

November 30, 2007

To: Alice P. Gast, President

CC: Mohamed El-Aasser, Provost
UDLC Members
Rajan Menon, Chair, Global Lehigh Advisory Council

From: UDLC Benchmarking Subcommittee

Subject: Benchmarking Report

The subcommittee investigated best practices for the administration of campus-wide diversity programs at American universities. Interviews were conducted over the past five months with Chief Diversity Officers and leaders of Offices of Institutional Diversity, and similar programs at ten universities. Our group researched and reviewed recently published articles on academic institutional diversity. Based on our benchmarking and research, we offer recommendations for Lehigh.

1. Lehigh's Evolving Diversity Administration Strategies

Since the late 1980s, Lehigh has created a series of diversity initiatives with goals to improve the campus climate and increase the numbers of women and people of color among the faculty, staff, undergraduate and graduate students, and university leadership.

In 1989-1990, the Commission on Minorities and Women formed study groups, which compiled a comprehensive report and recommendations on Academic Programs and Services, Campus Life, Conditions of Employment, Institutional Climate, and Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement. The President's Commission on Diversity for 1996-1998 prepared a report updating the recommendations and data. In September 2002, President Gregory Farrington sent to the campus community *Achieving a More Diverse Lehigh*, which reported on specific actions to improve campus climate and to recruit students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups.

In 2005-2006, an organizational structure was created to ensure that the University Diversity Initiative's mission and goals move forward. The University Diversity Leadership Committee (UDLC) was established as an umbrella organization for three additional task forces: the Task Force for Student Diversity, the Task Force for Faculty Diversity, and the Task Force for Staff Diversity. In 2006 the UDLC engaged Rankin & Associates, a nationally respected consulting group, to help assess the climate for diversity on campus. With an impressive 41% return rate, the comprehensive study provided information on areas of greatest concern and impact to frame the future direction of the Diversity Initiative.

In response to the recommendation of the UDLC and the Movement Student Group, a student-led group working to promote diversity, acceptance, and understanding within the Lehigh community, President Gast provided resources to create a new position of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Ally (LGBTQA) services director. Timothy Gardner was hired and joined the Lehigh community in mid-July to be the first director of the LGBTQA program at Lehigh. In his new role,

Timothy Gardner will work with students, faculty, staff and the community to change the Lehigh climate by inspiring a vision of diversity that is aware of, engaged in, and appreciative of issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Lehigh's many other diversity-related programs, resources, and student groups are listed in Appendix D.

Referencing the findings from the Rankin report on the Climate Survey data, the UDLC further developed recommendations for actions needed to address specific climate issues in its August 6, 2007 report to the President and Provost. With the submission of the report, the UDLC went into hiatus, awaiting the response to their recommendations which included replacing the UDLC with a new more representative structure. In October 2007 President Gast met with the UDLC and thanked them personally for their work. She proposed the creation of a Council of Equity and Community (CEC) comprised of faculty, staff and students to be a standing body to implement and sustain goals and initiatives that will move Lehigh towards realizing its vision of equity and community. The CEC will have working groups to implement and meet the goals and actions set forth by the UDLC report.

The goals of the recent Global Lehigh Advisory Council include “ensuring that internationalization in all dimensions pervades the university’s intellectual, cultural, and social life and to become evident to both undergraduate and graduate students, whether potential or enrolled.” This goal is an important component of broad based diversity without using the word “diversity”. As a result, the Benchmarking Subcommittee met with two members of the Global Lehigh Advisory Council, Dr. Rajan Menon and Dr. Judith

McDonald, to discuss an infrastructure for synergy and foster collaborations internally and externally. We consider this further with our recommendations in Section 4.

On November 8, Dr. Gast addressed the faculty, staff and students at a Town Hall Meeting and updated the group on the strategic thinking process that she launched in January 2007 to integrate the university’s separate goals into overarching institutional goals. Over the summer the senior leadership, working in teams, integrated the institutional goals and priorities, refined sub-goals for each and proposed actions. The next step in the process is to engage the campus community and the Board of Trustees, and develop a specific implementation plan for each of the goals. One of the emerging goals addressed is Diversity/Inclusion, defined as:

To create and maintain an inclusive community which values, affirms, and advances the diverse backgrounds, interests, experiences and aspirations of all its members. Achieving diversity requires working toward building a community that is more reflective of our society. Fostering a campus culture that embraces diversity will advance the intellectual and social vitality of the Lehigh community, and confirm the symbiotic relationship between diversity and academic excellence.

This report provides insights and recommendations on possible administrative approaches in support of this goal.

2. Recently Published Surveys and Analysis

Recently several survey and analysis articles on campus-wide diversity administration models were published. We found these three to be especially significant for our study. The articles are included in Appendix E.

