



West Chester University Multicultural Faculty Report:

Recommendations from the Second Annual Multicultural Retreat

Final Report

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West Chester University Multicultural Faculty Report

On March 18, 2005, multicultural faculty met at the Concordville Hotel and Conference Center to discuss issues pertaining to the recruitment and retention of multicultural faculty at West Chester University (see **Appendix 1** for participation list). These issues are of vital importance since they address two of the transformational goals as defined by West Chester University's Plan for Excellence:

- West Chester University will strengthen its commitment to pluralism, access, equity, and a supportive campus climate for a diverse community of students, staff, faculty, and administrators.
- West Chester University will increase its investment in the continued development of the skills and knowledge of its faculty, staff, and administrators.

This report summarizes several recommendations that were developed from the retreat, which we believe will help the university meet its transformational goals of demonstrating a commitment to diversity and the development of its faculty. Therefore, we are submitting this report to the Offices of the President, Provost, and Social Equity.

The following list is an executive summary of the recommendations that were created at this retreat. **NOTE:** *Although these ideas were proposed by multicultural faculty, we believe many of the recommendations will benefit all faculty members at West Chester University.*

Executive Summary

TENURE AND PROMOTION

- Provide interviews with the Deans

In response to last year's report, the Cabinet supported the recommendation of allowing all faculty members to be interviewed by his/her Dean before the Dean completes his report for tenure and/or promotion. We recommend that the President initiate a discussion with the Provost and Deans in order to achieve this goal.

- Investigate faculty of color barriers for promotion to full professor

The faculty promotion data (see **Appendix 2**) highlights the disparity between faculty of color and rest of the general faculty in regards to promotion from associate to full professor. The data indicates that only 37% of faculty of color who applied for

promotion to full professor were successful in being promoted (in other words, only 3 out of 48 individuals who have been promoted to full professor over the past five years have been a person of color). As compared to the general faculty, 85% of individuals who applied for promotion to full professor were successful.

We recommend that the Provost and Deans' Council investigate the disparity in the promotion of faculty of color to full professor. Upon the completion of this investigation, the findings, and remedies should be made accessible to faculty.

- Recognize the importance of service

During the session with the Deans, the Deans recognized that faculty of color are often in a “double-bind” in regards to service. On the one hand, faculty of color are needed to serve to diversify various committees, yet service is not as valued as scholarship or teaching in tenure and promotion decisions. Furthermore, service can overload faculty of color. We recommend that individuals who demonstrate excellent service to the University not be penalized when being considered for tenure and promotion.

GRANTS

The following recommendations from the first retreat were supported by the Cabinet:

- Create a grant information fact sheet.

We propose that a grant information fact sheet (that would include the name, type of grant, guidelines, and due dates) be distributed at the beginning of the year. Too often, when grants are announced faculty members do not have enough time to complete them.

- Evaluate the submission and awarding of internal grants.

We recommend an evaluation of the submission and awarding of internal grants (such as Faculty Development grants, CASSDA, etc.) over the past five years. This evaluation should identify how successful multicultural faculty members have been in acquiring grants.

- Create additional opportunities to acquire grants.

We propose the university create additional opportunities for multicultural faculty to acquire grants. We propose more creative grants that address “non traditional” scholarship, travel, mentoring of students of color, etc.

We support the Cabinet's position and ask the Grants Office and the Provost to work on completing these recommendations. Please let the planning committee know how we can help to achieve these recommendations.

CULTURE

The following recommendations are proposed to improve the organizational culture and create a more supportive environment on campus:

- Create a formal structure for mentoring.

The university needs to create and fund a mentoring system. Currently, Dr. Laurie Hyers and Dr. Timothy Brown are conducting a survey to determine the types of formal and informal mentoring that occur on campus and to what extent they occur. We recommend that the university support the recommendations that will be developed from the mentoring survey. Preliminary results indicate that faculty would welcome advice and knowledge about formal and informal structures such as:

- the expectations for tenure and promotion
- teaching preparation and strategies
- handling student issues
- service

- Encourage departments to diversify its committees

It is very difficult to change a culture, when the same individuals in a department serve on various committees (such as tenure and promotion, recruitment). Faculty of color are often out voted or muted when it comes to department decisions. Furthermore, due to the composition of a department, it is difficult to gain power for change. We recommend the President, Provost, and Deans be more willing to discuss with department chairs the need for diversifying these important committees.

- Create a faculty hall on campus

This idea revives a recommendation that was made last year for a faculty club on campus. Given the cabinet's response, we believe that if not a faculty club, a faculty hall is needed on campus. A faculty hall would provide the necessary space and multi-purpose rooms that can be used for:

- speaker receptions
- interviewing candidates on campus (lunch, meeting time with faculty)
- department meetings
- department events (such as colloquiums, guest speakers)
- informal/formal mentoring
- open house

As the university moves forward with its building plans for Swope and Mitchell Halls, consideration should be given to at least having a floor with multi-purpose rooms available as a faculty hall. Currently, space is limited on campus and Sykes is often "booked" well in advance with events. A faculty hall would provide necessary space for faculty events.

