



## *Blueprint for Diversity*

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### *Introduction*

George Fox University seeks to become a racially and ethnically diverse community. To this end, we desire to enroll and nurture a racially and ethnically diverse student population and to employ staff and faculty members who are persons of color. We believe that such goals are fully in keeping with our aims as a Christ-centered community for the following reasons:

#### **1. THE THEOLOGICAL MANDATE:**

As a Christ-centered institution, we believe that all human beings have been uniquely, fearfully, and wonderfully made by God. As such, every human being is of infinite value and worth. The story of God's work is one of reconciling people to Himself and we are called to be agents of reconciliation as we reach people from every tribe, tongue, and nation.

#### **2. THE GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY MISSION:**

The mission of the University is "to demonstrate the meaning of Jesus Christ by offering a caring educational community in which each individual may achieve the highest intellectual and personal growth, and by participating responsibly in our world's concerns." Moreover, one of the ten objectives through which the mission statement is further defined states that George Fox University will "cultivate awareness, respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity throughout the University community to provide members of diverse races and cultures an affirming environment that encourages cross-cultural sharing in the context of Christian lifestyle expectations."

#### **3. THE SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN WHICH WE LIVE AND WORK:**

The University believes that the racial and ethnic diversity of communities is an important resource in our society. The United States has become more and more diverse in terms of race and ethnicity. Even in the Northwest, the demographic makeup is changing. To pursue excellence and quality in this multicultural and global society requires an educational experience that acknowledges and appreciates the benefits of a diverse workforce and recognizes the reality of the world into which we send our graduates. As such, the George Fox University community must be diligent about learning how to create and nourish a racially and ethnically diverse community on our campuses.

## ***Key Definitions***

Defining terms for a document such as this is very difficult in light of the controversy surrounding terms such as “culture”, “race”, “diversity”, “multiculturalism”, etc. The American Psychological Association (APA) points out that race is “socially constructed rather than biologically constructed” and as such that it is “the category to which others assign individuals on the basis of physical characteristics, such as skin color or hair type” (2003).

Culture, on the other hand, is defined as the “belief systems and value orientations that influence customs, norms, practices, and social institutions, including psychological processes (language, caretaking practices, media, educational systems) and organizations (media, educational systems)” (APA, 2003). Finally, ethnicity is defined by APA as “the acceptance of the group mores and practices of one’s culture of origin and the concomitant sense of belonging” (2003).

When considering a *Blueprint for Diversity*, it is possible to go in a number of different directions. Diversity of cultural experience and background as well as socioeconomic differences are possible points of conversation. Issues of gender equity are another very worthy and important aim of a diverse educational environment. Of course, diversity of ideas and expression within the academic environment is critical as well. However, for purposes of focus, conciseness, and clarity, the intent of this particular document is to discuss diversity as it relates to race and ethnicity, fully recognizing the limitations of such socially constructed terms.

Two caveats should be made regarding this document. First, there are times throughout this document where broader issues of cultural understanding contribute meaningfully to our aims and goals. This is especially true when considering issues of curriculum, among other things. Second, although most of the document addresses domestic issues of race and ethnicity, globalization and international studies (including both programs designed to increase our representation of international students and those designed to give students cross-cultural experiences) intersects this document at critical junctures as well.

## ***Reporting Progress***

One of the key features of this document is that it establishes a framework for accountability and reporting of progress made toward the proposed goals. As such, individual offices or persons have been designated as responsible for carrying out each strategy by creating specific benchmarks with timelines. In November of every other year, the vice president for student life will convene a meeting to prepare a progress report regarding the *Blueprint for Diversity* that both includes and responds to these benchmarks and timelines. The meeting will consist of the following individuals:

- Vice President for Student Life
- Executive Director of Admissions
- Director of Multicultural Services
- Director of Student Financial Services
- Associate VP for Academic Affairs
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Center for Global Studies

This report will be shared with internal campus groups (Cabinet, employees, etc.) and also with the Board of Trustees (through the Program and Personnel Committee) along with appropriate benchmarks and timelines at the spring meeting every other year.

