

**Feedback on Progress Implementing the
Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003
College of Agricultural Sciences
Final Report**

The College of Agricultural Sciences has made substantial progress in institutionalizing many aspects of diversity in the College and in its state-wide presence through Cooperative Extension. In the face of major budget cuts and downsizing, the College is commended for its efforts in emphasizing the importance of diversity. The inclusion of data for assessing the outcomes/successes of the various programs designed to recruit and/or retain faculty, staff, and students would be helpful.

RESPONSE: These performance indicators will be in the 04-09 plan.

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The College responded to the previous feedback by describing how undergraduate campus, transfer and change-of-assignment students receive diversity content in AG 150S, 160H and 297. The response for graduate students was less clear.
- ❖ A new web site, *Commitment to Diversity and Civil Rights*, was initiated and is found on the CAS home page. The site has considerable information on “best practices” and is well linked, especially with Extension exemplars.
- ❖ No response was provided to the request for greater clarity on the roles, responsibilities, and relationships among the various diversity groups (Diversity Advisory Committee, Diversity Task Force, and Diversity Coordinating Council) in CAS.

RESPONSE: We have given this site prominence on our College’s home page.

RESPONSE: There is just one College wide diversity group: the Diversity Coordinating Council. The diversity task force and the diversity advisory committee preceded the establishment of the Diversity Coordinating Council.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The College describes departmental initiatives and indicates that CAS clubs “are actively engaged in program activities in the community to benefit diverse cultural cohorts.” Information about these programs and activities would be helpful.

RESPONSE: Here are some examples of club participation in community activities: Students for Responsible Use of Animals (SRUA) are open to students of all majors and have a diverse membership. SRUA club members take animals ("pet therapy") to the youth center at Bellefonte and nursing homes in State College. They also put on educational displays about agriculture at Farm Show and Ag Progress Days. In addition, they participate in Farm City Day in Harrisburg each fall where school kids from the area come to learn about the environment and agriculture, etc. SRUA club members do volunteer work for Horse Therapy Riding group, Centre for Wildlife Care, T and D Cats (tigers, cougars, etc.), CROP walks, PAWS, etc.

The Block & Bridle Club (B&B) sponsors a blood drive on campus with the Pa Beef Council, PA Cattlemen's Association and the south central cattlemen's association. The B&B Club volunteers at the Central PA Mennonite Beef Canning in Belleville; the beef is donated to world hunger and 10% stays in PA at local Food and Fuel Banks. In addition, B&B participates in the Heifer International Program.

Besides volunteer service to the State College Food Bank, and the annual donation of fresh turkeys to the Food Bank and various local church groups in Centre County, the Poultry Science Club prepared 40 plus Easter baskets for needy families in State College area in 2004. The recipient families were identified by local churches and the food bank. The Poultry Science Club bought supplies, prepared the baskets, and

delivered them to the Food Bank and churches, which presented them to the families (children). The Club also raised funds - and then matched them with a portion of the proceeds from their smoked turkey sale in spring 2004 - for the Heifer International Project (HIP). HIP funds are used to purchase poultry and feed for needy families in a developing country.

- ❖ The sexual harassment training programs are very important and the College is commended on their implementation.
- ❖ The response to question #3 states that the College is proactive through “training and other interventions” [in response to climate issues]. Examples of training and/or interventions would be helpful.
RESPONSE: Sexual harassment training for departmental faculty and staff and graduate students is one example; unit level diversity training was conducted in several departments. Other interventions consisted of several one on one problem resolutions or investigations into allegations of harassment or workplace violence conducted by our HR staff or other appropriate University offices.
- ❖ The review team notes that there are no specific references to key diversity constituents other than women and racial/ethnic minorities, such as LGBT persons, persons with disabilities, etc.
RESPONSE: With respect to LGBT issues, the College does not have a grasp on this population within its ranks. Previous to this reporting period, the College had responded to LGBT concerns in cooperative extension and organized several workshops with the help of Susan Rankin.
The College insures access to all of its educational programs for persons with disabilities; there have been many instances of providing accommodations for cooperative extension clients who are hearing, visually or mobility impaired. We expect our educators to seek out the resources to provide reasonable accommodations. Our EEO Coordinator assists them as needed.
- ❖ The review team feels that the examples provided regarding the College’s departmental leadership “providing visible support for diversity” do not address the question.
- ❖ The review team commends the College’s efforts in respect to minority youth programs (e.g. Conrad Weiser Program; 4-H program). It is unclear what the connection is between the programs and projected enrollments in the College. The team suggests that the College consider a recommendation to track these students.
RESPONSE: We do track these students. Both our EEO Coordinator and the Asst. to the Dean for Minority Affairs track the high school students who participate in our programs.
- ❖ The assessment of faculty-staff relationships in the College is a best practice. Findings from this survey were included in the appendices. It would be helpful to learn about “next steps” that the College plans to take with the findings from the survey
Response: In response to the results of the CAS Faculty/Staff Divide Survey, the college will provide leadership to our departments by developing and distributing guidelines designed to overcome the "divide ; hopefully, this will lead to a more positive working climate. The guidelines may be presented in a brochure or other type of publication and could include recommendations for training, departmental discussions on the issue, orientations etc. Additionally, the college will review the College's results from the University 2004 Faculty/Staff Survey for related climate issues identified by the survey which may provide further insight into improving faculty and staff relationships.

