

2001-2002 Report of President's Commission on Diversity and Community

A Message from Beth McCoy and Leonard Sancilio, Commission Co-chairs

Extraordinary commitment to the Commission's work is exemplified in the following subcommittee reports. We are grateful to the Commission membership, and particularly to the subcommittee chairs (Elaine Cleeton, Robert Owens, and Monica Schneider) for their time, intellect, and creativity. Following are several conclusions that we have drawn from the Commission's work this semester.

The Commission's work during Spring 2002 emphasizes two key areas. First, as President Dahl has himself articulated, the Commission has a duty to "keep the conversation going." Second, the Commission will serve increasingly as a resource to the larger community. As suggested particularly by the Building Community report, the Commission's guiding question might be understood as "How can we support your continued efforts to put into action the values of diversity and community expressed by Geneseo's Mission and Goals?"

One example of this is articulated by the Building Community report which suggests that the Commission is in a position to solicit ideas from Access Opportunity Program and International Student Services while exploring how the campus as a whole may better support these offices' missions. In the coming year, it may be useful for the Commission to explore actively how it might support the ongoing work of various divisions including Enrollment Services and College Advancement.

We cannot overemphasize the need to balance good news with honest assessment of work that needs to be done. For example, the overwhelmingly positive responses generated by the Summer Orientation Program's student evaluation form ought to serve as a testament to what can be accomplished when all aspects of the community work willfully together. That first-year orientation students feel prepared to encounter Geneseo as a caring, welcoming, and diverse community is exemplary and represents an example of how Geneseo has already been addressing some of the key issues in the Middle States report.

As the subcommittee report cautions, however, there is little data to help the college determine if students find that their optimistic expectations of the institution in the areas of diversity and community are met as they move through their Geneseo careers. Given the largely monolithic make-up of Geneseo's student body and the Middle States' finding that majority and minority students seem to occupy two different worlds on campus, it is imperative that the College take steps to figure out what accounts for such seemingly disparate experiences across student demographic groups.

We must also emphasize that especially in this era of budgetary restriction, resource allocation will remain a main measure by which observers within and without the College perceive whether or not the campus's public commitment to diversity and community is being pursued assertively. To this end, it is imperative that the College follow up on the recommendations from previous Commission reports: pursue both targeted fundraising for scholarships for ALANA students and more aggressive recruitment for ALANA students. An overwhelmingly white campus will likely--consciously or not--continue to orient itself to serve those majority students. Such a dynamic is indeed suggested by the Diversity and Learning Research Project's data (see Diversity Development report). Without greater numbers of ALANA students coming to campus and more substantial resources to support such incoming students, those ALANA students already here may also continue to report feeling isolated within the larger community.

Finally, we affirm what the Borderlands and Boundaries team reported to the Commission in 2000. Data generated both by the AAC&U (American Association of Colleges and Universities) and the University of Maryland's Jeffrey Milem demonstrate that supporting the needs of one segment of the community (e.g., ALANA students, transfer students) also serves to enhance the intellectual experience of all Geneseo students and furthers the College's own Mission and Goals. A win-win situation for all.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT

Members: *Tabitha Buggie-Hunt, Kelly Clark, Calvin Gantt, Cristina Geiger, Marie Henry, Edgar Miranda, Runa Rajagopal, Elaine Cleeton (chair)*

Charge from President Dahl:

The Diversity Development Committee was charged with the following tasks:

- Work closely with the leadership of the emerging Teaching and Learning Center;
- Assess needs of campus community regarding diversity development;
- Design seminar(s) for campus community;
- Explore fully possible sources of grant-funding.

During Spring 2002, the subcommittee concentrated on assessing campus needs in order to provide some sense of the range of existing experience with issues of diversity within the community.

I. Assessing community needs regarding diversity development:

In order to assess community needs, the subcommittee discussed current on-campus research investigating diversity and learning and explored how such findings might help develop a community-wide development seminar.

