

Report of the 1999-2000

Commission on Diversity and Community

State University of New York at Geneseo

Recommendations

I. Building a College Community

A. Assessment of Existing Programs and Experiences

As a community, we have no systematic reporting of the effectiveness of current programs and experiences that attempt to educate the community on issues of diversity and multiculturalism.

Recommendation: The President should assign a committee to oversee assessment of the efficacy of current programs and experiences regarding diversity and multicultural issues. This committee should include those faculty and staff familiar with outcomes assessment.

B. Oversight

No mechanism exists for monitoring College progress in building and maintaining a diverse and welcoming community.

Recommendation: A committee of the Commission should review, monitor, and report the College's progress on these 1998-1999 Commission recommendations adopted by the President.

C. Integration of Multicultural Events

Efforts must continue to increase visibility, advertising, and coordination at campus multicultural events.

Recommendation: The College should explore creative ways to encourage co-sponsoring of events. Specifically, Central Council allocates money according to the events sponsored by each organization. If an organization does not sponsor events, it loses that money. It is unclear whether or not the current system allows for the possibility of organizations to cosponsor events and yet retain their budget for the following year. Assess interest in special funds for cosponsored events and perhaps restructure current system to allow for creative allocation of funds for events.

D. Integration of Curricular with Co-curricular and Residence Life

Experiences

Students, faculty, and staff have expressed concerns regarding the lack of integration of student experiences in the classroom with students' co-curricular and residence life experiences. Residence Life currently attempts to build community in the residence halls. As a Community we must find effective ways to integrate growth and learning in the classroom with experiences outside of class, to improve strategies to promote communication and respect among students, and to help students identify their roles within a larger college community that appreciates and values diversity.

Recommendations:

1. The College should

- a. Support Residence Life in their efforts to address challenges and concerns regarding community, both in the residence halls and at the college.
 - b. Determine which programs or awards are currently in place to provide rewards and recognition for leadership and service related to diversity initiatives and building community.
 - c. Provide these programs with adequate support (financial and otherwise).
2. Student Government and the Office of Multicultural Affairs should
- a. Continue to facilitate the forming of alliances between groups to see if they can work together on programs and promotions.
3. The Commission on Diversity and Community should
- a. Assess faculty, students, and staff views regarding the factors each group feels are important for the community's growth and development.
 - b. If discrepancies exist, explore the possibility of addressing these issues in terms of building community.
4. The President should add the Director of Resident Life, a representative from the College Senate Executive Committee, and the President of Central Council to the Commission.

E. First year and Transfer Student Transitioning to SUNY Geneseo

Incoming students often feel a lack of connection and isolation. Student social groups might help in the transitioning process. A campus-wide peer mentoring program for First Year and transfer students would be an important part of an integrated transitioning plan. The type of mentoring offered should vary with the needs of each student and should include social as well as academic aspects. Faculty should also have a role in the transitioning process.

The transition for transfer students is particularly difficult because of their lower numbers and the difficulty in identifying other transfer students who may be experiencing the same transitioning difficulties. Moreover, transfer students often find themselves faced with upper-level classes from the beginning rather than slowly transitioning to more difficult material.

First Year Seminars offer a wonderful opportunity to integrate incoming students into our community. Unfortunately, only about 25% of first-year students take these courses.

First-Year Enrichment Programs have been created in those residence halls which house only first-year students. Each center has strategic programming for the first six weeks on issues that are particularly relevant for first-year students.

The Orientation Advising Committee met with the Commission and discussed coordinating the experiences of incoming students. Faculty and staff members of the Orientation Advising Committee agreed to continue addressing these issues toward an integrative transitioning plan in their discussion next academic year.

Recommendation: The Orientation Advising Committee should continue to address an integrated transitioning plan.

F. Campus Community Center

A Campus Community Center can be a welcoming place for all members of the community. Easily accessible and a central part of the community, the Center would be beneficial in helping the community move toward an integrated, centralized model that crosses boundaries between students, faculty, and staff. As such, it should be a place that houses the services and programs related to multicultural and diversity

issues as well as a place that provides community members with the opportunity to interact informally with one another.

Recommendation: The Commission should gather information about models used at other institutions that we use as benchmarks for other studies and comparisons: perhaps other SUNY colleges (e.g., Brockport) or COPLAC colleges. (See Suggested Action for the 2000-2001 Commission beginning on page 7 of this report.)

G. Campus Community Statement.

At the First Annual SUNY Brockport Diversity Conference, Dr. George Toth, director of Career Services at SUNY Brockport presented the Better Community Statement developed at SUNY Brockport (see Appendix C). This statement has been adopted by the SUNY Brockport college community and serves as a guideline of expected behavior for all members of the community.

