

# **UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

## **DIVERSITY BLUEPRINTS FINAL REPORT**

**MARCH 15, 2007**

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## INTRODUCTION

Diversity is far more than a demographic goal: diversity is the experience of meaningful exploration and exchange through a set of dynamic and reciprocal interactions. On a college campus, diversity becomes intellectually, culturally and socially productive and central to the university's educational mission when it is a source of mutual enrichment to all members of the university community. To this end, the University of Michigan seeks to provide an academic environment where intercultural skills are developed and enacted among diverse campus constituencies, with community partners, and within classroom and research practices. We seek to develop these capacities from day one, through recruitment, at orientations, through dialogues and grant opportunities, and in job and unit expectations. In this way education becomes a tool through which the *fact* of diversity is transformed to the exciting and productive *actions* of diversity, creating a climate and environment so stimulating and attractive that the experience of difference becomes a source of excellence and an instrument of achievement.

This vision of diversity provides the foundation for this final report of the Diversity Blueprints Task Force. Diversity Blueprints was established December 13, 2006, by President Mary Sue Coleman, in order to maintain University of Michigan's status as one of the nation's premier educational institutions while adhering to changes resulting from the passage of Proposal 2 in November, 2006. Proposal 2 amended the Michigan State Constitution to ban public institutions from discriminating against or giving preferential treatment to groups or individuals based on their race, gender, color, ethnicity, or national origin. In response, the University of Michigan changed its admissions and financial aid processes so that race and gender no longer are used in the decision-making process. The amendment contains an exception for any actions that are mandated by federal law or that are necessary in order for an institution to receive federal funding. The passage of Proposal 2 therefore does not alter employment practices mandated by various federal laws including Executive Order 11246, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, nor does it alter Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act which prohibits a wide array of discrimination extending far beyond issues of race and gender.

This final report presents recommendations shaped by the collective wisdom and effort of hundreds of Michigan students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and community members through their varied participation in five full Task Force meetings, four public forums, more than thirty-five hours of subcommittee meetings, and two days of consultation with key administrators from other states. In order to accurately determine the needs and goals of our K-12 partners, these recommendations also draw upon current significant outreach projects across campus units, including recent discussions with superintendents of several large southeastern Michigan school districts. Additionally, these recommendations incorporate perspectives from a number of other forums, meetings, workshops and written reports convened and compiled by a wide variety of campus constituents in the wake of Proposal 2. More than four hundred comments and suggestions submitted by e-mail, and uncounted discussions, conversations, and debates were also taken into consideration. This report does not represent a consensus of all these voices. Rather, it is a synthesis designed to guide the most immediate next steps of U-M's response to the changes brought about by Proposal 2.

The Diversity Blueprints Task Force was co-chaired by Provost Teresa Sullivan and Lester Monts, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, and consisted of 55 faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, alumni, and administrators. Diversity Blueprints was structured to include four subcommittees:

Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid, and Pipeline  
Graduate Student Recruitment, Retention, and Pipeline  
Faculty/Staff Hiring and Retention  
Educational Outreach and Engagement

Additionally, members of the Diversity Blueprints participated in a two-day Workshop on the Impact of Ballot Initiatives and Judicial Decisions on Admissions and Recruitment, Financial Aid, and Outreach with representatives from higher education institutions in the states of California, Washington, Texas, and Georgia. This workshop was hosted near the U-M campus in January, 2007.

Diversity Blueprints was charged with identifying innovative strategies to sustain and improve effectiveness in recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse student body, faculty, and staff and enhancing its educational outreach and engagement. Task Force members were asked to consider the University of Michigan's role as a primary and influential leader in the national landscape, knowing that U-M's response will signal not only the sincerity and success of its intent but also the scope of possibility for how other institutions of higher education will address similar issues.

That the University of Michigan has an unwavering commitment to this task is reflected in the substantial investment made by Diversity Blueprints members and those inspired to contribute to the work of the Task Force. The slate of speakers for every public forum was full. Despite short notice and a rigorous meeting schedule, more than three-quarters of the Task Force were present at each of the five full Diversity Blueprints meetings. Furthermore, Diversity Blueprints members devoted many hours discussing ideas in subcommittees, gathering data in preparation for the work of the subcommittees, and developing numerous written reports.

The recommendations explored by Diversity Blueprints touched on many themes. Educational outreach, partnerships, collaborations, investments, and engagements were common threads, especially ways to develop stronger relationships with K-12 education and with other colleges and universities. The ideas discussed by the Task Force included strategies to help Michigan youth envision themselves as U-M students and to help Michigan parents guide their children toward this possibility. They examined how to both simplify and bolster the complex terrain of financial aid. They identified ways to provide resources to individuals, schools, and communities that make the goal of a U-M education more possible. They looked at how to foster the links between faculty scholarship, research, and the public good. They articulated a new role for alumni in maintaining U-M's commitment to diversity. And they outlined ways to strengthen U-M's image and impact with a broad range of constituents.

