### STRIVE Conversation Summaries

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STRIVE Conversation with Liberal Education Council
Prepared by Jerry Stonewater, Interim University Director of Liberal Education

At the LEC meeting on October 28 we discussed issues of inclusion at Miami. We had a wonderful conversation and from it emerged many interesting ideas and comments. LEC is always interested in ways that we can improve the education environment at Miami. Our discussion ranged from specific issues that LEC could address to ideas and issues involving the University in general.

A. Ideas specific to LEC
   1. Rubric category for inclusions/diversity – We are currently in the process of field-testing a rubric that we use to review MP course proposals. It was suggested that one of the criterion for the rubric might be the extent to which the course addresses issues of inclusion and diversity, either directly in the content, or indirectly in the way inclusion is addressed pedagogically.
   2. Thinking “out of the box” on curriculum changes – It was suggested that we need to find pedagogical approaches that go beyond “intellectualizing” issues to those that will engage students in direct experiences so they can build understanding in a direct and meaningful way about issues and ways of behaving that exclude. Tied in with this idea is encouragement of service learning opportunities for students.
   3. U.S. Cultures courses – These courses may be helping students to understand difference.
   4. Survey existing MP courses – We could conduct an “audit” of which of our Mp courses currently are “set up” for inclusion (content wise or pedagogically). Best practices could be identified, and shared. An audit would provide information on which to make suggestions to the faculty about where new (or revised) courses are needed.
   5. Decreasing perception of LEC as “gatekeeper” – Our efforts to be less the critic and more the facilitator of faculty efforts is an inclusive activity. Continue these efforts.
   6. Student (and faculty) resistance – One member had the view that some students do not seem to “connect” with ideas of diversity and inclusion; it is removed from them and they are resistant because of previous learning or environments. How do we address this resistance?
   7. Faculty Development workshops – LEC is planning a series of faculty development workshops related to the Miami Plan. Perhaps include something on pedagogy for inclusive classrooms.
   8. Change in process to review course proposals – Part of being inclusive depends on seeing the other’s point of view and taking their position. Perhaps in the LEC review process, one reviewer would be assigned to defend the proposal as a way of taking the proposal writer’s perspective.

B. Ideas and issues related to the University in general
   1. Recruitment – A question was raised about what we do to recruit faculty, students and staff who may be “different” from much of mainstream Miami.
   2. Oxford Community – One member raised the concern that decisions had been made that have adversely affected the Mile Square. This is related to the growing number of faculty (especially minority) who no longer choose to live in Oxford.
   3. Top-Down Management – The perception that the administration’s management style is top-down was mentioned as detrimental to building an inclusive campus community.
   4. The administration’s handling of the strike – The question was raised about where did we see democratic, inclusive discourse during the strike. The administration’s approach to the strike was seen as detrimental to building an inclusive campus community.
   5. Faculty addressing their own biases – It was mentioned that before the community can change, individuals must “do their own work”. Some worried that many feel they are “already there”, but have much to do.
   6. Mandatory diversity training – Many institutions have mandatory diversity training. Should we do something like that here? Quality of those doing training is important.
STRIVE Conversation with the Office of Advancement of Research and Scholarship and Committee on the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching
October 15, 2003
Prepared by G. E. Pacey

On October 15, 2003 the staff of OARS and CELT conducted their STRIVE conversation. About 67% of the potential participants were present. The following comments/observations were made:

One general comment: This group felt that the “STRIVE” vision should be stated to the point of the goal that each serves. Then in a separate section expand the definition or explanation of the issues being addressed. The group felt that vision statements are simple concise statements that can be expanded elsewhere. The items after the served goals confused the issues for many of the participants.

1. On the “S” vision: The words highly qualified, diverse, and capable were questioned. Depending on one’s definition of these words, this vision is good or bad. For example, one comment was should capable be replaced with teacher/scholar using the newly developed definition (Provost’s breakfast discussion)? If the definition of “capable” is left up to individual units, mediocre units will have at best a mediocre definition. One suggestion was that transformational leadership might be a term that can be used.

2. On the “T” vision: The discussion centered on the word deep. What does that mean? This group thought that critical thinking and self authorship should be promoted not deep learning.

3. On the “R” vision: Professional development for some reasons has a negative aura about it. One suggestion was life long learning/learners

4. On the “I” vision: The idea of inclusion was unanimously endorsed. It was stated that diversity that is with segregation is not helpful. There was a feeling that the University strives for diversity by setting up segregated programs. Inclusion also meant to the classified staff that their input on issues is seldom sought and when sought seldom respected. During this discussion the staff stated that the lack of communication, lack of input, minimal team collaborations or spirit and lack of respect has created a second class citizen status for them, a sort of them versus us versus the student segregation for the classified staff. They are disrespected by the administrators and/or unclassified staff and they are looked down upon by the students. Many expressed a feeling that this was a gender issue as well. I specifically asked how much of this feeling was due to the strike. The response was that these feelings existed prestrike and continues poststrike. They would like to see a statement about creating a professional atmosphere in all University offices.

5. On the “V” vision: Only comment was can this be if the PC police exists?

6. On the “E” vision: Evaluate what was the first comment? A short term evaluation would be meaningless. A longitudinal study would be required to see if the inclusion concept is a lifelong objective of our formal students and an existing objective for the faculty and staff. Benchmarking is still a dirty word.

Other General comments:
Staff is not in the University’s mission statement.
The Greek community and athletics are the most non-inclusive groups on campus.
The furniture policy for Miami staff designates class status.
The group, especially the staff, would like to thank the Coordinating Council for this opportunity.
STRIVE Conversation with Miami University Libraries
Prepared by Dean Judith Sessions

What do you think that Miami as a whole needs to do in order to move closer to this vision?

• Understand that the tuition is too high for many segments of our society, so explore ways to offer more scholarships early in the admissions process
• Recruit from more diversified geographical regions of the state and country
• Eradicate the appearance of elitism on all levels
• Examine ways to overcome the mistrust of central administration
• Actively recruit a diverse campus in all areas
• Ensure that recruitment efforts address the concepts articulated in Project STRIVE
• Deemphasize the Greek system on campus because it promotes exclusionism
• Deemphasize sports
• Work hard towards economic equity – provide wages which meet the market midpoint for every position
• Offer more exchange programs with visiting scholars and graduate students from colleges and universities throughout the world
• Expand the graduate program offerings which may result in a higher international presence
• Offer distance learning opportunities
• Have a greater variety of classes on the regional campuses at non-traditional times
• Better handicap access to all buildings

How can new opportunities for inclusion be created inside and outside the classroom?

• More use of Diversity Peer Educators
• Provide study abroad opportunities in non-English speaking countries
• Create a buddy system – program will assign students from different backgrounds with an opportunity to share cultural, religious and ethnic experiences with one another
• Diversify and broaden curriculum
• Better access for the handicap community
• Offer closed caption films

How might faculty or staff involvement in inclusion be enhanced?

• Provide various incentives to faculty or staff members which may include providing release time, include service on evaluations for tenure, provide public service opportunities for staff
• Provide more service learning opportunities
• Create a job shadowing or exchange program
• Have faculty members require students to participate in diversity programs offered through CAWC, program areas, multi-cultural council, minority student enrichment, performing arts series, etc.

What policies or structures might be reworked or created to enhance inclusion?

• Benchmark the university against corporations and other universities that have demonstrated “best practices” regarding diversity
• Have administrators speak regularly on the topic - Hold administrators more responsible in “walking the walk and talking the talk” around issues of diversity
• Develop a university mission statement that includes “inclusion”
• Create job descriptions that include a statement on “inclusion” and highlights the university’s commitment to an inclusion environment
• Explore ways to ensure that minority contractors receive work during the capital buildings campaign
What are you already doing to implement this vision?

S – Students, faculty and staff who are highly qualified, diverse and capable of leadership in a global community. The university libraries has a minority librarian recruitment program which attempts to recruit new minority librarians to Miami and provide them with the inner workings of librarianship. Also, we recruit for all librarian positions in the targeted journals read by librarians of color.

The library has worked with the Personnel Office and Office of Multicultural Student Enrichment to increase the number of minority staff and students respectively.

T – Teaching that promotes deep learning. The university libraries offer a variety of information literacy classes to departments and units that support the university mission of academic excellence. This instruction focuses on critical thinking and evaluation of information sources.

R – Resources and support for faculty and staff - each academic discipline has a qualified subject specialist that is responsible for securing materials in all formats and ensuring that the collections complement the academic classes.