Recommendations:

1. The College should undertake drafting a campus community statement and a statement of related responsibilities.
2. Campus Community Statement should be introduced in the orientation process for students, faculty, and staff and be integrated as a part of the fabric of the campus community.

H. Efforts to Decrease Bias

In the 1998-1999 Commission Report, we addressed several issues relative to decreasing bias on campus. In this section, the Commission makes further recommendations, especially regarding sexual orientation, which was only addressed minimally in our previous report.

Recommendations:

1. Residence Life should
 - a. Provide more training for Resident Assistants in residence halls in counseling, peer mediation, conflict resolution, and diversity.
 - b. Develop clear plans for dealing with harassment in the residence halls.
 - c. Distribute Student Bill of Rights early in the academic year and provide multiple opportunities for students to discuss these issues.
2. The Vice-President for Student and Campus Life should
 - a. Develop a "bias brochure" that specifies procedures for reporting bias-related actions.
3. The Milne Library should
 - a. Increase subscriptions to more minority and gay-oriented magazines.
4. The College Union should
 - a. provide more representation of minority and same-sex couples on art and posters displayed on campus.
5. The College could decrease bias relative to multiculturalism, including sexual

orientation in the following ways:

- a. Residence Life should change the policy that does not allow same-sex couples involved in a relationship to room together.
- b. Faculty should infuse issues of multiculturalism, including sexual orientation, into the curriculum wherever possible (e.g., social science core courses).
- c. The Office of Multicultural Affairs should develop a list of "gay-friendly" faculty as an alternative option to the counseling center.
- d. The Counseling Center and GLBF should provide training on sexual orientation to faculty interested in establishing "safe zones" for individuals dealing with such issues.

I. Training of Faculty and Staff

The College needs to continue to address the training of faculty and staff related to issues of diversity. In recognition of this need, the Commission recommends several items.

Recommendations:

1. Provide training and resources to new and returning faculty and administrative, professional, and classified staff. This could include:
 - a. a series of workshops on issues of diversity and community in the classroom.
 - b. a program that provides faculty with information about the goals of the college, the structure of the college, and the programs available for faculty, students, and staff.
 - c. open discussions with returning faculty members (this could also serve to get diversity information to faculty who are already part of the college community).
 - d. open discussions with members of the AOP and disabilities programs and diverse student organizations, such as HUG, BSU, and GLBF, to dispel myths and provide accurate information about these students.
 - e. interactive opportunities with students from diverse backgrounds.
 - f. perhaps a mandatory retreat for a day for new faculty.
 - g. peer mentoring (either at the department or college level).
 - h. orientation materials to include a booklet and web-site on diversity.
2. Explore creative ways for incorporating service contributions and the scholarship of teaching of issues of diversity and multiculturalism into renewal, continuing appointment, and promotion decisions.
3. Work should continue through the Provost's Office for the establishment of a Teaching and Learning Resource Center with a full-time director who would coordinate our present fragmented efforts to address diversity issues among faculty at Geneseo into a coherent program. The Center would:
 - incorporate diversity concerns into new faculty orientation.
 - provide all faculty with sensitivity training for helping students with disabilities, and for addressing race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation issues within the classroom.

- provide guidance to help faculty redesign courses and create new ones to incorporate diversity and multicultural issues
 - coordinate departmental mentoring efforts into a college-wide system so that new faculty do not feel isolated and problems are addressed before they become crises.
 - provide a congenial gathering place for faculty to exchange information and ideas, encouraging greater cross-campus dialogue and integrating new faculty quickly and completely into the college community.
4. Apply for a UUP Grant to establish a pilot teaching circle on the topic of integrating diversity and multicultural issues into the existing curriculum.
 5. Reconfigure the H Form to include a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Category that would:

- reward faculty for participating in sensitivity training sessions.
 - reward faculty mentors for helping new colleagues.
 - provide greater incentive for redesigning old courses to incorporate diversity issues and creating new multicultural courses.
 - acknowledge the value of efforts by faculty to counsel and support students outside the official advisement structure.
6. Provide faculty training.
 - to help faculty infuse diversity issues, such as sexual orientation, into existing courses.
 - to teach faculty how to address the topic of differences in a sensitive manner.
 - to teach faculty how to deal with racist, sexist, or homophobic remarks in and out of the classroom.

J. Integration of Student Academic Support Services

Access to and information about academic support services is uneven across the campus. This situation might be moderated with our recommendations.

