

**COMMISSION ON INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE
REPORT TO FACULTY and STAFF
NOVEMBER 2007**

OVERVIEW

During the past decade, several important strides toward developing an inclusive climate have been made at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, including the Report of the Diversity Task Force in 1996, participation in the Greater Expectations Institute in 2003 and the report of the Commission on the Status of Women submitted to the Faculty in 2007. To build on these efforts, in February 2007 President Gearan convened a group of students, staff and faculty to continue the work of fostering a more inclusive community on this campus. The members of this Commission envision a community that goes beyond tolerance of difference to one of “inclusive excellence”, and one that is guided by the principles of equity, social justice, cultural competence, and engaged citizenship. The goal of “inclusive excellence” is to create a learning community that advances excellence of all its members and promotes meaningful interactions and relationships with diverse peoples and perspectives, both on and off campus. The name, Commission on Inclusive Excellence, reflects the importance of the rhetoric used to approach the subjects focusing on inclusivity and diversity to be discussed by the Commission. Inclusive Excellence highlights the importance of these subjects and connects the discussion with one of excellence rather than to one that implies a lowering of standards.

COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Lesley Adams	Chaplain
Teresa Amott	Provost and Dean of Faculty
Eugen Baer	Dean of Hobart College
Cerri Banks	Assistant Professor, Education
Sandy Bissell	Director of Human Resources
Debra DeMeis	Dean of William Smith College
Don Emmons	Vice-President of Enrollment & Dean of Admissions
Felipe Estefan	Hobart Student 08
Robb Flowers	Interim Vice President of Student Affairs
Mark Gearan	President of the Colleges
Mike Hanna	Director of Hobart Athletics
Susan Henking	Professor, Religious Studies
Jon Iuzzini	Assistant Professor of Psychology
Alejandra Molina	Assistant Dean of Intercultural Affairs & Chair of the Commission on Inclusive Excellence
Susan Pliner	Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
Deb Steward	Director of William Smith Athletics
Shavonne Ward	William Smith Student '09, Student Trustee

COMMISSION VISION AND GOALS

VISION

Hobart and William Smith Colleges are committed to fostering an intellectual and engaged community that values and celebrates a wide spectrum of differences.

The Colleges' Commission on Inclusive Excellence envisions a community that goes beyond tolerance of difference to become one of inclusive excellence – a learning community that is guided by the principles of equity, social justice, cultural competence, and engaged citizenship. We believe inclusivity is essential to achieving the standards of excellence to which we aspire. Inclusive excellence is organized around a concept of diversity that is influenced by history and biography and includes multiple social and cultural identities. Its goal is to foster the excellence of all community members and promote meaningful interactions and relationships with diverse peoples and perspectives, both on and off our campus. Every individual at Hobart and William Smith has a responsibility in this endeavor.

CHARGE FOR THE COMMISSION

The Commission will create a strategic plan that will help the Colleges build a Community of Inclusive Excellence – one that will stand as a National Model. In order to realize our Vision for Inclusive Excellence, the Commission will need to meet a number of goals. These goals are linked to one another as structural building blocks and are realized through a set of initiatives.

Goal I: Communicate the Commission's Vision to all members of the HWS Community – students, faculty and staff – and to our community partners.

Initiatives:

- Ensure the Vision remains a high priority in the overall planning efforts of the strategic plan and mission statement of HWS.
- Ensure effective collaboration with the larger Geneva community.

Goal II: Review, assess and benchmark all efforts currently and into the future to achieve inclusive excellence.

Initiatives:

- Generate a comprehensive database (students, faculty, and non-academic staff) to evaluate our current environment and create measurable benchmarks for the future.
- Establish a longitudinal approach for generating feedback from students, faculty and staff about the status of campus climate.
- Identify practices or policies that may have negative impact or create barriers for particular populations.
- Evaluate curriculum and collaborate with the faculty to assure that it properly addresses topics related to inclusiveness.
- Evaluate the co-curriculum and collaborate with student affairs to assure that their efforts contribute to a community of Inclusive Excellence.
- Review current campus wide hiring practices and work closely with HR in assuring that such practices follow the Commissions vision.

- Evaluate current training of faculty, staff, administration and students on principals of inclusiveness, equity, social justice, cultural competence and offer suggestions to maximize the effectiveness of such training.
- Analyze current recruiting practices and make recommendations that contribute to diversifying the student population.
- Review institutional financial priorities and offer suggestions to assure that key priorities foster the development of practices, programming and institutional climate that follow the Commissions vision.

Goal III: Make recommendations on developing programming and “best practices” that would insure inclusive excellence as a foundation for advancement.

