VCU

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
DIVERSITY PLAN

PREAMBLE

The Department of English is dedicated to the university’s mission to pursue the needs of students from diverse backgrounds, as detailed in the university’s Five-Year Diversity Plan (http://www.diversity.vcu.edu/diversityplan/) and as articulated by President Rao (http://www.diversity.vcu.edu/diversityplan/index.html#DivStatement). These diverse backgrounds include, but are not limited to, differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, national origin, socioeconomic class, marital status, religion and political thought. The department recognizes the importance of educating students to embrace diversity and multiculturalism as a lifestyle wherein lives and democracy are enriched, not just as a classroom learning experience.

The English department’s diversity goals are framed in relation to the four dimensions of diversity described in higher education scholarship (see D. G. Smith, How do you know you are making progress? http://www.diversity.vcu.edu/calendar/workshop02262010a.htm). These are Access and Success, Climate and Intergroup Relations, Education and Scholarship, and Institutional Viability and Vitality.

The varied and rigorous degree programs offered by the Department of English expose students to alternative viewpoints and stimulate exchange by exploring ideas and values of humankind in texts from diverse historical periods, as well as social and cultural contexts. In addition to emphasizing diversity in classes and curriculum, the department will work to ensure that diversity is reflected in student, faculty, and staff recruitment, and in all of the department’s activities, initiatives, and programs.

The English department strives to achieve the goal of inclusive excellence, as defined in VCU’s Five-Year Diversity Plan, promoting the competencies and skills that prepare its faculty and students to live in and contribute to a more complex and demographically diverse world. The department also embraces, encourages and requires meaningful participation of diverse voices and perspectives in its activities. All faculty and staff share responsibility for achieving these diversity goals. The English department plan is intended to empower all of those individuals, and students as well, with the principles of diversity that are detailed in this plan.

All faculty, staff and administrators share responsibility for achieving these diversity goals. The department’s plan is designed to give all of those individuals, as well as students, the power to redress non-compliance with the principles of diversity as detailed in this plan. To that end, this plan places the responsibility for addressing any issues or concerns raised by students, faculty or staff with the chair of the department and/or other appropriate university officials.
ACTION PLAN

GOAL 1: CREATE A WORKING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WHERE DIFFERENCES ARE WELCOMED AND VALUED

In keeping with the diverse culture of the university as a whole, the department will promote a climate of openness, acceptance and inclusiveness, offering opportunity and support for the success of all faculty, staff and students. The department will take active steps to create a diversity-friendly environment so that all individuals, from various backgrounds and perspectives, will feel included and able to express themselves freely. The department is also committed to fostering free speech as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Strategies

1. The department will actively communicate its commitment to diversity through its publications, recruitment and other materials.

2. Faculty will be encouraged to bring attention to and advance the discussion of diversity issues in their work, whether it is of a creative or academic nature.

3. The department’s faculty and staff will work to ensure that the department’s students are provided with an open and inclusive environment, and will seek diversity in hiring and appointing student workers, peer advisers and members of other groups where opportunities exist to foster a diverse environment.

4. The department will seek to reward and recognize faculty and staff who have contributed to the advancement of a climate of inclusiveness and acceptance by nominating such individuals for awards at the university, such as the VCU Presidential Awards for Community Multicultural Enrichment, or for similar recognition by professional or academic groups.

5. The department will encourage faculty and staff development in areas that will serve to promote a diverse culture and climate.

Activities in Support of these Strategies

- Faculty representative of the Department's diverse membership will be encouraged to collaborate on projects, grant proposals, and research, and to cooperate in other ways that foster issues of diversity and multiculturalism.

- The department will foster and support research and creative activity that addresses issues of diversity and multiculturalism. Faculty and staff will be encouraged to participate in and attend conferences with diversity themes. Creative writing faculty will be encouraged to present readings that reach diverse audiences.

- As part of faculty and staff development, they will be encouraged to complete training in the Safe Zone program, which seeks to prepare individuals to understand and accept the unique perspective and experience of gays and lesbians. Where applicable, the department will also
utilize tangible evidence of the climate it seeks to create. For instance, following the Safe Zone example, individuals who complete the training are encouraged to display the Safe Zone insignia as a symbol of their openness and acceptance of gays and lesbians.

