

***REPORT OF THE VISITING TEAM***  
***INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY REVIEW***

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Dates of Visit: January 13 - 16, 2009

**Team Members**

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The Diversity Review Team visited the University of Arkansas campus on January 13 - 16, 2009, to assess and evaluate its diversity programs and initiatives. While on campus, the team met with various individuals and groups involved in the University's diversity efforts, including students, faculty, and staff. The review team included:

Dr. Nancy "Rusty" Barceló, Vice President and Vice Provost for Equity and Diversity, University of Minnesota.

Dr. Lester P. Monts, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Senior Counselor to the President for the Arts, Diversity, and Undergraduate Affairs; and Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Music, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Dr. Charlie Nelms, Chancellor, North Carolina Central University.

Collectively, the review team has more than 100 years of diversity experience in major higher education institutions.

The team's visit culminated with a well-attended town hall meeting and also a get-together with a group of community members who maintain a deep interest in the University and its ongoing agenda to foster diversity. Participants at both gatherings were open and frank in their communication with the team and responsive to all requests. The team wishes to express its gratitude to Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Johnetta Cross Brazell, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Education Carmen Coustaut, and Interim Vice Chancellor and Provost Robert McMath and their staffs for arranging a pleasant and productive visit. We were also pleased with Chancellor G. David Gearhart's support of our visit and the emphasis he has placed on diversity since rising from Vice Chancellor for Development to Chancellor of the University.

## **Introduction**

The changing demographic profile on the University of Arkansas campus has compelled institutional leaders to reassess the role of diversity and call for a higher level of shared responsibility and accountability. Today, mass media and global technology allow University of Arkansas students to sit in their residence halls and classrooms and contact scholars, student peers, and research materials throughout the world. As

educators, we must realize that we are inescapably involved in the incredible explosion of diversity and in the crucial issues that underlie the current challenges facing higher education institutions.

At the University of Arkansas, as in the whole of American higher education, the cultural awareness demanded by our current era calls for a new understanding on our part of the pluralistic nature of our society; this challenge has sparked an intense dialogue here, as elsewhere, over the role of diversity in our colleges and universities. At the heart of these debates are issues that focus on the many manifestations of diversity.

In the campus community, interaction among individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds reflect similar relationships found in society at large. But unlike other sectors of society, institutions of higher learning have been charged with a mission to open pathways of knowledge that address the many challenges confronting modern life and to share that knowledge with other sectors of society.

As we move through the 21<sup>st</sup> century, universities will evolve into more than degree-granting institutions of higher learning that provide facilities for teaching and research; they will also become communities that expose their constituents to the many forms of diversity. From all that the review team has observed in Fayetteville, we are confident that the University of Arkansas will continue to place high value on diversity and the benefits and opportunities it provides.

## **General Observations**

We begin this report by citing two pronouncements regarding the University's position on diversity as an institutional imperative and the emphasis that campus leaders have placed on the student experience. First, in his 2007 State of the University address, then-Chancellor John A. White declared that diversity remains the University's top institutional goal. This diversity theme was further echoed in the University of Arkansas' section of the *Fayetteville/Northwest Arkansas Area Community Profile*:

In society, every individual is afforded equal rights and opportunities—an education is foremost among those opportunities. Higher education is clearly the gateway to a better quality of life. While access to education has been legally ensured, at the University of Arkansas it remains a high priority to see that prospective students from traditionally underrepresented and underserved communities feel welcome on campus.

The workplace is becoming not just multi-cultural, multi-national, and multi-lingual. The world always has been a diverse place, but never before has that diversity penetrated so deeply into our daily lives. As an educational institution, the campus community must reflect Arkansas demographics and America's changing society as a whole.

Secondly, shortly after his elevation to the Chancellorship, G. David Gearhart initiated a plan to put "Students First." Hence, Chancellor Gearhart has played an important role through his publicly expressed commitment to students. By doing so, he articulated in only two words the true reason for the existence of colleges and universities. Placing students first inevitably turns the institution's primary focus on teaching excellence, and constitutes an implicit pledge to evaluate faculty, community service, administrators, and support staff by how effectively they meet the priority of serving students. Hence, the full weight of the institution is brought to bear on meeting students' needs for intellectual growth and development.

