

PENN STATE ERIE, THE BEHREND COLLEGE

FIFTH YEAR UPDATE
to
**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE FRAMEWORK
TO FOSTER DIVERSITY AT PENN STATE: 1998-2003**

February 13, 2004

INTRODUCTION

This is the final update to Penn State Behrend's initial plan to implement the goals identified in A Framework to Foster Diversity At Penn State: 1998-2003. The plan was initially developed by the College's Diversity and Educational Equity Committee (DEEC) in collaboration with College leaders during the 1997-98 academic year and updated during the 1998 and 2001 academic years in consultation with the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity.

CHALLENGE 1

DEVELOPING A SHARED AND INCLUSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSITY

The College defines diversity as a community of students, faculty, and staff that reflects the diversity of the region in which we are located and serve. The College will provide programs and services in and outside the classroom that examine and promote an appreciation and celebration for differences of race, ethnicity, global perspective, gender, age, physical ability, and sexual orientation, among others. The college environment will be free of discriminatory barriers, both physical and attitudinal.

We believe that diversity initiatives cannot be isolated from the mission or core technology of an institution of higher education. Consequently, the College uses an integrated approach to developing and sharing our understanding of diversity issues. Information regarding the College's diversity initiatives is communicated in a variety of ways including bi-annual Staff Information Sessions in which staff from all units of the College are invited to attend a presentation by the CEO and Dean who provides an update on a variety of challenges facing the College. This is an interactive session in which attendees are encouraged to ask questions of the CEO and Dean. A similar session is held for faculty during the College's faculty development in-service held in August each year.

Regular updates on diversity issues are provided to Faculty Organization through the Dean's and Senior Associate Dean's reports, through minutes of the Dean's Committee on Diversity, and to staff through the College's newsletter.

Responding to feedback from the previous diversity strategic plan update, the College formed the Dean's Committee on Diversity (DCD) during the 1999-2000 academic year which has continued to meet regularly. Chaired by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Academic Administration, the DCD continues to focus on a plethora of issues including strategies for recruiting minority and women faculty, developing principles of good practice for faculty and staff interviews, developing positive learning environments for underrepresented students, educating the College community on diversity issues, and supporting the provision of child care, among others. Membership of this committee includes Faculty Council Representatives from the Undergraduate Studies and Faculty Affairs committees, the director of Student Affairs,

director of Educational Equity Programs, Minority Admissions Counselor, Special Assistant to the Dean, an academic advisor from the Division of Undergraduate Studies and the chair of the Women's Commission Liaison Committee (WCLC).

The DCD works in collaboration with DEEC and the WCLC. DEEC is chaired by the Director of Student Affairs and has a student-centered mission dealing with recruitment and retention issues as well as the campus climate for students from underrepresented groups, students with disabilities, and returning adult students. It functions as a steering and policy-review committee, although it also helps directly with student recruitment (phonathons, sleeping-bag weekends, etc.).

The WCLC has sponsored networking opportunities for women faculty and staff and was involved in the decision to relocate the childcare center to its new location. Both DEEC and the WCLC have representatives on the DCD to insure an integrated approach.

Absent a University-wide climate assessment regarding diversity, it is difficult to identify best practices with associated measurable outcomes that indicate the members of the College community have a shared understanding of diversity. Our best practice lies in our success of weaving diversity related processes, programs, and procedures into the fabric of the College. From new faculty orientation to new student orientation, maintaining a respectful learning environment is a key expectation shared with students, faculty and staff. Activities including the College's Speaker Series, Multi-Cultural Resource Center, faculty recruitment activities (the results of which will be discussed under Challenge 4 Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce), Student Activity Fee, etc. are part of the College culture, not an afterthought.

As the College plans for the future, the CEO and Dean has identified 8 hallmarks of Behrend that make us a special place. The hallmarks are strengths to be built upon and serve as guiding principles to shape the College's next steps. These hallmarks include:

- Diversity
- Engagement
- High Quality
- Inspirational Environment
- Mission Focus
- Student-Centeredness
- Teamwork
- Technologically Advanced

GOAL 2 CREATING A WELCOMING CAMPUS CLIMATE

Visible support for diversity must come from the highest levels and begins with the College's senior leadership. The CEO and Dean, Associate Dean, School Directors, and members of the Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC) provide visible support for diversity through the attendance of and/or participation in college-wide including the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Campus-wide Celebration, Speaker Series events, the Harambee Dinner (a College tradition signifying racial unity), and a myriad of student-sponsored events.

