

TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL PLAN FOR DIVERSITY

April 3, 2009 (Revised July 6, 2009)

INTRODUCTION

The Diversity Task Force for Expanding our Horizons was formed in December 2008 to help advance Tarleton's diversity and global awareness goal. The group's charge was to:

- 1) Identify areas of weakness and strength;
- 2) Define reasons for weaknesses;
- 3) Develop a draft of an Institutional Plan for Diversity (Diversity Plan), which delineates the action steps needed to achieve our goals; and
- 4) Correlate the Diversity Plan to the Strategic Goals, particularly pertaining to "Expand our Horizons".

The task force met weekly from January 15, 2009 through March 31, 2009 (with the exception of Spring Break week), engaging in very enriching and introspective dialogue and analysis. The group considered and discussed many resources, including but not limited to:

- President Dottavio's charge to the task force
- Tarleton's Strategic Goals
- Highlights from the TSU Diversity Climate Survey (2006-07). This survey is the second administration encompassing a 10-year interval.
- Summary of Diversity Climate Survey: Focus/Discussion Groups Report (2008)
- TAMUS Employee Turnover Report (2008)
- Documentation related to Tarleton's "Butterfly Initiatives" (1998/2002)
- OPEIR report on departmental assessment efforts related to diversity
- Report summarizing recommendations of the Task Force on Faculty Hiring Practices (circa 2003)
- AASCU/NASULGC Report: "Now is the Time: Meeting the Challenge for a Diverse Academy", 2007

This report is the fruit of these discussions, and is respectfully submitted with a vibrant optimism for the future of diversity at Tarleton and an eye toward the day when the world is our satellite campus. The heart of this report is the set of actionable components, the action plan, that delineates ways to move Tarleton forward regarding diversity (see **Diversity Plan: Reaching the Next Level** below). The final section (see **Diversity Plan: Our Strategic Goals** below) of this report provides a matrix indicating the alignment of the proposed action plan with Tarleton's Strategic Goals. The first section identifies areas of strength and weakness, and provides recommended strategies for confronting some of the challenges.

Diversity Task Force for Expanding our Horizons

Members:

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DIVERSITY PLAN: THE CHALLENGES BEFORE US

In discussing the strengths and weaknesses that exist in Tarleton's diversity climate and campus culture, the task force regrettably recognizes that Tarleton has not yet built the foundation of consensus in the value for diversity as a fundamental part of achieving excellence as an institution. However, the task force recognizes that the institution has a long history of successfully realizing those visions to which it genuinely commits. It is in this spirit of optimism that the challenges that face the institution are presented here, as well as suggested strategies to confront these challenges.

A. Strengths

- The "4 Es" that comprise Tarleton's strategic goals, when considered in a context that is ever mindful of diversity, all represent necessary and sufficient objectives for the realization of Tarleton's vision of diversity, inclusion and global awareness
- 1/3 of Tarleton's workforce is over 55; this represents an imminent opportunity to achieve a significantly more diverse workforce in the relatively near future. Further, this change may mark a considerable shift in the perception of diversity and diversity education by those 55 and over.
- The Provost's Task Force for Diversity in the Curriculum has developed a plan to define an intentional effort to integrate diversity into the curriculum
- A Task Force is actively working to develop a renewed Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
- New leadership in the President's Office, the Provost's Office, the Office of Institutional Advancement, as well as the creation of the Division of Enrollment Management provide real opportunities to move forward with a genuine commitment to diversity in education at Tarleton
- Abundance of programmatic opportunities to enhance global awareness
- Positive trends/momentum in recruiting a diverse student population

B. Challenges

- Verbiage-"Diversity" may have become an ineffective descriptor on campus, especially for those who have served the University greater than 10 years. Structural diversity, i.e., the degree to which various races and ethnicities are represented on campus, does not *yet* exist to a significant extent within the faculty, staff or student populations. The institutional expectation for its vision of diversity must be upgraded from the level of "tolerance" to one of "value"
- Vagueness of terms such as cultural competence and global awareness
- The turnover rate among the Black workforce population at Tarleton for 2006-08 is 28.3%, compared to 14.5% system-wide
- Lack of diversity in the civic community; Blacks represent 1.1% of the general population, Hispanics/Latina/o represent 11.6% of the general population and Whites make-up 85.6%.
- Diminished sense of belonging among those from underrepresented groups
- Campus climate is perceived by some as neither inclusive nor inviting for those in the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender populations
- Pockets of bigotry and racism exist on the campus

- Diversity is still perceived by some as a weakening force rather than a strength that has real educational value
- Numerous Tarleton traditions are grounded in a non-diverse institutional history or are exclusive

