

Implementing the MSU Diversity Plan: A Diversity Commission Report

President's Diversity Commission
Minnesota State University, Mankato
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Table of Contents

Members of the Diversity Commission	1
Executive Summary	2
Chapter I	4
Progressing Toward a Diversified Campus	5
Challenges to a More Diversified MSU	8
Chapter II	15
Recommendations for the Campus	15
Chapter III	28
Context for Progress	28
Concluding Remarks	30
References	32
Appendix I	33
Appendix II	34
Appendix III	35
Appendix IV	36

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Executive Summary

As the demographics indicate an increasingly diverse nation, institutions of higher education must prepare to meet the needs of a changing campus. Minnesota State University Mankato is uniquely positioned to provide a leadership role in diversity as it has already taken such proactive measures as operationalizing what diversity means to the university, identifying diversity as a strategic priority, commissioning a Diversity Task Force, and developing a Diversity Plan. Each of these actions was intended to reinforce MSU's commitment to diversity as well as to provide vision and resources to help move the university forward.

The Diversity Plan, adopted in the Fall of 2004, advanced numerous recommendations, including the formation of a President's Diversity Commission. This Commission is to have multiple functions, including publishing annual reports on the progress towards implementing the Diversity Plan. This report is therefore one part of the implementation of the Diversity Plan and is designed to evaluate the degree to which the recommendations of the Diversity Plan have been integrated into campus planning and action. Accordingly, the report is focused on the achievements of MSU as well as the challenges and opportunities that remain for the university.

The report is structured around the Diversity Plan and its integration into the planning and actions of units from across the university. In order to measure the impact and integration of the Plan, 42 requests were sent to units, offices, and individuals identified by the Plan as responsible for implementing its recommendations. The requests yielded 28 responses that were submitted to the Diversity Commission; the totality of these responses providing an interesting and enlightening portrait of MSU's progress towards achieving diversity as a strategic priority. It is a portrait that is characterized by some successes and achievements and a lack of coherent, focused and consistent efforts towards achieving a broader objective of a more inclusive campus.

This report is thus structured around MSU's documented progress toward meeting the objectives and recommendations of the Diversity Plan, the work that needs to be done, and a set of specific recommendations aimed at making the university's diversity priority clear and attainable. The Diversity Commission report points to a need to be even more focused, coherent, intentional, and strategic while taking note of the offices, investments, and activities that are well under way. The focus of the Commission has been to stress that despite the many efforts of staff, faculty, and administrators the status of diversity is yet to be marked by consistent progress across the university. To achieve its goals the Commission recommends a more focused, articulated, and coherent set of objectives based on benchmarks, multi-year goals, best practices, and accountability by those leaders and administrators charged with implementing portions of the Diversity Plan. The report also takes note of the need to revise the Diversity Plan as the university moves ahead with this strategic priority.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

As with many universities who look toward a future of rapidly changing student demographics, Minnesota State University Mankato has begun to reinforce and specify its commitments to campus diversity. This process began in earnest during the 2003-2004 academic year when President Richard Davenport authorized the development a campus-wide diversity task force and identified the promotion of diversity as one of the strategic priorities for MSU. At roughly the same time, the Office of Institutional Diversity was relocated under Academic Affairs and Dr. Michael Fagin became both Dean for Institutional Diversity and Special Assistant to the President for Multicultural Relations. In the Fall of 2004 a Diversity Commission was conceived and that group was established in January 2005.

This report emerges after a more than year-long campus conversation, albeit full of lulls and changes in focus, about diversity's place and role in the present and future of MSU. The report is intended to be a meditation on the progress made by MSU as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Diversity Plan; and how it was communicated and implemented by the campus; and the Commission's recommendations for future directions and actions to be taken by MSU. The report does not contain any preliminary data or analysis of the campus climate survey, as both will be available in Fall 2005.

The work process involved in compiling this report began in earnest on April 6, 2005 when the Diversity Commission sent requests out to each unit or office that was identified by the Diversity Plan as having responsibility for broad or narrow initiatives and activities. The initial request was sent out on behalf of the Diversity Commission to 42 university offices (more specifically the director, chair, dean, or other administrator responsible for the specific office).

Of the 28 responses were returned to the Diversity Commission Co-Chairs, Dr. Jacqueline Lewis and Dr. Fernando Delgado, 25 provided substantive information regarding actions taken. This report will summarize and analyze the substance of these responses. This data will be supplemented by Commission's analysis of other formal campus communications (including campus data, other reports, etc.) as well as less formal communications (responses from open forums, feedback and queries provided to the Commission, questions and concerns regarding the Diversity Plan requests).

