



Columbia State
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Columbia State Community College
2008-10 Diversity Plan**

June 30, 2008

**Columbia State Community College
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Diversity Plan Background

Diversity Committee

Columbia State's Diversity Committee began laying the groundwork for the college's Diversity Plan in September 2007. Under the leadership of the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity, the seventeen member committee reviewed the college mission and strategic plan, Tennessee Board of Regents communications, best practices from other institutions, and other diversity related information.

In early 2008, the Assistant to the President, in coordination with the President, formed an expanded 40 member Diversity Plan Development Committee to prepare and implement a college-wide plan to increase awareness and encourage diversity across the entire college. The expanded committee ensured that faculty, staff, current students, alumni and community stakeholders were represented during the planning process. The committee met bi-weekly in January and February and weekly in March and April. It held additional meetings in May and June in order to submit the final plan by June 30, 2008.

The Diversity Committee formed six subcommittees to conduct research and prepare reports that would flow into the Diversity Plan. The Institutional Policies and Practices Subcommittee reviewed policies and practices to determine how they may aid or detract from diversity efforts. The Campus Climate Subcommittee reviewed faculty, staff and student attitudes to determine the need for diversity training and other initiatives. The Employment Subcommittee reviewed employee demographics to begin identifying underrepresented groups. The Enrollment Subcommittee reviewed student demographics to begin identifying underrepresented student groups. The Resources and Structures Subcommittee explored funding and structures devoted to enhancing diversity. The Past and Current Diversity Subcommittee researched diversity related programs and events.

The subcommittees presented their reports in late March 2008. Based on these reports, the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity refined and drafted a diversity definition and diversity statement. In addition, the Vice-President for Planning and Development developed draft goals, objectives, actions and outcomes. The Diversity Committee reviewed the draft plan and recommended changes where appropriate. The Assistant to the President presented the Diversity Plan to the President for review and approval in mid-April 2008 before submitting it to the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) on April 18. After submission of the plan to TBR on April 18, the plan was reviewed by the committee and revised as appropriate for final plan submission on June 30, 2008.

Policies, Plans and Practices

As the Diversity Committee initiated work on the Diversity Plan in September 2007 it considered the college's purpose statement, policies, plans and practices. Columbia State's mission statement, for example, refers to the importance of diversity to the

college's success. The mission includes the following statement: "The college encourages mutual respect in interactions among employees, students and communities it serves, provides services in safe and secure environments, and is committed to maintaining a climate that promotes diversity and access without regard to race, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status." Columbia State annually reviews how well it addresses its mission in its Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Report. In its deliberations the Diversity Committee considered the February 2007 IE report which stated that "as Tennessee enters the post-Geier era, recent judicial actions are causing the Tennessee Board of Regents to expand its interpretation of diversity and broaden the definition of minority students. In light of these changes, Columbia State will have to revisit its diversity goals, programs and services." As the Diversity Committee continues to revisit diversity goals, programs and services, it will focus on the need to identify and understand the access needs of underrepresented student groups.

TBR and Columbia State policies, plans and past actions provide a foundation for the Diversity Plan. As mentioned earlier, the Diversity Committee reviewed related policies, plans and actions in the early stages of the planning process to gain a better understanding of planning context, history and future directions. TBR Policy 5:01:02:00, for example, states that... "Diversity of students, faculty and staff is a crucial element of the educational process and reaffirms its commitment to enhancing education through affirmative action to increase diversity at all levels." One of four major goals in the TBR 2005-10 Strategic Plan is to "strategically provide access to higher education to an increasingly diverse population."

The Diversity Committee reviewed past plans and other documents during the planning process. Columbia State's 2005 Diversity Assessment and Plan, for example, outlined the college's efforts to redefine and articulate its commitment to diversity. These include Columbia State policy 01-00-00 that positioned the Office of Minority Affairs (later renamed the Office of Access and Diversity) with the President's office to "provide leadership in developing and implementing short and long-term strategies to recruit and retain ethnic minority faculty and staff and to recruit, retain and graduate ethnic minority students." In addition, Columbia State's 2005-10 Strategic Plan includes a goal to "help individuals and communities succeed in a changing economic and social environment by increasing access to higher education." This goal includes an objective and related benchmarks to "increase minority enrollment, with an emphasis on the recruitment and retention of African-American students." It is important to note that while Columbia State continues to address this objective, the Diversity Committee and Planning Council are discussing how to best expand access and diversity efforts to encompass a wider circle of underrepresented students.