Recommendations to attract students to U-M also grappled with the criteria by which we define and evaluate academic success. They explored the notion of "cognitive complexity," "distance

traveled" and "direction headed," supported the processes of holistic evaluation, identified strategies for increasing our conversion rates, and developed the idea of "citizen scholars" as the kind of student we seek to support and cultivate.

While none of the Diversity Blueprints subcommittees was specifically charged with the task of addressing U-M's campus climate, this theme emerged as a key consideration in each of the subcommittee deliberations. Climate is influenced by a wide array of physical, institutional, and interpersonal conditions within the environment that influence a sense of the general spirit of the campus and the specific sense of belonging experienced by each individual. The atmosphere or climate experienced in one environment (e.g., a classroom, office setting, academic program, staff meeting, student organization, or social activity) can permeate other environments and contribute positively or negatively to the engagement, productivity, learning, and development of each member of the U-M community. Attention to campus climate has been a longstanding aspect of U-M's commitment to diversity, and the need for this attention is increased through the passage of Proposal 2.

With this in mind, Diversity Blueprints also explored issues relating to the quality of life on the U-M campus including structural accountability, rewards for commitment, remediation of institutional barriers to success, and the provision of rich opportunities for interaction. Task Force members considered new programs designed to support and reflect academic pathways founded on a commitment to diversity and social justice. They examined ways to expand existing programs that successfully foster intercultural skills and communication. They identified ways to capitalize on the extensive resources of our libraries and scholarship. They referenced successful mentor models, expanding upon these to establish more rigorous and comprehensive mentoring opportunities at Michigan. And they noted the need to make the social and educational values of diversity more tangible in the everyday experiences of faculty, students, and staff.

Finally, these recommendations articulated the need for collecting new data about our campus and defined ways to make better use of the data we have. They suggested ways to provide support and recognition for students, faculty, and staff who demonstrate a commitment to diversity at U-M and encouraged new partnerships and networks across the various units and roles of our campus. They addressed the importance of critical mass and role models, articulating the challenges of the "cascade effect" through which the loss of representational presence on campus undermines the desire and ability for others to remain at U-M. And they called for ongoing improvement in the communication and coordination of the many faces of diversity on our campus.

Drawing from these many ideas, this report provides the foundation upon which a coherent *implementation plan* can be built, tested, and refined. Some recommendations can be implemented immediately (immediate and ongoing) or begun before the fall semester (next steps). The Task Force has indeed assembled "Blueprints" for Diversity, which are far more than a design description but far less than work orders. Ongoing engagement will be needed to complete implementation plans across the university based on a well-articulated vision, and consisting of fully developed strategies, thoughtful allocation of resources, and structurally integrated accountability mechanisms.

Once finalized, relevant subcommittee reports will be distributed to units where their suggestions can be evaluated and enacted. The full listing of the hundreds of ideas and possibilities generated through Diversity Blueprints will also become available to be utilized by the U-M Diversity Council, other diversity programs and administrators in academic and co-curricular areas, and all others who are tasked with the on-going actualization of U-M's diversity goals. Diversity Blueprints documents will be available online and archived at the U-M's Bentley Historical Library for future access.

## **SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **POLICIES AND PROGRAMS**

- I. Establish fully coordinated educational and community outreach and engagement activities.
- II. Maintain and improve student admissions, conversion, and retention practices within the new legal parameters.
- III. Address U-M's interpersonal climate by providing structured interactions, facilitated dialogue, and opportunities to work across boundaries.
- IV. Dismantle structural impediments and increase structural support for faculty, staff, and students, especially those working on diversity-related issues.

### **INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES**

- V. Ensure campus-wide buy-in, engagement and transparency with diversity efforts.
- VI. Increase accountability and sustainability mechanisms for all units and departments across the university.
- VII. Continue to advance these goals.

## STRATEGIES GLEANED FROM OTHER UNIVERSITIES

Public universities in the states of California, Washington, Texas, and Georgia have sought to maintain their racial, ethnic and gender diversity in the wake of legislative and judicial changes like those brought about by Michigan's Proposal 2. By their own report, they have experienced significant setbacks in demographic representation and discouraging dynamics in their campus interactions.

They found that many under-represented students, faculty and staff chose private institutions where funding was more available and where there was less campus turmoil and strife over these issues. In their efforts to respond, these universities discovered the limitations of computer modeling and proxies such as socio-economic status, and the surprisingly low return on transfer student strategies. They faced the reality of a diminishing presence of middle class under-represented students on their campuses and the associated class divisions between the low and high income students that remained. They struggled with raids on their faculty and staff by private institutions that were able to promise a more diverse, and less conflicted, campus climate. And they experienced on-going controversy, as well as public scrutiny and doubt, about the validity, effectiveness, and appropriateness of many of the actions they undertook.

