A Systematic Approach to Expanding Diversity at Institutions of Higher Education

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Diversity, a somewhat amorphous concept, is crucial to our growth as a nation. Diversity represents change, a transformation that will essentially provide new and expanded leadership opportunities for the next generation of citizens in the United States. Diversity represents patriotism, an honored custom in the United States that relies on informed citizens and reasoning human beings.

Now more than any time in the history of the United States – with a population quickly reaching 350,000,000 with an increasing ethnic minority population that will account for vast majority of the total growth in the United States over the next decade – diversity is real. Colleges and universities should be planning to meet the needs of the new student population that will be arriving on their campus. This proposal attempts to define a procedure and practice that will prepare institutions to deal with the increasing diversity that will inevitably occur.

Issues of diversity and inclusion on college and university campuses are creating a new way of doing business. Gone are the days when these institutions concentrated only on mono-cultural themes and values. Today, the increase in diversity on their campuses has turned their focus toward a greater emphasis on racial diversity and global education perspectives. As a result of the population changes in the United States, diversity has become this century’s buzzword. It is one of the most talked about topics, often headlining current news stories. Though it should be as natural as the air we breathe, it is one of the most misunderstood concepts around.
Nearly sixty years have passed since the famous decision in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* was handed down by the United States Supreme Court, ending de jure segregation for African Americans and other ethnic minorities in their quest for full participation in traditionally all-white schools. This single court decision led to the integration of many public schools and institutions of higher education, a change that gave birth to the diversity revolution on college and university campuses. However, many colleges are still failing to provide rich and compelling opportunities for students to learn about multiculturalism and to understand the complexity of internationalism in the broader world context. While the challenges of moving toward a pluralistic campus environment are ever present today, there are still higher education institutions that are stubbornly inching along as if they are trying to turn back the hands of time.

When one examines the future of colleges and universities it becomes evident that one of the greatest challenges they face will be the restructuring of existing structures in the academe. This includes the creation of new academic programs that expand and sustain opportunities for diverse populations. Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Grutter v. Bollinger* and *Gratz v. Bollinger*, upheld the University of Michigan's use of affirmative action in regards to using race in their admissions decisions to their law school and undergraduate college. They narrowly found that states have a compelling interest in creating diverse student bodies at public universities, but those programs must be carefully structured. This decision demonstrates the importance of diversity in higher education. Patricia Gurin et al. (2004) expanded the understanding of the decision:

The Court issued a resounding reaffirmation of affirmative action as a compelling state interest. . . . These briefs offer vivid insight into the value of diversity to our entire society, from universities to industry to the military. While many educational institutions and organizations filed briefs on our behalf, the Court also received statements from major corporations, from nonprofit organizations, from elected officials, and from retired military leaders (p. 190).

This challenge, as well as a commitment to expand diversity, were unavoidable and required new strategies and immediate measures to assist in closing the present gaps of inequity that exist on college and university campuses among ethnic minority and majority populations.

The concept of diversity is often misunderstood, rarely is it fully embraced as an important and vital institutional priority. I fully believe that diversity is, to borrow a phrase from a leading carmaker, "job number one," and should be treated that way in setting the agenda of institutions. An institution has to be blind or just plain obstinate to fail to address the demographic changes that are so prevalent in society today, yet most colleges and universities have relegated diversity issues to a secondary status even in light of the rapid demographic changes emerging in the United States.
It is imperative to encourage, not just tolerate, the richness of our differences. I maintain that the college and university campuses should be the laboratories for embracing diversity, teaching tolerance, and the elimination of prejudice and discrimination.

By far, the diversity issue and all of its ramifications unmistakably constitute one of the greatest issues facing colleges and universities today as well as society as a whole. Why then is there such a fuss over educating students to live and work in an increasingly diverse society? And why, on the nation's college and university campuses as well as in United States courtrooms, are citizens of color experiencing majority white citizens fighting ethnic minorities to limit their access to education in an attempt to protect the status quo? These questions need an honest answer if institutions of higher education are going to remain in the vanguard of advancing social change in the United States.