Furthermore, there is no “center” on campus for administration, faculty, and staff to develop relationships. A faculty hall would make for a more collegial atmosphere on campus. It would also provide an opportunity for formal and informal mentoring to take place.

STUDENTS

The final session of the retreat addressed issues affecting students of color (see **Appendix 3**). Our recommendations include:

- Improve the status of undeclared students

Upon entrance to WCU, students are told that if they are undeclared they have time to select a major once on campus. However, due to many majors being capped, students are locked out of many majors (such as Nursing). Undeclared students on campus have a harder time getting into a major than students who are accepted into a major. We recommend the university increase the number of open spaces for undeclared students to be accepted into a major

- Investigate pre-major problems for students of color

The university needs to investigate whether these pre-major problems affect students of color more disproportionately. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many students of color are locked out of majors so they choose liberal studies or professional studies.

- Waive fees for economically disadvantaged students

WCU is up against a lot of competition for students of color. Other institutions offer financial incentives (scholarships) for students of color to enroll. One small financial incentive would be to waive application fees for economically disadvantaged students.



Appendix 1

West Chester University Multicultural Faculty Retreat

The Concordville Hotel and Conference Center
Friday, March 18, 2005

Participants

Mahrukh Azam	Chemistry	Sunita Nayar Mayor	English
Chris Awuyah	English	Greg Riley	Applied Music
Marshall Becker	Anthropology	Michael Rodriquez	Political Science
Anita Foeman	Communication	Margaret Ottley	Kinesiology
Isabel Glasner	Foreign Languages	Ana Sanchez	Foreign Languages
Yoko Hashimoto-Sinclair	Theater and Dance	April Smith	Pre-Major Advising
Lauri Hyers	Psychology	Jim Trotman	English
Niki Javidani	Human Resources	Intae Yoon	Social Work
Jim Jones	History		

Invited Guests

Tim Blair	Dean, College of the Visual and Performing Arts
Matt Bricketto	Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students
Richeleen Dashield	Office of Social Equity
Fiorentino, Chris	Dean, College of Education
Angel Harper-Jackson	Admissions
Tammy Hillard-Thompson	Resident Director
Angela Howard	Admissions
Charles Hurt	Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Skip Hutson	Office of Multicultural Affairs
Jennie Skerl	Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Planning Committee

Tim Brown	Communication
Idna Corbett	Education Development
Celia Esplugas	Foreign Languages
Linda Huff	English
Tammy James	Health
Herb Lee	Educational Development
Ralph Rodriguez	Management
Bhim Sandhu	Political Science
LaTonya Thames Leonard	History



Appendix 2
West Chester University
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Faculty Promotion Data (Source: Provost Office Records)			
	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor
2000			
Total applied	0	19	13
Total approved	0	16	9
Women applied	0	8	6
Women approved	0	6	5
Persons of Color applied	0	3	0
Persons of Color approved	0	2	0
2001			
Total applied	0	20	19
Total approved	0	14	14
Women applied	0	8	9
Women approved	0	5	6
Persons of Color applied	0	1	3
Persons of Color approved	0	1	1
2002			
Total applied	1	9	7
Total approved	1	8	4
Women applied	1	6	2
Women approved	1	5	1
Persons of Color applied	1	1	1
Persons of Color approved	1	1	1
2003			
Total applied	1	20	12
Total approved	1	17	7
Women applied	0	14	7
Women approved	0	11	6
Persons of Color applied	0	3	3
Persons of Color approved	0	3	2
2004			
Total applied	0	22	18
Total approved	0	20	14
Women applied	0	13	11
Women approved	0	12	9
Persons of Color applied	0	1	1
Persons of Color approved	0	1	0



Appendix 3

West Chester University Multicultural Faculty Retreat

Observations of Students of Color
Prepared by Tammy Hilliard-Thompson
Resident Director, Schmidt Hall

I have been a Resident Director at this university for five academic years. The first three years were in McCarthy Hall (all females) and the last two years in Schmidt Hall (co-ed). The following have been my observations from a residential, judicial, advisory and in some cases academic standpoint of the students I have encountered:

Strengths:

- There is more interest and willingness to get involved with university organizations and activities if personal contact (one-to-one) is made early when students arrive on campus. There tends to be a high correlation between involvement in campus organizations and academic success for students of color.
- The majority of students who are student leaders such as RAs, DAs, Executive Board Members for organizations, athletes, mentors seem to perform better in academics when they associate themselves with groups that have common positive goals. They tend to share stories of achievements as well as failures with those with whom they have made a connection.
- Those students who have made a commitment to academics and have a declared major tend to be confident enough to ask for academic help when needed. They feel comfortable and tend to use faculty's office hours, the Career Development Center, Tutors...etc.
- Many are self-reliant financially and able to assist with or pay for their college expenses. This shows a dedication to wanting to succeed in graduating from college.