In addition, the University Libraries have established a variety of different electronic collections that highlight the history of Miami. These include African-Americans at Miami, Women in Sports at Miami and Women at Miami. The University Archives and Havighurst Special Collections also contain valuable resources that complement the academic mission of the university. Electronic databases reflect a diversity of views, such as Opposing Viewpoints and Ethnic Newswatch. We have created databases searchable with keywords related to diversity, including the GirlsVoices database of children’s literature.

I – Inclusive community and campus life – A core principle of librarianship is intellectual freedom and freedom of access for all regardless of your race, gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status in life. Offices within the university libraries have been designated safe places as part of the CAA program. Our lobby display case is available for any campus group that wants to display artifacts and resources that reflect their views. We have computer workstations and software specifically for persons with disabilities.

V – Values that promote intercultural understanding and a healthy public, democratic discourse – please see above

E – Evaluation and assessment in the form of best practices and benchmarking – The University Libraries have participated in a Library Assessment program entitled LibQual twice during the past four years. In addition, library departments have worked closely with academic departments to assess library services with our clientele. The Libraries regularly conducts environmental scans through conferences, programs, professional readings or committee involvement to ascertain the “best practices” within the field of librarianship.

How might you or your unit help to implement this vision more effectively?

The Dean and University Librarian has developed a Diversity Cluster that will have coordinating responsibilities related to Project STRIVE. In addition, the Diversity Cluster is charged with promoting diversity through implementation of academic, cultural and social programs, events, exhibits and collection development that reflect the range of racial, ethnic, religious, geographical, socioeconomic backgrounds, disabilities and sexual orientation. The Cluster shall provide leadership in building a library climate that supports and encourages library staff to recognize and value their similarities and differences.
Support for STRIVE
At its October 10 meeting, the Accreditation Steering Committee discussed the STRIVE Vision. It praised the Vision’s goals and bottom-up, grassroots strategy. It believes that the entire accreditation self-study effort will support and contribute to STRIVE by inviting all elements of the University community to participate in an institutional self-assessment whose results can be used to plan new strategies for achieving STRIVE and First in 2009 goals. In particular, the Committee noted that the STRIVE Vision focuses on many objectives that are also highlighted by the Higher Learning Commission’s criteria. The self-study’s special examination of diversity can also assist STRIVE. In addition, results of the Steering Committee’s request that faculty, staff, and students identify the major strengths and concerns at Miami could be useful to the STRIVE initiative.

Action Taken
The Committee discussed ways to increase the self-study’s ability to support STRIVE, deciding that this could best be accomplished by explaining STRIVE to its six subcommittees and asking them to heighten their attention to inclusion during their work. Each Steering Committee member will carry the STRIVE message to the subcommittee for which he or she serves as a liaison.

Continued STRIVE Discussion
The Committee continued its STRIVE discussion by exploring the relationship between the STRIVE Vision and the Higher Learning Commission’s Core Component 3C, which concerns the extent to which “The organization creates effective learning environments.” Committee members noted that an effective learning environment is one in which all students feel respected and where they are not distracted by the harassment and hostility that is sometimes experienced by students because of their racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, disability, or other factor. On the other hand, the Committee noted that creating an effective learning environment is not the same as creating an environment where everyone feels “comfortable” all the time. An environment that promotes growth can sometimes be uncomfortable because it challenges individuals to see things in new ways, encounter new experiences, and engage with new ideas. However, in an effective learning environment all individuals are respected and supported in their efforts to gain knowledge, grow, and relate constructively with one another.

Finally, the Committee touched briefly on two additional points. It noted that some groups that agree with the Vision may have difficulty deciding how to allocate their time and energies among the various initiatives that have been advanced in the University. The Committee also wondered whether the Coordinating Council would benefit from developing a mechanism for learning about unfunded STRIVE projects that aren’t mentioned in the STRIVE reports submitted in conjunction with the initial round of STRIVE discussions.
Draft STRIVE Conversation with Miami University Middletown Campus
Prepared by Marty Petrone

**Demographics:** 24 participants representing a cross section of the campus community including upper administration, faculty, unclassified staff, and classified staff from a broad range of locations within the Campus. There were, however, no students in attendance.

There was general agreement that a culture of inclusion recognizes the intrinsic value and unique capabilities of everyone in the community.

There was also some strong sentiment that there is irony in an exclusive state school trying to promote inclusion. As one person stated the message the University sends through its actions is, “You can be diverse as long as you are smart and rich.”

Some felt Vision 2009 “hamstrings” diversity efforts by creating an environment that attracts diverse populations but not creating a university culture where they feel they belong. One person pointed out that the Vision 2009 is in itself hierarchial and exclusive in its design. Being “First in 2009” is by definition an exclusive declaration.

There was also concern that academic excellence is a misnomer. If the only students who attend Miami are those who are already outstanding along the present University measures for excellence, what kind of learning is actually taking place? Many in this discussion believe that excellence deals with the level of value added to our students’ intellectual and social development rather than their scores on standardized tests and success in national competitions.

**What can Miami as a whole do in order to move closer to this vision?**

1) Recognize that inclusion is accepting people where they are and providing the opportunities to help them get to where they want to go.

2) Attend to the diversity we have right now. Begin by making the people who are already here feel valued, comfortable and included themselves—Inclusion means encompassing Oxford classified staff and the Hamilton, Middletown, and Luxembourg Campus faculty, staff, and students in dialogues and decision making.

3) Focus on transforming the University culture so that all members of the community feel that they belong. We cannot just be diverse we must take action to make it central to our mission.

4) Expand the definition of diversity to include a wide range of physical and academic ability as well as mental health (depression, anorexia)

5) Recognize that democracy is about people in power. The University Senate must get its voice back in the governance of the institution.

6) Cultural transformation and this inclusion initiative must include the Miami University Board of Trustees and all levels and locations of administrators
   a) Broaden the diversity of perspectives on the Board of Trustees.
   b) Encourage upper administration to examine their own statements from the perspectives from others. There were strong reactions to the “Open Letter” from Miami’s upper administration. It appeared to relegate the “working poor”—a minority group within the University structure—to an economic entity rather than individuals working for the good of the institution and students.

**How can opportunities for inclusion be created inside and outside the classroom?**

1) Stop thinking that we know what “others” need. Rather than treat others as we would like to be treated, we should find out how others want to be treated and act on that information. (Platinum Rule)
2) If we want to make people feel welcomed, we need to greet them—for lack of a better word—we need to provide customer service. If a student comes to the University for a service and feels their needs and interests are not valued, they do not want to come back and will tell everyone they know not to come here also. Our “product” needs to be one that includes the needs and wants of all students.

3) Faculty need to reflect diversity in their research and be rewarded for it.

4) Get out of our silos and interact with students and across work units.

5) Provide help and incentives to faculty for understanding and learning how to more effectively address diverse ways of knowing, learning, and relating.

6) We cannot set goals and meet them if we do not measure and track something.
   a. We seem to measure our success by racial, economic, age and academic factors but do not track or report on other forms of diversity like academic readiness, social rank - other than economic- and lifestyle or life commitments (family, work, etc...)
   b. What we need to do is:
      1. Identify factors for success regarding inclusion of individual differences.
      2. Track and report them.
      3. Advertise our successes and learn from our failures.

What are you already doing to implement the “STRIVE” vision?

In many ways, the Middletown Campus reflects this vision. We have broader diversity across a range of primary and secondary identity dimensions including age, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, socioeconomic status, gender as well as learning styles and academic preparedness. Our focus is outreach and opportunity and addressing students where they are rather than where we think they should be. We also engage in critical pedagogy and teaching and learning collaboration across disciplines.

What are some barriers to achieving the “STRIVE” vision?

1) Constraints imposed by the Oxford Campus departments and divisions
   a. Enrollment management efforts which exclude our students
      1. Gaining entry into an education cohort is based solely on GPA. Process for acceptance needs to be diversified to encompass a range of measures. A high GPA in no way assures that a student will become an effective, compassionate, classroom teacher. The rich life experience of students may be a better measure.
   b. No evening Bachelors completion program available for non-traditional students who work and/or have families
   c. Expecting regional campus students to travel to Oxford to take entrance exam for their major

2) A general sense that the University is not “coming in peace” with the “STRIVE” initiative.
   a. In addition to the AFSME strike, last month at Middletown there were open discussions on the lectureship proposal and the new P & T guidelines, a forum on the new tuition formula, and a dialogue with John Hughes about expectations for grants. In the context of these other discussions, “STRIVE” seems contradictory.

3) A sense of feeling included only when it is of benefit to the University
   a. Demographic data on diverse populations from Middletown is included in overall University statistics but those same student are likely to find that their needs go unmet if and when they transfer to the Oxford campus.