“Strategic Planning for Diversity and Organizational Change,” D. A. Williams and C. Clowney, *Effective Practices for Academic Leaders*, Vol. 2, Issue 3, Stylus Publishing, Inc. March 2007.

A helpful taxonomy of diversity models is described: (a) the *compliance* model, emphasizing affirmative action law and principles of equity; (b) the *multicultural* model, in which narrowly targeted programs are added incrementally; and (c) the *academic diversity* model, stressing an intentional linkage of diversity with academic missions. Based on these models, we assessed that Lehigh has, in recent years, transitioned from the compliance to the multicultural model. In our summary of the interviews, we classified each university using this taxonomy.

“Discussions in Diversity,” Special Issue of the *College and University Professional Association for Human Resources Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 1, Spring/Summer 2007. We found this article illuminating: “*The Chief Diversity Officer*”, D. A. Williams, K. C. Wade-Golden.

This invaluable article surveys recent CDOs established at over a dozen universities. It articulates roles that CDOs are playing: change agents, point leaders, and relational leaders. It describes a variety of organizational models and discusses their relative effectiveness. It compares “vertical” and “unit” administrative models, and lists skill sets for CDOs, and hiring strategies.

Making a Real Difference with Diversity – A Guide to Institutional Change, A. Clayton-Pedersen, S. Parker, D. Smith, J. Moreno, and D. Teraguchi, Association of American Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C., 2007.

The report makes recommendations based on a six-year, \$29M initiative to assist twenty-eight California universities to improve campus diversity. The report supplied pertinent data to assist us in developing our recommendations.

3. Benchmarking Interviews

The subcommittee conducted 10 interviews with colleges and universities. The interview questions were developed by our subcommittee and they are listed in Appendix A. Universities selected to interview are listed in Appendix B, and universities where we were able to identify a contact are also listed in Appendix B. The complete interview notes are provided in Appendix C. They contain a wealth of insight, and we urge the reader to review them carefully. The following table “Key Elements from Benchmarking Interviews” and the document “Salient Excerpts from Interviews” highlight the significant elements found in the interviews.

4. Salient Excerpts from Interviews

Bucknell University

Rolando Arroyo-Sucre

Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity

Office of Diversity and Equity

Dr. Arroyo-Sucre views his role as providing “centralized coordination” in broad and strategic support of Bucknell’s diversity and equity goals. He believes that diversity and equity should include outreach to all stakeholders. Collaboration and building bridges across campus with all stakeholders is the hallmark of his approach. So far he has been surprised that he has encountered little resistance.

He advocates leveraging the resources and activities of all departments, not just those charged with diversity/equity missions. All campus groups have their own agendas and so a central administrator plays a vital role in keeping the focus on achieving diversity and equity goals all within the context of the university’s overall mission and goals. On campuses where a full-time role is not possible, appointing a senior faculty member and providing release time from teaching and research is an option.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Ken Durgens

Executive Director

Office of Institutional Diversity

Position is designed so that he has high interaction with faculty and academic policy team. He maintains a “diversity databank” of faculty to monitor trends on campus. Women faculty have increased from 13% to 25% since he was hired. The campus environment has to be willing to change, however, and when you centralize an office to hold the school accountable, it is much easier to develop this change. Diversity has to start at the top so that it can be seen as an institution wide priority, and performance planning makes accountability everyone’s issue.

Tufts University

Dr. Lisa Coleman

Executive Director and Faculty member, Department of Africana Studies

Office for Institutional Diversity

Their outreach and programmatic efforts underscore historical and emerging scholarship and research related to race, ethnicity, culture, gender and sex, disability, sexual identity, gender identity, educational and socio-economic status, age, religion and national origin.

The Board of Trustees has been influential in promoting diversity and a few members of the board are people of color, disabled or LGBT. Diversity was the focus of the first Board of Trustees meeting in 2007. A current board member was formerly president of CUNY and has been exceptionally active in diversity initiatives.

The office budget is a line item in the university budget and funding also comes from grants. There is a \$500,000 university grant through the President’s office, open to faculty, staff and students. The proposals are reviewed by the Deans of each college.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Dr. Archie W. Ervin

Associate Provost for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

Office for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

He advises that for diversity initiatives to be implemented, the directives must come from a senior officer reporting directly to the top office, BUT that person cannot be singularly responsible.

It is important for each unit of the institution to have accountability. The trick is to get everyone on the same page and agree on a centralized approach, and the effort needs to come from the bottom up; top down dictating is problematic and counterproductive.

Dr. Ervin stressed the importance of “getting the message out”. For UNC Chapel Hill this included a senior leadership annual planning retreat where an hour and a half was devoted to this topic. Diversity is fully integrated into the academic plan. The Chancellor reports on diversity in the State of the University address.

All areas of the institution (13 schools and 25 administrative units) submit an annual report answering 8-10 questions which demonstrate how that area is working towards achieving diversity goals. These reports are regularly publicized.