During Spring 2001, students enrolled in Seminar in Sociology: Sociological Inquiry undertook the Diversity and Learning Research project in order to examine Geneseo student experiences with diversity and learning. This project was designed to complement Zhiming Zhao's and Rose-Marie Chierici's in-progress qualitative research on diversity. Referencing a Hamline College study that found that members of its college community are afraid to discuss race, seminar students interviewed Geneseo students about their high school and college experiences with diversity and learning.

Among the Diversity and Learning Research Project findings was evidence of a range in attitudes about the importance of diversity in the classroom: from students who viewed it to be absent from the college and thus irrelevant in class to those who stated that critical engagement with diversity in the classroom is essential preparation for personal and professional success. Generally, students expressed difficulty with the term diversity and defined it as black/white racial categories and individual differences. Furthermore, students who describe difficulty contributing to classroom discussions (including those on race) attribute their silence to intellectual inferiority and black student sensitivity. These findings demonstrate the need to educate Geneseo students about the complexities of cultural identity; the privileges, liabilities, and complexities of identity; and the role identity plays in the development of critical thinking skills.

During Spring 2002, the Diversity and Learning Research Project was expanded to include members of the Geneseo faculty. Preliminary analysis of faculty interviews found high school and college diversity and learning experiences like those of the students. At a Commission meeting, one member testified to the value of such interviews, saying that the process made her think (and re-think) critically about how her own identities and assumptions have shaped what she does in the classroom and why she does it. The subcommittee worked with the Project to develop a questionnaire to be administered to members of the Geneseo staff in Fall 2002.

II. Recommendations for campus-wide development seminar: AAC&U seminars, plenary sessions, and publications have consistently pointed to an important link between active learning and successful, ongoing institutional engagements with diversity. Geneseo affirms this link in its guiding documents as its Mission Statement, goals, and outcomes all embrace active learning in a diverse cultural setting. While the Middle States Evaluation

Team acknowledged "commendable work on active learning," it also observed that "concern for diversity is not universal" among all community members (14). The team recommended external assistance to develop a strong, proactive plan to address this issue and views these recommendations as both consonant with the college's aspiration to national stature (as articulated by President Dahl) and supported by the College Council and the Chair of the SUNY Board of Trustees.

The subcommittee recommends, therefore, that college development initiatives continue to support and promote existing cultural diversity programs. At the same time, the subcommittee recommends that the college implement a campus-wide diversity seminar that supports participants in critically examining how their identities (e.g., racial, disciplinary, etc.) shape their own assumptions and practices in their work for the College. (Note: The importance of such an approach is underscored by the Building Community subcommittee report, as well.)

A. Develop a community-wide seminar on cultural identity following the design of the Fall 2002 Teaching and Learning Institute.

1. Develop program in association with the Teaching and Learning Center. .
2. Schedule institute for 2.5 days (beginning on a Thursday) in February 2003.
3. Seek representation from across faculty, staff, administration, and student groups.
4. Encourage participants to propose changes that they will make to courses, programs, daily practice, etc., as a result of their participation in the program.
5. Invite Keith Jenkins, Department of Communication, RIT, in association with Kelly Clark, to conduct workshop on cultural identity (Dan Strang attended this year's diversity seminar at the University of Rochester and can attest to Jenkins's abilities).
6. Assess the institute by organizing participants into small working groups meeting regularly for one year. Additionally, interview individuals and conduct small focus groups. Implement findings in the following year's Cultural Identity Institute.
7. Expand institute to include all members of the college community.

B. Consider specific recommendations for diversity education on campus

1. Tie diversity education to shared commitment to advance and integrate classroom learning with broader social issues and concerns.
2. Develop campus-wide understanding of critical thinking as a learning outcome. Identify student awareness of critical thinking. Support student conversations in the classroom.
3. Discuss implementation of community-based learning, including support for Knights' Collaborative and involvement in assisting local minority public school students with preparation for college.
4. Support interdisciplinary projects.

