First in 2009 Coordinating Council
Annual Report on Progress
June 2005

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Background and Rationale

Over the years, the Miami community has shifted from seeing diversity as one strategy or issue among many at our university to recognizing the importance of diversity as an educational imperative. Social psychologist Pat Gurin has found that students who encounter the most diversity inside and outside the classroom show the deepest engagement in active thinking processes, growth in intellectual engagement and motivation and development of academic skills (1999). As President James Garland noted in a recent column in *The Miami University Report* (March 25, 2004), “Education is about shaking students out of their comfort zones, challenging them to take risks, making it impossible for them to rely on learned patterns of behavior carried over from childhood. A diverse environment makes us smarter because it forces us to adapt to our world in new and unfamiliar ways.” Toward these ends, the First in 2009 Coordinating Council focused in 2003-2004 on the broad theme of advancing academic excellence through inclusion and conducted 25 departmentally-based conversations as well as 20 “vision and planning” focus sessions with over 300 members of the Miami community to identify critical priorities for action.

In a retreat held in May 2004, the First in 2009 Coordinating Council along with the Council of Academic Deans, the University Multicultural Council steering committee and other invited administrators reviewed all of the ideas generated in the focus sessions and conversations held the previous academic year. Retreat participants elected to create four subcommittees or groups to address four of the priorities most commonly cited in the 2003-2004 focus sessions and conversations. They selected the following topics for the 2004-2005 subcommittees: (1) helping faculty to create more inclusive classrooms, (2) enhancing international education, (3) creating a better relationship among the three domestic campuses, and (4) ensuring that graduate education is a visible presence.

This report summarizes the rationales for, and the work of, the four First in 2009 subcommittees.1 It also describes the annual retreat held in May 2005 in which participants reviewed the subcommittees’ progress as well as reports and documents generated by other university committees. Finally, the report will identify the recommended action steps for 2005-2006 which were developed at the May 2005 retreat.

Subcommittee #1: Creating More Inclusive Classroom Environments

In order to attain “First in 2009” goals, Miami needs to create institutional transformation that locates diversity as central to educational excellence. Evidence in the literature suggests that comprehensive institutional change in teaching methods, curriculum, campus climate, and institutional definition provides educational benefits for minority and majority students. The First in 2009 Faculty Development

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1 Each subcommittee created a lengthy report on its progress. Copies of the full reports of these four subcommittees can be located on the First in 2009 website (www.muohio.edu/firstin2009).
Action Team was formed and co-chaired by Susan Mosley-Howard and Marty Petrone. Committee members included Peter Magolda, Joan Fopma Loy, Susan Paulson, Ron Scott, Jennifer Kinney, Kay Snavely, Hays Cummins, Eric Aikens, and Gerardo Brown-Manrique.

The team engaged in extensive research and collaboration not only within the team itself but among other key constituents and stakeholders throughout the university to develop a strategic plan for creating an inclusive teaching and learning environment. This plan follows the RPEE structural model (research, planning, enactment and evaluation). Although the plan outlines a range of component parts designed to fit the diverse needs of Miami’s students and faculty, the team argues that it should be enacted as a total entity.

The plan includes a list of suggested interventions at various levels:
1. Place Statement for Respect for Human Diversity and STRIVE statement prominently on University website and other communication outlets.
2. Disseminate widely an overview on the centrality of diversity to students’ intellectual and social development.
3. Develop an accountability-and-reward system for inclusion efforts.
4. Develop an OUR MIAMI INCLUSION CAUCUS (university-wide diversity summit)
5. Earmark funds for inclusion efforts.
6. Develop integrated, new Faculty Orientation First-Year Program that extends throughout the year which includes brown bag series on best practices. Assess each program.
7. Create divisional diversity resource teams.
8. Develop pro-seminar on inclusive pedagogy.
9. Create a “Critical Friends” initiative that provides support and interventions for faculty and staff already engaging in strong inclusion practices.
10. Create “Our Miami” partnerships between Academic and Student Affairs staff and faculty to redesign curriculum and co-curriculum.
11. Expand “Let’s Talk” dialogues in the residence halls to include both faculty and students.
12. Develop a resource consortium (central clearinghouse for diversity resources).