## ***Students***

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### ***Recruitment***

#### ***Issues:***

- As of the 2004-05 academic year, The undergraduate population is approximately 90.1 percent Caucasian (excluding non-resident/international students), which compares to 86.6 percent for the state of Oregon (2000 census). It appears that the state of Oregon is becoming diverse more rapidly than is George Fox University and most of our students come from Oregon and Washington. George Fox University desires to be more reflective of the diversity of our state and nation.
- George Fox University seeks to create an environment that is welcoming, supportive, and affordable for students of color.
- George Fox desires to become better known and prominent in the thinking of racially and ethnically diverse communities throughout the states of Oregon and Washington.

#### ***Recommendations:***

- **Recruitment** (*Exec. Dir. of Admissions*): Work with the director of multicultural services to create an awareness of George Fox University as an option for college choice among racially and ethnically diverse student populations. Each year as a part of their planning process, the admissions office in consultation with other departments will identify specific strategies to reach these important objectives. Examples of such strategies include the following:
  - Partner with Tilikum to introduce George Fox as a college option to families of ethnically diverse children in the Day Camp and High Adventure Camp programs (as well as churches such as Mt. Olivet with which Tilikum has a longstanding positive relationship).
  - Develop relationships with important school district contacts to identify opportunities to promote George Fox University to racially and ethnically diverse students.
  - Partner with University Relations, George Fox Evangelical Seminary, and Multicultural Services to establish relationships with Portland and Salem area churches that have a significant number of ethnically diverse individuals and families.
  - Initiate programs that introduce racially and ethnically diverse prospective students to George Fox University through services/courses offered to prepare them for college.

- Partner with local churches and schools committed to outreach to the Hispanic community in Newberg (i.e., Newberg Friends Church, St. Michael's Episcopal Church) in presenting workshops about college options to these families.
- **Financial Aid** (*Exec. Dir. of Admissions and Dir. of Student Fin. Svcs.*): Establish or redefine financial aid programs to assist racially and ethnically diverse students in better meeting the cost of education at George Fox University.
  - Establish ten (10) full scholarships as a part of the Act Six program for multicultural leadership that would enhance the existing Multicultural Student Achievement Awards (currently \$2500 and \$1000). The Act Six program has been very significant and successful at Whitworth and has great potential for George Fox University. These new awards will be granted to students from the Portland area who have demonstrated experience in addressing multicultural issues and concerns. It is anticipated that these awards will yield a potential of 40 ethnically diverse students over a four year period.
  - The Church/University Matching Program for Multicultural Students permits eligible students of color to receive a 3-1 match not to exceed \$1,500. For example, if a church sponsors a student who is eligible for the Multicultural Scholarship in the amount of \$500, the University will match the amount with \$1,500. The student's Church/University Award will then total \$2,000. If the student's church sponsors with \$200, the University will match that award with \$600 for a total of \$800.

## **Retention**

### **Issues:**

- It is important that George Fox students of color who enroll as freshmen progress to graduation in four years at a rate similar to the general student population.
- Students of color should feel welcomed by the campus community and supported in their educational and social endeavors.
- The experience of students of color at George Fox University should be assessed and appropriate responses should be developed.

### **Recommendations:**

- **Academic Support** (*VP for Student Life and Dir. of the ARC*): Utilize and initiate programs that support students' persistence and academic success in college (i.e., freshman seminar, academic resource center, orientation programs, etc.). The Academic Resource Center is a strategic resource for all students including students of color and first generation college students. Additional attention should also be given to policies regarding how to support students for whom English is not their first language. This should begin with admissions and academic advisors as they identify students who could use tutorial support in their first semester. The ESLA 295 Writing

Tutorial is available to assist non-native English speaking students, but they need to be advised to utilize this course. Strategies such as encouraging professors to allow extra time on tests should be explored in consultation with the Academic Affairs office. It is also critical to pay attention to the academic advising process and “flag” students who are “at risk.”

