1998-1999 Report of

President's Commission on Diversity and Community

State University of New York at Geneseo

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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What is Diversity?

Specific historical, economic and social patterns have shaped American culture as well as the ways in which people who participate in American culture interact with each other. One of the most significant aspects of American culture and its world view is its diversity. Each of the groups which comprises

American culture brings to it unique perspectives and knowledge and contributes to the collective consciousness that gives meaning to interactions within American society. The dynamics that govern group interactions in American culture are specific to it. Outside of American culture, group identities and group labels are redefined and are assigned different meanings.

Groups negotiate their collective identity and their position within the larger culture. Individuals also negotiate and construct their own identity within their group and within the larger American culture. Thus negotiations happen at several levels and within several contexts: at the level of institutions, between groups, within groups, and at the individual level. The richness as well as the diversity of American culture comes from this mosaic of experiences.

Diversity is defined broadly as differences based on gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, language heritage. religion, sexual orientation, class, physical ability, learning style, geographic background, mental health, age, and relationship status. These differences have powerful ways of drawing people together and pushing them apart. It is the breadth of this diversity that the Commission has targeted, not the narrowness. As defined by the Commission, race does not mean African American any more than sexual orientation translates into gay or lesbian. Physical limitations are not always handicapping. Family does not always mean nuclear.

The Commission recognizes that none of the differences mentioned above is monolithic nor does any one characteristic define an individual. Diversity is about understanding people as members of groups but also as individuals who have to negotiate their unique configurations and meanings in relation to their collective group identity and the larger American culture. It is in recognition of the individuality of faculty, staff and students that the Commission has undertaken the task of addressing diversity at SUNY Geneseo. As a college community, SUNY Geneseo represents a combination of the diversity of each individual member. It is important not only to acknowledge and understand the richness of each group, but also the uniqueness and variability of each person in these different contexts.

What is Community?

Campus Life: In Search of Community, a special report of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching provides the following principles as a guideline to building effective campus communities. A college community should be:

Educationally *purposeful*, a community where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning.

Open, a community where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected and where civility is powerfully affirmed.

Just, a community where the sacredness of the person is honored and diversity is aggressively pursued.

Disciplined, a community where individuals accept their obligation to the group and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good.

Caring, a community where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.

Celebrative, a community in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared.

These principles are specifically designed with the "new academy" in mind, one that understands that knowledge is not stagnant, one that pulls its strength from the differences and commonalities of its individual members, and one that understands community as a process not an endpoint.

SUNY Geneseo has many people of good will. What is lacking is a coordinated effort to increase campus diversity and form a more welcoming community. Individual efforts are very important and need to be supported by a campus and community atmosphere that welcomes and celebrates the diverse nature of human beings.

What are Diversity and Community?

All communities have some inherent diversity. Even those communities, seemingly homogeneous, are in fact diverse. Within communities that are recognized as homogeneous, individuals are socialized to acknowledge and give more importance to those characteristics held in common than those in opposition. For example, when visiting a monastery, the outsider may see homogeneity. The act of seeing is passive. Only through interaction does one discover the differences in age, nationality, and life experience which bring rich diversity to the group.

Conversely, in seemingly diverse communities, there are likely to be many more commonalities than individuals have been socialized to see. It is only through active means that individuals come to recognize the commonalities that provide a sense of structure to the rich diversity. To examine human diversity is to marvel at its impact on community. To examine human communities is to map out the great interplay between diversity and sameness.

Communities with enhanced diversity are "value added." Communities which embrace their diversity promote a common culture by subscribing to a set of values which seek to construct and reconstruct community across differences. Communities which embrace their diversity are not threatened as affinity groups seek out space in affirmation of their identities. Communities which celebrate diversity provide more avenues for members to cross boundaries. It is by crossing boundaries that individuals discover new and exciting ways of seeing and knowing the world -- the very purpose of a liberal education.

Why Both Diversity and Community?

People live in communities. A community is a group of individuals who come together for a specific purpose. A well organized community promotes a climate of understanding, respect, caring for all its members, regardless of their differences. Communities share a common culture and subscribe to specific norms and values that define their individuality and special character.

A college community is no different. Faculty, students, staff who come to Geneseo make a conscious choice to join the college community. The community we would like to build will welcome, value, and respect people of diverse backgrounds and cultures. It will reflect our common purpose and goals as well as the ideals we promote.

Efforts to diversify the College must be more than mere crunching numbers. Our efforts must be holistic in nature, including building diversity and community together. Community is not meant only in the sense of space. Community must include those intangible aspects embodied in words such as ambience, climate and spirit, which help to distinguish communities from each other. The SUNY Geneseo community must foster a learning centered environment where academic as well as personal growth of all members is valued; a community where the individual and his or her unique contributions as well as group affiliations are respected; a community that stresses growth and development across the life span. To attempt a mere increase in numbers without giving sufficient attention to community would be worthless.

SUNY Geneseo has established the goal of becoming "the premier public liberal arts college in the country." Furthermore, our current mission statement suggests that "the entire college community works together to develop socially responsible citizens with skills and values important to the pursuit of an

enriched life and success in the world." Because many Geneseo students come from homogeneous small communities and suburbs, the College needs to recognize that it must take purposeful and calculated steps to move our students to the stated ideal. These steps should help students learn to respect themselves and to see differences, such as race, class, or ability, to name a few, as not just normal but as valuable. We must provide opportunities for our students to learn to understand and respect multicultural perspectives. We must be purposeful in our establishment of a community climate that accepts, yet challenges, that is deliberate; a community where it is okay to fail because to fail means that at the very least we tried; a community where we all are valued for whatever our unique contribution may be; a community that celebrates the diversity among us.

Where is SUNY Geneseo now?

A series of calculated administrative decisions supported by the exceptional hard work and dedication of the college community have elevated SUNY Geneseo to the ranks of the "highly selective" colleges and universities in the nation. In fact, the College's new vision statement indicates that "Geneseo aspires to be the premier public liberal arts college in the country". Toward this aim, the College must celebrate its current strengths, while recognizing that there is still much to be accomplished to enhance and embrace diversity.

Data for the 1998-99 school year show a student body which is 65.5% female with an average age of 20. The African American, Latino, Asian and Native American (ALANA) student population of Geneseo makes up 9.9% of the total student body, down from a 10 year high of 12.3% in 1994. Asian students make up the majority of the ALANA population, comprising 48% followed by the Latino population at 31%, African American population of 18% and Native American population of 2.5%.

While other data for 1998-99 are not yet available, past reports from the Office of Institutional Research indicate clear trends that are most likely to persist this year. In 1997, 46% of Geneseo freshmen indicated that they were Catholic; 28.2% identified themselves as Protestant. This is almost an exact reversal of the national data indicating 53% Protestant and 27.9% Catholic. In 1997, 4.4% of Geneseo freshmen indicated that they were Jewish. The percentage of 1997 Geneseo freshmen who report that their parents hold college or postgraduate degrees is also very different from the national data: 58.9% of Geneseo fathers as compared to 39.6% nation wide and 53.6% of Geneseo mothers as compared to 35.5% nation-wide.

The reported socioeconomic data of the College's students are changing. In 1993, 68.9% of freshmen reported family incomes of $50,000 or more while in 1997 this figure increased to 72.6%. At the high end salary scale ($75,000+), 42.1% of the fall 1997 Geneseo freshmen reported such family income compared to the national average of 25.1%. The majority of the Geneseo freshmen in 1997 came from towns and cities located 51-500 miles from the campus, accounting for 74%. Just 5.4% came from distances greater than 500 miles.

Considerably less data are collected about employees; however, in 1997 there was a total of 249 faculty members, 35.3% of whom were women and 8.8% of whom were people of color. Of the ALANA faculty, the Asian population comprised 59.1%, 18.2% were African American and 22.7% were Hispanic. No faculty of Native American heritage were employed by the College. These statistics, although factual and mathematically correct, are of questionable value because the numbers are so low.