4) There was some sentiment that the acronym “STRIVE” trivialized this effort. Additionally, another felt that the way the language was couched did not invite participation.
STRIVE Conversation with the Graduate Student Association  
October 21, 2003  
Facilitator, Connie Kendall

The October GSA meeting opened with Adolph Haisler’s Q&A forum on the “Post Miami Manor” situation and the question of adequate, affordable graduate student housing. I was scheduled to speak directly after Mr. Haisler. The subject of Mr. Haisler’s talk – the University’s plans to build a $30,000,000 apartment complex in place of Miami Manor, where rent is projected to be (approximately) $1000 per month per bed – was highly contentious in nature and lasted nearly one hour. However, the problem of graduate student housing actually brought into focus the issue of inclusion well before I began to speak, and therefore paved the way for a productive conversation about what GSA might do to confront this issue. Let me explain.

Context of the STRIVE conversation:
Most of the graduate students who currently live in Miami Manor (and who have been recently relocated, with the same rental fees, because of the beginning construction at the site) are international graduate students and/or married/single graduate students with children. Miami Manor provided affordable housing as well as convenient access to campus and to various forms of public transportation, which is especially important for those students who do not have cars (a way of life considered “typical” for this population of graduate students). While living space was viewed as limited and the amenities were “outdated” in the Miami Manor apartments, the rent is considered to be reasonable given the stipend amount currently offered by the University for most MA and PhD students. However, the projected rental of the new apartment space will be prohibitive to all graduate students (and their families) who are expected to “live” on the stipend wage alone (even with the stipend increase that was instituted this academic year). The student population most affected by this change in rental fees will be the very students who are often “targeted” by inclusion initiatives -- international students (because of laws that restrict their partners from earning wages while in the US) and non-traditional students (parents, older students returning to graduate school). There is grave concern on the part of GSA that these same students will be forced to find housing elsewhere (which is already considered to be extremely limited in nature) and/or will not choose to study at Miami University if better housing opportunities are not offered.

Outcome of the STRIVE conversation:
GSA was greatly encouraged to hear that the STRIVE Committee is seeking proposals that would aim at articulating and reconceptualizing graduate student housing needs. After some discussion, GSA decided to write for a grant that would specifically address topic #4 of the Call for Proposals for STRIVE Vision (i.e., “Policy: analysis and redesign of existing policies, creation of new policy or procedure”) in order to effect some changes in the current housing situation which would help to better establish a climate of inclusion for all graduate students at Miami University.
STRIVE Conversation with SL, CCL Staff of the Division of Student Affairs  
October 16, 2003  
Prepared by Denny Roberts

Q1. What do you think Miami as a whole needs to do to move closer to the vision of STRIVE?
• Leadership of the University needs to be open and public in exploring Miami’s vision and mission and how it relates to STRIVE.
• Use students to help recruit high school students – Have them return to their own high schools to report on their experiences.
• There should be better assessment of how students view their experience. There’s sometimes a mismatch of what they say vs. what is reality.
• Recruit faculty and staff members who are more diverse.
• The message about STRIVE needs to go beyond the “choir” – get outside of the usual advocates.
• Discuss issues of diversity with CSP students involved in assistantships through Student Affairs.
• Explore the nature of the current environment for faculty, students, and staff:
  - What’s working? What are the issues? Retention? Satisfaction?
• Poll graduate students to get their perspectives.
• Develop an environment within the (upper) administrative structures that truly fosters, welcomes and encourages public debate and discourse.
• Live the “Miami Leadership Commitment” values

Q2. What are you already doing to help the vision?
• Social Action Center through Service Learning and Civic Leadership
• Kettering Foundation support “Fraternal Futures” deliberations
• NPHC advisory board in Office of Greek Affairs
• Continued development of resources and programming that fosters civic engagement through community service and service learning.
• BRIDGE – grassroots inclusion campaign through greek organizations
• SALAD diversity education program – Nov. 1
• Classes from OPC: EDT 499 - New Zealand, Equador, Mexico
• Team teaching in a variety of courses
• EDL 306 is a model of inclusive and experiential pedagogy that introduces first-year students to deeper learning possibilities
• Work with each other and student organizations to manage calendar programming
• Multicultural recruitment in student organizations
• Multicultural Concerts and Lecture board in CAC
• LeaderShape – students’ visions related to inclusion and enhancing the learning community
• Community support – civic engagement
• Leadership conferences of a variety of types and foci

Q3. What might your unit do to help the STRIVE vision?
• Enhance the breadth and quality of leadership development opportunities for the student body
• Create opportunities for collaboration and follow through in SL, CCL and with Student Affairs and academic colleagues
• ASG - Unity fund to encourage student organizations to work cooperative together across different areas of interest
• Personal relationship building
• Divisional goals dealing with STRIVE
• Needs assessment done related to inclusiveness needs to be systematic
• MLC values implemented throughout all our programs
STRIVE Conversation with Student Affairs
Prepared by Susan Mosley-Howard

ORL Session

General Comments:
- Lack of critical mass at Miami is a problem

1) What can the University do to encourage this vision?
- Recruit more heavily among diverse students
- Be more intentional about seeing inclusion as a core element in excellence

2) What can you do within this unit or as an individual to implement this vision?
- Infuse inclusion/diversity training into orientation
- Place more of an emphasis on inclusion in Living Learning Communities and First Year Experience
- Train orientation staff more on inclusion
- Attempt to ensure diverse residential halls when a critical mass is achieved at MU

OLA Session:

General Comments
- Change is needed for inclusion to occur
- We need a new model for looking at students that goes beyond a narrow ACT score
- Individual change leads to cooperation which leads to us overcoming resistance e.g., academic affairs putting up road blocks to systemic changes in how we deal with students who are learning challenged
- International students do not feel valued always
- If the leaders are not on board our grass root efforts will fail

1) What can the University do to encourage this vision?
- The university needs to check its values, e.g., Miami pays according to what it values…minority initiatives are given little money
- Every students knows that Miami says it values inclusion/diversity but we don’t demonstrate in tangible ways that diversity is important. It needs to be modeled outside of the classroom and inside the classroom
- Student affairs does a good job—but students say faculty aren’t approachable---and they [faculty] don’t have to go through diversity training like Student Affairs does
- MU students say that diversity is an “add-on” so we need to make it a core issue (some students even started an “ I am not Miami campaign”)
- Maybe we need to do a RE-EVALUATION of our values
- We need to tie our practice and language together (alignment)
- We need to stop setting up models of EXCLUSION like admission to MU, cohort groups for admission into academic programs, gates of exclusion are everywhere at MU
- Connect more curricular with co-curricular

2) What can you do within this unit or as an individual to implement this vision?
- It seems like we (OLA/LEC) work on inclusion a great deal through individuals, our big challenge is how do we work on the system and those that uphold barriers
- We need guidance with how to make this work our core and tie our efforts all together
Staff from the Miami University Libraries met in two sessions and discussed the Strive vision and brainstormed ideas to help further that vision. While a cross-section of classified and unclassified staff met in each session, this summary will focus on the ideas put forth and the comments made by classified staff in those sessions.

Staff were asked to respond to a couple of questions that were intended to generate ideas that could then be used to address the questions put forth in the STRIVE Conversation Facilitator Guidelines.

Question 1: How might the Libraries expand and promote intercultural programs that will lead to greater inclusion of students, faculty, and staff from a wide range of diverse backgrounds?

Responses included:
- Addressing the need for working with various groups and departments across the campus and in the community.
- The need to actively seek input from individuals at all levels and affiliations with university—not just the faculty and library selectors.
- Discussion groups forming to address a wide variety of subjects.
- Recruit speakers and programs that pull from a wide array of groups.
- Partnering with various interest groups across campus.
- Invite staff to speak about their own backgrounds and cultures.
- Work to ensure that displays and the collection are “inclusionary”.

Question 2: What are some recommendations for improving interpersonal relationships among library staff?

Responses included:
- Promoting interaction between all levels of staff by forming discussion groups, book clubs, and developing a system of staff lunching together and discussing issues of interest.
- Continue to address the division between classified and unclassified staff.
- Development of a program in which staff “job shadow” and learn what is involved in various jobs.
- Increase the amount of non-work related time staff get to spend with one another.
- Ensure that clusters, teams, and working groups are comprised of classified and unclassified staff whenever possible.
- Development of a newsletter.

