Diversity Pre-Planning Workgroup
Report and Recommendations

Introduction and Background

Colgate seeks to enhance and build upon diversity in the population and culture of its campus. Reflected in the Strategic Plan is the commitment from the University to engage with diversity, to learn from it, and to come to grips with the opportunities and considerable challenges that life in a genuinely multicultural society brings. Notably, diversity is a consistent thread throughout the conceptual framework of the entire strategic plan. Further, one strategy focuses solely on issues of diversity:

. . . . Colgate defines a diverse community as one with a critical mass of people from traditionally underrepresented and disadvantaged groups where difference is viewed as an integral component of the institution, and where all groups and individuals fully benefit from the educational opportunities, in and out of the classroom, of a multicultural environment. . .

Excerpt from the Strategic Plan: Bridging Differences in a Diverse World

Recognizing the importance of the conversation regarding diversity that is taking place nationally, Colgate desires to identify strategies of engagement, and seeks to position itself as a potential leader. Central to the larger conversation are discussions of inclusivity and equal opportunity, framed through the understanding that it is precisely at the intersections of difference that the most passionate discussions regarding democracy are taking place.

In 2003-04, as a first step in responding to the strategy, Bridging Differences in a Diverse World, President Chopp appointed a Diversity Pre-Planning Group to define the scope and purpose of an on-campus committee that will begin its work formally in the 2004-2005 academic year. As a second step, the Provost and President will appoint the on-campus committee to review diversity at Colgate in the context of this national conversation and begin to implement the Bridging Differences strategy.

The Diversity Pre-Planning Group surveyed the current landscape of diversity at Colgate specifically, and in higher education generally. The group then engaged in a critical review of relevant data working from the assumption that a central component of a critical analysis and understanding of diversity is the acknowledgment of the sometimes contradictory implications of quantitative and qualitative data. As such, the group acknowledged that competing explanations arising from quantitative and qualitative data need not cancel out one or the other.

While the University’s vision for diversity at Colgate is grounded in the understanding that multiculturalism is inclusive of all identities, including those of race, class, gender,
sexual orientation, religion and disabilities, the pre-planning group has given primary
attention to people of color who have been historically underrepresented (African
Americans, U.S. Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans).

As the group engaged in the process, it became very clear that student-centered diversity
efforts/initiatives cannot succeed, especially in the long term, unless there is a concurrent
emphasis on improving the institutional climate overall so that it is supportive of and
clearly values diversity. Programs that have an emphasis on linkages with other
programs, departments and initiatives, collaboration, interrelationships, and community
building will facilitate system-wide institutional change by: 1) developing a greater
awareness and more complex understanding of diversity and issues facing students of
color, faculty and staff in a small and predominately white university; 2) providing
faculty, staff and students of color with the experience of an intimate and nurturing
educational environment that is the hallmark of a world-class post-secondary education.

The group focused on three priority areas—students, faculty, and staff—and organized
efforts under the headings/categories of Recruitment, Retention, and Enhancement
/issues of climate).

Three themes emerged:

- Connectivity. The need for coordination and linkages between
  programs and departments, e.g. Office of Undergraduate Study and
  Admission, Office of Undergraduate Study and ALANA Cultural
  Center, ALANA Cultural Center and Africana and Latin American
  Studies.

- The need for structural development and support of pipelines (internal
  and external) for both recruitment and retention.

- The need for acknowledging and addressing the disparity between
  quantitative data and experience (the impact that “perception” has on
  the quality of experience whether or not the perception is contrary to
  numerical data).

These themes will be articulated more fully in the body of this report. Further, the group
recognized that in order to develop and foster an institutional climate that supports
difference, we need to work from the premise that diversity is transformative and changes
the way an institution responds to its community and constituencies through policies,
practice, programs and curriculum.

Students

Summary:

After reviewing statistical data and conducting focus groups with students, faculty and
staff there was a general sense that the climate for students of color has improved overall
during the last several of years. However, there is also the sense that these
improvements/changes are fragile and somewhat tenuous. Therefore, in order to ensure positive, long-lasting impact, it will be very important to identify initiatives that will support these changes in institutional climate.