C. Suggested Institutional Responses to Challenges

The following suggestions for action represent efforts that could be implemented to confront the challenges listed above:

1. Provide a formal campus definition for terms such as “diversity” and “cultural competence”. The following may serve as reasonable starting points:
 - Diversity can be broadly defined to include all aspects of human difference, including but not limited to, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, social-economic status and status as a veteran (source: AASCU/NASULGC report)
 - Cultural competence refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures. Cultural competence comprises four components:
 - Awareness of one's own cultural worldview
 - Attitude towards cultural differences
 - Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
 - Cross-cultural skills
2. Creatively work within the “traditions” branding to more effectively appeal to a diverse population. For example, nearly half of the “cowboys” in Texas in the 19th century were either Hispanic or Black. The promotional image of 4 cowboys (2 white, 1 black, and 1 Hispanic), as opposed to a single white cowboy, would be historically accurate, while respecting our historical branding.
3. Incorporate diversity into faculty/staff orientations
4. Incorporate diversity into the freshman seminar and First Year Experience
5. Develop and incorporate a “diversity” website that, among other objectives, publicizes Tarleton’s faculty/staff/student organizations within minority populations
6. Examine Human Resource policies and procedures to assure fairness and equity for all. An example may be: To recruit female faculty, consideration may be given to modifying the probationary period for tenure in order to allow for maternity leave.
7. Consider waiving the delay period for health insurance for new faculty/staff hires.
8. Revisit and deliberately implement the recommendations of the task force that reviewed (circa 2003) hiring practices for faculty, toward the end of more effectively attracting a diverse faculty. An analogously thorough review should be conducted to explore opportunities to better recruit a diverse staff population.
9. The university should more intentionally strive to hire a diverse recruiting staff.
10. Consider and optimize the utilization of incentives (moving expenses, salaries, etc) to recruit a diverse faculty/staff.
11. Implementation of intentional efforts to build relationships, networks, and community among minority faculty and staff, and more generally, among new faculty and staff, would enhance efforts to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce.
12. A renewed commitment to the “grow-your-own” faculty program for retaining a diverse and skilled/educated workforce.

13. Support (recognition, budgetary resources, administrative backing) for those making significant contributions that effectively address the University's diversity goals
14. Enhanced University presence and advertising in metropolitan areas
15. Continued/enhanced support for study-abroad or study-away opportunities
16. Regularly organize campus forums and dialogues on diversity and global awareness issues which produce purposeful activity toward change
17. Strategic planning to leverage financial aid in more effectively attracting a diverse student body
18. Proactive development, driven by best practice principles, of accommodations (e.g., facilities, parking, website, etc) for those with disabilities
19. Proactive enhancement of support services, driven by best practice principles, for those with learning (and other) disabilities
20. Support for the development of co-curricular, curricular and extra-curricular experiences related to diversity, cultural competency and global awareness
21. Regularly offer diversity training/professional development
22. Performance review of supervisors/department heads should address the fostering of a diversity friendly work environment, especially for those having little or no management experience

DIVERSITY PLAN: REACHING THE NEXT LEVEL

The task force recommends the enactment of 5 initiatives seen as essential for Tarleton to achieve its strategic goals for diversity, inclusion and global awareness:

- I. Accountability and Leadership: Establish the Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- II. Diversity in the Curriculum: Implement the recommendations of the Provost's Diversity in the Curriculum Task Force
- III. Diversity and Student Engagement in the Classroom: Establish the Faculty Development program
- IV. Reflective Practice and Assessment: Actively engage in self-study at all levels and across the institution
- V. Shared Vision: Evaluate the charge for the Access, Equity and Diversity Committee

A description of a possible vision for each initiative follows.

I. Accountability and Leadership: Establish the Office of Diversity and Inclusion

The University must develop an Office of Diversity and Inclusion (OD&I) administered by the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO).

- The CDO should be an executive position reporting directly to the President. With such organizational positioning, the CDO would be empowered to move down and across the campus administrative structure, and would have at his/her disposal existing infrastructure and resources in all campus divisions (Academic Affairs, Student Life, Institutional Advancement and Finance & Administration) to effectively oversee and coordinate a comprehensive and integrated campus diversity effort.
- The CDO would have the responsibility to build concordance as the campus goes through the coordinated but challenging transformational process of incorporating diversity related initiatives throughout the campus. As a primary change agent/advocate, the CDO must communicate the key significance of diversity in Tarleton's pursuit of excellence in education and inclusion. Furthermore, the CDO must be intentional by prioritizing Tarleton's pursuit of inclusive excellence, facilitating the evolution and strengthening of the campus vision of diversity.
- The OD&I should be located within the Administration building.
- The OD&I should be afforded sufficient budgetary and personnel resources, together with necessary authorities of oversight, to effectively carry out the responsibilities of the position.
- Administrative structures should be examined and modified as necessary to ensure that the CDO is afforded lines of supervisory authority that allow for effective pursuit of the diversity mission.
- Responsibilities of the CDO should include (but not be limited to)*:
 - Developing and implementing an aggressive strategic plan
 - Membership on the President's Cabinet, affording the CDO opportunity for input on
 - master planning
 - budget planning

