State campuses. For applicants, the services include follow-up with students, their parents, and guidance counselors to ensure that applications are complete, individual application review with referral options for applicants not automatically offered admission, early communication about diversity-related student aid programs, and extensive counseling throughout the application and decision-making process.

Successful Practices:

1. Coordinating and hosting bus trips for students to visit various campuses
2. Conducting admissions and student aid application workshops in the high schools, at CRCs, community youth education agencies, and churches
3. Providing comprehensive personal admissions counseling to students and their families
4. Personal review and correction of all applications received at the CRCs
5. Retrieval of all information needed to complete the application accurately, provide continuous follow-up, follow through, and referral options to applicants, parents, and

guidance counselors

6. Provide application fee waivers to applicants experiencing financial hardships
7. Conduct Educational Opportunity Program interviews at local recruitment centers
8. Identify area students with no financial aid applications (FAFSA) on file and assist in correcting and/or submitting an accurate financial aid form
9. Achievers' weekend
10. Hispanic Heritage Month bus trips
11. Academic Bowl at Harrisburg
12. SAT preparation at Pittsburgh
13. Graduate assistantship dedicated to campus visit coordination
14. NYC prospect receptions
15. Student aid presentations to targeted high schools

Student Financial Aid Programs

The Office of Student Aid administers three university-wide, institution-specific student aid programs that are committed to creating a diverse student body. The programs are:

Penn State Opportunity Grant (UDG): In support of the goal to create a diverse student body and provide opportunities for students who might not be able to afford a Penn State education, the University created the Penn State Opportunity Grant. This grant is awarded to students who have the potential to succeed at Penn State but whose economic or educational background poses barriers to their enrollment. The grant does not have to be repaid and is used to supplement other federal and state grants that students receive through their application for student financial aid. All first-year students are automatically considered for the grant.

- Grant amount: $1,500 - $2,250 (award values may be adjusted annually based on the number of eligible recipients)
- Semesters available: available for eight semesters if minimum 2.3 GPA is maintained

Bunton-Waller Scholarship and Fellows Program: Penn State is committed to creating a diverse student body to enhance the educational experience for all students. To this end, the University reaches out to many undergraduate students who could not enroll without support beyond federal and state student financial aid programs and who show high academic performance. These students contribute to Penn State's strength by providing richness in academic quality, culture, and diversity.

Named after Penn State's first female and male African American graduates, Mildred S. Bunton and Calvin H. Waller, the Bunton-Waller Scholarship and Fellows Program seeks to create this diverse environment. In naming this prestigious scholarship for these two individuals, Penn State recognizes the significance of their roles and honors the inspiring examples they have set for future generations.

- Bunton-Waller Scholarship:
    - ✓ Scholarship amount: minimum $2,500 (awards may change annually based on the number of eligible students)

✓ <u>Semesters available</u>: available for eight semesters if minimum 2.75 GPA is maintained

- <u>Bunton-Waller Fellows Program</u>:
  - ✓ <u>Scholarship amount</u>: The fellows award, in combination with other scholarships and grants, covers tuition, fees, room and board for Pennsylvania residents, or full non-Pennsylvania tuition for non-Pennsylvania residents
  - ✓ <u>Semesters available</u>: available for eight semesters if minimum 3.0 GPA is maintained

Table 2a and Table 2b illustrate the history of program spending since 1994-95 and the impact of the scholarship and grant awards in assisting student financial needs. The number of students receiving these grants and scholarships increased from 2737 to 3381 between 1994-95 and 2000-01. Over the same time frame, the percentage of underrepresented undergraduate students as compared to total undergraduate enrollment at Penn State has increased from 8.9 percent in 1994-95 to 11.4 percent in 2000-01. However, over the same period there has been a decline in the percentage of tuition that is covered by the award value of the grants and scholarships.

Adult Learners

Following a trend noted in the EMA Strategic Planning Update for 1998-99, the enrollment of undergraduate adult learners continues to decline. Between fall 1994 and fall 2001 there has been an overall 19 percent decline in the enrollment of adult learners. This compares to a 13 percent increase in total enrollments (see Table 3a).

While the number of adult learners overall has declined, the number of adult learners applying for and receiving student financial aid at campus colleges has increased (see Table 3b). Veteran students are a subset of the adult learner aid applicants. Veteran students have decreased in number and the amount of student financial aid received (see Table 3c).

International Students

The number of undergraduate applications from international students has increased from 681 applications in 1993 to 1782 applications in 2001, an increase of 162 percent. During 2001, the number of students accepting their offers of admission increased 436 percent since 1993 to a high of 316 students (see Table 4).

Other

Currently EMA has no way to track the admission and retention of two other groups of underrepresented students that are identified in the *Framework for Diversity*, students with disabilities and lesbian, gay, and bisexual students.

Challenge 4. Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

1. How has your unit actively engaged in locating and recruiting staff from underrepresented groups?

Other than staff in the functional roles created to help recruit underrepresented students at Penn State (i.e., MACA, CRCs), there is no consistent or systematic process for locating and recruiting staff from underrepresented groups. A large number of the minority staff within EMA is located within MACA and the community recruitment centers.

2. What recruitment strategies have been most successful?

When the word "minority" appears in the position title and description, it tends to attract diverse ethnic populations. This is a passive self-selection process.

