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College of the Liberal Arts
Diversity Questionnaire Responses
Revised Version, April 11, 2002

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

1. How does Liberal Arts define or describe diversity? Liberal Arts defines diversity as central to the study of the humanities and the social and behavioral sciences. Through their study we learn to think about our relation to the world and the moral and aesthetic values that direct our lives and give us human dignity. Liberal education is impossible without a commitment to truth and free and open inquiry; accepting and understanding the value of human diversity are essential to any successful and sustained search for truth.

To promote diversity has come, in part, to mean increasing the representation of traditionally underrepresented groups. It means broadening our community to include those who have not been well represented in it because of gender, race, or ethnicity. We are firmly committed to making progress in this critical area. And we are also committed to making our college a welcoming environment for all.

Our goal is to be among the finest liberal arts colleges in the nation's public universities. We cannot realize our goal without recruiting and retaining an outstanding faculty, student body, and staff, diverse in their gender, race, ethnicity, backgrounds and beliefs, but united in their commitment to provide the highest quality education, research, and service. We certainly will not be as good as we can be if those we appoint and enroll cannot work to their capacity because of an unsupportive climate. We must provide a climate in which we respect individual differences at the same time that we value free inquiry, critical thinking, and the exchange of ideas.

2. How has Liberal Arts distributed and discussed information to students about the University's diversity initiatives? Liberal Arts distributes information to students about the university's and college's diversity initiatives in a variety of ways. During the fall and summer College meetings, the Liberal Arts multicultural coordinator discusses how diversity is a critical part of the academic and social experience. Throughout the academic year, information and opportunities for underrepresented students are distributed as it is made available via department list serves, the College of the Liberal Arts web pages, mailings, and advertisement on high-traffic area bulletin boards, including the bulletin boards adjacent to the College's Undergraduate Studies offices.

3. How has Liberal Arts distributed and discussed information to faculty and staff about the University's diversity initiatives? Information concerning diversity and diversity relevant events is distributed to faculty, staff, and alumni through announcements in *LA Times*, the

College's monthly newsletter (**Appendix 1**), *Liberal Arts*, the College's annual magazine (**Appendix 2**), *LAZine*, the College's on-line magazine, the Liberal Arts Website, department list serves, *Intercom*, and high-traffic area college and department bulletin boards.

4. What is the role of the multicultural coordinator in Liberal Arts? The College's multicultural coordinator serves as a resource in assisting the College to achieve its diversity goals. The coordinator helps to recruit and retain students at both the graduate and undergraduate level. He acts as a point of contact and mediator for students with concerns about classroom climate issues. He is also expected to monitor the academic progress of minority students and coordinate appropriate interventions with the students' academic advisors. He encourages and supports student participation in co-curricular experiences, such as internships, McNair scholar's activities, summer research opportunities, and education abroad. In addition to his duties as multicultural coordinator, he also assists the Liberal Arts Undergraduate Studies office with faculty senate petitions and course substitutions.

5. Does Liberal Arts have a diversity committee? What is its role? Liberal Arts does not have a standing diversity committee. *Ad hoc* committees are appointed to assist in diversity planning. We are currently exploring the establishment of a committee or other ongoing means to assess and address ongoing climate issues.

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

1. How do college and department leaders demonstrate visible support for diversity?

Budgets reflect priorities. We have invested significantly in faculty and student diversity. The College has significantly increased the proportion of women and minorities in the faculty during the past decade. College and departmental leaders communicate their support regularly through funding for faculty lines supporting diversity, top off offers to minority graduate students, support for student trips and other diversity activities, support for research on topics relevant to diversity by Liberal Arts faculty and graduate students (**Appendix 3**), for offering lectures, seminars, and conferences on diversity-related topics, and to assist the Department of African and African American Studies and the Women's Studies Program. Funding has also been provided for seed projects in the Latino and Asian American areas. Rhetorical support appears in statements at meetings, in *LA Times*, *Liberal Arts*, *LAZine*, on the College's websites, and in discussions with the administrative committee and faculty groups.

