

# Cultural Diversity Planning at Salisbury University

Presented to the USM March, 2009 (per Senate Bill 438 & House Bill 905)

## Introduction

Salisbury University (SU) is in the final stages of completion of its 2009-2013 Strategic Plan. This strategic plan embodies SU's commitment to and plan for programs of cultural diversity on the campus and recognizes several areas where SU is committed to moving forward over the next five years. Indeed, as stated in the introduction on page 1 of the Strategic Plan:

*The core values of Salisbury University are:*

- *excellence*
- *student-centeredness*
- *learning*
- *community*
- *civic engagement*
- *diversity*

*We believe these values must be lived and experienced as integral to everyday campus life so that students make the connection between what they learn and how they live. The goals and objectives of our strategic, academic, facilities, and enrollment plans, as well as our fiscal commitments, reflect our fundamental values.*

The Strategic Plan has four goals and each has several focus areas. While *Diversity* is mentioned explicitly as a Focus Area for Goal 2, cultural diversity is interwoven into all four goals. The four goals and their focus areas are:

**Goal 1:** Provide exceptional contemporary liberal arts education and academic and professional programs that are aligned with an increasingly competitive, global, and knowledge-based economy.

- Academic Programming
- General Education and Program Assessment
- Thomas E. Bellavance Honors Program
- International Students and Study Abroad

**Goal 2:** Continue to attract and retain quality students.

- Future Enrollment
- Closing the Achievement Gap

**Goal 3:** Promote and develop a student culture that places the highest priority on academic engagement and personal growth by leveraging the SU "small school feel" and strong student/faculty/staff interactions.

- Engagement/"Small School Feel"
- Diversity

**Goal 4:** Continue to build the resources – human, financial, physical, and external – that support student academic and engagement needs.

- Financial Resources
- Facilities
- Sustainability
- Human Resources
- Community Outreach and Partnership

Within the focus areas of each goal, the importance of cultural diversity is recognized, and the specific recommendations for increasing awareness and respect for cultural diversity are included in each goal area.

### **Cultural Diversity at SU (IIIA)**

Since its founding in 1925, Salisbury University has traditionally attracted primarily white students, faculty, and staff. Recognizing a need to increase students' opportunities to gain competency in learning about and working with diverse cultures and expanding access to college, President Dudley-Eshbach launched a cultural diversity initiative when she arrived on campus in 2000. In her initial letter to the campus she stated "*What needs to happen on this campus is no less than a transformation in terms of inclusiveness, campus climate, and dialog within our SU community,*" announced the creation of an Office of Diversity, and tasked it with promoting cultural diversity on the campus. Some initiatives of the Office of Diversity include educating the campus community on the importance of cultural diversity, sponsoring events that promote cultural diversity, and addressing the special needs of minority communities. However, cultural diversity at SU is not the province of just one office. Many other departments, clubs, and organizations provide various support structures for the campus community. For example, the Diversity Office works closely with Student Affairs which supports many different activities, clubs, and organizations to help meet the needs of a diverse community. Additionally, the Office of Diversity has worked with Human Resources to help increase SU's ability to attract and retain diverse faculty and staff.

The following is a partial inventory of some of the ongoing activities SU offers in support of cultural diversity:

- Bus trips for prospective minority students to visit the campus (1,000<sup>+</sup> students annually)
- Optional SAT (seems to be positively affecting recruitment of minority students)
- Annual multiethnic visitation weekend for freshmen
- Activities such as GEARUP (MHEC CPIP), AmeriCorps, the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network
- Activities for TRIO students visiting from other campuses (SU does not yet have a TRIO program)

- Center for Student Achievement (founded in 2008) to help students achieve their full potential. Initiatives include an academic early warning system, a math placement and development program, tutoring services, assistance in winning prestigious scholarships (e.g., Goldwater, and freshmen seminars).
- Writing Center to help students develop and improve writing skills
- Learning communities for students with common academic interests
- Special events such as a cultural competency workshop, African-American History Month, Asian Pacific Islander Month, Multicultural Festival Week, Islam Awareness Week, Hispanic Heritage Month (Cinco de Mayo), Oktoberfest, Kwanzaa, African-American Alumni Weekend, and Multicultural Leadership Weekend
- Office of Diversity to promote diversity initiatives with an emphasis on recruiting and retaining minority faculty and staff
- A refined hiring process for faculty and staff to increase the pool of diverse applicants
- Nomination of all eligible new faculty for the MHEC Henry C. Welcome Fellowship
- Center for International Education to host international students, support faculty in developing programs abroad, assist students in finding study abroad opportunities, and pursuing J-1 Visa status for the campus
- Financial support for faculty who win Fulbright appointments
- The campus publication *Panorama* that provides the schedule of all cultural events for each semester
- Cultural Events to celebrate diversity extending over a semester or year. Examples include *Spotlight on Asia*, *Celebration of Latin American Culture*, *Eastern European Series*, *A Celebration of Native Americans*, *The Year of the Languages*, *The Artists of Asia*, *African American Cultural Celebration*, and *The Renaissance*
- Lectures by speakers such as Arun Gandhi, Lech Walesa, and F.W. de Klerk
- Center for Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution to support students, faculty, and staff in learning about, understanding, and addressing interpersonal, group, international, environmental, and cross-cultural conflict
- Blackwell Library routinely does Kwanza, Christmas, and Chanukah displays in December, works with student clubs to do displays for events (Muslim Society), acquires award winning books in all diverse areas, and operates a Web site called Diversity in the Classroom – a resource for incorporating cultural diversity into the curriculum .

