

Diversity Strategic Plan for Dickinson College

Dickinson College has worked intentionally over the last decade to more accurately “reflect America and Engage the World”. Through faculty development, curricular innovation, new program implementation and focused admission practices we have made tremendous progress. As we face the next five years, despite a different economic reality, we must continue to maintain the strong leadership and direction that has made this growth possible. To be competitive we must continue to be among those institutions that expand their definition of inclusion. We must continue to work toward our strategic objective to “support a climate on campus that builds community and encourages open dialogue on issues of intellectual, ethical and social importance, teach and model for students the practice of engagement with critical and controversial issues related to difference in our culture and foster a sophisticated understanding of the balance between our diversity and the commonalities inherent in our shared humanity”.

In previous plans we have articulated our commitment to the American project-yet unfulfilled- of promoting the principles of openness, pluralism, inclusiveness and democracy. We believe no college can achieve its academic and social goals without reflecting the richness of diverse peoples and voices in America and the world.

I. Defining Diversity

Diversity includes the presence of persons different from one another on a variety of parameters. It recognizes that each individual possesses multiple characteristics that comprise their identity and impact how they are perceived by and how they interact with others. These characteristics include but are not limited to race, age, color, gender, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability status.

At Dickinson College a diverse community will include individuals from majority populations, historically under-represented populations, international students, and individuals from various socio-economic levels all having a wide variety of ideas, attitudes and beliefs,

II. The Rationale for Diversity

The historic 2008 election gave hope to many that we had turned a corner on race relations in this country. The election of Barack Obama seemed to signify a capacity for coalition building across a wide variety of differences. Since that moment, we have unfortunately witnessed a re-opening of fault lines around markers of difference. Surely the economic situation has exacerbated people’s fears and anxieties but some of the fault lines are old ones.

As a nation, our best hope for continued forward progress is education of citizens. In a “flat world” colleges and universities will be obligated to provide what future graduates need to know about their world. Many say that no longer will it be enough to acquire expertise and vertical mastery in a single field. A “flat world” demands experts with the capacity to synthesize across a diversity of fields. It will require workers with flexibility, cultural competence and a willingness to move beyond the known and comfortable. This must continue to be the hallmark of a Dickinson education.

Research tells us that complex thinking occurs when people encounter novel situations for which they have no ready script. We are told that thinking deepens when the environment demands more than our current scripts provide. Because of persistent patterns of segregation in the world, college is the first opportunity for many students to experience broad diversity and encounter countless novel situations. In college, students are exposed to individuals whose life experiences and multiple identities challenge their worldview. Extensive empirical evidence has shown that college students educated in diverse settings are more likely to exhibit certain desirable “learning and democracy outcomes”. (Gurin) Studies have shown that students who experienced racial and ethnic diversity in classroom settings and in informal interaction with peers experienced the greatest engagement in active thinking processes. This intellectual engagement produces growth in a wide variety of academic and social outcomes that colleges and universities say they prize. Research also shows that students educated in formal and informal diverse settings continue to live more racially and ethnically integrated lives after college. Dickinson College must continue to work to create the kind of rich, diverse and engaging environment that challenges our students in all the ways that produce the outcomes we seek.

III. Conditions for Success

Make no mistake; to solidify our current gains and increase the representation of historically underrepresented groups at Dickinson it will continue to require significant financial investment. We will need to focus our efforts both on structural diversity efforts (recruitment and retention) and on all the aspects of campus climate that create an inclusive environment for all members of the community.

In support of our goals for diversity it will be necessary to deepen collaboration and cooperation among the President’s Office, Admissions, Student Development, the Division of Academic Affairs and Human Resource Services

Goal: Ensure that the enrollment gains of the last decade do not erode. Work to expand the pools and markets from which we draw students to maximize our ability to meet our articulated goals.

Recruitment

Students

- Clearly articulate our current goals for diversity within the student population
- Have honest and informed conversations about the tensions inherent in our diversity goals, high need students, and institutional capacity
- Track recruitment of specific underrepresented or underserved student populations
 - Track demographic data regarding:
 - Students of Color
 - International Students
 - Transfers
 - Community College Students
 - First Generation students

Community Based Organizations (CBO) students

- Identify funding needed/allocated to support the recruitment of these populations
- Identify amount of funding allocated to the different admissions /financial-aid cycles
 - Clearly communicate these various deadlines to desired “high-need” students in our pool
- Strategically expand the pool from which we draw diverse students with a goal of recruiting diverse students from families with increased financial capacity

Faculty/ Staff

- Monitor data on the representation of women and people of color in the faculty
- Work with department chairs when vacancies occur to develop a recruitment plan that maximizes the diversity of the candidate pool
- Actively support the integration of newly hired diverse faculty into the community

All

- Develop regular and effective communication about diversity at Dickinson
 - Develop a regular program within the Admission’s recruitment cycle that highlights diversity at Dickinson.
 - Outreach to parents of diverse students to articulate/emphasize the value of a liberal arts education
 - Continue to expand and update “Diversity at Dickinson” portal on our website.
 - Use our website and multi-media to get the story out to prospective students and families

Goal: Closely monitor the progress of diverse students to identify any achievement gaps. Develop strategies/programs that ensure that diverse students access resources and programs at comparable levels as majority students.

