

# **COMMON GROUND ACTION COMMITTEE**

## **ACTION PLAN & SUMMARY REPORT**

**August 2005**



**The University of Richmond is committed to developing a diverse workforce and student body, and to modeling an inclusive campus community which values the expression of differences in ways that promote excellence in teaching, learning, personal development, and institutional success.**

**COMMON GROUND ACTION COMMITTEE  
REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT**

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**COMMON GROUND ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT  
TO  
PRESIDENT WILLIAM E. COOPER**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Common Ground Action Committee (GCAC) was established to continue the work that was begun in 2003-2004 by the Common Ground Commission. CGAC was charged with developing a three year plan to enhance Richmond's ability to attract and support faculty, students and staff who seek a dynamically diverse community in which to teach, learn and work. To accomplish this, the CGAC enlisted the help of about 100 faculty, staff, and students during the 2004-05 academic year who worked together to meet the President's charge. To establish a common understanding of what is meant by "Inclusive Diversity" and to prepare the Committee and all Senior Administrators for leadership of the Common Ground initiative, they all attended a two-day workshop with consultants. In addition, the CGAC: created a statement of purpose and vision for inclusive diversity; conducted a university-wide climate survey to assess areas of greatest concern and to establish benchmarks against which to measure progress in years to come; and created a Common Ground website for the University. The most important outcome of the CGAC's work was a set of six integrated action steps designed to develop and sustain inclusive diversity objectives for students, faculty, and staff at the University of Richmond. Together the six action steps are called an "Embedded Action Plan" because they distribute responsibilities for implementation to organizational units that will be ultimately accountable to the President for specific deliverables. The underlying rationale for the Embedded Model is that the challenge to create a climate of inclusive diversity must be met by everyone, not just one or two new high profile positions. Moreover, practices and culture shifts should become embedded in our infrastructure in order to be sustainable as the normal way that business, learning, and student life are experienced at this institution. The Plan will require significant investment of new resources including some new positions, and 2-3 years to phase in including the time required for receiving additional input from the university community.

**INTRODUCTION AND PRESIDENT'S CHARGE**

One of the original Common Ground Commission's recommendations was to appoint an oversight Committee to coordinate an institutional action response to the recommendations submitted in June of 2004; therefore the Common Ground Action Committee (CGAC) was created. Some of the Commission's recommendations were straightforward and were acted upon by administrative decisions. Others required further evaluation by CGAC along with input from the university community to develop a shared vision, before deciding what course action, if any, should be taken.

As a reminder, the CGAC was instructed by President Cooper to view diversity not as a "problem" to be solved, nor simply as the moral imperative that it surely is. Instead, inclusive diversity should be considered as a source of tremendous creative energy and educational potential that will help Richmond achieve its highest goals. Those are the benefits we want to realize as an institution. There is much to be achieved in this regard, because even when individuals have rejected racism, or sexism, or elitism, or other isms, organizational barriers are likely to exist that thwart the hiring, admission, and inclusive acceptance of individuals whose background or ideas are different from the majority.

## Main Task

By May of 2005, CGAC was to develop a three year plan to enhance Richmond's ability to attract and support faculty, students, and staff who seek a dynamically diverse community in which to teach, learn, and work. The broad aims include:

- Develop specific goals and strategies for increasing diversity among staff, students, and faculty.
- Develop a plan and process for making diversity more intentionally inclusive, integrated, and valued so as to become permanently embedded and sustainable in the mainstream of education and operations—as opposed to continuing to view diversity apart as a separate goal.
- Identify assessments to monitor progress and upon which to base changes in strategy that may be necessary for long-term success

## METHODOLOGY

The Common Ground Initiative was initiated by President Cooper and Provost Aprille in 2003, and the Common Ground Commission (CGC) was appointed with a charge to develop recommendations that will allow all members of the institution to take full advantage of the rich benefits of working and learning in a community made up of individuals derived from varied backgrounds. (The CGC's 2004 final report and recommendations may be accessed at [http://provost.richmond.edu/committees/Common\\_Ground.htm](http://provost.richmond.edu/committees/Common_Ground.htm) and is also on reserve at Boatwright Library.) One of the recommendations was to establish an oversight committee to work out an implementation plan for the recommendations, and President Cooper thus appointed the Common Ground Action Committee (CGAC) in the fall of 2004 for that purpose. It is important to note that the scope of the CGAC charge was expanded to include a plan for increasing diversity as well as improving the climate for inclusive diversity.

