

Diversity Task Force College of Education

2004

The Diversity Task Force was established by Dean Miller in October, 2003. Members include:

Maria Asplund	Elementary and Early Childhood
Gwen Berry	Special Populations
Darrol Bussler	K-12 and Secondary Programs
Julie Carlson	Educational Leadership
Jacqueline Lewis	Counseling and Student Personnel
Pat O'Sullivan	Military Science

Charge

Develop goal statements to frame the College of Education's (COE) work with five-year outcomes to guide planning, assessing, and understanding of work.

Framework for Direction

The framework for direction is grounded in (1) Minnesota State University's definition of diversity, (2) the charge given to the University Task Force on Diversity, (3) the Conceptual Framework for the College of Education, (4) College of Education Goal Statement on Diversity, and (5) NCATE Diversity Standard #4.

- **Minnesota State University, Mankato Definition of Diversity**
Minnesota State University Mankato embraces diversity as an integral part of its mission to create a community where everyone learns to live effectively in a pluralistic world.

Diversity emphasizes understanding and acting to lessen the individual, institutional and societal dynamics of oppression based on race, gender, ethnic and national origin, class, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation.
- **Minnesota State University, Mankato Diversity Task Force Charge**
Develop a comprehensive institution-wide diversity plan. The plan will identify and implement strategies for searching, hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and staff and for recruiting and retaining students of diverse backgrounds. In developing a diversity plan, the task force will review and assess existing plans for diversity at MSU. Unit directors and administrators providing diversity-related services and programs may be asked to present draft plans to the task force for discussion and recommendations. As part of their charge, the task force may make recommendations to accept an existing plan, modify the plan, request and/or develop and adopt an entirely new plan.
- **College of Education Conceptual Framework**
The Professional Education Unit seeks to develop educators who act according to beliefs grounded in a vision of learning communities . . . These educators value forming and working in broad-based, diverse learning communities. . . They guide and nurture learners to live in a diverse and open society.
- **College of Education Goal Statement: Diversity**
The College of Education will create a process to study issues of diversity and make recommendations regarding professional development, curriculum adequacy, pedagogical practice, clinical field experience components and rubrics, recruitment and retention of faculty, and recruitment and retention of students.

- **NCATE Diversity Standard #4: Diversity**
The unit designs, implements, and evaluates curriculum and experiences for candidates to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn. These experiences include working with diverse higher education and school faculty, diverse candidates, and diverse students in P-12 schools.

Assumptions

The population of students, faculty, staff and administrators at the University should be representative of the population the College's graduates serve—in the region, state, nation and beyond.

- The work of all diversity is connected.
- Diversity is a state of mind, heart and behavior.
- Schools in the immediate service area of Minnesota State University, such as Faribault, Madelia and St. James, need the support of the University to meet the challenges they face in dealing with racism in school and community.

Focus and Rationale

The Task Force recognizes a broad definition of diversity, (i.e., the eight societal groups) experiencing oppression in United States Culture: race, gender, ethnic and national origin, class, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation. However, the focus of the Task Force's recommendations is on race. The rationale is based on the following:

- **Dean's Direction**
I would like to suggest that because of a lack of awareness and understanding as a predominantly white organization and society, and because the work regarding all of diversity is connected, we should begin our work focusing intensively and energetically on race.
- **NACTE**
While NACTE does recognize diversity in a broad sense, an emphasis on race is evident. For accreditation purposes, the Unit must demonstrate that graduates have demonstrated ability to work with diverse populations, specifically, with diversity in race and ethnicity.

And finally, since the Task Force believes that the work regarding all of diversity is connected, it believes that more progress can be achieved if work begins with a singular focus, rather than an attempt to address issues relating to all eight societal groups simultaneously.
