

Diversity at Ferris Annual Report for University College
November 17, 2008
Submitted by Dean William Potter

Due to its purpose and programming, University College plays many important roles with regard to addressing and achieving the University’s goals pertaining to diversity. As stated on the website, our purpose is ***to provide developmental courses, educational counseling, and academic support services that will empower students enrolled at Ferris State University to achieve their educational and career goals.*** Provided below is an inventory of College activities, successes, challenges, and initiatives as they relate to the overall goals of creating a University that is welcoming to diverse populations; recruiting, retaining and graduating a diverse student population; hiring and retaining a diverse workforce; and creating learning environments that are inclusive and sensitive to a diverse student population.

I. Major Diversity Activities in University College

A. Enrollment and Retention

1. University College – *27% of students are students of color and 43% are women; these percentages are consistent with prior years. The vast majority are first year students. At this time, no international students enroll in UC since the programs are not eligible for them to choose.*

University College Gender and Ethnicity Report						
Ferris State University						
As of Sep 8, 2008						
	TOTAL	% of Total	# M	% M	# F	% F
University College	497	100%	281	57%	213	43%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	8	2%	2	1%	6	2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	8	2%	3	1%	5	2%
Black, not of Hispanic Origin	95	19%	48	17%	47	17%
Hispanic/Latino	18	4%	8	3%	10	4%
Unknown	2	0%	1	0%	0	0%
White, not of Hispanic Origin	364	73%	219	78%	145	52%
Not Reported	2	0%	0	0%	0	0%

As the college assigned with the preservation of the opportunity vision of the Founder, the University College, Directed Studies, and General Studies programs all enroll students who do not qualify for regular admission to the University or to specific programs. Our purpose is to provide coursework, support services and academic advising that will enable and encourage these students to meet the posted requirements and transfer into the degree program of their choosing. Retention data detailed by program is in the works, but based on data from IR&T we know that about 75% of our FTIACs return for the spring semester and 50% are still enrolled the next fall semester every year. The graduation rate for students in University College has improved steadily from 20% for the class entering in 1998 to 29% for the class entering in 2002. These rates are below those reported for the other undergraduate colleges, but are respectable considering the students we serve (mean ACT is 3 points lower and mean hsgpa is a half grade lower).

2. Honors Program – 5% of total Honors enrollment are students of color.

Group	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total	331	384	465	486	504	539	585	620
African American	2	1	0	0	1	4	8	6
Hispanic American	5	5	7	5	2	6	5	4
Asian-Pacific Islander	5	5	8	7	6	6	11	13
American Indian	2	0	1	2	1	3	7	8
International	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0
Subtotal	14	11	16	16	11	20	31	31
% of Total	4.20%	2.90%	3.40%	3.30%	2.20%	3.70%	5.30%	5.0%
First-year Only			9/196 4.6%	3/200 1.5%	2/211 1.0%	7/190 3.7%	10/213 4.7%	10/238 4.2%
Transfers						0/10 0.0%	6/33 18%	2/22 9.0%
All New Students						7/200 3.5%	16/246 6.5%	12/260 4.6%

These enrollment data are routinely collected every year and show that while some progress has been made in recent years with regard to increasing enrollment diversity, there is still a long way to go. One additional positive aspect to be gleaned from this report is that Honors has made those gains during a period of sustained growth overall. Detailed retention and graduation data for Honors students is also currently in the process of being collected as part of Academic Program Review, but existing data show that overall 90% return for the sophomore year and 75% or more of the students who start in Honors as freshmen graduate from Ferris

within six years. These rates are both well above those reported by the undergraduate degree-granting colleges.