In making the commitment "Students First," Chancellor Gearhart added further significance to the phrase by stating:

On a somewhat superficial level, it simply means projecting a welcoming and friendly attitude to each and every student. It means being more helpful when they ask for assistance or come to faculty and staff with concerns. It means reaching out to students and creating an environment in which they feel valued.

Hence, two chief executives, current and former, have articulated themes that not only support diversity and excellence, but also foster them as main elements in the

University's mission. This is an excellent starting point for our report.

## **Commendables/Strategic Assets**

With considerable success, the University has undertaken several targeted diversity planning efforts, all well documented and organized by a broad range of stakeholders, including administrators, faculty, staff, and students. The University has succeeded in developing a clear and concise strategic plan for diversity. Starting with very broad objectives, the plan is further nuanced by very specific goals that articulate in very meaningful ways how the University can foster diversity within its complex structure. Moreover, each of the University's schools and colleges has developed its own plan, one that not only references the broader institutional plan, but also provides background information and recommendations that are specific to each unit's unique disciplines and workplace culture.

The diversity reports compiled by the Office of Associate Vice Chancellor Carmen Coustaut were effectively organized and well aligned with the University's goals and objectives. These materials grounded the current themes in the context of the continuing diversity challenges and accomplishments over a five-year period and set the stage for future programmatic growth.

After our team's review of the preliminary materials and our meetings with individuals and groups on the campus, five key themes emerged over the course of our three-day visit. The themes reflect not only the broad objectives articulated in the University of Arkansas 2005 Diversity Plan, but also the educational experiences of undergraduate and graduate students and the workplace experiences of faculty and staff:

- Administrative oversight of diversity programs and initiatives.
- Creating a campus climate that is conducive to carrying out the University's mission.
- Accountability in all phases of the diversity enterprise.
- Infusion of diverse subject matter into curricula.
- Recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and workforce.

In identifying these themes, our team is for the most part reinforcing, reiterating, and restating many of the components of the 2005 Diversity Plan and the plans developed by the University's schools and colleges.

### Theme 1: Administrative Oversight

It is vitally important that the institution's leaders express a strong and sustained commitment to diversity. Such pronouncements must emanate from chairs and directors, as well as from deans, executive officers, and the governing board. The message on diversity must be coupled with that of excellence, so that both objectives are firmly integrated into the University's mission. The leading individuals and groups must communicate their general consensus that diversity programs and activities are an integral part of, and not merely tangential to, the University's central mission.

In this regard, the University has already made commendable progress by building an institutionally based infrastructure for diversity oversight. Many of the nationally recognized "best practices" are now part of the University's culture and practice. In 2005, University leaders created the position of Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Education and established diversity advisory councils at both the campus-wide and school/college levels. In addition, the academic community has set goals that aim to invigorate campus attention to diversity. While we appreciate the progress the University has made, we do not believe the current administrative structure is sufficient to meet its stated diversity aspirations. Our recommendations concerning this and the other four themes may be found in our Recommendations section.

Recent and anticipated changes at the executive officer and decanal levels of the University will provide the means for continued success and the enactment of new and transformative diversity programs and services. The campus's chief executive officer, Chancellor G. David Gearhart, took office in July 2008. Sharon Gaber, Senior Associate Provost at Auburn University, will begin duties as Vice Chancellor and Provost in May 2009; until then, Interim Vice Chancellor and Provost Robert McMath will serve in an

acting capacity. With the retirement of Vice President for Student Affairs Johnetta Cross Brazzell, another vacancy has occurred in a key executive position. Vice Chancellor Brazzell was unanimously cited by those with whom we met as being a major force in the University's diversity accomplishments over the past decade. We sensed significant concern within the University community regarding the adverse impact that her retirement, and the possible merger of academic and student affairs, may have on the University's ability to sustain its diversity efforts and to implement the new programs in its strategic plan.

As stated in the 2007 North Central Association of Colleges and Schools Higher Learning Commission Report (HLC), many universities have adopted the positions of Vice President or Vice Chancellor to oversee and lead its diversity efforts. Administrators holding such titles become members of the executive team and consult and confer with colleagues who are ultimately responsible for carrying out the University's mission. Conferring this rank on the leading diversity officer institutionalizes an institution's diversity efforts. We expect that intense dialogue will surround any change in the University's executive structure that may affect its ability to realize its diversity objectives.