5. Assess impact of such programs on participants' experience, as well as that of the larger campus community.
6. Seek leadership from senior members of community; support junior members interested in this work.
7. Consider INTD 105 course as a model for developing portions of this program (e.g., INTD's across-the-curriculum model might bring on board faculty from many disciplines).
8. As a strategy for bringing people on board, link diversity and identity with critical thinking and institutional excellence.
9. Seek funding essential for developing and assessing programming. Seek funding essential for compensating/rewarding participants.

References:

"Report to the Faculty, Administrations, Trustees, Students of The State University of New York College at Geneseo." 12 November 2001. Evaluation Team representing the Middle States Association Commission on Higher Education. Prepared after study of the institution's self-study report and a visit to the campus on 21-24 October 2001.

BUILDING COMMUNITY SUBCOMMITTEE

Members: *Irene Belyakov, Robert Bonfiglio, Ralph Carrasquillo, Marie Henry, Julie Innes, Don Marozas, Jennifer Sahrle, Michael Schinski, Monica Schneider (chair), Joseph Van Remmen*

Charge from President Dahl: The Building Community Subcommittee was charged with examining assessment-related issues for groups, programs, and events already put in place to build community as well as communication issues across various groups that constitute our college community.

General Approach or Plan: Our Subcommittee addressed issues of assessment, integration, and communication building at three levels of acculturation into the college community. First, we examined the orientation process for students, faculty, and staff. Next, we examined how students, faculty, and staff experience and contribute to the community once they are members of the college community. Lastly, we explored issues of community for student, faculty, and staff members who leave our community. The following report includes both the knowledge and understanding that we gained about the programs and events available for community members as well as recommendations developed to address issues of community that remain.

I. Orientation to the SUNY Geneseo Community

A. First-Year Student Orientation and Weekend of Welcome; Julie W. Innes, Coordinator of Orientation and First-Year Programs

Currently, first-year students participate in a comprehensive two-day orientation program during the summer and a two-day program during the weekend before classes. Both programs involve various members of the college community (faculty, staff, administration, and current students) and incorporate a significant amount of diversity and community programming (see Appendix A). Included in the Student Evaluation Forms of the Summer Orientation Program are questions directly pertaining to community and diversity. Students' responses indicate that between 60-90% of first-year and transfer students who completed summer orientation in 2001 agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcomed into the SUNY Geneseo community and that they had learned about the college's commitment to both cultural diversity and respectful relationships among community members (see Appendix A). These data suggest that the orientation process is doing a great job of making our students feel welcomed into our community. Assessing student perceptions of community after the first year (or in the senior year), however, would allow us to determine if the college, by providing a welcoming and supportive community, follows through on the expectations that orientation creates for our students. Additionally, because Commission conversations revealed anecdotal concerns about transfer students, we found that we lack real data about that population, one that represents a significant portion of Geneseo's student body.

Recommendations:

1. The Commission should continue to provide support and resource services for the Orientation Advisory Committee. Several members of the Commission are currently members of the Advisory Committee.
2. The orientation process for transfer students should be examined, particularly with regard to issues of community. Enrollment trends indicate that 23% of the new students in 2001 were transfer students.

3. The Subcommittee should invite transfer students to discuss their issues and concerns as members of our college community and to provide the Commission with recommendations for improving community for transfer students.

B. Access Opportunity Program First-Year Student Orientation; Isom E. Fearn, Director of Access Opportunity Programs

During Summer 2002, the Access Opportunity Program First-Year Orientation overlapped with the college-wide First-Year Summer Orientation Program. For the first time, first-year students admitted through AOP participated in diversity- and community-related programs along with students completing the general student orientation process. This integration will provide AOP students with many opportunities to interact with other first-year students. Both the joint programs and the programs specifically designed for AOP orientation involve various members community members (e.g., faculty, staff, administration, and current students). Although assessment measures are taken at the end of every AOP summer orientation program, additional assessment questions were expected to be included this summer specifically pertaining to the newly combined orientation program. The Subcommittee has not yet had the opportunity to discuss specific details of these assessment procedures with members of AOP; the Subcommittee, however, affirms its intent to support AOP efforts in all ways possible.