- Organizations to support a diverse student body, staff, and faculty such as African Student Association, Asian/Pacific Islander Club, Bisexual Transgender Gay Lesbian and Straight Supporters, Caribbean Student Association, German Club, Jewish Student Association, Muslim Student Association, NAACP, Salisbury Activists for Gender Equality, Spanish Club, the Union of African Student Association, the Baptist Student Ministries, Brother And Sisters In Christ, Campus Crusade, Catholic Campus Ministry, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the Gospel Choir

Like any institution, SU achieves its purpose through the specific efforts of many people working in different and concerted ways. SU's institutional strength and stature have grown considerably in recent years. We take special satisfaction in the many ways in which the educational program of the University has grown and flourished, and how our reputation as *A Maryland University of National Distinction* has expanded as a result.

But we must be clear about the conditions for future success, which depend on our mission and the specific circumstances and demands of the world around us. In this regard, our history and the shape of the future tell us that for SU to continue to flourish and to realize its mission in a responsible and responsive way, we must continue to make progress on recruiting a diverse student body, faculty, and staff; foster a community of tolerance, understanding, and engagement; and recognize and share with our students the remarkable range of cultural difference and complexity that defines our national and international lives.

## **Plan to Enhance Cultural Diversity (IIIB; IV)**

### *Administrative Coordination and Accountability*

- Strengthen the charge and resources of the Salisbury University Assembly *Committee on Multi-Ethnic Concerns* to oversee and monitor the SU cultural diversity effort
- Expand the charge of the Office of Diversity to include all cultural diversity efforts
- Identify a venue where the administration can report annually to the campus community on the state of the cultural diversity effort
- Conduct Campus Climate Survey to establish baseline for assessment
- **Completion Date:** *December 31, 2009*
- **No Cost**

### *Complete an assessment of General Education*

- Map courses used to satisfy SU general education courses to SU's General Education Learning Principles and Goals (pg. 355 of the 2008-2010 Catalog)
- Assess how courses are meeting the general education goals of
  - Interpersonal Communication – Acquiring abilities to relate to and work effectively with diverse groups of people
  - Social Responsibility – Tolerance and respect for diverse groups of people and a disposition toward responsible citizenship and a connection to the community

- **Completion Date:** *June 1, 2011* (this is also the date which a report is due to Middle States on assessment of General Education)
- **No Additional Cost**

#### *International Education*

- Incorporate a reference to international education in SU's mission statement
- Support efforts to implement the five-year Center for International Education Strategic Plan
- Establish an English Language Institute to support students for whom English is a second language
- **Completion Date:** *June 1, 2011*
- **Cost:** *\$100,000 per year*

#### *Hiring Procedures*

- Enhance procedures to expand the diversity of applicant pools
- Establish procedures to document assess efforts to expand the pool of diverse applicants
- Identify resources needed to
  - help search committees recruit
  - attract diverse applicants
  - retain diverse applicants
- Implement a system to track and assess the results of enhanced hiring practices
- **Completion Date:** *September 2009*
- **Cost:** *\$25,000 per year*

#### *Closing the Achievement Gap (Retention)*

- Strengthen the newly formed Center for Student Achievement and Success
- Implement programs to address gaps in students' mathematical backgrounds
- Pilot a summer bridge program
- Pilot academic learning communities
- Pilot freshman seminar integrated with general education courses to help students learn expectations of University
- Identify resources for the newly formed Center for Student Achievement and Success
- Strengthen the Writing Center
- Emphasize cultural diversity in the first-year orientation program
- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **Cost:** *\$312,000 per year*