1. Departments might explore providing student tutors, especially for large introductory courses
2. The proposed Community Center would be an ideal central location for an Academic Help Desk that could refer students to appropriate help in learning centers or departments.

II. Continuing the Campus Conversation

A College discussion on diversity and community has begun. Much of this discussion has been at higher levels in the administration and within the Commission. This communication will continue and can be nurtured in other areas of campus life, beginning at a grassroots level that includes departments, student organizations, classes, residence halls, administrative units, and informal groupings.

Discussion within these groups can facilitate communication across the College and aid the incorporation of diversity issues into the consciousness of the College Community. Continuing discussion at all levels can only benefit the college and alert prospective and current faculty, staff, and students to the College's commitment to continued dialogue on the issues of diversity and community. It is through such communication that the College can evolve.

The Commission has assigned the task of furthering these discussion to itself. (See Suggested Action for the 2000-2001 Commission beginning on page 7 of this report.) Other recommendations can also raise awareness.

A. College Senate

Recommendation: The Commission chair should make regular announcements in College Senate of Commission activities. The activities should become an integral part of campus life.

B. "History Months"

Recommendation: The College should continue to support and facilitate celebration of the 'history months'. A committee of the Commission could be given the task of co-coordinating the creation of these celebrations and supporting departments and student groups in these efforts. There should be an annual budget to do so.

C. PATH Awards

Recommendation: A committee of the Commission should be given the responsibility of administering the PATH awards.

Suggested Action for the 2000-2001 Commission

I. Building a College Community

A. Assessment of Existing Programs and Experiences

1. Assess the College's progress on the 1998-1999 Commission recommendations.

B. Oversight

1. Oversee implementation of those commission recommendations adopted by the President.

C. Integration of Multicultural Events

1. Continue to explore how to improve communication networks on campus in order to better integrate events and disseminate important information to community members.
2. Facilitate discussions between different cultural and social organizations to improve coordination and integration of events sponsored by the different organizations.
3. Include Greek Organizations in the discussions regarding coordination and integration of events.
4. Invite Central Council and IGC to discuss the role that they might play in building a sense of community.

D. Integration of Curricular with Co-curricular and Residence Life

Experiences

1. Assess attitudes regarding the value of diversity among faculty, staff, and students.

2. Collect quantitative and qualitative data on ALANA students experiences with regard to community at SUNY Geneseo.

Do they feel disproportionately greater responsibility for improving diversity issues on campus?

If so, what are the outcomes from this?

3. Identify community issues that may specifically pertain to members of groups that are underrepresented on campus.

4. Determine which events and programs are already in place for building community and assess their effectiveness.

5. Develop ways to support and strengthen programs already in place for building community .

E. Campus Community Center

1. Gather information about models used at other institutions that we use as benchmarks for other studies and comparisons: perhaps other SUNY colleges (e.g., Brockport) or COPLAC colleges.

a. Suggestions for assessment:

- Collaborate with Student Affairs Division in the development of the survey.
- Conduct an on-line survey or a survey on the Geneseo web page.
- Collect quantitative data followed up with qualitative data.
- Increase faculty/staff participation through announcements at Convocation and in senate meetings.
- Increase student participation through announcements during Central Council meetings.

b. Suggestions about the structure of the survey.

- Provide an overview of the goals of the survey that includes a philosophical statement and rationale for a Campus Community. Center (e.g., the role of the Center in enhancing the educational mission of the college).
- Alternate the rationale for a given section with questions assessing perceptions and opinions of that section throughout the survey.

c. Cautions regarding survey development.

- Do not be too specific in the descriptions of the Center or in the questions asked.
- Do not be too lengthy in the number of questions or in the answer individuals are required to give in order to complete the survey.
- Do not specify location or specific services or programs.

D. Follow Up Data on Faculty, Staff and Student Retention or Departure.

1. Review the data gathered on faculty, staff, and student retention and departure, especially among ALANA faculty and make further proposals to the President.

E. Daycare for Faculty, Staff, and Nontraditional Students

1. Analyze the results of the Spring 2000 survey and address problem areas.
2. Continue to gather ideas from other institutions (like MCC) that have found creative solutions to day care needs.
3. Seek ways to make the day care facility more accessible to the children of faculty, staff, and students who have incompatible schedules because they do not attend Geneseo Central School.
4. Seek ways to accommodate the children of Geneseo faculty, staff, and students of school age on days when their schools have vacations days but SUNY-Geneseo does not.
5. Seek ways to allow Geneseo faculty, staff, and students priority for summer day care programs.
6. Seek ways to provide discounts for families with more than one child.
7. Look into possibilities for providing emergency day care for sick children.
8. Explore options for utilizing teacher training programs in the School of Education and/or the new state requirement for twenty-five hours of field service for new teachers to provide the necessary personnel for more flexibility in day care provisions during after school hours, holidays, and vacations.
9. Explore options for using Geneseo facilities and students to enrich the experiences of children in day care at Geneseo during after school hours, holidays, and vacations.