Progressing Toward a Diversified Campus

As MSU has taken on the task of creating a more diverse campus and a more welcoming climate, various markers or indicators of success and progress can be pointed to, many of these arising from the recommendations made by the Diversity Task Force report:

- The President accepts the Diversity Plan submitted by the Diversity Task Force and presented it to the campus in August 2004
- Diversity Commission established in January 2005 to promote diversity issues on campus and serve as an independent advisory body to the President on issues of diversity
- The establishment of a Dean level Office for Institutional Diversity has elevated the concerns and needs of diverse students, principally from the four historically underrepresented and underserved groups, and the campus
- The hiring of a Program Coordinator for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Center
- A Campus Climate survey that involved students, faculty and staff was conducted during the 2005 Spring semester by a national expert in the field, Dr. William Sedlacek. The results of the survey will be analyzed and presented to the campus in early Fall 2005

- The hiring of a full time Director for the McNair Scholars Program
- The development of a diversity plan within the College of Education that addressed the areas of recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students, curriculum development
- The sponsorship of workshops through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), aimed to enhance teaching and learning about diversity
- The establishment of an Office of Admissions and Institutional Diversity Recruitment Plan and the hiring of a recruitment/retention specialist
- The continuation of Institutional Diversity's recruitment efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, efforts which included faculty and administrators from the College of Education and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.
- The establishment of a Language Learning for Academic Success program to assist those whose first language is not English
- Implementation of first two phases of the "Train the Trainer" diversity workshops
- Allocation of funds to publicize diversity-themed events and to reach out to diverse off-campus constituencies
- Academic Affairs administrators attended diversity training about such issues as affirmative action
- Numbers of Pre Doctoral Fellows increased during the 2004-2005 academic year with one in the College of Education and two in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Mentoring program for faculty offered by Academic Affairs through CETL
- President Davenport spearheaded the development of the Greater Mankato Area Diversity Council. MSU representatives serve on the council and serve as diversity trainers

- Promotion and Tenure Workshops were publicized through multiple media formats and this increased attendance among all the faculty
- Professional Development Day was reinstated and two diversity workshops were offered. Diversity Training is included as part of the mission of the Professional Development Task Force
- The General Education Sub-Meet initiated a pilot program to review student learning outcomes in Categories 7 and 8
- The Academic Affairs and the Faculty Association facilitated several workshops on incorporating diversity into course syllabi and classroom

This goal of creating a more diverse campus is fundamentally tied to MSU's definition of diversity:

Diversity at Minnesota State University Mankato is a commitment to create an understanding and appreciation of diverse peoples and diverse perspectives; a commitment to create an academic, cultural, and workplace environment and community that develops mutual respect for all and celebrates our differences.

The evidence for this move to pluralism and diversification appears in various reports. In several instances the goal of pluralism has been connected to the training of staff and administrators. To that end, the campus has initiated diversity and anti-racism training workshops in both academic years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. The sequential "Train the Trainer" workshops have provided an additional and focused attempt to provide skills and insights to faculty, staff, and administrators. The university has focused on increasing professional development—including training efforts, informational fairs, workshops, and there appear to be shifts and improvements in the campus openness to such efforts.

Efforts have also been made to hire key individuals to facilitate a more inclusive and pluralistic campus. Two hires that stand out are the Program Coordinator of the Lesbian, Gay,

Bisexual and Transgendered Center and a recruitment/retention specialist focused on attracting and graduating students from underrepresented groups.

Challenges to a More Diversified MSU

It appears that while the Diversity Plan was proactive, encompassing and emerged from a complicated political and institutional reality, the recommendations that it produced have not completely taken root. Of the 42 institutional reporting entities that the report identified, two-thirds have responded to the Commission's request for information and data during the current cycle. In many cases the reports that did come in also noted the unit or campus group was (1) unaware of the issues/items that were identified; (2) did not have a role in the activity; (3) or were confused as to why they and not some other unit was charged with providing data and information. Those who did not respond to the Commission's request—which were initially sent via electronic mail in April 2005 and once a month thereafter until July 2005—further complicate matters. On the one hand it may be that the entities were either confused by the request or disagreed with the attribution that they were responsible for the identified items. A more difficult reality to confront is that some groups may not have the Diversity Plan and its recommendations as a high priority. The Commission has been aware that there is an important segment of the campus community that has not fully embraced the priority, and that some individuals, including those who have been or are in positions of authority, do not see diversity as a key institutional priority or are insufficiently prepared to lead this institutional change and evolution.

What the Commission has observed most plainly is that integrative, intentional institutional efforts toward creating a more diverse and inclusive campus has occurred in fits and starts. The space between the submission of the final Diversity Plan (April 2004) and the

commencement of the Diversity Commission (January 2005) was not marked by obvious, cohesive, and continued campus engagement and conversation regarding our efforts. There may be several logical reasons for the inconsistencies but the impact has been that the implementation of diversity initiatives has been inconsistent across divisions, several of which have had their own diversity initiatives independent of the Diversity Plan.

This last element points to a critical gap in how MSU pursues this priority. The absence to have a viable, integrated, and effective internal and external communication plan or process renders collaboration from different sectors of the campus difficult at best. Moreover, the campus has not been adroit in its processes to identify programs and activities in timely fashion so that the university can communicate to communities beyond the MSU campus. However, the largest communication challenge that has emerged has been the importance of diversity to the campus, what needs to be done, how it will occur, and who is responsible for what activity. In short, the communication gap has led to slippage and to a lack of clarity regarding purpose, action, and accountability. No clearer evidence of this can be seen than from one response, an honest appraisal of the situation, to the Diversity Commission's request:

“This process created confusion with the College as most of us thought that either it was the same report that is due to [Institutional Diversity] or that it was a response to goals that had been created last Spring for this academic year.”