I believe, in order to advance diversity on college and university campuses, two factors must be incorporated into their strategic plans to support the increased numbers of ethnic minorities entering their campuses. First, new strategies must be developed in order to facilitate students' transition to college and to provide a campus climate that supports diversity. Second, strategies must be formulated in order to create professional growth opportunities to help white faculty understand more fully the challenges diverse students face. White faculty members must become aware that they not only have to teach a new population of students, but they quickly must discover that they too have as must to learn from this diverse population as to teach. Today, with the changing demographics in the United States, classroom faculty members are faced with a flurry of educational challenges.

Having over two decades of professional experience in higher education administration and education leadership, amassed from three major Carnegie Foundation Divisions-I Public Research Universities and two regional campuses, I was compelled to create a blueprint for establishing an institutional approach to managing campus diversity. This blueprint focuses on the specific aspects of expanding ethnic minority participation in every sector of the college and university communities as well as on the restructuring needs of the institutions in order to ensure empowerment among underrepresented populations on campus. I believe that several basic assumptions must be made when examining the organizational structure of an institution of higher education. These assumptions include a) ethnic minorities help the racial climate on campus, b) institutions become committed to achieving racial equality when a diversity plan is established, c) administrators of color are major players in contributing to and effectuating policy changes at their host college or university, and d) the majority white population will greatly benefit from the racial and cultural influences that are generated from increased diversity on campus. Diversity provides enormous benefits both intellectually and in promoting public understanding of racial differences.
According to Betts, Urias, and Betts (2009), minority groups are growing faster than the majority groups in the United States. Citing 2008 data from the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Betts, et al. report that the demographics of higher education in the United States reflect “thirty-four percent of the current population is minority and approximately thirty-five percent of the current student population enrolled in higher education is minority” (Demographics in Higher Education section, para. 1).

There is no doubt that the ethnic minority presence on the nation’s campuses is growing. However, only a few institutions are making the critical move toward addressing this demographic shift in spite of the predictions of increased ethnic minority populations in the United States. Ethnic minorities have made a significant contribution to colleges and universities since the 1970s, and they are poised to continue making contributions and lending leadership to the Nation’s higher education systems. Their participation on college and university campuses enhances the overall learning opportunities for all persons by their exchange of different perspectives and worldviews. Colleges and universities must take advantage of this talent pool and embrace the collective genius of every member by assertively expanding opportunities in order to broaden the prospects of learning for their entire campus. In short, institutions must advance not only perceived quality changes, but also practical, genuine quality changes that will further enhance the development of individuals through expanded equal opportunities and full inclusion.

It is true that a significant paradigm shift is required for most institutions of higher education, especially in regards to generating a positive impact on society through their commitment toward developing and sustaining an inspired diverse campus community. Adapting the blueprint I have developed will provide the fundamental elements necessary for instituting an equity and diversity program with inclusive components that will impact the entire campus community, eventually making a lasting and significantly positive contribution among all members.

I maintain that higher education institutions should establish their own comprehensive plan for the fulfillment of E Pluribus Unum. The following blueprint proposes an outline that describes the components of a diversity and equity program model at the Vice Provost administrative level. This model is consistent with the roles and responsibilities that are at the basis of other diversity plans used in a number of campuses across the United States. This model is comprehensive in nature, taking into consideration the needs of the faculty, students and staff. It does not, however, incorporate external vendors and organization stakeholders – a constituent base that also needs to be included in such a plan. This plan, on the other hand, differs from others in that it suggests innovative approaches using critical success factors for sustainable diversity outcomes on college and university campuses.
Diversity Program Components

Definition of Diversity

In developing a model for an institutional diversity plan, the establishment of a diversity and multicultural services office is paramount. It is important to define with precision just what is meant by diversity and multiculturalism as they relate to institutions of higher education. Just as there are no two human fingerprints alike, there are no two campuses alike. Recognizing this uniqueness and factoring in the unique need of human diversity on college and university campuses requires a careful definition of the campus community. The overarching questions then become: What prognosis can we make on the future of the institution? What will the institution look like in the year 2050 and beyond? I have devised and I recommend that the following definition for the term diversity be used. This term reflects a definition that was created from a compilation of functional descriptions and philosophies entail in the broad literature on diversity and multicultural terms.