These responses along with several others were put forth and discussed by the staff in attendance. The responses and ideas were then consolidated by the University Libraries’ Diversity Cluster and were used as the basis for the responses to the questions included in the STRIVE Conversation Facilitator Guidelines. These consolidated responses were submitted to Dean Judith Sessions.
University Communications staff (about a dozen individuals including staff from Marketing Communications, the alumni magazine and News and Public Information) met Oct. 7 and participated in a discussion about STRIVE. Classified and unclassified staff participated. I briefly introduced the program, passed out printed information and requested feedback.

The conversation that followed was wide-ranging. Because ours is a service unit that doesn't have direct contact with students there was little discussion of potential proposals, but rather of the university's goals and direction.

As a whole, the group agreed that a bottom up approach was preferable to top down directives. There was some disenchantment expressed about the 2009 Vision itself as being an example of a "top down" directive.

Here is a summary of the kinds of comments staffers made in no particular order:

- Who will make the decision on grants?
- Miami emphasizes diversity in race at the expense of wealth and class. There should be more emphasis on class.
- Miami students have little sympathy for the working poor (this from two staffers who had led book group discussions).
- Miami should come up with programs that force students from different backgrounds to become part of a team and work toward a goal that has nothing to do with diversity.
- Miami should create a voluntary dining hall program that would include menus that low-income families survive on for a week.
- Miami students, whether they be high income or low income, don't understand the other group. There's a lot of stereotyping and backbiting. Ditto for liberal vs conservative. Ditto for conservative Christian vs liberal humanists.
- One staffer (who is attending Miami for her undergrad degree) said that an individual in her diversity class stated he wanted to sit with some black students at a football game because they were having so much fun, but he didn't know how to break in and thought he would be rebuffed.
- Miami's current "touchy, feely" approach to diversity turns many individuals off.
- People are tired of having diversity crammed down their throats. Downplay the word diversity.
- STRIVE should downplay its connection to the 2009 vision.
- Miami should use the strike as a way to educate the community about economic inequality.
- Miami should abolish fraternities and sororities. They shut people out.
- There should be more of an effort to include Miami's regional campuses at all levels—administrative, student, etc.
- There is a rift between faculty and staff. Staff feel that faculty do not appreciate their role and further that faculty consider themselves experts on subjects they know little about. A "class system" within the university itself exists that downplays the role of both classified and unclassified staff. Does the STRIVE committee itself include classified staff? If not, can it really be an example of an inclusive model? (Not attending the first meeting and not remembering who is on the committee, I could not answer this question.)
- Programs that help participants, whether it be students of employees, learn that "respect for all" is what it's all about are needed at Miami.
UPAC meets twice per month, the first week of the month and at the end of the month. The second meeting is a “working meeting” in which we address all business issues of the committee. I felt this was the most appropriate meeting to have the STRIVE discussion. I distributed part of the information at our first monthly meeting so persons would have an idea of the initiative and would be prepared for our discussion.

Following my presentation of the STRIVE information on 10/21, there was much enthusiasm among the membership for the initiative. Everyone felt there is a need for more interaction among diverse groups on our campuses.

The following are my notes on our discussion:

- Develop a mentoring program consisting of UPAC members and other unclassified staff mentoring CPAC members and other classified staff.
- UPAC is willing to partner with other groups on initiatives, such as CPAC.
- Propose idea based on “Whale Done” presentation to be made by Raquel Dowdy-Cornute at our meeting 11/18/03. The presentation focuses on relationships.
- Will further discuss ideas at our next meeting so proposal can be prepared by 12/1/03.

UPAC is committed to the STRIVE principles of inclusion. We feel that employees who are accepted and valued make better employees who share a concern for their fellow workers which fosters healthy exchanges across differences.

Many initiatives can be accomplished without a large sum of funding and should be encouraged even if they are not chosen for further consideration by the Provost’s Office.
I met with the dean’s advisory council because of low response through efforts with the chairs to generate interest. This was a very interesting group and, in the end, I think it was very productive discussion. This group now has a much better understanding of the work of Coordinating Council and the non-top-down nature of this initiative. However, I think the general awareness of Coordinating Council and its relationship to the faculty and staff is pretty minimal (surprising since Pamela was Chair?!). As you will see from the notes, we have many challenges in terms of communication and in terms of what the current Miami culture is like since the strike.

The STRIVE Mission (Feedback):
If STRIVE is to succeed, more conversation across the university must be promoted. People are unclear about what this initiative is, how it relates to other initiatives, and how it fits into the greater scheme. It seems that we are on initiative overload.

Miami needs to start at the top. What kind of diversity/inclusive training or development is happening with upper administration? The recent labor strike gave the administration the perfect opportunity to take a leadership role in defining this culture in terms of diversity and inclusiveness. The result is a culture in which initiatives like STRIVE seem hypocritical. Even though the STRIVE initiative is being presented as a grass roots initiative, it seems part of a pattern of things that dictate to faculty “who we are,” rather than taking the time to get to know who we really are. There is a disconnect between what we say and what we do. *In general, the recent strike and issues that still resonate as a result of the strike permeated this conversation. With this group, it seemed that the gap between Administration and Faculty/Staff is widening. It seemed to me that there was also a concern that new initiatives seem to overlook what may already be happening.

Issues/Questions:
How does STRIVE link with other initiatives: 1st year seminars, Summer Reading, campus programming, etc.
Are we creating Initiative clutter as well as Diversity clutter?

How do we “interlink” all these initiatives?

If this is about inclusion, how can we address the fact that many unclassified staff feel that their opportunities to participate and reap the benefits of conferences, training, etc. are severely limited. One tenure-track faculty member shared her experience of being invited to events at the President’s and Provost’s homes (events she felt compelled to attend) that fell on her religious holidays, which created problems both in terms of the event and the menu.

International population (students, faculty, staff) presents a different set of circumstances than issues surrounding race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. How do WE construct dialogue around these issues to promote a better global and international climate?

Who’s on Coordinating Council? How many full-time faculty? There is a lack of knowledge about CC and various initiatives at the “lower levels,” both faculty and staff. (I spent some time describing the role of CC.)

Possible Initiatives:
Would STRIVE fund things like consultants/mentors to look carefully at course materials, assignments, exams, etc., as part of a process for thinking differently about one’s teaching? How can faculty think about changes in their teaching that address STRIVE goals?
Would a Focus Group (faculty, staff, and students) be a good initiative in order to understand what the issues are surrounding inclusion and what might be done about them?

What about an initiative to work with admissions for better understanding of how to make diversity recruitment happen that also results in better retention of minority students? Retention of minority students seemed to be something most people agreed was a significant problem.

If efforts to improve teaching around topics of diversity and inclusion require help with training and development in classroom technology, would a STRIVE proposal for technology assistance be considered?

Are individual or group proposals more likely to be funded?

Would STRIVE fund sending a team of faculty and staff to a conference that might educate and energize the group?
Conversation with School of Interdisciplinary Studies Faculty  
October 24, 2003  
Prepared by Carolyn Haynes

The faculty in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies endorsed the STRIVE acronym and vision.

Steps the University could take to advance this vision:
- Offer domestic partner benefits so that gay and lesbian staff and faculty can be included in the community as full members.
- Upper administrators need to give tangible signs that they are behind this vision.
- The University needs to work more closely with the Oxford community to ensure that faculty and staff want to live here and are able to afford living here and that their children can attend good local schools. Create better partnerships between Miami and local school system.
- Foster healthier debate and discussion that encourage individuals to examine their own belief systems and communicate honestly about diversity issues.
- The University needs to coordinate the diversity efforts on campus more systematically.
- Eliminate GHETTOFEST.

Steps the School of Interdisciplinary Studies can do to advance this vision:
- Many Western faculty go abroad and conduct international summer workshops. It would be great if efforts could be coordinated so that these faculty members could recruit students from those countries and WCP could offer them scholarship support. Maybe ideas could be gleaned from the international recruitment efforts that Howard Blanning in the Theatre Department makes.
- Other faculty suggested the need to recruit US minorities. Could Western forge a relationship with a diverse high school such as those in Cleveland and bring students from that high school here?
- Western faculty could work together to help foster greater debate and dialogue about diversity issues in our classrooms. Sometimes it is difficult to get debate going due to students’ reticence to take a stand on controversial issues.
- Some faculty recommended creating a Freedom Summer Institute. This institute could be held during the summer for 8-10 weeks. It would offer courses on Social Justice and Activism and invite noted scholars to serve in residence during the summer session. It would be directed at students from around the country interested in political activism and social justice, who would be invited to apply. It could serve 100 students, 20 from the four college levels and 20 high school juniors and seniors. It could also be associated with CAWC, various programs and perhaps the Wilks Leadership Institute.
Many of the staff members present at all three meetings liked the vision. Some expressed skepticism that Miami, given its remote location, could ever attain full inclusion. Some pointed out that Miami has a long way to go because most of the students are very conservative in nature.

