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

**Feedback on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003
College of Arts and Architecture**

The leadership of a new Dean should be commended, and it is hoped that the College will continue to improve in climate, curricular integration, and definition of diversity.

If the definition of diversity were stronger and more precise, it would provide greater direction and guidance for incorporating structured processes for enhancing the College's diversity efforts, as reported in the update.

RESPONSE: This College believes, as is stated, in diversity and inclusively in its broadest context and that any attempt to define it in more precise terminology would undoubtedly omit some population or offend others.

If greater ownership were felt at all levels for diversity issues and initiatives, it would be easier to facilitate the proactive College-wide approaches identified.

RESPONSE: We wonder how this last conclusion was reached? We believe that ownership is taken very seriously; every unit in the College has embraced the need to diversity our faculty and students. Extreme efforts are being expended at the department and school level to seek out minority applicants for faculty and staff positions.

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ While it is commendable that the Multicultural Programs Coordinator sits on the Dean's council, he is given much responsibility but has little authority.

RESPONSE: Conversely, the College has given the MPC a great deal of authority to plan and coordinate programs and activities. He will be provided with support and supervision to accomplish these tasks.

- ❖ Participation of faculty and students on the Diversity Committee is positive. The College might wish to expand the membership to include staff and senior leadership.

RESPONSE: Excellent suggestion, we will add two staff and the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies to the Committee.

- ❖ It is positive that both the Dean and the Multicultural Programs Coordinator discuss commitment to diversity in student orientation, faculty orientation, and staff meetings.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The list of performances, lectures, etc. reflects the range of quality artistic offerings expected of a major university. While this is important on the whole, it may not significantly impact climate in the absence of other concrete strategies.

RESPONSE: Much of our strategic plan (Goal 1, Objective 1 and 2, and several actions under Goal 4, Objective 3) are specifically about creating a welcoming environment and creating a positive climate. Our Mentoring program, while not exclusively aimed at diverse populations, includes all new faculty (full and part time) and is aimed at creating a welcoming environment for all.

- ❖ The Climate Committee might wish to develop a more structured process for identifying climate issues and developing College-wide approaches for proactively addressing climate concerns.

RESPONSE: The College will charge the Diversity Committee with developing initiatives to discover and address climate issues and concerns.

Challenge 3: Recruiting and retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ Establishing a College scholarship for underrepresented students at Charter High School of Art and Design (CHAD) is a potentially “best practice” strategy. The College may wish to consider periodically sending faculty to visit the school in order to develop the relationship between the College and CHAD, and to develop students’ interest in the College.
RESPONSE: The College has already sent staff, administrators and faculty to CHAD and has developed excellent personal relationships with the staff there. The Dean talks regularly with the staff of CHAD and we are attempting to bring the first CHAD scholarship recipient to Penn State.
- ❖ The Peer Mentor Program for undergraduates is a promising program, as is the new student group, Multiculturalism in Arts and Architecture (MIAA). More detail on the purpose of MIAA would be helpful. Also, the College might wish to institute more formal retention activities for graduate students in addition to informal social gatherings.
RESPONSE: As a new initiative, we are still formulating plans for both groups and we appreciate these suggestions.
- ❖ Mentoring relationships between faculty and students are cited as a particularly effective retention strategy; the College is encouraged to outline any structures it has in place to encourage faculty to form these mentoring relationships.
RESPONSE: These relationships are built upon mutual respect and trust—there is no formal structure. Faculty recognize the importance of building these ties and have done so freely on their own initiative through MIAA, SROP and McNair program, among others.
- ❖ The College needs to provide more information on how students from underrepresented populations are encouraged to pursue majors, graduate study, and careers in the arts.
RESPONSE: This is an excellent action for the MPC and he will undertake this challenge.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ The recruitment of five new minority faculty is a considerable success. Appropriate recognition of the faculty member who was instrumental in this success for this effort is advised.
RESPONSE: We appreciate the compliment and assure the respondents that these efforts and successes have been acknowledged at both the College and University level.
- ❖ The faculty mentor program shows promise in faculty retention.
- ❖ Recruiting and retention efforts should be broadened beyond what is mandated by the University.
RESPONSE: We are not aware of “mandates” by the University. Our significant efforts are/were prompted by a true commitment to diversity and have gone well beyond any university norm or expectation.

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

- ❖ In terms of curriculum, “diversity” seems to be defined very broadly. It is encouraging to see that there has been effort to expand non-European components.
RESPONSE: Yes, to both statements. We, also, view this as a very important direction in our efforts.
- ❖ Faculty should continue to be encouraged to incorporate diversity components into existing courses, as well as offering diversity focused courses. The work of the Hamer center is a potential “best practice” which provides excellent example of how research, service and teaching have been integrated to provide students opportunity to be engaged with underrepresented and underserved groups in a diverse community.
RESPONSE: We appreciate the encouragement and compliment.

- ❖ Although the College was not asked to address this in this Challenge, one strategy to promote diversity in the curriculum and provide necessary support for new instructors is for the department to develop a diversity component to be integrated as a permanent part of the teaching seminar for graduate students.

RESPONSE: In meetings with our Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, the Graduate Officers stated that the college units in their orientation sessions for graduate students are presently making presentations to ensure that all graduate students will be aware of the need to be sensitive to minority students and to respect the ideas expressed by all students.

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ The College's encouragement of faculty and staff to pursue professional development opportunities is important. The College should provide details regarding participation of underrepresented faculty and staff in leadership and management programs, and the resulting opportunities available to them.

RESPONSE: We will begin to collect this data.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ The response to this Challenge indicates several positive actions. For example, the Guidelines for Searches (included as an appendix), and that searches have been re-opened to ensure a more diversified pool represent a detailed recruitment plan for diversifying the faculty. The College is encouraged to provide a breakdown of how the President's Opportunity Fund has been used.

RESPONSE: As noted, the College has recently been successful in recruiting minority faculty and have gratefully received assistance from the President's Special Opportunity Fund to enhance competitive salaries, augment positions and develop senior hires.

- ❖ The College is encouraged to use information gleaned from exit interviews to address the concerns of underrepresented faculty.

RESPONSE: The Dean reviews every exit interview and if there are issues raised of any substantive nature, methods to address the concerns are discussed with the appropriate head or director. This is standard process for the College, regardless of gender or ethnicity and the Dean will conduct interviews with minority faculty.