2. How does Liberal Arts identify climate issues? Department heads are charged with monitoring the climate for students, staff, and faculty in their departments and dealing with it, including bringing problems to the attention of the associate dean for administration and undergraduate studies when necessary. The College is considering what kind of further institutionalized process should be used to address climate issues.

3. How does Liberal Arts respond to climate issues? The Associate Dean for Administration and Undergraduate Studies is charged with advising department heads, faculty, staff, and students of the appropriate response when climate issues arise. He works with the multicultural affairs coordinator for student issues. He also works closely with the University Office of Affirmative Action. The College has three sexual harassment officers, two faculty members and one staff member. For students, the advising and counseling services of the multicultural equity coordinator are available. When necessary, the Director of Undergraduate Academic Services intervenes and communicates with other administrators as appropriate to resolve problems. Issues related to discrimination that arise in the grading process are handled through the College's Good Offices process.

4. What college-wide and individualized approaches has Liberal Arts developed to enhance overall climate and individual satisfaction with the environment? Each year the College holds an informational session for new faculty that includes discussion of classroom climate issues, sexual harassment, and the like. In addition, all new teaching assistants are required to attend a workshop on sexual harassment offered by the affirmative action office. Most training of graduate teaching assistants occurs in the departments, and we are planning to develop training modules for departments to use that focus on other aspects of diversity and climate. Most of our departments already do this, but we will make sure all do. The multicultural coordinator sends individual greeting letters to first year and change of assignment students each fall. Midway through the semester, students receive e-mails with suggestions for questions they should raise with their academic advisors and with encouragement to contact the coordinator.

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how do you rate the climate for diversity in Liberal Arts at present? We have no way of estimating the climate for diversity in the college on a scale of 1 to 10.

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

1. Does Liberal Arts contribute to locating and recruiting undergraduate students from underrepresented groups? If so, how? The College contributes \$1000-\$1200 toward the Philadelphia Honors Convocation in an effort to recruit the best students from the Philadelphia School District. Our multicultural coordinator works with the Community Recruitment Centers in Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Pittsburgh to identify schools and key staff to promote Liberal Arts as a choice within Penn State. Our efforts include assisting Minority Admissions and Community Affairs in providing information to prospective students throughout the year and during special events, such as achievers weekend. The multicultural coordinator identifies and selects students for the Bunton-Waller Undergraduate Fellows program.

2. How has Liberal Arts contributed to locating and recruiting graduate students from underrepresented groups? The associate dean for research and graduate studies meets each month with departmental graduate officers. At least two of these sessions each year are devoted to recruiting and retaining underrepresented students. At those meetings, strategies and best practices, such as student campus visits, web site design, and mentoring programs, are shared and discussed. The College regularly funds trips by faculty to HBCUs and relevant conferences to showcase Penn State and to develop relationships to enhance our success rate. The results of these efforts, and some of the challenges present in recruiting graduate students from underrepresented groups, can be gleaned from **Appendix 4**.

3. What strategies have you implemented to retain undergraduate students from underrepresented groups? Liberal Arts, with 13 percent of the undergraduate student body, includes 20 percent of all University Park undergraduate African Americans, 17 percent of all Latinos, 14 percent of all Native Americans (a tiny number), and eight percent of Asian Americans. Their choices of majors parallel those of non-minority students with psychology, crime, law, and justice, political science, and (for African Americans, English and labor and industrial relations, and (for Asian Americans), economics being top choices.

We provide resources for students experiencing financial hardship in meeting book costs. Students in good standing accepted to education abroad programs are almost always supported for transportation costs upon completing the College's student enrichment form. We encourage all eligible students to file the college scholarship form in the spring for the next academic year. Our multicultural coordinator assists our scholarship coordinator in identifying students for college scholarships. We provide students with information on the importance of graduate and professional school and the steps necessary for successful planning. We have worked to gain private support for scholarships targeted to underrepresented groups.