This particular unit simply documented, in the starkest of terms, much of the confusion that was reflected back to the Commission in various forms—personal conversation, electronic mail, written communiqués. The need to heighten awareness about the diversity priority and to communicate and reinforce responsibility for activities remains an issue to be resolved.

The Diversity Plan highlighted in its recommendation 8 that “the university should undertake a diversity-focused advertising and marketing campaign in local media.” So, while in the past, strategic priority funding has been allocated for the purposes of advertising and marketing events, there is yet no strategic and specific campaign that can be reported. Such a campaign should be strategic and focused on specific outcomes that the university would like to see. One goal could be to raise the profile of the university among under-served communities and to reach out to immigrant communities. A second goal could be to communicate the university’s commitment to diverse issues and communities to the mainstream. However, the university’s rhetoric should be a reflection of its actual actions and commitment or it risks further alienating communities and creating mistrust.

Related to communicating internally and externally is the absence of a clear and accessible university calendar. This issue has two dimensions. First, a calendar of cultural, social and athletic events should be obvious and easily accessible. Second, the calendar should result from consultation. Too often events are planned and scheduled without communication across units or divisions. The result, as we have seen, is the erosion of attendance, confusion, and poor use of university resources. To wit, multiple events related to diversity but unrelated to Eliminate Hate Week were scheduled concurrently with each other. This reached its zenith when Esera Tuaolo was invited to deliver a public presentation, with local media present, at the same time as the Moore lecture. Such missteps diffuse the university audience and the message the institution wants to communicate.

An integrated and strategic communication plan is a key component to ameliorating some issues on campus but it is by no means the only cure for what ails MSU. For example, while the university continues to plan a diversity orientation for all employees, the campus still does not

have an entry point experience to focus new employees on this (or any other) priority. In addition, the campus should continue to enhance and expand ongoing professional development activities and programs that focus on diversity and related issues. While Academic Affairs and the IFO reported that a faculty mentoring program has been established, the university must assess whether or not an effective comprehensive mentoring program, particularly for faculty of color, assists individuals across the various domains of their professional lives at MSU. The Diversity Plan notes the need for support and information networks for faculty and staff who feel isolated and the university should create more activities and opportunities for ALL faculty and staff of diverse backgrounds to gather. Such efforts should be formalized, and perhaps managed by Academic Affairs and other relevant divisions, though they may be conducted in a social atmosphere.

However, before the university can be wholly successful in the support and networking of faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds the institution needs to do a better job of recruiting and retaining such personnel. Best practices in universities note that students are attracted to campuses where there are models, mentors, and members of the communities who look like them and reflect their experiences. MSU must meet the challenge of attracting more diverse faculty and staff to the campus. The Pre-Doctoral Fellows program is seen as a good-faith effort to increasing the number of diverse faculty. Still, there is much work to be done. The role of Affirmative Action in encouraging and enforcing the university's faculty and staff diversification should be enhanced. The campus must begin to think of each search as an opportunity to hire excellent and diverse faculty. Affirmative Action and/or Institutional Diversity might be charged with delivering greater training and development efforts for the academic colleges and for search committees. Annual goals and targets would be one way to hold the university accountable. The

university may also want to be more proactive in establishing formal and informal relationships with doctoral-granting institutions that have a reputation for producing faculty of color; this may be done on a program or college basis as well. The university has collected little systematic data on why faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds are attracted to the university and their reasons for leaving. Having insight on both ends may help the university capitalize on known strengths and address shortcomings.

Two elements of faculty and staff recruitment efforts are a challenge. The first is the absence of a partner accommodation policy. There appears to have been little work in this area despite the recommendation made by the Diversity Plan. The second challenge is more systemic. A typical model of faculty hiring is to pursue a critical mass in certain areas by first pursuing a more senior scholar who would then attract and perhaps mentor more junior scholars. This situation would not be so significant if the university had a critical mass of faculty from diverse backgrounds, particularly faculty of color, who stayed and moved through the ranks. The ability to grant rank and tenure to such faculty would expand the pool of potential faculty mentors who could be attracted to MSU.

The issue of critical mass is also important in terms of campus culture and with respect to faculty service. The Diversity Plan noted among various success indicators “the inclusive membership in all significant campus groups” aligned with the outcome of “including representation on all significant committees, task forces, work groups, search committees.” While the value that guides these statements is well intentioned, the effect can be to produce burnout among faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. Given the relative paucity of such individuals on campus, especially faculty and staff of color, they are often consumed by types and levels of service that make it more difficult to persist and succeed at MSU. While the

university does endeavor to have broad and representative committees, task forces, and work groups, it must also ensure that faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds are neither tokenized in their service nor consumed by their level of service to the university.