- **Social Support** (*Dean of Students*): Cultivate an environment where peer support of minority students is promoted (i.e., mentoring program, living learning communities focused around diversity issues, etc.).
- **TRIO Programs** (*Dir. of Multicultural Svcs. and Advancement Office*): Explore the possibility of bringing federally-funded TRIO programs to George Fox University. These are generally programs designed to support first-generation college students and at risk students through early intervention and other strategies.
- **Campus Awareness** (*Dir. of Multicultural Services*): Develop events and processes that further understanding and support of minority students’ concerns and issues. Examples of this include the following:
  - Work with ASC’s Cultural Awareness Coordinator and the Multicultural Club to facilitate a supportive and inclusive environment that raises awareness of issues pertaining to diversity on campus. This will occur through both formal and informal programming opportunities.
  - Create Multicultural Education Teams (METs) to provide programs that will facilitate dialogue on multicultural issues. These forums will provide opportunities for freedom of expression and self-disclosure in an understanding and supportive environment.
  - Work with other area colleges in coordinating special events related to cultural diversity.

## ***Faculty and Curriculum***

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### ***Issues:***

- Increase racial and ethnic diversity among the faculty.
- Retain racially diverse faculty at a high rate.
- Create mechanisms to raise concerns regarding racial and cultural awareness and sensitivity for the general faculty (perhaps, through the work of the Intercultural Concerns Committee).
- Encourage integration of racial and multicultural diversity focus in courses across the curriculum as appropriate.

- Provide resources to aid faculty in cultivating awareness and sensitivity to issues of race, culture, and gender.

***Recommendations:***

- **Focused Responsibility** (*Provost and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Identify a member of the AAO as the point person for facilitating the activities listed below:
  - The Director of Multicultural Services will serve as a resource for department chairs and search committees to promote racial and ethnic diversity of applicant pools.
  - The AAO will meet with each department to assist in developing the work plan described below (within 2 years of Blueprint approval).
- **Department-Specific Strategies** (*School Deans and Department Chairs*): Each department will develop its own strategy (1-2 pages) for promoting an environment which is supportive and embraces a commitment to cultural diversity. It is recommended that each department consider the strategies proposed by Richard Slimbach during a faculty development workshop on November 3, 2004 (entitled *Toward a Strategy for Global Engagement*).
  - See Maximino Plata’s article, “Retaining Ethnic Minority Faculty at Institutions of Higher Education,” *Journal of Instructional Psychology* (1996), Vol. 23, No. 3, 221-227. (The full text of this article is available in the Education Full Text database on the MLRC web page.)
  - Departments will explore strategies for integration of perspectives and skills related to cultural diversity into existing courses.
- **Academic Policies and Programs** (*Associate VP for AAO and Chair of Curriculum Committee*): Incorporate topics of multicultural teaching and cultural awareness into existing or new academic policies and programs (e.g., growth plans, faculty forum, new faculty class, teaching and learning forums).
  - Provide faculty development training, resources, and incentives to faculty for the purpose of integrating different cultural perspectives and skills into their courses.
  - Provide Faculty Development Committee grants and leaves for cross-cultural projects.
  - Develop a faculty exchange program with a college or university that serves a predominantly minority population.

***Staff & Administrators***

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**Issues:**

- Increase racial diversity among staff and administrators.
- Offer ongoing education for staff and administrators to increase understanding related to racial diversity.
- Create a welcoming and supportive environment for staff and administrators of color.