F. Student Services

1. Analyze collected data on student satisfaction with present services and identify any unmet needs
2. Continue efforts to coordinate fragmented services and make them more accessible.

II. Continuing the Campus Conversation

The Commission on Diversity and Community should

A. Campus Community Statement

Begin a discussion with small groups of students, student organizations, departments, and staff to formulate a Campus Community Statement and a statement of related responsibilities.

1. Recommendations Regarding a Campus Community Statement
 - a. Administrative approval and support are vital.
 - b. The Community Statement needs to be easily accessible to all members of the college community.
 - c. The Community Statement needs to be integrated into the college community. This statement could be integrated at all levels, including program training for Residence Life staff and orientation for new students, faculty, and staff.
 - d. The committee working on this statement should try to complete it in time get it into many of the brochures and handbooks provided to students, faculty, and staff.

B. Cine Diversite

Reconfigure Cine Diversite and pursue making such presentations an integral part of course offerings.

C. Speakers

Continue the project to bring Barry Rand, the CEO of Avis, to Geneseo.

D. Diversity website

Continue to work on the Diversity website.

Appendix A

Committee Reports

Report of the Committee on Building Community

The Building Community Subcommittee was developed to address issues of community identified by the 1998-1999 Report of the Commission on Diversity and Community and to increase the involvement of faculty, staff, and student members of the community in our discussions. For the 1999-2000 academic year, our subcommittee met weekly to address these issues. At various points throughout the year, we have had discussions with students from the various cultural and social organizations (i.e., BSU, GLBF, Hillel, HUG, JSU, Jump Nation, USCA, and WAC), Residence Life staff and students, the Vice-President of Student and Campus Life, and other interested student, faculty, and staff members.

I. Fall 1999

In fall 1999, our subcommittee was charged with identifying and discussing relevant issues surrounding community and generating recommendations to enact change. Four major issues were identified and addressed.

A. Coordination and Representation of Multicultural Events

The Subcommittee addressed issues related to multicultural events on campus. Representatives from various student organizations (i.e., BSU, HUG, USCA, Jump Nation, Hillel/JSU, WAC, GLBF) attended at least one of the meetings. Two major concerns or issues were addressed.

• How to increase participation at multicultural events: Faculty, staff, and students generated recommendations for increasing participation at multicultural events. These included: increasing advertising of events to all members of the community including personal invitations to faculty and staff, increasing faculty support by encouraging faculty to think creatively about how such events could be integrated as part of courses, and scheduling events in a way that minimizes overlap of events. In addition, we discussed the role that student groups could play in this process.

• Coordination of multicultural activities and events: Students as well as faculty and staff expressed a frustration with the lack of coordination of multicultural events on campus. However, there was consensus that the situation has continued to improve over the past couple of years. Kelly Clark (Director of the Multicultural Affairs Office) and Gerard Torres (student) developed a plan for creating a web based calendar where all cultural and social events could be posted. They completed the calendar in spring 2000; it is currently accessible to the campus community. In addition, Kelly Clark continues to contact executive board members of the various cultural and social groups to help facilitate coordination between the groups.

B. Integration of Curricular with Co-curricular and Residence Life

Experiences

Students, faculty, and staff expressed concerns regarding the lack of integration of student experiences in the classroom with students' co-curricular and residence life experiences. The Subcommittee met with students from various cultural and social organizations as well as students and staff from Residence Life to address these issues. Three major topics were discussed.

• The Role of Residence Life in Building Community: Members of Residence Life discussed the ways in which Residence Life currently helps to build community in the residence halls, with an emphasis on the challenges/concerns faced by Residence Life regarding community. Some challenges identified included: finding effective ways to join with other in the community in encouraging stronger integration of student growth and learning in the classroom with their experiences outside of class, improving strategies to promote communication and respect among students in the residence halls, and helping students to view their residence halls as vital communities within a larger college community that appreciates and values diversity.

• General Issues Surrounding Community: Students, faculty, and staff identified important questions that need to be addressed regarding community before major growth or change can occur as a campus community. These included the value our community places on diversity, the role that ethnic minority group members on this campus are expected to play with regard to justifying the importance of diversity, strategies that could foster a vested interest in the need to develop community, and integrating curricular with co-curricular experiences for students.