**CGAC organized its work into six subcommittees** that involved about 100 staff, students, and faculty altogether. Subcommittees' full charge, composition and final reports are located in Appendix A. Briefly, the subcommittee titles and tasks were as follows:

1. *Recruitment and Retention*— Increase diversity (demographic and ideology) among faculty, staff, students, and administration. Work with Admissions, Human Resources, Managers, Supervisors, Deans and Department Chairs to develop a diversity recruitment policy and supporting statements that will be included in all publications, job notices and communication. Identify diverse markets in which to recruit, as well as methods for recruiting. Review the various staff divisions throughout the University, paying particular attention to areas where staff is predominantly majority or minority to make sure policies/practices in hiring and promotion do not promote a continuation of the status quo.
2. *Personal and Professional Development*— Identify opportunities that promote human relations skill development, and foster understanding which contributes to a campus climate for students, faculty, and staff that welcomes and benefits from human differences.
3. *Curricular and Co-Curricular Programming*— Investigate ways to insure that students have intentional opportunities to develop multicultural proficiency, certainly through curricular offerings and co-curricular programming and possibly also as a requirement. Review current co-curricular programming aimed at promoting inclusive diversity to

determine whether goals are being met. As an alternative to recommending more programming, consider whether consolidation of resources and programs would lead to more effective outcomes.

4. *Community Relations*—Find ways to change external perceptions that may be barriers to student/staff recruitment or to public participation in campus events; explore increased student/staff engagement in the city of Richmond, including options for transportation.

5. *Policies, Practices and Procedures*—Review/revise institutional representations to show more directly the institutional commitment to inclusive diversity.

6. *Assessment*—Conduct a baseline climate survey [see Attachment 1 for Executive Summary of results]; establish measurable goals and outcomes assessment for all CGAC recommendations.

The subcommittees worked in groups, held hearings, conducted surveys, gathered data, and met with various units and individuals to gather data and input necessary to establishing action steps relative to the original CGC recommendations.

#### **Other Activities and Processes Contributing to CGAC's work:**

1. **CGAC members and all senior administrators (President, Vice Presidents and their direct reports, and all Deans) attended two-day workshops** on inclusive diversity with a consultant group, Visions, to prepare for leadership of the Common Ground Initiative.
2. **CGAC developed a statement of purpose and vision** that was reviewed by Senior Administrators, University Faculty, and the Academic Programs Committee of the Board of Trustees, as follows:

*The University of Richmond is committed to developing a diverse workforce and student body, and to modeling an inclusive campus community which values the expression of differences in ways that promote excellence in teaching, learning, personal development, and institutional success.*

Diversity is understood to go beyond specific categories of difference related to important demographic identifiers and cultural stereotypes, as diversity also includes each individual's uniqueness with respect to personal values, beliefs, experiences, ideas, and perspectives. Nevertheless, we recognize the need for special awareness of some categories of difference (examples such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability, socioeconomic status) that are more likely than others to be negatively impacted by the history and embedded practices that shape current institutional culture.

Inclusive diversity means that the open discussion of different opinions is sought and valued, and that individuals are heard, understood and respected for who they are without pressure to conform. Inclusive diversity is necessary to achieve the kind of positive interactions that contribute to excellence in educational outcomes, staff development, and long-term institutional success.

- The realization of this vision will require relentless ongoing effort to insure that:
- diversity is recognized and acted upon as a value-added quality in recruitment and retention of outstanding students, staff, and faculty;
  - all individuals and organized groups have the opportunity to engage in critical self-examination and be willing to adjust attitudes and behavior in ways that promote inclusive diversity;
  - the university addresses perceived and real barriers to inclusive diversity that may exist in current institutional programs, practices, and policies.

**3. A Diversity Climate Survey was developed by the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment in collaboration with CGAC and administered to students, faculty, and staff at the University of Richmond during the spring semester of 2005.**

The survey was composed of 48 items and included demographic information on relevant attributes such as gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, years of service at the institution, and departmental affiliation. Approximately 675 students, 135 faculty, and 370 staff members participated in the survey. These numbers represent over 30% of each population (faculty, staff, and students). See Attachment 1 for an Executive Summary and Appendix G for the full survey results. The results will provide the benchmarks for future comparison as a basis for assessing the outcomes and progress of the Common Ground Action Steps that are implemented.

**4. Members of CGAC attended department meetings, school faculty meetings, and student meetings** to discuss the Common Ground Initiative, gaining input, and to answer questions relating to the diversity initiative.