4. What strategies have you implemented to retain graduate students from underrepresented groups? The Liberal Arts Research and Graduate Studies Office supplements the Bunton-Waller program by topping off department graduate assistantships in years two and three by an average of \$3000 each year. Thus, we make offers of at least \$15,000 for at least four years, though most of the time we offer even more and for longer durations. All African American and Latino graduate students enrolling over the past five years have entered graduate study in Liberal Arts with enhanced stipends.

5. What recruitment and retention strategies have been most successful? We believe that our student book assistance program, the Bunton-Waller Fellows program, our top offs for graduate students, and our Philadelphia student recruitment efforts have all been moderately successful.

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

1. How has Liberal Arts actively engaged in locating and recruiting faculty and staff from underrepresented groups? As a college policy, departments are encouraged to identify and seek out minority faculty candidates, particularly African Americans and Latinos. If a department locates and recruits an excellent African-American candidate, whether or not there is an opening, the Dean (with assistance from the provost) has guaranteed an appointment. This academic year, the majority of approved searches in the college are aimed specifically at recruiting African American faculty, including three searches for the Department of African and African American Studies. We have no special programs for the recruitment of staff from underrepresented groups, but would hope that at the university level policies and procedures could be changed to improve the diversity of our staff workforce at University Park.

2. What recruitment strategies have been most successful? The most successful recruitment strategies involve faculty and department heads contacting colleagues across the country to identify promising new Ph. Ds, as well as faculty who might be under-placed in their current academic positions. Simply placing ads, even in venues targeted to minority candidates, is not a successful strategy

3. What retention strategies have you implemented in Liberal Arts to retain members of underrepresented groups? The salary averages for faculty from underrepresented groups are significantly above the salary averages for others in the same rank and field. Underrepresented junior faculty, like all untenured, tenure-line faculty in Liberal Arts, receive a research semester free of teaching prior to the final tenure decision. Underrepresented faculty are invited to our annual promotion and tenure workshops for untenured faculty. The dean and the associate dean for research and graduate studies each hold small group lunches throughout the year to follow up on orientation themes and to better acquaint new faculty with resources available to them in the College, such as support for external funding efforts. The dean has had some lunches focusing on issues of relevance to women and minorities.

4. What retention strategies have been most successful? Senior recruiting has been a very successful strategy. Over the past ten years, Liberal Arts has aimed to appoint approximately one-third of new hires at the rank of associate or professor with tenure. During that time we have recruited 17 minority faculty with tenure, 14 percent of all the senior faculty we have recruited. Eighty-eight percent of those minority faculty are still here, almost exactly the same figure for all 123 senior faculty hired during that period. At the junior level, 17 percent of the appointments since 1992 have been from underrepresented groups. The retention rate for these junior African Americans is 62 percent, for Latinos, 67 percent, and for Asians, 75 percent. This compares to a 62 percent retention rate for whites hired at the assistant professor level. These retention rates are artificially high because they include people appointed this year and last year. If we look just at those appointed from 1992-1998, where people have by now had a chance to leave or be terminated, we had 120 new junior appointments, 18 percent of whom were minorities (9 percent African American, 3 percent Latino, and 6 percent Asian). Fifty-four percent of the African Americans, 50 percent of the Latinos, 71 percent of the Asians, and 50 percent of the whites are still here.

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

1. What initiatives has Liberal Arts taken in supporting multicultural curriculum efforts?

Liberal Arts is by definition multicultural. The humanities and social sciences focus on different cultures, different languages, different histories, and different nations. That is what we do. Of the 544 courses throughout the university that bear the International/Intercultural diversity designation (formerly diversity courses), 66.7% are Liberal Arts courses. There are currently 33 new Liberal Arts diversity focused courses in the curricular affairs process. Liberal Arts houses the Department of African and African American Studies and the Women's Studies program. Seven hundred and seventy six students enrolled in AAAS courses in the 2000/2001 academic year, and 1739 enrolled in women's studies courses. Thousands more enroll in our other diversity courses. The College houses and provides infrastructure support to the Africana Research Center.