Recommendations:

1. The Building Community Subcommittee should meet with Isom Fearn next academic year to discuss how the Commission could support AOP's ongoing efforts, particularly with regards to community.
2. Information gathered from the assessment measures taken at the end of orientation should be processed to assess the impact of the various workshops and programs provided during orientation, students' initial perceptions of the college community and the college's commitment to diversity, and impact of the combined orientation programs on all students' sense of belonging and community.
3. The subcommittee should invite AOP students to discuss their experiences as members of our college community and to provide the Commission with recommendations for improving the college-wide community for AOP students.

C. International Students; Mary B. Hope, Director of International Student Services

Our subcommittee has not yet had the opportunity to discuss the orientation process for international students with Mary Hope; the Subcommittee, however, affirms its intent to support ISS in all ways possible.

Recommendations:

1. The Subcommittee should meet with Mary Hope next academic year to discuss how the Commission could support ISS efforts, particularly with regards to community. Several important issues could be considered:
 - a. Are assessment measures given at orientation or elsewhere to evaluate international students' transition to the college community?

- b. How are members of the faculty, staff, and students involved in the orientation process? How can faculty, staff, and students from different parts of the college community be utilized to enhance community connections for international students?
- c. Are there adequate support services available to help international students with their transition to college? How might the Commission support ISS efforts? Does the office have enough financial and staff service support to help accomplish its goals?

2. The Subcommittee should invite second-year international students to discuss their experiences as members of the college community and provide the Commission with recommendations for improving community for international students.

D. New Faculty Orientation; David F. Gordon, Associate Provost, Coordinator of New Faculty Orientation

Currently, new faculty participate in comprehensive, year-long orientation during the first year. This program includes workshops addressing a variety of community- and diversity-related issues, including cultural competency in the classroom, information about student life, and information about counseling and health services available on campus (see Appendix B). In addition, these workshops provide new faculty with the opportunity to meet important members of the community, interact with one another, obtain important information about the formal structure of the college, and become familiar with the campus lay-out. At the end of the first year, new faculty complete an evaluation and feedback form about the orientation program (see Appendix B). This form asks new faculty to assess the usefulness of the specific workshops they attended throughout the year.

Recommendations:

1. Consider broadening the Cultural Competency workshop to include issues directly related to non-traditional students, transfer students, international students, etc. Perhaps focus on examining biases that faculty and students may bring to the classroom, biases that stem from personal history, educational experiences, and the particular training that faculty receive in their disciplines.
2. Consider how the Commission might facilitate the orientation process for new faculty. Perhaps provide a mechanism by which Commission members could reach out to new faculty as a viable support system and resource provider.
3. On the evaluation form, include questions about faculty members' perceptions of community. Provide a forum where faculty could make recommendations about how to make SUNY Geneseo a more welcoming community.
4. On the evaluation form, include questions that ask new faculty, based on their first-year experiences, to articulate their perceptions of the important values emphasized by the college community.
5. Encourage all departments to develop a mentoring system within their department for new faculty.
6. The Commission needs to examine the issue of orientation for part-time and adjunct faculty. What is currently being done? Is more needed? How can we

increase access to resources and disseminate critical information effectively to these faculty members? How can a sense of community be built for these faculty members?

E. *New Staff Orientation*; Sara Crowell Andrews, Associate Director of Payroll/Personnel Services

All new part- and full-time professional staff (including faculty) and classified staff (e.g., clerical, maintenance crew, University Police, and health center employees) participate in an orientation process with the Personnel Office. For most staff, this process includes meeting individually with a member of the Personnel Office where payroll and personnel information is completed and/or disseminated. In addition, the new employees' managers must sign a form indicating that department rules and tours of the facilities/office were provided to the employees. Moreover, all new employees receive a sheet that includes important contact information designed to help the employee get situated (e.g., where to get housing information, whom to contact for moving expenses).