Climate issues identified by students are brought to the attention of the Director of Educational Equity Programs. This staff member is responsible to the Director of Student Affairs for the development and administration of College programs and services directed toward the retention of underrepresented student groups and special needs populations. The director serves as general counselor/advisor for students of color; advises the Multi-Cultural Council; and coordinates programming with the Office of Student Activities. The director also assists with assessing the effectiveness of retention efforts through data collection and evaluation, assists in the development and operation of the Multi-Cultural Resource Center, and supervises a new part-time coordinator of disability services.

The most frequent climate issues raised by students generally involve the defacement of posters advertising diversity-related organizations, activities, and events on campus. The director notifies the Director of Student Affairs and Director of Student Activities in the event of an incident. The defaced posters are collected (and replaced, where possible) and the areas in which the posters were defaced are monitored by building staff.

Classroom climate issues are generally brought to the attention of the School Directors and the Director of Student Affairs. There have been two incidents during this update period in which female faculty members have received inappropriate email messages from male students. In both cases the Director of Student Affairs, who also serves as a sexual harassment contact person, developed with the faculty member an intervention strategy with the student. In each case the matter was resolved quickly.

Dean Burke has recently charged the Dean's Committee on Diversity with redistributing guidelines to faculty regarding disruptive behavior. The committee will revise previously distributed information this spring which will be shared with faculty.

The topography of the campus sends a foreboding message to students with physical limitations. The College has integrated ADA-accessible pathways into various projects including the completion of a north/south accessible route for students with the completion of Senat Hall in August, 2004. Wheelchair users will be able to traverse the campus unassisted through new elevators in the Reed Union Building, Senat Hall, and stair tower. This has been a 6-year plan that will result in increased independence for wheelchair users who will no longer have to rely on a wheelchair-equipped van for campus access.

In addition, sidewalk projects in association with the Research and Economic Development Center, the new home of the College's Black School of Business and School of Engineering and Engineering Technology, will add two additional east/west accessible routes.

During the spring 2003 semester focus groups of women students were conducted by DEEC to better assess the campus climate (see Appendix A). Overall, the students rated the climate for women as quite positive. Given an undergraduate enrollment that is 64% male, we frankly expected more issues to surface. Students were most emphatic about the College's need to add liberal arts majors, specifically education, HDFS, and journalism and perhaps nursing. Students were also interested in more theatre events on campus.

DEEC has recommended that a regular schedule of focus groups for students from underrepresented populations should be conducted (a minimum of one each semester) in order to identify climate issues.

GOAL 3

RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY

The percentage of students of color has remained relatively stable from Fall 1997 through Fall 2002. While the College's student headcount of baccalaureate degree students has increased from 2,885 to 3,446, the student of color population has remained at 8%. Over the five year planning period the College has enrolled slightly fewer Asian American (6) and Native American (4) students while increasing the number of African American (20) Hispanic/Latino (9) students.

The College enrolled significantly greater numbers of international students (increasing from 2 to 44 students) during the planning period and has greatly increased its support services. A new International Student Orientation program has been instituted at the College and includes cultural awareness workshops, academic advising, and immigration procedures, among others. The College has also increased its electronic communication with international students prior to enrollment in order to identify individual transition issues.

The greater numbers of international students have had a positive effect on the campus environment. New organizations such as the International Student Organization and the Association of African Students have sponsored a variety of programs regarding their home countries as well as the increased student-to-student interaction among international and domestic students.

The number of new African American baccalaureate students has fallen during the planning period. This decline is due largely to a lower number of out-of-state students. From FA00 to FA01 the number of out-of-state African American students has fallen by half from 26 to 13. Given the significant increases in tuition costs and the state of the economy, it is unlikely that these figures will improve in the near future. Therefore, the College has sought increased contact with the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh recruitment centers for participation in recruitment activities.

A successful search was concluded to fill the admissions counselor position dedicated to recruiting and enrolling students of color. This person plays a critical role in the recruitment of students from Erie and throughout the Commonwealth.

The minority admissions counselor has made several trips to the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia recruitment centers to improve our relationship with the staff and to provide the most recent information about the College. Strengthening this relationship was a key recommendation of a continuous quality improvement team formed to improve the College's efforts in attracting students of color. We are now offering free transportation to students of color who cannot afford to attend our Sleeping Bag Weekend program, a weekend recruiting visit for groups of students who stay with current students in the residence halls.