Diversity has many different meanings. The most misused definition implies that diversity is another word acceptable to be used when referring to the term minority. Many people use the terms interchangeably. However, this is incorrect; diversity is not synonymous with minority.

Diversity means the acceptance of diverse racial, cultural, economic and social populations. Diversity embraces a perspective that recognizes, respects, appreciates and celebrates human differences. Diversity recognizes humanitarian values, moral orientation, equality, and individual freedom. Diversity defines an individual’s culture, race, ethnicity, age, geographical origin, gender, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, socioeconomic status and country of origin.

When one reviews the literature on human diversity definitions, it becomes evident that diversity is an institutional term. Diversity and multiculturalism are inclusive terms; however the tradition on most campuses is to use these terms as a euphemism, in other words, as a substitute for the term minority. On college and university campuses, diversity must take on the denotation descriptor and not the connotative references of the definition. Therefore, I believe that the term diversity supports and fosters an atmosphere that encourages multiplicity of opinions and experiences among all member of the campus community.

I envision, for the purpose of this model, that the definition of diversity for a college or university setting combine the human side of diversity (social diversity) with the cultural side of diversity (human demographic diversity). Both dimensions of diversity rely upon a campus environment that values and actively supports a community built on inclusion and affirmation. In short, diversity means oneness. Colleges and universities must take the lead in defining their unique oneness – their unique personality, missions, and core values – much like a country defines its nationalism.
It is quite obvious to me that diversity embraces a perspective that recognizes, respects, appreciates, and celebrates human differences. Diversity promotes the creation of culturally rich environments built on inclusion, participation, contribution, affirmation, motivation, and interaction. Harmony is an aim of diversity, and it is the synchronization among people of different cultures, languages, and religious beliefs. Diversity is basic to the ideals of a truly democratic society. In the process of developing a diverse society, resistance and tension will naturally occur. However, as educators, we must recognize the opportunities that dealing with biased thinking, resistance, tokenism, intolerance, and narrow viewpoints bring to the discussion of diversity and seek constantly for mutual understanding of opposing points of view. This brings about a teachable moment for those who resist.

Diversity in the United States, if appreciated, recognized, and practiced, would indeed demonstrate the existence of the basic ideals of a truly democratic society – E Pluribus Unum. In such a society, educating oneself and broadening one's level of appreciation for all human kind can eventually remove the resistance and tension caused by the failure to embrace differences.

From a sociological perspective, encouraging diversity awareness increases the level of understanding among people – a situation which contributes to the development and growth of interpersonal relationships. This increase in awareness and appreciation of diversity in turn serves to strengthen the interpersonal relationships on college and university campuses, in our communities, and in our nation. When you think about this term, if you are honest, you will come to believe that diversity speaks to advancing society beyond the status quo – the very nature of a term that incorporates inclusion and acknowledges the strength of many and the collective genius of all. Diversity teaches the importance of understanding, accepting, and embracing cultural differences as well as the recognition of similarities among members of the campus community.

Development of an Institutional Diversity and Multicultural Services Office

For discussion purposes, let's say that the name of the institutional diversity office is the Office of Institutional Diversity and Multicultural Services (IDMS). The sole purpose of this unit will be to lend leadership and make a commitment to advancing diversity on campus through a focus on increasing the numbers of new hires of underrepresented faculty and staff as well as the recruitment of underrepresented students. The IDMS will assist academic and non-academic departments in developing and recommending strategies that provide new impetus for addressing the needs of establishing a truly democratic community on campus. In the process of developing an appreciation for a diverse campus community, the IDMS will encourage the establishment of an educational environment that fosters the vigorous exchange of ideas without fear of prejudice or persecution. The IDMS will
help to prepare members of the campus community to move toward a mutually embracing, synergetic learning community through advocating for inclusion and giving voice to the underrepresented populations on campus.