B. Diversity Programming

1. Accessibility Awareness Day – University College staff provided leadership for the recent Accessibility Awareness Day that allowed key campus leaders to learn about and better understand the challenges faced by many Ferris students.
2. Freshman Football Workshop – Each fall, Dean Potter offers a series of 7-8 Tuesday evening workshops for freshmen football players. This group tends to be very diverse and the goal is to help them transition to college and perhaps persist through graduation.
3. The Educational Counseling and Disabilities Services office continues to serve more than 100 students who register for accommodations that help them to succeed at Ferris.
4. The Educational and Career Counseling office also provides advising and scheduling services for up to 100 non-degree (including many non-traditional) students who enroll at Ferris each semester.
5. Tutor training includes two modules that address diversity and inclusion issues:
 - a. Learning disabilities
 - b. Cultural differences
6. The SCHOLAR peer mentoring program continues to provide support to students who can benefit from having an upper class student as a mentor. Moreover, many of their activities have been provided in collaboration with the International Student Advisor, now located in Academic Affairs.
7. The Dean’s Office provides funding to support various diversity-based programs on campus including MLK week, the Vagina Monologues, Disabilities Awareness Week, and the International Festival of Cultures.
8. Structured Learning Assistance, which was originally funded as a King-Chavez-Parks initiative to support underrepresented and underprepared students, continues to serve a wide variety of Ferris students as they enroll in those “bottleneck” courses in the curriculum.
9. The Carl Perkins program is also housed in University College. Perkins funding supports tutoring and SLA for students who meet the grant criteria – essentially based on economic and disability factors. UC staff also maintains the Perkins database about students.
10. University College faculty and staff provide a disproportionate level of support, relative to the size of the College, for diversity initiatives across campus including the Diversity Planning Committee, MITE, YBBW, MLK Week, and others.

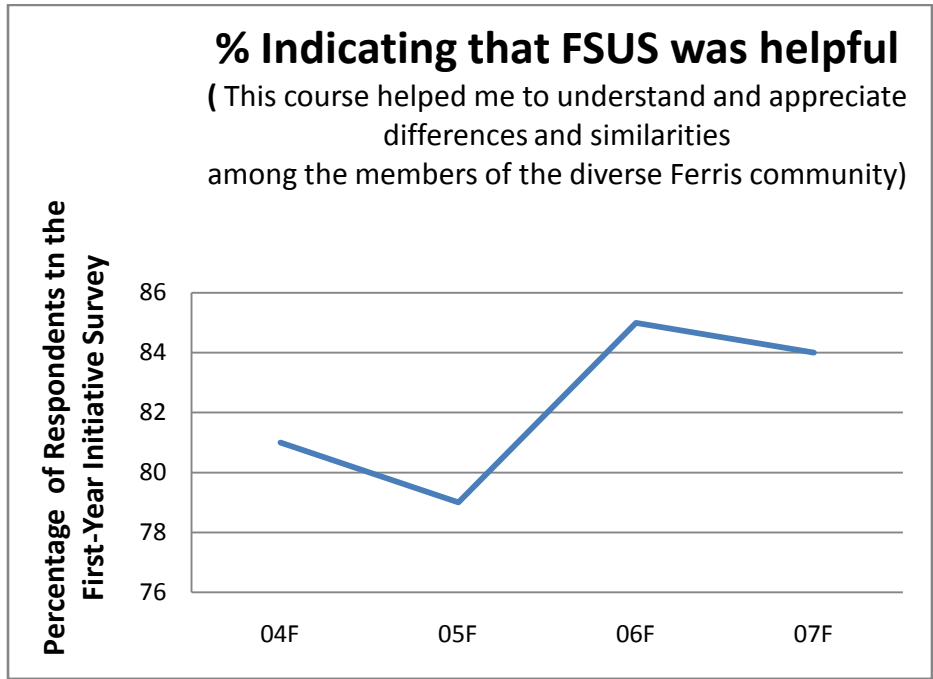
II. University College Diversity Successes