Given the political similarities between the recent changes to the Michigan State Constitution and the situations faced in these states, there is little to suggest that our initial experiences will be any different.

However, our colleagues in these states have cleared a path through the territory we now walk. The wisdom borne of their experience sets an important context for the recommendations we present. Increasingly, they are identifying and implementing successful methods for attracting and sustaining a diverse population on their campuses. Through strong commitment by university leadership (especially regents, presidents, provosts, and deans), new hires (such as a development person at Washington), adaptive admissions policies (selecting students with promise and finding that they prove to do well once on campus), support programs for K-12 education (such as math and science teacher education), and intensive partnerships with selected high schools (such as the Texas Longhorn Opportunity program), they are diligently moving toward their goals.

Ongoing conversations with these and other universities will help us avoid blind alleys, prepare for on-going challenges, capitalize on best practices, and prevent unintended consequences. Because of this, we anticipate that many of our setbacks and discouraging moments will be short-lived. Indeed, we see ourselves as uniquely situated to be at the leading edge of the questions and challenges posed to our nation through ballot initiatives like Proposal 2.

Principal concepts articulated in these conversations include:

- A. Cultivate knowledgeable and engaged leadership and public endorsement at the highest levels of the university.
- B. Carefully craft all diversity programs with public transparency in mind.

- C. Create competitive financial aid packages that stand up to comparisons among friends and peers and provide swift response to admitted students.
- D. Publish and utilize federally mandated Affirmative Action guidelines and data to invigorate faculty and staff minority recruitment and provide stability for diversity initiatives.
- E. Develop aggressive targeted outreach activities as a necessary component of the broad diversity pipeline, including specific fundraising strategies and goals. Once implemented, rigorously assess outreach programs for effectiveness and implement appropriate changes as needed.
- F. Expand implementation of projects and strategies that have been successful in some areas of U-M or at other universities and infuse them throughout the university.
- G. Be aware of the role of campus climate in the decision-making processes of prospective faculty, staff, and students. A positive campus climate also more successfully engages on-campus constituents in outreach and conversion efforts.
- H. When applying general recommendations relating to institutional diversity goals, have all units develop plans for implementation with periodic review giving attention to who participates in their activities, who is employed and represented in their unit, and how members of their unit are trained in skills to improve both areas.
- I. Have clear accountability mechanisms, including those that track various efforts and assess outcomes and effectiveness.

In general, these concepts point the way forward into well-defined and focused actions and engagement so that the highest standards, and the deepest principles, are served.

## PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS WITH "IMMEDIATE AND ON-GOING" AND "NEXT STEPS" COMPONENTS

### POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

#### **I. Establish fully coordinated educational and community outreach and engagement activities.**

The University of Michigan has a long tradition of successful educational outreach and community partnerships. U-M faculty, staff, and students increase our effectiveness as a public body, as well as our institutional visibility, by participating in local communities, state realities, national priorities, and global possibilities while gaining the benefit of the rich diversity of experience and perspective such engagement affords. (An incomplete list of these programs includes those in the Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives, the College of Engineering, the Center for the Education of Women, and the Ginsberg Center, as well as many individual faculty and students who link their scholarship to community initiatives.)

At this time, greater synergy is needed among these varied efforts in order to make them a stronger signature of our mission as a public university. *Specifically, a University center for educational outreach and engagement is needed to coordinate, synthesize, cross-fertilize and strengthen substantive partnerships between the University and its many communities by promoting collaboration among academic and administrative units, fostering the development of new community outreach initiatives, leveraging existing partnerships, and administering outreach and engagement programs of its own.*

Through these activities, U-M would expand its reach into the communities of the state of Michigan and beyond, bringing resources, opportunities, intelligence, and commitment and broadening and developing the pipeline for students, faculty, and staff. Such coordination would also support well-informed and highly effective university involvement in communities and help ensure that the partnerships developed through these activities are true partnerships: ones that reflect the priorities of the communities being served and that fully recognize the resources, opportunities, expertise, and commitment of people and institutions beyond our campus.

In U-M's decentralized environment, another key benefit of a center would be the networks created not only between our nineteen schools and colleges, but also between the academic units and the many other programs and initiatives with long-standing and successful outreach models (e.g., the Global Intercultural Experience for Undergraduates, the Comprehensive Studies Program, Community Reads, and the Multicultural Health Initiative.)

#### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 1) Compile a complete inventory of current educational and community outreach programs and activities across campus. Distribute this inventory among U-M outreach programs to foster this network of practitioners and activities.