Mission statement

In order to align the diversity initiatives with the mission of the college or university campus, an additional mission statement incorporating the goals and values of diversity should be incorporated into the language of the institutional mission statement. This provision of the mission statement should provide specific diversity elements that complement the institutional mission statement while simultaneously defining the particular characteristics and goals of the IDMS. I recommend the following steps in drafting a mission statement for a diversity and equity office that aligns with the institutional mission statement.

Components of the IDMS

Objectives

- Commitment to diversity and nondiscrimination.
- Responsibility for developing and implementing an institution-wide diversity plan to enhance campus diversity and create a more inclusive institution.
- Collaborate with academic departments to develop workable strategies for the recruitment and retention of ethnic minority and women faculty.
- Assist in the recruitment of ethnic minority faculty in disciplines concentrating in academic areas with limited ethnic minority presence.
- Assist faculty with curricular and co-curricular programs that support all university departments in achieving and implementing goals for diversity and equity education.
- Exercise leadership in an effort to develop and sustain diversity in teaching, research, and learning technology.
- Ensure that ethnic minority students that meet or exceed the requirements for admission will be aggressively recruited.
- Provide diversity education and training in order to ensure awareness of the issues of diversity and their role as a critical competency for individual success in a global society.

Programs and services

Student programs and services

- Ethnic minority recruitment
- Academic support and retention
- Team learning groups
- Scholarship programs and financial aid
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

- Professional student development seminars
- Leadership development skills building
- Leadership roundtable council
- International exchange programs
- Mentoring programs
- Ethnic minority advisory council
- Supplemental instruction
- Early intervention and pre-college programs

Diverse faculty recruitment and development
- Recruitment and retention
- Academic grantsmanship
- Research support seminars
- International faculty exchange programs
- Professional development workshops
- Diversity curriculum reform
- Faculty of color and women faculty advisory councils
- Faculty of color excellence visiting professorship
- Lilly Excellence in Teaching Conference participation

Institution-wide programs
- Establishment of a center for the research and study of diverse campus populations
- Diversity monitoring committee
- Resource center for teaching excellence
- Center for the advancement of promotion and tenure
- Community outreach relations
- Alumni relations
- Development activities
- International education and global exchange

Key performance indicators of the IDMS

I recommend the IDMS develop a set of key performance indicators (KPI) to collect data sets to evaluate and benchmark initiatives. After all, the IDMS needs to have a way to gauge whether the activities and services rendered are making a positive impact on campus. KPIs offer the opportunity to measure the goals and objectives and to capture a snapshot of how well program initiatives are working. In the business community, KPIs are the measurement of quality performance. On college and university campuses, KPIs can serve as the monitoring indicators of what works and what does not work relative to diversity programs. At a glance, KPIs can inform how well the campus is progressing with diversity plans. The following are
KPIs for campus-wide initiatives which include students, faculty, alumni, and community stakeholders. Listed are a number of areas that should be included in a diversity plan and should serve as indicators of success.

_Campus-wide initiatives_

The IDMS’s overall mission is to serve as the vehicle for directing diversity endeavors and monitoring the success of those endeavors. I have identified the following factors the IDMS should address in regards to campus-wide initiatives.