A. University College Diversity Team

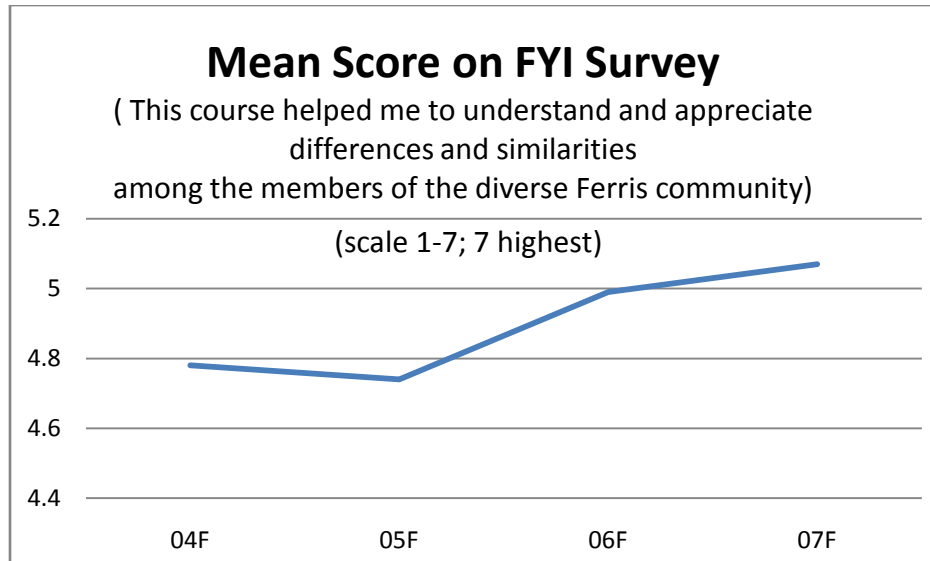
1. Initial meeting held October 10 to explore possible work to be done
2. Second meeting held November 17 to review this report
3. Third meeting will be held in December, before the recess

B. Searches – Thus far in 2008-9, University College has searched and filled three positions, including two tenure track positions, while maintaining or enhancing the diversity of the staff.

C. Assessment of FSUS Diversity Objective – Data concerning FSUS has been routinely collected since 2002. The charts below reflect student feedback concerning the diversity objective for that course. The first graph shows that four out of five students during the past four years report that the seminar helped them to understand and appreciate differences represented in the Ferris community.



The second graph indicates that we may be making a deeper impression with regard to the diversity objective in recent years. We believe that both of these changes may be due to the higher profile of diversity issues on campus since fall 2006, but there are no hard data to support or deny this supposition.



D. “Diversity in our Community of Scholars” statement in syllabi of reading courses.

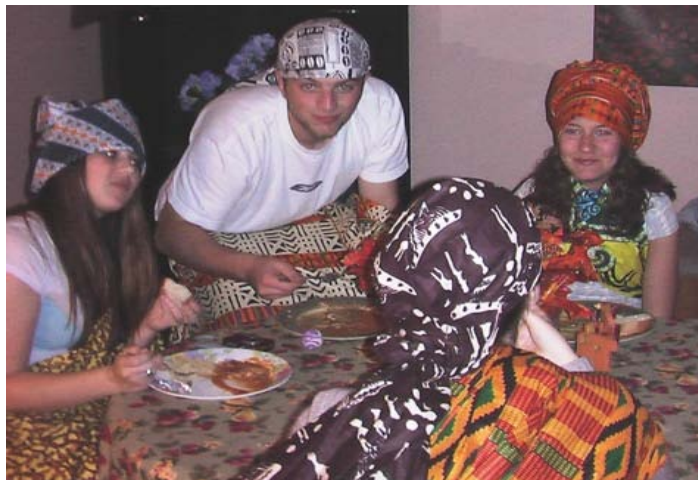
READ 106, College Reading Methods, (or READ 176, College Critical Reading) like your other classes, is a Community of Scholars, with students from widely diverse backgrounds who hold different values. They also learn in distinctly different ways. At the beginning of the semester, students will take the Grasha-Reichmann Learning Style Inventory and discover which classroom learning styles they prefer. I will acknowledge your diversity of learning styles by designing assignments which involve distinct learning preferences, e.g., experiential, abstract, concrete, intuitive. I encourage you to acknowledge your diversities by listening actively to one another. It is especially important that you listen to students whose opinions differ from your own, arguing with the opinions, while remaining respectful of the individuals who hold them. You are expected to be attentive during class, ask questions if you do not understand something, and participate in class discussions. You are also expected to listen respectfully to other students and to me when we are speaking. Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, and other forms of bigotry are inappropriate to express in this class. You are, by definition, a very diverse group of students, even if on the surface you all may look or act more or less homogeneous. Diversity is a strength in our society at large and here at Ferris State University. In this class, you will be asked to maintain an open mind to the differences around you, and you are encouraged to place positive value on those differences. Points of view may be actively argued, but the speakers are to be respected as essentially fair-minded individuals working to extend/enlarge their thinking about ideas and people. [Adapted from Toni McNaron, English, the University of Minnesota]

