

AAAC: The Diversity Agenda

Agenda

Objective: To start an ongoing process in which the AAAC becomes a leadership team to develop, implement, monitor, and sustain a process aimed at achieving our diversity and affirmative action goals.

Note: This must be a sustained part of our agenda in the months ahead... we cannot fall asleep at the wheel again.

JJD Overview Statements

Key Questions:

Break into groups for discussion and problem solving...

Identify a facilitator in each group...

Divisions:

Liberal Arts Programs

LSA, Music, Rackham, OVPR, ITD

"Have" Professional Schools (high salaries)

Medicine, Law, Business, Engineering, Architecture

"Havenot" Schools (low salaries)

Education, Nursing, Natural Resources, Library Science

Art, Social Work

Followup assignments:

How do each of us compare with our peers?

1. Who are doing better; who are doing worse -- and why?

Personally talk with several peer deans to learn their experiences...and be prepared to bring this back for the group to share.

2. Want to share some of the specific actions of the deans with one another...to learn whether these models would apply.

Introduction

UM has made a new commitment to the achievement of an environment which seeks, nourishes, and sustains racial and cultural diversity.

Of course this has been an important objective of the University for many years.

But events of the past several years have convinced us that we need a renewal of our commitments -- we must stimulate once again the involvement of the entire University community -- of our students, our faculty, our staff.

We simply have not been as successful in achieving

a strong minority representation among our students, our faculty and staff, our leadership. Furthermore, it has become increasingly apparent that the environment on our campus is simply not as sensitive, tolerant, and supportive of racial diversity as it should be...as it must be!

The Importance of Diversity

It is imperative that the University both recognize the importance of diversity and pluralism in its mission...

And make a firm commitment to its achievement:

- i) Through the recruitment, support, retention, and success of minority students, faculty, staff -- and leaders
- ii) And through the development of an environment of mutual understanding and sensitivity that not only tolerates diversity, but moreover seeks and embraces it as an essential objective of the institution.

Why?

1. Social Responsibility

As a public institution, as a source of leaders of our society, we have a special obligation to provide equal opportunity for all peoples.. represented and underrepresented.

Furthermore, we have an obligation to reach out and make a special effort to increase the participation of those racial, ethnic, and cultural groups who are not adequately represented among our students, faculty, and staff.

So does the University have a particular responsibility to address this social problem through its primary missions of teaching, research, and service... through teaching that fosters awareness, sensitivity, and commitment to change through research aimed at increasing the understanding of the problems and the development of appropriate solutions.

through service that gives priorities to strong partnerships with the public and private sector to make the expertise of the University accessible to other arenas struggling to improve the situation for minorities.

2. Excellence

I am convinced that our ability to achieve excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service will be determined over time to a considerable degree by the diversity and pluralism of our campus community.

I firmly believe that we draw strength from diversity.

Excellence and diversity are not only mutually compatible, but in many ways they are mutually reinforcing objectives.

Speaking as a scientist, it is well known that the broader and more diverse the population, the more successful can it adapt to the challenges and opportunities posed by its environment.

3. A National Imperative

Pluralism has not only been, but will continue to be an ever more important characteristic of American society

Universities have a particular responsibility to develop the models of tolerance and understanding of a pluralistic society essential to the future of our nation.

4. Human resources

Our nation simply cannot afford to waste the human talents of underrepresented minority groups.

Let me explain...

The Challenge Before America

The challenge of dramatic economic change...

Traditional industry economy is shifting to a new knowledge-based economy, just as our industrial economy evolved from an agrarian society at the turn of the century.

A transition is occurring in which..

Intellectual capital has replaced financial and physical capital as key to economic development.

We are shifting rapidly away from a resource-intensive society to a knowledge-intensive society!

People must be the major focus...

People -- not equipment or buildings -- are the source of creativity.

They generate the knowledge that makes the technological innovation possible. They are the workforce that makes society run.

They are our researchers and teachers, our leaders, managers, and decision makers in a modern technological society.

But here there are serious clouds on the horizon

Traditional source of S&E college students is declining

25%-30% falloff in HS graduates by 1992

Assuming that same fraction (4.8%) choose to enter S&E, and assuming constant demand (very conservative), there will be a cumulative shortfall of 700,000 by 2010!

Note: Composition of college age population is also changing...

By 2020 30% will be composed of Blacks and hispanics... students who have not traditionally chosen S&E careers.

The fastest growing pool of youths has the lowest participation rate in college and the highest dropout rate in high schools -- not the mention the least likelihood to study science and math.

Indeed, while Blacks and Hispanics account for 20% of total population, they account for less than 2% of scientists and engineers!

