

Muhlenberg College
Five-Year Diversity Strategic Plan
First Year Update, December 14, 2015

The Diversity Strategic Planning Committee (DSPC) identified six over-arching goals for the College's new diversity plan. Five of these were identified by the Committee members during their work together, and a sixth was added in response to suggestions from the community. Initiatives supporting these goals were also suggested by community members as well as members of the Committee. The Committee worked with relevant faculty, staff, and students to determine the one-time start-up costs of initiatives, and ongoing costs.

It is important to remember that the initiatives funded or otherwise included in this plan do not represent the universe of diversity initiatives and efforts at Muhlenberg, but new, incremental initiatives that will supplement existing efforts and resources.

Many of these initiatives support multiple goals. These interconnections will be indicated in the summary of goals and initiatives below.

Goal 1: Cultivate a campus community that is supportive of inclusion, justice and social equality

1.1 Institute on-line diversity training for all College employees.

2015: Four online diversity training modules were reviewed. The College contracted with Workplace Answers/Campus Answers for online diversity training; training will be rolled out in January 2016.

1.2 Install gender-neutral bathroom signage and develop a reference map of GNB locations on campus.

2015: Representatives from Plant Operations and Residence Life met with two students who served on the DSPC, the Director of Disability Services and the Director of Counseling to discuss appropriate signage. Gender-neutral bathroom signs have been installed in 17 locations on campus; those locations have been provided to Public Relations in order to produce a reference map.

1.3 Upgrade software and policies to make it easier for transgender students to change their names on IDs and in some College records.

2015: The Registrar investigated allowing students flexibility with the use of a variant first name. The creator of Capstone, John Wardenski, was approached and verified that it would not be difficult to use a "nickname" field currently in the system and rename it as a "Preferred Name" field. Working with other departments, the Registrar implemented the new option of a "Preferred Name" in our student information system in Fall 2015. The initiative was limited to students

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who were changing their name for gender reasons or because they used a middle name rather than their legal first name. Eleven students requested the addition of a Preferred Name, and 7 requests were granted; 4 of the students who requested a name did not fall within the parameters initially defined. Currently, the Registrar is conversing with various individuals and offices to determine whether we can broaden our parameters to include a nickname, such as Mike for Michael or Bill for William. If this is approved, the new parameters will be in place for Spring 2016.

- 1.4 Communicate gender-neutral housing policies for first-year students more effectively to ensure that all incoming students are aware of their options.

2015: The Office of Residential Services added a link to their website with information about gender neutral housing for upper class students, first year students, and transfer students.

<http://www.muhlenberg.edu/main/campuslife/resserv/genderneutralhousing/>

The Office of Residential Services worked with the Office of Information Technology to make changes to the first year student on-line preference form. It now includes information about gender neutral housing, how to contact the LGBT coordinator, and how to request special needs housing.

- 1.5 Include in every employee (faculty and staff) job description the expectation that employees will actively foster inclusion, justice, and social equity in their work; include assessment of personal efforts in these areas in annual performance appraisals.

2015: Language has been added to all job descriptions noting that all employees are expected to support Muhlenberg's commitment to function as a diverse, caring, inclusive community. Manager and Staff Associate annual performance appraisals address personal efforts in this regard. Advertisements state "Muhlenberg College is committed to recruiting and retaining outstanding faculty and staff from racial and ethnic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in higher education." Faculty ads also state: "Please make sure, in your application letter or separate document, to discuss how you will contribute to Muhlenberg's efforts to become a more diverse and inclusive community."

Goal 2: Actively recruit and retain a student body with increasing numbers of students from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups

- 2.1 Create the position of Assistant Director of Multicultural Life to support expanded programmatic initiatives related to diversity and multicultural life. (Also supports Goals 1 and 6)

2015: A search during the spring of 2015 was unsuccessful, but a second search at the end of the summer resulted in the hiring of Mark Smiley as the new Assistant Director for Multicultural Life, who came to Muhlenberg from Virginia Tech, where he was the Assistant Director of Multicultural Programs and Services.

