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Feedback on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004–09
Potential Best Practices, Mid-point Assessment
Spring 2007

Executive Summary and Full Compilation

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Executive Summary

The Potential Best Practices document highlights potential best practices that were identified by the review teams responsible for evaluating each unit's progress in implementing *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004–09*. Units were asked to self-identify under each Challenge those approaches that they believed to be potential best practices. Best Practices were defined as "processes, programs, and procedures that most successfully lead to the unit's ability to reach the University's diversity goals and can be validated through measurable outcomes." At this mid-point of the 2004–09 *Framework* cycle, substantiating data may be incomplete, so promising practices are identified as "Potential Best Practices." The potential best practices were identified by the review teams from among the practices self-identified by the unit. In some cases potential best practices were also identified from the body of programs and initiatives discussed in the updates, even if not self-identified by the unit as a potential best practice. The full compilation of potential best practices identified by the review teams, arranged by Challenge, can be found below.

In analyzing our progress thus far, several overarching themes emerge that can be considered essential to effective planning, assessment, and reporting. Active, visible support from executive leadership is critical to success, both at the unit level and for Penn State as a whole. Broad participation in diversity planning, implementation, and reporting helps to leverage expertise available to the unit and to increase effectiveness. Also, sustaining momentum throughout the planning cycle is critical to greater progress. Best practices identified by the review teams include themes of purposeful, integrated, and collaborative approaches; alignment of diversity planning with general strategic planning; use of appropriate measures; and broad and inclusive communication strategies.

Purposeful, integrated approaches across units, particularly Colleges, coordinating central and department level efforts
- ❖ Integration of academic and student life activities around diversity themes.
- ❖ Response teams that monitor climate and quickly respond to acts of intolerance.
- ❖ Tiered diversity committee structure and empowering committees to actively address and facilitate diversity goals.
- ❖ Coordinated approaches to curricular integration.

Collaborative, participatory approaches within the unit, across the University, and with applicable external resources
- ❖ Retention programs, mentoring, and leadership development programs for students, faculty, staff, and aspiring administrators.
- ❖ Collaborative efforts with Penn State resources (commissions, Affirmative Action Office, LGBTA Student Resource Center, etc.), cross-function support structures, and intercollege partnerships.
- ❖ Collaborative efforts with other institutions (HBCUs, HSIs, Tribal Colleges, and Study Abroad programs).
- ❖ Collaborative efforts with community organizations.

Broad and inclusive communications strategies
- ❖ Use of multiple communication formats (e.g., printed materials, listservs, presentations, Internet, etc.) to disseminate information broadly, including visual displays (photos, videos, etc.) that project Penn State's inclusiveness and the benefits of diversity.
- ❖ Publications such as fact sheets, alumni reports, and business cards that highlight broad aspects of diversity and are widely distributed.
- ❖ Blogs, podcasts, diversity forums, and other venues that engage a range of audience and initiatives.

Alignment between diversity planning and general strategic planning
- ❖ Purposeful alignment of the *Framework* with general strategic plans and other long-range planning.
- ❖ Inclusion of diversity values among core values and competencies.
- ❖ Allocation of resources, including budgetary resources.

Effective measures of success and assessment
- ❖ The use of empirical data in evaluating success.
- ❖ The use of a variety of data sources and available expertise (e.g., national databases, climate assessments, and input from various stakeholders, including alumni).

Active leadership
- ❖ Reorganization of administration to ensure accountability on diversity goals.
- ❖ Facilitation of focus groups, orientations, and diversity forums by the leading executive of the unit.

The full compilation of the potential best practices identified by the review teams, arranged by Challenge, can be found below. The potential best practices are unit-specific but often provide information for other units that are interested in adopting and adapting successful practices or gleaning inspiration for new approaches. Additional information about the specific practices listed can be found by accessing the complete feedback report and unit response, as well as the unit update. These materials can be found at www.equity.psu.edu/framework/updates.