- Serve as the primary representative for the institution regarding diversity/multicultural issues.
- Advise the President, Provost, and Deans while working collaboratively with all institutional officials to enhance the climate of diversity and serve as the campus’s internal and external spokesperson on virtually all issues involving diversity.
- Be responsible for and serve as a consultant providing innovative leadership, guidance, and direction for all campus diversity initiatives including the development and implementation of diversity plans as well as the establishment of diversity committees, study groups, and work teams focused on diversity issues.
- Promote the advancement of multicultural and diversity-related issues.
- Monitor all aspects of the institution’s efforts toward diversity with emphasis placed on the advancement of faculty, students, and staff of color.
- Serve as the university’s liaison and ombudsperson to mediate situations of ethnic and cultural tensions before they become serious problems or enter into the grievance system.
- Work closely with department deans, chairs, and faculty to ensure that the general education and major programs curricula develop an understanding of the diversity of society and provide support to those faculty members who seek to incorporate a greater emphasis on diversity within their courses and/or revise their curricula to enhance learning about diverse cultures and people.
- Examine existing academic programs and develop new programs to ensure equitable opportunities for all members of the university community.
- Provide leadership for academic and curricular changes that encourage cultural, language, and racial diversity.
- Provide reports depicting the progress and status of the diversity efforts ongoing at the university by measuring the effectiveness of KPIs.
• Serve as a resource to the communications/public relations office in reviewing institutional publications and publicity to ensure that the institution’s interest in representing members from populations of color is present.

• Assist in developing both internal and external collaborations and partnerships with multicultural alumni constituent groups to maintain connections with the institution and establish supportive relationships with current students and faculty, especially those from diverse backgrounds.

• Create an annual campus forum to confront and clarify diverse interests and to express and consider dissent.

• Develop and implement diversity training and other professional development opportunities for the entire campus to increase its understanding of diversity and global affairs.

• Collaborate with student affairs services to foster a climate supportive of students from historically underrepresented minority populations at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and to increase campus awareness of the educational issues that affect these students.

• Work with academic affairs units to develop mentoring programs for students of color and to address issues regarding curriculum and research related to diversity perspectives.

• Consult with the enrollment management unit to develop a recruitment plan for students of color that enlists reasonable goals and timetables necessary to achieve the goals of the diversity plan. A campus diversity plan should be unique to the college, its mission and personality, and should be custom made to comply with the United States Supreme Court rulings on affirmative action and diversity precedent.

• Recommend ways to improve the collegial experiences of underrepresented and graduate students of color by creating and promoting a hospitable campus environment.

• Work with constituent groups to initiate, develop, and implement innovative programs to aid in the retention of students of color, especially in math, engineering, science, and health.

• Develop coherent academic strategies to provide effective support programs in related academic majors for underrepresented students.

• Work closely with other campus offices that deal particularly with students of color to foster relationships with special student programs designed to improve the success of students of color in all aspects of campus life.
Faculty development and recruitment goals

The institutional diversity office should prioritize the recruitment of faculty of color and the diversification of all academic units on campus. It is said that where there are critical numbers of faculty of color, there will be equally critical numbers of students of color on campus. Excellent goals with enforcement mechanisms can stop the all too familiar revolving door syndrome of hiring faculty of color and not nurturing them to tenure and promotion. The literature is clear on what works and what does not work. The following are steps the IDMS should take to reach faculty development and recruitment goals.

- Establish a professional network of faculty of color to identify potential candidates for university positions.
- Establish an annual graduate and doctoral symposium and invite students of color to attend and meet with faculty from academic departments and discuss career prospects.
- Recruit diverse faculty outside of the traditional ranks from business, industry, and government.
- Explore innovative approaches such as faculty exchanges and visiting faculty appointments with historically black colleges and universities.
- Design searches that cover the entire pool of available faculty of color candidates and women, not just the academic "superstars," but include newly minted faculty as well. Encourage search committees not to eliminate viable candidates from applying or from being invited to an interview by asking for more educational accomplishments and/or experience than is really necessary to be successful in the position. Do not dismiss a faculty of color candidate because of her or his cultural-specific research interest.
- Develop departmental mentoring programs to ensure that existing ethnic minority faculty and women are given full opportunity and encouragement to be successful in the tenure and promotion process.
- Provide incentives for faculty who take the lead in sponsoring departmental, collegiate, or university-wide forums that foster activities and discussions, and who demonstrate understanding and appreciation for diversity and a more inclusive campus culture.
- Provide a faculty of color incentive fund for the first three years of tenure track review to allow her or him to travel to conferences and present her or his research, hire a graduate assistant, or purchase instructional materials and technical resources.
- Assist faculty and staff in developing an understanding of diversity programs and increase awareness of the concerns of populations of color as well as other diversity and global awareness issues.
• Review existing programs and create new programs that will enhance the professional development of individual faculty of color in the broad responsibility of teaching, research, grant acquisition, public service, and international travel.

