Rising to the Challenge: Examining Excellence Through a Lens of Diversity

Maryville College
Strategic Plan for Diversity
2009-2014
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A Vision for Diversity at Maryville College

The Maryville College Statement of Purpose establishes a commitment to diversity:

"Maryville College is, in essence, a community for learning. This community includes persons with a variety of interests, backgrounds, beliefs, and nationalities."

The College has a distinguished history of affirming diversity as essential to higher education. The first woman to graduate from college in Tennessee received a Maryville College degree. The College was among the first to educate African-Americans and led the late nineteenth century effort to sustain racial integration in higher education in the state. The College has other longstanding commitments to diversity that include international education, addressing the concerns of the Deaf community, and educating students from Southern Appalachia. But Maryville College also recognizes the beginning of the twenty-first century as a window of opportunity to address new and continuing challenges of diversity in local, national and global settings. These challenges include racial and cross-cultural relations, issues of gender and human sexuality, dialogue and conflict within and across religious faiths, and diversity in the College faculty, staff and students.

The presence of a diverse educational community provides opportunities to fulfill a commitment to democratic citizenship. Exposure to the ideas, cultures, and values of others enables all members of the learning community to grow intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. Diversity enhances learning because it recognizes the inherent worth of all individuals. It motivates learners to discover the achievements and traditions of near and distant cultures, to more fully appreciate their own heritage, and to develop greater self-awareness. Equally important, diversity facilitates critical inquiry about the histories, assumptions, and behaviors that serve to marginalize some members of our local and global communities. Thus, diversity encourages learners to develop the intellectual agility and the sensitivity to re-examine long-held assumptions about others after carefully listening to or observing the expression of different realities. Although such an examination may reveal contradictions and invoke strong emotions, the dialogue fostered by diversity can extend critical thinking, compassion, and humility.

Motivated by the educational benefits of diversity, Maryville College seeks to provide a safe and civil environment that encourages awareness of, curiosity about, and respect for those whose insights and experiences come from varied traditions. The College strives to promote cross-cultural collaboration and to invite new voices to expand the learning community. Recognizing that critical engagement with diversity requires personal experience, faculty, staff and students are encouraged to explore diversity in curricular and co-curricular settings as they learn about and celebrate the rich variety of human gifts. Community members affiliate with various groups in order to enjoy support, to increase knowledge, to gain new perspectives, and to open windows of opportunity through social action. By design, membership in the Maryville College community promises interaction with diverse people, perspectives, and ideas.

(Created by Vision for Diversity Committee 2006)
Preamble: Historical Context to Contemporary Landscape

As Maryville College settles into the twenty-first century and moves toward its bicentennial, we must reclaim the legacy of our founding father, Isaac Anderson. As a college community that has forged a history of rising to meet challenges, whether in the building of a frontier school or the acceptance of women, freed slaves, and international students following the Civil War, we must meet the challenge of understanding and living life through a broadened lens of diversity. We gratefully acknowledge the efforts of the Maryville College community in carrying on the work and legacy of Kin Takahashi and Nancy Smith Wright and the many others who make up the rich history of our College. These individuals, often motivated by their ideals and the inspiring legacy of the College, found support from their contemporaries, both near and far. That rich tradition calls us to acknowledge and celebrate those who worked tirelessly, decade after decade, and long before a formal Vision for Diversity or Diversity Task Force existed.

That tradition also calls us to remember that despite early 20th century state legislation prohibiting the College’s racial integration policy, the College continued to welcome women, international students, and students from all socioeconomic backgrounds. With the Brown v. Board of Education decision of 1954, the College reclaimed its institutional pledge to educate a diverse student population that included African American students. The College has continued to increase racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity throughout the last half of the 20th century and has reaffirmed its efforts to become more inclusive through the President’s appointment of the Diversity Task Force and his charge to develop a Strategic Plan for Diversity.

Diversity serves as the foundation upon which a high quality and globalized liberal arts education is built. This principle has inspired every revision of the Core Curriculum from the most recent 1996 revision dating all the way back to at least the 1967 revision of the Core, which involved very intentional changes, including a course on non-Western perspectives (now a 300-level World Cultures course), an experiential education component, and a course entitled Science Thought (now Science 350) that examined the relationship between science and civilization. With each Core review, the process and the resulting curriculum have reflected a broader understanding of diversity. Beyond the classroom, diversity enhances the critical thinking skills of students, educators, and support persons on campus. The College’s recognition of this benefit has resulted in a number of diversity-focused retreats, formal initiatives such as becoming a campus affiliate of the National Coalition Building Institute, and informal initiatives such as CHEF (Cook Help Eat Fellowship, a gathering of faculty, staff, students, and families to enjoy meals from a variety of cultures). As a result, the community has realized increased morale and more meaningful personal relationships. Moreover, developing an institutional commitment to diversity is a sound fiscal practice.

Maryville College recognizes that diversity necessitates evolving policies, procedures, and a cultural climate in which its members increasingly appreciate and celebrate each other’s uniqueness. In today’s landscape, diversity includes but is not limited to ability, age, domestic and international culture, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, race, socioeconomic status, religion, belief systems, work and behavioral styles, marital status, parental status, political affiliation, national origin, and veteran status. A culture of diversity is born of shared ideals and the understanding that we must move beyond the minimum legal requirements and toward the implementation of policies that further inclusion for all members of the community. These policies will also need to address personal, social, and institutional barriers to success.