A comparison of the faculty diversity at Geneseo with the national averages shows some interesting differences. Nationwide, the percentage of full-time ALANA faculty was 12.6 in 1995. Of these, 38.9% were African American, 18.3% were Hispanic, 39.7% were Asian American and 3.2% were Native American. Geneseo has a significantly lower percentage of faculty of color. Nationally, the percentage of ALANA faculty that are African American and Asian Faculty are about equal, whereas at Geneseo the percentage of Asian American faculty far outweighs the percentage of African American faculty.

In 1997, 72.7% of the faculty had been with Geneseo six or more years. Those faculty members holding the rank of Professor accounted for 22.9% of the total, Associate Professor for 33.3%, Assistant Professor for 34.5%, Instructor for 3.6% and Lecturer for 5.6%.

In 1997, the College employed 138 professional staff members, 8.7% of whom were people of color. People of African American descent comprised the majority, while the College employed no Latino or Native American professional staff members.

What is the Commission on Diversity and Community?

On May 7, 1998, President Christopher C. Dahl appointed the President's Commission on Diversity and Community with the following stated purpose:

...we seek to create a richly diverse community where students and faculty are actively engaged with a wide range of ideas and where we all have the opportunity to learn from people of diverse racial, ethnic, and social backgrounds. We seek to build an educational community where differences are respected and where individuals from all backgrounds are accepted and participate freely in the teaching and learning process.

Dr. Dahl further stated that "Continuing to build such a community at Geneseo is essential to providing a liberal and liberating education for all students."

The Commission's Charge

The Commission was to consider four areas:

Coordination of diversity efforts

Recruitment and retention

Campus atmosphere

Building community

President Dahl directed that an 1998-1999 report be prepared by the end of the academic year.

The commission was divided into four working subcommittees:

Student recruitment and international students/programs

Faculty and staff recruitment and retention

Student retention

Curricular and co-curricular concerns

The recommendations of each subcommittee are compiled in the 1998-1999 report. Each recommendation has been discussed further by the entire Commission prior to appearing in this report. The results reflect the collective will and the consensus of the Commission

While the Commission has chosen to define diversity and community in the broadest possible terms, there are certain groups who have faced historic under-representation at colleges and universities across the nation, namely African American, Latino, Asian and Native American people. The acronym ALANA is used throughout this report to refer collectively to these populations. The Commission has devoted much attention to policies and services that the College must enhance to effect positive changes in enrollment and retention of ALANA faculty, students and staff. The Commission has also focused heavily on the

recruitment of international students, those students who are foreign-born, not currently residing in the United States.

As the work of the Commission continues, new recommendations for enhancements and services for other specific populations will emerge. Such populations may include students with ESL needs, Jewish students, male students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and non-New York state residents.

Based on its deliberations over the past year, the 1998-1999 Commission on Diversity and Community recommends the following overall long-term goal and supporting goals. Each of the supporting goals addresses an area in which there were clearly discernible goals, which the Commission delineates further in subsections of this report.

Long-Term Goal

To create a truly world class college in which students learn through a variety of curricular and cocurricular encounters in classrooms, residence halls, student and volunteer organizations, and the larger community to appreciate, to understand, and to live and work in the diverse environment of the 21st century.

Supporting Long-Term Goals

To develop clear lines of responsibility at the highest levels of the administration that reflect the College's commitment to diversity.

To recruit and retain a faculty and staff that reflect the diversity of the population they serve.

To recruit and enroll highly qualified students who are representative of the diverse populations of New York State and the nation. [See Census data, Appendix A]

To recruit and enroll highly qualified international students from diverse cultures including non-Western.

To support, retain and graduate a diverse student body that is proportionately similar in each year from entry to commencement.

To establish and maintain exchange programs with universities abroad.

To establish and maintain exchange programs with colleges historically serving Black, Latino American, and Native American populations.

To expand and support the Study Abroad program.

To infuse diversity throughout the curriculum and the campus community where possible and appropriate to create a curriculum that reflects, as far as possible, the whole campus community.

To become a learning-centered community that fosters and encourages academic and personal growth for faculty, staff, and students and to create a cultural climate where diversity is a valued and natural part of the campus community infrastructure.

To foster a collegial spirit among faculty and staff that welcomes, values and celebrates diversity as a natural part of academic life and supports the free exchange of ideas and information in support of the College's educational mission.

Institutional Issues

Part of establishing a diverse community is to have students, faculty, and staff who value diversity, as well as the active support of leaders at the highest level of SUNY governance who share that value. Campus governance leaders must continue to encourage SUNY leadership to seek effective means for fostering and rewarding diversity initiatives throughout the university system.

Many members of the Geneseo College Community hold the notion that to embrace diversity is a desirable thing, and there exist many persons of good will who are working individually to attain this goal. Yet, the College must establish its goal of enhancing and embracing diversity as a community value and communicate this clearly, especially to incoming freshmen, faculty and staff. In doing so, the College must be careful to encourage a definition of diversity which includes all members, including "Whites" and/or the "majority".

The Commission recognizes that there are certain roadblocks that interfere with SUNY Geneseo's efforts related to enhancing diversity and community. Specifically, these include low salaries, the rural/agrarian location, and the competition for ALANA faculty, staff, and students. Other roadblocks may be self-imposed, such as those that result from poorly defined goals, poor communication, and out-dated or poorly define implemented policies and procedures.

Prior to the development of a major diversity initiative, the college must first identify institutional goals that reflect this purpose. These goals will give rise to a structure that will foster achievement of our long-term aspirations. The College must recognize that attainment of these goals is contingent upon the allotment of resources, personnel, and time. Such a major initiative should include the following five essential elements:

1)   Accountability

2)   Inclusiveness

3)   Share Responsibility

4)   Evaluation

5)   Institutionalization

Long-Term Goal
To develop clear lines of responsibility at the highest levels of the administration that reflect the College's commitment to diversity.

Immediate Objectives
A. Amend the College Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, and Goals of the Institution to reflect a commitment to diversity at the highest levels of the College and as an integral part of its mission.

B. Form an administrative structure at the highest levels with clear lines of responsibility for accomplishment of the goals outlined in this report. [See Appendix B for details]

C. Promote diversity among alumni, faculty, staff and students with year-long educational and promotional programs stressing the need for diversity and for financial support for associated college programs.

Objectives for 1-2 Years

A. Undertake a targeted Diversity Campaign Fund Drive in support of faculty and student recruitment, student scholarships, international studies and exchanges, curricular revision, and special projects.[See Appendix B for details]

B. Revise the mission of the Office of Multicultural Affairs to reflect the specific goals and objectives of this report.

Building Diversity
Institutions, such as SUNY Geneseo, with a history of limited diversity must embrace active change if they wish to increase diversity. Faculty, staff, and students from diverse backgrounds must be sought out by the College. Recruitment alone will not insure diversity. The College must offer faculty, staff, and students reasons to remain at SUNY Geneseo.

Recruitment

Faculty and Staff Recruitment
If SUNY Geneseo truly desires to have a diverse faculty and staff, the recruitment process should reflect the College's commitment to this goal. Geneseo's environment should be conducive to the intellectual development of the entire community, free from prejudice, and welcoming to all. As stated, the Commission recommends a broader distribution of "Geneseo's Initiatives for Increasing Faculty Diversity," herein referred to as "Initiatives."[See Appendix C] It is important that students encounter role models and diversity at all levels of the College, thus the initiatives should be expanded to include recruitment of staff. In addition, because there are different union issues in each division, each division should adopt its own set of initiatives based on its unique hiring practices. The goals enumerated below give specific reference to the Initiatives where appropriate.

Long-Term Goal
To recruit and retain a faculty and staff that reflect the diversity of the population they serve. [See Faculty and Staff Retention section]

Immediate Objectives
A. Adopt the Geneseo "Initiatives for Increasing Faculty Diversity" as official College policy and procedures for the recruitment of faculty. [See Appendices B and C for details]

B. Expand the "Initiatives" to staff searches, recognizing the need to amend them to meet the unique hiring practices for staff members of the various College divisions.

C. Establish a diversity plan. [See Appendix B for details]

D.Take steps to diversify the applicant pool for faculty and staff positions by.