• Provide an institution-wide effort to ensure an equitable and hospitable climate for faculty of color and women faculty that in effect transforms the campus to reflect their culture and interests.

• Sponsor an annual new faculty tour as a way of effectively educating faculty about the statewide history, economy, agriculture, politics, and industries that impact the institution while simultaneously introducing citizens statewide to the new professors who educate the students from that state.

• Encourage new faculty of color to join civic organizations and leadership intern programs sponsored by local and state government agencies.

Endowment activities goals

Critical to the establishment of a campus diversity plan is the development of a well focused endowment program to engage in internal and external fundraising activities. The design of a development plan must consider that diversity is not going away and therefore must reach a diverse population of supporters who want to contribute to programs that enhance inclusion. Diversity endowment efforts are essential to maintaining support for diversity programs, creating student scholarships, and creating a more inclusive and supportive campus climate. The following are steps the IDMS should take to reach endowment activities goals. Serve as a consultant to the development office for fundraising activities from all private sources in support of current operations, endowment, and other capital purposes for enhancing diversity on campus.

• Provide assertive leadership in supporting the development office in creating an annual operating plan to outline goals and strategies to increase involvement and participation of individuals from multicultural constituencies in university department and alumni affairs and activities.

• Promote diversity in fundraising and a philanthropic tradition of charitable giving for funding diversity initiatives.

• Work in collaboration with the corporate relations officer and the foundation officer as liaisons to corporate and foundation prospects as well as develop and implement cultivation and solicitation strategies as appropriate.
Community outreach goals

Community development and engagement is vital for building bridges between the campus and community stakeholders. Building relationships with community partners will help support campus diversity initiatives by building on existing community assets and resources. The following are steps the IDMS should take to reach community outreach goals.

- Establish contacts with the external communities within the state to enhance the quality of life for diverse populations by extending the institutions knowledge and resources about diversity and multicultural education opportunities.

- Represent the institution and engage in a wide range of activities to promote greater involvement in community outreach activities to assist individuals, organizations, and communities with solution-driven outcomes for appreciating, understanding, and valuing diversity in the wider-society.

Global education goals

Emphasizing global education is critical because increasing attention to the growth of international educational activities among faculty and students on campuses is intensifying. International partnerships with colleges, universities, and educational organizations worldwide are becoming commonplace and according to Thomas Friedman, “The world is flat." Institutions of higher education should meet head-on the challenges and issues presented by global twenty-first century demands – social, political, cultural, economic, and educational – present to the future generations of world citizens. The following are steps the IDMS should take to reach global educational goals.

- Provide overseas educational opportunities for faculty, staff, and students working with existing offices on campus that are engaged in international exchange.

- Collaborate with the international student services office to encourage international study abroad opportunities for ethnic minority students.

- Establish international faculty exchange programs with international host countries in Third World nations and Sub-Saharan African countries.

- Investigate, through research and intellectual study, global activities and programs that will encourage collaboration with international partners to promote cross-cultural understanding.
• Provide technical assistance, consultation, and direct services concerning issues that interface with issues of the globalization of education, global education practices, and comparative educational studies.

• Provide research on constructive globalization issues that are promoted by international organizations such as USAID, UNESCO, the Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad Program, and the World Bank.

• Shape the direction of state and national policy and research pertaining to global education and research, which will be accomplished by attracting recognized experts to campus for advanced studies and intellectual activities on issues related to international service learning and education initiatives.