**Steps the University could take:**
- Empower some of the student organizations that promote diversity.
- Create more spaces for social interaction, such as bowling alleys, movie theatres, dance halls to promote constructive social exchange.
- Alter the course scheduling so that non-traditional students could attend classes on the Oxford campus.
- Offer insurance benefits for significant others.
- Foster a sense of equity and tolerance.
- Promote a healthy sense of debate.
- Hire an ombudsman for “inclusion” issues.

**Steps IT Services could take:**
- Create more electronic forums for diverse discussion groups (e.g., chat rooms).
- Develop targeted online courses so that nontraditional students can have access to our courses.
- Make sure that we hire a diverse body of staff and student workers.
- Work to find resources for virtual space for social interactions.
1) The group appreciated the STRIVE vision, as compared to the previous First in 2009 statements. They said, "This tells us more who, what, when, where and why." They also thought the STRIVE statement was more to the point. They thought the "First" in "First in 2009" was confusing and ambiguous.

2) They thought that "inclusion" was a better word than "diversity." They commented that inclusion is more than race and ethnicity, but also faculty-staff, faculty-students, etc. Also, they appreciated the importance of socio-economic inclusion. Generally, all in the meeting liked "inclusion" better.

3) To encourage STRIVE adoption, they recommended several items:
   a) In recruitment of staff, if we want to increase inclusion, we must offer competitive salaries. They commented that attracting different types of people (beyond Butler, Preble counties), we must be able to competitively recruit.
   b) To increase diversity, the university must provide assistance in family relocation costs once staff are hired.
   c) At Kent State, they have the flexibility to link financial aid awards to tuition increase. This has the effect of increasing aid to offset compounded tuition increases over multiple years. This would help attract a more diverse group of students.
   d) We could implement better ways to get information out to students about scenarios that are possible to keep them here. For example, making sure they are all aware of how student loans and PLUS loans can be used to supplement the scholarship award packages they receive.
   e) We could implement a better first year student "navigation" course that shows students how to get around the administrative hurdles of Miami.

4) One person commented that they appreciated the use of the word "staff" in the STRIVE document. They said no mention of staff was made in the First in 2009 documents.
The Office of Admission staff was very receptive to the STRIVE theme and to the notion of Miami infusing diversity interests throughout their curriculum and other daily operations.

They articulated ways that they could collaborate with other units on campus to improve the admission of students of color:

- Identify success stories of Miami’s students of color. Work with chairs, directors and deans to create a list of outstanding academic achievements that can be used in recruitment efforts.
- Assess the majors and minors that students of color at Miami typically enroll in. This data will help in recruitment efforts and in enabling us to know which departments need to work on recruiting more students of color.
- Deepen the relationship with the departmental liaisons with Admission. Perhaps establish divisional contacts as well to help with recruitment efforts.
- Find a way to acknowledge excellence of junior high and high school students of color through letters or special events on campus.
- Increase the level of participation of faculty and staff of color at Open Houses.
The Center for Writing Excellence’s Advisory Committee discussed the STRIVE Vision on October 6. The Committee supported STRIVE’s voluntary, grassroots approach and identified the following actions that the Center might take to support STRIVE.

1. The CWE could study results from the National Survey of Student Engagement to determine whether they suggest that certain kinds of writing assignments are associated with the achievement of STRIVE goals. If so, CWE could employ this information as an additional reason faculty should consider using such assignments in their courses.

2. The CWE could meet with Dr. Edgar Beckham, Scholar in Residence with the Center for American and World Cultures, to garner his ideas.

3. The CWE could ask Dr. Chris Anson, Director of the Campus Writing and Speaking Program at North Carolina State University, for suggestions when he is here on October 31.

4. The CWE could use STRIVE as an occasion to build partnerships with departments and programs such as Black World Studies and Women Studies that focus extensively on diversity and inclusion issues. (The CWE is already working with the Center for American and World Cultures to offer a workshop for IDS 159 instructors.)

5. The CWE could develop suggestions for ways instructors could design writing assignments that pursue STRIVE goals.

6. The CWE could talk with the Liberal Education Council about ways to incorporate writing into the Summer Reading Program, which often chooses books related to inclusion.

   This part of the Advisory Committee’s discussion also generated ideas that are unrelated to writing but still might be used to extend the effectiveness of the Summer Reading Program in achieving STRIVE goals.

   • The Committee discussed the desirability of extending the Summer Reading Program to the regional campuses (while also noting the difficulties of doing so).

   • The Committee speculated that it would be worthwhile to connect upperclass students with the Summer Reading Program, for instance by announcing the book to the entire student body and arranging for the author to address all students, not just incoming students.

7. The CWE could add greater diversity to the outside speakers and the leaders of its workshops.

8. The CWE Advisory Committee could add greater diversity to its own membership.

9. The Committee endorsed Cindy Lewiecki-Wilson’s observation that the Inclusion Vision should include students, staff, and faculty with disabilities.
Only two faculty members attended the EAP focus group meeting. Twelve faculty/staff attended the Engineering and Applied Science session.

- All attendees favored the University’s emphasis on inclusion (as we have defined it). That said, there were numerous concerns expressed.

- Attendees reported that there are too many university-wide initiatives currently being initiated. Attendees specifically mentioned the Multicultural Counsel initiative, Choice Matters, Benchmarking, North Central accreditation, and First-Year Seminars as time consuming interventions. Too often these initiatives are hyped then they “die.” Attendees wanted to know if STRIVE is the initiative de jour (i.e., this year’s fad)? Attendees recommended that STRIVE organizers clarify the interrelationship between STRIVE and others initiatives. Also clarifying how STRIVE is distinctive from other initiatives would likely increase MU community members’ support for it.

- Some attendees lamented the insufficient time to prepare a proposal by the December 1, 2004 deadline. Faculty liked the idea that the University is providing money to support inclusion initiatives. Many expressed an interest in submitting proposals, but the one-month preparation period for this year’s awards was too short. Some mentioned that they had already established their research and service agendas for the year and would probably apply next year if funds were available. This raises an important question to pose to the Provost — Will money be available beyond the 2003-04 allocation?

- Many felt that to do serious and substantive work related to inclusion, funding would need to be available for projects that were 3-5 years in duration. Many thought that one-time/one year initiatives were less effective and not worth pursuing. Faculty noted that unless extended funding was available, they would unlikely embark on major initiatives.

- Some faculty like the broad “almost anything goes” call for proposal guidelines. Others wanted more detail and specifics about the selection criteria.

- Questions arose as to whether funding was available to faculty on all three Ohio campuses.

- The grass roots emphasis appealed to the EAP group. They liked knowing that funding could be available to support their local inclusion initiatives.

- Faculty members like the idea of collaborating with colleagues from other departments to co-design and co-teach a class.

- Engineering faculty revealed some long-term potential STRIVE/inclusion initiatives that sounded exciting and innovative.

- One faculty member expressed a frustration with getting involved with University-wide programs in light of how the senior university administrators represented the University during the strike.

- One faculty member did not understand what we meant by the term “inquiry-based” learning. We might clarify this in the future.

- The EAP attendees favored the idea of supporting initiatives that benefited students and placed them “first.”
We have taken two approaches to cultivating interest in STRIVE among CAS faculty and administrators. First, an informational mailing was made to Chairs and Program Directors in mid-October (copy enclosed). The purpose of this mailing was to brief CAS leadership on STRIVE initiatives and opportunities for proposal development and applications. We also alerted Chairs/Program Directors to an opportunity to meet personally with Drs. Yildirim Dilek and Rodrigo Lazo at the 5 November Council of Chairs meeting. The 18 October mailing has resulted in some positive discussions between the Dean’s Office and individual departments on possible STRIVE initiatives and proposals for the 1 Dec target date.

At the 5 Nov Council of Chairs meeting, Rodrigo Lazo made a short and effective presentation of STRIVE goals and context, and then the floor was opened for discussion. Comments were somewhat mixed. Positive discussion focused on possible project themes and ways to make STRIVE more inclusive by greater emphasis on staff and non-traditional students. Concerns were also raised that STRIVE does not adequately acknowledge and integrate important and effective diversity initiatives that have been on-going for the past several years.