▪ Identify faculty and staff volunteers to participate in the Green Zone initiative in support of student veterans. This initiative, funded by the Aurora Foundation (http://www.aurora4vets.org) and Region IV, Virginia Wounded Warrior Program (http://www.wearevirginiaveterans.org/) has as goal to make VCU a more veteran-helpful university. Participants in the Green Zone program agree to:

- Attend a workshop that provides information and resources related to issues faced by student veterans.  
- Display the Green Zone sticker outside their office door to let others know they are available to provide support and information about resource for student veterans.  
- Be a resource to other faculty, staff or students who may have questions about student veteran issues.

▪ Faculty will report on the annual faculty evaluation report form any activities that bring attention to and advance the discussion of diversity issues as they relate to the disciplines incorporated in English studies.

GOAL 2: INCREASE DIVERSITY OF FACULTY AND STAFF IN UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING ROLES

The English department will establish and implement strategies that promote a diverse faculty (in terms of gender, race, seniority, etc.) to positions of leadership and decision-making to advance diversity in institutional leadership. The department will strive for representation at or above the university levels overall, especially of females and people of color.

Strategies

1. The department will nominate faculty from diverse groups for internships, fellowships, and programs to prepare them for leadership, administrative and professional positions.

2. The department will seek to fill open leadership positions with persons from diverse groups in order to increase opportunities, broaden the applicant pool, and enrich the campus experience for everyone.

3. The department will provide professional development support for diverse faculty who have expressed an interest in or may have potential for A&P positions.

Activities in Support of these Strategies
▪ The department will seek to increase the number of faculty identified and securing administrative and professional positions.
▪ The department will encourage women and minority members of the faculty and staff to take part in leadership training, including programs sponsored by the university, or by academic and professional organizations.

▪ The department will increase perception that service activities are rewarded by acknowledging and crediting service contributions of diverse faculty and staff.

GOAL 3: INCREASE THE PRESENCE OF DIVERSE FACULTY MEMBERS AT ALL RANKS AND LEVELS

The English department will consistently endeavor to recruit, retain and promote faculty and staff members to facilitate diversity as defined above. The department hopes to hire more faculty who will expand the current literature-of-diversity offerings. It will also address through its hires the impact of globalization and technology on the future of literature and literacy.

Strategies

1. All search advertisements will include language encouraging applications from diverse groups, including women and minorities.

2. All search committees will include a diverse membership.

3. The department will seek to have its searches be as broad as possible, utilizing many publication outlets, to have a more diverse and qualified pool of candidates from the increased exposure.

4. The department will participate in conferences and similar meetings to increase its recognition among potential minority, faculty and staff candidates.

5. In making committee assignments, the department will strive to ensure that female and minority faculty and staff members are not overburdened with service duties inside or outside the department.

6. Faculty will be encouraged to include diversity issues in their research and to participate in conferences with diversity themes.

7. The department will foster collaborative faculty research that includes female and minority faculty.

Activities in Support of these Strategies
▪ As with all new faculty, new minority faculty will be assigned a faculty mentor. Mentors are encouraged to help the new faculty members to adjust into the department and the university, and, in the long term, to establish the foundation for a highly successful career.
▪ Search committees will identify and regularly update information about venues for reaching female and minority prospects.

▪ Faculty will be asked to report on the annual faculty evaluation form any activities which advance the discussion of diversity issues.

▪ Search committees will identify and regularly update information about venues for reaching female and minority prospects. Members of the search committees will make personal contact with diverse potential applicants, individuals and organizations which represent individuals who would add to faculty diversity.

GOAL 4: INCREASE THE PRESENCE OF DIVERSE STAFF MEMBERS IN THE HIGHER PAY BANDS

The department is committed to recruiting, retaining and promoting administrators and staff members to facilitate diversity especially in terms of race and gender. The department will seek to increase the diversity of professional individuals hired or promoted in pay bands 4-7 to achieve a diverse staff at all pay levels in the unit.