• Making more of an effort to target schools, publications and professional organizations that have a higher percentage of minorities when advertising openings. [See Appendix B for details]

• Emphasizing our goal to increase the diversity of our faculty and staff by stating it directly in employment advertisements. [See Appendix B for details]

E. Create opportunities to make hires that would increase the diversity of faculty and staff.

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

A. Increase ALANA scholar presence on campus by

• Establishing a visiting minority scholars program. [See Appendix B for details]

• Developing an alliance with an historically black college(s) or university which would enable faculty exchanges.

B. Promote the Geneseo "community" with prospective faculty and staff by

• Publishing a recruitment pamphlet that emphasizes cultural programs at Geneseo and our proximity to Rochester and Toronto.

• Providing assistance in finding housing for faculty and staff members by developing a listing of housing opportunities in the area, including information about apartment complexes, real estate listings, and Rochester neighborhoods. [See Appendix B for details]

C. Develop departmental one-on-one recruitment plans to remain in contact with prospective faculty and to "sell" the College much as a coach might recruit a star player.

Student Recruitment

In general, the Admissions Office is doing well within the guidelines provided by the College. If the institution is committed to increase diversity, changes need to take place at the institutional level. The College should undertake a planned effort which would involve not only the Admissions Office but also academic departments, faculty, staff and students. The Commission proposes a Diversity Recruitment Plan, which would be coordinated through the Admissions Office. The recruitment effort would be monitored by an Advisory Board composed of four to five members recruited from across the campus community. The plan would specifically identify those populations the College seeks to increase. It would also outline those specific measures to be implemented.While the Commission has so far focused on increased ALANA and International student recruitment, the College's efforts at increasing diversity among the student body should not be limited to these two groups. As its work continues, the Commission expects to make additional recommendations in this area.

Long-Term Goal

To recruit and enroll highly qualified students who are representative of the diverse populations of New York State and the nation. [See Appendix A]

Immediate Objectives

A. Bolster resources for planning and implementing effective strategies to meet enrollment goals with regard to diversity, beginning immediately by retaining an outside consultant to advise and assist the Admissions Office and the Commission on such strategies.

B. Clarify the charge to the Admissions Office regarding its responsibility to lead and coordinate efforts to increase diversity significantly among those qualified applicants, especially from traditionally underrepresented groups in the ALANA population, who are admitted and subsequently enroll at the College. [See Appendix D]

C. Charge a specific office/person with responsibility for improving and centralizing the collection and analysis of data on recruitment and enrollment.

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

A. Establish an Advisory Board on Student Recruitment and Diversity, whose membership and chair are appointed by the President, with responsibility for

• Developing a formal plan that will explicate priorities and goals for enrolling an increasingly diverse student-body, including recommendations on the coordination of recruitment efforts involving the Admissions Office, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the academic departments, individual faculty, staff, students and alumni.

• Identifying underrepresented populations in the College's student-body, focusing initially on traditionally underrepresented groups in the population of ALANA students in New York and surrounding states.

• Establishing specific recruitment goals with regard to those traditionally underrepresented groups among ALANA populations.

• Advising the Admissions Office on ways to increase the applicant pool from traditionally underrepresented groups in the population of ALANA students.

• Monitoring the impact of College support services on the ability to recruit students under these initiatives.

• Identifying methods of promoting the College to populations traditionally underrepresented in the College's student-body through the following: [See Appendix B for details]

Recruitment materials that stress the College's commitment to diversity.

Additional scholarships.

Liaisons with student and faculty groups.

One-to-one relationships with career counselors, community and religious leaders, and community organizations that are in contact with ALANA students.

An interactive strategy in recruiting individual prospective students that includes alumni, faculty and individual students.

Expanded Campus Visitation Programs.

B. Charge the Admissions Office with major responsibility for implementing the student recruitment and enrollment objectives of the diversity plan.

C. Establish student exchange programs with colleges historically serving Black, Latino American, and Native American populations. [See Appendix B for details] [See Exchange Programs]

Objectives Within 5 Years

A. Increase funding significantly for scholarships that support the College's goals regarding diversity and enrollment. [See Appendix B for details]

B. Evaluate the effectiveness of in-place programs to recruit and enroll students from traditionally underrepresented groups.

International Student Recruitment

International studies and exchange programs contribute a great deal to campus diversity by opening windows to the world. This theme is not new at Geneseo. Forty years ago, the Editors and staff of the 1958 OH-HA-DAIH chose "Windows on the World" as an appropriate theme for their year book. Even then there was an appreciation for the diversity that international students and Study Abroad programs bring to Geneseo's campus. The Geneseo student body supported a College Ambassador program to foreign countries and hosted foreign students, particularly from Latin America, participating in a project in connection with the International Co-operation Administration.

Currently, there are only four international and four exchange students currently studying at Geneseo. Geneseo has exchange programs with four institutions and is working on establishing two more. The sub-committee on Student Recruitment and International Student/Studies recognizes that while SUNY Geneseo students go abroad in significant numbers, the College receives much fewer students from other countries.

Long-term Goal

To recruit and enroll highly qualified international students from diverse cultures including non-Western countries.

Immediate Objectives

Develop a committee responsible for setting guidelines for international student recruitment and evaluating support services to meet the special academic and social needs of these students. [See Appendix E for details]

Objectives for 1-2 Years

A. Begin recruitment efforts with special brochures, application materials, a Web page, and admission procedures. [See Appendix B for details]

B. Provide a special orientation program for international students.

C. Offer First Semester Seminars that would provide opportunities for American and international students to explore each other's cultures.

D. Establish a peer support network for international students.

E. Liaise with International Student Offices at nearby institutions to coordinate services and with organizations to provide host families.

F. Provide basic services for international students, such as immigration advisement, academic advisement, academic support.

Retention

Faculty and Staff Retention

To recruit faculty and staff without an eye toward retention is shortsighted and will not serve the goal of increasing diversity for the long-term. Efforts must be made to keep good faculty and staff.

Long-Term Goal

To recruit and retain a faculty and staff that reflects the diversity of the population it serves. [See Faculty and Staff Recruitment section]

Immediate Objectives
A. Improve the retention rate of diverse faculty and those committed to a multicultural curriculum by

• Conducting exit interviews through the Personnel Office to increase factual rather than anecdotal data on the reasons faculty leave SUNY Geneseo.

• Encourage faculty and staff to emphasize their contributions in the role they play in promoting multiculturalism and diversity when preparing documentation for term renewal, tenure, promotion and/or evaluation.[See Appendix B for details]

B. Investigate provisions for maternity leave and the need for low-cost daycare and make recommendations. [See Appendix B for details]

Objectives Within 1-2 Years
Make the campus more "user friendly" to faculty, staff, and students by training volunteers to peer-mediate diversity-related staff/management and student-staff disputes.

Student Retention
SUNY Geneseo appears to be doing better than the national average in overall graduation rates. The national graduation rate for all college students across the country is 50% compared to Geneseo's overall average of 80%. When students are separated by ethnicity or race, the graduation rates across various ALANA groups at Geneseo range from 30% to 80%. This is comparable to the national averages for members of various ethnic groups. Retention rates of full time undergraduates (1991-1995) indicate very small differences in the retention rates of ALANA students compared to white students from freshman year to sophomore year. From sophomore year to junior year, ALANA students leave Geneseo at greater rates than Whites (% change three times greater for ALANA students).

For the purpose of comparison, the following section will focus primarily on ALANA students admitted to the College through Access Opportunity Programs (AOP) -- both the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and the Transitional Opportunity Program (TOP). Qualitative data obtained from the AOP for this student group indicate that ALANA students, for the most part, leave the College for the same reasons as white students. These include but are not limited to transferring to other schools to be closer to home, lack or interest in available majors, or intended majors not offered at Geneseo. More specifically the data show that the larger percentage of AOP ALANA students leave the College by graduating. For those who do not graduate personal, health and academic reasons are the most commonly given justifications for leaving. Very few students leave for financial reasons. Moreover, AOP ALANA students, like most students transferring from Geneseo, do so at the end of the sophomore year, regardless of the reason for leaving.