Recommendations:

1. Provide clerical staff of every department with a copy of the contact sheet distributed to new employees so that they may function as an additional support and resource service for new faculty.
2. Examine the possibility of providing opportunities for professional (non-faculty) and classified staff to participate in orientation workshops currently provided for faculty.
3. Develop the means for the College to have a discussion of the orientation process used for Campus Auxiliary Services (CAS) employees, including how its mission, goals, values, and history are communicated in the context of the larger college community. For example, are new CAS employees provided with information about the college? Do CAS employees have access to privileges afforded other employees (e.g., use of the library)?
4. Explore the formal, college-wide welcoming practices for non-faculty personnel hired at Geneseo. For many such personnel, the New Faculty/Staff meeting provides their only public welcome to the campus.

II. Communication and Building Community Issues

A. *Assessing Campus Attitudes Regarding Community*

Students: Five major sources of data regarding students' perceptions of community and diversity have been collected (see Appendix C):

- *Student Evaluation Form of the Summer Orientation Program* (Julie Innes). Evaluations are available to every first-year and new transfer student who participates in orientation. The data is collected every summer.
- *SUNY Student Opinion Survey* (James McNally). Evaluations are completed by a sample of the student population at SUNY Geneseo (goal: representative sample by class year and major). This data is collected annually. Approximately 14 items on the survey pertain to community-related issues. A copy of the survey and a summary of the data for those items for 2000 can be found in Appendix C.

- *Survey of the Campus Climate on Diversity Issues* (Rose-Marie Chierici & Zhiming Zhao). This survey was conducted in the spring of 2001 and contains items regarding students' perceptions of community and diversity. Questions specifically pertaining to community issues are marked on the survey in Appendix C. This data is currently being analyzed and a full report is expected in the next academic year.

- *Diversity and Learning Research Project* (Elaine Cleeton). These interviews were completed in Fall 2001 as part of the Sociology Seminar in Sociological Inquiry. Seminar participants conducted interviews with students assessing their experiences with and perceptions of diversity and active learning.

- *National Survey for Student Engagement* (James McNally). This survey was completed by a random sample of first-year and senior students this past semester. The data will be available in the Fall 2002. The Subcommittee has not had the opportunity to see if the survey included any community-related questions. This survey could potentially be conducted annually. This year was the first time our college participated in this survey.

Faculty: Three major sources of data regarding faculty members' perceptions of community and diversity have been collected (see Appendix D).

- *Survey of the Campus Climate on Diversity Issues* (Rose-Marie Chierici & Zhiming Zhao). This survey was conducted in the spring of 2001 and contains items regarding faculty's perceptions of community and diversity. This data is currently being analyzed and a full report is expected in the next academic year.

- *Diversity and Learning Research Project* (Elaine Cleeton). In Spring 2002, Dr. Cleeton and her sociology seminar conducted interviews with faculty assessing their experiences with and perceptions of diversity and active learning.

- *Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey* (James McNally). This survey contains items assessing faculty's perceptions of campus climate and beliefs about the importance of diversity on campus (see Appendix D). It is conducted about every 3 years. Enclosed is a copy of the results of the survey completed in 1998 compared with data collected from other public 4-year colleges and all 4-year institutions. The results of this year's survey will be available in the fall semester.

Staff: Two major sources of data regarding staff members' perceptions of community and diversity have been or will be collected.

- *Survey of the Campus Climate on Diversity Issues* (Rose-Marie Chierici & Zhiming Zhao). This survey was conducted in the spring of 2001 and contains items regarding staff's perceptions of community and diversity. This data is currently being analyzed and a full report is expected in the next academic year.

- *Diversity and Learning Research Project* (Elaine Cleeton). Next academic year, Dr. Cleeton and her sociology seminar class will conduct interviews with staff on community and diversity-related issues.

OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Integration of resources and information needs to occur.* For students, faculty, and staff, issues of community and diversity are being assessed. However, there is currently no

formal mechanism for integrating and applying the information gathered by the various sources. Moreover, there is no formal mechanism for assessing these issues on a regular basis so that changes can be implemented systematically and progress can be monitored. Although this integration and formalization would be difficult to do, the Subcommittee feels that it would be a crucial step toward developing a mechanism for assessing progress and effecting relevant change with regard to community. Without this information, the efforts of pockets of individuals and groups will continue to overlap, and the data that is collected and analyzed will probably end up in the file drawer or on the bookshelf. Thus, without some commitment to resources, this data is unlikely to be disseminated to the larger community and is unlikely to lead to change.

2. *Collect and process exit interview or survey data.* Currently, students complete a senior survey, but this survey does not directly assess issues of community and diversity. In addition, there seems to be no college-wide formal mechanism for assessing the perceptions and concerns of faculty and staff who leave the institution.

B. *Increasing Communication and Understanding within the Campus Community*

1. Disseminating information in order to increase a sense of community

a. Publish and disseminate background information on new faculty and staff to members of the college community. Depending on the type of background information (e.g., demographic versus interests/hobbies), this information could be collected and disseminated by the Personnel Office or through a collaborative effort of the Personnel Office and appropriate divisions of the College. Perhaps new faculty and staff could be officially welcomed to the community by being introduced at the All-College Convocation on the academic year's Opening Day .

b. Develop and disseminate a list of students, faculty, and staff who are willing to serve as available sources of support for students dealing with issues of adjustment and/or community. Volunteer faculty and staff could provide information about themselves that could provide students with potential contacts and support. This list could be cross-referenced for different group memberships, backgrounds, and identities of the individuals on the list. Students could access different lists by using key words or phrases. This information could be gathered and disseminated through a collaborative effort of appropriate divisions of the College.

c. Develop and disseminate a list of faculty and staff who are willing to serve as potential contacts and/or support for other faculty or staff. This list could be cross-referenced for different group memberships, backgrounds, and identities of the individuals on the list. In addition to traditional group memberships (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation), information about interests and hobbies could be included to allow people to make contacts with others who have similar interests. This information could be gathered and disseminated through the same subcommittee developed for supporting students.

d. Departments could develop a list of local agencies and key people in the general community who could serve as viable resources and connections for faculty in their teaching and in their research.

2. Increasing Access to and Expanding Development for College Community Members

a. *Faculty:* Several workshops related to diversity and cultural competencies were provided for faculty this past academic year. For example, a workshop on cultural competencies in

the classroom was provided to new faculty as a part of orientation. In addition, workshops addressed issues specific to students with disabilities (conducted by Tabitha Buggie-Hunt), ESL/international students (conducted by Irene Belyakov), and gay, lesbian, bisexual students (conducted by students working with Emilye Crosby) were provided for faculty this past semester. Some of these workshops were not well attended. Furthermore, there are some linked issues related to teaching and working with a diverse student body that need to be addressed in an integrated fashion.

Recommendations:

Develop a formal forum designed to increase education about and understanding of issues related to cultural competency and diversity in the classroom for faculty and staff. This new forum would provide a more comprehensive and integrated discussion of broader teaching and community issues (e.g., equity for all students, examination of biases and perspectives inherent in each faculty member's approach to teaching), as well as issues and concerns specific to particular groups (e.g., students with disabilities, ESL students, international students, transfer students, non-traditional students). This forum could be coordinated and developed in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Center and could include presentations/discussions led by relevant staff and faculty members. In order for this forum to successfully accomplish its goals, it needs to be:

- Formally and meaningfully supported by the administration from the top down;
- Framed within larger pedagogical issues and classroom concerns in the classroom;
- Seen as relevant to all faculty and necessary to promote community, accomplish College mission goals, and teach effectively;
- Focused on how faculty could be proactive rather than reactive;
- Conducted at a time specifically allotted for the forum. It could, for example, be held as part of the summer development seminar currently being developed by the Commission or could be held during the semester in the all-college free period with a special request from President Dahl that all other committee meetings and programs be postponed.