- campus/marketing and branding, including web services
 - policy making
- Presiding over an advisory council, the membership of which should include (but not be limited to):
 - Director of the Center for Diversity Initiatives
 - Dean of Enrollment Management
 - (Pending) Academic Affairs designee for Diversity in the Curriculum initiative
 - Affirmative Action officer
 - Director of International Academic Programs
 - Director of Disability Services
 - University Web Administrator
 - Director of Public Information
 - (Pending) Director of Faculty Development program
 - Chair of Access, Equity and Diversity committee
 - Human Resources Training Specialist
 - Member of the Strategic Enrollment Management Council, providing input on the development of the Strategic Enrollment Plan
- Oversight of institutional research related to diversity and inclusion, allowing for the analysis of the university effort to recruit and retain diverse faculty, staff, and student populations
- Assessment of educational outcomes of diversity, cultural competence, and global awareness
- Management of campus communications of institutional progress toward achieving diversity/inclusion goals
- Oversight of ongoing diversity education/training programs for faculty and staff
- Oversight of leadership/management training, with an emphasis on inclusive excellence, for all holding supervisory positions
- Membership in the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education
- Development and implementation of effective processes to recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff
- Support Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action compliance
- Monitor student recruitment and admission practices to ensure alignment with university diversity goals
- Coordination of efforts to cultivate an inclusive campus environment
- Supporting efforts to enhance curricular and co-curricular integration of diversity issues, cultural competence and global awareness
- Support special initiatives to facilitate inclusive excellence and diversity

***Special Note:** It should be noted here that responsibility may come in the form of 1) direct and accountable supervision for a given process, 2) budgetary/resource authority, and/or 3) signature/consent authority.

NOTE: The committee recognizes the challenges that will face one who holds the position of Chief Diversity Officer and proposes that special/priority consideration be given to candidates demonstrating the following qualities:

- 1) A demonstrated record of effective consensus building in higher education
- 2) Diplomacy and negotiation skills; effective conflict management skills
- 3) Knowledge and familiarity of best practices in strategic enrollment management
- 4) Substantive experience in strategic planning and assessment

II. Diversity in the Curriculum: Implement the recommendations of the Provost's Diversity in the Curriculum Task Force

The University should actively support and implement the recommendations of the Task Force for Diversity in the Curriculum. Diversity efforts proposed in this report will be successful only when curricular and co-curricular efforts work in concert. As such, the central importance of infusing diversity into curriculum and pedagogy cannot be overstated or overestimated. A curriculum and pedagogy that ubiquitously foster diversity/global awareness is pivotal to the success of the proposals put forth in this report. Students' education is superior when universities develop deliberate means for students engage meaningfully in out-of classroom interactions. Our proposed QEP, "Making it REAL" will be an excellent catalyst in this endeavor. Of equal importance is classroom content and pedagogy; however, we do not have a catalyst comparable to a QEP to compel us forward—except for the pending recommendations from the Provost's Task Force on Diversity in the Curriculum.

III. Diversity and Student Engagement in the Classroom: Establish the Faculty Development program

The University should renew its commitment to the professional development of its faculty by re-instituting a faculty development office with sufficient staffing and budgetary resources to:

- Provide and support instructional development activities that:
 - Equip and empower faculty to utilize effective pedagogies in creating a classroom environment that more effectively engages a growingly diverse student body
 - Orient new faculty to available resources and effective instructional pedagogies
 - Instruct faculty on the use of instructional technologies for face-to-face and distributed delivery of instruction
 - Support the integration of diversity/cultural/global studies and service learning into the curriculum
 - Inform faculty on methods of appropriately integrating diversity, cultural competence and global awareness into their curriculum
- Serve as a catalyst in building community among a growingly diverse faculty body through ongoing orientation and faculty engagement activities.

NOTE: The position description for the Director of the Faculty Development program should explicitly indicate the responsibility to provide diversity-related training/education for faculty, as directed by the CDO.