- 2) Continue meaningful dialogue with Michigan K-12 superintendents to increase highly focused U-M-secondary school engagement.
- 3) Create avenues of communication with external constituents to enhance understanding of U-M's values of democracy, citizenship, diversity and access (connecting these values to the needs of external groups, especially the state of Michigan) including: communication avenues with government bodies; dissemination strategies for increased public dialogue on key issues; effective pool of key advocates for University goals and strategies; high profile alumni as active partners in ongoing efforts to educate community leaders and local media.
- 4) Continue engagement with community colleges, building on the work of the Michigan Transfer Initiatives for Emerging Scholars program, and the Transfer To Michigan initiatives sponsored, in part, by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation. (Both of these programs focus on increasing the transfer rate of low- to moderate-income community college students and support for them on campus.)

#### **Next Steps:**

- 5) Begin the process of articulating and formulating a centralized Educational Outreach Center, to coordinate, synthesize, and cross-fertilize outreach efforts across the university, linking these activities to the academic life of faculty and students.
- 6) Collect and analyze relevant data to evaluate and develop existing outreach goals, strategies, activities, and outcomes.
- 7) Expand engagement in targeted partnerships with underserved K-12 schools, on-campus high school counselor partnerships, and programs that provide college preparation and financial aid education (what is available, and how to obtain it). Possibilities include "adopting" schools from the K-12 system for interactive programs, campus visits, etc.; developing a pilot program modeled after the Kalamazoo Promise with a demographically diverse middle school (including setting standards for academic achievement and guaranteeing admission and financial aid for students who meet those standards); investing in schools that accomplish goals associated with our commitment to diversity, such as minimizing the black-white achievement gap.
- 8) Develop and support non-traditional pathways to undergraduate and graduate degrees, including pipelines that rely on clear identification of career pathways (such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields, Health Professions, Humanities, etc.). Cultivate other benefits of long-term working partnerships with colleges, universities and industry. Identify top graduate students from other schools who could become U-M faculty.
- 9) Support innovative academic initiatives that extend into community settings such as the existing "Michigan in Washington" program and ideas for a "Michigan in Detroit"

semester-long experience (to be coordinated with the Detroit Center). Provide and develop more training for engaged college students and faculty, such as that provided by the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives, Ginsberg Center and the Global Intercultural Experiences for Undergraduates program, to gain the cultural and community awareness to conduct themselves effectively in these partnerships.

- 10) To further actualize U-M's contributions as a public institution, increase financial support and recognition of outreach activities to underserved communities conducted by staff, faculty, and students, such as a citizen scholarship program to recognize distinguished service to the community, or internal grant opportunities for faculty and staff initiating new outreach activities. Provide more direct and explicit means for students and staff to track, interpret, and learn from community service work as a component of their educational experience, as with the E-Portfolio initiative being piloted in eight units this semester.

## **II. Maintain and improve student admissions, conversion, and retention practices within the new legal parameters.**

A key component of the success of our admissions practices is making potential students feel they are valued and welcomed on our campus. Our holistic review practices, admissions processes, and related outreach activities already reflect this goal, and additional strategies are already in process to achieve this outcome. It is vital that we assess the effectiveness of current strategies, implement new and proven strategies for conversion, and pursue the on-going development of mechanisms that personalize the admissions process. This includes timely offers and interactions; campus day, orientation, and retention programs that reflect the particular interests of students; and comprehensive follow-through with all our admitted students. Responsive admissions practices also reflect our commitment to creating a diverse and engaged student body.

This section separates out the following two priorities: a) pipeline and holistic review of applications, and b) conversion and retention.

### **A. Pipeline and Holistic Review of Applications**

#### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 11) Continue to support and develop the new U-M holistic review of applications for undergraduate and graduate students. Include non-traditional projects in the holistic review process such as videos, artistic productions, research findings, and other work projects testifying to student potential.
- 12) Once finalized, provide Diversity Blueprints Undergraduate Admissions, Financial Aid, and Pipeline Subcommittee report and Graduate Student Recruitment, Retention, and Pipeline Subcommittee report to all admissions committees and deans for review,

including the proposed "Admissions Philosophy Statement" submitted by the graduate student subcommittee.