Maryville College’s future success will be determined, in part, by how we respond to changing regional and national demographics. The changing racial and ethnic pluralism within the United States population will continue to be reflected in the pool of applicants to colleges and universities.
within the next twenty years. These individuals will bring to the College cultures and histories different from the predominant culture of the current student majority. Maryville College must respond with a strong liberal arts curriculum that encourages students to move beyond the familiar and to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to participate successfully in a larger global society. Consistent mention of diversity in the visioning exercises for the next strategic plan demonstrated widespread support for a comprehensive and holistic approach to diversity. This Strategic Plan for Diversity proposes strategies for substantially moving toward realization of the College’s Vision for Diversity between January 2009 and December 2014.
Task Force Membership and Timeline

Diversity Task Force members included Terry Bunde, Crystal Colter, Lee Davis, Larry Ervin, Belinda Kenny, Andy Lewter, Paula McGhee, Kirsten Sheppard, Mary Kay Sullivan, Jan Taylor, and Barbara Wells. Barbara Wells served on the task force in the Spring of 2007, and Mary Kay Sullivan joined the task force in the Spring of 2008. Paula McGhee, Director of the Office of Diversity Programming, served as facilitator for the task force. Dr. Nina Gregg of Communication Resources worked with the task force on the organizational management methodology for the plan. Specialty work groups including faculty, staff, and students were appointed by the task force to research specific topic areas and submit reports on their findings and recommendations.

In response to the Windows of Opportunity Plan’s call to build diversity, a charge was issued by the President to develop a strategic plan for diversity to guide Maryville College over the next several years. The Diversity Task Force made a commitment to this task and to one another. Shortly after it undertook Dr. Gibson’s directive, the Diversity Task Force retreated to the House in the Woods to establish a plan of action for the implementation of the President’s charge within the two-year timeframe. The members understood that the committee served as a microcosm of the campus community, operating with democratic principles. In light of this, the Diversity Task Force developed five enduring commitments which recalled and reclaimed the College’s legacy and the commitment of the current administration to guide the campus community toward a greater understanding and appreciation of diversity in its broadest sense. The subsequent timeline of the Task Force’s work was as follows:

**Spring 2007**
- Appointment of Diversity Task Force
- Beginning of research
- First community forum
- Initial interim recommendations to Cabinet

**Fall 2007**
- Literature review
- External landscape research
- Site visits to institutions with best practices (Berea College and Appalachian State University)
- Formation of work groups

**Spring 2008**
- Formation of Student Diversity Council
- Second community forum
- Work group reports completed
- Second interim recommendations to Cabinet

**Summer 2008**
- Initial writing of strategic plan
- Submission of plan draft to consultant for feedback

**Fall 2008**
- Review of first draft with consultant
- Revisions of first draft based upon consultant recommendations
- Highlights of first draft of plan presented to work groups
- Faculty, staff, and student forums held for final community feedback
- Incorporation of community feedback into draft
- Submission of strategic plan draft to consultant for feedback
- Review of second draft with consultant
- Final revisions of second draft based upon consultant recommendations

**January 2009**
- Completed Strategic Plan for Diversity presented to the Maryville College President
Educational, Moral, and Business Rationale for Diversity

The general rationale for fostering a diverse and welcoming campus community and for infusing diversity into all corners of the College rests on educational, moral, and business rationales.

Educational Rationale
The educational benefits of a diverse community and of the infusion of diversity into all corners of the College are outlined in the College’s Vision for Diversity:

“The presence of a diverse educational community provides opportunities to fulfill a commitment to democratic citizenship. Exposure to the ideas, cultures, and values of others enables all members of the learning community to grow intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally. Diversity enhances learning because it recognizes the inherent worth of all individuals. It motivates learners to discover the achievements and traditions of near and distant cultures, to more fully appreciate their own heritage, and to develop greater self-awareness. Equally important, diversity facilitates critical inquiry about the histories, assumptions, and behaviors that serve to marginalize some members of our local and global communities. Thus, diversity encourages learners to develop the intellectual agility and the sensitivity to re-examine long-held assumptions about others after carefully listening to or observing the expression of different realities. Although such an examination may reveal contradictions and invoke strong emotions, the dialogue fostered by diversity can extend critical thinking, compassion, and humility.”

An understanding and appreciation of the value of diversity and an infusion of diversity into all corners of the College enhances a liberal arts education and provides clear educational benefits.

Moral Rationale
The moral rationale for building a diverse community and infusing diversity in all corners of the College is expressed in the first section of the College’s Statement of Purpose, which declares that the College “strives to be an instrument of liberation and growth for adults of all ages.” The Statement of Purpose continues:

“Maryville College is, in essence, a community for learning. This community includes persons with a variety of interests, backgrounds, beliefs, and nationalities.... In such an atmosphere of openness and caring, lasting friendships are formed. Through caring for others on campus and beyond, sharing genuine concern for the world, and working to fulfill the College's purpose, directors, administration, staff, faculty, and students strive to build and strengthen the human community.”

Furthermore, specifically in the context of the College’s voluntary covenant with the Presbyterian Church USA, the following excerpt from the Statement of Purpose also makes the case, from a faith perspective, for valuing diversity:

“In an atmosphere of freedom and sensitivity, Maryville College bears witness to God's revelation in Jesus Christ who challenges all human beings to search for truth, to work for justice, to develop wisdom, and to become loving persons. Continuing in this vital faith, the College believes that it must listen attentively and humbly to all human voices so that it may hear the call of God no matter how God may speak.”

The goals laid out in the Strategic Plan for Diversity are supported by a moral rationale in addition to the educational benefits provided by a diverse community and the broad infusion of diversity at all levels of the College.
**Business Rationale**

Finally, there is a business rationale for diversity initiatives such as a positive and welcoming campus climate, a diverse faculty and staff, and the infusion of diversity at all levels of the College.

Our students will join an increasingly global workforce. They will likely seek jobs with employers who, like Maryville College’s long time community supporters, are organizations with policies that reflect the importance of cross-cultural understanding and inclusive values. For example, ALCOA sees its strength in the “many perspectives that our people bring to the workplace,” and has made “an inclusive work environment” a prominent goal. Likewise, DENSO “recognize[s] and value[s] the benefits in the diversity of people, ideas and cultures.” And, United Way, a College partner, defines “diversity and inclusion” as “core values,” and promotes an “inclusive environment in which differences are recognized, respected, valued and celebrated.” All of these organizations, and the growing majority of businesses, non-governmental organizations, governmental and educational institutions recognize diversity as essential to building a more supportive, more productive, and more committed workforce. An emphasis upon diversity can be equated with an emphasis upon success.