#### *Market Research*

- Initiate a market research project beginning fall 2008 to generate the best projections possible of the demographic profiles of college-bound students five to ten years in the future and the best-informed strategies for marketing, recruitment, retention services, pricing, programs, and facilities
- Continue aggressive efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student body
- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **Cost:** *10,000 per year*

### *Financial Aid*

- Increase need-based financial aid
- **Timeline:** *Immediate*
- **Cost:** *\$600,000 per year*

### *Social Life and Organizations*

- Copies of this plan will be shared with student organizations. These organizations will be asked to respond to the documents and to prepare their own plans for cultural diversity.
- Cultural events programming planned to expose students to artistic expression and intellectual perspective representing diverse cultures
- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **No Additional Cost**

### *Faculty and Administrative and Support Staff Development*

- Explain to new faculty and staff the importance of cultural diversity to the mission of the University and related challenges and opportunities in the classroom
- Support faculty and staff development opportunities to explore issues of pedagogy, classroom dynamics, and student/faculty relations in an increasingly diverse institutional setting
- Increased support for curricular development in all disciplines to prepare students to work in a diverse society and world
- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **Cost:** *\$25,000 per year*

### *Community Relations*

- Serve as a catalyst for positive change in the surrounding community. The University will continue working with local and regional governmental and private entities to make the Salisbury area more accepting of diverse populations.
- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **No Additional Cost**

### *Alumni Programs*

- Determine ways to engage alumni in the cultural diversity initiative
- Design alumni survey instruments to help the University understand the perceptions and interests of minority groups among its alumni and share this information with the University community
- **Timeline:** *May 2010*
- **No Additional Cost**

### *Designated gifts & grants that support cultural diversity*

- **Timeline:** *Ongoing*
- **No Additional Cost**

## **Process for Reporting Campus-Based Hate Crimes (IIC)**

### *Salisbury University Police Procedure Incidents of Racial Religious and Ethnic Hatred or Sexual Orientation*

#### 1-0 Introduction

Racial, religious, or ethnic hatred incidents such as cross burnings or painting of swastikas or slogans, and incidents relating to the sexual orientation of an individual or group, warrant thorough police attention. It is important to investigate such acts in order to stop further incidents and threats of violence, and to assuage the citizens' fear of repeated harassment.

#### 1-1 Policy

University Police will promptly respond to investigate and file an appropriate report on all complaints where there is an indication that motivation for the incident was based upon the victim's religion, race, ethnic background, or sexual orientation regardless of whether or not a crime was actually committed. Further, University Police personnel will display sensitivity to the concerns of the effected individual or group.

#### 1-2 Procedure

- a. When it is determined that an incident has occurred where the motivation was based upon an individual's or group's religion, race, ethnic background, or sexual orientation, an officer will be dispatched promptly to the scene. Upon verifying the hate incident, the officer shall request the Criminal Investigations Commander to respond.
- b. Every effort should be made to assure the victim that the incident will be fully investigated.
- c. The investigation, in addition to normal collection of evidence, should concentrate on determining if this incident is part of a continuing pattern against the victim and/or related to organized group activity.
- d. The Maryland Human Relations Commission by law receives notice of all such incidents reported to police.
- e. Prior to any case being closed without an arrest, the victim will be contacted to determine if any further incidents of harassment have occurred and to be made aware of the progress of the investigation. If, after supervisory review, it is determined that the case will be administratively closed for lack of evidence, the victim will be so advised.
- f. Patrol checks will be instituted in the area the incident occurred for 60 days unless it is determined that such patrol checks will interfere with the investigation.

### Financial Resource Need Estimate (IID)

The table below summarizes the annual cost to implement fully Salisbury University's initiatives.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Additional funds required</b>
Recruiting faculty and staff	25,000
Center for Student Achievement	312,000
Market Research	10,000
Financial Aid	600,000
English Language Institute	100,000
Faculty and Staff Development	25,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,072,000</b>

### Conclusion

In closing, Salisbury University has made significant progress in developing a diverse community to better its students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The University stands poised and ready to serve its students, but due to funding limitations it cannot deliver the level of service the modern student requires. For example, the President's testimony to the Legislature and other bodies documents the shortfall in need-based financial aid at Salisbury. As another example, the Center for Student Achievement was opened in direct response to the call for "Closing the Achievement Gap" and was proposed with an initial budget of \$312,000. The Center opened in fall 2008 as promised, but due to state budget limitations it opened with less than one third of the amount needed. Finally, the University has not been able to fund an English Language Institute for students whose first language is not English. Such an institute would not only attract international students to the campus from countries such as China and India, but it would also be a valuable resource for the University to serve the growing Hispanic population of Maryland. There is no question that with additional funding the University could make a leap forward in meeting the needs of the ever increasingly diverse citizens of Maryland.