Comments on the STRIVE vision from Chairs meeting:

- One chair said her department is tired of cheap acronyms.
- Another one said STRIVE smacks of corporate mentality and marketing.
- The document shows a disconnect in terms of socioeconomic inclusion because it mentions staff once but doesn't bring it up again.
- Hostility to uniting STRIVE with First in 2009. If it's so important, why not just have it as its own program.
- The money doesn't seem like a lot.
- It smacks of diversity clutter. Aren't there already a lot of opportunities for funding?
- Questions about why it's connected to benchmarking.
- One person asked for more guidance for the proposals.
- Probably the most positive critique was that we need to include age in the definition of diversity.
There were 15 people in attendance staff psychologists, interns and one staff psychiatrist. All in attendance seemed very receptive to the didactic portion of the presentation. The interactive portion of the presentation centered on two questions:

What are we presently doing at the Student Counseling Service to focus on inclusiveness?

- The Diversity Peer Educators work out of the SCS.
- A staff member advises the International Students Club.
- Some staff are “Diversity Specialists”.
- There is a multicultural focus in the intern-training program. It is a major criterion in intern selection process.
- Significant work with “Community Advocacy Alliance”.
- Several staff members serve on university committees with diversity focus.
- Diverse magazine collection and lending library.

Where can we go from here?

- Don’t make statements that are “anti-inclusive”. Include inclusiveness in “First in 2009” definition of “best”.
- More scholarship funding focused on inclusiveness.
- Redefine focus of inclusion. Focus on social justice not just “numbers”.
- Need physical space for inclusive interaction.
- The “Miami Image” has to change to reflect inclusiveness. Alumni, Greeks life, Parental expectations, faculty/staff role models

The SCS staff present really felt that they could use their skills and experience to develop inclusiveness training for the rest of the university.
I have addressed the STRIVE initiative with the Finance and Business Services division and received a few suggestions for proposals. Unfortunately, they mostly are very specific actions within the division and are quite limited in their scope.

1. For HDGS to develop a new recruitment outreach plan for attracting more minority classified and unclassified staff to the Oxford campus.
2. Persuade Miami administration to create an annual fund for each department for classified and unclassified staff recognition and appreciation initiatives.
3. Recommend a restructure of the university "job enrichment" programs to provide higher salary increases for phase II and phase III (i.e., 6% for phase II and 10% for phase III). This should include a one-time raise for those who have completed phase II to receive a 2% salary raise and those who have completed phase III to receive a 4% salary raise.
4. Promote university-wide awareness and responsibility for the inclusion of physically disabled persons through such recognized methods as: ADA compliance, space reassignment, etc.
5. For skilled trades staff, they would like our training programs to be structured so that their training is fully recognized within their respective industry.
6. Improve interaction between rank-and-file staff and upper administrative staff. Previous presidents and VPs would walk around campus and stop and talk to front line troops.
STRIVE Conversations:  
A Summary of School of Business Conversations and Feedback  
November, 2003

STRIVE Conversations were held during school of business departmental meetings over the course of October. Because of time constraints, conversations could not follow the issues outlined in the questionnaire specifically. The comments below are grouped by what we felt were common themes in the discussion. The STRIVE descriptions and questionnaires were distributed to faculty and returned individually. The summary of these answers is provided separately.

Summary of Conversations

Business School Faculty are deeply concerned with the state of diversity and inclusiveness on this campus. On the positive side, there was nearly universal agreement with the ideals of the STRIVE initiative. Greater diversity is considered to be important to the health and well-being of Miami University. The improvement of the recognition of and respect for individual differences is important to our mission on many levels. There was almost total agreement with the idea that each member of the Miami University community plays a significant personal role in establishing and maintaining an inclusive environment. Overwhelmingly, members of the Business School Faculty applaud the ideals outlined in STRIVE.

At the same time, the Business School Faculty are deeply troubled about the current conditions and practices at Miami University, and have little expectation that these will change in general or as a result of the specific implementation of the elements of the STRIVE program. Concerns, broadly, fell into three categories:

1. Lack of administrative commitment
   a. Once again, the business school has called for administration to include same sex partners (and other non-traditional partnerships) in the benefits package offered to Faculty and Staff. If we can’t do something that simple, to end our own discrimination, faculty members question how we can expect to present ourselves as inclusive. A significant number of our faculty believes strongly that if this is not addressed, nothing else can be done effectively. Past administration responses on this issue have been unacceptable. ((a) We cannot act until the state legislature votes to accept gay or lesbian marriage. (b) We cannot act without the support of other state colleges and universities. (c) It is politically inexpedient to act at this time. (d) WE believe in it, personally, but our hands are tied.) This is a question of doing what is right. P&G does it. Delta Airlines does it. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it.” If we, an academic institution founded on principles of justice and truth, cannot remove active discrimination from our policies for fear of political and/or financial retribution, then what message do we send our students? We certainly didn’t shirk from the tuition battle with state politicians.
   b. There is a belief that administration is more committed to new programs and initiatives than bolstering existing programs and their commitments to diversity. The administration’s argument that the new tuition program would be used to improve scholarships to diverse students is perceived as dubious. Since there is no explicit, written commitment for the use of these funds nor is there any accountability for the claim, some faculty were skeptical that funds would be used in support of inclusion.
   c. The SBA has, in the past 5 years, created the position of Diversity Director, held multi-day workshops, created a variety of committees that were empowered to enact initiatives, gone on record by vote of the faculty in support of partner benefits, and put a significant amount of
money, time, and administrative backing towards STRIVE-type activities (including making diversity efforts part of annual reports and, implicitly, part of the reward structure). It is believed that these efforts have not been supported by higher administration.

d. There is a deep cynicism about STRIVE – it is not perceived as different from past “lip service.” Furthermore, it was expressed that STRIVE presents the appearance that the administration has “given up” and is “throwing a bone” to the faculty with a paltry sum of money, asking them “What can we do?” This problem requires a bold, committed, visionary leader. While there are times that grass-roots initiatives are called for, this is not one of them.

e. Some responses reflected a perception that the administration does not really intend for the diversity mix to change at Miami University. Comments noted that the STRIVE initiative is simply the latest in a series of initiatives, programs, policies, funds, etc., that have been undertaken over the years. Given the lack of funding, lack of consistency, lack of follow-through in existing programs, lack of open communication, lack of support for and/or response to divisional initiatives, the very motives of the administration have come into question.

2. Recruiting.

f. We need to put our money where our mouth is. The money associated with STRIVE is, in the grand scheme of budgets here, tiny. We need to make a significant INVESTMENT in diversity. As schools compete for relatively smaller populations of diverse students and diverse faculty, one doesn’t need to be an economist to see that the “price” will rise. We need to be prepared for and supportive of spending scholarship and salary money to recruit the best and brightest. Money also could be used for work-study programs, internship programs, etc.

g. Involve Faculty and Alumni in recruiting. Create a “personal touch” to recruit students and faculty.

h. Connect local high schools more to Miami University – programmatical and with regard to their advisors.

i. There was concern that the admissions office is dealing with mixed messages and a lack of clear mandate. One department pointed to a minority recruiting fair in Cleveland recently, where Miami University declined to attend. Another pointed to an exchange with our admissions office where the office claimed “we have no affirmative action policy” in admissions.

3. Corporate Relations

Some of the top recruiters of our students have cut back or altogether stopped recruiting at Miami University because of Miami’s lack of diversity. The SBA cannot emphasize our concerns in a more dire way – we are very concerned that we are at a cross-roads and change MUST come.

4. Scope

The belief is that time for incremental change has passed. Change, of a transformational magnitude is needed. Our peer schools are also implementing “STRIVE-like” initiatives and so, it is even more important that our efforts are competitively significant.

One proposal that is being circulated is that we begin a semester-long exchange program with a historically black college involving significant numbers of students from both schools. One faculty member suggested a more explicit relationship between salary and diversity training or salary and inclusiveness of curriculum (both positively and punitively.) We envision change of this sort of magnitude.
The Hamilton Campus discussion about the STRIVE initiative spread itself over a week’s time. It was introduced at a Hamilton Campus Senate meeting, followed by an email message to faculty and staff with the questions to be considered along with the FAQ page and the summary page for STRIVE. The final component was a discussion on November 25, 2003. Five people sent fairly long written responses since they had class or meetings at the time of the discussion. Five more showed up for the discussion itself. The lettered responses below come from the written responses and the bullets come from the verbal discussion. Some of the written responses were shared with the “live” group to further the integration of the discussion.

1. What can the University do to encourage the vision represented by STRIVE?

a.) Miami University could pay closer attention to the implications of the rhetoric of "academic excellence," which to some of its constituents has an elitist connotation. To some of the working-class and first-generation college students and their families considering MU, the language the University uses to describe itself sounds alienating instead of inclusive. As a state university, MU has an obligation to serve the state--including the blue-collar and racially diverse populations that surround MU's three campuses.