2010-15 Strategic Plan

As the Diversity Committee developed the Diversity Plan, it kept in mind that the college, along with other TBR institutions, will begin developing its 2010-15 Strategic Plan in about 12-15 months. This consideration resulted in the Diversity Plan timeline being set for the 2008-10 period, with Diversity Plan goals, objectives and outcomes

flowing directly into the 2010-15 strategic planning process. By taking this approach, the Diversity Committee will ensure that diversity issues receive strong attention over the next two years and will be given prominence in the upcoming strategic planning process.

Diversity Definition and Statement

Definition of Diversity

Human diversity is variety in group presence and interactions. It includes, but is not limited to, culture, age, gender identity, color, ethnicity, religion, disability, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and national origin.

Statement on Diversity

Columbia State Community College understands the value that a diverse student body, faculty, staff, and administration bring to its educational environment, the communities it serves, and beyond. In promoting and celebrating diversity, the College pledges to value and respect the personal uniqueness and differences of everyone; attract and retain diverse faculty, staff, and students; challenge and reflect on stereotypes; and promote sensitivity and inclusion across our circle of influence.

Goals, Objectives, Outcomes, Actions

The Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity has responsibility for monitoring the Diversity Plan and ensuring that goals, objectives and outcomes are achieved. The Assistant to the President will work closely with the President, college-wide Diversity Committee, and appropriate departments to coordinate stated actions. In addition, the Assistant to the President will work closely with the Vice-President, Planning and Development and Planning Council to ensure that Diversity Plan outcomes flow into the 2010-15 strategic planning process and the resulting Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: Structure, Policies and Practices

Ensure that Columbia State's structure, policies and practices support its commitment to diversity.

Objective 1.1

Review proposed changes to Columbia State policies, procedures and structure to assess impact on diversity.

Outcomes

- Process will be in place by June 30, 2009 to review proposed changes to Columbia State policies and structure that could affect diversity.
- All proposed changes to policies and structure after June 30, 2009 that could affect diversity will be reviewed according to an established process.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to develop a college process that reviews all proposed changes to policies and structure for impact on diversity. The subcommittee will consist of faculty, staff and student representatives.
- Recommend review process to President.
- Work with Director, Institutional Research, to assess impact of Objective 1.1 actions on diversity as part of periodic institutional effectiveness, campus climate and/or student surveys.

Objective 1.2

Assess curriculum to determine level of diversity infusion and need for a diversity-related curriculum initiative in 2010-15 strategic plan.

Outcomes

- Curriculum will be assessed for level of diversity infusion and need for strategic initiative by June 30, 2009.

- Proposed initiative to infuse diversity in the curriculum will be presented to Planning Council by November 30, 2009 for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to review curriculum and survey faculty to assess level of diversity infusion and need for diversity-related curriculum initiative. The subcommittee will consist primarily of faculty, but may also include staff and student representatives.
- If needed, develop proposed initiative and present to Planning Council for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Goal 2: Campus Climate

Strengthen and sustain a campus climate that prepares students for success in a globally connected and increasingly diverse world.

Objective 2.1

Adopt survey-based indicators that can be used to track campus climate during the 2010-15 planning period.

Outcomes

- Survey-based indicators for tracking campus climate will be identified by June 30, 2009.
- Indicators will be presented to Planning Council by October 31, 2009 for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to review survey results and recommend indicators. The subcommittee will consist of faculty, staff, student and community representatives.
- Determine diversity related attributes that prepare students for success in globally connected and increasingly diverse world.
- Research, identify and recommend student groups, objectives, outcomes and periodic outcome assessment measures.
- Present recommended indicators to Planning Council for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Objective 2.2

Develop a program of professional development and events that address needs identified in campus climate surveys.

Outcomes

- Survey will be reviewed by October 31, 2008 to determine professional development and event needs.
- Needed professional development and events will be identified by June 30, 2009.
- Program will be developed and initiated by June 30, 2010.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to review survey results and identify program of professional development and events. The subcommittee will consist of faculty and staff representatives.
- Work with appropriate college departments to develop and initiate professional development program to address needs identified in campus climate surveys.
- Work with Director, Institutional Research, to assess program impact through periodic campus climate survey and/or institutional effectiveness survey.

Goal 3: Student Recruitment, Enrollment and Retention

Continually improve recruitment, enrollment and retention of underrepresented and disadvantaged students.

Objective 3.1

Continue focus of planned actions to meet or exceed enrollment outcomes for minority students as specified in the institution's 2005-10 Strategic Plan.

Outcomes

- Minority enrollment will increase to 317 students (spring, 2009) and 326 students (spring, 2010) per the 2005-10 Strategic Plan.
- Planned recruitment and retention actions identified in the annual Strategic Action Plan will be completed on schedule.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Work with Director, Grants and Planning Management, to identify and seek available grants to fund Access and Diversity initiatives.

