



## 2008-2009 Unit Action Plan

Division:

Executive Division

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College/Unit:

Diversity Office

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Department:

Diversity Office

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Significant Areas of Success:

The Diversity Office was founded in January 2007, to help transform Ferris into a truly diverse institution. During the 2007-2008 year, the Diversity Office worked with the Diversity Planning Committee and others to accomplish the following:

### Planning

- 1) Wrote a University Diversity Plan that includes a definition of diversity, identification of strategic goals, and some specific initiatives to be addressed by the University;
- 2) Helped establish Diversity Work Groups in each division at the University;
- 3) Served as a resource for Diverse Work Groups in divisions that produced Diversity Action Plan drafts: Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, and Student Affairs.

### Implementation

The strategy has been to find opportunities to implement specific initiatives in the Plan when opportunities arise.

- 1) The 2007 Summer University had a day and a half devoted to diversity, with Dr. Frank Hale as a keynote speaker and members of the Diversity Planning Committee as facilitators of diversity-themed workshops. In several instances facilitators also delivered these workshops later in the year.
- 2) A University-Wide survey of Ferris students was conducted from September 23- October 18, 2007. Of the 12, 606 students with verified email addresses, 2,804 completed the survey, for a response rate of 22.24 percent. Some of the results are available at the Diversity Office website. **Note to the University: Notify us if there are specific reports that you want.**
- 3) Worked with University College and Student Affairs to create the Tuition Incentive Program (TIP) Scholars Office. The Fall 2007 TIP enrollment was 487 (phase 1: 431; phase 2: 56), representing a gain of 154 students from Fall 2006.
- 4) Worked with the Honors Program to increase the diversity of the program. The number of students from diverse populations increased from 20 in Fall 2006 (3.7 percent) to 31 (5.3



percent) in Fall 2007. The biggest increase was found in transfers where 6 of the 33 students (18 percent) were from diverse backgrounds.

- 5) Helped conceptualize, organize, and moderate University-wide discussions on race, including, "Why is your RSO Black?" and "The N-Word," Fall 2007, and a forum about the Diversity Plan (January 29, 2008).
- 6) Worked with the Office of Multicultural Student Services and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Planning Committee to conceptualize, organize, and implement week-long series of diversity events, with special emphasize on Faculty/Staff In-Service (January 21, 2008), and Day of Segregation Activity (January 22, 2008).
- 7) Worked with Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning, the Office of Multicultural Student Services and the Equity Conference work group to plan, organize, (and eventually host) the 18<sup>th</sup> Equity in the Classroom scheduled for March 30-April 2, 2008.

### Other Activities

CDO delivered lectures at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York (July 25, 2007, and October 27, 2007), and the National Communication Association Conference in Chicago (November 16, 2007, with Sandy Alspach), and Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts (February 19, 2008); and, CDO conducted an all-day workshop for social sciences teachers in Flint Public Schools (December 4, 2007).

The CDO seizes opportunities to discuss diversity with University members, including but not limited to: Student Affairs Retreat (July 18, 2007); Hall Directors (August 3, 2007); New Faculty Orientation (August 14, 2007); New Tenure Track Faculty and Adjuncts (August 14, 2007); Faculty Senate Retreat (August 21, 2007); and, all first year students during Welcome Week (August 29, 2007).

During the academic year the CDO hosted the non-award winning University-produced television show, *Expect Diversity*.

CDO served as Chairperson for the Governing Ideas Taskforce, charged with taking the ideas expressed by members of the University and drafting and redrafting the following statements: core values, mission, and vision.

The Diversity Office financially sponsored a number of events and activities that furthered the University's diversity objectives, including but not limited to: Diversity Buttons for Student Leadership (August 21, 2007); expenses for faculty member to attend HUSITA Conference (August 26-29, 2007); expenses for poet Rane Arroyo (October 16, 2007); refreshments for World Language Day (November 13, 2007); busing for Pierre Toussaint Academy to come to Ferris (November 15, 2007); provisions for Soul Food Dinner (January 20, 2008); tee-shirts and posters for Day of Segregation (January 22, 2008); co-sponsored the University-wide lecture of Jeff Johnson (January 23, 2008); travel and registration for student advisor to attend the National Society of Minorities in Hospitality Conference in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania (February 21-24, 2008), major sponsor for *Vagina Monologues* (February 29, 2008); sponsor for the ALSAME Conference at Ferris (March 28, 2008).



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Challenges to Continued Success:

The Diversity Office is committed to helping the University implement all parts of the University Diversity Plan. The major challenges are:

- 1) Annually, the Diversity Office will produce a document called, *Diversity at Ferris*. This report will chart and analyze the status of diversity initiatives. This requires each division to submit relevant information in a timely fashion. Once the data is received the analysis represents a significant workload.
- 2) All divisions are asked to create diversity action plans in consultation with the Diversity Office. The creation, implementation, and monitoring of these plans represents a significant challenge. How do we create sustained dialogue that results in action plans, and how do we make sure that the action steps are achievable and achieved?
- 3) A major diversity challenge is the relative paucity of faculty from racially diverse (and in some instances ethnically diverse) backgrounds. In Fall 2007, there were 575 full time faculty. Whites represented 527 (92.95 %) and African Americans, Hispanics, Asians or Pacific Islanders, and American Indian or Alaska Native Faculty, collectively totaled 40 full time faculty, meaning, 6.96 percent. The Diversity Office will work with the new Provost, Academic Deans, and faculty to implementing strategies to address the long-standing dearth of faculty of color at Ferris.
- 4) The growth in the number of TIP students has created an untenable workload for the part-time Intern who has the primary responsibility of working with student. It is recommended that the TIP Intern position be converted into a full-time position with pay and status commensurate with the responsibilities of the job.



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Ongoing or Proposed Significant Activities:

The Diversity Office is committed to working with members of the University to implement the specific initiatives listed in the Diversity Plan. The Diversity Office is involved in the following activities:

- 1) Continue to analyze the Student Diversity Climate Survey, looking for insight into how we should address issues of diversity at the University.
- 2) Have one-on-one discussions with every University employee from an underrepresented group—and all other employees who want to meet with me.
- 3) Serve as a resource for all divisions as they create diversity action plans.
- 4) Help conceptualize and implement a mechanism for handling concerns and handling disputes among members of the University.
- 5) Help Advancement and Marketing and Human Resources conceptualize and implement an aggressive campaign to market Ferris to potential employees, including people from diverse backgrounds.
- 6) Assist with the creation of a video called, “The Many Faces of Ferris,” to highlight Ferris’ efforts to be a welcoming university. Diversity Office and Diversity Planning Committee will assist with the writing and reviewing of the script. Note: There are many diversity related projects that would be enhanced by the hiring of a full-time videographer.
- 7) Work with the Faculty Center For Teaching & Learning to devise and implement a Diversity Across the Curriculum initiative, involving at least ten courses each semester.
- 8) Reinvigorate Diversity Counts! Committee initiatives, especially monthly potluck events where professors discuss best practices, review syllabi and course content, and talk about diversity pedagogy.
- 9) Create a program where low-income and working class students can obtain professional attire for classroom presentations and job interviews.