

**Feedback on Progress Implementing
A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003
Best Practices 1998-2003**

Best Practices 1998-2003

This document highlights best practices that were identified by the Review Teams responsible for evaluating each unit's implementation of *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State: 1998-2003*. Best Practices are 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. Additional information on the development of Penn State's diversity strategic planning process can be found at www.equity.psu.edu/framework/updates/. For more information on the practices listed, see the corresponding section of the unit's report.

Challenge 1: Developing a Shared and Inclusive Understanding of Diversity

- ❖ The College's definition of diversity; and its participation in the Northeast Pennsylvania Diversity Education Consortium (NEPDEC) (Commonwealth College)
- ❖ Using listservs and other e-mail communications to distribute and discuss diversity information regularly among students, faculty, and staff; and well defined roles for the multicultural coordinators encompassing areas that reach students, faculty, and staff (Schreyer Honors College)
- ❖ Use of theatre groups to help raise sensitivity and generate insight into diversity and community issues; regular meetings between the Multicultural Student Services Director and Dean; faculty involvement with mentoring programs; and addressing diversity in "issues meetings" (College of Education)
- ❖ The orientation program for diversity; distribution of diversity forums by videotape to all Penn State locations; and integration of planning and assessment for diversity into all unit strategies and processes (University Libraries)

Challenge 2: Creating a Welcoming Campus Climate

- ❖ The electronic newsletter; and outreach activities embracing diversity and making the arts more accessible to everyone (College of Arts and Architecture)
- ❖ The pre-doctoral minority scholar fellowship, funded at the College level (Penn State Abington)
- ❖ The Minority Affairs Advisory Board (Shenango); participation in the Northeast Pennsylvania Diversity Education Consortium (NEPDEC) (Hazleton, Wilkes-Barre, Worthington Scranton); "I'll look out for you" campaign addressing issues related to domestic violence against women (New Kensington); and "Family Night" for adult learners (Commonwealth College)
- ❖ The Report Hate Web site as a mechanism to identify and initiate immediate response to climate issues and to track incidents of intolerance (Educational Equity)
- ❖ The Campus College Connection Program providing a link and support for underrepresented Engineering students starting at locations other than University Park (College of Engineering)
- ❖ Development of D-NET student organization for students interested in diversity issues, as well as linkage to other diversity-related Web sites (School of Information Sciences and Technology)
- ❖ The *Diversity Newswire* (University Relations)
- ❖ Requiring all staff to annually complete a minimum of three hours of diversity training (Student Affairs)
- ❖ Extensive programs and activities that are classified as service to the University and measured regularly for effectiveness; and 111 Penn State Pulse surveys completed as of April 2003 (Student Affairs)
- ❖ The assessment of faculty-staff relationships in the College (College of Agricultural Sciences)
- ❖ Partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs); the "Difficult Dialogues" initiative, which provide opportunities for students and faculty members to share views about diversity, multicultural issues, and other program concerns; a standing Diversity and Community Enhancement Committee; town meetings; and various communications vehicles for students from underrepresented groups (College of Education)
- ❖ Ongoing assessment in follow-up climate surveys conducted every five years (While this survey interval is not as frequent as for some units, the use of follow-up focus groups and the implementation of changes related directly to the survey are both commendable) (University Libraries)

Challenge 3: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Student Body

- ❖ The Pennsylvania Young Artists awards programs; and relationships with the Charter High School of Architecture and Design in Philadelphia and the Manchester Craftsman’s Guild in the Pittsburgh (College of Arts and Architecture)
- ❖ Minority Mentorship Program expansion to all incoming freshmen as the Abington Link Program; personal calls from Director for Intercultural Affairs to minority students with a GPA lower than 2.0 to offer support; and “Footsteps to the Future,” which takes Abington College students to middle and high schools in the local area and inner city to talk to the younger students about college opportunities (Penn State Abington)
- ❖ World of Diversity online community (Dubois); Campus Environment Team sponsorship of diversity-related events (Fayette, Wilkes-Barre), K-12 programs; tutoring programs; and a College-wide Online Progress Reporting System that facilitates early intervention (Commonwealth College)
- ❖ The Carlson project to increase minority enrollment in hospitality management (College of Health and Human Development)
- ❖ Minority Advanced Placement Program/Women in Science and Engineering Program (MAPP/WISE), a pre-college recruitment program for 11th grade students that has demonstrated success in recruiting diverse students to Penn State (Penn State Erie, The Behrend College)
- ❖ The FastStart Program, which provides mentoring opportunities for incoming undergraduate students of color and has demonstrated success in improving retention and graduation rates of participants (Development and Alumni Relations)
- ❖ Mentoring; specialized services; financial support; and personalized campus visits for prospective students (College of Education)
- ❖ Regular recruitment visits and relationship building with HBCUs; and establishing cohorts to “build a culture of diversity” (College of Communications)
- ❖ Open house; Smart Start for returning adult students; and the Passport to Success@psu orientation for international students (University Libraries)