Advisory board

The IDMS should establish an advisory board that will help guide and advise the organization about matters pertaining to the activities and operations of the office. This advisory group will not have any personnel authority over the staff of the office; instead the primary function of the advisory board will be to advise and to support the activities and programs of the office. Members of the advisory board will be selected from the alumni, faculty, students, business, civic, and community organizations. The IDMS administrator will serve as an ex-officio member of the advisory board. Advisory board meetings should be held at least three times a semester, with meetings suspended during the summer months.

Assessment and Evaluation Process

The first step in enhancing diversity appreciation on campus is to begin with an assessment of the current status of the institution – an inventory of campus diversity. Data collection is important for the understanding of what areas diversity initiatives are concentrating on and who is benefiting from the diversity efforts. In the assessment and evaluation process, all aspects of the campus should be examined to determine how successful the campus is doing regarding diversity initiatives and to determine areas of specific need. This data constitutes the basis for developing a comprehensive diversity plan with goals, benchmarks, outcome measurements, and key performance measurements.

The following are key indicators for assessing and gaining an understanding of a campus’s current diversity status and environmental dynamics.

• Provides information and data about trends.
• Provides inventories of college and university initiatives.
• Provides understanding as to how well efforts are working.
• Alerts officials about the need to modify or change existing intervention efforts and programs.
• Assists the institution in justifying or sustaining the diversity initiatives.
• Provides concrete data with which to base decisions as well as to garner public support.
• Provides evidence needed to debate with detractors as well as to motivate support.
• Investigates what various audiences perceive and how they rate diversity activities.
• Investigates how to gain credibility for the program.
• Gains insight about improving or enhancing initiatives.
• Gains public support for the diversity initiatives.

Data collection and assessment exercises should be kept to one or two focus areas. Comprehensive approaches to assessment can lead to overwhelming data gathering which sometimes creates more confusion than usable data and may confuse the intended diversity result. Another important factor in assessment exercises is to make sure there is an institutional commitment to providing funding for the necessary staff or outside agent to collect and maintain the essential assessment data. Budget allocation must be sufficient for assessment activities so that the quality and credibility of the assessment data will reflect the anticipated outcomes of the exercise. Once the institutional assessment has been completed and reviewed by the central administration, diversity advisory board, and deans/directors, the next step is to make sure the data is broadly disseminated throughout the institution. Published reports, press conferences, and open forums are excellent promotional strategies for getting the report disseminated. Encouraging the president of the institution to address the campus community after the report has been published is an effective way to gain support for institutional diversity plans.

**Implementation: Self-directive work team**

Getting started with implementation once the assessment data has been formulated into a diversity plan will require mobilizing the campus community to work together for the purpose of successful execution. After the institutional assessment has been completed, it is important to establish a representative task force to develop an institutional diversity agenda. This task force should be made up of highly respected members of the campus community.

Leadership and oversight of the diversity plan must reside with the diversity office administrator who will be responsible for organizing and orchestrating the work of the task force in order to eliminate fragmentation of efforts. The diversity office administrator should invest personal focus,
energy, intellect, and diplomatic fervency to ensure the success of the program. The administrator should be out front and visible promoting every aspect of the diversity plan.

In my experience, managing diversity goals is often difficult and slow. Therefore, in order to attain the goals of the diversity plan within a reasonable time period, a cluster of Self-Directive Work Teams (SDWT) should be developed. The SDWT are also called Self-Directive Work Groups (SDWG) and they are customarily defined as having the characteristics of team activities, team participation, team communication, and a continuous improvement process (Kauffeld, 2006). These teams are self-managed work cells that focus on separate target areas of the diversity plan (selected from the plan's recommendations) and promote a steady flow of incremental changes, monitoring progress and keeping the goals on schedule (Drinka, 1996). I included the following quote from Orsborn, Moran, Musselwhite, and Zenger (1990) because it outlines the uniqueness of the SDWTs and its relationship to the organization's leadership.