## Theme 2: Campus Climate

The review team heard a mix of opinions from students, faculty, and staff regarding campus climate and diversity. Some individuals said that it was a privilege to be a part of the University community and that they felt very comfortable on campus, while others expressed a strong sense of racial, gender, and religious bias from their interactions with other student communities, faculty, and in the greater Northwest Arkansas community. Responses to questions on cultural climate issues are bound to be mixed. Yet many of the individuals and groups we met consistently cited the need for on-going diversity training and exposure on the lines of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and religion.

Many student interviewees believed that a coherent approach to student learning—one that incorporates both curricular and co-curricular resources—would contribute immensely to their cultural competencies by preparing them for participation in a diverse campus environment and beyond. Research by the nationally recognized expert on diversity and psychologist, Patricia Gurin, sheds important light on issues surrounding diversity in higher education. Her work points out that,

- Because students in late adolescence and early adulthood are at a critical stage of development, diversity (racial, economic, demographic, and cultural) is crucially important in enabling them to become conscious learners and critical thinkers, and in preparing them to become active participants in a democratic society.
- Students learn more and think in deeper, more complex ways in a diverse educational environment.
- Education plays a foundational role in a democracy by equipping students for meaningful participation. Students educated in diverse settings are better able to participate in a pluralistic democracy.

Programmatically, the University must recognize that student and faculty diversity is multifaceted and complex matter. From our conversations with students, we learned that, based on places of origin and life experiences, there is tremendous diversity within student communities, and we caution the leadership not to view them as monolithic groupings. For example, the experiences of documented and undocumented Hispanic/Latino students are quite different.

### Theme 3: Accountability

In the final analysis, every member of the University campus community benefits either directly or indirectly from campus diversity when the institution puts diversity to good use. Therefore, no individual or group should be left out, or feel left out, of the diversity equation, and the campus leadership must ensure that all units of the institution are working to promote diversity as an essential element in the University's desire to achieve its mission through well-articulated goals and objectives.

As mentioned above, our team was particularly impressed by the diversity plans of each University school and college. As a result, the University programs operate under a campus-wide strategic plan and a set of college and unit diversity plans that are responsive to the goals and objectives first set forth by Chancellor White. Together, these campus-wide and unit-based plans provide a rich institutional context for diversity and illustrate the University's approach to institutional self-reflection and improvement. As a result, Arkansas has articulated one of the most comprehensive approaches to diversity modeled on a university campus anywhere in our nation. We recognize these actions as major accomplishments for an institution as decentralized as the University of Arkansas.

The reports on campus diversity also highlight the history of collaboration among campus units. The team was informed on numerous occasions by individuals and groups about their diversity collaborations and cooperative ventures, many of them facilitated by the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Education. While diversity programs on many campuses are focused on faculty and students, the team was pleased to see the extensive and effective involvement of staff as the recipients and purveyors of diversity at Arkansas. At many other colleges and universities, the vital involvement of staff in the diversity effort is either nonexistent or invisible.

#### Theme 4: Curriculum Infusion and Integration

We believe that the infusion of diversity into the curriculum is one of the most challenging tasks facing an institution. Negotiating the inclusion of diversity learning into the curriculum must be accomplished with great intellectual vitality. Otherwise, when diversity is introduced as a new area of knowledge or a new conceptual framework, questions arise regarding scholarly rigor and academic relevance. We heard from several faculty members that they favor the infusion of diversity into the academic mainstream because it enriches students' understanding of the subject matter and prepares them with the cultural competencies necessary for participation in a global society.

Faculty reported that traditional departments, such as the humanities and social sciences,

have already expanded their curricula to include diversity as a major component in a variety of creative, evolving ways. Programs in African American Studies, Latin American and Latino Studies, and Women's Studies have also enhanced their courses by incorporating diversity issues. Pedagogically, introducing diversity into the Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics disciplines has presented greater challenges, but according to some faculty with whom we met, these are challenges that can be overcome. The initiative "Faculty Scholars for Inclusive Excellence" is beginning to address the need for faculty-led development of content and pedagogy for infusing diversity into the curriculum for all disciplines.