Strategies

1. The department will seek to increase the diversity of staff in higher pay bands.

2. The department will strengthen staff search procedures in order enhance diversity in the candidate pool and recruitment. All search advertisements will include language encouraging applications from diverse groups, including women and minorities. All search committees will include a diverse membership.

3. The department will seek funds for advertising and marketing to support recruitment of diverse staff members into higher pay bands and leadership positions. It will also increase use of diversity publications and professional associations for advertising and recruitment.

4. The department will work to ensure that salary compensation for classified staff is comparable to the Richmond market and other Virginia colleges and universities and implemented equitably to diverse employees.

5. The department will encourage managers and staff supervisors to seek workshops and programs to improve workplace climate, cross-cultural communication, and interpersonal relations between staff and supervisory personnel.

6. The department chair will encourage and respond to inquiries from staff about possibilities for movement into pay bands 4-7 by determining if job responsibilities and skill levels of classified staff meet criteria for positions in pay bands 4-7.
7. Staff will be encouraged to use the tuition waiver program for advancement and for furthering their education.

Activities in Support of these Strategies
▪ Evaluate and strengthen the existing staff development and mentorship programs.

▪ Document employee performance throughout the year to justify reclassification requests and review classified staff positions to determine if duties warrant reclassification.

▪ In addition to ensuring that diverse persons are included in applicant pools and among interviewed candidates, the department will seek to increase the number of diverse applicants, interviewed candidates, and staff hired into pay bands 4-9.

GOAL 5: RECRUIT AND MAINTAIN A STUDENT BODY REFLECTIVE OF THE DIVERSITY IN COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS

As part of its effort to attract, recruit and retain quality students, the department will seek to increase undergraduate representation to meet or exceed the University’s undergraduate minority representation percentage. Likewise, the department will seek to meet or exceed the percentage of minority graduate students within the University. The department’s administrators, faculty and staff will work to ensure that the department’s students are provided with an open and inclusive environment, and will seek diversity in recruiting, hiring and appointing student workers, peer advisers and members of other groups where opportunities exist to foster a diverse environment. The English department also aspires to draw students into undergraduate and graduate programs that will enrich their understanding of and respect for diverse cultures.

Strategies

1. Recruitment. In the hopes of attracting a large and diverse audience, undergraduate and graduate program recruitment initiatives will include:

▪ Development and implementation of new print advertising campaigns in national publications such as *The Writer’s Chronicle*, *Poets & Writers*, and *Writer Magazine*;

▪ Development and implementation of new online advertising campaigns in *Poetry Daily*, *Poets & Writers*, and *AWP* and placement of online ads for all three graduate programs (MA, MFA, and PhD) in Google ads starting in fall 2010;

▪ The department will conduct recruitment efforts in venues outside of VCU (graduate school fairs, annual conferences, etc.) to attract prospective students with diverse perspectives and backgrounds;

▪ The department will use its scholarships to attract and retain quality students, especially from underrepresented populations;
• Execution of a national program mailing to English departments (including historically black and women’s colleges and universities);

• Revision and redesign of department website as the public record of current undergraduate, graduate and faculty activities and accomplishments—as the chief means of program promotion and recruitment;

• Aggressively recruiting minority and international students for the MATX program, an interdisciplinary PhD in Media, Art, and Text.

• The department will monitor retention statistics on an annual basis and address any retention issue with regard to the diversity of its student body.

2. Scholarships and Awards. As a means to retain its best students and recognize their contribution to the university, the department will continue to nominate active students for such awards as:

• Nominate minority graduate students for academic recognition and honors (Black History in the Making and Phi Kappa Phi’s Kennedy Award) as well as Graduate School and other fellowships to assist minority students in their thesis and dissertation work;

• Award the annual Jean Roy Riely scholarship to a female undergraduate student who is returning to school after a significant absence;

• Strive to obtain greater financial assistance for the department’s undergraduate and graduate students.

