

# **The President's Commission on Diversity and Community 2008 – 2009 Report**

**Submitted by: Monica Schneider and Irene Belyakov**

## **Commission Members**

Irene Belyakov; Lecturer and ESL Coordinator (co-chair)  
Tabitha Buggie-Hunt; Assistant Dean for Disability Services  
Joyce Chen; Student  
Ulyses Colon; Student  
Ben Delozier; Residence Director, Onondaga Hall  
Celia Easton, Dean of Residential Living  
Becky Glass; Executive Assistant to the President  
Patricia Gonzalez; Access Opportunity Programs  
David Gordon; Associate Provost  
Scott Hemer; Coach, Department of Athletics and Recreation  
Harry Howe; Professor, School of Business  
Fatima Johnson, Coordinator, Multicultural Programs and Services  
Wendi Kinney; Coordinator, Greek Affairs & Off-Campus Living  
Megan Lee; Student  
David Levy; Assistant Professor, Philosophy  
Maria Perpetua Socorro U. Liwanag; Assistant Professor, School of Education  
Gloria Lopez; Associate Director, Human Resources/Director of Affirmative Action  
Jeannette Molina; Director, Dual Diploma and ESL  
Garry Morgan; Residence Director, Allegany Hall  
Susan Norman; Interim Director, Xerox Center for Multicultural Education  
Robert Owens; Professor, Communicative Disorders and Sciences  
David Parfitt; Director, Teaching and Learning Center  
Steve Radi; Interim Director, Student Health and Counseling  
Polly Radosh; Dean of the College  
Julie Rao, Director, Institutional Research  
Malissa Rivera; Student  
Monica Schneider; Associate Professor, Psychology (co-chair)  
Sherry Schwartz; Associate Professor, School of Education  
Farooq Sheikh; Assistant Professor, School of Business  
Isaiah Tolbert; Residence Director, Jones Hall  
Kathy Trainor; Student and Campus Life  
Annmarie Urso; Assistant Professor, School of Education  
Joe Van Remmen; University Police  
Robert Wayland-Smith; Geneseo Board  
Lindsey Wiltse; Student

### **Overall Direction and Emphasis of the Commission's Work**

The following report represents the Commission's hard work and dedication throughout the 2008-2009 academic year. The Commission continued its commitment to outreach, building community, and "continuing the conversations" regarding important diversity and community issues. Whereas the predominant focus of the Commission during the 2007 – 2008 was in identifying the most effective ways to provide outreach and build community, the focus of the Commission during this academic year was on the development of proposals and programs designed to achieve these goals.

Several changes were made to the structure and function of the various subcommittees to reflect this movement toward continued integration and outreach. Specifically, six subcommittees were created to accomplish the overarching goals of the Commission: Student and Campus Engagement, Deliberative Dialogues, Assessment, Diversity Plan, Faculty Development, and PATH Awards. Approximately 34 Commission members and 11 non-Commission members served on the various subcommittees, with several members serving on multiple committees. Furthermore, countless other departments and individuals from the SUNY Geneseo college community contributed significantly to the Commission's functioning by providing invaluable support and resources.

Below is a summary of the activities of each subcommittee as well as a list of recommendations for the next academic year. The complete 2008 – 2009 subcommittee reports can be found in the appendices.

### **Summary of Activities: 2008-2009**

***The Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee:*** The Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee (SACES) made significant strides in developing a pilot program designed to provide students with a "transformative diversity experience." This program (known as Real World at Geneseo) emerged in response to an identified need for students to have a greater opportunity to incorporate academic and service learning experiences related to diversity as central components of their education and personal development at SUNY Geneseo. Currently, the program includes an experiential component, an academic component, and a service-learning component. Specifically, students selected for the pilot program will participate in a 4-day experiential residential retreat during winter break, complete one of a series of predetermined courses addressing important diversity-related issues during the spring 2010 semester, and meet in small teams to develop proposals that will allow students to apply what they are learning to benefit the larger community in some significant way. Throughout the spring 2009 semester, members of SACES met with interested faculty, staff, and students to identify potential participants, faculty/staff facilitators for the various phases, and relevant academic courses. The SACES applied for and received grant funding for the pilot program.

This past year, SUNY Geneseo received funding for developing campus-wide programs that "bring theory to practice" at college institutions. A task force was created to address this issue as one of six initiatives or "Big Ideas" that the College will focus on this

coming year. The pilot program developed by the SACES would serve as one potential model for achieving these goals. Not only would students have the opportunity to address issues of diversity and community in personal and meaningful ways, they would be encouraged to integrate what they are learning personally and academically in their service or outreach to the larger community. In addition, this pilot program would help support the Commission's goal of outreach and community building within and outside of SUNY Geneseo. Specifically, this program will require the coordinated efforts of students, faculty, and staff throughout various divisions within the College. Moreover, students may potentially be working in conjunction with individuals from various programs and institutions outside the College for the service learning component of the program.

***The Deliberative Dialogues Subcommittee:*** The Deliberative Dialogues Subcommittee continued to seek innovative ways to increase its outreach and “continue the conversations.” In response to feedback received last year from the campus community, the DD Subcommittee ran smaller, more frequent Deliberative Dialogue sessions rather than two or three larger forums across the two semesters. Specifically, the DD Subcommittee facilitated a dialogue titled “Democracy’s Challenge: Reclaiming the Public’s Role” four times in the fall semester and a dialogue titled “God and Commons: Does Religion Matter?” three times in the spring semester. The DD Subcommittee also increased its outreach to the college community by conducting a workshop through the Teaching and Learning Center on how to incorporate DD in the classroom. Moreover, several DD Subcommittee members helped facilitate Deliberative Dialogues in conjunction with faculty in the classroom. Lastly, the DD Subcommittee established a group page through MyCourses designed to encourage past participants of DD sessions to continue the conversations regarding relevant community issues.

