

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Achieving the Vision: A Planning Document

### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT & DIVERSITY**

Bryan Hall 108  
107 S. Indiana Avenue  
Bloomington, IN 47405-7000  
812.856.1934  
812.856.5119  
[www.indiana.edu/~asd](http://www.indiana.edu/~asd)

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## Achieving the Vision:

### A Planning Document for the Office of Academic Support and Diversity

#### Premise

Too frequently, diversity is taken to be something of a sidebar enterprise by administrators, that is, attempts to diversify the student body and faculty are treated as pro bono work, good work that the university does because it has the discretionary funding to do it.

In difficult fiscal times, efforts based on this notion of diversity are likely to wane. Diversity in and of itself is a desirable thing, but not an end in itself. If the role of a state university is to level the educational and social playing field for as many of the state's citizens as possible, then diversity must be part of the core mission of Indiana University. If the role of a state university is to equip as many of the state's citizens as possible to make the educated and nuanced judgments necessary to maintaining a pluralistic democracy, then diversity must be part of the core mission of Indiana University. If the role of a state university is to equip as many of that state's citizens as possible to be productive members of the state's 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce, then diversity must be part of the core mission of Indiana University.

#### Background and Charge

The planning committee was appointed by Vice President Charlie Nelms in the early summer of 2003 and was charged with arriving at a comprehensive and concrete plan for the next three to five years for the Division of Academic Support and Diversity (ASD). Vice President Nelms noted that the consultant report "20/20," written in 1998 and implemented in 1999, had served as the division's de facto plan but was not the result of self-study or a formal planning process. Accordingly, Dr. Nelms asked the planning committee to create a plan that represented the best thinking of the senior leadership in Academic Support and

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Diversity and that would serve as a successor to the original 20/20 document.

## The Planning Process

After the appointment of the committee, which included virtually all of the senior staff of the unit as well as leaders of key constituencies within the unit, the group began to meet to discuss how the process might be conducted and what shape the eventual plan might take. The committee quickly agreed that the overarching theme of the plan would be **collaboration**. The committee felt that the goals articulated in the mission statement of ASD were ones that could only be reached by the campus as a whole, not by the division of ASD in isolation. In fact, the division of ASD itself existed, according to the 20/20 plan, to create broad awareness and ownership of the issues facing the campus in terms of equity and excellence. As part of the planning process, for example, the chairs interviewed all campus academic deans in order to: 1) to determine how in their estimation ASD was performing; and 2) to gauge the deans' current thinking about where their schools stood in establishing and achieving their goals of recruiting and retaining faculty and graduate students from historically underrepresented groups. In addition, members of the committee met with focus groups from the Asian Culture Center, the Latino Cultural Center, the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center, and other student leaders convened by Richard McKaig, vice chancellor for student affairs and dean of students.

The plan, because of shifting ground locally, in the state, and at the federal level, is both a management document and a planning document; given the climates in which it has been produced, we recommend that it be reviewed at least annually and updated biennially. While some of its goals might be ambitious and long-range, many of the steps it articulates could be addressed through short-term decisions determined by the local and national environment in which the division is operating.

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## Contexts

The planning process is taking place in a changing environment nationally as well as locally. On the national front, cuts have taken place in higher education, particularly in financial aid, to lower and middle-income students. At the state level, higher education has been hampered by the recession and the reduction of new state operating and capital funding, as well as the unprecedented cuts in availability of state financial aid (relative to tuition increases) for Indiana residents. At the same time, the demographics of the likely future indicate that **it will be more difficult than in the past for IU to assist more first-generation families in higher education.**

Additionally, the well-chronicled immigration of Latinos to Indiana promises that the diversity of future student bodies is likely to increase significantly, although it is unlikely that the new students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be able to pay their own way through Indiana University. The university's longstanding commitment to enrolling an appropriate proportion of the state's qualified African-American high school graduates remains as yet unfulfilled. Support for an increasing population of Asian Americans, if any is required, has not yet been determined.

In addition to the nation and state's changing demographics, the environment will be affected in ways yet unknown by the Supreme Court's decision in the University of Michigan Affirmative Action case in the summer of 2003. That decision affirmed the right of universities to consider race as a factor in admissions but outlawed race as an exclusive factor. No doubt there will be further refinements of this decision, and how universities, states, and the federal government promulgate new regulations and requirements based on the decision will certainly change the way IUB recruits and retains a critical mass of students of color.

The campus environment has always been a challenging one. Indiana University has always faced significant obstacles to diversity, particularly at the undergraduate level. It has not had a large population

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of citizens of color in its area of the state, and this region has not had a reputation for being especially friendly to people of color. While this perception is changing—because we are making some headway in changing the climate of IUB through various programs in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Support and Diversity--such **transformation is not swift.** Acknowledgement that the transformation will be a gradual process does not imply that persistent and energetic efforts are unnecessary. Much progress has been made on campus and in the nearby community in recent years. A complete description of the accomplishments of the campus since the publication of “20/20” shows an impressive array of new programs and services, and a growing awareness of the importance of simultaneous equity and excellence. (The report is available online at <http://www.iub.edu/%7Eidsa/reports/2020-2003.pdf>).