3. Community Engagement. The department will participate in community outreach programs which provide students an opportunity to work with Richmond inner-city schools. Such activities include:

• Undergraduates and graduates are encouraged to participate in a community literacy program at the city jail through service learning writing classes;

• Undergraduate students volunteer to work with students in the Richmond Public Schools;

• Students from area high schools are invited to participate in the department’s Cabell First Novelist program and are then encouraged to spend time visiting departments at the university.

4. Curricular Strategies. The department will continue to develop and monitor its curriculum to ensure that it addresses issues of multiculturalism and the contributions of minorities, and will provide support for extracurricular activities that contribute to multiculturalism. The English curriculum exposes its graduate and undergraduate students to varied cultures and histories.
through literature, criticism, and writing. The department is pleased to be able to cross-list many of its courses with such other departments as Women’s Studies and African American Studies and believes that such a relationship through the curriculum is important for students.

- The undergraduate major degree in English will continue to emphasize multiculturalism by requiring that the curriculum include a diversity course and options to take other coursework in related areas. The graduate programs will expand their current offerings in this area.

- The department will expand its offerings in the area of multiethnic literatures and emphasize the issue of globalization as it relates to the understanding of other cultures both at home and abroad. All undergraduate students are required to take at least one course in the area of diversity and multicultural issues.

- The department will continue to encourage its faculty to use their areas of expertise to create new and engaging classes for students that will emphasize diversity.

- The department will continue to work with other departments at VCU to cross cultural divides when promoting literature and literary events.

- Through its website, its blog, its undergraduate advising Facebook page, and its listserv, the department will continue to make its students aware of activities on campus that encourage diversity and multiculturalism.

Activities in Support of these Strategies
- The department currently offers courses in African American Literature; Caribbean Literature; Writing for Social Change; Women Writers; Lesbian Texts/Queer Theory; Feminist Literary Theory; Medieval Women Writers; Harlem Renaissance; Virginia Woolf; Race, Gender and Fiction; Contemporary Women Poets; African American Autobiography; Toni Morrison seminar; Post-Colonial Literatures; and Prison Writing, among many others.

- All students will be encouraged to participate in national, state and local conferences, programs, lectures and other events that promote diversity.

- As a part of an ongoing alumni survey, questions will be used to determine exposure to concepts of diversity and inclusiveness in the curriculum/classroom while a student. This should give us a base to assess the success in promoting diversity in the curriculum.

- The VCU Visiting Writers series continues to bring in writers of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and blackbird: an online journal of literature and the arts will continue to publish creative efforts from around the globe.

- Literati, the department’s student organization, will continue to act as another outlet for multicultural discourse; faculty will present on a number of subjects that enhance knowledge of diversity through literature, cultural studies, and writing.
▪ Students will be encouraged to participate in Study Abroad programs, particularly those administered via VCU’s Office of International Programs. The department’s faculty continue to teach summer sessions in Peru and Scotland that are available to a selected number of VCU English students.

▪ Several English majors either work with or were published in Amendment, a student-run literary journal of social change. Having this creative outlet is extremely important for the department’s majors, and the department finds it to be a highly valuable part of the Student Media Center.

GOAL 6: STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO ENGAGE IN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS THAT RESPECT DIVERSITY

The English department will emphasize and promote diversity in its outreach and service to professional organizations, the Richmond community, high school and college students and teachers, and other groups. In such interactions, faculty, staff and students will promote positive attitudes toward multiculturalism and showcase the department’s commitment to diversity.

Strategies

1. The department will support a variety of initiatives that promote diversity. These include having individuals and representatives from relevant professional organizations visit the department as guest speakers and in other capacities. This includes linking these individuals and groups to the department’s Web site to enhance communication and cooperation.

2. The department will encourage faculty, staff and students to engage in service and service-learning projects that provide exposure to kinds of diversity beyond their previous experience. These might involve reading and writing projects with schools and nonprofit groups; helping groups produce publications; engaging in community projects, and mentoring programs for area public schools.

3. The department will continue and will enhance where possible its efforts to interact with the Richmond community in ways that take advantage of the department’s particular strengths and the diversity of the Richmond community.