Subcommittee #2: Enhancing Students’ Learning Abroad and at Home
Miami has long held a national reputation for its Luxembourg Center (MUDEC) and the large number of its faculty-led international credit workshops. Although Miami’s ranking remains high in total enrollments, aspirant institutions have now surpassed Miami in the critical and annually ranked category of the percentage of students studying abroad by time of graduation. Institutions nationwide recognize study abroad experiences as essential to a superior education. Miami must increase enrollments to reclaim its national rankings and to prepare its students to be citizens of the world.

As a result of these realizations, the Coordinating Council elected to form a task force chaired by David Keitges. Other task force members were Mark Boardman, Anna Dollar, Charles Ganelin, Janet Henry Jeanne Hey, Kevin McNeilly, Chris Myers, Jim Shively, Cordelia Stroinigg, Harvey Thurmer, Marcia Waller, and Cheryl Young. The task force charge was to benchmark against aspirant institutions to identify strategies to increase the percentage of Miami undergraduate students studying abroad and propose ways that those students’ experiences can enrich the domestic campuses.

After conducting research on aspirant institutions, the task force developed four major objectives for the future:
- By 2009, raise to 50% (from the current 30%) the participation rate of undergraduates studying abroad by graduation;
• Raise to 50% (from the current 30%) the annual percentage of undergraduates studying abroad for a semester or longer;
• Develop curricular offerings to extend the learning experiences of returnees and enrich the education of non-participants;
• Recognize and celebrate students for their noteworthy study-abroad experiences and personal successes abroad.

In order to reach these objectives, the task force offered over 40 recommendations. Among the most significant recommendations were:

1. Develop recommendations for study abroad programs approved for degree-program credit.
2. Create approved MP Thematic Sequence for specific study abroad programs, consider adding study abroad option as substitute for MP requirement, and explore using one-plus option for study abroad.
3. Establish scholarship support for international education.
4. Develop master plan for promotion of study abroad programs.
5. Develop study abroad website and web-portal on Miami’s webpage.
6. Increase health insurance coverage for those participating in study abroad.
7. Develop assessment instruments for study abroad impact on students and on Miami as a whole (focus groups, surveys, etc.).
8. Design re-entry course for students returning from study abroad as well as other upper-division courses that engage returnee students.
9. Create more recognition and celebration activities and programs for study abroad students (photo contest, web-based gallery, essay contest, awards for study abroad excellence, sashes at graduation, flags at graduation, etc.).

Subcommittee #3: Creating Synergy Among Miami’s Domestic Campuses
For the first time in their history, the regional campuses are faced with serious and rapidly developing competition. Recently, Sinclair Community College announced its intention to move into both Warren and Butler counties where the Middletown and Hamilton campuses are located. Additionally, three bachelor’s degree institutions (University of Phoenix, Mt. Vernon Nazarene, Wilmington College) have opened branch campuses in Butler County in the past eighteen months. These developments seriously threaten the viability of Miami’s two regional campuses. In order to address these threats, some of the regional campus members believe that additional degree programming at all levels, but particularly at the bachelor’s degree level, are needed. Moreover, the regional campuses need greater flexibility and autonomy, and they need to act with greater unity, in order to be best positioned to respond to community needs and to effectively compete. Although the relationships between the three domestic campuses are generally positive, there is a need for greater consultation with, and consideration of, the regional campuses in major decision-making and policy development at the University.

To address these serious issues, a subcommittee chaired by Michael Governanti, Daniel Hall and Judith Delzell was created. Its membership included individuals from all three campuses: Marilyn Anderson, Don Byrkett, Becca Hickam, Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, Diana Royer, Rob Schorman, and Robin Sommer. The subcommittee charge read as follows:

Review the Ohio Board of Regents and other appropriate State of Ohio documents regarding goals and priorities for higher education, and review the respective First in 2009 goals. Then, take the following steps:

- Identify the most important issues facing the regional campuses that need attention, prioritize them, and develop recommendations for action;
Consider the most appropriate relationships among the three campuses; and
- Determine the strategic and programmatic directions for the regional campuses, including the appropriate mix of degree programs and the appropriate degree of outreach and public service.

The subcommittee generated a report which included the following key recommendations:

1. Statement by the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees outlining a vision for the regional campuses. This statement needs to be followed by the development of a strategic plan for the regional campuses. Because time is of the essence, the Task Force recommends that the strategic planning process occur in the Fall Term, 2005. The plan should include, if endorsed by senior administration and the BOT, the addition of new certificate, associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s, and workforce training programs.