As Colgate seeks to implement a Strategic Plan that embodies overarching and fundamental change, it will continue to operate a number of successful and innovative programs that seek to recruit and improve the quality of life and scholarship for students of color (see appendix). However, because few links exist among these programs, programs and departments are often not aware of what is being offered in other units. As such, programs that address and improve the coordination of many of the targeted areas should be developed and/or identified and enhanced.

Recruitment:

Recommendations

1. Consider models that will work toward increasing the yield of student acceptances, e.g. contact with faculty at the front end of the recruitment process as well as during.
2. Because Athletics recruits a substantial number of students of color, (tiered athletic programs are key diversity sites at Colgate), identify and develop linkages to other programs that support students of color.
3. Track and monitor the impact athletic scholarships have on diversity.
4. Examine the discrepancy between an increase in the applicant pool for students of color overall and absolute numbers and percentages in students of color accepted
5. Explore faculty involvement in the recruitment/admissions process.
6. Admission should provide reports to faculty on a regular basis in which diversity continues to be an integral aspect.
7. Examine “April Visit Days” and explore how they could be made to be more effective.
8. Examine and clarify the University’s diversity mission and in turn, Admission, e.g. is the mission to develop a critical mass of visibly diverse students, or to work towards closing the inequality gap, or both?
9. Evaluate and assess the Colgate website and update so “diversity” is more accessible and visible).
10. Develop and strengthen pipeline through exploring relationships with k-12 schools and develop K-12 initiatives (Bridge Programs) that will allow Colgate to recruit nationally and locally.
11. Consider how to further Admission success (Admitted students of color 20+% for 2004).
12. Explore why the percentage of Black admits is down.
Retention:

**Recommendations**

1. Identify ways to strengthen linkages between existing programs that will improve the institutional climate.
2. Provide development opportunities for students including opportunities to prepare and present papers, funding for conferences, and guidance in conducting research.
3. Explore various mentorship models as a vehicle for improving academic performance.
4. Review and examine diversity efforts/initiatives in the Orientation Program.
5. Identify strategies for improving and enhancing OUS such as identifying steps for revitalizing the Science and Math Initiative.
6. While overall the retention and graduation rates of students of color are satisfactory, there is a need to address challenges such as the correlation between SAT scores and high school GPAs to academically underperforming at Colgate (NOTE Future research).
7. In addressing issues of climate consider/integrate data from the Climate Survey conducted in 2002 and assess campus climate regularly through climate surveys.
8. Consider the development of a center for academic excellence as a vehicle through which all programs and initiatives could be coordinated.
9. Examine the impact perception has on student experience.
10. Review the summary of the curriculum developed by the pre-planning group and examine the perception that the CORE lacks diversity –U.S.
11. Give serious consideration to issues of diversity with regard to the distribution requirement.
12. Identify first steps in the development of a pipeline to graduate schools that could have long range impact in the development of the faculty of color pipeline, such as the development of loan relief program for students of color who go to on to graduate school for advanced study in target disciplines.
13. Work with alumni of color to develop and implement initiatives, workshops and seminars that will provide students with the skills needed to adjust and succeed at Colgate and in the work-place.
14. Review and examine diversity efforts and initiatives that address climate issues such as Skin Deep, Inter-Group Dialogue Circles, Breaking Bread, Privilege and Power Workshops/Seminars.
Faculty

Summary:
The recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty remains one of the most challenging issues facing higher education today. The number of Colgate faculty who are from historically underrepresented groups remains relatively static with little or no increase over a 12-year period. To increase the number of faculty from underrepresented populations, we need to ensure that successful programs designed to recruit and retain faculty from these populations are linked so that faculty can progress through the pipeline. We envision a comprehensive faculty development program that includes mentoring from senior faculty, support for research and publication, and networking.

Recommendations:

1. Examine the governance structures from the perspective of the larger diversity mission.
2. Examine and assess the mission, goals and objectives of Affirmative Action.
3. Review charge and examine the scope of the Faculty and Staff Affirmative Action Oversight Committee.
4. Review the summary of programs and initiatives in place.
5. Assess current hiring and retention efforts.
6. Priority should be given to recruit underrepresented faculty in target areas.
7. Identify ways to encourage faculty involvement in the recruitment process.
8. Identify initiatives that promote institutional accountability.
11. Analyze the adverse impact term positions may have in the long run in expanding faculty diversity.
12. Define the role diversity should have in incremental hires.
13. Identify steps in developing relationships with graduate schools.
14. Explore the gap between availability rates and offers made to people of color—availability is not the issue, rather offers are not made—.
15. Explore models for pipeline enhancement such as: fostering relationships with HBCUs, department diversity liaisons, resources from the Campaign Fund, Dissertation Scholars Fellowship Program, and Bridge Programs.