### **Next Steps:**

- 13) Centralize information at Rackham School of Graduate Studies (Rackham hereafter) to determine if the thresholds for the various predictors of success such as test scores, grades, and evidence of previous research can be validated. Rackham should identify criteria for success that have empirical support. Rackham should also review the criteria and procedures of departments and schools that have been successful at attracting and graduating diverse students.
- 14) Investigate new quantifiable measures of academic diversity such as *distance traveled* (as the Medical School has done to assess student ability to overcome barriers), *direction headed* (to assess degree of commitment to the improvement of the public good), and *cognitive complexity* (to measure modes of diverse thinking and capacity for engaging with diverse perspectives). Give stronger consideration to socioeconomic status and first generation students. Track the effects of Proposal 2 on the socio-economic profile of enrolled students.
- 15) Create and strengthen pipelines for graduate students such as: intra-university programs to encourage outstanding U-M undergraduates contemplating entering professional school or Ph.D. programs to choose U-M for their graduate work; programs that identify undergraduates with the capacity to enter such programs who may not be considering them and encourage them to do so; new inter-university collaborations and exchange programs with schools/universities that enroll a large number of under-represented minority students; programs that allow graduate students to spend a semester or year at U-M (similar to CIC traveling scholars programs for doctoral students and MIGS for masters and doctoral students attending in-state public institutions. The College of Engineering currently has a 2+3 program with the Atlantic University Center.)
- 16) Investigate the use of pre-screening and pipeline database committees that could supplement the Admissions process through holistic information-gathering on students engaged in our outreach and academic enrichment activities.

## **B. Conversion and Retention**

### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 17) Create enhanced personal follow-up for all admitted graduate and undergraduate students who have not yet made their enrollment decision.
- 18) Expedite financial aid offers to all admitted students and invest in more opportunities for campus visits for all admitted students seeking legally permissible ways to reach out to diverse communities.

**Next Steps:**

- 19) Explore new ways to maintain and continue to improve existing levels of financial aid to underserved graduate students and undergraduates such as: provide full tuition scholarships based on academic promise and financial need to students from targeted geographic locations; create a scholarship for qualified undergraduates admitted from underperforming high schools; provide scholarships and stipends for students selected and enrolling in summer bridging programs prior to the first year as an undergraduate or graduate student at U-M; increase scholarships for first-generation undergraduates; provide scholarships tied to performance in pipeline partnerships; developing "matching programs" which offer to meet the competition's offers based on our best judgment of the degree to which the student is "in demand" or, for any student we admit, say we'll do our best to beat the financial aid offers from competitive institutions; create a debt management program in which loans convert to grants post-graduation based on performance criteria.
- 20) Create more focused campus days and other strategies to target students with specific interests such as learning communities, intergroup relations, multicultural initiatives, or service learning, and students who have participated in summer and other outreach programs. Build upon the targeted outreach strategies of this kind that exist in the professional schools (such as Dentistry, Public Health, Business, Social Work, and the Medical School) and other programs (e.g., the Ginsberg Center, the Women in Science and Engineering program).
- 21) Develop a highly structured, academically rigorous transition and retention program that includes components such as: rigorous schedule of in-class/out of class activities and structure in early years; Pass/Fail options for undergraduate students in their first year and/or summer bridge students; study groups, supplemental instruction, tutors, learning communities, and mentor matching programs with staff/faculty/peers; a spectrum of social and cultural support in multiple contexts and methods; proactive advising to students with consistent monitoring of success; dedicated facilities and staff; paid student internships within the University and during the summer outside the University.

**III. Address U-M's interpersonal climate by providing structured interactions, facilitated dialogue, and opportunities to work across boundaries.**

At the center of the work of Diversity Blueprints was the charge to maintain, sustain, and expand diverse communities at all levels of the University. This goal extends far beyond quantifiable measures of social identity to include the development of intercultural skills and diverse encounters as an integral, systematic, and pervasive aspect of the work and learning of everyone at U-M. Making the social and educational values of diversity an everyday priority at U-M requires recognition of the individual and cultural gifts of our students, faculty and staff; integrated opportunities for diverse experiences; development of the social networks necessary for any individual to consider a place their home; and the training and support needed to have the hard, compelling, and necessary conversations that arise amidst our differences. It depends upon

the development of intellectually, socially, and culturally productive encounters that create the benefits brought about by diversity.

### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 22) Make intercultural skills and diverse encounters an integral part of the work and learning of everyone at U-M in order to make U-M a safe and effective place for difficult conversations. Extend this to all constituents on campus through programs such as: an expanded Day of Change program in Fall 2007 during Welcome Week to all students so that they each have an interactive presentation on multicultural skills, the community plunge experience, and then a facilitated dialogue about it; follow-up experiences during Fall Semester in the residence halls; extended scalable best practices such as those developed and utilized by Expect Respect, the Center for the Education of Women, Student Activities and Leadership, Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Affairs , and Office of Academic and Multicultural Initiatives, Resident Advisor Training, Minority Engineering Program Office, Women in Science and Engineering.
- 23) When finalized, provide Diversity Blueprints subcommittee reports to all deans, executive officers, and key administrators for review and further discussion (within units, across administrative functions).