IV. Reflective Practice and Assessment: Actively engage in self-study at all levels and across the institution

Changes recommended in this report will invariably affect the status quo. As such, deliberate and proactive efforts and resources must be put in place to assist the community in managing, navigating and contextualizing the ensuing feelings and reactions emanating from these efforts. It is also vital that ongoing dialogue within units be developed to assist in the systematic incorporation of these changes/recommendations. As such, the university must engage in directed dialogue and reflection to: 1) assess the impact of past/recent initiatives on the campus climate; 2) garner some insight into direction for near and mid-term efforts; and 3) make informed decisions on organization and infrastructure that are inherent in the implementation of the recommendations of this committee. Available resources for such reflection and assessment include:

- Hubbard, Edward E., “The Diversity Scorecard: Evaluating the Impact of Diversity on Organizational Performance”, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003
- Williams, D. and Wade-Golden, Katrina C., “The Chief Diversity Officer: A Primer for College and University Presidents”, American Council on Education, 2008
- AASCU/NASULGC Joint Task Force Report, “Now is the Time: Meeting the Challenge for a Diverse Academy”, NASULGC, 2007

V. **Shared Vision: Evaluate the charge for the Access, Equity and Diversity Committee**

The role and purpose of the committee must be re-evaluated and, if necessary, redefined so as to effectively support the office of the CDO. Given the function of the Advisory council (see **Accountability and Leadership: Establishing the Office of Diversity and Inclusion** above), the resolution of this committee would be advisable.

DIVERSITY PLAN: OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

In developing this proposal, the task force remained ever-mindful of the larger context within which the diversity plan must reside. The matrix below details the alignment of the proposed initiatives with Tarleton's Strategic Goals.

Strategic Goals	Initiatives				
	I	II	III	IV	V
Excel in Scholarship, Teaching and Learning					
Excellence in Scholarship, Teaching and Learning					
Provide the administrative vision and support needed to foster an environment that will encourage innovation in teaching, learning, scholarship, research and program development	X		X		
Develop state and nationally recognized academic programs and selected doctoral programs					
Provide rigorous academic programs and employ effective pedagogies and research to actively engage students and enhance student learning			X		
Create living and learning experiences that support the achievement of student success	X	X		X	
Educational Technology					
Commit to a robust collaborative technological environment in pursuit of the university's mission of teaching, scholarship and research			X		
Align student knowledge of technology with the requirements of their disciplines and career goals					
Expand Our Horizons					
Access, Diversity and Inclusion					
Utilize innovative delivery methodologies to maximize nationwide access to Tarleton State University programs					
Develop the capacities, procedures, and efficiencies to enable continued enrollment growth and expand distance programs while maintaining student experiences of the highest quality					X
Work aggressively with K-12 partners to promote participation in higher education					
Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse student body, faculty, and staff	X	X	X	X	X
Integrate cultural competence across the curriculum	X	X	X		
Develop a living-learning environment of meaningful interaction among the Tarleton diverse citizenry	X			X	
Foster supportive and safe learning environments for all students, faculty, and staff			X	X	X
Build community at regional, national, and international levels					
Encourage Leadership, Service and Student Success					
Leadership Development					
Promote student, alumni, faculty, and staff participation in leadership development and service opportunities					
Recognize and reward exemplary leadership and service to the university and the extended community					
Student Services and Campus Life					
Create opportunities for students to learn and develop socially and academically	X	X	X	X	
Foster values that support diversity, leadership development, community service, and civic responsibility of students	X	X	X	X	
Enhance the quality of student life and learning experience by increasing participation in campus organizations, activities, and programs	X	X	X	X	

Extend Our Reach						
Outreach and Off-Campus Initiatives						
Extend services through development of off-campus, on-line, continuing education, and community education learning opportunities				X		
Develop strategic partnerships with schools, community colleges, businesses, and other enterprises that facilitate the extension of learning						
Maximize the use of faculty, staff, and facilities to increase awareness and goodwill in the larger community						
Institutional Advancement						
Develop and implement a comprehensive promotional plan to increase and shape public awareness of Tarleton		X				
Expand services and opportunities to Tarleton alumni and visitors						
Secure ongoing capital acquisition and external funding of programs and services		X				
*						
Personnel and Resources						
Promote greater levels of professional and personal growth to encourage higher levels of thinking and interactions among the university constituencies		X	X	X	X	
Increase accountability and responsibility through effective assessment and management of personnel, resources, processes, and risks		X	X			
Provide and maintain the highest levels of safety and security						
Promote the greatest possible opportunity for Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) participation in the procurement of goods and services for the university						
Insure that current facilities are maintained through remodeling/updating						
Construct new facilities and acquire land as needed to accommodate future growth and needs						