Qualitative data and anecdotal evidence suggest a variety of other reasons for attrition. One of the most common reasons cited involved students' discomfort with living on a campus that is very different from their own hometown. Specifically, this included being far away from home, being asked to "educate" others about their lifestyle on a daily basis, being the target or having friends who are the target of derogatory comments and behavior, not feeling like they quite "fit in" with the drinking scene on campus, not having access to enough students from the same background, and not having food options that are consistent with religious or cultural beliefs and practices.

Another reason cited involved pressure to conform to a given subculture. Students as well as faculty and staff reported that this "pressure" seems to come from both "in-group" members and "outgroup" members.

The summary of the College's "current situation" regarding retention is preliminary and incomplete. The focus is primarily on ALANA students, without addressing issues related to other students from diverse backgrounds (e.g., gays and lesbians, international students, students with physical disabilities, students from various economic backgrounds, students from various religious backgrounds). One reason for the narrow focus was the availability of information, albeit limited, about other groups of interest. Nevertheless, preliminary investigations suggest that SUNY Geneseo needs to make changes toward diversity at various levels if it is to fully address the issue of student retention.

Long-Term Goal
To support, retain and graduate a diverse student body that is proportionately similar in each year from entry to commencement.

Immediate Objectives
A. Establish a Student Retention Committee whose primary charge is to assess the current situation on retention, to develop short and long term goals, and to develop a student retention plan for how to achieve those goals. [See Appendix B for details]

B. Formalize support programs surrounding mentoring and disabilities services by

• Expanding the First Year Peer Mentoring Program.

• Enhancing the current disabilities program by initiating a program of training faculty and staff about effective techniques to accommodate individuals with disabilities. [See Appendix B for details]

C. Expand and formalize diversity efforts into programs already in place by:

• Collecting qualitative and quantitative student retention data on why students stay and graduate from SUNY Geneseo as well as why some students leave. [See Appendix B for details]

• Collecting qualitative and quantitative data on the effectiveness of current academic services and the need for such services and addressing issues related to the "stigmatization" of these services.

• Expanding the definition of faculty service for tenure and promotion decisions to formally include faculty efforts in support of diversity.

• Formalizing the procedures for informing faculty about adaptations for ESL students and students with disabilities. [See Appendix B for details]

• Creating in the Office of Multicultural Affairs a support data base for students which includes a list of faculty willing to offer formal and informal support to students regarding diversity-related issues. [See Appendix B for details]

• Expanding Career Services Center assistance by including training to help students with disabilities. [See Appendix B for details]

• Expanding CIT services to consider students with disabilities in technical planning. [See Appendix B for details]

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

A. Implement the retention plan developed by the Student Retention Committee within the first two years (with an assessment plan in place).

B. Develop a centralized and coordinated Support Services and Tutoring Center with a full-time coordinator which houses most services in a centralized location and coordinates disabilities services, academic counseling and tutoring (including Math Center and Writing Center), and ESL services (in coordination with support services for international students). [See Appendix B for details]

C. Establish faculty and staff training in adaptations to be made for individuals with disabilities.

D. Study the need for low-cost daycare for nontraditional students. [See Appendix B for details]

Objectives Within 5 Years

A. Develop formal procedures for assessing the effectiveness of data collection on student retention rates.

B. Develop formal procedures for assessing the effectiveness of the student retention plan.

C. Formally assess the effectiveness of the retention plan.

D. Modify programs that are not working well.

E. Develop additional programs as the need arises.

International Student Retention

Long-term Goal
Provide the appropriate support services, including immigration and visa support, transportation between local airports and train stations and the campus, housing at times when the campus is officially closed, communication with home, as well as extensive training in English as a second language for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Building a Liberal Curriculum
The current Geneseo curriculum already addresses diversity concerns in a significant way, with the exception of one or two departments. Most departments are rapidly increasing course offerings that either focus entirely on topics relating to diversity or integrate diversity issues where appropriate. Geneseo's curriculum either matches or excels in terms of particular courses and majors offered at several other area colleges. Geneseo's educational program could be further enriched by expanding available academic minors.

While it might be counter-productive to propose rejuvenating the American Pluralism Core at this time, the College should encourage faculty members to propose new courses for core credit that incorporate diversity concerns. As new core courses are reviewed by the College Senate, the integration of diversity concerns might be an additional criterion.

Long Term Goal
To infuse diversity throughout the curriculum and the campus community where possible and appropriate to create a curriculum that reflects, as far as possible, the whole campus community.

Immediate Objectives
A. Begin discussion on

• Infusing diversity throughout the curriculum and co-curricular activities.

• Creating a Teaching Resource Center.

• Introducing diversity issues into First Semester Seminars on a regular basis.

• Ensuring that several sections of the new college requirement in writing (INTD 105) address diversity issues.

• Requiring a Foreign Language/American Sign Language for all students.

B. Set aside development grants for infusion of diversity into the curriculum. [See Appendix for details]

Objectives Within 1-2 Years
A. Assess the core in terms of its efficacy in addressing concerns relating to diversity to ensure that new courses meet, where appropriate, diversity concerns, especially for courses that satisfy core requirements. [See Appendix B for details]

B. Discuss the way in which additional incentives, such as course release time or additional money, might be introduced to stimulate the development of new courses or academic minors on diversity issues.

C. Organize faculty workshops and seminars on diversity in the curriculum by drawing upon the expertise of nationally-known scholars as well as the Geneseo faculty.

D. Begin budgeting for the creation of a Teaching Resource Center.

E. Encourage academic departments to co-sponsor events with student groups. [See Appendix B for details]

F. Expand the list of academic minors to include, for example, Jewish Studies and/or Lesbian and Gay Studies.

Objectives Within 5 Years
A. Open a Teaching Resource Center, operated as part of the Faculty and Teaching Development Program under the direction of the Provost, whose function will include [See Appendix B for details]

• Providing resources for integrating diversity into existing courses.

• Conducting seminars for departments.

• Maintaining a list of faculty and staff "diversity" mentors or consultants throughout the college.

• Organizing in-service training by national experts in multicultural education.

B. Offer more international programs and service-oriented diversity program opportunities during Intersession and Spring Break. [See Appendix B for details]

College Exchange Programs/Study Abroad
According to the Alliance for International and Educational Cultural Exchange, of the 14,000,000 undergraduates matriculated at US colleges, only about 100,000 participate in overseas programs each year -- roughly 1 out of every 140 students. In a typical year, over 200 of Geneseo's 5000 undergraduates will participate in overseas studies programs, roughly 1 out of every 25-30 students or about 4 times the national average.

Long-Term Goals
To establish and maintain exchange programs with universities abroad.

To establish and maintain exchange programs with colleges historically serving Black, Latino American, and Native American populations.

To expand and support the Study Abroad program.

Immediate Objectives
A. Promote exchange programs through information and assistance to departments interested in establishing student and faculty exchange programs with institutions abroad and colleges historically serving Black, Latino American, and Native American populations. [See Appendix B for details][See Student Recruitment]

B. Continue promoting study abroad programs and seek expanded opportunities in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. [See Appendix B for details]

Building Community

The SUNY Geneseo Campus Community
Faculty, staff, and students will not remain where they feel unwelcome. The College must make every effort to embrace diversity as a vital part of the Institution. The College must reach out to all its members and announce clearly that it values them.

Long-Term Goal
To become a learning-centered community that fosters and encourages academic and personal growth for faculty, staff, and students and to create a cultural climate where diversity is a valued and natural part of the campus community infrastructure by:

• Creating a community that supports diversity and provides an opportunity for students and faculty to encounter and celebrate cultural differences.

• Developing a community that provides an opportunity to exchange ideas and information so that members of the college community can learn from one another's experiences.

Immediate Objectives
A. Charge the 1999-2000 Commission on Diversity and Community with the task of exploring ways to foster community at all levels. This includes

• Assessing the current views about community.

• Developing an ongoing system of assessing the campus climate including qualitative and quantitative data on student, faculty, and staff perceptions.

• Developing short and long term goals.

• Developing a plan to achieve those goals.