The 20/20 progress report also notes several key challenges that remain. As a campus we are still short of our goal of a critical mass of faculty and staff of color; we have articulated specific benchmarks in the past in terms of percentages of students of color; 2001 was the high-water mark for minority student attendance in recent years, at 9.4%. **As of AY 2003, the percentage of students of color was about 9.3%, a percentage that may decline still more as tuition increases. With occasional spikes upward, the percentage of African-American undergraduates has declined since 1981.** Although the actual number has increased our attempts to meet the financial need of our students are falling short, even though the campus generally and ASD specifically have increased spending to prevent this problem from worsening.

In addition to the aforementioned financial issues, the **campus also has not resolved all of its climate issues.** The 20/20 report noted that the campus offered a “chilly climate” for students of color. Certainly in the five years since the report, the

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climate has improved. New programs and synergies within ASD are largely responsible, but other entities across campus, such as Residential Programs and Services, the Graduate School, and the Office of Academic Affairs, have also been helpful, as have many academic units. It is generally recognized that the tension surrounding the continuing presence of the Benton Murals in Woodburn Hall is a symptom of durable difficulties in improving campus climate.

Because state and federal resources are lacking, and especially because the campus has levied about as many tuition increases as the average family can possibly sustain, it is unlikely that much in the way of new resources will be available to address the unmet needs of this or any other unit. Accordingly, collaboration--utilizing a cross-functional, responsibility-sharing method of work--must be the order of the day if we are to achieve real progress in meeting our goals. We look forward to working together within our unit, as we have been doing, and across the campus, as we are increasingly beginning to reach out, to make Indiana University Bloomington a model for equity in American public research universities.

*With these premises and contexts in mind, the following courses of action should be pursued.*

As a result of our analysis of the social and fiscal environments in which IU Bloomington exists, and in keeping with the theme of collaboration, the committee employed the following mission statement as a foundation for all of our recommendations:

**Mission:** Academic Support and Diversity exists to provide a support system and a voice at all levels for students of color, first-generation students, and high-achieving students at Indiana University Bloomington. Additionally, ASD assists other units in enhancing undergraduate education in general, and works to achieve at least a “critical mass” of diverse faculty and staff.

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**Indiana University will be a leader among American universities in creating and sustaining a campus climate that promotes cultural, ethnic and gender diversity, equity and excellence.**

**Vision:** Indiana University will be a leader among American universities in creating and sustaining a campus climate that promotes cultural, ethnic, and gender diversity, equity and excellence.

## **Internal Collaboration:**

Our theme of collaboration is based on the original 20/20 plan but also stems from five years of experience in implementing the report's recommendations. Clearly, the Bloomington campus's great strength is its cross-unit collaboration and collegiality.

**At the same time, the campus environment requires collaboration in order to progress.** The much-criticized "silo" mentality works for few, if any, units. In the case of academic support and diversity, our mission is to support and enhance the experience of so many students and faculty that in reality we cannot begin to achieve our goals by ourselves. Therefore, the environment and our own aspirations call on us to reach out to others and for them to reach out to us; hence, collaboration. Much of what we want to do transcends the abilities of ASD, yet we can accomplish a great deal to create an environment conducive to synergy and collaboration, and we pledge to do so in the coming months and years. We acknowledge programs such as the I-95 Scholars Initiative in HPER that draws on the talents and abilities of ASD personnel, faculty, staff and students from a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. As we have discussed our vision with others and among those in our units, we have discovered that the commitment to enhance diversity is real in the hearts of many outside our units, and we expect them to join us in making equity and excellence everyone's business.

At the same time, we must set our goals as individual units and as the larger ASD division in sight of what we can accomplish with our human and financial resources. Every student cannot succeed at IU Bloomington, and we cannot make every student

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entirely comfortable here, but we can certainly improve the situation for many. We cannot recruit every student in the pool of academically eligible high school seniors, but we can certainly raise the level of awareness and the sense of possibility that IU offers to more students.

On campus, ASD units will increase visibility with other units, so that non-ASD units understand what we do and how we can all be a part of the advancement of our agenda – which is the university’s agenda – of equity and excellence. **Toward that end, we recommend that regular meetings take place between academic deans and ASD leadership—a good foundation for these has been laid in the committee’s meetings with the deans.** To enhance our visibility, communication, and goal setting in concordance with other campus and external entities, ASD should establish a visiting committee. The committee should include high profile alumni from the corporate and non-profit sectors.