**Recommendations:**

- **Applicant Pools** (*Dir. of HR and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Increase racial diversity in our applicant pools for every job opening. Specific strategies might include the following:
  - Explore the cost of advertising in major newspapers of cities with large minority populations for key administrator positions, such as *Seattle Times*, *LA Times*, etc...
  - Post appropriate job openings with the Oregon Employment Division.
  - Consult current minority employees for ideas on recruiting, retention, climate, etc.
- **Relationship with Churches** (*Dir. of HR and Exec. Dir. of University Relations*): Establish relationships with racially diverse key churches in Portland area and routinely send those churches position announcements. To a degree, connections have already been made between George Fox Evangelical Seminary and African American pastors in the Portland area. It is important to continue to communicate with and inform these churches and pastors about university-sponsored events and programs as well as job openings. Specific strategies consist of the following:
  - Obtain names of the churches and visit pastors. GFU student groups are rarely invited to minister to racially diverse churches nor do racially diverse churches attend GFU-sponsored events with frequency. Working with the church relations committee, a plan will be developed to increase participation and communication.
  - Emphasize the tuition benefit. (We believe this will encourage people to commute to Newberg to work and will likely have a positive impact on the racial diversity of the student population as well.)
  - Provide a job seeker workshop at a minority church in Portland that would include mock interviewing, resume writing, etc. Ask Career Services to spearhead.
- **External Relationships** (*Dir. of HR and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Establish relationships and advertise with recruiting organizations such as Urban League, Siletz Tribe, and Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement (OCHA).

- **Education and Training** (*Dir. of HR and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Provide initial and ongoing education for staff and administrators to increase understanding related to racial diversity and to create a diversity-friendly climate (consider “updates” at Faculty Retreat and All Employee Meetings in August). It is also important to affirm to employees that increasing and supporting racial diversity is a goal at George Fox and that support of this goal is an expectation of all employees. Specific strategies might include the following:
  - Add language of this nature to employee handbook
  - Present an annual address by Dave Brandt or other Cabinet member to employees, perhaps at staff and all employee lunches.
  - Offer periodic diversity activities for all employees, beginning with “Bridges to Understanding” within first year of employment.
  - Solicit ideas, resources from other schools in OICA, NW conference.
  - Use Diversity as the theme for a Staff Development Conference in Fall 2005.
  - Include employees in events such as cultural celebration week.
  - Provide community outreach opportunities for employees to other races, cultures. (Example, tutoring Hispanic children)
  - Invite employees to attend chapels featuring minority speakers and/or on diversity.

## ***International Programs***

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GFU has two major types of international programs, each of which impact the cross-cultural attitudes and awareness of GFU students. These are considered separately:

### ***Recruitment, Placement, and Retention of International Students***

#### ***Issues:***

- Create a supportive and welcoming environment for international students.
- Meet the diverse needs of international students. In the 2004-05 academic year, GFU has 42 undergraduates who are citizens of countries other than the U.S. Some of these are enrolled in the English Language Institute (ELI), some were previously enrolled in ELI and are now taking regular classes, and some came to GFU with adequate English fluency.

- The terrorist attacks on the U.S. in 2001 caused understandable fear among prospective international students and the subsequent tightening of immigration processes have compounded the problem. Programs in other universities like GFU's ELI have had difficulty maintaining enrollment, but our international student numbers have remained steady, mainly due to active sister-school agreements, for which we are grateful.

***Recommendations:***

- **Undergraduate Recruiting** (*Exec. Director of Admissions*): The admissions staff working in conjunction with the ELI staff will continue to recruit international students and facilitate the placement of these students in the ELI and regular undergraduate programs. Goals for international recruitment will be established and resources allocated accordingly. Along with this, it is important that the ELI staff and the Director of the Center for Global Studies regularly evaluate the partnership agreements with universities outside the US and place their primary emphasis on programs that result in substantial numbers of students enrolling in ELI and degree programs.
- **Undergraduate Retention** (*Dir. of Internat'l Student Svcs.*): Continue to determine and implement ways to help international and diverse American students more fully integrate with one another on the GF campus.
- **Graduate Recruiting and Retention** (*Executive Director of Admissions/School Deans*): The deans of GFU schools with graduate programs will evaluate the adequacy of their services for international students and report to the Provosts' Council. We believe a strong international presence at the graduate level would be as advantageous as it is at the undergraduate level, but recognize adequate services for this population will be needed if this population grows.