In the domain of faculty and staff, the university must ensure that diversity is in fact, supported by the entire MSU community. The Diversity Commission has received some information that there are sectors of the campus, including administrators and managers, who are not committed to the goal and who actively undermine and tacitly threaten employees who are working to make the university more diverse and inclusive. Campus leadership must ensure that the divisions, departments, and units are in fact in step with university priorities. Those who have contributed positively to this priority should be celebrated by the university and the incidents of marginalizing these efforts and agents for diversification must be reported and investigated. The Diversity Commission has recommended priority funding for a workplace bullying survey—echoing the recommendation of the Diversity Task Force—and Human Resources has reported that it “is trying to get funding for Climate Survey related to workplace environment, civility, and other issues that may not specifically be based on protected status.” While the broader issue of workplace bullying deserves attention, the issue of whether or not the university is fully committed to diversity and inclusiveness has not yet been resolved.

The Commission observes that the university is challenged by the lack of meaningful and articulated benchmarks, limited collection and assessment of institutional data, and an absence of transparency and accountability. There is not an obvious use of data to assess how the university has made quantitative improvements in demographically shifting the university community. The absence of benchmarks and goals also make it difficult to align priorities and resources. If the university and its constituent units were aware of timelines and goals, there could be improved

strategic efforts and results. Similarly, establishing even vague goals without accountability measures renders the goals meaningless. Many of the reports submitted to the Diversity Commission indicated that efforts were in progress or still to be undertaken. Yet, the Diversity Plan provided one and two-year timelines for initiation or completion of certain projects. Further, the progress statements often did not indicate either a status of how much progress had been made or a projected completion date (the Commission acknowledges that many activities would have to be ongoing and persistent). For MSU to create the campus culture to which it aspires, the university will have to be clear and aligned on goals, resources, and accountability. This is impossible without leadership and clear and accurate data so that the university can understand where it is, where it is going, and how it will reach that end.

CHAPTER II

Recommendations for the Campus

The importance of promoting diversity at MSU is clearly articulated in the Diversity Plan that was presented to the campus in Fall 2004. However, an analysis of the progress towards achieving the identified outcomes suggests that MSU needs to implement the Diversity Plan more aggressively and consistently. Recognizing the urgent need to create an inclusive learning environment, the Diversity Commission makes the following recommendations:

Leadership

Demonstrable leadership for this strategic priority, beginning with the President and the Vice Presidents, is essential if the diversity plan is to be successfully implemented in 2005-2006. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) The President publicly asserts MSU's commitment to the Diversity Plan as an institutional priority. Such an announcement is made at the 2005 Fall Convocation and through a Presidential electronic mail message about the Diversity Commission during the first week of classes
- (b) The President's response to the Diversity Commission report is shared with the campus and other constituents by the end of the first week of classes
- (c) The President communicates to the expanded Cabinet their responsibility for providing leadership for the implementation of the Diversity Plan at the beginning of the Fall 2005-2006 academic year
- (d) The Senior Vice President publicly asserts MSU's commitment to the Diversity Plan as an institutional priority and to demonstrable progress in 2005-2006. The Vice

- Presidents and Deans share the Diversity Plan and the Diversity Commission report with their units at the initial Fall meetings
- (e) There is an increase in diversity in the administrative ranks so that voices of diverse groups are represented among institutional leaders
 - (f) The role of the Office of Institutional Diversity is clearly articulated by the President for the campus and its constituents
 - (g) MSU develops marketing programs to promote this strategic priority both among on-campus and off-campus constituents
 - (h) An active media campaign is designed in the Fall and implemented immediately to inform the campus and its constituents of MSU's commitment to diversity
 - (i) The Office of Affirmative Action is strengthened by providing it with the personnel and the resources to monitor, investigate and facilitate diversity initiatives, including faculty and administrative hiring, as well as student recruitment and retention efforts

Accountability

Accountability is fundamental to the success of the Diversity Plan; a lack thereof sends the message that MSU is not serious about this strategic priority. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) Every division, unit and their leader will review the Diversity Commission Report and develop strategies for the 2005-2006 academic year that addresses their responsibilities using the outcomes and success indicators in the Diversity Plan and the Diversity Commission report and provide a progress report to the Diversity Commission on April 3, 2006

- (b) Administrators clearly understand the consequences of not providing appropriate leadership for implementing the Diversity Plan. These consequences could include a loss of funding, reduced resources, or other disincentives
- (c) Administrators who demonstrate leadership in implementing the Diversity Plan are rewarded with additional funds to support diversity related projects, additional leadership opportunities, leadership and related professional development training, and monetary incentives as applicable
- (d) Provide the Affirmative Action Office with the support and resources to enforce the implementation of the MSU affirmative action plan that is designed to take aggressive measures to eliminate internal barriers to equal opportunity and remedies the historical under-representation in employment, retention and promotion of qualified underrepresented persons
- (e) Provide the support and resources to ensure that the Affirmative Action Office has the most current employment data and availability data