***The Assessment Subcommittee:*** The Assessment Subcommittee continued to examine dashboard indicators of students’ perceptions of diversity and community with an emphasis on diversity as it is related to race and ethnicity. Specifically, the Assessment Subcommittee updated the diversity indicators that they used to examine the retention rates of students of color and the current proportion of students, faculty, and staff of color at SUNY Geneseo. In addition, they developed additional diversity-related items that they included in the Student Opinion Survey (SOS) administered in spring 2009, with plans to examine potential differences in some of the survey indicators by ethnicity. The results of the SOS will be available over the summer.

***The Diversity Plan Subcommittee:*** At the end of the 2007-2008 academic year, the Assessment Subcommittee met with the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) to advocate for the development of a campus-wide diversity plan that could be added to the College’s strategic plan. The SPG accepted the proposal and added the development and implementation of a campus diversity plan as an objective under the larger goal of “recruiting, supporting, and fostering the development of a diverse community of

outstanding students, faculty, and staff.” A new subcommittee was formed to develop a campus-wide diversity plan to be submitted to the SPG for consideration. The Diversity Plan Subcommittee examined diversity plans used by comparable college institutions, created an overarching structure for the plan, and began developing content for the major sections.

***The Faculty Development Subcommittee:*** The Faculty Development Subcommittee was formed in response to an identified need for continued faculty development regarding issues of diversity. This subcommittee identified important diversity issues and developed a model that could potentially be used in faculty development workshops. The subcommittee met with David Gordon, the Interim Provost, to discuss the possibility of conducting two back-to-back workshops with new faculty, with the understanding that the decision would ultimately be made by the incoming Provost. If these workshops are received favorably by incoming faculty, the subcommittee hopes to work in conjunction with the Teaching and Learning Center to find a mechanism for addressing this important faculty development issue with returning faculty. These workshops have the potential to initiate and sustain dialogue regarding diversity in meaningful and important ways among faculty and can serve as a mechanism for building community.

***The PATH Awards Subcommittee:*** The PATH Awards Subcommittee selected three PATH Award winners from among the 7 individual and/or group nominations received by the committee. For several years now, a subcommittee of the Commission has had the responsibility of selecting the award winners. However, getting nominations from the college community has continued to be a challenge. To address this issue, the subcommittee recommends that the responsibility for selecting award winners be given back to the students in the hopes that ownership of the project would increase student commitment and interest in the award.

## **Recommendations for 2009 -2010**

### ***Overall Direction of the Commission***

1. The Commission should continue to strive to take more of an active rather than reactive role in identifying diversity and community issues that are challenging to the college community. In addition, the Commission needs to continue to foster community dialogue about these issues in a meaningful way by supporting and encouraging these dialogues at all levels of the College. They should serve as “promoters” of people talking about ideas and issues.
2. The Commission could hold open forums or meetings about specific issues or could meet with particular segments of the college community to find out their specific needs or concerns. This can be done through the Commission as a whole and/or by its subcommittees.

3. The Commission should continue to strive to become even more integrated in its functioning by:
  - including non-Commission members in the membership of the subcommittees
  - working in conjunction with already established committees, programs, and divisions at the College
  - co-sponsoring and supporting programs designed to address diversity and community related issues
  - examining ways in which the Commission could help integrate and coordinate the diversity-related efforts of the various areas of the College
  - serving as a resource and source of support to divisions, departments, and the larger community as a whole
4. The Commission should continue gaining more visibility so that the college community will come to see the Commission as a resource and touchstone for diversity and community related issues. To accomplish this goal, the Commission needs to clearly define its role and effectively communicate that role to the larger college community. This may include: creating a web link on the diversity webpage for the Commission, marketing the Commission by communicating to the community how the Commission may help them accomplish their goals, using already existing forms of communication (e.g., GSTV, allstaff-l) to invite input and to provide information about the Commission's current activities, and providing annual updates to the College Senate and the Student Association about the Commission's activities.
5. The Commission should increase its efforts to invite, include, and reach out to members of the college community in ways that help support individuals and groups who are feeling alienated and unsupported in the community.

### *Specific Recommendations for the Subcommittees*

**Real World at Geneseo Program Subcommittee:** Last year, the Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee worked on a diversity-related learning community program for students titled Real World at Geneseo (RWG). We recommend that a new subcommittee be formed to implement this pilot program during the 2009-2010 academic year. The subcommittee should focus on the following tasks:

- developing a marketing campaign for the RWG as a kick-off for the Fall Semester.

- providing the Dean of the College Office with the completed grant proposal, which includes the courses with the RWG distinction. Associate Dean McKeever agreed to assist with the registration process for RWG participants. This registration process needs to become formalized.
- assisting in organizing a formal meeting with Dr. Thomas Matthews, Leadership Development and Ms. Kay Fly, Volunteer and Serving Learning to establish a collaborative partnership for phase three of the project.
- inviting consultant Robert T. Jones to come back to campus to meet with the committee and involved faculty to present the curriculum for the 3.5-day residential experience.

The Diversity Commission should assist this subcommittee in providing sustainability of the project, which includes where the project will be housed and its continued financial support.