• Ideas and Recommendations for Building Community: Students, faculty, and staff generated ideas and recommendations for building community.

C. First year and Transfer Student Transitioning to SUNY Geneseo

The Subcommittee addressed issues related to making the transition to life at SUNY Geneseo. Several important points were raised.

• The Need to Find Others with Similar Backgrounds and Experiences: Students discussed the lack of connection and isolation that they felt when they first came to campus. We discussed how student social groups might help in the transitioning process.

• Peer Mentoring: Several students from Dr. Latragna's INTD 208 class expressed a strong interest in developing a campus-wide peer mentoring program for First Year and transfer students. The following issues with regard to peer mentoring and transitioning were discussed:

- Mentoring as an important part of an integrated transitioning plan
- The importance of providing peer mentoring for as many First Year and transfer students as possible
- The importance of training peer mentors
- Acknowledgement that students needs differ depending on their circumstances and the specific issues they face on campus
- Diversity in the type of mentoring offered depending on the needs of the student (e.g., social as well as academic)
- Peer mentoring used in conjunction with a list of potential faculty and staff that they could approach with transitioning issues as well as other programs

- Other functions the program could serve (e.g., communicating to incoming and prospective students what SUNY Geneseo is all about)

- Beyond Traditional Group Lines: Several students expressed the need for cross-cutting opportunities that went beyond traditional group lines. They emphasized the need to provide mentoring and other transitioning experiences that were not solely based on demographic and background statistics. They felt that the cross-cutting experiences were an important part of student growth and development.

- Transfer Transitioning: Students felt that the transition for transfer students is particularly difficult because there are fewer transfer students and it is difficult for them to identify other transfer students who may be experiencing the same transitioning difficulties. Moreover, transfer students often find themselves faced with upper-level classes from the beginning rather than slowly transitioning to more difficult material. Lastly, most of the other students at their level already know each other, making it more difficult to develop interpersonal connections.

D. Emphasis on Assessment of Existing Programs and Experiences

Dr. Bonfiglio, Vice-President of Student and Campus Life, discussed the importance that assessment could play in addressing issues of community. Specifically, he emphasized assessment of existing programs and experiences regarding diversity and multicultural issues. These could include attitudinal changes of students as programs are implemented and students perspective of the programs and experiences that had the most impact on those attitudinal changes. Faculty, student, and staff members raised the following issues regarding the assessment process. First, it was noted that assessment takes time and experience. Therefore, it would probably work most effectively if it is conducted by a research team of individuals who are committed and knowledgeable about assessment issues. Perhaps faculty members of the research team could receive "scholarly activity" credit for the research conducted to benefit the campus community. Another possibility discussed was that assessment could be incorporated as part of methods courses in certain departments (e.g., sociology) that have quantitative and qualitative data collection projects as part of the course. Funding for the assessment project will need to be addressed. Lastly, assessment will require commitment from the campus community; they must be willing to contribute to the process.

II. Spring 2000

In spring 2000, our subcommittee was charged with two major projects: 1) addressing issues surrounding the need for a multicultural/community center on campus and 2) facilitating discussion regarding an integrated first year and transfer transitioning plan. Below are the four major issues that emerged from our discussions.

A. Campus Community Center

The Subcommittee began addressing the issue of a community center by identifying several potential goals or roles that the Center could serve. Then, we generated a preliminary list of some of the purposes the Center might serve for the SUNY Geneseo community. Both the overarching goals and the possible purposes for the Center can be found in Appendix B. The focus then turned to the issue of assessment of need and desire for a community center. The recommendations generated by the Subcommittee are presented below.

Important issues addressed by a Campus Community Center: Our Subcommittee generated different issues of community and diversity that could be addressed with a Campus Community Center. These included diversification of students, faculty, and staff in terms of recruitment and retention as well as student development.

B. Campus Community Statement.

At the First Annual SUNY Brockport Diversity Conference, Dr. George Toth, director of Career Services at SUNY Brockport presented the Better Community Statement developed at SUNY Brockport (see

Appendix C). This statement has been adopted by the SUNY Brockport college community and serves as a guideline of expected behavior for all members of the community. All of the student, faculty, and staff members agreed that our college should develop a similar statement for the college community. Discussions with SUNY Geneseo students elicited several suggestions for a community statement (see Appendix D).