In addition to the benefits of diversity initiatives for students, building a positive and welcoming campus climate, increasing the diversity of the faculty and staff, and the infusion of diversity at all levels will benefit all employees of the College. The College as a workplace will be a safe, welcoming, and nurturing environment in which to work. Employees who feel that their personal and social identities are valued will also be more productive, more effective, and more likely to continue doing good work for the College for years to come.

From a business perspective, then, the diversity initiatives outlined in the Strategic Plan for Diversity are also well supported. This rationale includes both benefits related to students and the value of diversity initiatives for all employees of the College.

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Enduring Commitments and Challenge Areas

Enduring Commitments
The Diversity Task Force developed five enduring commitments which recall and reclaim the College’s legacy and the commitment of the current administration to guide the campus community toward a greater understanding and appreciation of diversity in its broadest sense. These “enduring commitments,” which have guided the Task Force in its work, serve as prerequisites for the successful implementation of the Strategic Plan for Diversity. They also provide assurance of the College’s commitment to move beyond what is recognized as acceptable and toward leadership among liberal arts colleges by modeling institutional best practices for diversity.

The committee’s expectation is that these commitments and the subsequent plan will provide a lens of diversity through which Maryville College may view our local and global communities as well as a roadmap to guide faculty, staff, and students as they fulfill the College’s Vision for Diversity. The enduring commitments include maintaining and furthering our efforts to:

- Sustain a learning community where all members feel safe, respected, supported, and valued.
- Expose all community members to ideas, cultures, and values which represent realities different from their own and cultivate understanding of and appreciation for difference.
- Build broad and vibrant representation of diverse peoples, perspectives, and ideas.
- Creatively utilize the tension inherent in balancing diversity and community.
- Devote resources toward achieving Maryville College’s vision for diversity.

These enduring commitments have led the Task Force to make recommendations in five broad institutional areas:

- Campus Climate
- Academic Program
- Student Admissions and Retention
- Infrastructure and Leadership
- Faculty/Staff Hiring and Retention

The five challenges and their respective goals constitute a holistic approach—a comprehensive, integrative plan for diversity. Order does not in any way imply priority.

Challenge Areas

Campus Climate
Enriched by the incredible patchwork of experiences, backgrounds, and characteristics of those who choose to join our community, Maryville College’s pledge to value, respect, appreciate, and celebrate diversity must be inherent in the very fiber of the institution, from its rich history to its contemporary direction. This commitment should be visible to anyone who encounters Maryville College. A sense of psychological safety and the knowledge that every individual’s personal and social identities are valued at Maryville College are crucial to each community member’s ability to thrive personally, professionally, and academically.

Student Admissions and Retention
Maryville College has a long heritage of valuing diversity and seeking to admit and retain international students, students from ethnic minority groups, and first-generation college students. The College understands that a diverse student body enhances student learning and better
prepares all students for an increasingly pluralistic society. However, the current retention and graduation rates at Maryville College for students from underrepresented groups, including special admittees, are far below those rates for students in the general population. The College should ensure that a comprehensive and integrative program of support systems for students from underrepresented groups and special admittees is funded and established in order to attain high matriculation, retention, and graduation rates of students from these groups. In this way, Maryville College will maintain its legacy of contributing to the success of students who otherwise might not have an opportunity to succeed and will increase the College’s reputation as a model liberal arts institution firmly committed to the success of all students.

Faculty/Staff Hiring and Retention
Maryville College’s reputation is built upon academic excellence. Many studies reveal the relationship between academic excellence and diversity in the learning community. These studies have influenced colleges and universities across the nation to adopt initiatives to increase diversity among faculty and staff. They have also convinced the United States Supreme Court to acknowledge the importance of diversity in higher education. A college environment that includes a diverse faculty and staff will expose students to different topics, course materials, and pedagogical styles. It will create more opportunities for cooperative learning, critical thinking, and problem solving. Ultimately, it will promote a greater sense of personal commitment to the common good. Thus, recruiting, hiring and retaining a diverse faculty and staff must be an integral part of a plan to further educational excellence and nurture an inclusive and welcoming College community as Maryville fulfills its mission of preparing “students for lives of citizenship and leadership.”

Maryville College values a community of persons with a variety of interests, backgrounds, beliefs, and nationalities. The College’s employee handbooks support diversity, a variety of informal practices employed by search committees encourage diversity, and new employee orientation programs address some diversity concerns. However, recruitment of a diverse faculty and staff often requires very intentional strategies. Thus, as an institution that promises interaction with diverse people, perspectives, and ideas, we must intentionally adopt strategies for recruiting diverse faculty and staff and develop a climate that welcomes these community members if we are to fulfill the promise of being a diverse and welcoming community.

Academic Program
Our diverse nation and increasingly global society call us to ensure that the Maryville College curriculum challenges students to understand the cultural basis of how people learn and function as well as the historical structures of inequality and how those structures have affected society. The College curriculum should enable students to develop the active citizenship and leadership skills to work in diverse domestic and international settings, to solve the pressing and challenging problems facing the global community, and to affirm the contributions of everyone, not just the majority. Our students must learn and practice these skills and lessons now in order to effectively lead the country and the world in the 21st century.

Infrastructure and Leadership
Developing an institutional culture that seeks to celebrate and support a broadened understanding of diversity in the 21st century requires an intentional, top-down effort. Also required is a grass-roots acceptance of the administration’s charge and a willingness to participate in furthering the strategic plan for diversity.
Campus Climate Challenge

To provide for each community member a safe, civil, nurturing, stimulating, and challenging environment that affirms and supports personal and social identities and promotes personal and professional development through intercultural experiences.