**The Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee:** This subcommittee should focus on increasing outreach and building community with a diverse body of students through:

- *Outreach:* We recommend that this subcommittee reach out to various student groups and organizations by attending their meetings in the hopes of identifying community and diversity-related issues that are currently relevant to the students. In addition, these interactions could serve as a mechanism for increasing the Commission's visibility as a viable resource.
- *Mentorship Program:* Initial data collected by the Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee revealed a strong student interest and need for some form of mentorship. This subcommittee should continue to develop a mentorship model that would best serve the needs of the students. To accomplish this goal, the subcommittee will need to collect more quantitative and qualitative data from a larger, more representative sample of students. Once this program is developed, this subcommittee should be responsible for overseeing its implementation.

**The Deliberative Dialogue Subcommittee:** We strongly recommend continuing the Deliberative Dialogue (DD) program, which has been an effective component of the Commission's outreach to the SUNY Geneseo community.

The DD Subcommittee reported foreseeing certain challenges in the coming year: the DD Subcommittee will have a new chair during the 2009-2010 academic year; with the ongoing economic downturn and attendant budget crisis, there are anticipations that there might be reduced support for DD. However, at the same time, it is logical to expect that President Dahl's Six Initiatives (or "Six Big Ideas")—each with its own Task Force—

will provide a space for an increased role for DD. In addition, the Curriculum Task Force is in the process of making recommendations to the College regarding curriculum reform. Again, DD could serve as an invaluable tool for these discussions.

Each initiative has the chance to significantly affect what Geneseo is, and thereby to affect the role played by every member of the college community. The DD format would allow for a deeper, more pervasive level of understanding of what is being considered, what might be done, and what trade-offs would be involved. It would be a significant undertaking for the DD subcommittee to work with some (let alone all) of the new Task Forces, and so the subcommittee should give it a careful consideration. Still, this would seem to be a chance for the DD process to help the College adapt to the demands of the new educational and economic realities.

Given the importance of these initiatives to the college community, we recommend that the DD Subcommittee begin to find ways in which the DD process could be used to identify the relevant issues and concerns that emerge from the dialogues being conducted. In addition, the DD Subcommittee needs to find a mechanism by which to foster continued communication among community members regarding these issues with an emphasis on action outcomes.

**The Assessment Subcommittee:** In the coming year, the Assessment Subcommittee should analyze the existing data addressing the important questions raised by this subcommittee last year. This includes data from the Student Opinion Survey (SOS) administered in spring 09 and the NSSE results separated by race and ethnicity. In addition, we recommend that this subcommittee develop an integrative assessment plan that will allow the College to systematically keep track of campus climate and diversity-related issues over time.

**The Diversity Plan Subcommittee:** This subcommittee should continue creating a campus diversity plan. It should focus on such tasks as developing a discussion of the benefits of diversity, refining goals, developing specific objectives, developing an assessment plan, and developing a process for implementing the campus diversity plan. This subcommittee will need to present the proposed campus diversity plan to the Strategic Planning Group who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan. In order for the college community to fully accept the diversity plan, we believe that it is important to provide members of the community with the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposed recommendations at some point in the process.

**The Faculty Development Subcommittee:** This subcommittee should continue developing a mechanism for providing faculty with professional development opportunities related to diversity. This subcommittee should work in conjunction with the Provost's Office and the TLC to identify the most effective way to provide these opportunities. The President's Commission through the Faculty Development Subcommittee should:

- continue to pursue faculty development
- meet with the new Provost with a model for faculty development
- make firm plans to initiate new faculty development as soon as the hiring freeze is lifted
- coordinate plans to offer the training to returning faculty via the Teaching and Learning Center

**The PATH Awards Subcommittee:** This subcommittee continues to be impressed by the quality of those nominated in 2008-2009 school year. It recommends, as it did last year, that nominations for the PATH Awards process be put back into the hands of our students in cooperation with the Commission members. This is based on the belief that the students who live and learn on our campus have a better feel for those who are deserving of the PATH Award.

Unfortunately, as of now, an informal request of students has not brought forth any volunteers willing to take ownership of the PATH Awards. The subcommittee maintains the importance of recognizing those who are doing such exemplary work at the college, however, a push should continue for this to again become a student-led award. The possibility of a cash award or some other incentive should possibly be pursued. The Commission should explore the possibility of involving an existing student group (through the office of Multicultural Programs Center for Community) in taking an active role in PATH awards.

### **Overall Summary and Conclusions**

Overall, the Commission has taken significant steps toward addressing important community issues and involving members of the larger college community in the process. Moreover, the Commission has played a major role in facilitating and fostering community through Deliberative Dialogues, in spite of the difficulties the DD Subcommittee faced during the past school year. As the Commission continues to make its transition toward outreach, the subcommittees will need to continue to involve the larger community as they try to implement the various programs and initiatives proposed in this report. Furthermore, the Commission will need to continue to reach out to the community and find ways to support the College as it begins working on the Six Initiatives designed to address issues that are central to the effective functioning of the College.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the members of the Commission for their hard work and dedication, especially the chairs of the various subcommittees who have provided such effective leadership in the process. This past year, the Commission had the greatest number of members since its inception, reflecting the commitment of the SUNY Geneseo students, faculty, and staff toward issues of diversity and community. The amount of work accomplished and the quality of the programs and proposals developed by the subcommittees are remarkable, especially considering the fact that the Commission did not officially begin functioning until the spring semester. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to work with a group of individuals who are so committed to making a positive difference in our community.

We would also like to thank the students, faculty, staff, and administration outside of the Commission who contributed their ideas, concerns, and resources throughout the year. Many of the programs and proposals presented in this report are a direct result of the collaborations that emerged between Commission members and non-Commission members. Their continued support plays an invaluable role in the Commission's functioning.

