

**Analysis of the Survey on Diversity in New Jersey Colleges and Universities**  
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**May 17, 2005**

In October, 2004 the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) administered a survey to gain an overview of diversity initiatives at New Jersey colleges and universities. Because New Jersey is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse states in the country, and fifth in the nation in foreign-born residents, it provides a rich context for understanding ways in which colleges and universities are tapping their state's diversity as an educational resource. This study identified various models of campus diversity initiatives that emerged from the data and selected three institutions with exemplary models: Bloomfield College, Rutgers University, and The College of New Jersey. Fifty New Jersey colleges and universities received the survey and twenty-five institutions responded. Sixteen of those that responded underwent further web analysis, and four were selected for follow up interviews. The four institutions selected for interviews are all doing exemplary diversity work, but only the three named above were found to have comprehensive approaches to their initiatives.

These three institutions, Bloomfield College, Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey, and The College of New Jersey, will be featured as case studies on *DiversityWeb*. Created and Maintained by AAC&U, *DiversityWeb* is a comprehensive compendium of campus practices and resources about diversity in higher education. Results of the survey complement a current diversity project with several colleges and universities called the Bildner New Jersey Campus Diversity Initiative (NJCDI), which is funded by the Bildner Family Foundation in partnership with AAC&U and The Philanthropic Initiative (TPI). This project focuses on reducing prejudice, promoting intergroup understanding, and fostering comprehensive institutional change needed to support such learning. This study and promising practices emerging from NJCDI suggest that diversity initiatives designed to create a balance between macro efforts (e.g. diversity infused across the curriculum or explicit articulation of the importance of diversity in the institutional mission) and micro efforts (e.g. individual diversity courses, or co-curricular diversity programming) are the most likely to be sustainable and create an environment that maximizes student learning.

This latest iteration of the analysis of the data has produced a series of diversity initiative models. These models aid in understanding progress in the creation of comprehensive institutional change with diversity as a catalyst and help identify areas that need improvement. The models below represent the range of diversity initiatives at the 25 institutions that participated in the study. By coding campus diversity work as micro and macro efforts and using the models to represent the relative presence of those efforts in a diversity initiative, this study suggests a possible correlation between comprehensive diversity initiative designs and outcomes of quality, sustainability, and academic excellence. That is, the extent to which educational quality, institutional sustainability, and academic excellence can be achieved depends upon the effectiveness of the diversity initiative across the institution. To account for effectiveness, three measures were used: centrality, pervasiveness, and integration. These measures of effectiveness are described in greater detail below.

## **Measures of Effectiveness**

Centrality refers to the macro efforts on a campus (i.e. mission statement and campus-wide diversity requirements) that systematically create the infrastructure upon which diversity initiatives can be built and the extent to which the central administration is committed to diversity. Centrality influences an initiative's sustainability by legitimizing diversity work and easing a reliance on a few key individuals who do all the work and/or external support that may not last.

Pervasiveness refers to the degree to which diversity initiatives are present throughout an institution in the form of micro diversity work (i.e. major requirements and individual courses on diversity or that incorporate diversity). The more pervasive a diversity initiative is the more students, faculty, administrators, staff, and community constituents it will reach. Making diversity a core value of all aspects of a university is a powerful educational tool in developing cognitive and social skills and grounding academic work in social issues. Pervasive initiatives have a large impact on student learning, retention of students, faculty, and staff of color, and the creation of a campus climate conducive to the achievement of academic excellence for all students.

Integration refers to the intersections and collaborations amongst and between the central (macro) and pervasive (micro) efforts on a campus (i.e. academic affairs and student affairs collaboration). Integrated diversity initiatives provide seamless learning environments that take into account the whole student. They take full advantage of the powerful student learning that can occur when curricula, co-curricular, and community connections are brought together as holistic educational experiences.

## **Diversity Initiative Outcomes**

The educational quality of a diversity initiative refers to the extent to which diversity is central to the educational experience of students throughout an institution. While educational quality is largely determined by content, the three measures of effectiveness (Centrality, Pervasiveness, and Integration) are predictors of the educational quality of a diversity initiative in this study. In other words high levels of centrality, pervasiveness, and integration are likely to correlate and contribute to high levels of educational quality.