A likely place for the University to enhance its curricular focus on diversity is through the General Education (GE) program, a series of courses that all students must complete. The review team learned from faculty interviewees and the HLC report that there have been no major revisions in the GE program for a number of years. Revising the GE program would provide a transformational opportunity to introduce diversity topics into GE course offerings, thereby exposing *all* students not only to the enriched subject matter surrounding intercultural studies, but also to the heightened sense of social responsibility inherent in an appreciation of diversity.

#### Theme 5: Recruitment and Retention

Achieving a critical mass of underrepresented minorities in the student body is one of the University's major concerns. The HLC Accreditation Report focuses on the strategies that can be used to reverse the downturn in various student populations; it outlines a comprehensive approach to inclusion by providing information on a wide range of programs that address diversity in the workforce, socioeconomic diversity, gender diversity, curricular and co-curricular diversity, and issues surrounding campus climate.

Realizing the importance of representational diversity and the need for public universities to produce leaders of quality for the state's growth and development, the Arkansas Legislature passed Act 1091, which mandates a set of carefully monitored

programs for the retention of African Americans and other underrepresented minority groups as students, faculty, and staff. The University is committed to compliance with the provisions of that legislation.

We were concerned that very few students of color participate in the University Honors Program. For admittance to honors programs, other reputable universities have found it useful to expand the criteria for selection beyond simply tallying test scores and grade point averages. Other attributes, such as leadership skills, entrepreneurship, volunteerism, and creative abilities, provide a more holistic view of the student and better reflect his or her potential for success. We believe that flagship institutions like the University of Arkansas must use the inherent creative capabilities of its students, faculty, and staff to incorporate diversity into its programmatic matrix.

The mission to improve and enhance faculty diversity is apparent throughout the HLC Report. Faculty recruitment/retention is a crucial component for the success of the University's diversity programs. Faculty members of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, etc. bring diverse perspectives on subject matter and research perspectives; they also serve individually and collectively as role models and mentors to all students. In the faculty data provided, we noted that no underrepresented minority faculty holds a Distinguished University Professorship or a University Professorship. Surely, these coveted professorships could be used to attract outstanding and celebrated minority scholars to the University of Arkansas.

### **Recommendations – Set 1: The Five Themes**

Institutional diversity was a major focus of the 2007 HLC Report, which cited many accomplishments in diversity education at Arkansas and elsewhere. However, their report signaled the need for the University to enhance and broaden many of its efforts to achieve diversity in critical areas. With that in mind, our team offers the following two sets of recommendations. The first set addresses the five themes we outlined above:

### **1. Administrative oversight of diversity programs and initiatives.**

The University should condense and prioritize its diversity goals in order to provide greater focus. We applaud the University's unit-based, decentralized approach to diversity planning and operations; however, we also see the pressing need for a chief diversity officer at the executive officer level of the University.

### **2. Creating a campus climate that is conducive to carrying out the University's mission.**

An intensive look into the inter-group and intra-group relations among these and other groups may result in the need for customized programmatic responses to their needs.

### **3. Accountability in all phases of the diversity enterprise.**

All University administrators, e.g., chairs, directors, deans and executive officers, should know that they will be held accountable for achieving the University's diversity goals. The University's executive leaders should initiate regular cultural audit/climate surveys, at both campus-wide and unit levels, that focus on key areas of concern, e.g. climate, retention, and workplace issues. They should also create and conduct an inventory of campus diversity programs and initiatives in order to determine what is being done and how well it is being done, and to identify future challenges.

### **4. Infusion of diverse subject matter into curricula.**

The team believes, as do many faculty at Arkansas, that only a well crafted set of general education requirements will expose students to the intellectual, societal, and pedagogical benefits necessary to meet the challenges they will encounter in their upper-division courses and in the specific regimen of their academic major.

### **5. Recruitment and retention of a diverse student body and workforce.**

A viable enrollment management program requires purposeful collaboration among the offices of admission, financial aid, orientation, honors program, and the schools and colleges. The team noted that many of the staff who work in these units believe that a higher level of synergy is necessary in order to recruit and retain a diverse student body. Along with the Division of Student Affairs, we believe that an even more concerted effort is needed to bring about greater cooperation and collaboration on issues of recruitment and retention.

While the team understands that faculty are authorized to evaluate and hire their colleagues, we believe that efforts beyond the department, school, or college should be made at a consistent level by the administration to provide resources to support faculty

recruitment and retention efforts. Diversity hiring programs can be focused on entry-level assistant professors as well as on those considered “stars.”

