

**Task Force on Diversity**  
**First Year Report**

July 5, 2005

# Task Force on Diversity First Year Report

## Executive Summary

Chancellor Thomas F. George initiated the Task Force on Diversity, September 2004. The task force is representative of the University community and chaired by Malaika Horne, PhD.

The task force focused on structural impediments; campus diversity and interactions (climate), which are inextricably connected. Materials, presentations, discussions and individual meetings were very useful in exploring/analyzing the issue. The approach is to have initial recommendations include short-term actions and broad recommendations as we continue to explore enhancing diversity at UMSL.

Below are recommendations for first year of work:

1. Reinforce educational benefits of diversity to students, faculty, staff and others, including external stakeholders.
2. Commit resources to diversity efforts.
3. Put commitment to diversity in appropriate University plans and materials.
4. Encourage cultural groups to raise awareness about diversity
5. Increase awareness of UMSL among people of color in the St. Louis region.
6. Increase multicultural presentations.
7. Emphasize data driven decisions and actions.
8. Address possible pay inequity.
9. Better coordinate diversity activities

## Background

The University of Missouri - St. Louis is considered one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse campuses in the state, yet it continues to experience uneven progress toward having a more multicultural campus environment.

Toward this end, Chancellor Thomas F. George established The Task Force on Diversity in September 2004. Chancellor George requested Malaika Horne, PhD., director of the Executive Leadership Institute/College of Business Administration, to be chair. The task force would like to thank Chancellor George for his commitment to this crucial area. Moreover, task force members are to be commended for taking time from their busy schedules to contribute to this endeavor. (see list of task force members in addendum)

The first meeting was convened September 23, 2004 with Chancellor George attending. The chancellor gave a charge of wide discretion, that is, the task force could be exploratory in nature. He said it would be decided later whether to formalize it. Hence, the first year of meetings was mainly exploratory.

The task force met monthly, starting September 23, 2004. Its last meeting was May 13, 2005. It will reconvene September 9, 2005. A committee will meet over the summer.

## Task Force Comprised of Multicultural Members

This is a multicultural task force with four ethnic groups represented: White, Black, Latino and Asian (or Asian American). It is representative of the university community, comprised of faculty, staff, students and a UMSL alumnus. There are varied levels of knowledge and experience among participants around diversity. Thus getting somewhat on the "same page" was important. The chair met with most of the members individually and discussed in-depth diversity concepts and how we might approach the work.

Monthly meetings further fortified an *apperceptive mass*, that is, the group learned and grew together in its views about diversity, notwithstanding a healthy respect for different points of view. The high level interest among task force members as well as

their active participation and input are indicative of what can occur when there is strong commitment and appreciation of the task.

### Approach

After much discussions and reading of various materials on the subject, e.g., *Does Diversity Make a Difference?* - American Council on Education (ACE) and American Association of University Professors (AAUP), members decided to examine diversity in the following ways:

- structural impediments
- campus diversity
- interactions (climate)

### Definitions

Structural Impediments: institutionalized barriers imbedded in the system that perpetuate discrimination against people of color and other culturally different groups.

Diversity: the examination and eradication (dismantling) of ethnocentrism (superiority). At the same time, conserving and appreciating culture as well as promoting members of different cultural groups to interact and compete without impediments.

Campus Climate<sup>1</sup>: <sup>1</sup>behaviors within a workplace or learning environment, ranging from subtle to cumulative to dramatic, that can influence whether an individual feels personally safe, listened to, valued and treated fairly and respectfully.

### Presentations by UMSL Personnel

- Deborah Burriss, director of OEO (Office of Equal Opportunity) - (Diversity at UMSL)

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<sup>1</sup> Report on the Task Force on Women, Harvard University, May 2005

- Curt Coonrod, vice provost for Student Affairs, Orinthia Montague, director of Student Life (Programs Student Promoting Diversity),
- Provost Glen Cope & Dr. Larry Westermeyer -- Institutional Research (Pay Equity)
- Dr. Judith Walker de Felix, dean of the Graduate School (Recruiting Graduate Students of Color),
- Gwen Deloach-Packnet, director of Multicultural Relations (activities/programs)
- Chancellor George (UMSL Mission/Vision)
- Jessica McConnell and Jordan Steffen (Recruiting and Retaining Hispanic Students)

Presentation to Task Force by External Group

Brighton Advertising - Brighton handles the advertising for the campus

Conference Attended

*Whiteness - Some Critical Perspectives:* attended by Deborah Henry, Malaika Horne, M.K. Stallings and discussed at the next task force meeting. Conference held at Washington University Law School 10/29/04.