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- 2.2 Expand the Emerging Leaders Program by adding a second cohort. (Also supports Goal 1)
2015: The Class of 2019 included two cohorts of Emerging Leaders for a total of 31 students. Two faculty members were invited to become FYS instructors, and both cohorts had a dedicated FYS. In addition, 3 staff mentors and 15 student peer mentors were chosen for each cohort.
- 2.3 Provide a limited number of stipends to support participation in MILA courses and Alternative Break programs by students otherwise unable to participate because of financial constraints. (Also supports Goal 1)
2015: In the Spring of 2015, thirteen students were awarded stipends of either \$1000 or \$1500 to defray the expense of MILA travel courses. These students studied in Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Italy and Greece. Each student submitted an application and the awards were made on the basis of demonstrated financial need. For Spring 2016, 27 students have been awarded stipends to defray the expense of MILA travel courses. A total of \$25,600 was awarded, whereby 22 students were each awarded \$1,000, three students received \$800 and two received \$600. These students will study in the following nations: Panama, Senegal, Costa Rica and Ireland. Each student submitted an application and the awards were made on the basis of demonstrated financial need.
- 2.4 Expand bilingual resources for the recruitment and support of international students
2015: Additional budget and staffing support allowed for more aggressive international recruitment this year, including two on-site recruitment trips to the Pacific Rim (China and Vietnam). International applications are up, and 11 international students have already committed via Early Decision. An *ad hoc* committee has been formed under the leadership of Dr. Chris Herrick to deal with support issues, ranging from initial arrival and pre-orientation program to meals during breaks to academic support and advising, surrounding the international students who are choosing to enroll at Muhlenberg. Fall 2015 international recruitment travel included China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Vietnam and Japan, as well as India. The Class of 2019 included 34 international students—29 from China, and one each from Italy, Japan, Jordan, Rwanda and Vietnam. ESL support has been expanded for international students, and the *ad hoc* International Student Committee continues to meet to deal with support issues for these students.
- 2.5 Provide one-time support for a “Voices Heard” initiative, engaging alumni from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups to define and develop events and programs that support, engage, welcome, and celebrate both students and alumni from these communities who may be feeling disenfranchised and disengaged.
2015: The Office of Alumni Relations along with a working committee comprised of representatives from admissions, communications and public relations, the

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Multicultural Center, Student Services and the Wescoe School, planned and executed "A Celebration of Diversity: Past, Present and Future" for over 50 alumni and students of color in October 2014. The response to the event was overwhelming positive and there was enthusiasm for continued opportunities to engage this population.

In February 2015, a survey was designed and emailed to all alumni asking them to self-identify their interest in receiving communications, invitations and information on events and programs focused on issues of diversity. To date the Office has received close to 400 responses. The Alumni Affairs Office had conversations with 10 survey respondents who all wished to be contacted after the survey to provide further context. These conversations provided helpful feedback in event ideas and formats, including incorporating meaningful alumni and student interaction, celebrating alumni achievements and multicultural efforts on campus, and a more nuanced understanding of multicultural alumni experiences.

An event tied to student programming for Queer Week to bring together LGBTQ students and alumni took place on March 16, 2015. The Office of Alumni Affairs partnered with the Multicultural Center and the LGBT Coordinator to bring to campus Darren Melchiorre '00, founder and director of the "So Gay, So What" campaign, for a photo shoot of interested students, staff and faculty. On that same day, the Alumni Affairs office partnered with relevant student groups on an LGBTQA student-alumni networking dinner held in the Red Door Cafe, after which all participants attended the Geena Rocero lecture focusing on trans* rights. Twenty-eight students, alumni and staff attended this event.

In the Fall of 2015, a similar event was repeated on campus for LGBTQA students and alumni. The speaker for the evening was Jay Maddock who also spoke on trans* rights.

Plans for a large-scale multicultural student and alumni event were postponed from Fall 2015 due to a paucity of available dates. The Alumni Affairs Office is working closely with the Director of Africana Studies and the Director and Assistant Director of the Multicultural Center to identify and plan around events already scheduled for Spring 2016. Relevant Center for Ethics events and regularly scheduled Multicultural events are being explored as options, as well as the formulation of a new event, or an event similar to the Fall 2014 Celebration of Diversity.

The Alumni Affairs Office also plans to collaborate with MTAC and SQuAd on an event around a Spring 2015 Speaker, tentatively Laverne Cox. Additionally, the Office looks to collaborate with Dany Guy '08, an alumnus identified by the aforementioned survey whose theater company, InterAct Theater in Philadelphia, has LGBT-themed productions planned for summer 2016.

