

Before you read the feedback and report revisions, you are strongly encouraged to review the Overview, History and Calendar Web page at

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

**Schreyer Honors College
Update for Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity**

Challenge 1. Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

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

- (a) The Schreyer Honors College (SHC) defines diversity broadly to include population differences in race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, abilities/disabilities, veteran status, international status, language, political persuasion, and regional or geographic origins, as well as different talents, interests, ideas and creativity.

Rationale: The SHC views diversity experiences in classroom pedagogy, in the curriculum and in the community as essential to a quality undergraduate education and central to the College's mission. Achieving academic excellence, building an international perspective, and creating opportunities for leadership and civic engagement are impossible without valuing and understanding diversity.

- (b) This broad definition of diversity is demonstrated by the breadth of our staff training program, the breadth of student programming and co-sponsored events, and the breadth of curricular initiatives sponsored by the SHC.

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

The SHC regularly distributes diversity information to all SHC students via the student list serv (sent twice weekly). The SHC has also sponsored diversity discussions in the residence halls and partners with other units for diversity-focused events across campus.

3. How has your college discussed and distributed information to faculty and staff about the University's diversity initiatives?

The SHC uses the honors advisers' list serv to distribute information about the college's diversity programming and curricular initiatives to all 250 honors advisers at University Park and to the nearly 20 honors coordinators at other locations. Penn State's diversity initiatives were the sole focus at a staff training session in August 2001 and a major topic of discussion at the November 2001 staff retreat. Readings are also routinely circulated to staff and diversity is often addressed in 1:1 meetings with supervisors as well as in individual staff development annual plans.

4. *What is the role for the multicultural coordinator?*

The SHC's assistant dean serves as multicultural director. In that role, she attends the Council of College Directors of Multicultural Programs meetings and coordinates the SHC's diversity efforts, including the SHC Diversity Committee and Diversity Strategic Plan. The SHC's Recruitment Coordinator has primary responsibility for diversity student programming. The Dean sets the vision and college commitment to diversity.

5. *Does your college have a diversity committee? What is its role?*

The SHC established a Diversity Committee in July 2001. The SHC Diversity Committee develops the SHC Diversity Plan and focuses on one or more high priority diversity objectives each year. In Spring, 2002, the SHC Diversity Committee will focus on recruitment of first-year students of color. The 2001-2002 Diversity Committee membership list is attached.

Challenge 2. Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

1. *How does your college and department leadership demonstrate visible support for diversity?*

The SHC visibly demonstrates its support for diversity through: sponsorship and co-sponsorship of diversity programming and by publicizing diversity programs sponsored by other units on its twice-weekly student list serv. Programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the SHC are noted in the SHC Diversity Progress Report. Notes about the importance of diversity are also a regular part of the monthly newsletter, *Update*, and diversity programming is highlighted in this publication as well. The SHC also strongly encourages credit courses in a variety of colleges across U.P. colleges and departments. Special care is also taken to integrate diversity into the curriculum taught by SHC faculty (e.g., Terrell Jones does a guest presentation every year in IST/SOC 497H: World Trends and Global Issues).

2. *How does your college identify climate issues?*

The SHC has identified climate issues by conducting focus groups in the Residence Halls (with the assistance of Susan Shuman) and Dinners with the Dean with students of color, through the SHC Student Council, and by including students on the SHC Diversity Committee.

3. *How does your college respond to climate issues?*

The SHC responds to climate issues by initiating residence hall programming and through messages from the Dean and Coordinator of Student Programming and Service Learning on our list serv or in our student newsletter, *Update*. Direct contact with students is emphasized (e.g., the Dean and Coordinator of Student Programming visited all residence hall rooms with open doors on 9/11 and 9/12 and held open discussion/support sessions throughout the week).

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

The SHC's extensive diversity-focused curricular offerings enhance the diversity education and improve the climate for diversity for all students in the university. Several SHC-sponsored courses have engaged students in service-learning projects to enhance the climate for diversity at the university. This especially true of EDTHP 297H, taught by Dean Achterberg, in Fall 2001 and PLSC297H, taught by Professor Nancy Love, in Spring and Fall 2001. For example, students in the former course initiated a diversity-talk series in the residence halls, while students in the latter course have produced a Web guide to Penn State as a multicultural university. Students in SPCOM 100H also offered an Ambassadors of Diversity tour of University Park, open to the public in Fall 2001.