Activities in Support of these Strategies
▪ the prison writing project conducted with Richmond City Jail inmates that has been named among VCU’s 40 Acts of Caring and that has won recognition on the President’s 2009 Honor Roll of outstanding university-community partnerships;
▪ guest speaker Lucy Anne Hurston, niece of Zora Neale Hurston (February 2009);
▪ projects in which faculty participate in teaching courses with predominately under-represented students;
▪ partnership with the Hurston-Wright Foundation, which promotes new African-American writing;
enhancements of current projects to aid minority high school students in applying for college admission;
• Carver-VCU Partnership, spearheaded by faculty in the English department;
• creative writing workshops at John B. Cary School (Title One elementary school in Richmond);
• Armstrong High School project for college-application preparedness;
• VCU undergraduate connections to the annual Long Walk to Freedom event of Boaz and Ruth organization that assists ex-offenders;
• initiate a program for student volunteer work at the Powhatan Juvenile Detention Center;
• serve as homework and reading tutors for third graders in a local public school for Church Hill Activities;
• student participation in the Podium Foundation, a non-profit organization created to provide the opportunity for Richmond high school students to annually create, design and publish a literary magazine.

CONCLUSION

The English department will pursue the diversity issues defined above concurrently, emphasizing diversity in recruitment of faculty, staff, and students, but also in curriculum, departmental activities, scholarship and teaching. Diversity remains a central issue in the English department’s planning process, mission statement, program reviews, staff and faculty development.

The department’s student focus will include evaluating the access, retention and success of students in the department’s programs in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, and age. We will encourage and monitor interaction among groups, the quality of student experience on campus and the students’ level of engagement in a variety of activities, offices, and resources, including diversity resources. We will ensure the availability of diversity-related courses and requirements, and encourage students to address issues of diversity by choosing appropriate courses and focusing on them in their own papers, theses, and dissertations. We will also encourage students to engage in study abroad and service learning courses, becoming involved in community-university partnerships.

Concerning faculty and staff, the department will ensure the diversity and turnover of faculty and staff by level and tenure status. It will valorize their expertise on diversity-related matters, encouraging participation in teaching, research and publications related to diversity. The department will also provide minority and other faculty and staff development opportunities, including mentorship programs and faculty learning communities that emphasize diversity. The department will also continue its effort to engage diverse community partners and support minority vendors.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Goals (from VCU Diversity Plan)</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Position(s) Responsible for Implementation</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 1</td>
<td>Create and maintain a working and learning environment where differences are welcomed and valued</td>
<td>1. The department will communicate its commitment to diversity through its publications, recruitment and other materials. 2. Faculty will be encouraged to advance the discussion of diversity issues in their work. 3. Faculty and staff will work to ensure that the department’s students are provided with an open and inclusive environment. 4. The department will seek to reward and recognize faculty and staff who have contributed to the advancement of a climate of inclusiveness. 5. The department will encourage faculty and staff development in areas that will serve to promote a diverse culture and climate.</td>
<td>• Faculty representative of the Department's diverse membership will be encouraged to collaborate on projects, grant proposals, and research, and to cooperate in other ways that foster issues of diversity and multiculturalism.  • The department will foster and support research and creative activity that addresses issues of diversity and multiculturalism. Faculty and staff will be encouraged to participate in and attend conferences with diversity themes. Creative writing faculty will be encouraged to present readings that reach diverse audiences.  • As part of faculty and staff development, they will be encouraged to complete training in the Safe Zone program, which seeks to prepare individuals to understand and accept the unique perspective and experience of gays and lesbians. Where applicable, the department will also utilize tangible evidence of the climate it seeks to create. For instance, following the Safe Zone example, individuals who complete the training are encouraged to display the Safe Zone insignia as a symbol of their</td>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Five-year period</td>
<td>The department has been successful in providing an open and inclusive environment for its faculty, staff, and students. A number of faculty have collaborated in projects, grant proposals and research that emphasize cross-cultural and diversity issues.</td>
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| Goal 2  | Establish and implement strategies that promote a diverse faculty to positions of leadership and decision-making to advance diversity in institutional leadership. | 1. The department will nominate faculty from diverse groups for internships, fellowships, and programs to prepare them for leadership and professional positions.  
2. The department will seek to fill open leadership positions with persons from diverse groups in order to increase opportunities and enrich the campus experience for openness and acceptance of gays and lesbians.  
   - Faculty and staff will be encouraged to participate in the Green Zone initiative in support of student veterans. They will attend a workshop that provides information and resources related to issues faced by student veterans and will display the Green Zone sticker outside their office door to let others know they are available to provide support and information about resources for student veterans.  
   - Faculty will report on the annual faculty evaluation report form any activities which bring attention to and advance the discussion of diversity issues as they relate to the disciplines incorporated in English studies. | Department Chair | Five-year period | The department has been successful in preparing its faculty for leadership positions, both in the University (three of our faculty have recently held administrative positions or roles in the College) and in the larger community and profession (through national offices held, |
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<th>Goal 3</th>
<th>Year one and the following four</th>
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<td>The department will endeavor to recruit, retain and promote faculty and staff members to facilitate diversity, including faculty who will expand the current literature-of-diversity offerings.</td>
<td>The department is currently involved in a multilevel faculty search that will strengthen the multicultural and interdisciplinary nature of its programs, enhancing the diversity of the faculty.</td>
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1. All search ads will include language encouraging applications from diverse groups, including women and minorities.
2. All search committees will include a diverse membership.
3. The department will utilize different publication outlets, to ensure a more diverse and qualified pool of candidates.
4. Members of the search committees will make personal contact with diverse potential applicants, individuals and organizations which represent individuals who would add to faculty diversity.
5. The department will participate in conferences and similar meetings to increase its