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ The College presents an impressive six-page roster of programs and activities related to recruitment and retention. As noted in the 2001 feedback, the majority of the examples are related to recruitment, although it was noted that College administrators work with Academic Assistance Programs on retention issues. The undergraduate student tracking system will facilitate retention, as will the new Enrollment Incentive Award program.
- ❖ The Sloan Scholars Program offers the promise of recruiting new minority doctoral students to CAS.
- ❖ The 2001 feedback on the College's diversity plan encouraged the inclusion of aggregated recruitment and retention data to assist in the tracking of undergraduate and graduate students. With the exception of individual examples provided by departments, no College-wide data was evident addressing the outcomes of recruitment and retention activities.
RESPONSE: The Office of Undergraduate Education has this data aggregated from 2002 forward; the data will be used along with our performance indicator data.
- ❖ The review team notes the increases in both female and minority graduate students from 2001 to 2003.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ The College has experienced considerable success over the past two years in hiring 41 minority faculty and staff. Data on these hires appear in two appendices.
- ❖ The College is commended for the implementation of the ACTS initiative. This innovative program is already yielding results and promises to serve as an important College reward and retention tool.
RESPONSE: We feel good about the program; to get it on equal footing with our faculty and extension agent promotion programs central funding would be welcome.
- ❖ Notably, the College increased senior women faculty from 9 to 12 full professors and from 16 to 21 associate professors since the 2001 review.
- ❖ Both the ACTS program and the faculty-staff climate survey are best practices, yet none were identified in this section.
RESPONSE: We agree these could be retention strategies as well; it is in the final stage of the pilot, so we will need to discuss the role it can play in recruitment and retention.

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

- ❖ Numerous international programs have been developed in CAS during the past two years. It is not clear if any of these initiatives have spawned new courses that have been approved to fulfill the Intercultural/International Requirement (GI). For example, do any courses in the new 18-credit International Agriculture (INTAG) minor carry the GI designation?
RESPONSE: The old Intercultural/International Competence designation (GI) has just been replaced with two separate designations: Intercultural (US) and International (IL). The following four courses meet either one or both of those requirements:
AG EC 450 (IL) International Development, Renewable Resources, and the Environment
INTAG 100 (GS) (IL) Introduction to International Agriculture (3)

*CEDEV/R SOC/
WMNST 420 (IL) Women in Developing Countries (3)*

YFE 438 (US) Living in an Increasingly Diverse Society (3)

The College will be offering a mini-grant program this year to spur faculty to create international courses possibly with the IL designation

- ❖ Faculty participation in the “Infusing Diversity...” project is impressive. It would have been helpful to see the departments, ranks, and race/ethnicity of the participating faculty.
RESPONSE: We have this: N=30 15 white males, 13 white females, 3 black females, 1 Asian female.
- ❖ The College has focused on international concerns and issues within the curriculum. It is recommended that the College consider expanding this focus to include curricular initiatives that address domestic diversity.
RESPONSE: Agree/ much discussed during the infusion project. It is difficult to determine the progress of the successes of the infusion of multicultural issues into the curriculum without outcome measures.
RESPONSE: We are planning to summarize.

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ The report states that the College “has not met the challenge to recruit minority staff,” (pg. 25) yet, Attachment V shows that in calendar years 2002 and 2003 the College hired 32 new minority staff members. The College is commended for the significant increase in the numbers of women in leadership positions.
RESPONSE: We feel good about this, but as a percentage of our large workforce (1300 standing and fixed term) we would consider success to be a higher percentage.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support our Diversity Goals

- ❖ Some College staff have been deployed into new areas supporting diversity initiatives.
- ❖ The USDA project on *Change Agent States for Diversity* is exciting and innovative and will position Penn State as a national leader in Cooperative Extension diversity issues. The Tools for Change and Promising Practices are exemplars that should be shared University-wide.
RESPONSE: This is on our website, open to the University at <http://diversity.cas.psu.edu/>
- ❖ The College’s commitment of financial, human, and in-kind resources to diversity programming and related efforts is significant.
RESPONSE: Yes, we are committed.