**Goal 1:** The College will create and model a campus climate that is positive and inclusive of all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors to our campus.

**Strategy 1:** Develop and promote a comprehensive, innovative awareness campaign to foster inclusion and acceptance at all levels of the College.

**Partners:** Cabinet, Human Resources, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, Center for International Education, Communications, Admissions, Alumni Relations, National Coalition Building Institute trainers, Academic Division Chairs, and Department/Program Directors, Student Organizations

**Measures:** Campaign developed and implemented; campus climate assessment shows effectiveness

**Strategy 2:** Design and implement an ongoing campus climate assessment plan based on the recommendations from the April 2008 report of the Campus Climate Assessment Work Group, including an examination of existing data, additions to the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), and coordination of moderated focus groups to follow up on essay analyses, including assessment of personal and structural barriers which must be addressed in order to fulfill the College’s historical commitment to viewing education.

**Partners:** Institutional Research, Student Development, Program/Department Directors, Academic Affairs, Academic Division Chairs, Faculty Liaison Committee

**Measures:** Initiative developed and implemented

**Strategy 3:** Include faculty, staff, students, and board members as an integral part of the next phase of the diversity conversation, including review of the strategic plan for diversity and visioning for future diversity efforts at the College.

**Partners:** Board of Directors, Cabinet, Academic Division Chairs, Department/Program Directors, Student Organizations

**Measures:** Forums scheduled regularly for information gathering and exchange of ideas

**Strategy 4:** Appoint and train a diversity mediation team to deal with campus incidents that breed exclusion and intolerance rather than inclusion and acceptance.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Center for Campus Ministry, Safety and Security, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, National Coalition Building Institute trainers, Student Development, Student Government Association

**Measures:** Team appointed and trained; community survey shows awareness and understanding of mediation team’s function

**Strategy 5:** Upgrade campus facilities and services for disability access to a level that at least meets minimum American Disabilities Act requirements to ensure that the campus climate is safe, accessible, and welcoming for people with disabilities.

**Partners:** Administrative Services, Physical Plant, Safety and Security, Learning Center

**Measures:** Annual audit of facilities and disability services with respect to ADA completed, and action plans initiated; campus climate and student satisfaction assessment
Strategy 6: Add questions regarding campus climate and diversity concerns to student and employee exit interviews.
   **Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Department/Program Directors, Student Development
   **Measures:** Campus climate and diversity questions included in student and employee exit interviews

Strategy 7: Develop and maintain a list of resources—including student, faculty, and staff resources—regarding specific diversity-related areas or topics.
   **Partners:** Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming
   **Measures:** Directory developed and maintained

Strategy 8: Develop and maintain a clearinghouse catalogue in the Multicultural Center for diversity-related activities, films, and print resources available on campus.
   **Partners:** Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming
   **Measures:** List of activities and resources developed and maintained

Goal 2: The College will ensure that co-curricular programming fosters a campus climate that includes and supports all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and visitors to our campus.

Strategy 1: Develop programming initiatives and required, common experiences to provide motivation and skills to discuss differences at multiple levels and to address cultural and communication barriers that cause isolation or alienation of some community members.
   **Partners:** Cabinet, Development Office, Athletics, Mountain Challenge, Human Resources, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, Student Health Services, Center for Campus Ministries, Center for Calling and Career, Academic Division Chairs, Department/Program Directors, Alumni Relations, Center for International Education, Residence Life
   **Measures:** Programming initiatives and common experiences developed and implemented, Effectiveness assessed.

Strategy 2: Design a broad range of Student Development and Academic Affairs programming that will appeal to diverse populations.
   **Partners:** Student Involvement, Community Conversations, Appalachian Lecture Series, Intramurals, Mountain Challenge, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, Center for International Education, Center for Campus Ministry, Alumni Relations (Homecoming Planning), Academic Division Chairs, Department/Program Directors
   **Measures:** Programming developed and implemented; campus climate assessment indicates effectiveness

Strategy 3: Assess religious diversity of students, staff, and faculty and utilize this element of diversity to enhance interfaith programming on campus and ensure that the campus climate is welcoming for people from all faith backgrounds.
   **Partners:** Center for Campus Ministry, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, Student Involvement, Center for International Education, Student Organizations
   **Measures:** Assessment completed; programs implemented; campus climate assessment shows effectiveness

**Partners:** Student Development, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, Human Resources, Center for International Education

**Measures:** Annual program assessments will indicate program effectiveness

**Goal 3:** The College will support faculty and staff participation in professional development opportunities related to diversity.

**Strategy 1:** Enhance and expand diversity topics in new employee orientation.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Dean’s Office

**Measures:** New employee orientation includes diversity topics

**Strategy 2:** Enhance existing staff professional development program to include a broad range of diversity topics and develop international education opportunities with clear guidelines for supporting participation by staff at all levels.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Dean’s Office, Department/Program Directors, Center for International Education, International Programming Committee

**Measures:** Programs and guidelines developed and implemented

**Strategy 3:** Enhance existing faculty programs such as faculty forum and the Teaching Well series to include a broad range of diversity topics.

**Partners:** Academic Dean’s Office

**Measures:** Programs developed and implemented

**Strategy 4:** Require regular staff training in diversity and intercultural competence.

**Partners:** Human Resources

**Measures:** Participation and attitudinal surveys
Student Admissions and Retention Challenge

To recruit, admit, and graduate talented students who represent the diversity of our nation and the world.

**Goal 1:** The College will develop proactive recruitment strategies that will yield an incrementally larger percentage of students from underrepresented groups who demonstrate the potential for academic success.