## **Appendices**

- I. Student and Campus Engagement
- II. Deliberative Dialogues
- III. Assessment
- IV. Diversity Plan
- V. Faculty Development Regarding Diversity
- VI. PATH Awards

# **STUDENT AND CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE**

## **2009 Annual Report**

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Susan Preston Norman, Co-Chair  
Fatima Rodriguez Johnson, Co-Chair  
Patricia Gonzalez, AOP  
Emily Grossman, Student Representative  
Garry Morgan, Residence Life  
David Parfitt, Teaching and Learning Center  
Malissa Rivera, Student Representative  
Isaiah Tolbert, Residence Life  
Annemarie Urso, School of Education

### **SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES**

The Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee (SACES) focused on three goals:

- To utilize the Arizona State and Johnson and Wales University, Diversity and Leadership in Action model as the basis for establishing a transformative diversity experience for 40 sophomores to be piloted in the Spring 2010.
- To establish buy-in for the program (which became known as Real World at Geneseo) from faculty, staff and students on campus.
- To investigate funding opportunities for the RWG program.

During course of the spring of 2009, the subcommittee identified a location for the residential experience, established a list of course connections, and organized an assessment team for the project.

The committee also invited, Robert T. Jones, the consultant to Johnson and Wales University to present on campus as a part of the MOSAIC Speaker Series on April 1, 2009. With the assistance of Monica Schneider and Irene Belyakov, Chairs of the President's Commission for Diversity and Community, an invitation list was generated which included faculty, staff and students. Forty-five people attended the program with the majority of the participants representing the department of academic affairs.

The co-chairs of SACES held two more in-depth information sessions with interested faculty who agreed to have their courses designated as a part of the RWG experience. Dr. Annemarie Urso accepted the responsibility of organizing an assessment team and leading the weekly learning community.

In addition, the co-chairs of the committee met with Dr. David Gordon, Provost and convener of the Bring Theory to Practice Committee, Dr. Kerry McKeever from the Dean of the College's Office and received guidance from Becky Glass from the President's Office.

The committee with the help of Becky Glass turned much of its efforts to funding the project during later part of the semester. Helen Thomas and Gloria Lopez recommended grants and/or funders with a focus on diversity. The co-chairs reviewed the list and after receiving the RFP from Gloria Lopez, chose to pursue the Diversity and Academic Excellence Grant from SUNY.

The grant was completed on June 4<sup>th</sup> with strong guidance and support from Helen Thomas, Grant Writer from the Office Sponsored Research.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The SACES needs to develop a marketing campaign for the RWG as a kick-off for the Fall Semester.
- The Dean of the College Office should be provided with the completed grant proposal, which includes the courses with the RWG distinction. Dean McKeever agreed to assist with the registration process for RWG participants. This Registration process needs to become formalized.
- A formal meeting should be organized with Dr. Thomas Matthews, Leadership Development and Ms. Kay Fly, Volunteer and Serving Learning to establish a collaborative partnership for phase three of the project.
- Finally, consultant Robert T. Jones will need to come back to campus to meet with the committee and involved faculty to present the curriculum for the 3.5-day residential experience.

### CHALLENGES

- Sustainability of the project, which includes where the project will be housed and its continued financial support.

# SCES GRANT PROPOSAL

## Submitted by the Student and College Engagement Subcommittee

5/30/09

Real World Geneseo (RWG)

Explorations in Diversity and Academic Excellence

### **ABSTRACT**

SUNY Geneseo proposes “Real World Geneseo” (RWG), a new initiative to improve cultural competence in our predominantly white institution (PWI) by enhancing the traditional learning environment. This three-phase project consists of a transformative retreat involving forty diverse students, academic coursework impacted by the presence of teams of these students and a credit-bearing reflective lab course to help them integrate their experiences into campus life. Using Tinto’s 1993 Student Integration Model, RWG aims to improve the formal academic integration of non-majority perspectives in the classroom as well as improve the informal, peer group, social integration and interactions.

Geneseo’s mission states, “The entire college community works together to develop socially responsible citizens with skills and values important to the pursuit of an enriched life and success in the world.” Actively pursuing this mission requires that we set a strong foundation for cross-cultural communication and interaction on campus. As the campus continues to increase its critical mass of students from different backgrounds, it also needs to work to retain them. RWG will begin building that foundation through enhanced coursework.

### **PROJECT NARRATIVE**

The RWG project is a new effort stemming from the work of the Student and Campus Engagement Subcommittee (SCES), a subdivision of the SUNY Geneseo President’s Commission on Diversity and Community. The SCES represents a recent collaborative effort with representatives from both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. The two co-chairs of the committee, Susan Norman, Director of the Xerox Center for Multicultural Teacher Education and Fatima Rogriguez-Johnson, Coordinator of the Office of Multicultural Programs & Services, will work together to lead the RWG project.

**The purpose of this project** is to increase cultural competency among the students, faculty and staff in the academic setting. Although students are exposed to alternative viewpoints, cultures, and socioeconomic class perspectives within the general education curriculum, in 2006, our National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) reported that students perceive themselves to be “relatively unengaged” when it comes to knowledge and understanding of “others”. Two events triggered the SCES subcommittee to look into an alternative method to enhance diversity within the curriculum. In 2007, the open forums sponsored by the Provost’s Task Force on Curriculum Review suggested the need to deeply ground issues related to diversity in the curriculum, whether that be in some existing portion of the General Education program (such as the Western Humanities core,

the Social Sciences core, or the Non-Western Traditions requirement) or in some new requirement (such as a new Non-Western Humanities course). Second, a culturally insensitive and inflammatory incident occurred on campus at Halloween. This event highlighted the issues about which the student group FARI (Fighting Against Racial Injustice) had been speaking for nearly a year. For minority students, the lack of cultural competency on campus can lead to feelings of alienation and related stresses. In the end, some of these valuable students may choose to drop out or go elsewhere. In 2006, Geneseo boasted an overall retention rate of 92%; the retention rate for minority students was 81.77%. The overall six-year graduation rate for the 1999 and 2000 cohorts was approximately 80%; for minority students it was approximately 60%. According to Richardson and Skinner 1990, although many PWIs address campus climate issues...institutions that successfully support minority access and achievement focus on learning environments rather than race or ethnicity. We believe creating a transformative learning environment should also have a positive impact on retention efforts at SUNY Geneseo.