B. Integrate diversity into events that already take place by:

• Increasing access to information about various organizations at Freshmen Orientation. [See Appendix B for details]

• Including religious organizations and businesses at Weekend of Welcome. [See Appendix B for details]

• Expanding diversity training for Residence Hall Staff.

• Encompassing various cultural and religious holidays into holiday celebrations. [See Appendix B for details]

• Including ethnic and religious diversity in the CAS meal plan . [See Appendix B for details]

• Encouraging students to participate in a Student Citizenship Experience, an experience outside the curriculum that provides them with the opportunity to grow and develop as citizens (e.g., study abroad, volunteer through the Volunteer Fair, Habitat for Humanity Spring Break Experience).

C. Coordinate and integrate current efforts toward diversity between residence halls and student organizations as well as between the various student organizations. [See Appendix B for details]

D. Provide training and orientation on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues for faculty and staff so that "Safe Zones" could be established. [See Appendix B for details]

E. Assess the need for a Multicultural Center. [See Appendix B for details]

Objectives Within 1-2 years
A. Develop a plan for assessing the extent to which all aspects of the campus (e.g., recruitment of students, faculty, staff, implementation of programs, scheduling of campus events) reflect the long-term goal "To become a learning-centered community that fosters and encourages academic and personal growth for faculty, staff, and students and to create a cultural climate where diversity is a valued and natural part of the campus community infrastructure."

B. Begin exploring strategies for integrating diversity into all programs and events.

C. Coordinate and integrate efforts with regard to Freshmen Orientation [See Appendix B for details]

D. Provide sensitivity training toward diversity during orientation of incoming faculty and staff. [See Appendix B for details]

E. Create comfortable campus lounges that promote informal interaction and foster conversations between students.

Objectives Within 5 years
A. Assess the progress of the goals and the plan developed by the Commission.

B. Integrate diversity into campus wide events by having departments work together and by reframing programs to increase participation. [See Appendix B for details]

C. Develop a campus community where all members of the community feel a sense of identification, belonging, and commitment to the campus.

Faculty and Staff Community
The one relative constant in the transient nature of of college communities is the faculty and staff. It is of special importance that this segment of the college population feel connected to the larger college community and to itself. Such connectedness is also an important factor in retention of faculty.

Long-Term Goals
To foster a collegial spirit among faculty and staff that welcomes, values and celebrates diversity as a natural part of academic life and supports the free exchange of ideas and information in support of the College's educational mission.

Immediate Objectives
A. Provide more opportunities for faculty and staff and their families to get together socially. [See Appendix B for details]

B. Encourage faculty research on issues of diversity by designated grants for faculty-student research projects.

Objective Within 1-2 Years
Establish designated areas where faculty can socialize over lunch or just relax together.

The Geneseo Community and Beyond

Although it is important to work first with the campus community, then extend efforts to the outside community, there are some things the College could do in the immediate future to strengthen inter-community relations. It is most important for the College to focus its energies on the local high school students by introducing diversity issues in a subtle way as a natural part of their education.

Immediate Objectives
Invite student organizations to act as a resource on diversity to local high schools and communities.

Objective Within 1-2 Years
Invite local elementary and high school students to diversity-related events or classes. [See Appendix B for details]

Objectives Within 5 Years
A. Encourage faculty from diverse backgrounds to participate in "The Expert's List" published by the Office of Communications and Publications and ensure that that information be distributed to area high schools.[See Appendix B for details]

B. Sponsor conference days in which elementary school and/or high school children attend talks, events, dinners, and the like surrounding diversity issues.

 The findings and conclusions contained in this report reflect the work of the Commission on Diversity and Community throughout the 1998-1999 academic year. Members of the Commission [See Appendix F] working within five subcommittees formed the recommendations herein contained by consensus after careful reflection.

The College goals of increasing diversity and building community are important for the evolution of SUNY Geneseo. The Commission considers increasing diversity and building community to be central to the mission of a premier liberal arts institution of higher learning. The Commission believes that the recommendations contained in this report are vital to the College and to its mission and to enhancing learning.

People of good will can disagree. The entire Commission eagerly anticipates the opportunity to discuss our recommendations with the President and his top administrative staff.

Sincerely,
Robert E. Owens, Jr., Ph.D.
Chair

ESTIMATES of the U.S. and New York Populations

The source of Information in Table I is the "Population Estimates Program", Populations Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, as of July 1, 1997, from ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF STATES BY RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN: JULY 1, 1999. Internet Release date: 9/4/98 at
http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/state/srh/srhus97.txt
TABLE I
United States
Percent of Total Population
New York

Percent of Total Population
American Indian
2,322,044
0.87%
American Indian
74,483
0.41%
Asian & Pacific Island.
10,032,885
3.75%
Asian & Pacific Island.
952,736
5.25%
Black
33,947, 084
12.68%
Black
3,208,344
17.69%
White
221,334,048
82.70%
White
13,901,663
76.65%
TOTAL
267,636,061
100.00%
TOTAL
18,137,226
100.00%

White Hispanic
26,762,651
10.00%
White Hispanic
1,943,168
10.71%
Non-White Hispanic
2,585,214
0.97%
Non-White Hispanic
627,214
3.46%
TOTAL Hispanic
29,347,865
10.97%
TOTAL Hispanic
2,570,382
14.17%

The following is excerpted from "Explanation of Race and Hispanic Origin Categories" by the US Bureau of the Census, as of Internet Release date of Sept. 4, 1998 and accessible at http://www.census.gov/population/estimates/rho.txt: The race and Hispanic origin categories used

by the Census Bureau are mandated by the Office of Management and Budget Directive No. 15, which requires all federal record keeping and data presentation to use four race categories (White, Black, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian and Pacific Islander) and two ethnicity categories (Hispanic, non-Hispanic). These categories are not intended to be scientific in nature, but are designed to promote consistency in federal record keeping and data presentation.

The presentation in Table II eliminates the two subdivisions of race and Hispanic origin used by the Census Bureau and followed in the presentation in Table I.

TABLE II

United States
Percent of Total Population
New York
Percent of Total Population

American Indian
74,483
0.41%
American Indian
1,976,000
0.74%
Asian & Pacific Island.
952,736
5.25%
Asian & Pacific Island.
9,443,000
3.53%
Black
3,208,344
17.69%
Black
32,298,000
12.07%
less Hispanic non-white
-627,214
-3.46%
Hispanic
29,348,000
10.96%
Hispanic
2,570,382
14.17%
White
194,571,000
72.70%
White
11,958,495
65.93%
TOTAL
267,636,061
100.00%
TOTAL
18,137,226

100.00%

Institutional Issues

Immediate Objectives

Administrative Structure.

The goals of a diverse and welcoming college community can not be achieved without an administrative structure with clear lines of responsibility for accomplishment of these goals. This structure should flow from the goals and demonstrate the commitment of the institution while at the same time effectively meet the administrative needs of the chief executive. The administrative structure should demonstrate clearly the direct on-going involvement of the President, thus giving visible support to the importance of diversity and community for the College. Possible administrative structures include 1) a Diversity Cabinet with responsibility for the day-to-day oversight of diversity and community initiatives or 2) a Special Assistant to the President for Diversity. The final administrative structure must have a direct link to the chief executive.

Objectives for 1-2 Years

Diversity Fund.

Some objectives will of necessity require a financial commitment. The College must undertake a targeted Diversity Campaign Fund Drive which would involve alumni, the College, and the community to be preceded by an educational campaign. This year-long drive by the Geneseo Foundation would be preceded by an extensive educational and promotional program stressing the need for diversity and for financial support. This fund would support the following:

Faculty and student recruitment.

Student scholarships.

International studies and exchanges.

Curricular revision.

Special projects.

Contributors should be allowed to target a special population, i.e. nontraditional students, and/or program, i.e. endowed professorship.

Faculty and Staff Recruitment

Immediate Objectives

Geneseo's "Initiatives for Increasing Faculty Diversity."