**Strategy 1:** Establish and strengthen relationships with K-12 schools and state and federally funded educational initiatives with large numbers of students from underrepresented groups.  
**Partners:** Admissions, Academic Affairs, Faculty, Division of Education, Learning Center, Multicultural Affairs, Conference and Event Services, Center for Strong Communities, Advancement, Center for International Education, Public School English as a Second Language Program  
**Measures:** Track visits, survey leaders in diverse high schools to monitor effectiveness

**Strategy 2:** Involve current students, faculty, staff, and alumni from diverse populations as part of the recruitment process.  
**Partners:** Admissions, Academic Affairs, Department/Program Directors, Alumni Relations, Center for International Education, Student Organizations  
**Measures:** Program to involve current students, faculty, staff, and alumni developed and implemented

**Strategy 3:** Establish and strengthen relationships with the local and regional multicultural community and faith organizations as well as international organizations and agents to make the College more visible to potential students from underrepresented groups.  
**Partners:** Admissions, Center for Strong Communities, Center for International Education  
**Measures:** Track visits, survey leaders in diverse high schools to monitor effectiveness

**Strategy 4:** A focus on multiculturalism will be available in all publications and the website.  
**Partners:** Admissions, Communications, Center for International Education  
**Measures:** Specifically designed materials created, printed, and distributed

**Strategy 5:** Develop a recruitment weekend for prospective first-generation college students and parents as early in the search process as possible.  
**Partners:** Admissions, First-Year Experience Coordinating Group  
**Measures:** Event developed and implemented

**Strategy 6:** Develop a recruitment strategy that targets prospective international students using the Center for International Education.  
**Partners:** Center for International Education, Admissions  
**Measures:** Recruitment plan developed and implemented

**Strategy 7:** Establish measures beyond the normal admission process to determine whether prospective special admittees demonstrate the ability to succeed at the College.  
**Partners:** Academic Affairs, Admissions, Learning Center  
**Measures:** Develop and implement measures and process
Strategy 8: Establish summer academic camps that target middle school and high school students from underrepresented groups.
  Partners: Academic Affairs, Faculty, Conference and Event Services, Multicultural Affairs Office and Communications
  Measures: Programs developed and implemented

Goal 2: The College will develop a comprehensive support program to aid in retention and graduation of students from underrepresented groups and special admittees.

Strategy 1: Establish summer preparatory programs for students from underrepresented groups, special admittees and academically challenged students that will begin in the summer and extend through the first year of college.
  Partners: Academic Affairs, Enrollment Management Team, Learning Center, Student Development
  Measures: Programs developed, implemented and monitored for effectiveness

Strategy 2: Maintain and strengthen the ESL program of the Center for International Education, which provides support services to international students.
  Partners: Center for International Education
  Measures: Program maintained and strengthened

Strategy 3: Increase faculty/staff-to-student mentoring programs for students from underrepresented groups.
  Partners: Multicultural Affairs, Center for International Education, Student Development, Academic Affairs
  Measures: Program developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness

Strategy 4: Develop a student-to-student mentoring network for students from underrepresented groups that extends through the second year.
  Partners: Student Development, Multicultural Affairs, Center for International Education, Student Organizations
  Measures: Program developed, implemented, and monitored for effectiveness

Strategy 5: Expand Learning Center, Writing Center, and Supplemental Instruction programs and develop and implement new academic support programs for courses with high failure rates.
  Partners: Academic Dean’s Office, Academic Division Chairs, Learning Center
  Measures: Programs expanded or developed and implemented

Goal 3: The College will develop a comprehensive financial support program for all students.

Strategy 1: Develop a joint financial mentoring initiative between Academic Affairs and Student Development that will give students the tools and support to become competent in the areas of personal and educational finance.
  Partners: Financial Aid, Student Development, Academic Affairs and Business Office
  Measures: Initiative developed and implemented

Strategy 2: Develop innovative scholarship programs for students from underrepresented groups that include some type of on-campus commitment to facilitate community building.
  Partners: Financial Aid, Admissions, Student Development, Academic Affairs
  Measures: Tracked and held accountable
Strategy 3: Develop targeted program and seek grants to support scholarship programs for students from underrepresented groups.

Partners: Advancement, Institutional Grants, Alumni Relations, Financial Aid, Academic Affairs, Student Development

Measures: Campaign developed; grants obtained
Faculty/Staff Hiring and Retention Challenge

To recruit, hire, and retain talented faculty and staff that represent the diversity of our nation and the world.

**Goal 1:** The College will develop and implement strategies to improve success in attracting qualified candidates from underrepresented groups for faculty and staff positions at all levels.

**Strategy 1:** Articulate the College’s commitment to diversity in all advertisements for open positions, including a link to a College webpage highlighting the *Vision for Diversity* and College diversity initiatives.

- **Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Dean
- **Measures:** Inclusion of diversity commitment and web link in all advertisements for open positions

**Strategy 2:** Place advertisements strategically for all open positions to ensure broad distribution to underrepresented groups.

- **Partners:** Academic Dean, Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Search Committee Chairs
- **Measures:** Evidence of strategic placement of advertisements on file in Human Resources for all positions

**Strategy 3:** Advertise all open positions through our network of College alumni, parents, friends, donors and historically black college career centers in order to capitalize on the diversity and the social and professional networks of those groups.

- **Partners:** Alumni Relations, Advancement, Human Resources
- **Measures:** System in place for advertising positions through College network

**Strategy 4:** Utilize informal networking avenues including discipline-specific affiliation groups for underrepresented groups, Tennessee Workforce Career Center offices, national trade journals, and institutions with a diverse student body in recruiting for positions at all levels.

- **Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Academic Dean, Department/Program Directors, Search Committee Chairs
- **Measures:** Evidence of use of informal networking avenues on file in Human Resources for all positions

**Strategy 5:** Mentor, prepare, and encourage students from underrepresented groups to apply for open staff positions upon graduation and increase opportunities for internships that may become permanent staff positions.