- As with all new faculty, new minority faculty will be assigned a faculty mentor. Mentors are encouraged to help the new faculty members to adjust into the department and the university, and, in the long term, to establish the foundation for a highly successful career.
- Search committees will identify and regularly update information about venues for reaching female and minority prospects.
- Faculty will be asked to report on the annual faculty evaluation form any activities which advance the discussion of diversity issues.
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<th>Goal 4</th>
<th>The department is committed to recruiting, retaining and promoting administrators and staff members to facilitate diversity especially in terms of race and gender. The department will recognize among potential minority, faculty and staff candidates.</th>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>In making committee assignments, the department will strive to ensure that female and minority faculty and staff members are not overburdened with service duties inside or outside the department.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Faculty will be encouraged to include diversity issues in their research and to participate in conferences with diversity themes.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>The department will foster collaborative faculty research that includes female and minority faculty.</td>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>The department will seek to increase the diversity of staff in higher pay bands.</td>
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<td>The department will strengthen staff search procedures in order enhance diversity in the candidate pool and recruitment.</td>
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<td>• Evaluate and strengthen the existing staff development and mentorship programs.</td>
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<td>• Document employee performance throughout the year to justify reclassification requests and review classified staff positions to determine if duties warrant reclassification.</td>
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<td>• Ensure that diverse persons are included in applicant pools and among</td>
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**Department Chair and Department Manager**