Our second set of recommendations addresses work required to communicate and implement the strategic diversity plan. These recommendations focus on issues we believe contribute to the growth and sustainability of the University’s diversity agenda within the context of the five themes we have identified. We emphasize, again, that all of our recommendations emerged from, and were expanded upon, through discussions with Arkansas’ senior administrators, deans, faculty, staff, students, and community representatives. (The team acknowledges the creative and good work being pursued in a number of units, such as in general outreach efforts from admissions to creative writing programs, but we have chosen not to restate ongoing campus efforts as part of these recommendations.)

## **Recommendations – Set 2: Vision, Communication, Sustainability and Structure**

- **Vision/Mission.** Develop a more condensed and prioritized set of achievable diversity strategies related to outreach and retention of faculty, staff, and students, academic initiatives, climate/environment, development, and external community enhancement to maximize outcomes. We believe that a common vision and coherent strategies will enhance collaboration and successful outcomes. The diversity vision statement and accompanying goals should be aligned with the University’s mission statement to ensure diversity is at the very core of the University and a University-wide responsibility.

Given the history of the state of Arkansas and the developments surrounding the integration of members of underrepresented groups into the campus community, it is logical that these initial diversity efforts should focus on race and ethnicity. We believe the University should engage in a series of clearly articulated conversations on the need to explore the role of diversity in a much broader realm. That conversation could begin by placing the University’s diversity goals and objectives within the broader context of the global economy, thereby incorporating issues surrounding gender, disability, and sexual orientation. The United States’ changing demographics also mean that there will be a constant influx of new communities into the diversity arena.

- **Communication/Sustainability.** Develop and implement a communication plan that promotes the outstanding diversity efforts and outcomes at the University to the state populace. This could enhance relationships with external communities as they become more familiar with campus changes.
  - Increase and enhance work with the Black Alumni Society and local Latino community-based organizations to explore ways they can assist in achieving diversity aspirations.
  - Initiate a campus-wide annual diversity symposium led by the Chancellor and Executive Committee to provide diversity updates and to recognize individuals and groups for their diversity work.
  - Enhance the Web site and online diversity newsletter to make diversity more transparent to the University community and to reflect all aspects of the UA definition of diversity.
  - Review the criteria for merit-based scholarships to ensure that disproportionate emphasis is not placed on standardized test scores, which almost always exclude minority students.
  - Create a campus-wide diversity committee that is chaired by the Chancellor, with a membership consisting of other executive officers and key campus diversity stakeholders. This would provide ongoing accountability updates, initiate new collaborations, and affirm institutional commitment.
  - Create and update a Web-based inventory of all diversity-related programs and initiatives.
  - Increase outreach programming and create partnerships with school districts in underserved areas of the state, especially the southern region where people feel isolated from the University for many reasons.
  - Focus institutional research efforts on learning more about diversity. Conduct periodic student surveys to gain insight on how students perceive and respond to institutional diversity programs in both curricular and co-curricular settings. Conduct a faculty-staff work-life study to assess the role of diversity in the workplace.

## **Administrative Structure**

Nationwide, those colleges and universities that have made notable progress on a broad range of diversity issues have done so by creating a viable infrastructure to accommodate and oversee programmatic development and sustainability. The

components of that infrastructure may differ from institution to institution, but there are key elements that seem to be shared across the board. Just what structure the oversight of diversity initiatives might take depends in large measure on institutional history, the demographic makeup of the community, and various other social and political factors. We have mentioned the need for committed executive leadership and the accountability that should be expected of those in all leadership positions. We believe the University of Arkansas must now seek high level diversity leadership that is responsible for the University's equity and diversity initiatives and programs, and for infusing the core values of equity and diversity into all aspects of teaching, learning, research, service, and outreach.