Conversations are underway with a photographer to identify and document the life and work of alumni from historically underrepresented and marginalized groups. These works of photography would form the core of an exhibit that would

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initially be displayed in a prominent space on campus, such as Seegers Union, and then will ultimately reside in the Multicultural Center.

- 2.6 Provide one-time support for a partnership between the Wescoe School and the Office of Multicultural Life to create a mentoring program in which Wescoe School students and alumni who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups serve as life and career mentors for day students affiliated with Multicultural Life.

2015: Patrick Fligge and Natalie Hand (Office of Alumni Relations), Robin Riley-Casey (Multicultural Center) and Greg Scully (Wescoe School) met to begin work on creating a process and procedure for the mentoring program. A decision was made to focus on students who are part of the Emerging Leaders program at Muhlenberg as initial mentees. Alumni from both Wescoe (who will be identified by staff and faculty there) and Muhlenberg (who have either self-identified or who the Development staff will recommend) will serve as the pool of candidates for mentors.

Focus group conversations were held with multicultural students in Spring 2015 which led to a refocus for this partnership. The students felt that they already had strong and plentiful mentorship available to them on campus, but wanted more settings to meet and connect with multicultural alumni. A working group with representatives from the Wescoe School, Office of Multicultural Life, Alumni Affairs, Career Center and the Emerging Leaders program met to discuss and debrief this conversation during summer 2015. A plan for a Multicultural Business Etiquette dinner was formulated, with two pre-sessions with the Emerging Leaders four and two weeks in advance of the dinner, facilitated by the Director of the Career Center and Associate Director of Alumni/Student Connections. The Business Etiquette dinner was held on November 10. It included a final prep session for invited Emerging Leaders and other multicultural students, as well as an alumni networking reception. Both Wescoe alumni and traditional day-student alumni were invited to participate and 19 students and 26 alumni and guests attended.

- 2.7 Develop appropriate assessment protocols in cooperation with the Dean of Institutional Assessment and Academic Planning to assess recruitment, enrollment, and retention patterns.

2015: The Class of 2019 is comprised of 23% ethnic diversity, including 17.5% domestic diversity. We continue to track enrollment and retention patterns, and are in the process of disaggregating the recent HERI Senior Survey results to compare findings by subgroup. As part of the Middle States Self-Study, we conducted a focus group with diverse student representation to evaluate admissions materials.

- 2.8 Continue to pursue and expand partnerships with organizations that can help increase student diversity (e.g. Prep for Prep, TEAK, Schuler Scholars, Princeton PUPP, Philly Futures, etc.).

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2015: This had been happening prior to the Diversity Strategic Plan, and is being expanded and enlarged every year. The College has partnered for a number of years with such community based organizations as Prep For Prep, TEAK, NJ Seeds, Princeton PUPP, Schuler Scholars and others. A year ago, we joined the College Greenlight program, which connects us to over 400 community-based organizations across the country. We are now working with College Greenlight to develop a "top 40" list of CBO's to target for on-site recruitment and personalized cultivation. In addition, the admissions staff is working with individual high schools, such as Brooklyn Collaborative and North Star Academy (Newark, NJ), to develop relationships that result in multicultural application and enrollment growth.

The College continues to collaborate with the College Greenlight program, which now includes over 500 community-based organizations across the country. Relationships continue with Prep For Prep, TEAK, NJ Seeds, Princeton PUPP, Schuler Scholars, Say Yes to Education and others, as well as with a number of high schools which are "majority minority" and interested in forging relationships with small, private liberal arts colleges.

Goal 3: Actively recruit and retain more faculty and staff from those racial and ethnic groups that have had limited access to careers in higher education

3.1 Assess recruitment, hiring and retention patterns of candidates. Implement policies and training for search committee members to enhance recruitment of racially and ethnically diverse candidates.

2015: The vice president for HR and the dean of institutional assessment and planning met in early December 2015 to review the IPEDs faculty and staff data and to examine retention patterns.

The Provost's Office has established new expectations for faculty job ads. Applicants are now asked to address how they plan to contribute to Muhlenberg's efforts to become a more diverse and inclusive community. The ads also now include a link to the most recent update of the Diversity Strategic Plan.