Retention

- Extend data collection regarding retention of students of color beyond the first two years
 - Collect data on students we do not retain but ultimately gain their degrees at another institution
- Chart student progress through the institution by major ,and GPA
- Proactively develop academic success/advising workshops geared toward populations that demonstrate particular patterns (e.g. “failure to launch” , first-generation, male students, Posse scholars
- Partner with appropriate offices to help diverse students manage their personal and social lives effectively
- Expand efforts to increase the participation of diverse students across the full spectrum of majors and programs (e.g. NSF-STEP Scholars program)
- Monitor participation of first-generation, students of color and other populations in study abroad programs to insure that no barriers to participation exist

- Develop networking opportunities for first-generation and students of color to cultivate “insider knowledge” for certain fields
 - Tap alumni for internships and interview opportunities

Goal: Work to ensure the creation of a community that intentionally engages diversity in support of intellectual growth and development. Give special consideration to and address institutional and community practices that negatively impact historically underrepresented groups and impede their full participation in the community.

Campus Climate

- Employ regular diversity audits for departments/administrative offices tied to diversity efforts
- Explore and address quality and quantity issues related to student engagement at an institutional level (e.g. Are diverse students represented at all levels of participation- Student Senate, RAs, CAs, OAs, committee service? etc)
- Continue to develop a mentoring culture/mentoring community for underrepresented/underserved members of the community through the operational leadership of the Dean of Diversity and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources
- Develop a diversity leadership institute intended to enhance the knowledge base and skill competence of students.
- Provide regular and consistent diversity workshops for key audiences (e.g. new employees, first-year seminar faculty, admissions staff, other departments)
- Develop a bias response protocol that dovetails with and supports our non-discrimination policy
 - Develop a system (accessible via the website) for Dickinson community members to report bias/harassment incidents
 - Provide trainings to educate and empower students, faculty and staff around bias-related incidents
 - Develop and train a core group of faculty, administrators and students to serve as members of a bias response team
(Coordination of the training to be led by Director of the Office of Diversity Initiatives)
- Work closely with appropriate campus constituencies to ensure that the college meets all of its responsibilities under Title IX especially as it relates to campus sexual misconduct.
- Coordinate the work of the various deputy Title IX officers.
- Require the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional and Diversity Issues to brief all academic and non-academic search committees on the benefits of diversity before activity is begun. Help search committees establish expectations.
- Engage the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional and Diversity Issues to work with the Division of College Advancement to seek and help draft federal, state and private grants that improve our campus climate.

Goal: Continue to support curricular development and innovation that highlights social justice/ democratic teaching with the goal of producing students who develop the capacity to understand and appreciate difference.

Curricular Initiatives

- Continue to monitor the courses that fulfill the Cross-cultural and U.S. diversity requirements to ensure they meet intended knowledge acquisition
- Provide support for and coordination of efforts of emerging departments that add to the diversity of the curriculum (e.g. Middle-East Studies, Africana Studies, Sexuality Studies)
- Continue to support the efforts of the Community Studies Center in regards to curricular innovation, community outreach and student learning around diversity

Outreach

Goal: Work to engage or re-engage a wider variety of alumni from across the years and identity/affinity groups. Highlight the history and contributions of alumni from diverse populations.

Alumni

- Continue to work with Advancement to find ways to engage alumni around issues of diversity
- Continue to build affinity and affiliation with diverse alumni to solidify their relationship with the College
- Continue to connect current diverse students with diverse alumni for a wide variety of activities

Goal: Continue to support “democratic renewal through civic engagement” (Benson and Harkavay, 2002) through our work with local communities. Specifically work to enhance community enrichment and broadened access to educational opportunity.

Community

- Continue to support our outreach in K-12 efforts (e.g. CONNECT and Moreland Third-grade program)
- Serve on non-profit boards and share both our enlarged worldview and apply expertise to local problems
- Partner with the community to address social climate issues in the community that negatively impact the students experience.
- Increase the visibility of the College in key markets to expand the pool from which we draw diverse students and staff

Campus-wide integration and communication

While no one person can be responsible for diversity at Dickinson, the old adage is also true that when something is “everyone’s job nobody does it”. It is therefore critical that we continue to

strengthen the coordination of our efforts. This coordination will make us more efficient, reduce duplication and maximize limited resources. To that end the following recommendations are offered:

- Continue to support an annual meeting between the co-chairs of the President's Commission on Diversity and the President's Commission on Women to jointly go over the agendas for the committees
- Continue the twice yearly (once each semester) joint meetings of the two Commissions on Diversity and Women to further coordinate work/efforts
- Produce a joint report to the President from the two Commissions outlining the separate and overlapping issues related to diversity at Dickinson
- Support the efforts of the Dean of Diversity and Student Development at an institutional policy level to coordinate diversity efforts on broad diversity initiative issues that include; recruitment, women's issues, race and ethnicity, religious life and Jewish life issues, LGBTQ issues and disability issues.
- Distribute annual "Diversity Snapshot" to all directors, deans, vice presidents and academic department chairs
- Increase integration between global and domestic diversity efforts

