

**OSU-CASCADES MULTICULTURAL PLAN**  
**2006-2007**  
**Draft - 6/1/2006**

**INTRODUCTION**

In an effort to address diversity at OSU-Cascades, a committee was designated to establish a diversity plan of action. In the process of developing our plan, the Committee eventually recognized that the concept of *multiculturalism*, versus diversity, more accurately reflects our direction and approach. The concept embraces both ideology and action and must be universally accepted as essential to our institutional identity and mission to be effective.

Given this approach, the Multicultural Committee at OSU-Cascades established a definition and vision upon which its action plan is founded. It then established three interconnected areas upon which it will focus for 2006-2007:

- Climate
- Recruitment and marketing
- Retention

Beyond 2006-2007, the Multicultural Committee at OSU-Cascades has established a multi-phased action plan that will move beyond the traditional norms for campus diversity to measure and improve cultural competencies on campus. We hope this approach will bring OSU-Cascades toward our vision of multiculturalism.

**DEFINITION**

As part of its long range vision, OSU-Cascades defines multiculturalism as:

- An understanding that each individual is unique and that recognizing and honoring the uniqueness of each person is essential to the viability of multiculturalism. Individuality can be manifested through differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs and other ideologies.
- A genuine commitment to a diverse representation among OSU-Cascades' students, faculty, staff, academic curricula and research agendas.
- A proactive commitment to maintaining an open, supportive, and responsive environment.

OSU-Cascades intends to advance a multicultural environment on campus and in our community by:

- Fostering the exploration of differences in a supportive, positive and engaging atmosphere.
- Actively working toward and intentionally including elements of multiculturalism in its ongoing operations such as recruitment of students, faculty and staff and promotion of educational activities for the campus and community.

- Responding authentically to any issues confronting OSU-Cascades with regards to multiculturalism.
- Continually advocating for multicultural issues at the individual, campus and community level.
- Purposely seeking to build the awareness, knowledge and skills necessary at an individual and campus level to remain a leader in fostering a multicultural environment on campus and in our community.

## **2006-2007 AREAS OF FOCUS**

OSU-Cascades Multicultural Committee has established three interconnected areas upon which to focus its multicultural efforts in 2006-2007: climate, recruitment and marketing, and retention. The committee chose these areas due to the immediate impact they could have on the campus as a whole and our ability to make a difference in these areas given our current availability of resources and capacity to monitor and assess these efforts.

### **Climate**

The OSU-Cascades Multicultural Committee intends to cultivate multicultural understanding in the classrooms among the students, faculty and staff, and to extend beyond the confines of the campus into the community of central Oregon. We expect that through building awareness, knowledge and skills with regards to climate, an accepting, engaging, and progressive culture will emerge. More specifically, this committee will direct its efforts in the following year toward understanding the components of a multicultural community, establishing the necessary actions for cultivating diversity, and assessing the resulting outcomes for the Cascades campus.

- **Awareness:** OSU-Cascades will create a welcoming campus climate that acknowledges and is respectful of all individuals, understanding that each person is unique. We will recognize and honor those qualities. OSU-Cascades commits to maintaining an open, supportive, and responsive environment.
- **Knowledge:** OSU-Cascades will acknowledge the current campus climate, identify the existing challenges and develop an action plan to confront those challenges.
- **Skills:** OSU-Cascades will offer trainings to staff and faculty on how to create a supportive and welcoming climate on campus and in the classroom. These trainings will also provide ideas on when it is most appropriate to take action and how to move forward with those initiatives. Multicultural events and classes will be offered to students, faculty and staff throughout the year.

### **Recruitment and Marketing**

As a campus we recognize that recruitment and marketing are our face to the community and the world. The amount of effort that we put in to a multicultural approach to

recruitment and marketing is an indicator of the strength of our overall commitment to developing a multicultural institution of higher learning.