2. New model of administrative structure that provides the regional campuses with greater flexibility, autonomy, and unity. Regular interaction between the Board of Trustees and the regional campuses should be considered and an accelerated curricular review process for programs offered solely on the regional campuses needs to be developed.

3. Clarification of the expectations of department chairs pertaining to responsibilities related to regional campus faculty members. Make sure deans and department chairs are aware of the overall mission of regional campuses, as well as service/community expectations of regional campus faculty members.

4. Funding for the Voice of America initiative. Miami also needs to develop a plan for providing educational services to Warren County and the West Chester area.

5. Scholarships, better parking, and improved relocation services and advisement for students relocating to the Oxford campus.

Subcommittee #4: Creating a National Presence for Graduate Education

Miami University is classified as a Carnegie Doctoral Intensive University. As such, the University is not an institution that focuses exclusively on undergraduate education, nor a research university that concentrates its efforts on doctoral and postdoctoral education; its educational role is more complex. Although the presence of the graduate programs increases the quality of faculty hired by Miami University, enhances facilities and libraries, provides greater and higher quality research and scholarship opportunities to undergraduate students, and builds the reputation of the university, this has not been effectively communicated to many groups within the University. All these factors are critically important as “First in 2009 starts us down a trajectory toward being, not just a national university as we are now, but rather a nationally renowned university.”

Professors Jeff Potteiger and Anne Morris-Hooke agreed to co-chair a subcommittee devoted to this issue. The members of their subcommittee were Gil Pacey, Mary Cayton, Allen McConnell, Susan Ewing, Chris Wolfe, Brad Bays, and Keith Noble.

The subcommittee’s charge was to engage the university in a conversation that focuses on the following questions:

1. What is the appropriate proportion of graduate students at a university where a liberal arts undergraduate education remains its primary mission?
2. What steps can be taken to elevate the presence of Miami’s graduate programs and students across the nation?
3. How can we best utilize the talents and time of graduate assistants and teaching associates to improve our intellectual climate?
4. What is the role of graduate education in the scholarly efforts of Miami?
5. What steps can be taken to maintain and increase the diversity of the graduate student body, and how can Miami take a leadership role in this area?

The subcommittee members collected the following information to guide the discussions:

- Data on the enrollment (by gender and ethnicity) of undergraduate and graduate students at Miami University from Fall 1993 to Fall 2004.
- The undergraduate and graduate student enrollments at our aspirant institutions.
- A listing of the master’s and doctoral programs by department.
- The state subsidy dollars received for the different levels of masters and doctoral students.
- The stipends paid to teaching assistants and graduate assistants by division.
- The average stipends for selected fields at 83 institutions in 2003-04.
- Historical graduate student levels at Miami University.

Using this information as a collective starting point, the subcommittee initiated discussions with various constituents within the university. The chairs, deans, faculty members, and senior administrators at the Provost’s Breakfast had table discussions on November 2, 2004. Chairs and graduate program directors of most departments, and Miami University graduate students were consulted between December and February. Two open university forums were held on March 28th and 29th, 2005.

It became evident during these discussions that there is significant support for improving the existing graduate programs and thereby enhancing the contributions already made by the graduate programs to the excellence of Miami’s undergraduate programs. During the discussions, the subcommittee was encouraged to answer the questions in its charge, and also suggest that a strategic plan for graduate education at Miami University be developed. Therefore, the subcommittee recommends that a strategic plan for graduate education be developed by the Graduate School to set priorities and establish a time table to achieve five major goals by 2009 and beyond:

1. Increase the student stipends to nationally competitive levels (and include affordable health insurance);
2. Increase the numbers of full-time graduate students to 10% of the total student body (the level last enjoyed in 1995) through selective program growth;
3. Increase the visibility of graduate education within the University, the region, the nation, and the world;
4. Increase faculty-generated grant support for graduate education;
5. Increase the endowment from the Capital Campaign to provide stable support for graduate education.

The strategic plan should be endorsed by the provost, the president, and the Board of Trustees to ensure commitment to its goals and objectives throughout the University.