**5. A Common Ground website has been established.** The University's history of diversity work, updates, progress, and resources are located at: <http://commonground.richmond.edu/>

## **THE RESULTS: AN EMBEDDED ACTION PLAN**

The CGAC recognizes that there are many deserving ideas, but not all action steps from subcommittees were advanced by the Committee. Because of limited resources, the CGAC tried to identify recommendations that will have a sustainable impact on the largest number of constituents within the community. The Committee considers all six final strategies to be equally important and critical to moving UR towards a community of inclusion where differences are acknowledged, and all members' contributions are valued. The six action steps are tightly integrated as a package that should be implemented together if the goals are to be optimally achieved.

The action steps integrate the subcommittees' top recommendations and constitute an "Embedded Action Plan" to develop and sustain inclusive diversity at the University of Richmond. Six action steps are explained briefly in this section and summarized in a following table that assigns responsibility for actual implementation. (see Attachment 2)

### **Brief Rationale**

The CGAC synthesized an action plan from the recommendations received from each subcommittee, combining overlaps and using many (not all) of the good ideas that came forward.

The aim was not to supplant the many excellent initiatives already ongoing, nor to generate another wishful to-do list, but rather to create a well-integrated and practical plan for long-term and measurable success that meets the President’s charge. Accordingly the plan was crafted with recommendations that meet the following criteria:

- addresses important issues revealed by the climate survey and/or subcommittee input;
- have a cost/benefit ratio that optimizes a far-reaching and noticeable effect on the institution as a whole;
- can be implemented with accountability;
- is a strong complement to a sustainable long-term plan that meets the CGAC charge.

The CGAC product is a comprehensive *Embedded Action Plan* for the university. It is “embedded” because it does not invest in one new position and office (such as the ‘Diversity Officer’ idea that so many institutions have employed as a reflex response to diversity concerns); instead implementation and resources have been assigned to units that will be ultimately responsible and accountable to the President for the results.

The challenge to create a climate of inclusive diversity must be met by everyone, not just one or two new positions. Practices and culture shifts that become embedded in our infrastructure are more likely to be sustainable over time. Ideally, inclusive diversity will no longer be labeled for special attention—it will become part of the university’s fundamental identity and the normal way we conduct business and learning.

The Plan will be phased in over 2-3 years, including the time required for processing for additional input from the university community. And of course, the Plan will require significant investment of resources. The Embedded Action Plan is a novel and comprehensive approach, and worthy of attention as a national model.

**Six strategic steps comprise the Embedded Action Plan** (see appended grid in Attachment 2 for more detail, and the organization accountability chart in Attachment 3 to see how new positions fit in to existing structure)

- 1). New strategies must be developed for the way that we recruit students, faculty and staff, broadening our scope in explicit ways to seek individuals who bring BOTH talent AND diversity.

*Deliverables include greater demographic diversity of staff, faculty and students. To prepare students for lives in a pluralistic society, the university should mirror that society. More generally, learning and creativity increase when differences trump sameness. Other benefits include reduced social anxiety and increased retention relevant to those who otherwise leave for lack of diversity and social engagement, or because they feel undervalued. More diversity among staff, especially in managerial and senior-level positions, is critical for a positive representation of university values to prospective students, faculty, and staff.*

(a.) Student Recruitment and Retention

- Hire one additional admissions officer;
- Admissions and Financial Aid will develop strategies for new recruiting methodology to enroll more diverse students.
- Strategy should include training for all admissions personnel; budget for publications, travel and other recruiting costs for expanding racial, ethnic, and

socioeconomic applicant pool; explicit commitment to inclusive diversity in ALL publications and as a value when evaluating ALL applicants; incorporate optional essay question for expression of views on diversity on application; special financial aid packages of students with least outside support.

- Facilitate transfer of community college students and provide on-campus support for these transfers.
- Continue to expand financial aid for international students

(b.) Staff Recruitment and Retention:

- Engage consultants to review current HR (Human Resources) staff skills and responsibilities to determine best means (through a combination of reallocation and/or new hire) to create a new position, Associate Vice President for Organizational Learning immediately. The position will report directly and jointly to the Vice President for Business Affairs and the Provost. The main responsibility for this position will be to make sure that all supervisors and managers across the university have the training needed to develop and skills required to incorporate values of inclusive diversity in institutional practices related to recruiting, retention, leadership, and personnel management. In addition, the Associate Vice President for Organizational Learning should work with the Human Resources team to establish consistent personnel management practices for all University employees who have supervisory and hiring responsibilities. Resources should be available for consultants as might be required for special expertise and/or high volume of training needed in the first 1-2 years.
- HR will develop new strategies to recruit and hire more diverse employees, especially into management and leadership positions; proactive advertising and recruiting to expand the diversity of applicant pools for all open positions; explicit commitment to inclusive diversity in ALL publications and as a value when evaluating ALL applicants; develop a rigorous process for all job searches to include a commitment to diversity among the valued qualifications that are used to evaluate all candidates; and appropriate training for faculty and staff search committees and hiring managers.
- Make sure staff has available and understands confidential processes available for getting help with workplace circumstances that create anxiety, suppress creativity, or appear unfair.
- Engage consultants to establish compensation/classification criteria for staff positions across the university, and to recommend the best means (new hire or training current staff) to sustain the resulting model. As appropriate and based on the consulting study, fund adjustments to staff compensation levels to be internally equitable and competitive in the job marketplace.

(c.) Faculty Recruitment and Retention

- The CGAC sub-subcommittee on Faculty Recruitment and Retention will work with UFC and with school faculties and deans to develop new strategy for hiring and retaining a more diverse faculty as explained in their subcommittee report [located in Appendix F]. The strategy should include collaboration with HR to establish a consistent and transparent process for advertising and conducting searches, and more aggressive recruiting to generate a diverse pool of applicants.

It might also include a fund for exceptional hiring opportunities and formal orientation for all department chairs and search committee members to understand the goals and processes that underlie successful diversity hiring.

- Provisions for convenient child care and a policy for spouse/partner job accommodation should become institutional priorities to promote faculty and staff recruitment and retention. Child care also could help to bridge the “faculty-staff divide” as children and parents from both populations come to share similar spaces.

2). For reasons explained above, CGAC does not recommend a “University Diversity Officer” to oversee all of the recommendations and to be the person principally accountable for inclusive diversity. Nevertheless, there is a need for high visibility of the Common Ground initiative both symbolically and functionally. Action steps to achieve this are centered on hiring a “Director of Common Ground” and creating a centrally located Common Ground space.

*Deliverables: Sustainable and highly visible commitment to inclusive diversity; co-curricular support for the development of understanding and social skills that promote inclusiveness; address some documented reasons for gaps in student retention generally (lack of acceptance of diversity, lack of alternative social scene); additional support for non-majority students to ensure their increased academic success, retention, and postgraduate placement.*

(a) Establish a centrally located “Common Ground” space (ideally in Tyler Haynes Commons proximal to CCE) that becomes a magnet for student social gathering and activities that promote inclusive diversity whether or not it is the theme of the activity, and that is overseen by the Director of Common Ground (see next (b) below). **This space will serve both majority and non-majority students whose “common ground” is a demonstrated commitment to inclusive diversity.**

(b) Hire an experienced person as Director of Common Ground (**tentative title**) who reports jointly to the Provost and to the VP for Student Development. This office will require an administrative assistant. The purpose of this position is to create opportunities for students and faculty of all demographic and ideological identities to come together around common interests for social events and formal programming that will transform campus culture to embrace inclusive diversity. The office will integrate with the many other existing valuable programs that are already in place, and assist the people and offices that support them. In addition, the person will serve as a key staff member on the future CGAC which will be charged with oversight for implementing the Embedded Action Plan (see Action Step #6). Other specific functions of the office will be to maintain the CG website including up-to-date course listings, to gain additional support for GC through grants and publicity. There are many ideas in the CGAC subcommittee reports that might be developed into exciting opportunities by this new office.

3.) Multicultural Competence [see footnote<sup>1</sup>] should be adopted as a learning outcome for Richmond students with curricular components that support that aim. The business school has in

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<sup>1</sup> **Cultural proficiency** is the policies and practices of an organization or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable that agency or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. See Attachment 4 for complete definition.

fact adopted this competency as one of seven in the Professional Development Program. TFUGE has proposed the adoption of some curriculum revisions that address this aim, which CGAC supports. The future CGAC will be accountable for continued advocacy and monitoring progress on this objective.