Suffice it to say that we now know three important things about team leaders and team effectiveness. One is that the thing that differentiates successful team implementation from unsuccessful ones is leadership support. Without clear sponsorship from key leaders, the culture of high performance never really takes root. We also knew that once teams are established, leadership effectiveness is the most important variable in their ongoing operational effectiveness. Teams without the benefit of a good coach are not as successful as those who have one. (pg. xxxi)

The SDWT offers a flexible way for members of the campus to get involved in working to ensure successful implementation of the diversity plan by choosing an area of interest and joining a targeted work team. For instance, persons interested in working to enhance the undergraduate admissions component of the diversity plan can join the admission work team and make a contribution in that focus area. To this end, a manageable number of people can get involved with implementing a particular area of the plan through lending their expertise and talents.

The success of these teams relies on the makeup of its members, who are jointly responsible for the outcome of a project, with each individual member performing multiple tasks to ensure that the outcome is successful. This work strategy allows each individual member to enjoy joint ownership of as well as participation in the success of the entire plan.

I realized by using this methodology that the SDWT should be headed by team leaders who have the day-to-day responsibility for managing specific educational programs. It seems that these individuals just know what it takes to get the assignments finished. The team leaders meet on a regular basis with the diversity program administrator to update their accomplishments and to receive additional information. The SDWT team leaders normally hold periodic meetings with their team members to keep them updated. During these meetings with team volunteers the team leaders chart the progress of the teams, take responsibility for the teams' outcomes, and schedule projects and workloads among the members.
I have incorporated this method into my administrative work style with great success. It has been a dependable methodology for implementing campus-wide diversity projects. The successful implementation of campus projects using the SDWT structure is due in part to its ability to produce self-sustaining teams that manage projects, make decisions, offer recommendations, and perform tasks related to the overall diversity program goals. I have observed that the SDWT structure allows for responsiveness in getting large assignments done, and in some cases, it produces speed in the implementation and attainment of complex goals and objectives.

Conclusion

I've come to realize that institutions of higher education must continue to retool in order to address the new demographic shift taking place on their campuses. With today's demographic shifts, it is necessary for these institutions to establish a vehicle that will provide the leadership for expanding opportunities and improving the educational experiences of an ever-increasing presence of diverse populations on their campuses. I maintain that one way to accomplish this goal is to centralize the diversity efforts on campus and enlist a large representative body of volunteers to assist in the implementation of diversity activities and programs. Ultimately, the college president is responsible for and accountable to the campus community for diversity.

Certainly a variety of models exist to improve the education and retention of students of color on predominantly white campuses. In some cases, I have implemented a number of programs with a degree of success yet in other cases have had no great success at all. As popular as diversity programming seems, especially if one searches the literature on this topic, to my knowledge, there has not been any solid evidence to indicate that one program or plan is more successful than another. As I stated in the beginning of this discussion, diversity on college and university campuses should be as natural as the air we breathe. As members of a community of learners, I believe the entire campus community should be discovering the kaleidoscopic spectacle of the range of diversity in our society – practicing the choir of we are one community, instead of screaming insults at one another.

I have noticed that the strongest success indicator of diversity on a college or university campus is the expression of sincere passion that central administrators have for diversity and inclusion. When the head of the institution sincerely puts resources in front of rhetoric, demonstrates commitment in hiring faculty of color and women, and mandates civility on campus that, to me, is a real strong example of commitment to diversity.

One could say that the national prototype of diversity offices across the United States is a mixed bag of talented administrators from different disciplines working with limited staffing and resource trying to single-handedly impact change on an entire campus. I know from experience that this solo status approach has not worked and will not work. Striving to bring a harmonious and culturally-rich environment to a college or university campus
is basic to the learning objectives and ideals of a truly democratic society and it takes the involvement of the entire campus community to make certain that it is achieved.

I offer this IDMS model as a positive plan that will pilot expanded diversity and inclusion on college and university campuses. If seriously embraced by the central administration, deans, faculty, students, and unit directors, this progressive model will make tremendous strides toward becoming the nexus between the majority and minority populations on campus, thus providing unlimited opportunities for every person on campus.

References