In a sense the STRIVE initiative seeks to mediate this concern, which I applaud. On the other hand, by drawing attention to the perceived gulf between diversity and excellence, I suspect STRIVE doth protest too much. The literature ends up reminding readers that diversity and "excellence" can be seen as barriers to one another. The STRIVE FAQs, for example, articulates this (mis)perception in the first question. A second example is the sentence immediately underneath the unifying vision states that achieving these two goals "is ambitious," which could be construed as an admission that having it both ways "is ambitious."

To my knowledge, nobody is advocating that Miami University stop challenging its students or stop providing tough academic rigor. So then why must MU employ the phrase "academic excellence" as if it is a novel notion? "Academic excellence" seems like a no-brainer, akin to touting our ability to "teach classes" or "give grades."

Truly providing an inclusive and civic-minded environment -- one free of both hostility and systematic bias based on class or race -- is (sadly) a much more ambitious undertaking for a university. So I think we should stop apologizing for chasing inclusion and stop acting as if we bear some kind of burden of proof that we won't compromise excellence. OF COURSE we won't.

b.) One of the greatest issues in attracting a diverse faculty and staff lies in the community. It does not matter how inclusive the campus may feel if the individual does not feel welcomed in a community. This is an area of concern throughout this area, and some might argue throughout the midwest. We would need to work with community leaders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the greater Hamilton (and Middletown and Oxford) areas. For instance, are ethnic care products offered in local stores? Are people from an ethnic minority background treated fairly when they go to buy a
home in our area? How are relations with local police and other governmental or law enforcement offices perceived? How would a visitor to our area describe the quality of integration in the local school systems? Are local communities perceived as racist? How would a visitor feel about worship or cultural activities in the area?

I had many conversations of this sort in Oxford, and found numerous staff members frustrated by the fact that they had to drive to other areas to get their hair done. There were also limited worship choices and racial incidents. On this campus I have heard students and faculty mention their treatment by realtors and police officers - and their frustration with the selection in local stores. As a visiting candidate for a position - one would take community factors into consideration when considering a relocation.

c.) Perhaps the university should look at the cultures requirement. It is my observation that many of my students want to take American History because it is a "safe" course, something that they had in high school that does not challenge their belief system. This class is the first culture class to fill - and I'm not sure that that is the point behind the cultures requirement. Perhaps we could also offer courses exploring topics related to disabilities, Middle Eastern topics and sexual orientations.

d.) It seems to me that a lot of little efforts can help us make some progress — maybe some best practices from different units that all can learn from. For example, our (MUH) Racial Legacies and Learnings: How to Talk About Race I think have been helpful and could be repeated in different ways in different venues. In our department, we are planning to learn more from our students of color about what helped them come to MU, so that those things/factors that brought them here can be improved. I would guess that many units within the University have tried and done various small things that have made at least a bit of difference, and if we could share these and multiply the small things, maybe we can make some improvements.

e.) Hire more faculty of color. The more exposure, the less of an anomaly to students. If in 2009 we want to be first in diversity, I think that can only happen if we “see”, and I do mean literally, diversity.

f.) Obviously, Miami’s issues of race and gender discrimination are a reflection of the U.S. and eradicating it from campus is next to impossible. So I think two things need to happen: First, the administration needs to be aware of the experiences of people/women of color in the classroom, and demonstrate that they are aware and supportive. My experience in the classroom is not like a white man’s, a white woman’s and perhaps not even a black man’s. At times, I must overcome students’ perceived credibility issues before I can be an effective instructor. This is something that the Women and People of Color Committee is working on in A&S — we are collecting narratives about the experiences of the faculty of color at Miami and are planning to share those stories in various outlets. Second, provide a forum/outlet for women of color to develop strategies for dealing with these very real issues. I really couldn’t put my finger on what was happening to me until I began to talk to other women of color. Once I was able to articulate my experiences (because sometimes they are so subtle), I became more empowered to deal with them.

g.) Use an analytical approach to work on the problem — identify measurements that reflect effectiveness on each of the six goals of the vision; analyze how we are doing on each and what
suggested corrective actions are; prepare an action plan; test the plan as a pilot in a small part of the university; expand slowly.

From the discussion group:

- Publicize to students that the big corporations want exposure to and experiences in diversity-rich environments
- Inform the Miami community why is isn’t enough just to “let people apply” to MU, but active recruiting must occur
- Make an effort to be more welcoming and to make the welcome clear to those we want to recruit as students or faculty or staff; make it obvious that we have an honest desire to deepen our diversity
- Think about possible contradictions in MU’s recruiting message—is inclusion overshadowed by a sense of elitism and implications of an upper class white student body?
- Continue to provide faculty development opportunities for learning to communicate effectively with people who are from different backgrounds/cultures

2. **What can you as an individual or we as a campus group do to implement the vision, and what can the Coordinating Council do to help?**

a.) At the level of our campus, I think we need to explore better support systems for our relocating students. Before, during, and after the relocation to the Oxford campus, MUH needs to provide affirmative, aggressive networks of support that aid in retention and create a positive experience for our students. Many MUH students report intense anxiety about relocation. They perceive Oxford to be a place of exclusion and hostility "where everybody's smarter," or "where everybody's richer." If Miami wants greater inclusion (especially based on class), facilitating this relocation process is a good starting point. I think we on the Hamilton campus need to advocate for better support systems and take active roles but I think Oxford must also get involved. This is a big issue for our students and I think STRIVE provides an ideal chance to address this situation.

b.) On the Hamilton campus we need to **offer more workshops for both students and staff** that address the area of inclusion. I think it would be helpful for on-going development opportunities to be offered to instructors, office workers, etc. in regards to working with multi-cultural populations (both student populations and working populations). We could all benefit from this service, especially if it is rewarded/supported by our supervisors. Perhaps this is something the multi-cultural committee could work on, and perhaps they already do so - I am new here after all.

c.) As an individual I hope to continue to support inclusion and diversity through my attendance and participation at diversity events (such as the discussion panel before Blue Eyes, Brown Eyes and sitting at the Spectrum info table during lunch). I recently included a tour of our Multi-cultural office into the curriculum for my co-taught EDL 110 class, and it was something all of the students highly reviewed in their written remarks of the class. I think that I, and others, should make more of a concentrated effort to include items in our office that encourage a multi-cultural and open environment - perhaps to even spur discussion. Adinkra art and Safe Space signs would be examples of this type of environment.

From the discussion group:
• (MUH) Help Oxford understand the diversity that regional campus students bring to the main campus when they relocate—age differences, economic status differences, often racial differences

• (Coord. Council) Provide small amounts of money for faculty who want to do some diversity related faculty development as an individual, such as re-developing a course around a diversity focus

• (MUH) Look at our retention efforts—how do we do with the minority students we recruit? Work on retaining the same percentage of minority as majority students.

• (MUH) Identify our MPF courses that are particularly rich in diversity exposure and understanding or particularly challenging to students in a diversity sense; offer more of them. Help faculty with the development of this aspect of their courses, where possible. Use the teaching seminar format to present and discuss “best practices”.

• (MUH) Continue recent hiring efforts.

• (MUH) Help all, but especially majority, students better understand diversity and its benefit to them. (How?)
**Brainstorming in response to STRIVE**

**If Miami was the best, what would it look like?**
- Everyone would go to classes, be involved and attentive
- You would get the classes you want when you want them
- People would join organizations for more than just resume builders
- You would have the same advisor for all four years
- Advisors would be competent
- Teachers would be leaders in their fields
- Smaller classes and more engagement
- Bigger library and more study rooms

**What are three critical action steps to get Miami to that point?**
- More diverse student body
- Focus on Student Union, which NEEDS attention (New student center)
- Professors with better teaching methods and preparation, more active classrooms
- Be careful in granting tenure to professors (focus on quality teaching)
- More diverse graduate program (offer more academic breadth, use undergraduate programs as stepping stones to graduate)
- Increase the personal interaction during the admission process
- Parking services should be more responsive and should lower ticket prices

**What steps can we take as leaders of the Greek community?**
- Challenge ourselves to be active students in class and exemplary learners
- Get faculty and staff more involved in the programs of the Greek community (When invited, faculty should respond)
- Further increase academic excellence, up the academic focus, maintain entry requirement
- Forge personal relationships with faculty
- More diverse pledge classes with Greek recruitment
- Serve Miami Community as well as the Oxford community
I spoke with the anthropology department faculty at a regular faculty meeting and with representatives from MacMillan Hall at our monthly occupant's meeting. The College of Arts and Science faculty had just met with Dean Skillings and Rodrigo Lazo earlier in the week. The Women's Center was already aware of the initiative and was very pleased about the opportunity to apply for funds. They were planning to submit a proposal, co-authored with another office. The representative from the Dolibois program was even more excited for the opportunity to apply for support, since that office has little opportunity to seek external funding for these kinds of initiatives. In fact, this office is very concerned about the low numbers of minority students who participate in the Luxembourg program and would very much like to make the program more accessible to students of color by providing scholarships or alleviating the fear that such students might have about study abroad, especially in Europe. The representative from student affairs was interested in the possibility of gaining greater support for the student organizations' activities and agreed to contact student leaders directly about the initiative. Anthropology department faculty were generally interested in the initiative and we discussed several projects already in the planning stages for which funding might be sought. Faculty believed that more scholarship money needs to be found to support minority student enrollment.