**Phase I** of this project involves forty sophomores in a four day transformative retreat modeled after successful programs conducted at Arizona State University, Johnson and Wales, and at high schools across the country in “Anytown” programs. This experiential program immerses students in a diverse community to examine their attitudes toward one another and to engage in meaningful “change” opportunities guided by expert facilitators.

During the Fall 2009 semester, a diverse pool of students will be recruited through an application and interview process (see Appendix A). The same students will pre-register into one of ten courses (see Appendix B). The retreat is scheduled winter break in January, 2010, just before the start of spring-semester classes. All necessary arrangements for the retreat and following Spring 2010 semester-long activities will be made during this time.

During the retreat, a high level of trust is established among participants and instructors to allow for personal growth and understanding. This is enforced by having all participants develop a shared standard of behavior and expectations that are observed to insure a safe, productive learning environment. For the retreat, students will be transported to a YMCA center off campus, nearby Camp Weona. This facility offers an open community room with bunkbed dormitory style housing on the perimeter. Discussions will take place in large and small group settings. Modules include: Building Community and Cultural Sharing; Identity, Worldview, Race, Power and Privilege; Cycle of Socialization, Racial Identity Theory; Gender Bias, and Homophobia; Anti-Semitism and Xenophobia; Classism, Understanding Process, Cycle of Liberation; Becoming an Ally; Diversity and Inclusion; and Strategic planning. During the day, students will produce videodiaris, reflecting on the process and how they are feeling about the topics. Students will also keep journals of their experiences at the retreat. Weather permitting, students will also do team-building as well as recreational activities including snow shoeing and cross-country skiing. This retreat will be led by professional facilitators and overseen by onsite faculty and staff to ensure a safe and meaningful experience.

**Phase II** of the project begins directly after the retreat when classes commence on campus and the forty students split up into four-person teams for academic coursework.

Each team will have been enrolled in one of ten carefully selected courses and an RWG lab course. The courses have been identified by members of the President's Commission of Diversity and Community to allow students the maximum opportunity to explore issues related to social identity within the structure of rigorous academic course work. The issues include but are not limited to: social and cultural diversity; societal manifestations of oppression; examination of dominant ideologies; dynamics of power relationships and poverty; social exchange and equity; social justice in America; interrelated issues of race, class, work, public power, family and sexuality; and social institutions and social systems. The predetermined courses will have had four openings reserved by the Dean of the College specifically for the students participating in RWG. Faculty will teach courses without modification. It is the students who will be expected to participate vigorously within and outside the academic setting.

**Phase III**, running concurrently with Phase II, involves student teams being reconvened as a group of forty to share their experiences from the diverse courses. The weekly, credit-bearing lab sessions will be facilitated by School of Education faculty using a workbook on Cultural Competency. In addition to nurturing and supporting the cultural development of students through self-reflective activities, the lab course will require students to produce transformative artifacts. These artifacts include an ethnographic self-study; a self-reflective journal; analysis of videodiaries produced at the retreat; and the creation of a service learning proposal.

**New synergies** will be created on campus during each phase of the project. In Phase I, a powerful new synergy will be created by immersing students from diverse affinity groups in a "real world living experience." This experience is expected to be life altering and have a profound and lasting impact on participants as well as on people with whom they interact thereafter.

Each of the academic classes in which the teams participate will provide opportunities for new synergistic interactions as team participants bring their perspective to the classroom. Because of their experiences in processing "RWG" issues in a safe and caring environment, participants will be encouraged to continue peer facilitation with non-participating students, faculty and staff in the context both of their coursework and their daily lives. It is expected that these interactions will effect a widespread pollination of awareness and have an ongoing ripple effect.

**In order to engage diverse communities** on campus, the SCES co-chairs will rely on established partnerships with a number of diverse groups including the offices of Greek affairs, International Student Program, ACCESS Opportunity Program, Residential Living, Student Association, Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Shakti, Japanese Culture Club, Chinese Culture Club, Women's Action Coalition, PRIDE Alliance, and Students Educating about Ableism. Participants in the RWG will be recruited from these groups and are expected to represent a cross-section of different identities including: race, gender, sexual orientation, social economic status, ability, geographic location, religion, and community based experiences. The application for participation is attached as an appendix to this proposal.

**The long term impacts** of this project are expected to be multiple and self sustaining. Three major impacts are envisioned. All PWIs are seeking ways to diversify traditional curriculum that no longer fit the needs of today's 21<sup>st</sup> century demographics or required skill sets. If the assessment of the course enhancements shows a positive impact, the three phase enrichment process could become a model to reinvent and reinvigorate traditional courses. Second, if the enhanced coursework causes our students, faculty and staff to perceive more multicultural viewpoints, then a gradual shift of the learning environments should lead to a changing campus climate. A better learning environment in turn may help diverse students have better undergraduate experiences at PWIs and stay until graduation. A third long term impact occurs on an individual level. We hope to provide life-altering experiences to the cohort of forty participants in the retreat experience. They then will provide a more broad based impact through their multi-layered communications and interactions both on and off campus. These students will provide a new perspective to exchanges within the credible setting of academic coursework, and they will also pollinate their affinity groups and their social milieu with awareness. An appreciation of the importance of diverse perspectives in all settings will foster a more welcoming environment for new students of color, and other diverse groups.

