

Report from the Diversity Action Analysis Team ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The College of Education adopted a Multicultural Mission Statement in spring, 1993 which has provided a foundation and context for the college-wide Multicultural Education Initiative to date. The statement recognizes that diversity inequities arise from social, historical, economic, and political structures that influence and are influenced by culture, race, ethnicity, age, gender, educational and socioeconomic status, language, religion, national origin, disability status, sexual orientation, world view, and community. Therefore, the multicultural mission of the College of Education is to research and develop policies and practices that recognize, accept and affirm differences and similarities among people, and challenge oppression and structural and procedural inequities that exist in society in general, and in local educational settings, specifically.

Among the functions of the college's Initiative in multicultural education are efforts to:

- provide support and leadership for seeking input about diversity issues in the college;
- identify models and strategies to support and further support our work in diversity;
- review and reestablish priorities for our diversity work;
- examine how to maximize and enhance faculty, staff and student engagement in diversity work; and,
- examine the implications of our ideas and needs related to diversity for the kinds of structures and leadership the college would need to put in place to support the diversity work envisioned.

During Fall semester 2006, former Dean Castenell hosted a series of focused luncheon conversations with College faculty and staff about our college's work in diversity. Among the purposes of these conversations were to:

- seek input about diversity issues before the college,
- seek input about models and strategies that we might adopt to further promote our diversity work,
- review and reestablish priorities for our diversity work,
- examine how to enhance and maximize faculty, staff and student engagement in diversity work, and,
- examine the implications of our ideas and needs related to diversity for the kinds of structures and leadership the college would need to put in place to support the diversity work envisioned.

These sessions were rather well attended and involved a diverse representation of our college.

Detailed notes were taken by two members of the Dean's Council on Diversity during the meeting to capture the conversations. The notes were analyzed, resulting in several recommendations. Among the outcomes of these meetings were:

- establish **Action Teams** -- the goal being to use the College's Multicultural Education Mission statement as a guiding and filtering document, and topic areas identified at the focused luncheons meetings that reflected priorities for the COE's work in diversity, and establish Action Teams to identify (and build on) specific strategies and action and the leadership needed in order to put forward the priorities identified.

Therefore, in spring 2007, fortified by a semester of data gathering activities, five Diversity Action Teams were proposed reflecting the current priorities for the COE's work in diversity. The goal for these Action Teams was to use the College's Multicultural Education Mission statement as a guiding and filtering document when reviewing the topic areas identified from the data gathering activities. The Action Teams then identified (and built on) specific strategies and action as well as the leadership needed in order to put forward these priorities.

The 5 Action Teams proposed, and ultimately sanctioned, were in the following areas:

1. Professional Renewal and Learning: The role of this team was to further establish the rationale regarding the importance and impact professional renewal and learning in diversity is to a community and to the productivity and impact of that community related to diversity.

2. Curriculum: The role of this team included a recommendation for a process (or processes) for examining how the college and its programs can continually reexamine our curriculum for inclusion of diverse perspectives, make our placements and field experiences more collaborative, and examine and establish accountability measures for our inclusion of diversity in our curriculum

3. Recruitment and Retention: A role of this team included an examination of current recruitment and hiring practices in the College as well as retention efforts

4. Partnerships and Community: In an effort to be a more engaged college, roles included efforts to identify the diverse facets within our community and how we may share common agendas; examine better ways to communicate with our community; and, work to establish criteria by which we establish authentic partnerships

5. International: The role of this team was to better articulate the role of internationalism in the mainstream diversity conversation, and to help identify ways and promote promotion of how the international work has linkages to other diversity work, the dean's office and various programs.

Each of the Action Teams met over the course of two semesters and generated additional data to inform their recommendations. In his initial charge to the Action Teams, the Dean stated that "leadership and advocacy for diversity should be presented as the framework to encompass the entire Diversity Action Teams efforts within the College." Further, he stated that he, the Associate Deans, and the Dean's Council on Diversity were looking to the teams to "help organize the thinking around the 5 issues, to prioritize and identify action steps for the issues, and to identify the kinds of leadership and structures that are needed to support meeting the outcomes identified."