- OSU-Cascades will place increased emphasis on expanding our outreach efforts in order to procure applications from culturally diverse populations of potential students, faculty and staff.
- Student recruitment and retention efforts will develop programs to focus on first-generation college attendees.
- OSU-Cascades will seek and identify collaborative opportunities to recruit a diverse faculty, staff and student population.
- OSU-Cascades will develop and incorporate an intentionally welcoming and inclusive environment that will be reflected in all marketing and recruitment efforts.
- OSU-Cascades will place increased emphasis on expanding our outreach efforts in order to procure applications from culturally diverse populations of international students, faculty and staff.

### **Retention**

Student, faculty, and staff retention is an indicator of how well we are living up to the mission and vision that we convey when recruiting new members to our campus community. To identify and apply effective retention techniques, OSU-Cascades will examine the factors that have supported students who have successfully completed our program. Our retention program will include and augment those identified resources. It will also improve upon areas where students, faculty, and staff indicate a lack of support.

- OSU-Cascades will provide educational opportunities to raise cultural awareness and support diverse populations of students, faculty, and staff.
- Enrollment services and student services will collaborate with Cascades partners to provide first generation student support and international student support using resources on and off campus.
- OSU-Cascades will use graduation surveys to identify successful first generation and minority students' needs compared to other students.
- OSU-Cascades will establish a retention data base for students, faculty, and staff to assess changes in climate.

### **MEASURING AND IMPROVING CULTURAL COMPETENCIES**

OSU-Cascades believes it is essential that the students, faculty and staff at OSU-Cascades be actively engaged in challenging their own cultural competencies to move beyond their current levels of awareness, knowledge and skills with regards to intercultural understanding. Cultural competencies can be defined in terms of stages of personal growth that range from early stages involving denial of difference through advanced stages characterized by integration of difference (Bennett, 1993). As the students, faculty and staff proactively seek to progress through the stages of intercultural

sensitivity, our belief is that we will become more effective in our efforts to advance a multicultural environment on campus.

Our ability to achieve this vision is dependent on three critical factors: a.) the willing acceptance and active engagement of faculty, staff and students, b.) the attainment of resources necessary to implement this innovative and long range plan. c.) the capacity to monitor and assess the success of our program. The following provides an overview of proposed initial steps for the coming year (Phase I), with some mention of further plans beyond that time (Phases II and III).

## **Phase I**

### *Summer 2006*

- Train two faculty members on the issues of multiculturalism and campus development. These two faculty will also consult with the creators of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) on the feasibility of using these constructs as the basis for measuring campus changes in multicultural thinking.
- Develop a research project concerning the enhancement of multiculturalism on university campuses using OSU-Cascades as the sample population.
- Develop accountability guidelines to deal with issues as they arise for students, faculty and staff.
- Establish baseline retention figures for student, faculty and staff retention.

### *Fall 2006*

- Present the research plan to OSU-Cascades faculty, staff and selected students to establish their understanding, support and engagement.
- Achieve funding for project through OSU-Cascades and/or outside grant resources.
- Acquire training for two faculty (project leads) on use of IDI assessment instrument.

### *Winter & Spring 2007*

- Administer IDI assessment to faculty, staff and selected student leaders.
- Interpret results of IDI and develop training opportunities for faculty, staff and student leaders based upon results.

## **Phase II**

### *Summer 2007 through Spring 2008*

- Implement specifically developed training for faculty, staff, and select student leaders.

### *Spring 2008*

- Re-administer IDI assessment to faculty, staff and student leaders to determine changes in levels of cultural competence.

### **Phase III**

*Fall 2008 through Spring 2009*

- Based on results of research with faculty, staff and student leaders, continue project (initial assessment, interpretation, intervention, concluding assessment) with students as sample population.

### **CONCLUSION**

OSU-Cascades Multicultural Committee believes that creating a positive multicultural environment on any college or university campus requires a change in thinking; if thought paradigms change, so, too, will the environments in which they exist. OSU-Cascades' Multicultural Committee proposes an innovative and comprehensive plan to authentically address the growing imperative that we honor and celebrate our differences.