Most people expressed interest in the kinds of programs that might be funded. Several individuals felt frustration about our efforts towards diversifying the campus student body and faculty. Several people thought that the initiative represented a "top down" set of directives (even though the STRIVE literature states the grassroots nature of the program). I also heard that our efforts at making our campus more inclusive were an exercise in exclusivity. At least one person raised the question why our efforts at inclusion revolve primarily around social race - why aren't certain European groups (e.g., Serbs, Croatians) thought of as minorities and, therefore, subject to the attention paid to African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans.
STRIVE Conversations with University Senate

A special meeting of University Senate was held on Monday, November 10, 2003, to discuss the STRIVE initiative (Attachment A), the First in 2009 Coordinating Council and the University Multicultural Council’s proposal that Miami University should commit and align its educational mission to the simple but powerful principle that inclusion leads to academic excellence. Senators were assigned to one of seven discussion groups. Each group was asked to respond to the following:

- Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.
- Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.
- What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?

Group 1, Presenter: Mark Boardman

Things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision:

- “Adopt-a-school” recruiting programs with a “sports recruiting” mentality. A long-term commitment by the University to involve students as early as seventh grade in programs that would prepare them to continue their education following high school graduation, specifically at Miami University. These programs would involve Miami faculty visiting the “adopted” middle and high schools and these students visiting Miami.
- The University and the City of Oxford working together to make Oxford a welcoming place; e.g., organize, subsidize, or coordinate housing and economic-enterprise opportunities for individuals with diverse backgrounds.
- Remove geographic barriers by providing transportation between Oxford and Cincinnati.
- Involve Miami students in outreach programs both in the Oxford area (e.g., Over-the-Rhine) and/or in other countries (excluding Luxembourg or Australia) that place the students in an environment where they are the minority.

To accomplish these goals Miami should reward faculty, staff, and students who recognize diversity issues and engage themselves in diversity initiatives.

Group 2, Presenter: Kathy McMahon-Klosterman:

Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.

- More risk taking in admissions with follow-up support. Recognize the accomplishments of applicants in the context of the community from which they came, not just their ACT and SAT scores.
- Expand the definition of “diversity” to include disability and ability. Individuals with disabilities are an equal opportunity, minority group. An individual cannot change his or her ethnic background but he or she may become disabled. Miami could become a leader in a growing national interest of developing curriculum around disability issues.
- Hire minority senior faculty. Mentor and “protect” young faculty of minority status from all the “pulls” on them during the tenure-track period.
- Create study abroad programs that will help students develop a clear sense of themselves and their identity, and create follow-up programs for students to share their experiences with other students.

Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.

- Persistently work on and off campus with alumni and potential students to dispel negative stereotypes about Miami University and to raise awareness regarding the University’s efforts toward a more diverse environment. Inform people as to how they can get involved in the process.
- Redefine the University’s meaning of “diversity.”
• Recruit students who will contact potential students from diverse backgrounds.
• Create a welcoming environment and opportunities for minority students to meet with the larger student body and not just with other minority students when they come to campus.

What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?
• Diversity must be fully infused in curriculum development and not just added on to it.
• Incorporate inclusion of diversity issues in course work, activities, assignments, and readings as a criterion for faculty evaluations.

Group 3, Presenter: Alton Sanders
(Group 3 focused largely on student learning and faculty teaching that takes place off campus.)

Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.
• Increase diversity by offering study abroad programs to such places as Africa and the Middle East.
• Offer domestic exchange programs for faculty and/or students to places where the faculty and/or students would be the minority. One can fully understand the impact of being a minority if one has in fact been a minority.
• Actively recruit from two-year colleges in addition to Miami’s regional campuses; many urban two-year colleges have diverse student populations which include Native Americans, African-Americans, Hispanics, etc.

Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.
• Participate in study abroad and domestic exchange programs, and encourage students and colleagues to participate in such programs.
• Develop curriculum that includes study abroad and/or domestic exchange programs, and conceivably require participation in such programs.

What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?
• Hire faculty who are interested in being directly involved in developing curriculum and programs that would enhance diversity.
• Offer flexible teaching loads and create a reward structure that encourages faculty participation in promote diversity.
• Offer joint programs for faculty and students between Miami’s Oxford and regional campuses.

Group 4, Presenter: Rick Hearin

Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.
• Create a welcoming environment for students and faculty.
• Establish support structures that foster a mentoring-type relationship.
• Address concerns relating to:
  o The public school system. It is a conundrum that will weigh on the community for some time to come; it is broken and needs to be fixed if there truly is a concern about community issues in Oxford and Miami University.
  o The preponderance of students who are in Greek organizations. How does this affect the overall environment for students who are not involved in Greek organizations?

Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.
• Establish mentoring programs so that Miami University is not just in the business of attracting diverse faculty, staff, and students; it is also in the business of retaining and hopefully converting them into ambassadors for the University.
What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?
- Programs to enhance diversity should be long-term commitments to which the University allocates resources over a sustained period of time, not just month-by-month initiatives.

**Group 6, Presenter: Mike Chapman**
Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.
- Include faculty, staff, and students on the regional campuses in discussions and programs that the University implements.
- The administration should involve the University community in open and democratic discourse that the STRIVE vision attempts to promote.
- Enlist the services of an outside group or consultants to provide the framework by which the STRIVE vision could be promoted.

Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.
- Implement more authentic cultural programs with direct involvement by individuals from diverse cultures.
- Focus on using the intellectual and creative capabilities of faculty and staff.
- Hold the administration accountable. Identify a person who could raise concerns on behalf of faculty and students to the administration.
- Constructively challenge the increase in corporate structure at the University.

What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?
- A comprehensive review of the current campus-community climate.
- Create an open and democratic process for decision-making that affects the campus as a whole.
- More accurate media depiction of the campus community.

**Group 7, Presenter: Richard Nault**
Describe three things the University can do to encourage the STRIVE vision.
- Address serious concerns about the limited social opportunities for non-Euro-American students.
- Address critical concerns about the “chilly” transition climate for students from Middletown and Hamilton to Oxford. There are attitudinal dynamics in the community, from both faculty and students, which says students who transfer to Oxford from the Hamilton and Middletown campuses are second-class citizens.
- Ensure scholarship support and financial aid for students of color.

Describe three things that you (as an individual or a group) can do to implement the STRIVE vision.
- Engage the University community in serious conversations regarding fundamental, personal attitudes about diversity.
- A better road map is needed that defines the needs of multi-cultural students. The University tends to dichotomize diversity largely as a black/white issue, but there are needs of other students, e.g., Asian-Americans, Latinos.

What is needed to accomplish these goals (other than time and money)?
- When adding new majors, be mindful of how that curriculum will affect diversity on campus.
- The University tends to say diversity is a problem and then schedules a lot of speakers to address the issue. People must examine their personal attitudes and be given the opportunity to reflect on them. Senate could begin that process.
Commitment to diversity should be a criterion for faculty and staff evaluations and/or promotions in addition to research, teaching, and service.

Professor Bhattacharjee:
- Faculty and staff of minority status should be more visibly involved in University-sponsored events and student activities.
- Forty-four minority students are enrolled in microbiology at Miami University; eighteen of them are first-year students. Faculty and staff have invited these eighteen students to join them for lunch in the 1809 Room and to attend other University activities.
- Diwali, a multi-cultural event, will be Saturday, November 22, 2003, Hall Auditorium at 3:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 5:30 p.m.

Professor Boardman:
Professor Boardman thanked Senators for their participation. A summary of Senator’s responses will be reviewed as part of the STRIVE initiative discussions by the First in 2009 Coordinating Council, Council of Academic Deans, and the University Multicultural Steering Committee at their December 17, 2003, retreat.