Assessment

The appropriate analysis and interpretation of data and its availability to the campus is a priority to ensure institutional effectiveness and transparency. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) The Diversity Commission provide a reporting template for the 2005-2006 report to all Divisions/units identified in the Diversity Plan by March 1, 2006
- (b) Units accurately report the extent to which the objectives were achieved in a meaningful manner. This includes providing quantitative and qualitative data to concretely demonstrate achievement and success

- (c) The data about the recruitment, retention and promotion of faculty and administrators from diverse backgrounds is made available to the campus by all offices responsible for maintaining such data including the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Affirmative Action
- (d) That the offices that maintain the data respond to requests for the data in a timely manner
- (e) That the Vice Presidents and the Deans regularly share the recruitment, retention and graduation data of students from diverse backgrounds with faculty and staff and use it as basis for identifying the role of their Unit in the recruitment and retention process

Campus Climate

MSU must provide a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment for all people. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) The President holds each Vice President accountable for actively creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students, faculty and staff and especially for those from diverse backgrounds, by including such an objective in their annual performance evaluation
- (b) The Vice Presidents will hold the Unit heads accountable for actively creating a safe and inclusive environment for all students, faculty and staff and especially for those from diverse backgrounds, by including such an objective in their annual performance evaluation
- (c) MSU should look to implement the recommendations that are made as a result of the Campus Climate survey

- (d) Campus leaders, including members of the expanded cabinet, are trained to recognize institutionalized racism, prejudice and discrimination so that they can be proactive rather than reactive
- (e) Student leaders receive training during the Fall semester so that they develop the sensitivity and skills to work with students from diverse backgrounds so that all students are motivated to participate in campus life at MSU
- (f) Climate surveys are conducted every three years to understand the experience of persons from diverse backgrounds at MSU and in their college/unit, department and classroom. Funds for such surveys are set aside in the institutional budget
- (g) A survey of workplace bullying and harassment on campus is conducted by the Office of Affirmative Action/Human Resources during the 2005-2006 academic year
- (h) Division and Unit leaders seek information and feedback about diversity activities from their unit personnel, especially those in the trenches
- (i) A more effective process is developed to recognize and reward administrators, faculty, student and staff efforts to promote diversity at MSU and in the community, especially those in the trenches
- (j) Actively recruit representatives from campus constituencies and groups to participate on the Commission
- (k) The President will hold each Vice President responsible for developing a diversity plan targeted at enhancing the student experience

Communication

One of the most critical issues at MSU is the lack of communication between administrators, faculty, staff and students. A major priority is to establish effective communication across the

campus so that all constituencies, especially students, are aware of diversity initiatives and activities. Addressing the issue of communication immediately and in a pragmatic manner will mitigate the sense of disempowerment, marginalization, and powerlessness on the campus. Given the gravity of this issue, recommendations about communication are addressed separately. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) Campus leaders clearly communicate through their behaviors and actions MSU's commitment to meeting diversity goals and objectives
- (b) The university establishes a strategic marketing and communications plan that can effectively reach out to underserved populations and attract a more diverse student population
- (c) That information is communicated through the appropriate channels and by the appropriate supervisor rather than in an arbitrary and incidental manner through personal relationships, to units, their personnel and to the campus
- (d) That MSU create a campus-wide mechanism to facilitate university programming and planning
- (e) Delivering on the recommendation to create a centralized calendar of all MSU activities that is updated regularly and is accessible on the web is established under the leadership of the Office of Information Technology Services

Recruitment and Retention

A campus that asserts that it prepares students to live and work in a diverse environment must demonstrate its ability to recruit and retain diverse administrators, faculty, staff and students. As the available data suggests, this issue warrants special attention at MSU and is one

of the key objectives of the Diversity Plan. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

General Employee Recruitment Procedures

- (a) An immediate inquiry by the Affirmative Action Office into the hiring processes for faculty, staff and administrative positions at MSU to identify inequities and to recommend a fair and transparent process
- (b) Transparency, consistency, and fairness must be characteristic of ALL hiring processes--especially of administrative and staff positions--and every search should be seen as an opportunity to bring diversity to MSU. The practice of appointments, especially with the mid-level and upper level administrative and staff positions, should end
- (c) All position descriptions are written so that they reflect the needs of the position and of the institution, are advertised in a timely manner, and in a variety of media to attract a diverse pool of applicants. This will attract qualified candidates and ensure that the hiring process is free from the perception of nepotism and cronyism
- (d) Search committees should be trained to be more aggressive in their pursuit of diverse candidates. This includes the practice of posting faculty, staff and administrative positions as early as possible in the search season

Faculty, Administrators and Staff Recruitment Procedures

In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) A University-wide plan is initiated by the President's Office in conjunction with the relevant Unions, to recruit, retain, and promote faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds
- (b) The plan is assessed annually to determine its effectiveness and is modified based on the appropriateness and effectiveness of the strategies for MSU
- (c) All units develop plans that include short term and long term strategies to recruit and retain faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds
- (d) The Office of Affirmative Action share effective recruitment and retention strategies for faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds with the Vice Presidents, the Deans, and the Unions
- (e) The diversity among the faculty is increased especially at the rank of Full Professor by providing funds to enable colleges to hire faculty from diverse backgrounds at all levels but particularly at the senior ranks so that there are mentors for junior faculty
- (f) Establish communication with minority interest groups in each discipline and minority institutions such as the Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribally Controlled Colleges to inform them of positions and to attract potential candidates
- (g) MSU advertise positions in publications and online media that are associated with underrepresented groups