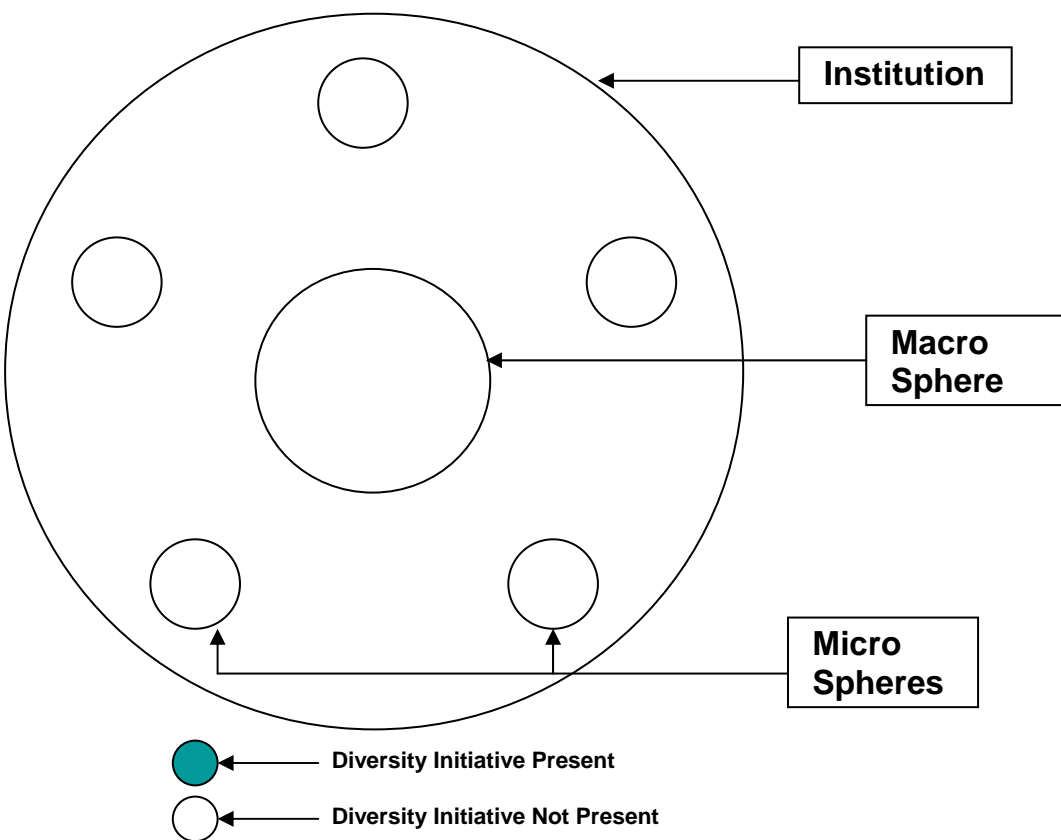
Sustainability refers to the permanence of an institutional initiative. Often diversity initiatives fade away after a particular grant runs out or the "champion" leaves an institution. If a diversity initiative has high levels of both centrality and pervasiveness, it is more likely to be sustained because it is supported across the institution. A highly integrated initiative ensures that everyone shares responsibility for its success, lessening the burden on any particular individual, and making it more likely that the initiative can survive shifts in both staffing and funding.

Educational quality and sustainability in a diversity initiative lead to academic excellence by creating a highly effective and holistic learning experience for students. By tapping into diversity as a resource, students gain a better understanding of "real world" issues and how their particular disciplines relate to them. Students benefiting from this sort of programming become empowered, informed partners in their own education with the skills they need to be responsible citizens of our diverse democracy.

## Diversity Initiative Models

These models display effective measures of centrality, pervasiveness, and integration through the use of macro and micro spheres of influence and the links amongst them, as seen in figure 1. The four models below, which depict different developmental stages, may be useful to other institutions because they provide visuals that show areas of strength and areas in need of further development. It is important to note that these models are limited to data collected from the AAC&U survey, interviews, Web research, and the institutions in the Bildner NJCDI. We encourage further investigation of these models as a heuristic tool for institutionalizing diversity.