Shortly after the publication of the College's Mission and Goals Statement, "A Quest for Excellence: Geneseo's Plan for a Decade, 1990-2000," the College Planning Council endorsed "Geneseo's Initiatives for Increasing Faculty Diversity," herein referred to as "Initiatives." Although the "Initiatives" are now college policy, and they serve as guiding principles for faculty searches, many faculty and staff are unaware of the

existence of the document. The Commission recommends that the College make more of an effort to publicize the Initiatives and hopes that the college community will embrace them. A copy of the Initiatives is included in the Appendix C.

Diversity Plan.

The Office of the Provost and the Office of Student and Campus Life should formulate an institutional plan for increasing the diversity of faculty and staff. For example, the Provost could hold a few lines "in reserve" for opportunities to make hires that would increase the diversity of faculty. Lines could be "lent" to units and' if warranted, taken back when a retirement occurs. Units that make the extra effort to diversify are rewarded with the increased versatility that an additional line will give. Although the situation may be more complicated, the Vice-presidents of the other divisions should retain flexibility in hiring staff. [See the Initiatives, I.(1-2)].

Targeting Schools, Publications, and Professional Organizations.

The Commission applauds recent efforts of the administration to do more in this area. In particular, the availability of the "Minority & Women Doctoral Directory," including mailing labels by discipline, is a wonderful idea.

True efforts to increase employee diversity include not passive but affirming actions that actively seek out candidates from diverse backgrounds. The College should make more of an effort to target schools, publications, and professional organizations that have a higher percentage of minorities for advertising openings. One way to insure that these efforts are being taken by units involved in searches is to have the department chair or division director identify publications and professional organizations at the onset of any search. The lists could be kept on file in the personnel office. The College should maintain membership in national organizations which assist in identifying candidates from diverse backgrounds and encourage faculty and staff to use their individual memberships to assist with searches where possible.[See the Initiatives, II.(1)]

Employment Advertisements.

Nationally, all advertisements include an AAEEO tag line. In order to emphasize the goal to increase the diversity of its faculty and staff, the College should create a unique and sincere statement to appear in employment advertisements. For example, "The College at Geneseo is an AA/EO employer committed to diversity within its community and to creation of a diverse community of scholars." [See the Initiatives, III.(3)].

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

Visiting Diversity Scholars Program.

As a complement to efforts to increase diversity among the faculty, the creation of a visiting diversity scholars program would be a means of providing additional high visibility role models, initiating faculty exchange programs, presenting workshops, and establishing research collaborations. [See the Initiatives, V.(2)].

Recruitment Pamphlet.

Develop a listing of housing opportunities in the area, including information about apartment complexes, real estate listings, and Rochester neighborhoods. This would involve working with area realtors. Materials could be given to new faculty and staff members.[See Initiatives, V(1)(d)].

Housing Assistance.

Provide assistance in finding housing for faculty and staff members. The Initiatives suggest making available short-term, interest-free loans to help cover some of the expenses associated with moving. [See Initiatives, V.(1)(a-c)].

Student Recruitment

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

Recruitment Materials.

Recruitment materials should reflect the school's commitment to diversity in pictures and words. By including this commitment in general recruitment brochures, the College sends a message to all prospective students and their families that a diverse community is a central strategy in its concept of a liberal arts education. Additionally, the College may choose to create a "minority recruitment piece". This would be a separate brochure targeted toward the ALANA students. It would realistically portray the ALANA community at Geneseo and provide prospective students an idea of the type of community they can expect to join should they attend Geneseo.

College liaisons.

The recruitment effort should make use of all available resources in the College community (e.g. departments, student clubs, faculty mentorships) to identify and work with ALANA high school students.

Relationships.

The Admissions Office should encourage one-to-one relationships with career counselors, community and religious leaders, and community organizations who are in contact with ALANA students; and between prospective students and alumni, faculty and individual students. With individual students, the Commission propose an interactive strategy not unlike that used by coaches to recruit college athletes.

CampusVisitation Programs Expansion.

Overnight visitation programs should be more encompassing to reach more students. This may require additional staff and financial support.

Exchange Programs.

The College and departments should explore ties with colleges historically serving Black, Latino American, and Native American populations. Exchange programs with these institutions may provide another opportunity for introducing increased diversity to Geneseo's campus.

Objectives Within 5 Years

Recruitment Incentives.

ALANA students for whom Geneseo competes are courted by the best schools, private and public, and that one of the decisive factors in their final decisions is the financial package. The recruitment effort should be "backed up" with real incentives, scholarships to attract the best students.

International Student Recruitment

Immediate Objectives

Committee on International Students.

This committee would work in concert with the Director of International Students Services, the Dean of Students, and the Dean of the College.

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

International Recruitment Programs.

The College should increase its efforts to recruit international students. These are students who come from abroad to matriculate at Geneseo. While the development of an international recruitment program could be costly and would require significant additional resources for the Admissions Office, it would increase the presence of foreign students on campus.

Faculty and Staff Retention

Immediate Objectives

Faculty and Staff Retention and Promotion.

It should be recognized that ALANA faculty and staff are asked to serve on a disproportionately large number of committees to insure diverse points of view. Additionally, all faculty and staff who mentor individual students and student organizations play an important role in creating a supportive campus environment. These actions also help to increase student retention.

The definition of faculty and staff service to the institution should encompass mentoring of students and involvement in student organizations and activities, research on diversity issues, and attempts to infuse multicultural issues into the curriculum. Form H should be revised to account for this faculty involvement. Efforts to infuse diversity issues in the curriculum and make extra efforts to work with students of diverse backgrounds should be reflected in Classroom Performance and Responsiveness to Students in the evaluation of instruction . Evaluation for staff should be similarly modified to include a means of rewarding those who take extra measures to relate to students from diverse backgrounds.

Maternity Leave.

At present, there is no provision for maternity leave beyond sick leave and the reassignment of responsibilities to the other faculty or staff members. This situation can create a hostile atmosphere for young faculty members who wish to begin their families. The College should establish a more liberal maternity leave policy for faculty and staff.

Low-cost Day-care.

The College should be more "user friendly" to faculty, staff, and students with young children by providing low-cost day-care. This may not be as expensive as it seems. The College could, for example, provide space on campus for an independent day-care provider.

Student Retention

Short-term Objectives

Student Retention Committee.

The College should create a student retention committee whose primary charge would be to develop and coordinate a retention plan. This committee should be responsible for assessing the retention information the College currently obtains and for developing effective ways of collecting the information that is not currently obtained. The committee should also be responsible for conducting regular and thorough assessments of its retention efforts in some systematic fashion.

First Year Peer Mentoring.

Stacey Edgar has done a wonderful job of developing and coordinating the Peer Mentoring Program. Such a program is extremely valuable to the students it serves. The Peer Mentoring Program should be expanded to include as many freshmen as possible. This may mean providing additional staff and financial support for the program. Academic Affairs in the person of the Dean of the College should work in consultation with Stacey Edgar to develop a systematic plan for coordinating and expanding the Peer Mentoring Program.

Disability Services Specialist.

The College should create a full-service office staffed by a trained disability services specialist. It should also be noted that there are a number of legal standards that must be adhered to when providing services to students with disabilities. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education Self-Assessment Guide for Disability Services could be used as a guide to the development of such an office.

Data Collection.

The assessment of student retention must start with good data. The College must begin gathering relevant data in a more systematic manner in at least the following:

Qualitative and quantitative data about why students leave (via exit interviews -

similar to AOP' s)

Senior survey should include markers or information by race/ethnicity

Graduating senior data about why they stay and graduate

Teaching/Testing Adaptations.

The College should ensure that all faculty are informed of teaching/testing adaptations for English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) students and for those with learning disabilities. Faculty should be reminded periodically and these procedures published in a faculty handbook. The master schedule should inform each student that adaptations are possible for those who need and desire them.

Support Data Base for Students.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Counseling Center should compile a list of faculty and staff who would be willing to offer guidance to students who are seeking a connection with someone of a similar background. Interested faculty could provide information on his/her various backgrounds. Then, students who would like to make a connection with a faculty member from a given background (e.g., someone who grew up in an urban environment, someone who is Jewish, someone who is gay) could do so. Faculty and staff names would be made available through the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Counseling Center, and Geneseo's web page.