Full Compilation

This document is a compilation of potential best practices that were identified by the review teams responsible for evaluating each unit's progress in implementing *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 2004–09*. Units were asked to self-identify under each Challenge those approaches that they believed to be potential best practices. Best Practices were defined as "processes, programs, and procedures that most successfully lead to the unit's ability to reach the University's diversity goals and can be validated through measurable outcomes." At this mid-point of the 2004–09 *Framework* cycle, substantiating data may be incomplete, so promising practices are identified as "Potential Best Practices." The potential best practices identified below were identified by the review teams from among the practices self-identified by the unit. In some cases potential best practices were also identified from the body of programs and initiatives discussed in the updates, even if not self-identified by the unit as a potential best practice. The items listed below do not constitute an exhaustive list, and in some cases additional units are successfully engaging in similar practices or approaches. Additional information about the practices listed below can be found by accessing the complete feedback report and unit response as well as the unit update. These materials can be found at www.equity.psu.edu/framework/updates. In analyzing our progress thus far, several overarching themes emerge that can be considered essential to effective planning, assessment, and reporting; these are presented in the executive summary, which can be found at www.equity.psu.edu.

Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations
Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity
- ❖ Creation of the Office of Planning and Assessment with emphasis on creating integrative efforts among various offices for ongoing and overarching assessment of knowledge and understanding, and drawing on available expertise. (Penn State Altoona)
- ❖ Incorporating diversity-related presentations into a college-wide approach that makes use of the presentations across the College and the University. (College of Health and Human Development)
- ❖ The Diversity Fact Sheet, particularly if it is expanded to also highlight additional aspects of diversity in the College and distributed to employees as well as students. (College of the Liberal Arts)
- ❖ The Safe Zone Program (a system comprised of staff and faculty who have been trained on LGBT issues and have an open-door policy to provide support and referral information). (Penn State New Kensington)
- ❖ A campus-wide reading program, which selects a book on a diversity topic that is read and discussed by faculty, staff, and students across campus. (Penn State Delaware County)
- ❖ The integration of academic and student life activities on common diversity themes. (Penn State Greater Allegheny)
- ❖ The integration of various student groups under a single umbrella organization. (Smeal College of Business)
- ❖ The formal commitment to use empirical data in evaluating the College's success and to rely on a variety of data sources (e.g., national databases, climate assessments, and input from various stakeholders, including alumni). (College of Engineering)
- ❖ The Diversity Committee's role in developing the College's *Framework* update. (College of Engineering)
- ❖ Distributing the Campus's diversity definition on a business card; broad dissemination across the campus and local community is encouraged. (Penn State Berks)
- ❖ The Multicultural Academic Excellence Program (MAEP) peer tutorial and the leadership development support group. (Penn State Schuylkill)
- ❖ Inclusion of "intellectual" diversity in the College diversity strategic plan to ensure the acceptance of "minority" critical opinions. (College of Information Sciences and Technology)
- ❖ Senior management's involvement in appointing members of the diversity committee and devoting one quarterly meeting per year to diversity issues. (Division of Development and Alumni Relations)
- ❖ Use of multiple communication formats (e.g., printed materials, listservs, and presentations) to disseminate information. (Division of Development and Alumni Relations)

❖ Inclusion of a community member on the Diversity Task Force. (Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus)
❖ The diversity awards that are given throughout the College. (College of Agricultural Sciences)
❖ Orientation and diversity forum to affirm diversity commitments. (University Libraries)
❖ Initiation of a student "blog," a dean's "blog" and a "radio style podcast" that foster student engagement and also involve a diverse range of students and initiatives. (Schreyer Honors College)
❖ G.O.O.D. (Group for Operational Oversight of Diversity), which aligns the *Framework to Foster Diversity* with the strategic plan and contains diversity as one of seven shared values in the strategic plan and respect for others as a core competency. (Penn State College of Medicine and Milton S. Hershey Medical Center)
❖ Publicizing the creation of a budget devoted to diversity initiatives. (Penn State York)
❖ Development of a College climate and diversity brochure that is mailed annually to all students, faculty, and staff. (Eberly College of Science)