On-going recruiting initiatives include the Minority Advanced Placement Program/Women in Science and Engineering Program (MAPP/WISE) and the Penn State Educational Partnership Program. Now in its ninth year, MAPP/WISE offers female and students of color who have completed the 11th grade an opportunity to enroll in a credit-bearing course during the eight-week summer session. Programming includes library, computer, and study skills sessions, field trips to various industries related to science and engineering, and speakers representing a diverse work force.

MAPP/WISE continues to be a best practice for the recruitment of students in underrepresented groups. From SU98 through SU02, 144 students participated in the program. Nearly one-quarter of the participants were students of color. Also, 59% of participants applied to the University with a yield rate of 46%.

Student Affairs has overseen a myriad of programs and services designed to create a more inclusive campus environment for students and thus impact retention positively. Great strides have been made in the recruitment of students of color into leadership positions in student organizations in addition to the Multi-Cultural Council. Students of color are strongly represented in the Student Government Association through Senate, Executive Board, and committee chair positions, the Lion Entertainment Board (the college's student programming board), and a variety of academic and service organizations.

Evidence of progress is best demonstrated by the increase in spending of Student Activity Fee funds in the category of Diverse Populations and Issues funding category. Funds allocated to support diversity-related programming have increased by nearly 60% to over \$31,000 for the current academic year. Programs funded include an Black Expressions, the Rhythms of Life (a Multicultural performing arts series) a holocaust remembrance program, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Campus-wide Celebration, an Allies luncheon, among many others.

The Student Government Association budget allocation committee has also demonstrated strong support for the Multi-Cultural Council and its member organizations (including the Association of Black Collegians, Asian Student Organization, International Student Organization, National Society of Black Engineers, Organization of African Students, Organization of Latin American Students, the Returning Adult Student Organization, Trigon, and Women Today). On a campus with over eighty student clubs and organizations, nearly 35% of SGA funds support the student clubs overseen by the Multi-Cultural Council. MCC clubs are supported financially and are consistently some of the best clubs on campus.

SGA, in partnership with MCC, developed a budget pilot project in SP03 to provide greater autonomy to MCC through the budget allocation process. A decentralized budget process was formed which provides MCC with funds to allocate to its member organizations. The pilot, repeated during the FA03 process, has been highly successful and has resulted in the expansion of the model to other councils within SGA.

A new recruitment/retention initiative began in the SP02 semester with the development of a student of color outreach program. Current students of color have been recruited to contact students of color in OFFER or PDACC status to encourage students to attend Penn State Behrend. Returning and new students were paired as “buddies” for the Fall 2002 semester to assist in new students’ academic and social transition to the college. Unfortunately, a limited number of students participated in the program during its first two semesters. However, MCC has embraced the program as an opportunity to positively impact minority enrollment. A tracking process has been established to determine yield impact among program participants and will be reported on in the next review period.

Penn State Behrend has increased its outreach to adult students through the creation of a Center for Adult Services and Evening Programs staffed by a full-time professional who works closely with staff from admissions, financial aid, and Veterans affairs. In Spring 2001 semester, responsibility for adult learners moved to Division of Undergraduate Studies which serves as the College’s advising center. Created was the Center for Adult Services and Evening Programs to serve Behrend’s non-traditional population.

Services are both academic and support in nature. Academic services include advising students while in pre-major status as well as maintaining a liaison relationship with each of the Schools. This is typically the initial contact point for all new and re-enrolled adult learners. Students are engaged in discussion of majors, requirements, degree audit (if appropriate), preparation as well as information on College services. Adult learners are given priority registration, if requested and evening office hours are available. Support services include maintenance of an adult learner listserv for distribution of information pertinent to adult learners. An Academic Enhancement series was developed. Seminar topics include math anxiety, stress management, career development and services, computer skills, personal finances and major exploration. Two student organizations are available: Returning Adult Student Organization (RASO) and Alpha Sigma Lambda honor society.

A 2002 survey of adult learners (please see Appendix B) has continued to shape the scope of the center’s activities. Survey results indicate that there was a general satisfaction with the programs and services offered by the College. Adults utilize campus resources such as the Learning Resource Center, computer labs, recreation facilities, etc. Areas of dislike/concern include faculty insensitivity to family emergencies, the need to complete a first year seminar, and the availability of evening courses

Three associate degree programs and one baccalaureate degree are now offered for evening completion in response to student needs. The Associate Degree in General Business, 2GBBC, is a 60-credit program that allows for a general overview of several aspects of business. In addition, it provides a stepping stone to all baccalaureate degree programs in business at Behrend College.