2. What research and teaching in Liberal Arts has advanced the University's diversity agenda?

Again, Liberal Arts is by definition multicultural. In the past two years, the Research and Graduate Studies Office (RGSO) of the College of the Liberal Arts has funded fifteen faculty research projects dealing with diversity related or focused topics. Many other faculty come with significant start up packages supporting research on underrepresented groups or women. RGSO grants have also gone to at least 30 graduate students for diversity related research projects. (**Appendix 3**) In addition, there are currently 14 externally funded, active diversity focused grants held by Liberal Arts faculty. For data on diversity teaching, see the other entries under Challenge 5 above and below.

3. How is diversity integrated into the curriculum of Liberal Arts?

Most of our majors have diversity embedded in their disciplinary curriculum through the nature of their subject matter (just to take three examples: anthropology studies cultures around the world and within the United States; the language and literature departments focus on language and literature in the context of culture; English incorporates literatures of African Americans, women, Latinos, and other marginalized groups.) All Liberal Arts B.A. programs require an additional three credits in "other cultures," courses that are non-western, pre-European domination, or non Judeo-Christian focused. Eight of our majors require additional diversity courses for the major. Our first year seminar program includes a significant diversity component. Of the 185 seminars offered since 1994, approximately 30% pertained to matters of ethnicity, race, class, religion, gender, physical or mental disability, and or sexual orientation. An additional 17% dealt with matters of global perspective.

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

1. How has Liberal Arts assisted faculty and staff from underrepresented groups in developing leadership and management skills? Liberal Arts has a female dean, three female department or program heads, a female director of development, a female director of undergraduate studies, and a female facilities coordinator. There is one African American department head in the college. Of the four research center directors within the College, two are women and one an African-American man. In filling other kinds of leadership posts within the College (for example, directors of graduate programs and senior staff positions), deans and department heads give careful consideration to every candidate and in particular are eager to identify promising candidates that will diversify our leadership team.

The college has an internally funded staff fellowship program. The first four participants in the program have been women, including one African American. The African American participant in the staff fellowship program, a grade 16, subsequently received a promotion to grade 21, Level 2 Computer Support Specialist. In fact, of our nine full-time, permanent African American staff members, six are in professional positions at grade 20 or above. A Hispanic computer support person, one of two Hispanic staff in the College, is a grade 21. Our one Native American staff member was promoted from grade 19 to 21 and now manages the college's web site efforts. An African American advisor in the Liberal Arts Undergraduate Advising Center was supported with a flexible work schedule during her work for her D.Ed.

Challenge 7: Coordinating Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

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

a. In a time of budget stringencies coupled with the need for additional technology support and increased demand for its courses, the College has looked for ways to reduce administrative costs and to put more resources into direct support for research and teaching. One of our strategies has been to combine administrative support staffs of small and medium sized units located in physical proximity, such as CAMS, history, and Jewish studies in Weaver Building, speech communication and philosophy in Sparks, and several language, linguistics and literature units in Burrows. As part of this plan, the College has combined the administrative support for the Department of African and African American Studies, Labor Studies and Industrial Relations, and Women's Studies in Willard Building. This provides a level of administrative support (including expertise in budgeting, Penn State's complex personnel systems, student issues, and computer support) that small units, two of which are directly focused on diversity issues, could not attain were they dependent upon their own small administrative staff. Though it has its own staff assistant, the Africana Research Center also benefits from the backup administrative and infrastructure support provided by the Willard support staff.

b. Resource mobilization and allocation strategies that are already in place are detailed in a number of the responses above. These will continue.

c. The College has long term planning strategies in place to develop the Department of African and African American Studies and the program in Women's Studies to a level of excellence suitable for a research university. These strategies include support for searches, particularly joint appointments with appropriate humanities and social science departments, and sufficient start-up and research funding after their appointments. In addition, the College has a policy in place that provides support for appointments for faculty from some underrepresented groups whether or not an opening in one of the college's departments or programs exists.