- **Partners:** Faculty Advisors, Multicultural Affairs, Student Development, Center for Calling and Career, Admissions, Advancement
- **Measures:** Data on percentage of staff members who are alumni (kept on file in Human Resources) indicate success

**Strategy 6:** Develop policies and procedures for bringing high-quality, non-local candidates to campus to interview for staff positions. Video conference interviews can be held without budget implications. Training can be done to alert interviewers to wording indicating under-represented populations.

- **Partners:** Cabinet, Human Resources
- **Measures:** Policies and procedures developed
Strategy 7: Create a program for visiting faculty scholars that would include opportunities such as the Fulbright program and exchanges with historically Black colleges and universities.

**Partners:** Academic Affairs

**Measures:** Visiting faculty scholar program established

Strategy 8: Examine employee benefits through a lens of diversity, promoting existing benefits such as health insurance and tuition benefits, and exploring opportunities to provide additional benefits such as on-site day care and domestic partner benefits that would attract candidates from diverse backgrounds.

**Partners:** Cabinet, Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Department/Program Directors

**Measures:** Written review of benefits through a lens of diversity; benefits materials distributed to candidates for all positions; expanded benefits

Strategy 9: Establish a tracking process to determine the degree to which recruiting efforts are expanding applicant pools for positions at all levels.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Academic Dean’s Office

**Measures:** Diversity of applicant pools increased for all positions

Goal 2: The College will develop and implement interviewing and hiring policies and procedures for all positions that reflect and promote diversity and inclusiveness as core values of the College.

Strategy 1: Create and distribute to all departments/programs and academic divisions a set of diversity-related questions from which to draw in talking with references and interviewing and evaluating candidates. Also have access to diversity training through EPA.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Dean’s Office

**Measures:** Set of questions created and distributed to all departments/programs and academic divisions

Strategy 2: Best efforts will be made for search committees interview teams to include representation that reflects broad diversity.

**Partners:** President, Cabinet, Human Resources, Department/Program Directors, Academic Division Chairs

**Measures:** Lists of search committees and applicant pools will be kept on file in Human Resources

Goal 3: The College will develop and implement strategies to improve retention of quality employees from underrepresented groups.

Strategy 1: Include in employee orientation sessions discussion of the College’s historic emphasis on and current initiatives related to diversity, including the Strategic Plan for Diversity.

**Partners:** Academic Dean’s Office, Human Resources

**Measures:** Information included in employee orientation sessions
Strategy 2: Provide for all faculty and staff access to an array of specific services and networks (professional and social/personal) that foster a climate of inclusiveness and support professional and personal adjustment and development.

**Partners:** Human Resources, Academic Division Chairs, Academic Dean’s Office, Faculty Liaison Committee, Program/Department Directors

**Measures:** New services and networks developed; list of existing and new services and networks distributed to faculty; survey of faculty showing high satisfaction with available services and networks

Strategy 3: Engage in ongoing conversations with all faculty regarding the criteria for tenure and promotion evaluations, providing mentoring support throughout each review process, including a renewed emphasis on the relationship between faculty members and Academic Division Chairs.

**Partners:** Academic Division Chairs, Faculty Mentors, Academic Dean’s Office, Faculty Personnel Standards Committee, Faculty Liaison Committee

**Measures:** Survey of faculty who have been reviewed shows high satisfaction with mentoring support throughout review process
Academic Program Challenge

To ensure that all students have a deep and genuine appreciation of the value of diversity in an increasingly global society by providing a curriculum in both the Core and major/minor areas that reflects best practices in diversity education and incorporates pedagogy that supports and engages a diverse student body.

**Goal 1:** The College will review the Core curriculum to ensure that it reflects best practices in diversity education and to equip students to learn and work in an increasingly global society and diverse workplace.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct regular assessments of the Core curriculum for diversity-related topics and applications and for evidence of a deeper, more integrative approach to diversity during each cycle of the Core review.
- **Partners:** Chair of the Core Curriculum, Academic Dean’s Office
- **Measures:** Assessments conducted; infusion of diversity throughout the Core curriculum demonstrated

**Strategy 2:** Highlight diversity through a common experience for all students during the first year.
- **Partners:** Orientation Program, Mountain Challenge, Bonner Scholars, Athletics, Residence Life, Center for International Education, Multicultural Affairs, Diversity Programming, First-Year Coordinating Group
- **Measures:** Diversity-related common experience developed and incorporated into the first year

**Strategy 3:** Include in the Core curriculum substantial coursework that addresses existing and emerging domestic cultures across a four-year program.
- **Partners:** Academic Affairs, Academic Life Council, Chair of the Core Curriculum
- **Measures:** Intentional coursework introduced across all four years of the Core curriculum

**Strategy 4:** Reward students for completing two years of a foreign language and expand existing foreign language offerings to include emerging global languages.
- **Partners:** Division of Languages and Literature, Academic Life Council, Academic Affairs, Chair of the Core Curriculum, Center for International Education
- **Measures:** Reward system established; language offerings expanded

**Goal 2:** The College will review and revise major, minor, and elective coursework to reflect best practices in diversity education and to equip students to learn and work in an increasingly global society and diverse workplace, incorporating this focus into regular divisional reviews.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct regular assessments of major, minor, and elective coursework for diversity-related topics and applications, integration of contributions of underrepresented populations to the development of various disciplines, and evidence of a deeper, more integrative approach to diversity in the curriculum.
- **Partners:** Academic Division Chairs, Academic Dean’s Office, Academic Life Council
- **Measures:** Assessments conducted; infusion of diversity demonstrated

**Strategy 2:** Encourage the development of courses in diversity-related areas.
- **Partners:** Academic Dean’s Office, Academic Life Council, Academic Division Chairs, The Faculty
- **Measures:** Introduction of diversity-related courses into the MC Curriculum

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Goal 3: The College will develop a network of resources and partnerships to support faculty, staff, and institutional efforts toward diversity-related curriculum and pedagogy.