Diversity Action Analysis Team Analysis Methods

Once these two levels of informational data were generated, four members of the Dean's Council on Diversity volunteered to analyze the action recommendations generated by the five Diversity Action Teams. Our task was to organize these action recommendations into one comprehensive report to present to College and University communities. We met several times during spring 2008, first to read over the action recommendations and generate appropriate action-oriented themes and categories to organize the items, and then to sort the items thematically into these

organizing categories. This process was repeated several times until we felt we had generated a network of categories that best represented the action recommendations provided by the Action Teams. Several factors guided our process:

- since the Action Teams had already gone through the process of analyzing and prioritizing the many action recommendations they had generated through their work together, we felt that it was important to preserve that work and integrate all their action recommendations into the final report;
- therefore, the categories generated were meant to be inclusive of several sub-categories reflecting the different orientations of the Action Teams as well as maintain a focus on action;
- however, in a few occasions action recommendations were eliminated if they did not clearly reflect or support the Multicultural Education Mission Statement of the College of Education; and,
- finally, in keeping with the COE's Multicultural Education Mission Statement, some action recommendations were reworded so as to better reflect that overall mission.

The next section outlines these action recommendations.

Action Recommendations

Five categories of recommendations were generated based on our analysis: (1) create a knowledge sharing system, (2) support and fund, (3) encourage and reward, (4) create a diversity-oriented intellectual exchange community, and (5) evaluate. Each category is explained in more detail in the following sections. Please note that the term **diversity** used throughout reflects the COE multicultural mission as described in the first section of this report.

1. Create a Knowledge-Sharing System

Recommended priority action: Develop a central diversity website of existing resources and partnerships related to diversity (for faculty, students, community access).

Description of a possible Knowledge-Sharing System. The website will enable users to cross reference information and resources related to four key areas: research, teaching, service and outreach.

Teaching

Service

Diversity Website

Research

Outreach

Research will provide links to information about the diversity-related research of faculty and students.

Teaching will provide links to information about diversity-related courses and service-learning opportunities offered in the College of Education.

Service will provide links to information about diversity-related service activities at UGA-COE and in the larger community.

Outreach will provide links to information about diversity-related partnerships and projects of faculty, staff and students in the COE.

As mentioned above, information in the individual areas will be cross-referenced to enable easier location of resources. For example,

- if someone was looking for information related to diversity-related skills, knowledge, and expertise of faculty/staff/students to serve as consultants, trainers or speakers, the user could look in **Research** or **Outreach** to locate this information,
- if someone was looking a comprehensive overview of student-governed diversity-related service-learning and other activities and outreach efforts across the college and beyond, the user could look in **Service** or **Outreach**, or
- if someone was looking for a list of faculty, staff, and/or student international activities, research, teaching, service, the user could look in **Research**, **Teaching**, or **Service**.

2. Support and Fund

Recommended priority action: Establish diversity as a priority across COE departments and programs.

The following were recommended by the Action Teams as possible activities:

Recruit for diversity. Develop a college-wide plan to more actively recruit faculty and staff from diverse groups. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Collaborate recruitment initiatives with OID.*¹
- *Encourage (or require) each department and programs to develop a set of recruitment materials designed to illustrate the department's commitment to diversity (for department, college and Office of Institutional Diversity use).*
- *Provide travel incentives to conferences to recruit potential faculty from diverse groups.*
- *Seek to set up partnerships with colleges and universities that serve underrepresented racial and ethnic groups (e.g. HBCU's) in Georgia and other southeastern states in order to establish partnerships in degree and non-degree programs as well as faculty, student, and staff exchange*

Support faculty, staff, or students from diverse groups. Develop a college-wide plan to retain and support faculty, staff, and students from diverse groups. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Promote ways to equitably award graduate assistantships to include international students.*
- *Promote ways to attend to special needs of immigrant students.*
- *Develop a formal mentoring/apprenticeship program for Jr. faculty and students.*
- *Establish a network/community to nurture Jr. faculty and students from diverse backgrounds.*
- *Develop formal mentoring structure for all junior faculty. Certificates for scholarly recognition of international scholars.*

¹ All italicized text was obtained from the Action Team reports and are used as examples of possible action recommendations.