Initiatives:

- Increase opportunities for gaining knowledge on specific curricular enhancements and co-curricular programming that advances an environment of inclusive excellence.
- Expand “inclusive” outreach strategies that expand avenues for recruitment but do not confer (or deny) educational benefits on the basis of race or ethnicity.
- Focus on strategies designed to expand the pool of applicants.
- Support curricular and co-curricular initiatives that encourage ideas and perspective reflective of diversity.
- Encourage student – student interactions that may advance the notion of “connection” to other.

2007 INITIATIVES

As the Commission began to organize its work, we determined that we needed to discern three areas regarding inclusive excellence: student perception, current and past HWS programs and initiatives and staff’s vision for the future. We began with a questionnaire for students and then moved on to an inventory of staff programming and visions.

Senior Class Questionnaire - In May 2007, an appreciative inquiry survey was distributed to senior students from a selection of senior seminars and to students involved in cultural and social justice clubs at the Intercultural Affairs Center. Replies were received from 35 students. The survey findings were reported to the Commission in August 2007. Responses indicated that while the students did not necessarily participate in the building of an inclusive community, they were positively impacted by being exposed to a diversity of people and experiences through classes, study abroad, student government, social events and evening lectures. The Commission plans to build on the results of the survey by forming student focus groups for discussion of issues of inclusive excellence and by developing ways to involve student governments of the Colleges in the work of the Commission during academic year 2007-08.

Staff Inventory Report – The Commission recognized the importance of integrating students’ perceptions of the Colleges as an inclusive campus with initiatives, programs and practices made available by HWS faculty and administrators. With this principle in mind, the Commission is conducting an inventory of current initiatives, programs and practices leading to the achievement of inclusive excellence at the Colleges. We have requested inventories

from 28 persons. The inventories will be analyzed to discern emerging contributions, patterns, gaps and needs. Preliminary findings will be presented to the Commission at its December meeting.

2008-2009 INITIATIVES

The Commission has begun to formulate actions designed to accomplish the goals as stated in the Vision and Goal Statement. Three sub-committees have been formed to begin preliminary work on each of the three goals as we move towards the creation of a **Strategic Plan 2008**.

Goal 1 – Communicating the Vision

Cerri Banks
Felipe Estafan
Mark Gearan
Alejandra Molina
Susan Pliner

Goal 2 – Reviewing, Assessing and Benchmarking

Teresa Amott
Eugen Baer
Don Emmons
Mike Hanna
Susan Henking
Jon Iuzzini

Goal 3 – Programming and Best Practices Recommendations

Lesley Adams
Debra DeMeis
Robb Flowers
Deb Steward
Shavonne Ward

CURRENT PRELIMINARY ACTION ITEMS

As the Commission develops **Strategic Plan 2008**, it will also be looking at the evaluations and recommendations gathered from the training conducted by the **Anti-Defamation League** in August 2007. The training was jointly sponsored by the Offices of Intercultural Affairs, Student Affairs and Human Resources. It was attended by Resident Assistants and representatives from HWS staff offices. The Commission hopes to make the training available on an annual basis so that all members of the campus population can participate. Recommendations from this year's participants include: hiring and retention of diverse faculty and staff, recruiting and retention of diverse students, consistent addressing of incidents of bias and hate speech and increased interaction with the Geneva community.

Goal 1 – Communicating the Commission's Vision

The sub-committee working on this goal is currently planning a **Listening Forum** for Spring 2008. This all-day event will be designed as an opportunity for participation in an all-campus conversation. The Forum is tentatively scheduled for January 21, 2008 with a lead-up poster campaign to motivate participation in the Forum, to develop awareness and to educate about the term “inclusive excellence”. The Commission is considering that the Listening Forum become an annual MLK event with the two-fold purpose of honoring Dr. King’s legacy and of communicating the Commission’s vision and goals.

Goal 2 – Reviewing, Assessing and Benchmarking

The sub-committee working on this goal is exploring methods to benchmark and assess efforts towards achieving inclusive excellence at HWS. One possibility is the use of the **Equity Scorecard**, a tool and a process that helps campuses assess their effectiveness in providing historically underrepresented students with the credentials they will need to gain economic, social, and political power. The Equity Scorecard provides a means to develop a clear and unambiguous picture of inequities, a method of analyzing and integrating the meaning of the inequities and a process to develop strategic actions for achieving equity in educational outcomes based on data, not assumptions.

Goal 3 - Programming and Best Practices Recommendations

The sub-committee will be developing recommendations to the Commission following a preliminary analysis of the staff programming and initiative inventories.

Information about and pertaining to the work of the Commission will be available on its **Blackboard** site in Spring 2008. An announcement will be made when documents have been posted to it.

Information regarding **publications** about **inclusive excellence** can be found at https://www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/index.cfm