- (h) Initiate long-term and short-term strategies such as “growing your own,” cluster hiring (e.g., Wheaton College program) and dedicating external funding (e.g., Duke University program) to increase, recruit and retain faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds
- (i) Provide financial support for administrators and faculty to attend professional meetings including conferences, to identify potential administrators, faculty and staff candidates from diverse backgrounds
- (j) Assist colleges and units to offer competitive recruitment packages so that MSU can recruit and retain faculty and staff from diverse groups
- (k) Develop a partner hire policy that provides employment for the partners of administrators, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds
- (l) Division and Unit leaders including the Vice Presidents, Deans and Directors, are informed that they are responsible for diversifying their faculty and/or staff and that they should cancel or postpone searches that do not have clear plans to enhance diversity
- (m) Deans inform the Chairs and the search committees that diversifying the faculty/staff is a top priority for MSU and that searches that do not demonstrate targeted plans to enhance diversity or aggressively pursue and proactively include candidates from diverse backgrounds or that involve intentional and/or unintentional attitudes and/or behaviors that exclude persons from diverse backgrounds will be canceled or postponed
- (n) Before the search process is initiated, search committees are trained to recognize the ways in which unintentional racism, ethnocentrism and discrimination excludes candidates of diverse backgrounds from the hiring pool and ultimately from positions

- (o) Resources are allocated so that search committees are trained to evaluate the portfolios of diverse candidates appropriately and not to exclude such candidates because their experiences maybe different from dominant culture candidates
- (p) The search process is revised to include a review and sign-off by the Affirmative Action Office for the proposed candidate before an offer is made
- (q) Revise search procedures to include affirmative action approval on hires for faculty and classified and unclassified staff
- (r) The Affirmative Action Office contacts faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds who were offered positions at MSU to identify the reasons for declining the offer and to gather feedback about their treatment during the search process at MSU

Faculty, Administrators and Staff Retention Procedures

While there is evidence of attempts to recruit faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds, greater efforts are required to retain new and currently employed persons. The continued loss of persons from diverse backgrounds is an economic, public relations and educational loss that will have unfortunate implications for the reputation of MSU and for the education of our students. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) The environment within the unit/College and the department is safe and inclusive for faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds. Such an environment is free of discrimination and all forms of harassment, including workplace bullying, as well as being welcoming and hospitable
- (b) That MSU formally recognizes family, partner, and community issues are important to any retention plan(s)

- (c) The division, unit leader/Deans organize discussions about the characteristics of environments that facilitate the recruitment and retention of faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds at the beginning of the 2005-2006 Fall semester
- (d) That faculty, administrators and staff from diverse backgrounds, especially women of color, are offered salaries comparable with other members in the department
- (e) That MSU conducts periodic salary compression and equity reviews and reports results back to the campus
- (f) The Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Deans and IFO ensure that the promotion and tenure process is free of systemic and intentional and unintentional racism, sexism, homophobia and workplace bullying
- (g) Reports of workplace bullying and harassment are acted upon promptly by the appropriate supervisor and that supervisors are held responsible for inaction and/or delaying taking action when such reports are made
- (h) That MSU is more proactive about providing increased transition services for new employees
- (i) The Affirmative Action Office interviews faculty, staff and administrators from diverse backgrounds to determine their reasons for leaving MSU
- (j) The Affirmative Action Office survey faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds every two years about their experience at MSU
- (k) Each division, college/unit develop a mentoring program to provide new and current faculty, administrators, and staff from diverse backgrounds with the support necessary to successfully understand and negotiate MSU, especially the promotion and tenure process

Recruitment and Retention of Students

With the growing diversity in the nation and in the state, the recruitment of students from diverse backgrounds is a priority for MSU and another major goal of the Diversity Plan. In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) That all programs and services must prioritize and/or establish processes that meet the university priority of creating and sustaining a more diverse campus
- (b) There is continued cooperation between the Office of Institutional Diversity and the Office of Admissions to recruit more students from diverse backgrounds to MSU
- (c) The university should establish multi-year quantitative goals for the recruitment of diverse student populations
- (d) Examine the admission criteria so that it does not discriminate against students from diverse backgrounds who may have different life experiences from dominant culture students
- (e) Continue to diversify the Student Affairs Division and advising staff and provide programs and support systems to ensure student success
- (f) MSU addresses the retention of students from diverse backgrounds with greater intentionality and specificity

Curriculum

In addition to the success indicators identified in the Diversity Plan, the Diversity Commission recommends:

- (a) Enhancing the ability of faculty to teach diverse student populations and include diversity in the syllabi and substance of courses

- (b) Appropriate university constituencies should ensure that learning outcomes lead MSU students to be successful in a diverse and globalized environment
- (c) Establish a timeline for the review of the cultural diversity requirement

CHAPTER III

Context for Progress

Many efforts to support, sustain, and enhance diversity and create an inclusive MSU community are evident from the reports and there have been successes and some progress. However, MSU has always prided itself on being a leader within MnSCU and the state, and to continue this role the campus must take an integrative and intentional approach to meeting the challenges of having a diverse and inclusive university. As the campus looks forward to diversity plans and efforts beyond 2005, it is critical to take into account the challenges it is likely to encounter.