Challenge 3. Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

1. *Does your college contribute to locating and recruiting undergraduate students from underrepresented groups? If so, how?*

The SHC recruits undergraduate students from underrepresented groups by: (a) purchasing SAT scores for students of color for 11 states and D.C. in addition to Pennsylvania; (b) sending letters to these students; (c) weekly monitoring applications to Penn State from students of color and inviting them to apply to the SHC; and (d) having the Dean and members of the SHC External Advisory Board, including Mr. Schreyer, make phone calls to students of color who have been offered admission to the SHC. In Spring 2002, for the first time, current SHC students of color will make phone calls to students with offers and the External Advisory Board will host receptions in Philadelphia and Maryland for prospective and accepted students of color. The SHC also works closely with the academic college multicultural coordinators to locate and recruit undergraduate students from underrepresented groups.

2. *How has your college contributed to locating and recruiting graduate students from underrepresented groups?*

As an undergraduate college, the SHC does not recruit graduate students. On the other hand, the SHC does sponsor a table at the Achievement Conference so that SHC students from underrepresented groups can learn more about graduate school opportunities. Students of color, as are all students in the SHC, are also strongly encouraged to attend graduate or professional school upon graduation.

3. *What strategies have you implemented to retain undergraduate students from underrepresented groups?*

To assist in retention of undergraduate students from underrepresented groups, the SHC has: (a) created a list serv for SHC students of color, (b) appointed the Assistant Dean as multicultural coordinator, (c) distributed to the SHC Dean's Council each semester a list of all underrepresented students in the SHC, (d) created a Diversity Log to record interactions with students of color, (e) worked with the college multicultural directors, the Multicultural Resource Center, and with the Office of Financial Aid to assist individual students, and (f) been flexible to the needs and circumstances of individual students, especially in terms of housing assignments where the SHC works as an advocate for students of color to ensure they have access to preferred housing in Atherton and Simmons Halls along with their preferred roommates.

4. *What strategies have you implemented to retain graduate students from underrepresented groups?*

Not applicable (as the SHC does not have graduate students).

5. *What recruitment and retention strategies have been most successful?*

Monitoring Penn State applications from underrepresented students and working with the multicultural coordinators to invite these students to apply to the SHC has been the most successful recruitment strategy we have employed to date. The SHC is initiating and continuing phone calls and D.C. and Philadelphia receptions for accepting students with the expectation that personal contact will also be a very effective strategy. A strong effort has also been made in the Capital Campaign to develop donor interests in diversity issues and to raise money for additional scholarships to enhance the diversity of the SHC.

Challenge 4. Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

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

The SHC has posted full-time job openings to the Women of Color Listserv and the CORED listserv. The SHC does not have its own faculty.

The data tables produced by the Office of Educational Equity appropriately focus on full-time staff, but in so doing, underestimate the diversity of the SHC staff, which in a small unit such as ours, includes a variety of important part-time staff. Most importantly, the SHC selected Dr. Carolyn Tubbs (African American) to serve as the Atherton Faculty Residential Mentor beginning in Fall 2001. Dr. Carolyn Tubbs participates in staff meetings, hosts monthly receptions for students in Atherton and Simmons Halls, serves on the SHC Diversity Committee, and contributes important diversity to the SHC staff and Scholars Housing residential environment. In addition, the SHC has two African American work study students assisting in the college; one is now in her second year. Finally, among the eight Scholar assistants working the SHC this year, two are Asian American. In sum, seven of 30 total employees in the SHC are from diverse backgrounds.

2. *What recruitment strategies have been most successful?*

Widely advertising a vacant position to all college deans and asking them to circulate it to their faculty helped the SHC recruit a postdoctoral scholar of color for the SHC Residential Faculty Mentor position. Posting work-study job openings in the *Collegian* has helped us successfully recruit work-study students from underrepresented groups.

3. *What retention strategies have you implemented in your college to retain members of underrepresented groups?*

Our Residential Faculty Mentor was retained because of the challenge and support the position offers her along with flexibility and the opportunity to create her own goals. The SHC retained two African American work-study students for two years by being flexible and supportive,

offering good training and varied tasks, treating them with respect, and avoiding mental menial tasks.