- The Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Diversity and Education should be repurposed to the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost level with faculty tenure, reporting directly to the Chancellor and Provost and serving as a member of the Chancellor's Executive Committee. This position should advise the Chancellor on policies and actions consistent with the core values of the University. Working with other institutional leaders, the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost should guide and coordinate diversity efforts and develop new models and strategies that address changing campus needs. Because the Vice Chancellor will hold a senior faculty position, he/she could also participate with the Provost on tenure reviews and faculty appointments. In addition, this position would develop and assess accountability for systemic change by:
  - Serving as the University's conscience on matters pertaining diversity.
  - Facilitating collaboration across administrative, student, and academic boundaries to develop and prioritize goals and strategies, from training to curriculum enhancement to outreach at every level.
  - Assisting with the design, implementation, monitoring and assessment of the University's diversity efforts.
  - Assisting with the integration of diversity-related criteria into the budget review and allocation process.
  - Serving as the University's chief diversity advocate and spokesperson.

In addition to the important role to be performed by the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost, it must be made clear to all University administrators, e.g., chairs, directors, deans, and executive officers, that they will be held accountable for achieving the University's diversity goals. To ensure progress in all campus units, appropriate incentives and disincentives should be articulated and implemented.

**Infrastructure:** The team notes that a viable infrastructure is needed to support the University's diversity goals. High-level leadership is needed to encourage the cultural fortitude to pursue those goals established for the faculty, staff, and student body. It is important that such an infrastructure is in place to provide the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost for Institutional Diversity and Education the leadership capacity to implement the University's diversity vision and goals. Efforts of this sort often fail due to inadequate resources and unclear lines of authority. Adequate resources with respect to staffing and budget are paramount to the success of achieving institutional diversity aspirations. We encourage the University to pursue creative strategies to address the following recommendations regarding the realignment of staff/faculty and budget.

- In addition to an administrative assistant, two positions at the assistant/associate level should be created to assist in addressing daily goals, so that the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost can focus on working with the campus and external community in developing and implementing the diversity plan. Ideally, a faculty member with research capabilities should be appointed half-time for a three-year term, and a staff person should be reassigned to work full-time with the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost. The Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost should determine specific responsibilities.
- The budget for diversity programs and initiatives must be significantly increased beyond its current allocation. This will ensure the availability of resources to achieve the University's stated diversity objectives. The Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost must have adequate funds to leverage collaborations between various colleges, schools, departments, programs, and services. The availability of such funds will enable the campus to take advantage of external funding sources.
- The Office of Multicultural Affairs should be more closely involved with the work of the Vice Chancellor/Vice Provost for Institutional Diversity and Education.

## **Summary/Conclusion**

The team was impressed with the institutional commitment and capacity revealed in all the materials reviewed and the interviews conducted. The University of Arkansas is an institution of remarkable scale and scope, educating large student populations at both the undergraduate and graduate levels in a full spectrum of academic, research, and professional programs.

Much of what we observed during our visit confirmed many of the points raised in the documents and reports made available to the team. These materials showed that the University is effectively establishing and advancing its diversity agenda. However, the team is concerned that without a major infusion or reallocation of resources, some of the schools, colleges, and central offices will have difficulty achieving the goals and objectives outlined in their diversity plans and institutional missions. Our concerns are founded more on the monumental nature of these tasks than on any concern about the unit's engagement and commitment to diversity.

While our overall assessment of diversity efforts finds them to be commendable, we are concerned that the University's infrastructure for diversity is still emerging. What we saw during our visit indicates that the University has made concrete progress and understands the challenges associated with its stated goals and objectives. However, much more work lies ahead.

Our understanding of this Diversity Review is that it will focus on how the University is actually using its various diversity plans as a template for future progress. We are concerned that the University is not yet prepared to fully adopt the transformational actions necessary to achieve its stated goals and objectives. We are particularly concerned about the marginal role that the Associate Vice Chancellor for

Diversity and Education plays in campus administration. We are equally concerned that consideration is being given to changing the position of Vice President for Student Affairs to the level of a Vice Provost. Both moves seem counterintuitive and could be counterproductive. Given the Chancellor's initiative, "Students First," the team believes it is critical that the Division of Student Affairs retain its separate identity to ensure that leadership in that vital area is provided by a senior level professional educator with the requisite education, skills, and experience in higher education. We strongly recommend that the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs report directly to the Chancellor and serve as a member of his executive leadership team.

While our exploration led to the discovery of many positive aspects of institutional diversity, we learned that many issues remain unresolved and many challenges unmet. We are confident that by enacting the team's recommendations and those of previous review agencies, the University of Arkansas can take an even greater role nationally in modeling institutional diversity.

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