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate
❖ Visual displays (photos and videos) that project Penn State's inclusiveness and the benefits of diversity, particularly if expanded to represent a broader array of diverse campus communities. (University Relations)
❖ The embedded tutor program to provide adult learners with academic assistance as part of regular class time and in a peer group setting. (Penn State Shenango)
❖ The Summer Law Scholars program. (Dickinson School of Law)
❖ Specific climate-related language incorporated into promotion and tenure guidelines. (College of Education)
❖ Committees within each academic department that are focused on diversity and related climate issues (College of Education)
❖ Collaborations among Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Research and Graduate Studies in planning and delivering diversity program offerings. (Penn State Harrisburg)
❖ The Community Assessment and Response Team, which mobilizes campus resources to effectively respond to acts of intolerance. (Penn State Harrisburg)
❖ Programming that focuses on leadership development of students from targeted racial/ethnic groups. (Smeal College of Business)
❖ Positive relations established with HBCUs and HSIs, particularly as they offer potential for expansion to include collaborative research, joint proposals, or co-authored articles. (College of Earth and Mineral Sciences)
❖ Providing office space for student organizations. (College of Engineering)
❖ Subcommittees on diversity that enhance communication about diversity issues within academic units. (Penn State Berks)
❖ Diversity forums. (Penn State Berks)
❖ The First Response Team to Acts of Intolerance and, if continued, the acculturation study of international students by the Faculty Senate Intercultural and International Affairs Committee. (Penn State Schuylkill)
❖ Addressing the transportation needs of residential students at a campus with geographic challenges. (Penn State Mont Alto)
❖ Future programming of the "Diversity Coalition" to improve the diversity climate on the Campus and in the region. (Penn State Mont Alto)
❖ The Ability Athletics Program. (Intercollegiate Athletics)
❖ Facilitation of focus groups by the leading VP or executive of the unit. (Finance and Business)
❖ Consultation with the Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equity, Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity, Commission for Women, the Affirmative Action Office, and the LGBTA Student Resource Center for advice on program development. (Finance and Business)
❖ Mandatory diversity training for all new hires and diversity-themed professional development opportunities for all staff. (Finance and Business)

❖ Formation of a committee to define each diversity "value" and provide recommendations on how each can be enhanced. (College of Information Sciences and Technology)
❖ Description of orientation, regular climate surveys, and assessment practice. (University Libraries)
❖ A Diversity Response Team and diversity training. (Penn State Worthington Scranton)
❖ Coaching by the multicultural coordinator for new employees and medical students during orientation as a welcoming/mentoring tool. (Penn State College of Medicine and Milton S. Hershey Medical Center)
❖ The Language Line service, which provides interpretation capabilities for the increasing Hispanic patient population. (Penn State College of Medicine and Milton S. Hershey Medical Center)
❖ Attending sessions of "Best Practices in Diversity Strategic Planning" to formulate substantive actions and meaningful measures of assessment. (Penn State Wilkes-Barre)

Representation (Access and Success)
Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body
❖ The Alaska Native program (which utilizes connections with Alaska Native communities to bring Alaska Native students to Penn State Altoona with financial assistance to complete four year degrees) and the Human Infrastructure Group (a collaboration with local community organizations and businesses to discuss issues related to internships, job creation, retention of people of color). (Penn State Altoona)
❖ Collaborative efforts between Global Connections and International Programs and between the Morgan Center and the LGBTA Student Resource Center. (Undergraduate Education)
❖ Personalized recruitment of previously underrepresented students. (Dickinson School of Law)
❖ A variety of retention programs that help disadvantaged students to be better prepared to succeed academically. (Penn State Delaware County)
❖ The Academic Intervention Program, which provides mentoring and counseling for students experiencing academic difficulties. (College of Communications)
❖ A cross-function enrollment management support team and ombudsman in Admissions and Financial Aid to provide more personalized support for students who need assistance applying for admission and financial aid. (Penn State Greater Allegheny)
❖ Provision of diversity training professional development opportunities for student employees; assessment of student employee satisfaction. (Finance and Business)
❖ Women to Women Mentoring Program for female students in "offer" status. (Penn State Erie)
❖ FastStart, a mentorship triad which assigns a faculty or staff mentor and an alumni mentor to each targeted student. (Division of Development and Alumni Relations)
❖ Dual Enrollment agreement between the campus and four service area high schools. (Penn State DuBois)
❖ Focus on increasing Adult Student Recruitment. (Penn State DuBois)
❖ Recruitment strategy, including information dissemination, cooperation with wider University recruitment efforts, and outreach receptions for students in "offer" status. (Schreyer Honors College)
❖ New course for medical students - Social Influences on Health - to address diversity issues/scenarios and their impact on healthcare and employee/student/patient relationships. (Penn State College of Medicine and Milton S. Hershey Medical Center)

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce
❖ Creating a viable International Educational Task Force that has developed a study abroad program with remarkable success; creation of a partnership and exchange program with the Inter American University of Puerto Rico at Bayamon; and leveraging resources such as those from the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence. (Penn State Altoona)
❖ Proactively seeking and courting potential faculty prior to position availability and maintaining that contact; distribution of guidelines for diverse faculty recruitment to search committees. (College of Health and Human Development)
❖ The attention given to hiring a diverse student staff as a way to increase staff diversity in light of the low turnover rate of the unit. (Undergraduate Education)
❖ Sponsoring and funding of the Diversity Internship Program. (Finance and Business)