4. *What retention strategies have been most successful?*

Flexibility and sensitivity to employees' needs and interests have been the most successful retention strategies. Specifically, allowing work-study students the flexibility to set and adjust their work hours around their course responsibilities and giving them varied tasks have been the most important factors in retaining work-study students from underrepresented groups and others as well.

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

1. *What initiatives has your college taken in supporting multicultural curriculum efforts?*

The SHC has collaborated with partners to support multicultural curriculum efforts and has initiated several new honors courses with a multicultural focus. During the past three years, the college has given seed grants to create two courses: one on "hate crimes in Pennsylvania" and another on the "multicultural university." In addition, the college has initiated a course in which students traveled to Juarez, Mexico to build a home and is sponsoring a course to build a community center on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Montana in the summer of 2002. An experimental honors first year seminar, EDTHP 297H also focused on diversity and leadership.

Many SHC courses help students acquire an international perspective as part of helping achieve the college's overall mission; these courses focus on multiculturalism in both a national and international context e.g., IST/SOC 497H World Trend and Global Issues. The SHC also partners with the Hubert Humphrey Fellows program to give Penn State undergraduates the opportunity to interact with mid-career professionals from developing countries around topics of mutual interest such as the digital divide.

2. *What research and teaching in your college has advanced the University's diversity agenda?*

Each year the SHC offers a suite of five signature courses that are publicized extensively to entering students. These five courses include several focused on issues of multiculturalism. A large percentage of the entering cohort enrolls in one or more of these five courses. In addition, the SHC is initiating a pilot study in Spring 2002 to evaluate students' openness to new experience and other cultures, leadership and self-initiative, teamwork skills and empathy with others in order to evaluate the impact of our signature courses. We plan to enlarge this to a major study in 2002-03. Of course, extensive teaching occurs through our co-curricular programming as well (see attached chart).

3. *How is diversity integrated into the curriculum of your college?*

Diversity is central to the SHC mission and integrated throughout SHC programming. However, the SHC does not own a curriculum per sé. As the SHC staff work with departments across the university, we look for opportunities to encourage diversity courses. Sometimes these courses are

initiated by the SHC; sometimes by the offering department. In addition, the SHC suite of five signature courses (see attachment) focus on diversity. These courses are heavily promoted to entering students; most of the students who traveled to Juarez, for example, did so after their first year. Consequently, SHC students frequently take more than one diversity-related course since they develop interests in diversity early in their academic careers. Some students have even changed their majors and adopted new minors because of their increased interest in diversity as a result of their early curricular exposure. The SHC's international mission can only be accomplished by helping students understand domestic diversity within a national and international context.

Challenge 6. Diversifying University Leadership and Management

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

The SHC places a high priority on staff development. Staff members are encouraged to participate in the university's Administrative Fellow program, the Commission on Women's mentoring program, and to take university and HRDC courses. Currently, two full-time staff members are pursuing an undergraduate and graduate degree respectively, one is applying for the Administrative Fellow program, another is participating in the mentoring program, another helps organize the Women's Leadership Conference each year, and many have taken very useful HRDC courses, including extensive participation in the Penn State Leader Program. A culture of staff development and cross-training permeates the college.

Challenge 7. Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

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

In July 2000, the Assistant Dean assumed responsibility for attending the Council of College Directors of Multicultural Programs meetings, formerly attended by the SHC Recruitment Coordinator. This has been helpful in ensuring that the college multicultural directors have two points of contact with the SHC. In addition, in July 2001, the SHC created a Diversity Committee. This committee assumed a leadership role in creating the college's diversity strategic plan. In addition, the entire staff, the SHC External Advisory Board and the SHC Faculty Advisory Committee all reviewed and provided input to the SHC diversity definition and strategic plan. In future years, the SHC Diversity Committee will assess the college's diversity progress on an annual basis. The college has completed a three-year diversity plan (2002-2005) which assigns accountability to specific staff positions for reaching desired diversity objectives. The college is engaged in ongoing efforts to diversify its External Advisory Board and Faculty Advisory Committees. Finally, the college has formed numerous partnerships with campus and community organizations to further the university's diversity goals, including the Hubert Humphrey Fellows Program, the International Hospitality Council, the Multicultural Resource Center, and the AT&T Service Center. In addition, the Assistant Dean and another member of the SHC's Diversity Committee are both members of the President's Commission for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Equity.