

From: **"Recruitment and Retention of Women Faculty And Faculty of Color"**

## **CHALLENGES—LOOKING TO THE FUTURE**

A significant implication for any organization in the future continues to be the changing demographics of the workforce. In the next millennium we are likely to face a reduction in population and labor force growth, an aging labor pool, as well as an increase in the number of women in the workforce. People of color and immigrants will be the fastest growing component of new entrants into the work force. We must be prepared for these changes.

If we are to thrive in the future, maintaining a distinctive role among the nation's—and international universities—administrators and faculty members throughout the institution must lend their energies to strengthening a continued effort to create a diversified professoriate. Attaining this goal will require even deeper commitment on the part of all of us because of certain specific changes in external circumstances (i.e., standards set by the Supreme Court for evaluating the constitutionality of affirmative action efforts). To refocus our efforts and reemphasize our commitment, we will work with deans, department chairs, and departments on a structured process for cultivating a diverse professoriate.

### **A Four-A Framework for Cultivating a Diverse Professoriate**

Effective management and commitment are driving forces behind any successful change effort. To engender better management of our efforts to build and maintain a diverse professoriate, and to demonstrate the level of commitment that will increase the likelihood of successful outcomes, we are proposing a four-step initiative: The Attention, Action, Accountability, Assessment Framework for Cultivating a Diverse Professoriate. To develop the specific guidelines for a Four-A framework, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will engage deans, department chairs, faculty, and other relevant administrative groups in the discussion of a structure. The Four-A framework can be tailored to meet defined institutional objectives, legal standards, and the special challenges faced by some schools and departments.

The following description of the 4-A's components highlights their importance to our reemphasis on diversification:

**Attention**—Increased attention to the value of diversity requires that we establish and maintain a fundamental link between diversity and our educational mission. This will call for enlisting the help of our faculty in identifying and articulating the educational benefits of a diverse professoriate at GW.

Also, included in this component are activities that lead to engaging faculty in discussions about valuing differences and addressing any personal biases and negative stereotypes associated with race and gender.

An intensified oversight and review process at all levels will ensure that we generate and maintain momentum, as well as remain true to the institution's values and aspirations. Once initiatives are developed and implemented, active leadership from all over the institution will be required for successful outcomes.

**Action**—Deans and department chairs must be actively involved in fully, forcefully, and effectively articulating the value of diversity and the goals and objectives employed to enhance diversity on campus. They must also ensure that faculty have the opportunity to participate in planning activities and are heard in the debate about what to do and how it should be accomplished. Below are a few examples of actions that may be employed in diversification efforts:

**STRATEGIC EMPHASIS:** Diversifying the professoriate must be a strategic initiative. The institution's strategic plan, and those of schools and departments, must serve as guideposts for diversity initiatives by establishing realistic and meaningful diversity priorities. To translate priorities into plans, plans into

actions, and actions into results, will require working together to identify and secure resources— existing and new—for realizing our plans and accomplishing results.

**LEADERSHIP:** Working with deans and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, department chairs must play a key leadership role in creating a climate of action and initiating dialogue around specific issues related to diversity in their departments.

**COMMUNICATION:** Clearly and widely publicized initiatives must characterize Four-A activities. Everyone must work to employ every method possible to communicate what we are doing and how it is done. Using group meetings, forums, written communication, etc., we must educate existing faculty, new members, and recruits about the institution's priorities, in general, and our "diversity" priorities in particular.

**DIVERSITY MODELS:** Affirmative Action and diversification attempts have been ongoing at educational and other institutions around the world, including GW, for many years. There is, therefore, no reason we should attempt to "reinvent the wheel." Much could be accomplished by an investigation of what has worked at GW and other institutions, identifying models of excellence in workplace diversity, and adapting what is realistic and works for GW.

**Accountability**—Intentions and achievements are not always perfectly matched. Therefore, an accountability component is important for ensuring that more than lip service is paid to enhanced diversification efforts. To increase the likelihood that action is taken to realize a diverse professoriate, the regular planning process should, at all levels of academic administration, include a Four-A Plan. Deans and department chairs are accountable for ensuring that plans are developed and implemented in line with institutional values and objectives and for periodically assessing and reporting on performance.

To manage the issue of accountability, the Vice President for Academic Affairs might first work with relevant constituencies to define what would be satisfactory performance in their areas. Then, if performance falls far short of the goals, use appropriate measures (such as, adjusting financial support or merit increases) to address the issue.

**Assessment**—At the end of a specified period, each level of academic administration should formally compare the results of activity to actual plans. In doing so, they could determine what worked, what did not work, and could then work to revise the plan accordingly. Units that have been successful in meeting their objectives should, in some way, be recognized and rewarded for their efforts.

The Four-A Plans that are developed would be continuous, dynamic, and would provide a much needed and consistent structure to our quest for a truly diverse professoriate. For any effort of this nature to succeed requires the commitment and involvement of administrators and faculty. The Four-A approach can also help to structure a much needed dialogue around specific diversity issues and concerns, as well as help to define the basic equal employment opportunity and affirmative action principles by which we will live and operate in the future.