Need for Strong Leadership: One of the biggest challenges is the need for proactive and demonstrable leadership, from across the campus, in the area of diversity. At MSU, there is an immediate need for clear and consistent communication from the administration, beginning with the President, that diversity is the most critical strategic priority. All campus leaders must demonstrate through their actions that the campus is serious about creating infrastructure, policies, processes, and practices that lead towards a more diverse and inclusive community. All persons charged with the responsibility of implementing diversity initiatives must be held accountable for reaching (or not) clear and concrete goals and objectives.

Lack of Visible Diversity among MSU Leaders: A related challenge is the lack of diversity, especially of people of color, in leadership positions both in the administration and in the faculty. For instance, there is currently no person of color in the position of Vice President at MSU or as part of the President's Cabinet. This creates a unique dynamic for an institution that is attempting to serve an increasingly diverse state and national population and is attempting to attract an international audience. The lack visibility of diversity in the leadership at MSU effectively

denies the entire campus community from having access to diverse worldviews, strategies and ideas; something that most corporations today recognize as a necessity for competing in a changing demographic environment. The university should continue to seek strategies to diversify campus leadership across racial, ethnic, and gender lines.

Lack of Communication on Campus: Another critical challenge is the lack of communication between individuals and among leaders and their units. Information is often communicated incidentally, through personal relationships, and/or in a hierarchical manner. Addressing this fundamental issue proactively is a first step to alleviating the sense of disempowerment, marginalization and powerlessness that is evident on the campus.

Creating a Safe Campus Culture: The campus is challenged by a campus culture that is characterized by distrust, powerlessness, and negativity. We need to create an environment in which people feel safe to openly bring attention to inequities at MSU; where people do not feel compelled to resort to anonymous communications and legal redress. There is a need to communicate that individuals who raise awareness of issues at MSU will not experience retribution. It is also important to address the perception that inappropriate behavior has no consequences, and that it is not rewarded through promotions or incentives. Such efforts will enable the campus to focus on issues and productive solutions rather than destroying our campus fabric.

Institutionalized Racism and Ethnocentric Monoculturalism: Institutionalized racism denies access, opportunity, and appropriate services to people from diverse backgrounds while the majority group continues to benefit from the status quo. Ethnocentric monoculturalism, which is characterized by Sue et. al. (1998) as a powerful sense of superiority of one's culture, the inferiority of other cultures, the authority to establish and enforce the criteria on the less

dominant groups and are apparent in the organization and policies, procedures, ensures that the campus structures, services and policies continue to reflect a dominant culture paradigm. These two elements prevent MSU from effectively implementing diversity initiatives, help to maintain the status quo and continue to disenfranchise persons from diverse backgrounds.

Sexism and Homophobia: MSU needs to remain attuned to the presence of sexism and homophobia as elements of diversity work, particularly in the creation of a safe and inclusive campus. Among the concerns are family issues, physical safety, bullying and harassment and as each of these continues the university will not be creating the kind of student learning and professional environment that is appropriate to the institution's mission and vision.

Lack of Transparency and Equitable Treatment: There are significant perceptions that there is a lack of transparency in process and in decision-making and that people do not receive equitable treatment at MSU. This is most clearly associated with decisions about hiring and promotion at the institution. These perceptions lend credence to the belief that the hiring and promotion processes are capricious and associated with nepotism and cronyism. Such perceptions are key reasons for much of the anger, disenfranchisement, and powerlessness at MSU.

Concluding Remarks

Diversity is not and should not be an "add on" to the university experience. It is the university experience because the university experience is about being exposed to and having new and different perspectives, nationally and internationally. Therefore, it is critical that these recommendations are implemented in a timely and appropriate manner, in the spirit of making MSU a truly inclusive environment for all and where diversity is seamlessly infused into the daily experiences of students, faculty, administrators and staff.

The various campus experts, task forces, work groups, and commissions that have assessed diversity at MSU have well documented what needs to happen to create an inclusive campus environment. The questions that we need to answer are: Is the university willing to commit to diversity through actions that match its rhetoric? Are we willing to demonstrate, through our results, to campus and community constituencies that MSU is becoming a more inclusive and diverse institution? Do we have the capacity to successfully confront the issues and challenges that are in front of us? Now is the time to provide intentional leadership and the will to ensure that the university's plan can produce manifest changes in 2005-2006 and beyond. The goal of the Diversity Commission, this report and presumably the entire campus community is to create a better MSU.