Visit to SIUE

A task force committee met June 10 at 1:30 PM with Dr. Rudy Wilson, vice provost for Social and Cultural Diversity at SIUE to learn about this program. The committee also observed a class on Inter-racial Communications. Malaika Horne, Deborah Henry and Gwen Deloach-Packnet attended. Other university visits are planned

Demographics - Student Population by Race FY 2003<sup>2</sup>

White, non-Hispanic	72 %
Black, non-Hispanic	13.6%
Hispanic	1.4%

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<sup>2</sup> University of Missouri – St. Louis, Workforce Profile, 11/1/2004

Asian/Pacific Islander American	3.0%
Indian/Alaska Native	.04%
Non-resident alien	3.6%
Race/ethnicity unknown	6.0%

Demographics - Faculty

White, non-Hispanic	80.5% %
Black, non-Hispanic	9.8%
Hispanic	1.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander American	4.0%
Indian/Alaska Native	.04%
Non-resident alien	4.0%
Race/ethnicity unknown	.1%

Demographics - Staff

White, non-Hispanic	69.4%
Black, non-Hispanic	26.2%
Hispanic	2.1%
Asian/Pacific Islander American	1.3%
Indian/Alaska Native	.02%
Non-resident alien	1.0%
Race/ethnicity unknown	.7%

Recommendations

Introduction

**Examining diversity at UMSL was addressed in three main areas: structural impediments, campus diversity, and interactions (climate) -- much of which are inextricably connected. Materials, presentations, discussions and individual meetings were very useful in exploring/analyzing the issue.**

In order to increase diversity, a systemic and structural investigation ought to be made, including examining the underlying or fundamental causes that pose as barriers to a more multicultural campus, including examining campus climate or interactions.

The task force decided to have their first year of initial recommendations aimed at more short-term actions as well as broader considerations as we spent a good deal of time exploring the elements of diversity on campus. As to be expected, this is a complex and potentially unwieldy matter, hence, continuing to shape an approach will be important.

The long-term goal is to recommend *routinizing* and institutionalizing processes (activities) so they will become part of the fabric of the campus culture and policies e.g., melding new diversity policies into existing programs and if needed -- recommending establishing new activities (or new programs) that could be more effective in enhancing diversity.

## Task Force on Diversity Recommendations

### 1. Diversity is an Educational Benefit

**Reinforce educational benefits**

Diversity enhances the educational

experiences for all students, regardless of ethnicity. As a premier public urban university, we ought to expose students to diverse groups, encourage them to be open to different perspectives and help them to adapt and be successful in multicultural environments.

*In Does Diversity Make a Difference? Three Research Studies on Diversity in College Classrooms* by ACE and AAUP (two university associations), it states, diversity "...generates more complex thinking ..." Furthermore, its benefits should be emphasized to faculty, staff and others, including external stakeholders.

The U.S. is a multicultural democracy and increasingly moving into an international system of globalization. Because engagement is such an important aspect of education, one question that should be paramount is: "What does it mean to be a citizen in a global context?" Moreover, through education, advocacy and interactions, the benefits of a diverse campus ought to be expressed and reinforced at every opportunity.

### 2. Resources are Important

**Commit Resources**

Where necessary and appropriate, resources



should be directed to areas that are needed to enhance and increase diversity or else it could be an exercise in futility and signal that the area may not be valued.

- Increase grants in diversity
  - Pursuing grant opportunities in diversity, e.g., Office of Student Life
  - Pursue funding to bring in a speaker on diversity each fall and spring via such units as Center for Teaching and Learning (see Recommendation #6)
    - Look for ways for various units on campus to share funding and activities, e.g., Center for Teaching and Learning, Office of Equal Opportunity, Office of Multicultural Relations etc.
- Center for Teaching and Learning, Office of Equal Opportunity, Office of Multicultural Relations, for example, require more support and resources committed to diversity efforts

### 3. Document Commitment

**Reflect commitment in University materials**

It is recommended that plans and materials at every possible level state a commitment to diversity, i.e., departments and programs ought to be multicultural, particularly increasing diversity among faculty, staff and students.

### 4. Affinity Groups Enhance a Culturally Pluralist Environment

**Encourage cultural groups to raise awareness**

Develop affinity groups of various ethnic/cultural groups (currently used in corporations) whereby members of these groups interact socially (including networking), work to help find capable applicants of color, physically disabled, etc.; review materials for publications, internal and external, to ensure cultural sensitivity and relevance

### 5. People of Color Ought to be More Aware of UMSL

**Increase awareness of UMSL among people of color**

Advertisement should increase targeting ethnics of color, particularly high school students (Appears to be little targeting of ethnics of color). This includes:

- Increase targeting of Latino student population, traditional and non-traditional. (It appears that this ethnic group on campus is under-represented in comparison to the region's demographics)

- The chancellor is already committed to increasing the African American student population from 14% to 16 percent
  - Advertising (targeting) African Americans should be expanded to meet this goal
- Radio - may be best way to advertise to students of color
- Percentage of late closures among applicants of color should be examined; it may be disproportionate and require more targeting
- IT & Graphics/Printing should collaborate on putting up photos more reflective of diversity (inside & outside the campus)
- Examine whether there is a common perception that the campus is in a bad neighborhood. If factual, it should be addressed.
- Brighton's strategy is to "put a human face" on the campus. The suggestion is rather than use one face in visuals, use multicultural gatherings (at least in some of the advertising)
- Continue to examine recruitment of Graduate Students of Color -- a project initiated by Dr. Judith Felix de Walker, Dean of the Graduate School
- Improve interactions of faculty and staff with students of color (Many

task force members perceived interactions as not as positive as it could be)