- ❖ Development and implementation of the Diversity Mentoring Program for newly hired employees of color. (Finance and Business)
- ❖ Networking with regional colleges and universities/campuses through NEPACU to share résumés. (Penn State Hazelton)
- ❖ Annual assessment of the promotion and tenure process to detect flaws and biases. (Eberly College of Science)
- ❖ Use of a Diversity Advocate to provide input to search committees, a practice followed by all campus locations. (Penn State DuBois)
- ❖ International Education Week, which encourages international study and understanding and complements the multicultural curriculum via lectures, exhibits, and presentations. (Penn State DuBois)
- ❖ IT Professional Development Program (PDP), which provides three years of training and mentorship for recent graduates from underrepresented groups. (Information Technology Services)

Education and Scholarship
Challenge 5: Developing a Curriculum That Fosters Intercultural and International Competencies
- ❖ The Urban Community Partnership Initiative, which provides the opportunity for HHD faculty and students to engage in various experiential, research and service learning projects in an urban setting. (College of Health and Human Development)
- ❖ Questions about issues of diversity and inclusivity on the course evaluation feedback form, especially if forms are distributed in all courses. (Dickinson School of Law)
- ❖ Short-term study abroad programs, which provide international educational experiences to students who otherwise might not be able to afford it. (Penn state Delaware County; Penn State Greater Allegheny)
- ❖ Additional support for instructors interested in strengthening the diversity content of their courses provided through the inclusion of a curriculum resource center. (College of Education)
- ❖ Community-based service learning experiences that include working with ESL students from the local Hispanic community and tutoring for adult literacy programs. (Penn State Lehigh Valley)
- ❖ Online learning, especially if expanded to include other areas of diversity. (Division of Student Affairs)
- ❖ Revising the theme of the common reading program to address diversity concerns. (Penn State Berks)
- ❖ Diversity Collection Group formation, and plans for improved diversity code usage. (University Libraries)
- ❖ Forming collaborative partnerships with other colleges for course and curriculum programs to foster diversity. (Schreyer Honors College)
- ❖ Multicultural certificates and minors. (Penn State Worthington Scranton)
- ❖ Increased opportunities for international clinical and research rotations, and added opportunities for students to practice in diverse communities. (Penn State College of Medicine and Milton S. Hershey Medical Center)
- ❖ Incorporating service learning options into course requirements. (Penn State Wilkes-Barre)
- ❖ The array of short term travel abroad experiences. (Penn State York)

Institutional Viability and Vitality
Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management
- ❖ External funding to advance career paths and leadership development for women and staff from diverse racial/ethnic groups. (Penn State Harrisburg)
- ❖ Requesting a diversity/professional leadership philosophy statement from prospective department heads, which could be expanded to a requirement for all departments and faculty positions. (College of Engineering)
- ❖ Support of the Leadership Centre County (LCC) Program, including providing tuition and release time for employees. (Finance and Business)
- ❖ The upgrading of the multicultural coordinator position to Executive Assistant to the Dean/ Director of Science Diversity Initiatives, reporting to the Dean, with membership in the ECoS Executive Committee. (Eberly College of Science)

❖ The diversification of the Campus leadership team and their involvement/engagement in the process to foster diversity at all levels. (Penn State DuBois)
❖ Offering faculty mentoring and encouraging advancement beyond entry-level positions. (University Libraries)
❖ Identification of diverse community leaders and the use of alumni as resources to students via classroom visits and mentoring. (Penn State Worthington Scranton)

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals
❖ Creation of the tiered diversity committee structure. (College of Health and Human Development)
❖ Collaborations with internal units and community organizations to advance diversity goals. (Penn State Harrisburg and Penn State Greater Allegheny)
❖ Articulation of diversity goals in the Campus Strategic Plan, the Master Plan, and the Ten-Year Program Statement. (Penn State Mont Alto)
❖ Inclusion of progress on diversity initiatives in the evaluation of all supervisors. (Finance and Business)
❖ Actively providing professional development programming that has resulted in an increased number of participation from women and racial/ethnic employees. (Penn State DuBois)
❖ Reorganization of the dean's administration to support accountability on diversity goals. (University Libraries)
❖ Coordinated efforts to seek support from companies that actively promote diversity. (Penn State Worthington Scranton)
❖ Annual awards to faculty/staff that promote outstanding diversity initiatives. (Penn State Wilkes-Barre)