## *Actions*

- Meet regularly with key groups of students, faculty and staff to discuss ASD and campus goals.
- Increase our communication, through regular meetings, web sites and other vehicles, between and among the staff and students affiliated with academic and support units, as well as raising the profile and the level of understanding of ASD units across the campus.
- Utilize future division-wide staff meetings and retreats to set common goals and develop collective ways of working collaboratively; evidence of intramural collaboration should be presented in all annual reports.
- Recommend that the annual “state of diversity” address be retained and expanded into a one-day campus wide conference that will be both an annual “check-up” and an opportunity for further motivation and inspiration; we recommend both

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quantitative and qualitative evidence be used in order to determine just where the campus is.

- Formalize one-on-one annual visits with each dean and vice chancellor by the Bloomington leadership of ASD; we recommend that the deans and vice chancellors meet en masse to determine campus progress.
- Offer to assist in determining progress toward genuine diversity in the Schools, the College, and across campus – on an annual basis.

## External Relations

We must carefully define what publics we want to reach and how we want to reach them. It is important that we have a strong set of relationships across the campus, community and state, and that we utilize the proper tools and the right staff and faculty in each situation.

Communications with local influencers such as the city and county governments, the Chamber of Commerce, local nonprofits, media, churches and ethnic communities must be strong. We must work with the Office of Communication and Marketing, Admissions and others to reach the right influencers in communities outside Bloomington.

### *Actions:*

- Improve communications with Mayor's office and Chamber of Commerce regarding climate and local opportunities.
- Devise a plan, with OCM assistance, for promoting the work of ASD in the region and across the state; particular attention should be paid to areas of the state likely to produce IUB-eligible students of color.

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## Service to faculty, staff and students

### *Attracting and Retaining Students:*

Agreement that the number of students of color at IU Bloomington is too low is widespread. At the undergraduate level, we have long aspired to have our enrollment match the percentage of each minority group in the state of Indiana. This has proven to be out of reach for a number of reasons. We believe we must set a more realistic goal and join with others to develop solid, achievable, measurable mechanisms to reach agreed upon goals. For example, the percentage of African-Americans and Latinos in Indiana is much higher than the percentage at IU Bloomington, but it is also significantly higher than the percentage of college-qualified high school graduates in those groups. Our goal is and should be to achieve a percentage of undergraduate students at IU Bloomington equal to that of the eligible high school graduates of Latino and African American heritage. Although we are already at or above the same percentages for Native Americans and Asian Americans, we recognize that because the state populations are so low, our aspirations must be set higher. We encourage the campus and the deans to work with us and with Enrollment Services to agree on goals for all the above groups that however challenging, will be achievable.

Enrollment data from the past five years show that, whatever the long-term goal, we are not making the progress we would wish. Perhaps that is the most important enrollment fact, and we must address it, by working with Enrollment Services, the direct admit programs of the schools, and with those who craft campus financial aid strategies. Even though the financial environment is difficult and it is therefore tempting to use most of our institutional aid to “leverage” higher-paying out of state students, we believe that in the long term, building a loyal in-state alumni base in communities of color will pay great dividends to Indiana University, and we call on the campus to join us in making that a primary goal.

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Turning to the resources we already have, we are concerned about certain issues that are faced by our pre-college programs and the Hudson & Holland Scholars Programs, Hutton Honors College and Groups Student Support Services. Clearly in the wake of the Michigan decision, these programs will have more difficulty maintaining their high enrollment of students of color, and we must make more resources available to students of color to supplant those lost by the Michigan decision and its implications.

As part of the university commitment to its K-12 initiative, summer pre-college programs have been growing in recent years and are accomplishing much in creating a “pipeline” of prepared students whose brief experiences at IU have increased their chances of applying and attending here. Nonetheless, the university needs to do a better job of accommodating the pre-collegiate programs since they are often poorly funded and their students in need of utilizing often expensive and sometimes inaccessible campus recreational, computing, library, and food service facilities. Greater cooperation and discounted and/or bundled services would increase access of pre-collegiate programming. Greater interschool cooperation, as mirrored by Informatics, Biology and the Business School, would aid in the overall coherency of the university’s K-12 outreach initiatives.

#### *Actions:*

- Compare our percentages at all levels of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, and Native Americans to those of the IU-eligible students from the same populations likely to graduate from Indiana high schools in the foreseeable future.
- Work with Enrollment Services to determine clear and measurable objectives regarding recruitment of students of color.
- Establish clear and measurable objectives on acquisition and retention of undergraduate students; accountability is too vague currently.