Career Services Center Assistance.

The Office of Career Services should participate in training to become more effective in assisting students with the job search, which can often present difficult challenges for student with disabilities. For example, students often struggle with disclosure of disability to a prospective employer. In addition to being a tricky personal decision, disclosure is bound by many legalities of which the students should be aware.

College Information and Technology Department (CIT) Services Expansion.

College Information and Technology Department (CIT) should, in all of its planned improvements in technological services and equipment, consider how these plans affect students with disabilities. The staff should continue to liaise with the Office of Disability Services to acquire and make readily available adaptive equipment for students with disabilities.

Objectives for 1-2 Years

Support Services and Tutoring.

Many Ivy League schools and other universities comparable to SUNY Geneseo have developed unique ways to provide campus-wide support services to ALL students without having those services stigmatized as "remedial". SUNY Geneseo should survey comparable colleges to find out how they have effectively implemented their programs. If developed well, a campus-wide support services program could be an effective way to address student retention issues for all students at SUNY Geneseo. This could potentially benefit the entire campus community.

Though Geneseo admissions standards have steadily risen, there continues to be an increase in the number of students with disabilities being admitted and enrolling at the college, from 11 students in 1990-91 to 65 students in 1997-98. Accompanying the increase in numbers has been a parallel increase in variety and seriousness of the types of disabilities seen within this population. Of the enrolled students with disabilities, the majority evidence learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders. The number of students with physical or mobility impairments is understandably small considering the terrain of the campus, nevertheless, students with physical impairments do enroll at Geneseo. Other diagnoses include Obsessive Compulsive Disorders, Autism, Cancer, and learning impairments caused by drug and alcohol abuse.

During the 1997-98 school year, students with disabilities participated in classes in all academic departments. Students were enrolled in 117 different classes, working with 117 different professors, some professor having more than one student per class. The School of Education enrolled students in 13 classes offered, the highest of any department; the Mathematics department followed with 11 classes. There are a number of efforts the college could make to increase its responsiveness to and support of students with disabilities.

This program may also house intensive English language services as a supplement for or complement to courses presently offered by English and Communicative Disorders and Sciences. Students with disabilities could receive help at this center also.

A tutoring program staffed by faculty should be established. This may mean providing additional staff and financial support for such a program at the college level or having departments provide release time or departmental service for faculty who tutor at the department level.

Teaching Methods Modifications.

Faculty and staff should participate in training sessions that relate effective techniques for accommodating students with disabilities in the classroom, as well as other campus areas, such as the library, gym facilities, the residence halls, science labs, computer labs, smart classrooms, etc.

Low-cost Day-care.

Older students often have familial needs that must be met in order to pursue an education. The College should establish a low-cost day-care for nontraditional students to help meet some of this need. This proposal could be integrated with a similar proposal made for faculty.

Building a Liberal Curriculum

Objectives Within 1-2 Years

Core.

Courses approved for Core should address concerns relating to diversity or justify why such an approach is inappropriate. Rather than introduce a new component to the core (such as American pluralism), the College should create and foster of culture of diversity by ensuring that all courses satisfying core requirements include diversity issues, unless it can be demonstrated that such an approach is not relevant to the topic.

Objectives Within 5 Years

T*eaching Resource Center.*

Integrating diversity in the curriculum requires providing adequate teaching support for faculty. A Teaching Resource Center would provide faculty access to support services for teaching. This center should be coordinated and maintained by a professional staff member or be the half-time responsibility of a faculty member of the School of Education, who specializes in pedagogical issues in teaching, including the integration of diversity issues in the curriculum. In addition, this center should contain a resource list of videos, books, and journals from a variety of disciplines as well as sources containing experiential exercises and demonstrations. This would support faculty who are committed to taking a multicultural approach to their teaching, yet lack the background to do so effectively. Such a center would be an important faculty development tool and would support faculty who wish to diversify their current courses and/or develop new courses addressing diversity issues.

Faculty Consultation Program.

Infusion of diversity into existing courses and the teaching of new courses can be enhanced through the expertise of faculty at SUNY Geneseo or at other institutions who can act as faculty consultants. Financial incentives in the form of grants should be offered to support consultants and those faculty at Geneseo who are attempting to make such change.

Intersession and Spring Break Experience.

Intersession can be used to increase the number of international programs and to introduce service-oriented diversity programs. Alumni could be involved in organizing and running these programs.

Department Support of Student Groups.

Diverse student groups often function in a vacuum and struggle with limited budgets. Many cultural organizations are SA funded and must adhere to strict budget guidelines. This restricts organizations from sponsoring certain events that cost too much money. Limited resources for activities can be expanded if academic departments form alliances with these groups to co-sponsor events. Departments should work together, with support from the Administration, to help these student organizations.

Academic Minors.

At present, minors in Africana Studies, Latin American Studies, Asian Studies, and Women's Studies exist. This list could be expanded to include Jewish Studies, and Lesbian and Gay Studies. Efforts also should be made to insure that classes within these minors are offered on a regular basis. Faculty should be offered financial incentives to develop academic minors that address diversity concerns.

Specific Courses

SUNY Geneseo offers the occasional individual course in Jewish, Asian, and lesbian and gay studies. The number of such courses should be increased, perhaps by hiring adjuncts, inviting visiting scholars, or using distance learning technology. Another possibility is to encourage increased cross registration with surrounding schools for fulltime students.

Foreign/Sign Language Requirement for All Students.

The learning of a second language puts students in contact with other cultures, broadens their minds, and helps them to realize there is more than one way to look at the world. Students could be required to complete two introductory level courses or demonstrate competency through testing in a foreign or American Sign Language.

College Exchange Programs/Study Abroad

Immediate Objectives

Departmental Exchange Programs.

The College should offer incentives to encourage, assist and support departments interested in establishing exchange programs with schools abroad, including countries outside of Europe. Exchange students come for a short term (one to two semesters), are not matriculated, and pay tuition to their home schools. While these programs do not require much from the institution in terms of support, they can add a great deal of diversity to the institution.

Study Abroad.

The College should establish a vehicle for the exchange of ideas between those who have studied abroad and those who have not. Student mentors who have studied abroad can be used by the College to encourage those who have not.

The SUNY Geneseo Campus Community

Immediate Objectives

Orientation Information.

To enable students to gain early connection with various religious, social and cultural organizations, the College Union and Activities Office, in conjunction with the Office of New Student Programs, should work to increase access. New students, for example, might be required to fill out a form with options of various organizations and clubs on campus before they register (with a "no" option available).

Holiday Celebrations.

Offices should be reminded that many different traditions are celebrated by members of The College's community. Seasonal holiday celebrations should be more encompassing, celebrating various religious and cultural holidays.

Faculty and staff need to be reminded of the "Policies Governing Student Attendance in Classes on Religious Holidays" (section 224-a of the Education Law of New York State, cited on P. 390 of the 1998-2000 Undergraduate Bulletin). Increased diversity may mean an increase in students who observe religious holidays on days when classes are in session.

CAS.

The College should develop a meal plan that includes ethnic and religious diversity, such as a Kosher kitchen. In addition, CAS should offer the option to pay for special event cultural dinners with meal plans as opposed to the CAS-h account. Many students do not have the money to pay for the variety of cultural dinners that are sponsored on campus causing attendance to be low. If students could pay with their meal plan, the number of students coming to the shows might increase.

Residence Hall-Student Organization Coordination.

Many of the social/cultural organizations have expressed interest in better integration of the larger student community into their programming. One way to accomplish this is to increase the exposure of hall residents, especially those of the freshmen centers, to the cultural and social organizations. Specific residence halls could work directly with various social/cultural organizations. Organizations might hold their meetings in those residence halls, include them in their programming, and the like. Some organizations are already doing this. All social and cultural organizations should expand these efforts.

Coordination of Student Organizations.

The various social, cultural, and religious student organizations should continue supporting one another's events and continue coordinating their activities to avoid overlap between cultural events. In addition, all student organizations should be contacted to include them in this process. The assistant director of Multicultural Affairs for the Student Association might play a major role in coordinating the efforts of these groups.