### **Next Steps:**

- 24) Evaluate and implement the appropriate aspects of the Division of Student Affairs proposed two-year Climate and Engagement Initiative to extend the reach of their proven co-curricular programs, classes, and services that contribute to engagement, learning and development.
- 25) Develop specific working definitions, case studies, theater sketches, and similar mechanisms to clarify and communicate the kinds of interactions that are essential to producing the climate we seek to create at U-M.
- 26) Identify important emblematic commitments to diversity that could be more publicly communicated and displayed in the U-M environment, such as named buildings, historical representations of U-M, designed spaces, and public art and performance such as those fostered by Arts on Earth and Arts at Michigan.

## **IV. Dismantle structural impediments and increase structural support for faculty, staff, and students, especially those working on diversity-related issues.**

Structural impediments play a significant role in the lives of individuals, especially staff and faculty who often spend much of their lives within this environment. Increasing structural support for faculty, staff, and students improves our institutional health and viability. Structural support includes programs designed to support scholarly and academic success in particular, as

well as those that guide individuals through new terrain (including new jobs, new fields of study, and new ways of learning). It includes the recognition of diverse academic pathways and the availability of resources to support diverse scholarly interests. We need to offset institutional barriers to success, and recognize the specific challenges related to diversity-related research and teaching. Our basic practices related to recruitment, hiring, promotion, and review must reflect our educational and institutional goals. These various manifestations of U-M's commitment to diversity need continual review and renewal so that they are strengthened by known best practices and responsive to the specific needs of U-M faculty, staff, and students.

### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 27) Increase opportunities for flexible and part-time funding for graduate students so they are better able to support themselves and their families while pursuing graduate studies.

### **Next Steps:**

- 28) Continue to provide and improve support, recognition, and integration structures for faculty and staff with complex responsibilities for research projects and course assignments related to diversity. Investigate ways to support new themes of research on diversity issues (such as health disparities, gender equity, and environmental justice), and identify and respond to the specific burdens of working in areas of emergent scholarship. (For faculty, such steps might include: flexibility in the tenure clock, recognition for service obligations, manuscript workshops, or research funding for work that may not be funded through standard channels. For staff, such steps might include: financial resources, professional development opportunities, and recognition for service obligations.) Continue to foster interdisciplinary scholarship related to race, gender, and other social identity categories and consider ways to synthesize this scholarship across the many areas of the University where it is currently conducted such as: an umbrella Diversity Studies Program with both undergraduate and graduate components; highlighting the Diversity Collection in the University of Michigan Libraries as a pre-eminent virtual destination.
- 29) Promote the Michigan Mentoring Initiative (based on the STRIDE model) and other exemplary mentoring programs at all levels of the University, including widespread education on mentoring and how to best draw on mentors. Explore formal mentoring for staff and review the effectiveness of faculty mentoring in relation to tenure and other issues. Knowledge of effective mentoring practices could be exchanged on a regular basis, and information collected centrally could be available as a resource handbook with workshops for diverse faculty and staff. Replicate exemplary mentoring practices for those constituents who currently do not have appropriate access to mentoring resources.
- 30) Compile and deploy best practices for staff and faculty recruitment and hiring. Study what different departments do, identify what works and doesn't work. Provide templates for recruitment and hiring practices and track unit adoption of specific recruitment and hiring principles. Develop more effective information-gathering and sharing for faculty hiring pools (such as the mail-in postcards utilized by Human Resources). With

standardized information gathering procedures, and resulting data available to hiring committees, committees could produce better results (i.e., more diverse hiring pools) and also be held more accountable.

- 31) Create more diverse pipelines for faculty and staff recruitment. These could include internships and cross-training opportunities coordinated with other campuses, opportunities to hire our own graduates where appropriate, and recruitment of undergraduates at other universities to graduate school at U-M.
- 32) Strengthen the role of Advising Offices, MultiEthnic Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Multicultural Initiatives, and other student support services that exist in academic and co-curricular areas to promote more expertise and responsibility for student mentoring and student services needs.
- 33) Sustain the internal pipeline to senior positions of leadership for diverse faculty and staff by creating opportunities for mid-level staff. Create incentives for senior faculty and staff to mentor and support mid-career colleagues, and recognize those who have contributed to diversity hiring and pipelines. Improve recruitment and promotion for high-level positions and targeted career families in the University where representation of various identity groups is weak or weakening, consistent with policies set forth in federally required affirmative action plans.
- 34) Enhance standard practices so that the importance of diversity interactions within the University becomes part of the U-M work experience. Discussions and follow-up training can be embedded in such programs as new employee orientation, staff supervisor training, and new department chair training.

## INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

### **V. Ensure campus-wide buy-in, engagement and transparency with diversity efforts.**

While U-M is well known for its commitment to diversity, it is important that we increase the visibility of specific mechanisms, definitions, goals, and strategies through which we enact this institutional promise. Increasing the transparency of our commitment will help us engage the full campus community in the complex and challenging discussions that diversity requires and makes possible. This is an opportunity to create better connections and networks across our highly decentralized environment. Increased visibility also leads to more appropriate recognition and reward levels for the individuals, courses, offices and programs that make significant contributions to cultivating our capacity for diverse engagements. Designated forums and formats for increasing communication on our campus can also help foster understanding and generative discussion with our off-campus constituents (such as parents, political bodies, and the people of the State of Michigan) about the specific nature and purpose of U-M's diversity goals.

**Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 35) Immediately make federally mandated Affirmative Action plans available to the campus community so that they are fully accessible to all who serve on hiring, recruitment, admissions, and promotion committees. The University Affirmative Action plan sets concrete goals, indexed to an available regional and national demographic, with the assumption that a diverse and excellent pool will produce a similar demographic among employees. Educate U-M constituents about federally mandated Affirmative Action requirements for the University, reaffirming that tracking and transparency of Affirmative Action recruitment is both a part of standard practice and a legal requirement.
- 36) Expand and develop the Diversity Council's existing diversity website and diversity newsletter (The Promise of Diversity) to provide comprehensive information about U-M's engagement with and experiences of diversity.
- 37) Schedule the campus-wide 2007 Fall Diversity Summit to review diversity data, existing annual reports, and progress towards the Diversity Blueprints goals. The Diversity Summit builds on a tradition begun in 2004 and provides the university community the opportunity to evaluate progress on these recommendations and to press forward with remaining next steps. Utilize this and other regular colloquiums and forums as an opportunity for constituents to come together to develop networks, share issues, note trends, discuss implications, and advance best practices.

**Next Steps:**

- 38) Create a regular mechanism and schedule to publish demographic data in multiple diversity categories.
- 39) Develop more ways to identify, showcase, and reward student, faculty, and staff efforts that are "institution enhancing" and "diversity building."

**VI. Increase accountability and sustainability mechanisms for all units and departments across the university.**

A diverse campus environment is more than an idea, and the educational value of diversity is more than a theory. To be fully actualized, U-M's commitment to diversity must be shared and reflected across all climates, levels and units within our community. Within each unit of the university, diversity and its benefits must be proactively sought and the efficacy of programs, structures and resource investments must be assessed. Budgets must be tied to outcomes, and review and reward structures must reflect these shared institutional priorities. Furthermore, the interlocking nature of our efforts must be factored into accountability. For example, recruiting and maintaining a diverse faculty and staff is an essential pre-condition for recruiting and educating a diverse student body.



**Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 40) Continue annual meetings between Deans and the Senior Director of the Office of Institutional Equity to discuss the Affirmative Action report submitted annually to the federal government. Reaffirm that Affirmative Action in faculty in staff recruitment is a federally mandated requirement for the University.
- 41) Develop proactive mechanisms to respond to faculty and staff at risk of leaving the institution. Conduct retention and exit interviews with staff and faculty. Retention interviews can identify issues or concerns, so that negative issues can be addressed and positive factors can be reaffirmed and replicated.
- 42) Continue to identify and evaluate diversity and climate improvement outcomes, and use these as key performance indicators. Strengthen institutionalized accountability and tracking for diversity in annual budget review at all levels to embed a formal and structured consideration of diversity, consistent with all applicable laws, in evaluation of key performance indicators at all levels.

**Next Steps:**

- 43) Establish on-going assessment and evaluation of the campus climate and diverse experiences of our students, faculty and staff, making use of existing practices such as the Michigan Student Study (which could be used to conduct admissions and first year experience surveys in 2007, 2008, and 2009 in order to establish baseline and change data regarding the immediate impact of Proposal 2) and institutional research on staff experiences conducted by Human Resources. Theory-driven approaches of our efforts should improve our practice and also contribute to the larger scholarship on the benefits and challenges of living in a diverse society. Provide mechanisms for the various studies of student, faculty, and staff experience to inform each other and be available to the campus at large (through the diversity website, newsletter, or other formats). Conduct generative interviews to systematically gather the history and institutional wisdom of U-M faculty and staff across the past 30-40 years.
- 44) Ensure that feedback to unit reports specifically addresses ways to improve actions and strategies for meeting diversity goals and improving climate.
- 45) Create strong incentives for departments to improve the retention and success of all students.

**VII. Continue to advance these goals.**

The recommendations in this report reflect the beginning rather than the end of a process to further develop and clarify the magnitude of our vision and the specificity of our decisions regarding U-M's curriculum, research, and service priorities, as well as our policies, procedures, and budget allocations. Our long-term task is to address the current legal changes while developing solutions that continue and re-invigorate the progress we have made, even going

significantly beyond our past efforts. We will not accomplish this with a single program or innovation. Rather, we must persist in the difficult but compelling work of continuing to re-invent ourselves and public education. This requires an enduring focus and commitment based in an "extended community effort" that is coordinated with colleagues across the campus, state and country, from both private and public sectors. To do this, it will be vital that we clearly define our vision and commitment and realistically engage our efforts.