- Increase diversity in Office of Student Life
    - Diversity Coordinator for Student Life to be hired
6. Presentations Emphasizing a Multicultural Campus Better Informs Internal and External Stakeholders

#### **Increase Multicultural Presentations**

- Develop regular presentations offered to graduate teaching assistants, new faculty and veteran faculty
- Develop diversity presentations to students, e.g., Service Leadership workshop, Office of Student Life
- (See Recommendation #5 on advertising as an example of external presentations)

7. Data Driven Information Elucidates Barriers

#### **Emphasize data driven decisions and actions**

- Increase Data collection in areas relevant to enhancing diversity activities so that analysis and views are not based merely on anecdotes.

Utilize data to base information/decisions and actions.

- Demystify myths, misinformation and stereotypes by drawing from data, communicating more accurate information via advertising, public relations, speeches, informal conversations.
- Misinformation includes:
  - UMSL is in a bad neighborhood
  - UMSL students are all from blue collar backgrounds
    - The Public Relations firm could also address the aforementioned

#### 8. Pay Inequity can be a Structural Barrier

##### **Address Pay Inequity**

- Review possible pay inequities (where there is significance difference)
  - This is still being examined by the task force

#### 9. Diversity Programs and Activities Ought to be More Coordinated

##### **Coordinate Diversity Activities**

- A consortium of diversity groups ought to be established to discuss shared values, responsibilities,

possible collaborations, etc. for a more coordinated effort

- There ought to be a more systematic way of knowing about campus diversity programs
  - Developed Inventory of UMSL Diversity programs and activities (in progress) (see addendum)
  - Also, note that this is a rough impartial list as there seemed to be no obvious way to collect the information

**ADDENDUM**

## Task Force on Diversity Members

Jessie Bridges	Administrative Associate I	English/History
Ditto-Pernell, Marilyn	Director	Disability Access Services
Guitierrez, Leo	Supervisor	Parking Services
Harris, Alexander	Director/Externship	College of Optometry
Henry, Deborah	Director/Affiliate Asst. Prof.	Continuing Ed. & Outreach
Horne, Malaika	Director	Executive Leadership Institute/CoBA
Kiel, Debbie	Clinical Asst. Professor	College of Nursing
Leonard, Gloria	Director	Business Services
Okuchi-Guy, Alicia	Assistant Professor	Theater and Dance
Packnet-Deloach- Gwen	Director	Multi-Cultural Relations
Qu, Suyun	Student	International Business
Ray, Gerda	Associate Professor	History
Richardson, William	Associate Professor	Music
Silva, Eduardo	Professor	Political Science
Sobomein, Layi	Alumni Association	Member
Stallings, M.K.	Student	Sociology
Valesco, Murry	Supervisor	Graphic Services
Woodhouse, Shawn	Assistant Professor	Education Leadership and Policy
Xu, Zhi	Associate Professor	Chemistry

## UMSL Diversity Inventory

(Incomplete list & information)

Name of Program	Contact Person	Purpose
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1. African American Leadership Council
2. AISEC Suyun Qu, president Provides internships for students worldwide
3. Associate Black Collegians
4. Black Business Students Assn.
5. Black Data Processing Associates
6. Black Students Assn.
7. Black Student Nurses Assn. Kim Young-Shields, faculty sponsor
8. Bridge collegiate academic program Dr. Gladys Smith, director Pre-
9. Center of Human Origin & Cultural Diversity Dr. Jacqueline Lewis-Harris director Provides information on human origin & cultural diversity
10. Center for International Studies Dr. Joel Glassman, director Exchange Programs & Study Abroad
11. Diversity Retreat College of Education Dr. Carl Hoagland, chair Retain Students of Color
12. Diversity Roundtable Divita Skanel, chair Brings diverse organizations together
13. Office of Equal Opportunity Deborah Burris Increases the pool of candidates in searches - one component seeks to increase faculty of color
14. Helping Hand Mentoring Project
15. Multi-cultural Relations Gwen Deloach Packnet, director Cultural enrichment
16. National Association of Black Accountants
17. National Optometric Student Recruitment of under-Represented ethnic Minorities
18. National Society of Black

y Waiver

## Engineers

19. Pan-African Student Organization                      Orinthia Montague, director  
Student Life
20. Retention Committee chair                      Dr. Robert Harris -                      Retain Students of  
Color
21. Alpha Kappa Alpha
22. Alpha Phi Alpha
23. Delta Sigma Theta
24. Omega Psi Phi
25. Phi Beta Sigma
26. Sigma Gamma Rho
27. Zeta Phi Beta

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