Additionally, new faculty orientation workshops might be made available to all interested faculty.

b. *Staff* (including professional, classified, and paraprofessional):

Recommendations:

- Examine diversity and professional development opportunities available to staff members.
- Provide increased opportunities for staff to take advantage of leadership training and diversity programs that are held beyond the all-college free period. This would require training- or release- time for classified staff.
- Allow interested staff to participate in some of the workshops and programs that are currently available only to faculty members or develop similar programs designed specifically designed for staff members.
- Encourage departments and their student employees to participate in a cultural competency workshop or GOLD leadership seminar.
- Consider coordinating diversity development for student paraprofessionals (e.g., Orientation Advisors, Writing and Learning Center tutors, Health Guards, Resident Advisors).

- Extend diversity development programs to include issues beyond cultural and ethnic diversity.

3. Increasing Communication and Collaboration Among Groups

- Examine ways to institutionalize a process whereby student organizations can coordinate their programming to reduce overlap of events. Kelly Clark, the Director of Multicultural Affairs, has already been facilitating this process with many student organizations. Discuss ways that the Commission can support this process.
- Continue to support the efforts of groups who have historically had difficulty with one another (e.g., police and ethnic minority students) or who do not typically see themselves as connected (e.g., Greek-letter organizations and faculty), with opportunities to interact and communicate positively and proactively.

4. Identifying and Addressing Issues of Community for Different Student Groups

The Commission needs to conduct student-centered discussion groups with a variety of different student constituencies to identify important community issues relevant for those constituencies. As a result of one vigorous Commission discussion, our primary focus this past semester became non-traditional and transfer students (again, 23% of the incoming class of 2001 were transfer students). We identified community issues and concerns regarding these students. The next step is to meet directly with these students and with other student groups.

In our discussions about non-traditional and transfer students, the following issues and concerns were identified:

- Is the college set up to serve this population of students? Is that something the college is committed to do? How does this issue fit in with the college's mission statement? How can this issue be most effectively addressed with the college community?
- What are the perceptions of students, faculty, and staff about the quality of transfer students? Is this affecting how the classroom functions? How can the college best dispel any myths that may exist about transfer students?
- Does the college have data to address the issue of preparedness among transfer students? Can such data be collected in ways not framed only in terms of deficiencies?
- What are the mechanisms that exist to support students who need help? Is this information being effectively communicated to all transfer students? How can faculty and staff provide these links for transfer students who need support without stigmatizing them?

5. Identifying and Developing Overarching Themes of Community

Two documents that could potentially serve as mechanisms for developing overarching community goals are the SUNY Geneseo Statement of Diversity and Community being developed by the Commission and "Reasonable Expectations," a document published by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) that identifies expectations that community members should have for one another to promote the highest level of learning and community (see Appendix E). These themes could serve as overarching goals around which to assess current community-related programming and perhaps to organize new programs.

6. Encouraging and Facilitating Assessment of Existing Community-Building Programs and Events

In recent years, there have been many different programs designed to increase understanding and sensitivity among members within our community. Rather than developing additional programs and workshops that work in isolation, the Commission needs to support and facilitate the development of larger integrated goals that could serve as effective ways of organizing and assessing the programs and workshops currently in place. This framework could then be used to identify issues that are currently not addressed and to guide the development of these new programs. This process would encourage integration of community resources, increase communication among different facets of the community, reduce overlapping efforts, maximize the strengths and contributions of different facets of the community, and improve the effectiveness of the programs through assessment.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Members: Tom Greenfield, Jo Kirk, Heidi Levine, Robert Owens (chair)

Throughout Spring 2002, the subcommittee met with various campus constituencies (e.g., Student Association) to discuss what values might be represented in a campus-wide statement on diversity and community. The subcommittee also began to draft a statement and held a conversation about that draft with the full Commission.

Recommendations: Subcommittee should continue to craft a statement consonant with Geneseo's profile and values. Subcommittee should also solicit feedback across many campus constituencies, not only about what such a statement should look like but also about how such a statement might actually be used in everyday campus life.