References

Sue, D. W., Carter, R. T., Casas, J. M., Fouad, N. A., Ivey, A. E., Jensen, M., LaFromboise, T., Manese, J. E., Ponterotto, J. G., & Vazquez-Nuttall, E. (1998). *Multicultural counseling competencies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Appendix I

CHARGE TO THE DIVERSITY COMMISSION MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

The purpose of the Diversity Commission is to assist the University in implementing the Diversity Plan (dated April 15, 2004) as prepared by the Diversity Task Force and in moving forward with diversity initiatives. The Diversity Commission will inform the President of concerns and note successes. It will take the lead in posing difficult questions and inviting comment from the University community. The Diversity Commission will review progress in the implementation of the Diversity Plan and will consult with other committees with regard to diversity objectives.

In carrying out its activities, the Diversity Commission may:

- Review, update, and monitor the Diversity Plan
- Publish annual reports of campus progress in implementation of the Diversity Plan including successes and failures
- Make campus wide recommendations related to diversity
- Serve as an independent advisory to the President on diversity issues
- Provide effective advocacy for diverse populations on campus
- Help improve communication across campus on diversity issues

The Commission membership will include members of the faculty, staff and students appointed because of their administrative responsibilities or to represent their bargaining unit or student organization. At least one member of the Mankato community will be appointed. The President will determine the size and composition of the Commission and will appoint a chair (co-chairs). The Commission will establish its meeting frequency and schedule. The Commission with its work may establish subcommittees as it determines to assist it with its work. Michael Fagin, Dean of Institutional Diversity and Special Assistant to the President for Multicultural Relations will serve as an ex-officio member of the Commission and will serve as the Commission's liaison to the President. The Commission will provide an annual report with of its activities no later than June 15 following the completion of the academic year.

Appendix II

SAMPLE DIVERSITY COMMISSION REQUEST

Date: April 5, 2005
 To: President's Office
 From: The Diversity Commission

The Diversity Commission is charged by President Davenport to report on the implementation of the diversity plan at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Your office is identified in the Diversity Plan as one of the units responsible for achieving specific outcomes. These outcomes are identified in more detail in the Diversity Plan that is available at www.mnsu.edu/president/priorities/reports/diversity/

Please provide Diversity Commission with a report about your unit's progress towards meeting the identified outcomes in electronic format, by April 20, 2005 using the attached template. Reports should be submitted via email to jacqueline.lewis@mnsu.edu and fernandado.delgado@mnsu.edu. If you have any questions about the report please contact the Co-Chairs of the Diversity Commission, Dr. Fernando Delgado (fernando.delgado@mnsu.edu) or Dr. Jacqueline Lewis (jacqueline.lewis@mnsu.edu)

Section I:

- ♦ Implement aggressive University-wide recruitment and retention plan at all levels that include accountability measures.
- ♦ Continually increase the number of faculty, staff, and administrators from under-represented groups.
- ♦ Establish the University's official commitment to diversity at orientation programs for all employees and students.
- ♦ Enhance first-year experiences for target recruitment groups and for all new faculty.
- ♦ Provide essential information source for student assistance

Section II:

- ♦ The MSU faculty, staff and administration should mirror the population of the state of Minnesota.

Section III

- ♦ Diversity on campus is supported by the entire MSU community, starting with the top administration and following throughout.
- ♦ *By Fall 2004*, The University will establish a permanent Diversity Commission
- ♦ Relationships will be developed between multiple groups at MSU
- ♦ MSU will work with the local community to eliminate obstacles hindering the development of a harmonious, diverse community

Appendix III**LIST OF UNITS FROM WHOM REPORTS WERE REQUESTED**

Academic Affairs
Admission's Office
Affirmative Action
AFSCME
IFO
MMA
MAPE
MNA
MSUAASF
Minnesota Government Engineers Counsel
Finance and Administration
Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
College of Allied Health and Nursing
College of Arts and Humanities
College of Business
College of Education
College of Science, Engineering, & Technology
College of Social and Behavioral Science
Library Services
Disability Services
Enrollment Management Committee
Faculty Development Committee
Student Financial Services
Office of First Year Experience
General Education Sub Meet
Graduate Sub Meet
Human Resources
Office of Institutional Diversity
International Programs
International Student Office
Information and Technology Services
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Center
Policy Consultation Committee
Office of the President
Professional Development Task Force
Program Assessment Sub Meet
Student Affairs
TRIO Programs
UCAP Sub Meet
University Advancement
Women's Center

Appendix IV

List of Units that Provided Reports to the Diversity Commission

Academic Affairs
Admission's Office
Affirmative Action
AFSCME
Finance and Administration
College of Allied Health and Nursing
College of Business
College of Education
Library Services
Office of Disability Services
Enrollment Management Committee
Faculty Development Committee
Student Financial Services
Office of First Year Experience
General Education Sub Meet
Graduate Sub Meet
Human Resources
Office of Institutional Diversity
International Student Office
Information Technology Services
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Center
Policy Consultation Committee
Office of the President
Program Assessment Sub Meet
Student Affairs
TRIO Programs
UCAP Sub Meet
Women's Center