Safe Zones.

Faculty or staff should be encouraged to establish their offices as "safe zones" for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, staff, and faculty by displaying stickers on their doors. Stickers can be obtained by faculty or staff upon completion of training in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues conducted by Counseling Services and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Friends student group. Such training should be accomplished on a biennial basis.

Multicultural Center.

Perhaps housed in Mary Jemison Hall, this center could serve multiple purposes. It could provide students, faculty, and staff with "safe" places to interact both formally and informally in a supportive environment. In addition, it could be a place where support networks could be established, where information about diversity and identity issues could be made available to all members of the community, and where all members of the community could go to learn about other cultures.

Campus Lounges.

There is a need to establish a sense of community. The College should set aside comfortable, out of the way lounges, to encourage faculty, staff, and students to gather in non-classroom settings for interactions.

Objectives for 1-2 Years

Welcoming New Students.

From the initial interaction with students, SUNY Geneseo needs to establish an atmosphere of welcoming diversity by:

Broadened Responsibility.

The College should broaden the primary responsibility for student orientation from Student Affairs to the campus community with the explicit goal of introducing the new students to the Geneseo college community. Diversity issues should be an important part of that introduction.

Incorporating Diversity into Weekend of Welcome.

The College should incorporate diversity themes into both the summer programs and the Weekend of Welcome programs for freshmen. These programs need to be a natural part of the programming, rather than a "side" issue.

Common Orientation Experiences.

The College should seek appropriate ways to have common orientation experiences and activities involving both AOP and the other incoming freshmen.

Faculty Participation.

More faculty should participate in the Weekend of Welcome as well as activities that recognize and promote the value of diversity on campus.

Follow-up.

The College should create opportunities throughout the freshmen year, to follow-up on the summer orientation including the whole college community and emphasizing valuing diversity.

Sensitivity training for faculty and students.

Make it a natural part of the process for incoming faculty and students. Such training would communicate to incoming faculty and students that this campus values diversity.

Diversity Sensitivity Orientation.

To insure that all faculty and staff are aware of College policy and to help raise the sensitivity of all College personnel to diversity issues, the College should include diversity orientation as part of job orientation and enrichment programs. To ease the transition to life in the academy, the academic units should establish mentoring programs for all new faculty and staff.

Objectives for 5 Years

Integration of Classroom and Student Diversity Events.

To create true community events, there should be increased coordination between faculty and student organizations so that events and programs could be better integrated with class discussion and course topics. This would integrate students' in-class and out-of-class activities.

Faculty-Student Interaction.

A true college community must extend beyond classroom interaction of faculty and students. To increase faculty-student interactions outside the classroom, the College should encourage educational and co-curricular programs where faculty and students interact by providing more opportunity for faculty to share information about their cultural backgrounds. Special faculty-student events could encourage such exchanges.

Campus-wide Events.

If the campus community values diversity, then diversity programs for students should be an entire community effort with various departments working together to help with design and implementation. Particular attention needs to be focused on reframing and reformatting diversity and multicultural programs and events to engender more student enthusiasm. Perhaps this should be done in collaboration with the campus community. The focus should be on quality more than quantity.

Faculty and Staff Community

Immediate Objectives

Social Interaction.

With more and more employees choosing to live in the metropolitan areas of Rochester, the College should take measures to help build community. For example, there could be more opportunities for faculty and staff and their families to get together socially, such as a faculty/staff dining area, an annual "company" picnic, etc.

The Geneseo Community and Beyond

Objectives for 1-2 Years

Campus Events and Classes.

Local elementary and high school students should be invited to different diversity-related events or classes as part of their classwork during the day. This may require talking to high-school teachers to see if they would be interested in having their students come to campus. Some professors on campus already do this. Perhaps develop an expectation that this is an important part of the faculty role. The College should increase its communication with local schools about diversity-related events on campus.

Objectives for 5 Years

Workshops.

Other high schools (e.g., Brighton) have faculty and students from diverse backgrounds come in and talk to the students through various workshops. They dedicate time where students have options to go to various presentations or workshops (either all in one day or one hour every day for a week). The College could further encourage faculty from diverse backgrounds to participate in "The Expert's List" published by the Office of Communications and Publications and ensure that that information be distributed to area high schools.

Conferences on Campus.

The College should encourage conference days in which elementary school and/or high school children attend talks, events, dinners, etc....surrounding diversity issues.

1988-1998 information on the background of first-time full-time students at Geneseo and other 4 year public colleges

Outline for an International Student Office

Personnel

Director of International Student Services

Oversee the office

Interface with college administration

Coordinate services with other campus offices

Keep abreast of immigration policies and their implementation

Advocate for international students

Monitor need and implementation of support programs

International Student Advisor

Advise, advocate for, monitor needs of international students

Program:

Orientation for new students

Continuing orientation

Introduction of students to campus community: "get-togethers", "buddy programs", peer counselors, dorm get-togethers

Introduction of students to larger community: friendship families, programs in local schools

Preparation students for reentry into their home countries

Provide basic counseling for students:

Cultural adaptation

Personal problems

Academic issues

Financial worries, etc.

Refer to appropriate campus services such as counseling, health services, dining halls, residence life, Dean's Office, etc.

Immigration/Admission Specialist

Keep abreast of INS policies and implement them

Advise incoming and admitted students, faculty, and administration re.immigration needs of students

Document preparation

Maintain data base of students and their immigration status

Student Interns

Assist with Orientation

Field basic questions

Data entry

"Front office" kinds of questions and services like making appointments

Services

Immigration Advising

Help students prepare for Practical Training

Assist students to find jobs

Provide programs to update students on immigration regulations

Provide informational brochures on travel, employment regulations

Immigration Document Preparation and Update

Prepare I-20 for incoming students

Review and evaluate proof of financial support forms

Work with Admissions Office to evaluate students academic credentials

Update and sign documents for students in the program

Travel signatures and travel documents

Recruitment

Work with Admission Office to establish admissions guidelines

Work with Admission to evaluate student applications

Academic Advising

Work with Dean refer students to appropriate programs: ESL, tutoring, Writing Center, etc.

Create a course (First Year Seminar) that teaches about cultural diversity by matching international and American students

Social Programs

Organize programs for the campus community to "show case" international

students

Organize programs to introduce American and international students to each other and facilitate adaptation to campus life: in residence halls, through buddy programs, international club

Organize International Day

Match students with friendship families

Organize

Programs to familiarize students with the area: field trips, shopping trips, discover the US, etc.

Programs that help students deal with culture shock, homesickness, financial and personal problems

Programs that help students understand and function in American culture and sensitize American students to other cultures

"Mainstreaming" International Students

Advocating for international students rights to a quality education and a quality experience on campus,

Assisting international students

Appropriate internship and work experiences

Financial aid or assistance in case of emergency (death in family, inability to pay tuition, political turmoil, etc.)

Health issues

Food

Emergency: critical illnesses, death/repatriation, psychological/emotional problems, hospitalization

Health insurance

Car insurance

Off-campus housing

Provide housing for students who have no place to go during breaks, intersession, summer

Coordinate faculty mentor program

Commission Members
Faculty
Administration/Staff
Student
Sharon Bossung
Kelly Clark
Jason Capili
Rose-Marie Cherici
Archie Cureton
Reyna Cerda
Laura Doan
Richard Farquharson
Ji Yoon Chung
David Geiger
Betty Fearn

Maxine Francis
Joaquine Gomez
Thomas Greenfield
Nasha Munroe
Srinivasa Leelamma
Debbie Hill
Lisa Rodriguez
Robert Owens
Scott Hooker
Julie Sacco
Monica Schneider
Yolanda Twitty
Joshua Sussman
        Laura Wrubel

We also benefited from the expertise of Linda Ross and Phyllis Latragna.

Organization

Robert Owens
Chair

Sharon Bossung
Rose-Marie Cherici
Laura Doan
Student Recruitment
Internat'l Students/Programs
Curriculum
David Geiger
Monica Schneider
Faculty & Staff Recruitment & Retention
Student Retention & Community