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- Review the current use of ASD financial aid programs.
- Review campus financial aid programs.
- Review undergraduate admissions policy both campus wide and in each school to insure equitable access for students of color.
- Develop and implement a process for collecting retention data by school—from the Schools.
- Enhance collaboration across campus on pre-college efforts.
- Determine the proper role of diversity in direct admissions and approaches to achieving diversity in direct admissions.
- Form graduate admission task force of deans, graduate school dean, and ASD leadership to coordinate strategies and resources associated with attracting and retaining graduate students of color.
- Administer, as a measurement and as an implicit training device, a campus climate questionnaire to all staff.
- Appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to determine the strengths and weaknesses of our existing pre-college programs and to make recommendations where appropriate.

## *Attracting and Retaining Faculty*

Schools are the primary drivers in acquiring and retaining faculty. ASD helps through the campus wide Strategic Hiring Program, but all of the decisions to hire faculty are and should be made by schools. The current arrangement works well, particularly as we can point to well over a hundred hires of faculty of color in the past few years, most of them with some assistance from ASD. The campus generally and academic departments specifically must do a better job of retaining these faculty. Doing so requires discovering ways to improve the climate for faculty of color, e.g., assisting spouses with securing employment in Bloomington.

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## *Actions:*

- Explore creation of a new program on strategic faculty retention through partnership with the Bloomington Faculty Council, academic deans; collaborate with Dean of the Faculties in “tracking” faculty.
- Encourage deans and selected departments to engage in further exploration of the idea of hiring more faculty of color with graduate degrees produced at IUB.
- Expand efforts to add diversity units across the curriculum.
- Encourage faculty to fold diversity into the curriculum at appropriate points.
- Continue to support Strategic Hiring vigorously
- Administer, as a measurement and as an implicit training device, a campus climate questionnaire to faculty.
- Continue to measure progress within each of the schools and the College.
- Provide incentives and recognition to units that are doing a good job.
- Encourage academic and administrative units to work with the minority staff councils to assist with potential hiring concerns.
- Encourage the Chancellor and President to hold vice chancellors and vice presidents with IUB portfolios responsible for achieving campus diversity objectives.

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## *Attracting and Educating Staff*

Perhaps to a greater degree than other schools, IU Bloomington is a faculty and student-centered institution; the faculty/staff ratio is lower at IUB than at any other CIC institution. Staffs are still under-recognized for their work and provide a critical major point of contact for most students. Accordingly, it is critical that staff as individuals and the offices that employ them must reflect the values of a multicultural campus with many diverse communities to serve. We believe that while many of the efforts to recruit students and faculty have been significant and successful, the staff level has lagged behind; with no meaningful, systematic effort put forth in what we recognize is a mostly white job applicant pool.

### *Actions:*

- Continue to monitor staff hiring and retention by the Office of Affirmative Action.
- Provide more consistent and universal training sessions on diversity issues.
- Promote and conduct more aggressive searches for staff of color at all levels, especially in offices that touch large numbers of students.
- Administer, as a measurement and as an implicit training device, a campus climate questionnaire to all staff.
- Continue to measure and to publicly report progress in all academic and administrative units.

## *Continuation of the Planning Process*

The preceding sections identify issues and objectives gleaned from meetings with deans and other campus leaders. As a follow-up, we recommend that the Vice Chancellor for Academic Support and Diversity and the campus Chancellor jointly solicit diversity reports from each campus RC. This solicitation should be done formally and annually; we recommend that a one-page summary outlining gains

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in diversity and improvement in campus climate be requested of each unit dean and vice chancellor. These should be incorporated in subsequent ASD planning.

Various components of this plan, given the shifting contexts in which these efforts will take place, should be updated annually; each ASD unit should produce a one-page report of key accomplishments and key goals each year, and these should be circulated widely within ASD and to all key constituencies, both on campus and elsewhere.

*Actions:*

- Solicit annual “diversity reports” from each campus vice chancellor and ASD associate vice chancellors that gauge the work of ASD as well as that of their own units.
- Solicit annual “diversity reports” from all campus academic units that gauge the work of ASD as well as that of their own units.
- Require annual reports of all ASD units describing key accomplishment and foregrounding collaborations with other units in and outside of ASD.

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## Conclusion

Our emphasis upon collaboration demonstrates plainly that while this plan was created within ASD and for ASD, that unit cannot achieve the campus’ shared aims for diversity without strengthening existing partnerships and creating new ones. Ask a student at Showalter Fountain or a faculty member in the Lilly Library whether or not diversity (and in this instance we mean attracting and retaining students of color and involving them in all parts of the intellectual and social life of the university) is a desirable thing, and we would certainly hear “yes” from both and then some language about equity and the enrichment of the educational experience. While

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we applaud and share these sentiments, we also acknowledge that it is a very different matter to make difficult choices in hard times in order to insure access to higher education for qualified students from historically underrepresented groups; we also acknowledge that it is no easy matter to make an intentional and persistent attempt to make diversity (as defined above) a part of the ethical infrastructure of an institution as large as IUB. We maintain, however, that making those choices and that attempt is as important as any other work done at IUB, and we welcome additional collaborators.