**Suggested Directions for 2005-2006**

On May 10, 2005, the chairs of the First in 2009 Coordinating Council subcommittees met with the Council of Academic Deans, the University Multicultural Council Steering Committee and other university administrators to review the work of the Coordinating Council and to identify possible action steps for the next academic year.

1. In addition to reading the four subcommittees’ annual reports, the retreat participants reviewed all of the reports from major committees of the University as well as recommendations made during Miami’s process of re-accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central
Association (e.g., the major reports of the accreditation committees which were created in preparation for the self-study, the self-study and the preliminary final report of the Higher Learning Commission).

Retreat participants then brainstormed possible 2005-2006 action steps as well as agents for the action. The table below summarizes the most commonly cited recommended action steps and responsible parties cited at the retreat:

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<tr>
<th>Issue/Topic</th>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>Agent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusive Classrooms</td>
<td>Assemble the Faculty Development Action Team; appoint Michael Stevenson as the new co-chair (along with Susan Mosley-Howard as returning co-chair), and expand membership as needed. Report on progress to the First in 2009 Coordinating Council.</td>
<td>CC Chair, Provost, Special Assistant to President on Diversity</td>
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<td>(Goal 2, 5)</td>
<td>Hold faculty development sessions on inclusion for new faculty. Update CELT website to include more information on faculty development and inclusion.</td>
<td>CELT (in consultation with Susan Mosley-Howard and Michael Stevenson)</td>
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<td>Expand “Let’s Talk” dialogues.</td>
<td>Special Assistant to President on Diversity, Assistant VP for Diversity in Student Affairs</td>
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<td>Study Abroad (Goal 4)</td>
<td>Implement key steps from the 2004-05 subcommittee report for increasing percentage of students studying abroad and studying for at least one semester. Report on progress to the First in 2009 Coordinating Council.</td>
<td>David Keitges, International Education Committee (of Senate)</td>
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<td>Ask departments to generate 1-3 superb study abroad programs for students in their majors.</td>
<td>David Keitges, Provost</td>
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<td>Identify new ways for study abroad to receive Miami Plan credit</td>
<td>Director of International Education, LEC</td>
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<td>Regional Campus (Goal 1, 3)</td>
<td>Develop a specific plan for addressing curricular recommendations from the 2004-05 regional campus subcommittee report. Report on progress to First in 2009 Coordinating Council.</td>
<td>Provost and the Executive Directors of Regional Campuses</td>
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<td>Form a working group of key stakeholders to develop and implement concrete ways of increasing the number of regional campus students relocating to the Oxford campus. Report on progress to First in 2009 Coordinating Council.</td>
<td>Provost Subcommittee formed by the Coordinating Council</td>
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<td>Graduate Education (Goal 1)</td>
<td>Implement recommendations from the 2004-05 graduate education subcommittee report for improving graduate education that includes suggestions for selective program growth, greater support for graduate students (e.g., stipends, graduate assistantships, library holdings, health insurance, housing) and a proposed budget.</td>
<td>Committee formed by the Dean of Graduate School</td>
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<td>Bicentennial (Goal 4)</td>
<td>Make progress toward creating an official Miami history, celebratory events and a major symposium for our bicentennial.</td>
<td>Bicentennial Committee, Bicentennial Coordinator</td>
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<td>Assessment (Goal 8)</td>
<td>Expand “Outcomes in the Majors” project, numbers of Assessment fellows, and instruments for assessment of student learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Assessment Team, Liberal Education Director</td>
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<td>First in 2009 Awareness</td>
<td>Develop new brochure that articulates progress toward First in 2009 goals; revise First in 2009 website (fall 2005). Offer presentations on First in 2009 to Miami community (2005-2006 academic year).</td>
<td>First in 2009 CC Chair</td>
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**Conclusion**

2004-2005 was a banner year in terms of progress toward the First in 2009 goals. Not only did the Coordinating Council and its four subcommittees make considerable strides, but many accomplishments were made by other committees and divisions across the University. This year’s highlights include the creation of 99 Ohio Achievement Scholarships, a significant improvement in the selectivity of graduate student admissions, a substantial increase in the total dollar amount of grants won by faculty, a wide array of new programs, majors and concentrations, the hiring of three leadership positions relating to diversity, an abundance of new building constructions and renovations, the expansion of our wireless technology capabilities, a successful university-wide self-study and re-accreditation process, and the launch of our $350 million capital campaign.