C. Integrative Transitioning Plan for First Year and Transfer Students

The Subcommittee met with faculty and staff members that play a primary role in students transitioning experiences, including Tom Greenfield (Dean of the College), Richard Farquharson (Coordinator of Orientation and Greek Affairs, co-chair of the Orientation Advising Committee), Kathy Trainor (Coordinator of College Union Activities), Debra Hill (Director of Alumni and Parent Relations), and Calvin Gantt (Assistant Director of AOP). Six major issues were discussed.

1. Integrating the general orientation process with the AOPs orientation process: Although everybody felt it was important to integrate these experiences, logistically it is very difficult given the programs and events scheduled for each type of orientation.
2. Coordination of Tracking Students Progress and Assessment of the Programs: Currently, we do not track students progress in a systematic fashion nor do we have an assessment plan for the programs in the transitioning experience.
3. First Year Seminars: These seminars are a wonderful opportunity to integrate incoming students into our community. Unfortunately, only about 25% of first-year students take these courses. Two issues influencing the number of students who participate include the number of courses offered voluntarily by faculty and staff and the volunteer nature of the program for students. Faculty and staff members who teach the courses take on an additional load and not all first-year students opt to take these courses voluntarily. The major disadvantage of making these seminars a required course is the resources (time, money, faculty/staff) that would be needed to accommodate all of the incoming students.
4. First-Year Enrichment Program: Freshmen centers have been created where those residence halls are only for first-year students. Each center has strategic programming for the first six weeks on issues that are particularly relevant for first-year students. Issues of value for the students, the staff support needed to sustain these centers, and assessment of the effectiveness of these centers were discussed.
5. The Role of Greek Organizations in the Transitioning Process: Greek organizations play a major role in the social life of the institution for students. They should be integrated with the transitioning experience and brought into the discussions of community.
6. Integration of Academic with Co-curricular Experiences •

**Faculty and staff members of the Orientation Advising Committee agreed to continue addressing these issues toward an integrative transitioning plan in their discussion next academic year.

D. Concerns of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Students

The Subcommittee met with student members of GLBF to discuss their concerns. Five major issues were raised.

1. Harassment in the Residence Halls: Students felt there was a lack of respect and a significant amount of biased behavior that is tolerated in the Residence Halls. They felt more RA training was needed for counseling, peer mediation/conflict resolution and diversity.
2. Lack of Diversity in the Curriculum: Students felt there was a lack of diversity issues in the curriculum, especially with regard to issues of sexual orientation. When these issues are discussed, they are framed as special topics rather than infused throughout the courses.

3. Lack of Faculty Training and Sensitivity to Issues of Sexual Orientation.
4. Lack of Supportive Places for Students to go When They Are Dealing with Issues Of Identity or Biased Behavior Toward Them.
5. Lack of Books and Art with Gay-Oriented Themes in the Library and on Campus.

E. Training of Faculty and Staff

The College has not addressed the training of faculty and staff related to issues of diversity. It will be easiest to address this issue through the training of new faculty.

Report of the "Back to the Drawing Board" Committee

The Back to the Drawing Board Sub-Committee worked on three unresolved areas within the 1998-1999 Commission Report to President Dahl.

- I. Gathering data on why faculty with diverse backgrounds leave or remain at Geneseo and suggesting ways for strengthening the support system for such faculty.
- II. Assessing the affordability and accessibility of present daycare services at Geneseo, and identifying unmet needs.
- III. Collecting data on the effectiveness of current academic student services, identifying any unmet needs, and assessing the impact of a potential increase in the numbers of students from diverse backgrounds on these services.

I. Gathering Data on Faculty Retention or Departure.

We discussed the idea of exit interviews. Guest Don Lackey, who has conducted them in the past, found them unhelpful. Guest Dave Gordon agreed that an anonymous questionnaire addressed to the Diversity Committee rather than to the administration might elicit more open responses. With the help of Guest Jim McNally, we identified faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds who have left Geneseo over the past ten years. With the help of Dave Gordon, we composed a questionnaire which will be sent in hard copy mail to these former faculty and staff members, as well as to present faculty and staff with diverse backgrounds, and to an equal sampling of non-diverse faculty and staff members. Our goal is not to collect statistics (the numbers involved are too small) but to uncover problems and to find solutions. This questionnaire will be mailed out by the end of the semester.

II. Assessing the Affordability and Accessibility of Present Daycare Services.

With the help of Guests Barb McKinney, Bill Gohlman, and Meg Stolee, who had previously conducted an informal day care survey, we designed a new questionnaire to assess the affordability and accessibility of the present daycare system and to gauge present and future needs. We will mail this questionnaire to faculty, staff, and nontraditional students by the end of the semester. We have also begun the process of collecting information on how other institutions (like MCC) have handled day care needs. We need to wait for the results of the questionnaire to proceed.