**Five-year period**

The department has been able to recruit and maintain a strong staff and has successfully promoted several of its members into the higher pay bands. The staff has also been encouraged to diversify their work, acquiring new skills and emphases. We also
<table>
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<th>The department</th>
<th>1. Recruitment</th>
<th>• All undergraduate students</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<td>seek to increase the diversity of professional individuals hired or promoted in pay bands 4-7 to achieve a diverse staff at all pay levels in the unit.</td>
<td>marketing to support recruitment of diverse staff members into higher pay bands and leadership positions.</td>
<td>interviewed candidates. Seek to increase the number of diverse applicants, interviewed candidates, and staff hired into pay bands 4-9.</td>
<td>employ work study students in our office, several of which are minority.</td>
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<td>Goal 5</td>
<td>will seek to increase undergraduate and graduate minority representation to meet or exceed the University’s percentages. The department will work to ensure that the its students are provided with an open and inclusive learning and working environment.</td>
<td>-- Development and implementation of new print advertising campaigns in national publications. -- Development and implementation of new online advertising campaigns for all three graduate programs. -- The department will conduct recruitment efforts in venues outside of VCU (fairs, annual conferences, etc.) to attract prospective students with diverse backgrounds; -- The department will use its scholarships to attract and retain quality students, esp. from underrepresented populations; -- Revision and redesign of department website as the public record of current student and faculty accomplishments; -- Aggressive recruitment of minority and international students for the MATX PhD program. 2. Scholarships and Awards. -- Nominate minority undergraduate and graduate students for are required to take at least one course in the area of diversity and multicultural issues. • Students will be encouraged to participate in national, state and local conferences, lectures and other events that promote diversity. • The alumni survey will be used in part to determine exposure to concepts of diversity and inclusiveness in the curriculum/classroom while a student; • The VCU Visiting Writers series will continue to bring in writers of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and the online journal <em>blackbird</em> will continue to publish creative efforts from around the globe; • Literati, the department’s student organization, will continue to act as another outlet for multicultural discourse, with faculty presenting subjects that enhance knowledge of diversity; • Students will be encouraged to participate in Study Abroad programs, including the summer sessions taught VCU faculty in Peru and Scotland; • English majors will be encouraged to work write for <em>Amendment</em>, a student-run literary journal of social change.</td>
<td>Chair, Associate Chair, and program directors of the five-year period has successfully built a curriculum that exposes undergraduate and graduate students to varied cultures and histories, offering courses (many of them cross-listed with other departments) in African American Literature, Writing for Social Change, Women Writers, Lesbian Texts/Queer Theory, Feminist Literary Theory, Post-Colonial Literatures, and Prison Writing, among many others.</td>
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academic recognition and honors (Black History in the Making; Phi Kappa Phi’s Kennedy Award. Etc.) ; -- Award the annual Jean Roy Riely scholarship to a female undergraduate student who is returning to school after a significant absence.

3. Community Engagement.

-- Encourage undergraduates and graduates to participate in a community literacy program at the city jail through service learning writing classes; -- Encourage undergraduate students to volunteer to work with students in the Richmond Public Schools.


-- The undergraduate major degree in English will continue to emphasize multiculturalism by requiring that the curriculum include a diversity course and options to take other coursework in related areas. The graduate programs will expand
| Goal 6 | The English department will emphasize and promote diversity in its outreach and service to professional organizations, and the Richmond community. In 1. The department will encourage faculty, staff and students to engage in service and service-learning projects that provide exposure to kinds of diversity beyond their previous experience. These might involve reading and writing projects with schools. | • The department has initiated projects in which faculty participate in teaching courses with predominately under-represented students; • partnership with the Hurston-Wright Foundation, which promotes new African-American writing; • enhancements of current projects to aid minority high school students in applying | Department Chair, Associate Chair and program directors | Each year of the five-year period | • The prison writing project conducted with Richmond City Jail inmates has been named among VCU’s 40 Acts of Caring and that has won recognition on the President’s 2009 Honor Roll of outstanding university- |
such interactions, faculty, staff and students will promote positive attitudes toward multiculturalism and showcase the department’s commitment to diversity.

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<td>and nonprofit groups; helping groups produce publications; engaging in community projects, and mentoring programs for area public schools, 2. The department will continue and will enhance where possible its efforts to interact with the Richmond community in ways that take advantage of the department’s particular strengths and the diversity of the Richmond community. for college admission; • Carver-VCU Partnership, spearheaded by faculty in the English department; • creative writing workshops at John B. Cary School (Title One elementary school in Richmond); • Armstrong High School project for college-application preparedness; • VCU undergraduate connections to the annual Long Walk to Freedom event of Boaz and Ruth organization that assists ex-offenders; • initiate a program for student volunteer work at the Powhatan Juvenile Detention Center; • serve as homework and reading tutors for third graders in a local public school for Church Hill Activities; • student participation in the Podium Foundation, a non-profit organization created to provide the opportunity for Richmond high school students to annually create, design and publish a literary magazine.</td>
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