The Provost's Office has researched consulting firms that specialize in training search teams in processes designed to build a racially and ethnically diverse candidate pool, to assure their fair treatment in the search process, and to attract outstanding candidates to the College. The College has identified a firm it would like to hire and is currently negotiating to contract their services for searches in the next academic year.

3.2 Continue to build a strong relationship with the Consortium for Faculty Diversity as a means of identifying and recruiting more diverse candidates for faculty openings.

2015: Of the four CFD Fellows appointed for the 2014-15 academic year, all attended the national CFD conference at Macalester College accompanied by CFD mentor Cathy

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Kim and Provost Ramsay. Two of the four were appointed to tenure track positions at Muhlenberg for 2015-2016. The third accepted a second-year CFD fellowship at Muhlenberg, and the fourth was offered a two-year fellowship at Muhlenberg, but declined in order to accept a tenure track position at another institution.

In October 2015, three members of the faculty and administration and one CFD Fellow attended the national CFD conference at Muhlenberg. Currently, one CFD search is underway for the 2016-17 academic year. Provost Ramsay continues to serve as a member of the national CFD Steering Committee.

Goal 4: Strengthen the depth and complexity of teaching and learning about diversity

4.1 Implement a Muhlenberg Intergroup Dialogue Program derived from the University of Michigan's model. (Also supports Goal 1)

2015: The Intergroup Dialog (IGR) planning team consists of over a dozen faculty and staff. The team engaged in a planning retreat on May 22. The three topics on the agenda for that retreat were: 1) discussion and decisions about foundational documents (mission, vision, values and goals) for the IGR program at Muhlenberg; 2) discussion and decisions about a 2015-16 IGR pilot program for students, faculty and staff; 3) discussion and decisions about a training program for those who will lead the IGR pilot program.

In June, the planning team for IGR met at a one day retreat to envision the shape of an Intergroup Dialogue program at Muhlenberg. In September, a group of 25 Muhlenberg faculty and staff attended a two-day training workshop in the appropriate facilitation skills.

The College then established a pilot program in Intergroup Dialogue. Two sections of a course titled Intergroup Dialogue are being offered in the Spring 2016 semester and both are fully enrolled. The course instructors will be Roberta Meek (Media and Communication and Africana Studies) and Marcie Lightwood (Institute for Jewish Christian Understanding); and Robin Riley-Casey (Multicultural Life) and Connie Wolf (Psychology). Course planning is underway. Associate Dean of Diversity Initiatives James Peck and Academic Engagement and Transitions Manager Jenna Azar are providing administrative support for this initiative.

4.2 Provide additional funding to expand Martin Luther King Week with interdisciplinary programming that deepens the engagement of the campus community with social justice issues. (Also supports Goal 1)

2015: The College celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. week 2015 with several events planned in conjunction with the Center for Ethics, the Office of Multicultural Life, Africana Studies, Student Activities, the Office of the Chaplain and the Black Student Association. This college-wide effort was led by Acting Director of Africana Studies Robert Meek and Director of Multicultural Life Robin Riley-Casey.

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The College is preparing for 2016 MLK week in collaboration with Africana Studies, the Black Student Association and Multicultural Life. The week of programming will include campus-wide student engagement, providing various sites for intragroup/intergroup dialogue about issues of race and social justice.

- 4.3 Provide one-time support for inclusive pedagogy programming through the Faculty Center for Teaching. (Also supports Goal 1)

2015: The Faculty Center for Teaching held a three hour workshop titled "Racial Considerations Inside and Outside the Classroom" in March 2015. Outside experts, Dr. Chayla Davison (University of Northern Colorado) and Dr. Frank Tuitt (University of Denver) led the workshop.

FCT also sponsored a program titled Examining Trigger Warnings in consultation with the Associate Dean for Diversity Initiatives in October 2015 and is collaborating with the Associate Dean to organize additional programs (including an extension of the discussion on trigger warnings) on inclusive pedagogy for the spring 2016 semester.