***Programs That Send Students Into Other Cultures***

***Issues:***

- For a number of years GFU has devoted considerable sums of money and time to facilitating the cross-cultural experiences of undergraduate students who were raised in the U.S. Our internal records confirm that by the time they graduate, the overwhelming majority of our students participate in one or more of these programs: juniors abroad, semesters off campus (international and US), and May/June serve trips.
- As GF students participate in these programs they learn a great deal about themselves and about other cultures. They in turn help create an understanding and welcoming climate for students who come to GFU from other cultures.

***Recommendations:***

- **Global Engagement** (*Dir. of Ctr. for Global Studies*): The International Program Committee will carefully study the recommendations in the “Strategy for Global Engagement” presented at GFU by Richard Slimbach from Azusa Pacific University.
  - In particular it would be desirable that a number of our programs incorporate aspects of the “cross-cultural immersion” level in Slimbach’s model.
  - It would also be desirable to determine what level of cultural competence we hope and expect our students to achieve upon graduation. Reflective and/or journaling experiences should be encouraged.
- **Cross-Cultural Experiences** (*Dir. of Ctr. for Global Studies*): GFU will continue to devote resources and energy to providing a variety of high quality cross-cultural experiences.
- **Serve Trips** (*Dir. of Outreach and Discipleship*): Written reflection and journaling experiences should continue to be utilized and expanded to enhance competency and learning.

## ***Community and Alumni Relations***

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### ***Issues:***

- As an institution, George Fox University’s community partnerships with the racially diverse agencies, businesses, churches and other organizations are limited.

### ***Recommendations:***

- **Networking and External Contacts** (*Exec. Dir. of University Relations and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Make a concerted effort to contact local support organizations, i.e., NAACP, OCHA, Urban League, etc. and learn about their services and programs. The purpose is to include information in campus publications concerning events and opportunities to engage with racially diverse populations and to provide information to agencies about opportunities at George Fox University that they might include in their newsletters. Opportunities to present college programs at ethnically diverse churches and schools should also be considered.
- **Partnerships with Churches** (*Exec. Dir. of University Relations and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): Establish contact with pastors of Hispanic, Native American, and African-American churches with an emphasis on partnering with their existing programs to support their efforts and demonstrate Fox’s commitment to their community. Specific strategies might include the following:
  - Organize student and faculty groups to work in the projects/opportunities identified by leaders of racially diverse churches. Examples of this include but are not limited to: Serve Day, Serve Trips, and internships where appropriate.

- Host pastors on campus and recognize them for their contributions to the greater community, particularly during Cultural Celebration Week, Black History Month, Cinco de Mayo, etc.
- **Increased Visibility in Minority Communities** (*Assoc. Dean for Student Leadership and Exec. Dir. of Admissions*): Emphasize visibility in local predominately minority communities through college days, mentoring programs (such as Little Bruins) or other existing programs. Specific strategies might include the following:
  - Create a paid time-off program for personnel to teach and mentor in public schools.
  - Continue to run advertising in publications whose target audience is minority groups.

### **Resource Development**

#### ***Issues:***

- Multicultural initiatives depend entirely on George Fox University funding.
- University-wide racial diversity plans are important to donors and the ability to seek grant funding.
- Key individual donors interested in giving to racial diversity initiatives have not been identified or actively solicited.

#### ***Recommendations:***

- **Grant Proposal** (*Dir. of Development and Dir. of Multicultural Svcs.*): After creating a systemic, university-wide racial diversity initiative, develop a grant proposal. Specific strategies might include the following:
  - Identify foundations that fund multicultural initiatives and determine viability.
  - Identify multicultural initiatives that need to be funded
  - Create grant proposal
  - Build relationships with the broader business community which includes the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and others.