E. The Honors courses required of second year students in the areas of Social Awareness and Cultural Enrichment for 2008-9 include an array of classes that support the program's diversity objectives :

1. Honors Medical Anthropology with Dr. Kali Majumdar
2. Honors Black Literature with Dr. Phil Middleton
3. Honors Community Studies with Dr. Tony Baker
4. Honors Literature of the French World with Dr. Dan Noren
5. Honors Eastern Religions with Dr. Randy Groves
6. Honors Civil Rights Movement with Dr. Kimn Carlton-Smith



Professor Tony Baker and his Community Studies class in Chicago meet with Ivan Tarver at the offices of the Third World Press.



Students in Professor Dan Noren's Literature of the French World class experience an African meal in authentic garb.

III. Challenges to Diversity

- A. **Recruiting for Honors and University College** – we have no recruiter dedicated to our needs. Given the prevailing overload situations for faculty and staff in the College and the elimination of the Developmental Curriculum Department Head, it is a challenge to focus on specific recruiting initiatives in addition to our regular work assignments.
- B. **Retention of Students** – As noted in the enrollment section of this report, retention of the students in University College who reflect the diversity of our campus is a challenge. The higher attrition rates for these students may be attributed to many factors including the students' mindsets, aptitudes, motivations, priorities, and financial need (except for TIP, they do not often qualify for non-loan funds).

IV. Major Diversity Initiatives in University College –

A. Launch of TIP Scholars Office to meet need of increased TIP enrollments.

1. Here is the upcoming University-wide Announcement concerning the appointment of the TIP Scholars Coordinator who will provide support services to students who meet the need-based criteria of this program:

On behalf of University College, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Chief Diversity Officer, I am delighted to announce the appointment of Felice Kelley-Nelson as the Coordinator of the TIP Scholars Program at Ferris State University. The TIP Scholars Program was piloted in 2007 to provide programming that would help students who receive the Tuition Incentive Program Scholarship be informed about scholarship requirements, remain eligible to receive the TIP award, learn about ways to succeed at Ferris, and network with other TIP students, faculty, and staff. Felice is twice an alumna of Ferris, having earned a B.S. in Computer Information Systems and a M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction. While a student, Felice worked in University College as a tutor and as an SLA facilitator. Most recently, she was a tenured computer and technology teacher at Muskegon Heights Public Schools. Please join me in welcoming Felice back to Ferris. Her first day of work is Monday, November 23. Her office is in ASC 1025.

2. The most recent data from the Office of Financial Aid (November 14) indicates that the overall TIP enrollment is 627 students.
 - a. This total is up by 30% from Fall 07 and 105% from Fall 06.
 - b. There were 254 new Phase I students in Fall 07.
3. Mailings have been sent to Michigan school administrators to request lists of TIP eligible students enrolled at their high schools so that those students can be contacted regarding this scholarship and Ferris.

4. Programming will begin in earnest in January, 2009 emphasizing recruitment of new students, assuring continued financial aid eligibility, facilitating transition from TIP I to TIP II status, identifying student employment options, developing summer employment options and fully utilizing existing Ferris scholarships.
- B. Language Curriculum for International Students** – Although the International Student Advisor Office was moved to the Academic Affairs Division, University College was asked to develop a curriculum to accommodate the admission of international students who score below 500 on the TOEFL. That curriculum, developed in conjunction with the College of Arts and Sciences, is in place and may be launched as soon as spring 2009. It will include special sections of UNCP 100, COMM 105, READ 106, and ENGL 074