Assessment Plan

Strategic Plan III serves as a logical frame within which our assessment efforts over the next five years might be defined. The following areas should be considered in the context of institutional diversity and a cross-functional team should articulate exact approaches to our assessment effort:

- 21st Century Skill Set
- Graduate/Career Advising (for students of color)
- Inclusive Classrooms
- Diversity programming (LGBTQA, Latino/a, White privilege, etc.)
- Itemization of ID groups (should this include border crossing? In other words, to what extent do different groups seek to understand one another?)
- Status of survey follow up (what are we doing with the data we've gathered?)
 - Benchmarking against *specific survey questions* that hold institutional importance.
- Assessing the lexicon
- Assessment of bias response
- Cultural competency at the institutional level (perhaps time for a survey)
- Clear articulation and assessment of the LGTBTA agenda. Who owns it?
- Development of KPIs based on overall institutional diversity agenda

Proposed Framework

A possible framework for the next two years could be laid out in the context of three key questions: (1) does the institution have "mini" plans for the strategic places where diversity work is happening? Are these plans written down, clearly articulated and understood by its relevant stakeholders, and are these plans aligned at the divisional and institutional levels? (2) what are the specific measures of success for progress towards and realization of goals; and (3) what specific goals can be validated through measurable outcomes, shared as best practices and/or affirmed in the field as unique or cutting edge?

<p>Ensure that the enrollment gains of the last decade do not erode. Work to expand the pools and markets from which we draw students to maximize our ability to meet our articulated goals.</p>	<p>Convene president's commission sub-committee to track recruitment of specific underrepresented or underserved student populations (students of color, int'l students, transfers, community college students, first generation students, CBO students)</p>	<p>Track along standard demographic variables.</p>	<p>11/12</p>
	<p>Work with department chairs when vacancies occur to develop a recruitment plan that maximizes the diversity of the candidate pool</p>	<p>ID and connect with viable resources that facilitate this practice and track both hiring and retention.</p>	<p>11/12-11/13</p>
<p>Closely monitor the progress of diverse students to identify any achievement gaps. Develop strategies/programs that ensure that diverse students access resources and programs at comparable levels as majority students.</p>	<p>Chart progress through the institution by GPA (commission sub-committee)</p>	<p>Chart progress through the institution by GPA.</p>	
	<p>Proactively develop academic success/advising workshops geared toward populations that demonstrate particular patterns (e.g. "failure to launch", first generation, low income, male students, Posse scholars, Philly Futures.)</p>		
	<p>Expand efforts to increase the participation of diverse students across the full spectrum of majors and programs (e.g. NSF- Step Scholars program)</p>		
	<p>Monitor participation of first-generation, students of color</p>	<p>Mainly involves collection and</p>	<p>11/12</p>

	and other populations in study abroad programs to insure that no barriers to participation exist	monitoring of student lists and communicating strategies for outreach.	
Work to ensure the creation of a community that intentionally engages diversity in support of intellectual growth and development. Give special consideration to and address institutional and community practices that negatively impact historically underrepresented groups and impede their full participation in the community.	Explore and address quality vs. quantity issues related to student engagement at a policy level		
	Develop a leadership institute intended to enhance the knowledge base and skill competence of students	Involves pre/post testing and a number of other built-in assessment activities for measurement of success	11/12
	Require the Special Assistant to the President for Institutional and Diversity Initiatives to brief all academic and non-academic search committees on the benefits of diversity before activity is begun. Help search committees establish expectations	Track presentations and search/hiring practices relative to intentional outreach to diverse populations. Cultivate/monitor relationships with affiliate programs (e.g. CFD program)	
Continue to support curricular development and innovation that highlights social justice/democratic teaching with the goal of producing students who develop the capacity to understand and appreciate difference.		Regularly report out on President's Commission on Diversity as it relates to these issues. Support the work of the US Diversity Task Force.	
Work to engage or re-engage a wider variety of alumni	Continuing to work with Advancement to find ways to	Begin to build list based on available	12/13

<p>from across the years and identify affinity groups. Highlight the history and contributions of alumni from diverse populations.</p>	<p>engage alumni around issues of diversity.</p>	<p>info regarding diverse alums (race, geography, professional affiliations, philanthropy, etc.)</p>	
<p>Continue to support “democratic renewal through civic engagement” (Benson and Harkavay, 2002) through our work with local communities. Specifically work to enhance community enrichment and broaden access to educational opportunity</p>	<p>Work with Dean of Diversity/Assistant to the President at an institutional policy level to coordinate diversity efforts among the Women’s Center, ODI, Religious Life, Asbell Center, LGBTQ Coordinator and persons responsible for recruitment of diverse students (activities residing in other divisions)</p>	<p>ID joint goals/collaborative practices that will enhance the work of Diversity and allow for regular reporting to the campus community. ID/ formalize institutional diversity “bridge work” to be done among various divisions.</p>	