Retention

Recommendations:

1. Identify how to involve departments in university-wide diversity goals.
3. Analyze how term appointments impact the morale and perceptions of faculty of color in the tenure stream.
4. Examine how perception impacts the experience of faculty of color and identify strategies to improve morale.
5. Consider a “Rotating Chair for Diversity.”
6. Review advancement statistics—assistant to associate, associate to full professor—for faculty of color.
7. Examine gaps in the promotion rates.
8. Identify strategies for a successful P & T process through all levels.
9. Identify ways in which there may be a devaluing of scholarship in particular disciplines (not recognizing the importance of research on diversity).
10. Examine the merit structure—are faculty of color receiving merit at the same rate as their majority cohort?
11. Develop peer mentoring and instructional support activities that help establish a viable: “culture of teaching” that balances and complements scholarship and research.
12. Examine the impact that losing faculty of color has on those who remain at Colgate.
13. Develop a process whereby exit interviews will be conducted.
14. Examine the role of the Office of the Dean of the Faculty in both recruitment and retention.
15. Develop accountability incentives for departmental diversity—i.e. budget increases tied to successful diversity efforts—diversity efforts somehow tied to performance review.
16. Identify and implement initiatives that assist in connecting junior faculty to the larger community and build bridges inter-departmentally, such as through some kind of colloquia.

Enhancement

1. Examine the definitions of scholarship and the reward system.
2. Identify ways to promote networking to improve climate.
3. Identify steps in increasing the representation of faculty of color on key committees.
4. Examine strategies for providing increased funding for research and teaching.
5. Identify unique barriers encountered by faculty of color in accessing resources for research and teaching.
6. Develop and/or enhance the mentoring program—senior faculty as mentors to associate professors moving to full professor.
7. Create opportunities for faculty of color to have appointments at senior administrative levels.
8. Incorporate and sustain faculty diversity as a core value and operationalize the commitment of the University system-wide.
Staff

Summary
While the pre-planning group wasn’t able to dedicate adequate time to staff/administrators, it was recognized that this group must be a priority for the on-campus committee as it is this group that often has more consistent and direct contact with students of color, and in some cases with faculty. It is clear that because of the development of a better working relationship between the offices of the Dean of the Faculty and Dean of the College, there is tremendous opportunity to create positive change for this group—as well as all the other groups discussed in this report.

The pre-planning group has outlined several preliminary recommendations that are listed below, some of which came out of the focus group that was conducted by the pre-planning group with administrators (See Focus Group Document).

Recommendations:

1. Identify and examine the unique needs of this group.
2. Identify and examine efforts to retain administrators of color.
3. Consider how programs such as the Mortgage Program could be available to administrators and professional staff as a recruitment and retention tool.
4. Consider how to develop networking and community building opportunities.
5. Identify steps in developing a mentoring program such as the establishment of an administrators’ network that would extend to other colleges such as Hamilton, Binghamton, etc.
6. Consider how to provide professional development such as opportunities to attend conferences, go to seminars and workshops etc.
7. Identify and support opportunities for promotion.
8. Develop an administrator workgroup/committee that could meet monthly.

Conclusion

In the last several years Colgate has made some strides in developing and fostering a difference-friendly institutional climate. However, in order to support these changes and ensure long-term success, we must make visible approaches that encourage collaboration between programs and create dialogue that allows best practices, commonalities, strengths and weaknesses, and programs that compliment each other to be identified. Further development and enhancement can occur through providing opportunities for team building by linking and coordinating a departmental and a University-wide network of individuals and offices that recruit and provide services to students, faculty and staff of color. This systemic and connected approach will then facilitate a collective diversity effort and build community between seemingly disparate programs and will serve as a model to the larger Colgate community.