Strategy 1: Design a professional development support program, including incentives, for faculty interested in researching and implementing best practices for culturally responsive pedagogy and for teaching diversity in both Core and major courses.
  Partners: Academic Dean's Office, Faculty Development Committee, Academic Division Chairs
  Measures: Program established

Strategy 2: Partner with regional and national consortia to foster innovative collaborations that meet diversity-related curricular goals.
  Partners: Academic Dean's Office, Academic Life Council, Faculty, Chair of the Core Curriculum, Library
  Measures: Establishment of innovative collaborations

Strategy 3: Create a visiting scholars program for special courses that will achieve specific curricular diversity goals.
  Partners: Academic Dean's Office, Chair of the Core Curriculum, Faculty
  Measures: Program created

Goal 4: The College will increase and facilitate immersion opportunities so that all students may study or work either in an international setting or in a diverse domestic community.

Strategy 1: Develop a student, faculty, and staff exchange programs with historically Black colleges and universities and other institutions with diverse populations.
  Partners: Admissions, Multicultural Affairs, Academic Dean’s Office, Registrar, Center for International Education, International Programming Committee
  Measures: Exchange program developed

Strategy 2: Increase student participation in study abroad opportunities, particularly for students from underrepresented groups.
  Partners: Center for International Education, International Programming Committee, Faculty Advisors, Multicultural Center, Diversity Programming, Financial Aid
  Measures: Increased student participation in study abroad opportunities; increased number of study abroad students from underrepresented groups

Strategy 3: Expand opportunities for service learning and experiential learning within diverse communities of the Appalachian region and East Tennessee as well as other regions of the country and the world.
  Partners: Experiential Education Committee, Center for Strong Communities, Center for Campus Ministry
  Measures: Increased service learning and experiential learning opportunities
Infrastructure and Leadership Challenge

To institutionalize diversity as declared in the Vision for Diversity statement through strategic planning, resource allocation, and assessment.

**Goal 1:** The College will designate a Chief Diversity Officer, whose responsibilities will include the following strategies.

- **Strategy 1:** Support each administrative division of the College in developing and assessing annual diversity-related goals and activities in order to increase dialogue among different groups.
  - **Partners:** Chief Diversity Officer, Cabinet
  - **Measures:** Annual reviews conducted with each Cabinet Officer

- **Strategy 2:** Manage a committee with rotating membership comprised of students, staff, and faculty who will serve as campus diversity educators and advisors.
  - **Partners:** Chief Diversity Officer, Diversity Programming, Center for International Education, Center for Strong Communities, Student Government Association
  - **Measures:** Committees of campus diversity educators established

- **Strategy 3:** Using existing annual events, recognize student, faculty, staff, departments, and organizations for exemplary commitment and service to the College’s continued effort to become a more broadly diverse community.
  - **Partners:** Chief Diversity Officer, Student Development, Student Involvement, Academic Affairs, Department/Program Directors, Academic Division Chairs, Human Resources
  - **Measures:** Groups and individuals recognized

- **Strategy 4:** Add a diversity track to the current list of personal and professional development tracks for staff.
  - **Partners:** Chief Diversity Officer, Human Resources
  - **Measures:** Diversity track added and incorporated, where appropriate, into performance reviews

- **Strategy 5:** Ensure that intercultural competence is a component in all employee performance reviews.
  - **Partners:** Chief Diversity Officer, Human Resources, Academic Dean
  - **Measures:** Intercultural competence incorporated into all job descriptions and performance reviews

**Goal 2:** The College will promote diversity at all advisory and employment levels to include members of underrepresented groups.

- **Strategy 1:** Seek opportunities for greater diversity in the composition of the Cabinet and the Board of Directors, as positions become available.
  - **Partners:** President’s Office, Cabinet, Board of Directors
  - **Measures:** Diversity of Cabinet and Board of Directors expanded

- **Strategy 2:** Provide mentoring to all faculty and staff who seek professional advancement.
  - **Partners:** Cabinet, Department/Program Directors, Academic Division Chairs
  - **Measures:** Supervisors receive training on mentoring for advancement including a section related to the advancement of members of underrepresented groups.
Goal 3: The College identity will communicate our commitment to diversity.

Strategy 1: Manifest the College’s commitment to diversity on website and in printed materials.
  Partners: Communications, Program/Department Directors, Academic Division Chairs, Student Involvement, Sports Information, Marketing and Admissions
  Measures: Commitment to diversity evident on website and in printed materials

Strategy 2: Design a Diversity page on the College website that includes the College’s social justice history, Vision for Diversity, Strategic Plan for Diversity, non-discrimination statement, and other diversity-related information and create a link to this page from the College homepage.
  Partners: Communications, Diversity Programming, Multicultural Affairs, Center for International Education
  Measures: Diversity page developed and maintained
Appendixes
Appendix A

Charge from the President to the Diversity Task Force

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 16 January 2007

TO: Proposed Diversity Task Force Members

Paula McGhee, facilitator
Andy Lewter
Larry Ervin
Crystal Colter
Lee Davis
Barbara Wells
Terry Bunde
Belinda Kenny
Jan Taylor
Kirsten Sheppard

FROM: Gerald W. Gibson

SUBJECT: Invitation and Charge

During the Spring 2006 term I appointed a Vision for Diversity Work Group and charged it with developing a statement of the vision for the Maryville College campus as it will be when it has achieved the desired state of diversity. Both the original charge to the group and the vision statement that resulted from its work are attached. The next task is to identify specific initiatives that promise to lead us as a campus community to the vision described by that statement.

“Diversity” and “community” are words that are commonly heard on college campuses across America. They are ubiquitous in goal statements drafted by academic planning groups and endorsed by boards of trustees. Yet, if we are honest, we must recognize that in the real world, including the academic corners of that world, it is no small challenge to realize and nurture both diversity and community simultaneously. I am inviting you to take a leadership role in assuring that Maryville College moves assertively and effectively to achieve the ideals for diversity set forth in the diversity vision statement, while maintaining a strong learning community where members feel bound together by a common purpose. I am confident that if that ideal balance between diversity and community can be realized anywhere, it can happen at Maryville.