III. Collecting data on the effectiveness of current academic student services.

We did not get very far with this issue. Members of the committee and guests decided that data on the effectiveness of current services already exists. Guests Dean Greenfield, Jim McNally and Isom Fearn volunteered to help collect it. This effort is still in process. Concerns were raised about the fragmentation of present services located in diverse departmental spaces throughout the college and about whether students are aware of many of the services currently provided and know how to access them. Dean Greenfield noted the recent creation of a web site that lists academic support services in one location (<http://www.geneseo.edu/acadsupt/>). There were also concerns that some

students who might benefit from existing programs are not eligible for these services, for example, foreign students who might benefit from note taking services that are provided through the AOP program. Access to support services of this type might become even more crucial if the college is successful in its efforts to increase the numbers of these students.

Report of the Communication Committee

The Communication Committee accomplished the following:

A. Cine Diversity-The Diversity film series

- Showed "Farewell, My Concubine", "Rosewood", and "My Left Foot"
- Requested and received stipend from President Dahl for Spring 2000
- Enlisted Randy Kaplan to help develop list of film selections from suggestions offered by staff and faculty. "My Left Foot" was introduced by Professor Denny Van Horn.
- Average attendance--30 to 35 students, 0 administration, 1 staff (one showing), 1 faculty (one showing), 2 community members(one showing). Most students attended for extra credit in a class. Attendance dropped 50% by the end of films.
- Publicity about Cine Diversite published in Lamron, Encompass, Democrat and Chronicle, Events-I and televised events list.

B. Invitation to Barry Rand, CEO of Avis, for fall of 2000

- Enlisted Business School assistance in offering program.
- Enlisted president Dahl's assistance in inviting Mr. Rand and funding his travel expenses.

C. Member Gerard Torres assisted Kelly Clark in development of diversity activities website. Gerard, a student is webmaster.

Appendix B

Campus Community Center

I. Broad Issues/Goals

A. The Center needs to be a place that adds to what we already have and does not duplicate already existing services and programs.

B. The Center must be a place where all members of the community feel welcomed.

C. The Center needs to be entrenched in the community in terms of content as well as location. In order for the Center to be easily accessible and a central part of the community, it is imperative that it be centrally located.

D. The Center should help the community move toward an integrated, centralized model that serves and crosses boundaries between students, faculty, and staff. Therefore, it should be a place that houses the services and programs related to multicultural and diversity issues as well as a place that provides community members with the opportunity to interact informally with one another.

II. Preliminary Framework

The Center could serve a number of important purposes for our community. Below is a list of some of the purposes we generated. This is a preliminary list that is not exhaustive by any means.

A. The Center as a RESOURCE CENTER that houses:

- the Multicultural Affairs Office
- a Multicultural Museum (initially proposed by Ellen Kintz and the Anthropology Department)

va section where multicultural and diversity-related books, videos, and magazines could be made available to the campus community

B. The Center could also house some important STUDENT SERVICES

- the Multicultural Affairs Office would fit under this category as well
- the International Student Affairs Office
- an office the helps coordinate a study abroad program on our campus
- the ESL (English as a Second Language) program
- the Writing Center
- a Volunteer Center or place where the Volunteer Fair and other related events takes place
- Office of Orientation and Greek Affairs Office

C. The Center as a TEACHING CENTER

- the Multicultural Museum would fit under this category as well

- a place where some classes could be held (e.g., Freshmen Seminars, courses directly related to multicultural and/or diversity issues).
- a place where faculty and staff training/workshops could be held (note: in the Commission's original report, we recommended "diversity" training and workshops for faculty and staff. These workshops could be held at the Center.
- a place where student workshops (including those provided at Weekend of Welcome) could be held here
- a place where colloquium presentations (especially related to multicultural and/or diversity issues) could be held.
- a place where students who have studied abroad, international students, and faculty and staff could provide informal presentations regarding their cultural experiences at Geneseo or abroad

D. The Center as a MEETING PLACE for:

- student club meetings (including the AGC and IGC organizations)
- large events (e.g., cultural dinners, Student-Faculty Research Poster Sessions)
- conferences
- study centers

E. The Center as an INFORMAL GATHERING CENTER which includes

- spaces for students, faculty, and staff to interact with one another informally
- perhaps a place where there might be a small area where food (including a Kosher deli) and coffee are available
- the College Bookstore (this can also be included under student services)
- a place where inexpensive multicultural gifts can be purchased (perhaps in conjunction with the bookstore)

F. The Center as a vehicle for COORDINATING ACTIVITIES between the various social groups as well as the Volunteer Center

G. The Center as a plus in STUDENT, FACULTY, and STAFF RECRUITMENT and RETENTION (especially of ALANA students, faculty, and staff as well as International students). It communicates to incoming members that SUNY Geneseo is a community committed to welcoming and supporting all of its members.