- Emphasize the need for continued institutional funding for Access and Diversity positions, financial aid and other initiatives.
- Continue student recruitment and retention actions identified in 2005 Diversity Assessment and Plan.

Objective 3.2

Develop enrollment and retention objectives, outcomes and actions for underrepresented and disadvantaged students for inclusion in the 2010-15 planning process.

Outcomes

- Underrepresented and disadvantaged student groups will be further researched and clearly defined by June 30, 2009.
- Proposed initiatives for identified student groups will be presented to the Enrollment Management Committee and Planning Council by November 30, 2009 for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Monitor diversity issues and data affecting enrollment and retention.
- Establish subcommittee to research and identify underrepresented and disadvantaged student groups and needing emphasis in enrollment, retention and financial aid practices. The subcommittee will consist of faculty, staff and student representatives.
- Identify and recommend student groups, initiatives, and periodic outcome assessment measures for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Objective 3.3

Identify and develop needed tools to increase understanding of financial aid practices, availability and use by underrepresented and disadvantaged students.

Outcomes

- Needed marketing, advising and other tools to improve understanding of financial aid practices, availability and use by underrepresented and disadvantaged student groups will be identified by June 30, 2009.
- Needed marketing, advising and other tools will be developed by June 30, 2010.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to review current tools, research best practices, and identify needed tools that affect understanding of financial aid practices, availability and use

by underrepresented and disadvantaged student groups. The subcommittee will consist of faculty, staff and student representatives.

- Work with Director, Marketing and Public Relations, Director, Financial Aid, and other appropriate departments to identify and develop needed tools.

Goal 4: Employee Recruitment, Hiring and Retention

Continually improve recruitment, hiring and retention of underrepresented faculty and staff.

Objective 4.1

Develop supervisor professional development that presents the value of faculty and staff diversity in achieving student learning and organizational strength.

Outcomes

- Professional development program content and structure will be identified by June 30, 2009.
- Professional development program will be developed and ready for implementation by June 30, 2010.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to review professional development needs, identify content and structure, and identify issues affecting faculty and staff participation in professional development programs. The subcommittee will consist of faculty and staff representatives.
- Work with Director, Academic Support Services, to present professional development program to responsible college departments for implementation.
- Recommend professional development program to Planning Council for review and strategic integration in 2010-15 Strategic Plan.
- Work with Director, Grants and Planning Management, to identify and seek grant funding to increase professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.

Objective 4.2

Identify key benchmarks, practices and improvements in recruitment, hiring and retention for inclusion in 2010-15 strategic planning process.

Outcomes

- Key benchmarks, practices and improvements in recruitment, hiring and retention will be identified by June 30, 2009.
- Benchmarks, practices and improvements for recruitment, hiring and retention will be presented to Planning Council by November 30, 2009 for review and strategic integration in the 2010-15 Strategic Plan.

Actions

The Diversity Committee, headed by the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will:

- Establish subcommittee to research and identify benchmarks, practices and improvements in faculty and staff recruitment, hiring and retention. The subcommittee will consist of faculty and staff representatives.
- Recommend benchmarks, practices and improvements to responsible departments and to Planning Council for review and strategic integration in 2010-15 Strategic Plan.
- Work with responsible departments to ensure timely implementation of adopted benchmarks, practices and improvements and assessment of results.

Evaluation

The Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will have responsibility for reviewing progress toward Diversity Plan goals and objectives. The Assistant to the President will work with the Vice-President for Planning and Development, Director of Institutional Research, and Director of Grants and Planning to incorporate Diversity Plan evaluation into annual department assessments, Strategic Action Plan reviews, and Institutional Effectiveness Report. Taking this approach will ensure that the Diversity Plan and progress toward stated goals and objectives continue to receive college-wide exposure and prominence. In addition, the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will work with the Director, Financial Aid, to periodically review access and diversity scholarship requirements and the award process to determine its effectiveness in improving diversity. To ensure awareness and participation in the Diversity Plan, the Assistant to the President for Access and Diversity will report on evaluation results to the President, Vice-Presidents, and Planning Council. Evaluation results will be included in the annual Institutional Effectiveness Report and placed on the strategic planning website for review and comment. The Assistant to the President will announce and promote the availability of evaluation results to faculty, staff and students through email and other appropriate means. In addition, Planning Council members will be encouraged to communicate results to the college constituency groups (faculty senate, professional staff organization, support staff council, student government association) and areas they represent.

Columbia State Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award Associate of Art, Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Columbia State Community College.

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