Support diversity of achievement. Develop a college-wide plan to support diversity related achievements for promotion and tenure. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Develop a series of initiatives to demonstrate that service and outreach, along with teaching and research, are central components of an academic career in education.*
- *Expand the standards of evaluation to allow for diverse achievements due to the demands placed on faculty with diverse groups.*

Fund diversity-related initiatives. Develop a funding pool (and process for funding allocation) to fund and support diversity-related and international initiatives in teaching, research, and service and/or support the work of faculty/staff/students from diverse backgrounds. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Provide and promote funding sources for additional resources for cultural diversity at the departmental level (i.e., money for speakers/trainers or multimedia).*
- *Help identify sources of funding for international travel, research development and scholarly collaborations.*
- *Cultural gifts exchange for faculty and international visitors.*
- *Request a pool of money for faculty travel to conferences addressing diversity issues (recruiting and selecting a team to go and bring material back to campus).*
- *Re-commit mini grants designated specifically to support diversity research.*
- *Develop administrative structures that would actively encourage and support faculty members in seeking diversity-related partnership grants.*
- *Support faculty to seek diverse experiences (e.g. continued funding for and promotion of Fulbright's for faculty and international conferences).*
- *Study abroad opportunities for faculty and their students.*

3. Encourage and Reward

Recommended priority action: Establish a culture of encouragement and reward.

The following were recommended by the Action Teams as possible examples of activities at various levels:

- *Faculty might provide evidence of engagement in diversity related teaching, research or service activities as part of annual faculty reports (e.g. participation in diversity meetings, events, training, scholarship).*
- *Undergraduates in the COE might be encouraged to take two semesters of a foreign language or spend one semester abroad and have an international experience.*
- *Graduate Students in the COE might be encouraged to integrate diversity-related issues into their scholarship and to become engaged in diversity related activities. If teaching, encourage graduate students to integrate diversity-related topics into their classes.*

4. Create a diversity-oriented intellectual exchange community

Recommended priority action: Create professional learning opportunities for faculty, staff, and students.

The following were recommended by the Action Teams as possible activities:

Develop a workshop series related to diversity. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Training in adverse racism for structuring sentences and wording in job announcements.*
- *Workshops to assist faculty in exploring ways to bring diversity into their instructional efforts*
- *Workshops for staff on diversity issues affecting their work with students, faculty and staff.*
- *Offer “train the trainer” diversity workshops once per year on a Friday/Saturday for site-based mentors and/or field supervisors to provide professional development and knowledge on multiculturalism, diversity issues, supervision, etc.*

Develop and co-ordinate the active exchange of scholarship related to diversity. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Promote international forums and seminars.*
- *Intentionally create COE-MEMO emails, monthly COE News online column, and articles in external news outlets identifying COE faculty teaching, research, and service connected to diversity.*
- *Re-introduce an annual Diversity Conference for faculty, staff and students (not to replace efforts that current exist (e.g. Black Issues in Higher Education) but to add a broad-based initiative related to diversity and social justice).*
- *Create a speaker series in which faculty who have dovetailed their teaching, research, and service commitments talk about career management as a model for others to follow.*

5. Evaluate

Recommended priority action: Create systems to enable evaluation of our diversity related efforts.

The following were recommended by the Action Teams as possible activities:

Continually reflect on and tend to our own (i.e., faculty) knowledge, skills, and commitments relative to diversity. For example, these are things we might consider:

- *Develop subjective and objective measures to determine the effectiveness of the infusion model in meeting COE's cultural diversity requirement.*
- *Assessment of what are our existing or promising relationships currently and establish a repository and dissemination source/model for this information.*

Given the grass roots nature and participatory model of this College-wide reflective process and assessment, we believe that the action items should be seen as opportunities to demonstrate further commitment to diversity at a variety of levels (programs, departments, associate deans, dean) and among multiple stakeholders (Dean's Council on Diversity, Education Policy Center, Faculty Senate, OIT, Staff Representative Group, etc.).

If each group took on one major action item, the goals for diversity related work in the college would continue to flourish and the Multicultural Education Initiative would be strengthened. The question that we pose to you:

What action item seems best suited to your (this) group?