3. What retention strategies have you implemented in your unit to retain members from underrepresented groups?

In a broader sense, EMA has not implemented any specific or unique retention strategy for any staff, including those from underrepresented groups, nor is there a formal system for rewards and promotions within the division beyond the annual salary increases awarded based on meritorious performance.

The questions posed in Challenge 4 present interesting challenges for EMA. For example, a majority of the staff responding to the recent climate survey strongly agrees with the statement: *EMA has made progress in diversifying our workforce.*

Supporting this response by EMA staff, Penn State's affirmative action goals for staffing patterns, provided to EMA in October 2001 (Table 5a), indicate that in most categories the division meets or exceeds the goals set for the percent of minority and women staff. In two categories, the goal has not yet been met:

- Women in Executive/Administrative/Managerial positions: Goal 37.2 percent and Actual 33.3 percent
- Minorities in Secretarial/Clerical positions: Goal 6.8 percent and Actual 3.7 percent

A review of staffing data 1994-2000 provided by the Office of Human Resources, Table 5b, shows that the only ethnic cohort within the division experiencing growth over this time is the White cohort. Within the White cohort there has been an increase in white males and a decrease in white females.

4. What retention strategies have been most successful?

There are no specific retention strategies in place.

Recommendation: Despite the information from the climate survey questions as well as the

Offices of Human Resources and Affirmative Action, some of the open-ended questions as well as informal conversations indicate that demographic information needs to be more widely communicated within EMA. The group recommends that the issues presented in Challenge 4 and the data provided in response, serve as a starting point for more meaningful dialogue within EMA on the issue of recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce and the creation of more specific plans for recruitment and retention of a diverse staff.

Challenge 5. Developing a Curriculum that Supports the Goals of our New General Education Plan

1. Does your unit contribute to a curriculum that supports the diversity goals of the University? If so, how? What practices have been most successful?

EMA is an administrative unit. Not Applicable

Challenge 6. Diversifying University Leadership and Management

1. How has your unit assisted staff from underrepresented groups in developing leadership and management skills?

While there presently is no formal division-wide plan for developing leadership and management skills in underrepresented staff, EMA is committed to developing University leadership and management skills in staff through an array of formal and informal opportunities.

Administrative Fellows Program: Two staff members from EMA have been selected as Administrative Fellows in the past two years. The success of these two applicants will hopefully encourage others from underrepresented groups within the division to see the Administrative Fellows Program as a viable opportunity to expand one's management and leadership skills.

Excellence in Leadership and Management: EMA has taken advantage of the opportunities offered by Penn State to provide opportunities for staff at all levels to develop leadership and management skills. EMA employees have participated in the following leadership and development opportunities: The Penn State Leader – 44 staff, Mastering Supervision – 3 staff, Penn State Management – 4 Staff. Additional employees are continually given the opportunity to participate in these professional development courses, including the new Penn State Office Professional Certificate.

Staff regularly participate in and lead working groups such as Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process teams and various strategic planning groups convened to support the strategic planning process. Also, opportunities exist for staff to attend professional development courses and seminars as well as professional conferences and workshops. Attendance at these types of functions allows staff to broaden their experience beyond their day-to-day interactions with students and staff. Volunteering for committee work with professional organizations (i.e., PASFAA, PACAC), leadership roles and work with community service providers (United Way),

as well as day-to-day interactions with external agencies and vendors are other opportunities for staff to develop leadership and management skills.

Also, many employees within EMA take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the staff tuition discount program to pursue or complete degrees at the undergraduate as well as graduate level.

However, with the flatter organizational structure that has evolved over the past decade there appears to be a widespread feeling that there is little opportunity for advancement and therefore little opportunity for developing leadership and management skills. Leadership and management opportunities are still strongly associated with upward mobility.

Recommendation: Better communication and more specific goals related to opportunities for on-going professional development. While many staff are able to take advantage of the multiple opportunities listed above, not all staff are aware of their options.

Challenge 7. Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

1. What organizational realignments, systems of accountability, resource mobilization and allocation strategies, long-term planning strategies, etc., has your unit implemented to ensure the realization of the University's diversity goals?

MACA, the original three community recruitment centers, and the Scholarships and Special Programs Team have been in existence for more than 15 years with a primary focus on the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups. With the creation of the division of Enrollment Management and Administration, there was a renewed focus on the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups with those efforts reported in Challenges 1-6.

As a result of the EMA strategic planning process and the on-going assessment of staffing priorities, resources have been reallocated and positions realigned to help meet our goals for creating a more diverse learning community. For example, funding has been provided for a new admissions recruiter to work in the New York area with the possibility of additional recruiters in other states in future years. Also, two additional positions within OSA were reallocated, providing the Scholarships and Special Programs Team the staffing needed to further develop the Bunton-Waller Scholarship and Fellows Programs as well as the Penn State Opportunity Grant Program and to better coordinate retention efforts with the staff in the Academic Advancement Programs.

Due to the successful recruitment and retention of the increasing numbers of underrepresented undergraduate students, OSA has reallocated general student aid funds to the special programs for underrepresented populations. For 2001-02 central administration allocated additional funds for these programs:

- A new African/African American Scholarship Program - $25,000

- Bunton-Waller Fellows Program - $350,000 to address prior year tuition increases

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