NOTE: We must make special efforts to expand participation by these groups...not just because that is good social policy, but because we cannot afford to waste their talents!

Michigan's Past Commitments

In 1970s Michigan assumed a leadership role in higher education with its firm commitment to achieving achieving appropriate representation of blacks and other minority groups among its students,

faculty, and staff.

Over the next decade, UM developed and implemented an array of programs aimed at recruiting, retaining, supporting, and developing minority students and faculty unexcelled by any other university in this nation. The commitment of resources -- whether financial or human -- was extraordinary by any measure. And during this period, it achieved modest success... minority enrollments to 10% and black enrollments to 7.2% in 1978.

However, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, Michigan, like every other major university in this nation experienced setbacks in achieving these goals...enrollments began a gradual decline (down to 5% black).

Hence, in the early 1980s Michigan once again decided to assume a role of national leadership by implementing a broad array of new programs -- and once again it was successful in turning around the national trend and rebuilding, albeit slowing, the decline in minority student and faculty representation:

But, any attempt at leadership is accompanied by certain risks...and at Michigan, despite our efforts.

- i) We have not been as successful as we should have been...
- ii) Expectations both within and outside the University were very high...
- iii) The growing national concern -- indeed tension -- over minority representation specifically and racial issues more generally was reflected on our campus.
- iv) There are many signs that we have not been successful in developing an environment on our campus which encourages and sustains diversity

We are now convinced that leadership requires a major increase in our efforts.

A renewed commitment to our aspiration of eventual representation of all minority groups in proportion to their numbers in our society.

Commitment of additional human and financial resources...
And the involvement of our faculty, students,
staff, alumni, and friends -- at all levels of the
University, inside and out, in the effort to move
toward this goal.

Hence we are setting out upon a new and exciting
agenda to move toward these objectives.

The New Commitment

On March 23, the University announced a 6-point plan
to increase representation of Blacks and other minorities
throughout the University. More precisely, we stated:
"The aspiration of the University is to achieve representations of
Blacks and other minorities proportionate to their numbers in the
population. In order to achieve this target, we believe it will be
necessary to establish appropriate goals and timetables within
each area of the University."

Concluding Remarks:

As Provost at the University of Michigan, I have become
convinced that key to our mission in serving this State and
its people is a renewed commitment to our aspiration of
eventual representation of all minority groups in proportion
to their numbers in our society.

This will require major new commitments of human and financial
resources. It will also require the active involvement and
cooperation of our faculty, students, staff, alumni, friends,
and supporters in the effort to move toward this important
goal.

We are setting out before this University an important
new agenda....although, to be certain, this
agenda has set goals which will present us with
a considerable challenge -- and we are going
to need all the understanding, help, commitment,
and involvement we can muster!

However, we are convinced that this new agenda to
make this University a leader in achieving new
levels of understanding, tolerance, and mutual
fulfillment for peoples of diverse racial and cultural
backgrounds is not only consistent with, but
indeed, necessary if we are to achieve the
University's equally important objectives of
excellence in teaching and scholarship.

Some Personal Remarks

Finally, let me offer some personal observations...

When I was a college student in the early 1960s,
the burning issue on college campuses was the
American Civil Rights movement...

Students spent their spring and summer vacations
engaged in voter registration activities, in
protests against segregation

Indeed, the commencement address at my
graduation in 1964 was given by the Reverend
Martin Luther King, himself...

And we followed his leadership in an effort to blaze
a new path of opportunity for all peoples

Today much has been accomplished...

Many barriers are been broken down...

Minority representation in all sectors of society
is larger than ever...

There is much we can be proud of...

Yet we also must acknowledge there is still a long
ways to go...and we must be committed to
increasing our efforts in this area...

But let me suggest that something more is needed.

We need to rekindle the fire, the commitment
that characterized Dr. King's movement itself
in the 1960s...

And through our actions this past spring, we hope
to stimulate a renewal of commitment throughout
our University community and beyond...

A commitment to the acceptance of, the striving for,
and the achievement of diversity and equal
opportunity to all as the key to the distinction
of this University.

Appendix A: Discussion Topics

How serious is the problem?

How badly are we doing?

Why can't we do better?

Do we need to spend more money?

Do we need to give these matters more attention?

Do you believe that the efforts to build and sustain
diversity conflict with our objectives of excellence?

How?

What would you look for as indicators of diversity...
or the lack of it?

How do we provide strong incentives for these efforts...

i) Personal incentives for deans and chairs...

Merit salary program???

ii) Incentives for units

Resource allocation???

What help do you need to do better?