The Associate Degree in Letters, Arts, and Sciences, 2LABC, is a 60-credit program that allows for a concentration of coursework in the liberal arts/humanities areas. This degree

can be used to pursue any of the baccalaureate degrees in Humanities and Social Sciences.

The Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology, 2 MET, is a 67-69 credit program that is designed to prepare graduates for careers as engineering technicians in industry or for technical sales. The primary focus of this program is the development of fundamental workforce skills.

Finally, the Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering Technology, METBD, is a 131-credit program that emphasizes modern industrial practices. The program emphasizes studies in materials, load bearing capability of parts and manufacturing processes and advanced design technology.

Like the University's population of adult learners, Behrend's population has also experienced a decline. We continually address the needs of adult learners and explore options to attract more to campus. New initiatives are underway and include certificate programs in business and engineering and engineering technology to be re-introduced with a new marketing and promotion strategy.

GOAL 4 RECRUIT AND RETAIN A DIVERSE WORK FORCE

The College has demonstrated modest success in the recruitment of female faculty into Assistant Professor ranks. During the planning period the percentage of female faculty has increased by 10% and reflects positively on our recruiting efforts. Likewise, promotion and tenure of female faculty has also increased during the planning period. There has been an 8% increase in the number of female faculty promoted to Associate Professor and a 12% increase in those promoted to Professor.

The minority representation in our faculty and staff has remained relatively flat during the planning period. New hires have been offset by retirements and attrition of minority faculty. The College successfully recruited 4 new faculty members from underrepresented groups for the FA03 semester. Three Asian American faculty (School of Business) and one African American faculty member (School of Engineering and Engineering Technology) were hired through increased networking efforts among current faculty.

As well, half of the chemistry faculty is now female with the addition of a newly-hired faculty member to fill a vacancy created through retirement. The School of Science has also made progress with recruiting women in the biology major (a search due to another retirement is underway) with three of seven faculty lines filled with women scientists.

The College has notified the Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity that it is interested in participating in the development of a liaison program for people of color, i.e. staff and faculty at non-University Park locations, similar to the liaison program coordinated by the Commission for Women. The DCD will serve as the coordinating body for this initiative.

All faculty who chair or are members of search committees have now been trained both at improving the overall recruitment process and at identifying and attracting faculty of color. We have also identified principles of good practice for recruiting. In addition we had all of the College's administrators trained in affirmative action policies and procedures. Moreover, we subscribe to directories of minority Ph.D.s and actively solicit candidates through these listings as well as through direct mail appeals to graduate departments. One new approach we plan to try is to ask UP departments to share resumes or names of minority candidates that they did not hire.

Our efforts to locate and recruit staff members include our advertising of position openings in publications where we will reach candidates from diverse backgrounds. Our most successful efforts have come from personal contact through recruitment by peers and through professional organizations. We maintain active membership and involvement in professional organizations in order to identify and recruit qualified quality candidates personally for our positions. Our efforts to locate and recruit staff members actively include our advertising of position openings in community publications as well as contacting such organizations as the Hispanic-American council, Greater Erie Action

Committee, State Vocational Rehabilitation and the State Job Center that will help us reach candidates from diverse backgrounds.

We have continued our involvement in Erie Insight, an organization that helps professionals new to the area form contacts within the community. Because the Erie area has a relatively small population of minority professionals, the lack of community contact has made it difficult to retain professionals of traditionally underrepresented groups. We also have attempted to strengthen the sense of community within the College by instituting more dynamic professional training and development programs aimed at bringing individuals of various disciplines together by offering a diverse range of programming. In addition to this we have further begun strengthening traditional College-wide social events and adding new activities celebrating our sense of community and our diverse backgrounds. (International Fair, Martin Luther King Celebrations, Welcome Back Party, Harambee Dinner, Dinner with Six Strangers, Friday Fiesta, Kwanzaa Dinner, and other events).

The CEO and Dean has recently approached the presidents of the other local colleges concerning active cooperation in spousal/partner hiring with an emphasis on faculty from underrepresented.

GOAL 5

DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM THAT SUPPORTS THE GOALS OF OUR NEW GENERAL EDUCATION PLAN

We feel strongly that the strength of a college's curriculum comes in part from the institution's commitment to programs, majors, and courses that reflect the diversity of the world in which we live. Carrying our integrated approach to diversity to curricular offerings, we can cite a number of programs and courses that contribute to the University's diversity goals.