### **Immediate and Ongoing:**

- 46) Implementation of this report and its recommendations should be directed by the Office of the President and the Executive Officers, because every part of the University is and should be engaged in diversity. We anticipate that many administrative groups will be involved, including the Office of the Provost, Division of Student Affairs, Human Resources, the Medical Center, and the leaders of the nineteen colleges and schools. We also look for the engagement of student leaders and organizations, faculty leaders and SACUA, staff organizations such as Voices of the Staff, the Alumni Association, and organizations such as the Diversity Council that represent a variety of constituencies. We suggest that the Diversity Summit during the Fall Semester be considered an occasion for presenting progress on this report, and for presenting additional plans for going forward.
- 47) Share the content of Diversity Blueprints with officers from U-M Dearborn and U-M Flint and cultivate collaborations across these three campuses to meet U-M's diversity goals. Identify mechanisms to consult and collaborate with the various groups and programs already tasked with actualizing U-M's commitment to diversity. Create methods (such as forums, consultations, focus groups, etc.) through which consultation can continue with other various relevant constituent groups around campus.

### **Next Steps:**

- 48) Set six-month implementation benchmarks that culminate in the 2007 Fall Diversity Summit. Include review, adaptation, and fine-tuning of all Diversity Blueprints recommendations; an overall timeline for implementation, and designation and recommendation of leadership for new initiatives and implementation of specific recommendations.
- 49) Sponsor, coordinate, and prepare students to visit public universities in California, Washington, Texas and Georgia to promote student collaborations and gather student perspectives about effective strategies for addressing the impact of ballot initiatives and judicial decisions on admissions and recruitment, financial aid, and outreach.
- 50) Work with the Diversity Council to identify the connections between the efforts of Diversity Blueprints, which are focused on race, ethnicity, gender, color, and national origin, and the many other dimensions of U-M's long-standing and nuanced commitment to diversity. These connections are essential to actualize U-M's pledge to building a community that is broadly diverse and inclusive of a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives that richly contribute to our learning environment.

## CONCLUSION

The work of this Task Force has been made easier by the University of Michigan's long and wide-ranging commitment to diversity and its strong local and national leadership demonstrated in response to Proposal 2 and the admissions lawsuits that eventually ended up before the U.S. Supreme Court. The breadth and depth of expertise brought to this report is the result of many years of University leadership in diversity scholarship and coursework, powerful innovative programming that has catalyzed similar efforts elsewhere, and a precedent-setting research-based understanding of the specific educational benefits of diversity. We truly have a powerful legacy in our commitment to diversity and a considerable commitment to extending its reach.

Across campus and the country, there is strong interest in how U-M will respond to the challenge of this moment. Proposal 2, coupled with the exigencies of the changing Michigan economy, call for a new level of University engagement. The Diversity Blueprints recommendations, taken as a whole, provide the roadmap toward a new vision for a more publicly engaged institution. Beyond the specific next steps outlined in this report, it is vital that we vigorously and publicly promote a unified vision for fostering both diversity and civic engagement at all levels of the university.

Our individual and collective efforts will be more visible, and impact the institutional culture more deeply, if we work toward baseline common goals in a coordinated manner. Our goals are more than a collection or list of activities and initiatives--they are activities and initiatives that build upon one another to create a welcoming and enriching community that seeks to promote the success and engagement of all its members.

Highly visible leadership will be critical to our ability to continue to recruit and retain under-represented and women faculty and undergraduate, graduate and professional students, many of whom will be heavily recruited elsewhere. Positive perceptions of the U-M reality--as well as the reality itself--will determine our success in maintaining and creating a vibrant community in the next few years. For this reason, we need to assure that all parts of the campus continue to be involved in the days ahead.

The leadership of this effort needs to be shared by all members of the U-M community. We need staff to rigorously assess their activities, document best practices, and replace ineffective efforts. We need executive officers and unit leadership to talk about diversity as they develop strategic plans, determine budget allocations, and review performance. We need faculty who will strengthen the ties between their scholarship and the public good and participate more vigorously in outreach activities to attract undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. We need students who will make U-M the school they desire it to be and help us extend the Michigan invitation to larger circles. We need alumni to utilize their networks and passion for a U-M education to help us attract and support a diverse community. And we need all members of the university to speak up about what needs attention, what needs to change, and what is possible, and to be the change agents who bring creative ideas and innovative solutions to the fore.

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