**Assessment of project** will be conducted by a team of faculty from the Ella Cline Shear School of Education, the Sociology Department and the Psychology Department. The bulk of the assessments will be incorporated into advanced education classes in which students participating in carrying out the measurements will also be exposed to the ideals of the program. Assessment methods will include pre-enrollment interviews. Student participants will be identified in early fall of 2009 based on these interviews. Post retreat interviews will also be conducted. Interviews will be transcribed and analyzed, and findings will be summarized and reported to the Chief Diversity Officer, and to the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. During the spring semester coursework and lab sessions, students will create video-diaries, self-reflective journals and other artifacts that can be assessed to determine the success of the program. Surveys will be given to faculty participating in the ten enhanced courses to measure what impact was made by incorporating more diverse student discussions and viewpoints into their courses. Retention rates of diverse students will be tracked on an ongoing basis to try to determine any significant change from prior years.

### **Budget Justification**

The budget for this project includes expenses for the retreat facilities, the consultant, the supplies for the retreat, the transportation costs, the supplies needed by the assessment team, and books needed for the reflective lab. All food costs will be incurred by the SUNY Geneseo budget.



The success of the retreat is dependent on the quality and experience of the facilitators. For this reason, we have contacted the same group of individuals who successfully conducted the retreats for “Anytown” as well as the Arizona State Invision and the Johnson and Wales Diversity in Action retreats. T. Lee & Associates can be contracted to provide four consultant/trainers for the four days at a cost of \$4500. The requirements for the retreat include a secluded, private setting, and accommodations and board of a group of up to 50 individuals. Camp Weona, is nestled amongst 1,000 acres of woodlands near Warsaw, New York. Located about one hour from Rochester, has been in operation for 110 years. For overnight stays, patrons will sleep in the Hyde Lodge, which is fully winterized and accommodates up to 50 people. Separate accommodations exist for male and female participants. The indoor portion of the program will take place in a heated barn complex which houses five separate areas. The outdoor usage includes nearly 1,000 acres of rolling hills, fields and streams. Rental space for four days and 50 people will cost \$2925.00. This facility was built for group activities and will be a great place for our daily meetings. Transporting students to and from the retreat with our contracted bus service will cost \$550. In addition, there will be Geneseo faculty/staff who need to be reimbursed for their travel estimated at \$400.00.

Assessment of participants, and instructors, will be done using paper surveys and also through the use of digital tape recorders and oral interviews. During the retreat, students will be asked to record video diaries on flip cameras, each camera costs \$125.00. We will purchase two and borrow 5 others from the School of Education. Newsprint, markers and digital tapes will also be purchased for the retreat and reflective lab. The faculty facilitating the reflective lab has used the Culture Competency workbook for several years and find that it is the best way to help students reflect on their own biases and experiences. Diller, J.V. & Moule, J.M. (2005). Cultural competence: A primer for educators. Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth. The used purchase price is \$54.00 each. The total cost for the workbooks is \$2160.00.

Food for the retreat will be purchased through funds \$4,000.00, received as a grant through the Bringing theory to Practice committee. Bringing theory to Practice project (BTP) is a project supported by the Charles Engelhard and Spencer Foundations, with the intent to fund campus’ interested in how best to positively engage students in their academic, campus, and larger community’s lives. The project involves hundreds of campuses trying new curricular, teaching and civic engagement activities.

## **DELIBERATIVE DIALOGUES SUBCOMMITTEE 2008-2009 Report**

Submitted by: David Levy, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Committee Members: Kimberly Bilinski, Ulyses Colon, Benjamin Delozier, Meredith Harrigan, Brian Hartle, Kimberly Harvey, David Levy (Chair), Becky Lewis, Doug MacKenzie, Christina Miller, Jeannette Molina, David Parfitt, Kathy Trainor

### **Overview of Activities:**

The subcommittee met on nearly every Wednesday throughout both the Fall and Spring semesters. We ran the Dialogue, “Democracy’s Challenge: Reclaiming the Public’s Role” on four occasions during the Fall. We ran the Dialogue, “God and the Commons: Does Religion Matter?” on three occasions during the Spring; in advance of running this Dialogue, a small working group (Ulyses Colon, Meredith Harrigan, David Levy, and David Parfitt) convened in order to revise the discussion guide. Finally, several members of the subcommittee (Meredith Harrigan, David Levy, Doug MacKenzie, Christina Miller, and Joe Van Remmen) organized and ran a workshop through the Teaching & Learning Center, providing a model for using Deliberative Dialogue in the classroom; during the spring semester, two members of the College’s teaching faculty (Andrew Herman and Ann Marie Lauricella) worked with members of the subcommittee to run Dialogues in their classes.

A Deliberative Dialogue group page was established through myCourses. This was used throughout the year to post announcements, contact individuals who had signed up to participate in a Dialogue, and connect instructors with facilitators for using DD in the classroom. Several discussion forums were also put in place; these, we hoped, would provide a venue for continuing the conversation once a Dialogue session ended (or for connecting participants from one session with those from another). Unfortunately, these were highly under-used.

An online registration tool was also established, this time using the Survey tool. With support from the staff of the Teaching & Learning Center (Que Palacz during the Fall, Leanne Dillon during the Spring), registrations were easily tracked, reminder e-mails were sent, and materials were distributed.