Academic Degree Programs

- International Business Major
- International Studies Minor
- Women's Studies Minor
- Business, Liberal Arts, and Sciences Major: Includes modules in Foreign Language, International Cultural Studies, Study Abroad, and International Policy

Behrend GI Courses

- PSYCH 120 - Cross-Cultural Psychology
- PSYCH 472 - Psychology of Gender
- HSTRY 109 - Gender and History
- INTST 100 - Introduction to International Studies
- INTST 400W - Seminar on International Studies
- ELISH 485 - The World Novel in English
- ELISH 487 - Women Poets
- POLSC 123 - Ethnic and Racial Politics
- POLSC 132 - Politics of International Intolerance
- COMMU 402 - Intercultural Communication
- MANGT 340 - Human Resources Management
- MANGT 442 Managing a Diverse Workforce
- MANGT 480 - International Management
- MRKTG 470 - Global Marketing

In addition to these courses, several PSU 007 (First-Year Seminar), ENGL 015, and ENGL 202 classes contained significant diversity themes in their content.

The College also offers its students numerous opportunities to broaden their international and intercultural experiences and travels through research projects, independent studies, special topics courses and internships. Two examples are BIOBD 497G, Tropical Biology, offered in fall 2003, which included a to Costa Rica and ECNS 497D, China in a Global Economy, to be offered in summer 2004, which will include a trip to China.

International Education Programs and Studies

Behrend encourages and supports student enrollment in academic programs outside of the

United States. Between 1999-00 and 2002-2003, 361 students participated in significant international experiences in 19 countries directly related to their academics. Penn State Erie sponsored or organized ten programs during that period. Additionally, 58 student athletes traveled internationally with their athletic teams and 37 students of the College choir performed overseas.

GOAL 6

DIVERSIFY UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT.

The college believes that support for diversity must come from the highest levels. One measure of diversity is in the leaders and the management at Behrend. To breed and develop leadership and management potential among employees we encourage and support participation in the Penn State Leader program, involve all levels of staff in personal mentoring, and we encourage involvement on committees and other service projects by staff members from underrepresented groups.

During the review period two staff members of color were given new duties and responsibilities that will allow them to develop new skills that will in turn increase their opportunities for advancement. In addition, we also arranged for the Office of Human Resources to offer the Mastering Supervision program at Behrend so all staff could avail themselves of this training and development opportunity. For faculty, the College provided scholarly activity support to help two minority faculty finish their Ph.D.s and enter the tenure track. In addition, salaries for minority faculty were increased to stay competitive with the market.

Searches are currently underway for the associate dean of Undergraduate Education and the director of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Both sets of finalists have included women candidates and the associate dean search included a person of color. Appointments to the positions are expected during the SP04 semester.

**GOAL 7
COORDINATE MULTICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION AND
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE**

An effective organization can constantly transform itself to meet the needs of the environment. At Penn State Behrend, we recognize that a commitment to diversity often requires realignment and refocus. We followed through on our plan to hire a half-time disability coordinator to meet the needs of that group of students more effectively. We also realigned and reformulated the DEEC and created DCD to better assess, respond to, and advise college leadership about issues of diversity in our community. We set affirmative action targets to our schools to encourage their commitment. We also instructed search committees on multicultural issues based on training we received from Affirmative Action.

We renewed our commitment to attracting international students by initiating a groundbreaking engineering exchange program with RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia and by moving most of our international student functions to Admissions. Coupled with the decision to hire a half-time staff member devoted to services for students with disabilities, this latter move allows our multicultural affairs staff member to devote a greater proportion of time to our minority students. In addition, a staff member was assigned to coordinate all international exchanges (as well as international education programs initiatives and study abroad advising) for the college.

Should fiscal resources allow, we have plans to continue a Minority Dissertation Fellow program begun in 2003. Two doctoral students of color were interviewed for a fellowship at the College which would offer them assistance in completing the dissertation while teaching at the College. One was offered the position but accepted a position elsewhere, the other was not offered. A decision regarding the future of this program will be made this Spring.

We will also, if budget permits, create a position in an area that will attract minorities (e.g., African-American History) next year. It is clear we need to create new opportunities for minorities.

We are also exploring new programming in areas which attract more women and minority students and faculty. Among these are nursing and education.

TABLE OF APPENDICES

Appendix A - Female Student Focus Group Summaries

Appendix B - Adult Learner Survey Results