Weaknesses (These may not be weaknesses but areas of concerns):

- Some students lack the skills in being proactive and assertive in stating and asking for what they need to succeed. Some students use aggressive and inappropriate behavior as a means to get their needs met or when they are frustrated at what they perceive to be a lack of progress (personally, academically...). In many cases their "back home" culture is the norm for them, which may not be the norm for the university environment.
- Being able to adapt and "fit in" to a predominately Caucasian student body on campus (This is not a weakness but is an issue for many students of color at the university.). For some it is very difficult to break out of homogeneous groups on campus and venture into other student groups, clubs, and organizations. Culture shock is very real for many students of color. This is even more visible in the class room. The lack of more of those "individuals who look like me" may be intimidating and uncomfortable for some which can in some cases discourage students of color from making attending class a priority.

- Peer pressure is a huge reality. Some of the students of color find it difficult to remain “real” on campus and “back home.” In some cases they are dealing with two different cultures and some students reported finding it difficult to go home and not hang with the “old crew” which may have been negative influences. In other cases, some feel the guilt of being reminded that they think they are “better” than others from back home. Here are a few concerns that students have voiced in judicial settings
 1. Some students have expressed that it is more comfortable for them to attend a club/organization meeting where there are similar people and interests than attend class where there are few people of color. Therefore, the organization becomes the priority and not classes.
 2. Some have expressed during judicial meetings that they went along with the crowd rather than just leave the incident or voice to others that what they were doing was wrong. They stayed during the incident even when things escalated rather than be perceived as a “snitch or someone who was afraid.” Students have faced severe consequences from the university rather than just leave. This can also cause stress which can take away from academic concentration.
 3. Pregnancy is an issue which can definitely affect academics as some students do not take the necessary precautions.
- Having the confidence and courage to inform a professor when “put on the spot” in class that “I do not represent the entire race or culture” is a concern for many. They are not comfortable making this statement the first couple of years in college to a professor who may call on them to answer a question for their race/culture. This type of setting can be uncomfortable.

Suggestions:

- The peer mentor program by OMA is an awesome opportunity for students of need to get involved. They may not think they need to get involved but a professor, advisor, or staff member may see the need. Maybe university officials can be made aware of the program and can recommend students for the mentor program. In some cases such students with behavioral issues, confidence issues, assertiveness issues which all may lead to academic failures can be recommended for the program.
- Skip Hutson, Kendrick Mickens, Dr, Bricketto, Marion McKinney, Phil Tripp and myself worked on a project called the URMAP program a couple of years ago. I thought it was an excellent idea, but it did not last very long. I would like to see it revived. I think it had great potential to assist with academic, personal and para-professional success. It is an opportunity to make another link with faculty and other divisions to get involved in the program. The program offered workshops, programs and discussions on topics such as ethics, values, morals, and not giving into peer pressure, interviewing skills and proper table etiquette, study skills and techniques, being an advocate for yourself and asking for what you need.

- There are a series of programs that occur now such as Academic Success Skills (Dr. Gadaletto), SMART (Richard Czyzyk, GA), Student Potential Seminar (Dr. Napeirkowski), where a student can attend a 4 week work shop (2 hours every Tuesday) and take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator as well as have discussion on a student's interest, skills, dreams, career plans, study skills... So far it has been successful in the residence halls. Maybe it could be advertised in the academic area as well to increase student participation in these programs. It would help if professors could offer extra credit for completing the programs.
- It has always been my opinions that students need to have workshops, programs, and discussions as soon as they enter college on topics such as peer pressure and how to make the right decisions, morals and values--what are yours? Do you know what you stand for? Being proactive and advocating for yourself; You are no longer home and anything does not go here at the university; civility, time management, and study skills. Many are not prepared for what college is going to be like and all of the things that students need to do on their own to be successful. I can relate as I was one of these students. Some are also first generation college students which can make it difficult.
- Personal issues and other things going on back home take up much of our students' time. Living dual lives can be extremely taxing on a student's well-being and make it difficult to concentrate on academics. Much of my time as an RD is spent helping students understand what all of their options are. Some issues are severe such as pregnancy, STDs, sexual assault, lack of financial support, death of a parent, and physically abusive relationships that students are trying to cope with first which can make academics not a high priority. The flip-side is sometimes academics are an outlet, but the stress of the personal issue still remains.