**Figure 1: Key for Campus Diversity Initiative Models**



### **Model 1: Nominal – Out of touch**

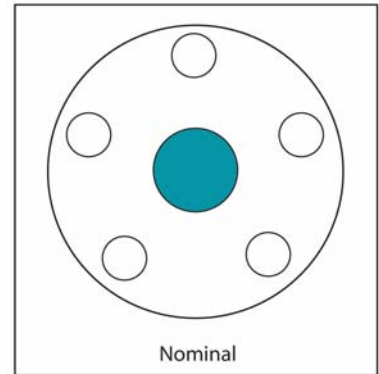
#### Measures of Effectiveness

Centrality – Medium (but superficial)  
Pervasiveness – Low  
Integration – Low

#### Outcomes

Educational Quality – Low  
Institutional Sustainability – High  
Academic Excellence – Low

A nominal campus diversity initiative represents diversity in name only. While it may contain language or ideals articulated in writing, those ideals are not being translated into action. The quality of a nominal diversity initiative is very low and student learning is unaffected since efforts never actually reach students. Moderate levels of centrality make this model sustainable, but ineffective because it is disconnected from improving student learning through diversity.



#### *Areas of Improvement*

An institution with a nominal diversity initiative must work to attain buy-in from across the campus to implement its diversity work broadly. The main focus should be on increasing pervasiveness to a high level while enhancing the macro support for diversity that is already in place. These steps will create a balanced initiative that will then be poised to improve in all areas. One possible strategy to accomplish this would be providing opportunities and incentives for faculty and staff to engage in professional development and enhance their knowledge of diversity scholarship.

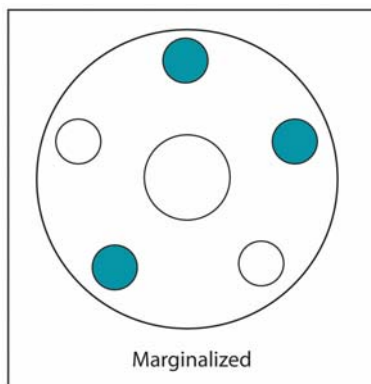
### **Model 2: Marginalized – Islands of Innovation**

#### Measures of Effectiveness

Centrality – Low  
Pervasiveness – Medium  
Integration – Low

#### Outcomes

Educational Quality – Overall low, but individual programs may be high  
Institutional Sustainability – Low  
Academic Excellence – Overall low, but may be high for individual students



One of the defining characteristics of a marginalized diversity initiative is that diversity work is be championed by a few individuals with little or no institutional support. The quality of these individual efforts may be extremely high, yet the overall quality of the initiative is low because it does not impact students across the campus and lacks integration throughout all aspects of campus life. The sustainability of this sort of initiative is very low because of a lack of institutional support and the high likelihood for burnout among diversity champions. As such, a marginalized diversity initiative is highly sensitive to shifts in funding and employment. While learning may be high for

small groups of students who benefit from these programs, the overall student learning from a marginalized diversity initiative is low.

*Areas of Improvement*

Individuals whose diversity efforts are marginalized should continue to garner ever-widening support from the institution. Those in the Bildner NJCDI project are currently writing compelling stories for various constituencies to communicate the educational and societal value of diversity to their institutions. The effective use of communication venues to articulate the dependence of effective micro work on macro support is a potentially powerful strategy to solicit institutional support.