III. Issues Raised

We must be careful not to have the Center include too much. At the same time, the Center must be broad enough to serve, support, and help integrate the campus community. In addition, the issue of space (and the limitations that go along with this issue) needs to be considered in the process.

Appendix C

SUNY Brockport

A Better Community Statement

As members of the State University of New York College at Brockport, we choose to be a part of an academic community that is dedicated to principles that foster integrity, civility and justice.

As citizens of a broad and pluralist society, we encourage those of all cultures, orientation and backgrounds to educate, understand and respect one another in a safe environment.

We respect the dignity of all persons and assume the best about them.

We challenge and reject all forms of bigotry while striving to learn from each other's differences.

We celebrate our differences while appreciating our similarities.

We value an inclusive environment that is accepting of each other's cultural,

We respect the right of each and every member of the community, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, medical condition, disability or socioeconomic status.

We realize that our common interest exceed our individual differences.

As members of this College community, we strive for academic and personal excellence that will enable us to achieve lives of productive work, personal enrichment and useful citizenship in an increasingly interdependent world.

We invite the exploration of new ideas that can stretch us beyond artificial barriers that are academic, political, or social.

We affirm that the well-being of our individual units, groups, organizations or disciplines cannot be separates form the overall College community.

We, as members of smaller groups on campus, respect and affirm the transcendent values and principles of the overall College community.

We uphold the right of each individual to pursue his or her intellectual, educational, professional and personal goals in a fair and encouraging environment.

As individuals who work, study or live in the College community, we affirm our rights to freedom of expression and association, and the belief that they must be exercised responsibly.

We value the right to due process which includes concepts of fairness, notice, opportunity to be heard, and timely and objective review of determinations.

We acknowledge that the essence of academic freedom is the free and open expression and exchange of ideas, even when controversial or unconventional.

We affirm that the dignity of our Brockport community is protected when free speech, academic freedom and individual rights are expressed only with responsible and careful regard for the feelings and sensitivities of others.

The spirit of building a better community is best served when the ideals of integrity, civility, and justice are expressed and debates with tolerance and good will.

SUNY Brockport

Graduate Bulletin

The Importance of Diversity in Higher Education

Many of the more than 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States share a common belief, born of experience, that diversity in their student bodies, faculties, and staff is important for them to fulfill their primary mission: providing a quality education. The public is entitled to know why these institutions believe so strongly that racial and ethnic diversity should be one factor among the many considered in admissions and hiring.

The reasons include:

Diversity enriches the educational experience. We learn from those whose experiences, beliefs, and perspectives are different from our own, and these lessons can be taught best in a richly diverse intellectual and social environment.

It promotes personal growth and a healthy society. Diversity challenges stereotyped preconceptions; it encourages critical thinking; and it helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds.

It strengthens communities and the workplace. Education within a diverse setting prepares students to become good citizens in an increasingly complex, pluralistic society; it fosters mutual respect and teamwork, and it helps build communities whose members are judged by the quality of their character and their contributions.

It enhances America's economic competitiveness. Sustaining the nation's

prosperity in the 21st century will require us to make effective use of the talents and

abilities of all our citizens, in work settings that bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds and cultures.

Achieving diversity on college campuses does not require quotas. Nor does diversity warrant admission of unqualified candidates. However, the diversity we seek, and the future of the nation, do require that colleges and universities continue to be able to reach out and make a conscious effort to build healthy and diverse learning environments appropriate for their missions. The success of higher education and democracy depend upon it.

Appendix D

Community Statement Input

Developed by and Ad-hoc group of students 4/00

Members of our community recognize that community means ALL of us, faculty & staff as well as students. As members of this community,

We are a learning centered community, we are ALL both learners and teachers.

We interact with each other from a position of Respect.

We seek to be Self Aware.

We strive to have the ability to adapt.

We are seekers and remain open to new situations.

We value communication.

We take advantage of learning opportunities in both formal and informal settings.

We expect that members of our community are active participants in our community.

We strive to be self motivated.

We respect different and new ideas.

We recognize that the "process" is just as important as the "end point."