In the late 1970s, the campus was 85% white, and currently is 69.9% white.

University of Pennsylvania

Dr. Jeanne Arnold

Executive Director, Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity
Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

The university has a decentralized model. The Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity is largely responsible for affirmative action/equal opportunity compliance, reporting and training. Each school and central administrative unit is responsible for integrating diversity into its respective area.

In Dr. Arnold’s view, this decentralized model has not worked effectively for Penn in terms of facilitating steady and sustained progress towards greater diversity and inclusion across campus.

Without a centralized office to drive the diversity agenda, efforts and progress are largely dependent on the leadership within the schools and administrative units. She calls this “personality driven” diversity planning and implementation model. Where there are strong school deans and senior officers, you may see diversity infused into every aspect. Currently, of the twelve schools, two schools have launched visible diversity programs with some good results.

In spring of 2007, the University Council (Penn’s governance group with representation from students, staff and faculty) decided to form a Diversity and Equity Committee. Representatives were appointed by the President and Provost and interested faculty and staff were invited to join the committee.

From time to time, the Provost will appoint a tenured faculty member to work out of the Provost’s Office on diversity related activities. The person is given the title of Assistant Provost for Minority Issues with 20-30% of his/her time devoted to diversity. The appointed individual is someone who is personally committed to the cause, but since he or she is also expected to continue with teaching

and research duties, the impact is limited. By and large, these appointments are viewed as diversity “window dressing” and are set up for failure given the lack of time and resources.

University of Virginia

Dr. William Harvey
Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
Office of Diversity and Equity

The ODE interacts with the major academic and administrative units, providing ideas and insights on ways that the institution’s schools, offices, programs, centers and departments can more effectively embrace and implement practices promoting diversity and equity within their operations.

However, rather than the centralized model in which all matters related to diversity report to a single office, the approach used by the ODE emphasizes communication, coordination and cooperation across the institution, a technique that reflects the university culture.

This approach also maintains accountability to enhance diversity within the responsible institutional units.

In addition to the Office of Diversity and Equity, a University Diversity Council with representation from every major academic and administrative unit provides guidance to the ODE.

5. Recommendations

The Benchmarking Subcommittee submits the following recommendations.

1. Lehigh has already evolved strongly, in the language of Williams & Clowney, from a “compliance” model to a “multicultural” model. We believe that Lehigh now has two distinct options: (1) continue to manage its multicultural programs in a loosely coordinated manner; or, (2) work towards integrating diversity initiatives more broadly throughout the campus, resulting in a step forward to an “academic diversity” model where a university-wide office, in close collaboration with senior leadership and the new Council of Equity and Community, oversees a transition, over a period of years, to a new culture where community, diversity, and equity pervade student life and academics. If we maintain our status quo, we will remain in excellent company among the majority of universities. If we take this next step, we will join a vanguard of a handful of progressive universities.
2. We recommend that Lehigh advance to the “academic diversity” model by appointing a Vice President of Equity and Community (VPEC). The VPEC would report to the President and reside administratively in the President's Office. The administrators of the various diversity organizations would continue to report as they do now, with an additional dotted-line reporting to the VPEC. A list of Lehigh’s multicultural activities is found in Appendix D.
3. Staff: The VPEC will have at a minimum one full-time and two part-time staff persons. One of the part-time staff members should be an appointed tenured Faculty Fellow on a rotating assignment. The support and guidance of a tenured faculty member will be instrumental in

connecting diversity to the scholarly interests of faculty thereby infusing diversity into the curriculum and pedagogy.

4. Budget: The VPEC will have a budget for seed money and matching funds to enable initiation and coordination of programs across the university.
5. Accountability: To ensure that accountability is distributed broadly across the university, the VPEC will receive annual progress reports from senior leaders. A compelling example of the value of this policy can be seen in the UNC—Chapel Hill interview.
6. Responsibilities of the VPEC will include:
 - leverage diversity and equity programs across the institution with the advice of The Council of Equity and Community.
 - offer resources, from the VPEC office's programs budget, in the form of seed funds and matching funds to encourage coordinated activities, to start new programs, and to enhance curricula and pedagogy.
 - report personally to the Board of Trustees annually.
7. Coordination with Global Lehigh. Considering the size of Lehigh and the similarities of proposed recommendations from both the Global Lehigh Committee and the Benchmarking Subcommittee to transform and reposition Lehigh beyond the 21st century, both groups support the idea of a combined leadership at the Vice President level to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. Combined leadership will be well positioned to keep each of the components linked together to create innovative approaches that will be sustained for years to come, locally, nationally and internationally.

We believe that these proposed next steps are critical to ensure sustained progress towards building a community of equity and diversity at Lehigh.

Respectfully submitted,

The UDLC Benchmarking subcommittee:

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