We did not use the previous invitation model for registration for this year’s Dialogues. Instead, all registrations were solicited via postings to various list-servs (Events-L, Whatsup-L, Allstaff-L, etc.); some targeted e-mails were also sent to student groups (the group’s e-mail account, as well as those of the listed organization President and faculty advisor) and to instructors whose courses seemed to suggest interest in the specific Dialogue’s topic. Moreover, each Dialogue was presented as a “small-scale” event. That is, registration for each Dialogue was capped at (roughly) 20, and was scheduled for a smaller venue than the College Union Ballroom. Dialogues were scheduled on different

days and at different times; this was done in an effort to maximize the opportunity for people across campus to participate.

Overall, total participation in the Dialogues was down. Approximately 55 people registered for the 4 Fall Dialogues; of these, approximately 30 people actually participated. During the Spring, approximately 45 people registered for the 3 Dialogues; of these, approximately 32 people actually participated.

### **A Weakened Connection to the Commission:**

This year's subcommittee operated almost entirely independently of the overall Commission. One significant reason for this was the delay in the starting up of the Commission itself this year. Were we to have waited for direction from the Commission, or for the President's charge, we would have remained idle for the vast majority of the fall semester, and would have been in no position to run any Dialogues during the fall.

With that in mind, we selected our topics without input from the Commission or its leadership. Our fall topic was chosen with an eye on the national election cycle; our spring topic was chosen after reflecting on common elements in each of the fall group's discussions (i.e., several groups spent some time discussing the connection between civic participation, personal values, and religious traditions). Although these topics offered little intersection with the overall work of the Commission, we believe that they allowed participants to continue to consider what it means to be a part of a community.

The leadership of the subcommittee—despite its efforts to keep the group active and to keep Deliberative Dialogue vibrant at Geneseo—longed for a closer connection to the work of the overall Commission. Absent a deeper institutional commitment to support for DD (i.e., the development of a Center for Deliberation, with a full-time person coordinating the entire process—topic selection, guide writing, facilitator training, etc.), the DD committee needs much more input from the Commission and its leadership if it is to maintain a meaningful presence at Geneseo.

### **Additional Frustration:**

Mid-way through the fall semester, the DD subcommittee began to discuss the possibility of running Dialogues during the spring that would give the campus an opportunity to think deeply about the (anticipated) conclusion of the work of the Task Force on Curriculum Review. After an initial meeting between David Levy and Paul Schacht, the subcommittee met with Schacht and Polly Radosh to consider the best way to frame such a Dialogue. (This meeting occurred within weeks of the start of the spring semester.) Although there was strong mutual interest in pursuing such a Dialogue, the subcommittee concluded that it was in no position to put together a meaningful discussion guide. Surely some part of this can be attributed to the fact that the Task Force itself was not in a position to provide clear or coherent enough pictures of the choices it had been considering. Absent this input, though, a full-time coordinator of DD should have been

able to pull together such a discussion guide. It was frustrating to walk away from an opportunity to allow the entire campus to engage with this singularly important issue.

**Looking Ahead:**

The DD subcommittee will have a new chair during the 2009-2010 academic year. With the ongoing economic downturn and attendant budget crisis, we anticipate that there will be reduced support for DD. At the same time, President Dahl's Six Initiatives (or "Big Ideas")—each with its own Task Force—would seem to provide a "space" for an increased role for DD.

Each initiative, it seems, has the chance to significantly affect what Geneseo is, and thereby to affect the role played by every member of the College community. The DD format would allow for a deeper, more pervasive level of understanding of what is being considered, what might be done, and what trade offs would be involved. It would be a significant undertaking for the DD subcommittee to seek to work with some (let alone all) of the new Task Forces, and so the subcommittee ought not to agree to do so lightly. Still, this would seem to be a chance for the DD process to help the College adapt to the demands of the new educational and economic realities.

**Report of the Assessment Subcommittee  
President's Commission on Diversity & Community  
Spring 2009**

**Committee members:**

Celia Easton, Dean of Residence Life  
A. Scott Hemer, Head Women's Basketball Coach  
Harry Howe, Professor of Accounting  
Gloria Lopez, Director of Affirmative Action  
Jeannette Molina, Director of ESL and Dual Degree Programs  
Steven Radi, Medical Director  
Polly Radosh, Dean of the College  
Julie Rao, Director of Institutional Research  
Farooq Sheikh, Assistant Professor, School of Business

**Committee Activities:**

The Committee updated the diversity indicators developed previously with demographic and National Survey of Student Engagement information. The updated diversity indicators are attached. They show an increase in the proportion of students, faculty and staff of color. Our minority retention rate (fall to fall retention) is on par with that of all students. The graduation rate for students of color rose very slightly and is still lower than 2000.

The Committee explored one of the questions raised in last year's report:

*Why does Geneseo score relatively low on the Student Opinion Survey question about racial harmony while it scores relatively high on other questions related to campus community?*

The Student Opinion Survey (SOS) was administered in this spring. Some concern was expressed that the racial harmony question was simply a bad question. We have the ability to add additional questions on the SOS; the committee developed an additional question, specifically to replace the racial harmony question, as well as others to look at diversity of campus.

The results of the SOS will be available over the summer. The Committee will compare the results of the new question to the racial harmony question. Some feedback received during the administration of the survey may shed some light on the issue. The wording of the question focuses on "racial issues" while the campus considers diversity more broadly than race. It could be the wording of the question is dated.

The Committee is also speculating on the differences between minority and majority students' experiences. One area proposed for investigation is to examine some of the survey indicators by ethnicity to explore potential differences.

The Committee will continue to investigate the questions raised in last year's report.