Charge

The Diversity Task Force will serve as our primary instrument at Maryville College for generating recommendations for initiatives that will help achieve the ideals expressed in the Vision for Diversity. The work of the group will be facilitated by Paula McGhee, Director of Diversity Programs. The Task Force will function for up to two years, and is encouraged to:

1. Gather information from a wide variety of perspectives and sources, both on campus and off, that can be of value as we seek to achieve Maryville’s goals for diversity.
2. Develop a strategic plan for achieving those goals.
3. Propose specific initiatives that we should undertake at Maryville College to give life to the Vision for Diversity.
4. Make recommendations as they become ready, and make a final report to the President’s Cabinet and campus not later than January 2009.
Diversity Task Force Charge to the Student Diversity Council

As the Diversity Task Force has undertaken the responsibility of developing a strategic plan for diversity for Maryville College it has sought a wide range of voices to inform the final plan to be submitted to President Gibson in January 2009. We proposed the formation of an ad hoc Student Diversity Council to ensure that students’ perspectives will be incorporated into our deliberations.

The DTF’s process has included discussions on the meaning of diversity, the development of core principles to guide our work as a task force, a perusal of reports on diversity at institutions of higher learning, and the formation of work groups to identify ‘best practices’ in recruitment and retention of a diverse student body; assessment of campus climate; curriculum; hiring and retention of a diverse faculty and staff; and co-curricular environment and programming.

First, thank you for agreeing to be a part of the Student Diversity Council. **Our charge to you as a group is to advise the Diversity Task Force on issues pertinent to the student experience at Maryville College from a uniquely student perspective.** The student diversity council will serve as liaisons for the Diversity Task Force: we ask that you share information with us from other members of the student body and student groups and also share information from the Diversity Task Force with the students of our campus community. You will serve as ambassadors for the Diversity Task Force and help members of the student body gain a better sense of our work from hearing about it from you. All members of the Diversity Task Force are available to assist you in this role when necessary.

The Diversity Task Force requests that the Student Diversity Council:

- Read and comment on the Maryville College Vision of Diversity. What would a diverse and inclusive community look like? What will Maryville College look like when the Vision is achieved?

- Consider the following areas in the context of MC’s Vision of Diversity and provide the Diversity Task Force with your thoughts on each:
  1. Recruitment and retention of a diverse student body
  2. Campus climate
  3. Curriculum
  4. Hiring and retention of a diverse faculty and staff
  5. Co-curricular environment and programming

- Seek information from your student organization counterparts at other institutions regarding these five topics at their schools. Share notable examples with the Diversity Task Force.

- Attend one meeting with the Diversity Task Force (*tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 26 from 12:15-1:15pm in the Proffitt Dining Room*).

- Participate in a DTF-hosted campus wide forum that will focus on student input on the Maryville College diversity initiative (*date TBD*).
Appendix C  
Definition of Terms

A **Challenge** is defined as one of the five major commitments by the College outlined in this plan that will bring life to the **Vision for Diversity**. We chose this term to reflect the notion of being called to greatness, aspiring to important causes, and rising to the task of fulfilling high expectations. Five challenges are presented in the Strategic Plan for Diversity.

**Cross-cultural** refers to information or experiential knowledge that incorporates perspectives from multiple groups or cultures.

**Diverse Populations** refers to all of the groups listed below in the definition of “diversity” as well as other groups who specifically define their uniqueness.

**Diversity** includes but is not limited to ability, age, domestic and international culture, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, race, socioeconomic status, religion, belief systems, work and behavioral styles, marital status, political affiliation, national origin, and veteran status.

**Enduring Commitments** refers to guiding principles developed by the Task Force for our work together which recall and reclaim the College’s legacy and the commitment of the current administration to guide the campus community toward a greater understanding and appreciation of diversity in its broadest sense.

**A Goal** represents a level of attainment, which when met through the successful accomplishment of its underlying strategies, will bring the College closer to meeting the overarching challenge. Multiple goals support each of the challenges presented in the Plan.

**Intercultural** refers to intentional bridging between multiple groups or cultures.

**A Lens of Diversity** is a standard for inclusiveness that reflects how all aspects of the College community are viewed, including personal and structural barriers which must be addressed in order to fulfill the College’s historical commitment to viewing education.

**Measures** refers to the specific means by which the College will be able to assess the degree of success of a given strategy. Every strategy in the Plan includes possible measures of success.

**Multicultural** refers to the intentional appreciation and celebration of the diverse groups and cultures that make up the larger community.

**Partners** refers to those suggested individuals, departments, or programs with primary responsibility or substantial involvement in the implementation of the strategies. However, those partners would enlist and collaborate with other campus departments and programs to accomplish each strategy. Every strategy in the Plan includes possible partners.

**Special Admittees** refers to students who are admitted through staff review or conditional admission programs.

**A Strategy** refers to a recommended task to be accomplished in service of a specific goal. Strategies can be readily assessed. A variety of strategies is listed under each goal in the Plan.

**Underrepresented Groups** refers to those populations who are underrepresented relative to their numbers in the general population. For example, at Maryville College for purposes of admission and retention, underrepresented groups who have been receiving increasing attention include, but are not limited to, racial and ethnic groups, first generation students, international students, and nontraditional students.
Appendix D

Diversity Task Force Workgroup Reports

The list below provides a link to each work group’s report. To access a report, simply click on the name to open a new document.

Co-curricular Work Group Report

Admissions Work Group Report

Staff Hiring and Retention Work Group Report

Faculty Hiring and Retention Work Group Report

Academic Program (Curriculum) Work Group Report

Assessment Work Group Report