**Model 3: *Balanced***

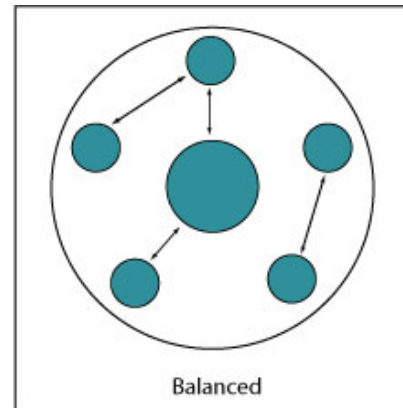
Measures of Effectiveness

Centrality – High  
 Pervasiveness – High  
 Integration – Low to Medium

Outcomes

Educational Quality – Medium to High  
 Institutional Sustainability – High  
 Academic Excellence – Medium to High

In a balanced diversity initiative high levels of centrality (macro) and pervasiveness (micro) are present. Integration, however, has not reached its peak, though it is beginning to be more evident. The high levels of support from both the macro and micro spheres create high levels of sustainability and bolster the educational quality of diversity, thus achieving academic excellence. A balanced diversity initiative is a solid foundation upon which institutions may advance and strengthen their initiatives.



An institution with a balanced diversity initiative should focus on integrating diversity efforts throughout the campus to create a high quality, holistic learning experience for students. Collaboration among existing projects, between student and academic affairs, and with the local and global community through civic engagement opportunities should be key goals of an institution at this juncture.

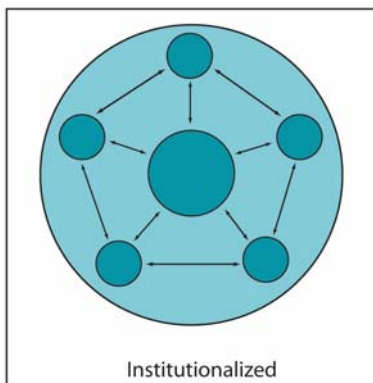
***Institutionalized***

Mode of Implementation

Centrality – High  
 Pervasiveness – High  
 Integration – High

Outcomes

Educational Quality – High  
 Institutional Sustainability – High  
 Academic Excellence - High



A major goal of most campus diversity initiatives is institutionalization. An institutionalized initiative is one in which diversity is seen as integral to the institution and to academic excellence for all students. Many campus constituents aspire to a time when diversity is a natural part of their institutional culture rather than something that is allocated to individual offices or officers with the sole

responsibility for making sure diversity work happens. In such newly conceived institutions everyone is accountable for supporting the diversity mission, which is comprehensively integrated throughout the institution (high centrality, pervasiveness, and integration). This leads to the highest levels of educational quality, institutional sustainability, and academic excellence.

### *Areas of Improvement*

A key characteristic of an institutionalized diversity initiative is constant assessment and re-evaluation. Because of this, the initiatives continually evolve and grow. The work, then, is never done. Best practices are enhanced and adapted to best serve the ever changing populations and in response to social realities on campus and around the world.

### **Final Thoughts**

AAC&U hopes that the models that have emerged from this study will help institutions understand their own institutional structure and culture in order to identify the next steps in developing diversity initiatives that maximize student learning. By gathering data from throughout the institution, a given college can create a comprehensive profile of the current state of its diversity initiatives and determine where it falls among AAC&U's four models. The institution can then identify areas of strength and areas in need of growth. By applying these institutional models, next steps for creating more comprehensive and balanced diversity initiatives should become more apparent.

For example, AAC&U applied these institutional models to the Bildner NJCDI and found that all of the campuses have balanced CDI models. A major contributor to their success has been the partnership among the Bildner Family Foundation, The Philanthropic Initiative, and AAC&U. This partnership has facilitated inter-institutional sharing over the past three years and provided resources to help them prepare their CDIs to be sustained after the grant ends. Although the strengths and weaknesses of the NJCDI schools differ within their institutional models, AAC&U believes these institutions are in position to share their experiences to help other campuses overcome and avoid pitfalls as they implement their diversity initiatives. In order to tap the experiences, insights, and promising practices of the NJCDI campuses, AAC&U is considering forming NJCDI Diversity Consultant Teams which enable them to share their institutional knowledge and strategies with the state of New Jersey. More information on these NJCDI Diversity Consultant Teams may be available in the Fall of 2005.

For questions or comments about this analysis, please contact Dr. Daniel Hiroyuki Teraguchi, Associate Director and Research Associate in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Global Initiatives. His email is [dt@aacu.org](mailto:dt@aacu.org) and phone number is 202-884-7429.