*What is behind the NSSE results that indicate better diversity outcomes for first year students than for seniors?*

Some speculation has occurred that because of the requirement that first year student live in the dormitories, they are exposed to a more diverse than seniors who may live and socialize more with students like themselves. The NSSE results will be analyzed with an eye for controlling for living situation.

*Why does there appear to be a decline in retention and graduation rate for minority students over the past three years?*

The Office of Institutional Research has starting looking at outcomes for cohorts on a unit record basis. They will also be making use of the Student Clearinghouse Services to explore if students who left Geneseo transferred to another institution. Having this type of information may shed some light on why minority students are leaving Geneseo.

*Submitted by Julie Rao*

**Report of the Diversity Plan Subcommittee  
President's Commission on Diversity and Community  
Spring, 2009**

**Members**

Calvin Gantt, AOP  
David Gordon, Office of the Provost (Chair)  
Fatima Johnson, Multicultural Programs  
Gloria Lopez, Human Resources  
Harry Howe, School of Business  
Monica Schneider, Psychology  
Jeannette Molina, ESOL, Dual Degree Programs  
Taimur Gibson, Student  
Ashley Guarino, Student

**Purpose**

The Strategic Planning Group adopted a new objective in May, 2009, which reads, *Develop and implement a campus diversity plan that will identify diversity goals and objectives, performance indicators, and a means of assessing progress on an annual basis.*

In response to this new objective, the Diversity Plan subcommittee was formed to draft a campus diversity plan.

**Activities**

The subcommittee created a structure for the diversity plan and began developing content for several sections. These include an introduction, a brief summary of current diversity-related activities and programs, a list of next steps, and a list of proposed campus goals. Tentative broad goals include the following:

**Goals**

1. Create a campus climate in which all members of the community feel included and valued.
2. Enhance academic quality and excellence by preparing students to live and work in an increasingly global, pluralistic, multicultural, multilingual society.
3. Enhance student development through experiential learning and community service and character building opportunities in preparation for their roles as contributing citizens in a global society.
4. Foster and promote citizenship, teamwork, community-building and respect.

5. Foster, promote and encourage a safe, scholarly environment where issues of diversity, class, culture and race are discussed.

### **Next Steps**

Remaining tasks include developing a discussion of the benefits of diversity, refining goals, developing specific objectives, developing an assessment plan, and developing a process for implementing the campus diversity plan.

*Submitted by David Gordon*



## 2008-2009 Faculty Development Subcommittee

### Members

Robert Owens (Chair)  
Maria "Perpie" Liwanag  
David Parfitt  
Sherry Schwartz  
Kathy Trainor

The Faculty Development Subcommittee met bi-weekly throughout the spring semester. Most of our time was spent reading and proposing items for inclusion in new faculty development. Bob Owens, subcommittee chair met informally with Dr. David Gordon, Acting Provost, who was favorable to two 90-minute back-to-back workshops with new faculty during the year. The final decision, of course, is with the new Provost. If the education is favorably received by new faculty, we propose that the subcommittee and the Teaching and Learning Center pursue a similar model with returning faculty. The goal is to introduce the topic through a combination of interactive and multimedia means. Overall, the model we chose includes the following:

- Ice breaking/trust building exercises
- Introduction to diversity and community
- Privilege and the Power of Language
  - Racism and White Privilege
- Integrating diversity into each course
  - Never assuming
  - Dealing with difficult issues
- Tesating, assignments, and language/dialectal differences
  - What are reasonable adjustments?
- Resources available (Handout)

Faculty would be encouraged to go to one of several offices and groups, such as the ESOL Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, or Black Student Union to explore issues and available resources on campus. It was felt that this was preferable to presentations within the training which would break the continuity. Faculty would also be given short reading assignments in order to expand beyond the presentations.

We propose that the President's Commission through the Faculty Development Subcommittee

- Continue to pursue faculty development
- Meet with the new Provost with a model for faculty development
- Make firm plans to initiate new faculty development as soon as the hiring freeze is lifted
- Coordinate plans to offer the training to returning faculty via the Teaching and Learning Center

## **Path Awards Subcommittee 2009**

Wendi Kinney, Julie Rao, Ulyses Colon, Joe Van Remmen (Chair)

During the spring of 2009 the PATH Awards subcommittee convened to look at nominations for this year's award.

The following individuals and groups were nominations for the award:

Assistant Professor David Levy was nominated by Associate Professor Ted Everett.

The Geneseo Anthropological Association was nominated by Assistant Professor Barb Welker.

Associate Professor Rose McEwen was nominated by Dr. Kate Conway-Turner.

Student Brian Hartle was nominated by Professor Beth McCoy and Associate Professor Emilye Crosby.

Student Kai Davies was nominated by Lecturer Irene Belyakov.

Student Elizabeth Squairs was nominated by Associate Professor Linda Ware.

Assistant Professor Elizabeth Hall was nominated by Assistant Professor Ann Marie Lauricella and Field Placement Coordinator Therese Riordan.

The 2009 PATH Awards were presented to:

Associate Professor Rose McEwen, and students Brian Hartle and Kai Davies.

Last year I made a recommendation that the nominations for the PATH Awards process be put back into the hands of our SUNY Geneseo College students. My belief then as now, is that the students who live and learn on our campus have a better feel for those who are deserving of the PATH Award.

Unfortunately, my informal request of students has not brought forth any volunteers willing to take ownership of the PATH Awards. Although I maintain the importance of recognizing those who are doing such exemplary work at the college, a push in my opinion should continue for this to again become a student led award. The possibility of there being a cash award or some other incentive should possibly be pursued.

The subcommittee reviewing nominations continues to be impressed by the quality of those individuals who are nominated.