- 4.4 Provide one-time support for a three-phase program supporting faculty development and curricular development of academic programs addressing transnational, multicultural, and global subjects of social justice and equality. (Also supports Goal 1)

2015: The Stuart Hall group has convened two times in the Spring 2015 semester: one introductory meeting, and another meeting with Phi Beta Kappa speaker, Jeffrey Alexander. In both sessions, about 7-10 faculty were present. In the first session, two of Hall's works were discussed (see citations below) while in the second session, Alexander's work on "culture and sociology" were discussed (in tandem with cultural studies). There were another two sessions before the end of the semester, and the group focused on Hall's work on multiculturalism, hybridity, and race.

Some the key questions discussed included: "how to develop an inclusive approach to the concept of culture in research or teaching;" "how or where to do we take the lessons from Hall on identity-related work;" and "how do we theorize about the role of culture and its production."

Members of the group expect these readings and discussions to inform their teaching in terms of conceptual approaches (updating and renewing) and influencing how they go about "teaching topics/issues on race, multiculturalism" in a more global integrated fashion. The impact can be seen in terms of readings, topics of discussion in courses, assignments, course development.

Based on last spring's interdisciplinary learning group, as well as the fall semester's FCT-funded faculty reading group on "Critical Cosmopolitanism," there are plans to organize a follow-up series of discussions in Spring 2016, which will be specifically geared towards pedagogical application. In particular, faculty will be invited to 1) discuss one or two seminal pieces on Hall ("the question of cultural identity"); 2) discuss one or two recent works on critical cosmopolitanism, and 3) apply such

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frameworks to an existing syllabus or assignment for revision or extension towards global learning pedagogies.

Goal 5: Engage more deeply with the diverse communities of Allentown and the Lehigh Valley

- 5.1 Create a Muhlenberg-Allentown Promise Program that will annually provide at least one full-tuition scholarship for a qualified student from the Allentown School District High Schools (Allen, Dieruff, Roberto Clemente Charter) and Allentown Central Catholic High School. This program would be comparable to the College's current commitments to the Say Yes to Education Program, the Afghan Girls Fund, and the Open a Door Foundation. (also supports Goal 2)

2015: We are hopeful that we will have a candidate from the Allentown School District for this full-tuition scholarship program this year. We are planning an aggressive campaign to market this opportunity to students in the Allentown School District for the coming admissions cycle.

An applicant was identified from the Allentown School District who qualified for the full-tuition scholarship. The student was admitted, aided and enrolled. In total, 7 students were enrolled in the Class of 2019 from Allentown public schools, plus Allentown Central Catholic High School. For the 2015-16 admissions cycle, the application fee has been waived for all applicants from Allentown area high schools.

- 5.2 Create a supplier/vendor diversity policy.

2015: A Supplier Diversity Purchasing Policy has been created and will be part of the revised Purchasing Manual.

Goal 6: Assign responsibility for the measurement, assessment, and coordination of diversity initiatives

- 6.1 Create the position of Associate Dean for Diversity Initiatives to ensure that diversity initiatives and progress toward diversity goals are both coordinated and regularly assessed. (also supports Goals 1, 3, and 4,)

2015: Jim Peck, Professor of Theatre, has been appointed to a renewable two-year term as Associate Dean for Diversity Initiatives. Peck has been active and effective in multiple areas of his responsibility: 1) organizing with Jenna Azar the training, faculty, and courses for Intergroup Dialogue in Spring 2016; 2) creating ad language and hiring protocols to increase faculty diversity; 3) conferring about the design of the President's Diversity Advisory Council; 4) collaborating with the Director and Assistant Director of Multicultural Life, faculty, and students to shape campus discussions about racism, privilege, and inequities; 5) implementing

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multiple initiatives associated with the Mellon Foundation grant "Achieving Muhlenberg's Civic and Global Mission."

- 6.2 Provide one-time funding for a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of all college policies and processes to determine which are exclusionary, discriminatory, or supportive of unearned privilege, including: admissions and financial aid policies, housing policies, student health insurance requirements, campus transportation, hiring, vendor selection, etc. (Also supports Goal 1)

2015: The Vice President for Human Resources has consulted with a local alumnus and a Trustee in search of a consultant to review Muhlenberg's existing policies. Two hundred policies have been identified, although only fifteen to twenty of these policies will need to be reviewed for "best diversity practices." To date, no consultant has yet been identified.