Challenge 4: Recruiting and Retaining a Diverse Workforce

- ❖ Mentoring of underrepresented faculty and administrators within the context of a College-wide mentoring program (College of Arts and Architecture)
- ❖ Predoctoral Fellowship Program for underrepresented faculty (Penn State Abington)
- ❖ Contacting HBCUs and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; faculty mentoring guidelines; including a diversity advocate on search committees for faculty and director of academic affairs positions; recognizing diversity-related activities in staff and administrator performance reviews; and an annual convocation for staff assistants from all locations (Commonwealth College)
- ❖ A combination of recruitment strategies that involves faculty and department heads contacting colleagues across the country to identify promising new Ph.D.s and faculty who may be under-placed in their current academic positions (College of the Liberal Arts)
- ❖ Recruitment efforts for student staff members that include sending letters to members of targeted student groups asking them to consider work opportunities within the unit (Student Affairs)
- ❖ Using the Administrative, Coordinator, Technical, or Supervisory (ACTS) program to reward and recognize outstanding staff; and the faculty-staff climate survey (College of Agricultural Sciences)
- ❖ Advertising positions nationally using the Association of University Technology Managers’ Web site (Intellectual Property Office (IPO)); providing copies of recruitment ads to the African-American Chamber of Commerce and Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in Pittsburgh when recruiting for technical specialists in the southwestern Pennsylvania region and placing ads in the *Pittsburgh Courier*, a newspaper serving the minority community (Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PENNTAP)); fostering collaboration among ethnically diverse researchers on projects such as study of disparity of health-related services, program development, and targeting university-community partnership programs for African American youth; focusing on attracting and retaining women in technical positions within computing, Geospatial Information Systems and survey cores (Social Science Research Institute (SSRI)) (Research and Graduate School)
- ❖ Hosting an end-of-year Diversity Action Council retreat to review the diversity strategic plan and assess goal attainment (Penn State Great Valley, Research and Graduate School)

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- ❖ The Diversity Internship Program, which funds up to six internships throughout the unit each year with the intent of offering full-time employment to interns successfully completing the program (Finance and Business)
- ❖ Involvement of the dean and a member of the Affirmative Action Office with search committees; and personalizing candidates' campus visits (College of Education)
- ❖ The work of the Wage Advisory Committee to develop policies and procedures aimed at increasing the diversity of the part-time employee workforce (University Libraries)

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

- ❖ The American Indian Housing Initiative, which has potential for national and international recognition for outreach and collaboration (College of Arts and Architecture)
- ❖ Center for a Digital Society, focusing on issues of the digital divide and inequality; increased internationalization of curricular requirements; collaboration with College of Communications on The Institute for Information Policy; and research by faculty members specifically exploring issues of technology and underrepresented populations to advance both the research and diversity agendas of the University (School of Information Sciences and Technology)
- ❖ The College's Urban Community Partnership Initiative, which acknowledges the complexity of urban issues beyond focus on race/ethnicity (College of Health and Human Development)
- ❖ The College's financial and administrative support for SOC 119: Race and Ethnic Relations and the affiliated Race Relations Project, which provides interactive educational activities for student groups (College of the Liberal Arts)
- ❖ Proactive curriculum reviews; integration of diversity content across the curriculum; and creation of innovative field experiences (College of Education)

Challenge 6: Diversifying University Leadership and Management

- ❖ Active efforts to identify potential candidates; inclusion of a "diversity advocate" on each search team; attention to diversity throughout the search process, especially in administrative searches; a second review of known underrepresented candidates to ensure that a fair screening has occurred; 360-degree review of all "director and above" positions; and opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to serve in interim senior administrative positions (Commonwealth College)

Challenge 7: Coordinating Organizational Change to Support Our Diversity Goals

- ❖ Annual review of vision, mission, goals, and action steps; the First-Year Task Force review of all elements of the first-year experience with attention to diversity (Penn State Abington)
- ❖ Challenging students to develop diversity programs and activities (York); establishing new diversity specialist positions (Worthington Scranton, York); establishing advisory boards to the dean to help keep diversity issues at the forefront of administration at College and campus locations; and the inclusion of a diversity component in all performance reviews (Commonwealth College)
- ❖ Creation of *A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State* and implementation of the diversity planning process to establish long-term planning strategies surrounding diversity, which represents a benchmark for other universities (Educational Equity)
- ❖ Creation of department committees to address diversity issues (College of Education)
- ❖ Direct reporting of the Diversity Committee to the dean; making the associate deans accountable for diversity recruitment and hiring; strong financial and organizational support for diversity programming/activities; and the visible leadership and accessibility of senior management (University Libraries)