*Deliverables: Learning outcomes that include skills for productively and respectfully engaging with others who have different identifiers, conflicting opinions, and varied perspectives. This has to entail more than studying diversity at arm's length—it should involve learning and conscious 'practice' in real interactions-- in the classroom, in residential life, and in other structured opportunities for experiential learning. Outcomes include more lively social and intellectual engagement here in the campus community, and lifelong skills for alumni success in a globally pluralistic society.*

- Use the CG website to promote a comprehensive list of courses and programs that feature inclusive diversity and multicultural competency as learning objectives. Offer course development grants to increase the quality and number of such courses, managed by the Director of Common Ground under #2 above.
- Provide opportunities for faculty to prepare to teach multicultural competency, and more generally to model the values of inclusive diversity in the classroom regardless of subject matter; (possibly as part of faculty workshops proposed by TFUGE or offered by PETE).
- Include a 'cultural immersion' option for the Experiential Learning requirement proposed by TFUGE. The Director of Common Ground (hired under recommendation #2 above) should sponsor this initially as a pilot program, and if successful continue it whether or not it is formally adopted by TFUGE. (Will include mentoring to ensure adequate preparation and goals, and accountable reflection and follow-up for each student)
- Strongly advocate the incorporation of multicultural competency in the Humanities Core and in Inquiry Courses proposed by TFUGE.

4). Action should be taken to change the external perception that the University is neither diverse nor fully inclusive of diversity. Such perceptions exist among prospective staff employees, and among current and prospective students, who judge the university to be homogeneous. The strategies listed below will cultivate a positive impression of the university through the ambassadorial work of our students, staff, and faculty.

*Deliverables: The University will become a stronger magnet for staff, student, and faculty talent. Enhanced group creativity and learning are proven outcomes of diversity. We should see measurable increases in Richmond as a first-choice among students, staff, faculty, and employers resulting in enhanced recruitment, retention, and alumni placement. The resulting increase in demographic, socioeconomic, and ideological diversity can become self-sustaining when the question "will I be welcome and valued here?" always can be answered "yes".*

- Staff should be encouraged and prepared to participate in community organizations as ambassadors of the University, including allowance for time spent in lieu of on-campus hours. We have to get out there!

- Extend student service projects to include sustained relationships with neighborhoods and schools (coordinated through the CCE.)
- Support increased outreach to school children and their parents, especially in ethnic neighborhoods (Phillip Morris Math and Science grant for middle schools; HHMI grant for outreach).
- Support the Law School's intent to establish an urban center for law school and University engagement in the city.
- Find ways to improve transportation between campus and the city.
- Support the SCS in furthering its success as a positive force for Richmond in the community.

5). Revise University policies, practices, and representations to include an explicit commitment to diversity, and to remove institutional barriers (perceived and real) to inclusive diversity.

*Deliverables: The inclusion of the Common Ground mission statement and other such language in university publications and in visible areas across campus will assist all of the aforementioned goals, and will be especially impactful for recruitment and retention of diverse talent.*

- The CGAC developed a mission statement (ref. page 3) which has been reviewed by University faculty and by the Academic Program Committee of the Board of Trustees (BOT). This statement should be presented to the full BOT for discussion and affirmation as an institutional priority.
- The mission statement should be included as appropriate in as many university publications and representations as possible and practical, including prominent access on our website, admissions and financial aid literature, job advertisements, and in posters around campus and in classrooms.
- University policy documents should be revised in accordance with the recommendations of the CGAC subcommittee which studied these (see Appendix E).
- Going forward, all university documents and representations both existing and new should be screened and revised with inclusive diversity in mind.
- The University should pay increasing attention to handicapped access, modifying facilities as needed for disabled students, faculty and staff, and exceeding code when possible in new construction.
- Campus signage could be modified to be more informative and thus more welcoming to the public who are not likely to be familiar with building names and descriptors that are second nature to long-time campus occupants.

6). A new iteration of the Common Ground Action Committee should be established to monitor implementation and outcomes of the Embedded Action Plan.

*Deliverables: Given the major investment in resources that is likely, the inevitable question "what did we get for the investment" must be answered with rigorous assessment. The CGAC must be willing to make aggressive course corrections, including revisions and even discontinuing initiatives if promised deliverables [noted under each recommendation 1)-5) above] are not realized in spite of best efforts.*

- The new CGAC will be appointed and empowered by the President following appropriate consultation, to be comprised of members representative of faculty, staff and students who have sufficient expertise to make sound judgments about plans and progress in each of the strategies and overall. Size should not exceed 10 members, and two-year terms should be staggered to insure both turnover and continuity. Initially the CGAC should be chaired by the Provost. The Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, of Business Affairs, and of Student Development will be responsible to the Committee and thus the President for the actions and success of the CGAC, and for the success of the entire Embedded Action Plan overall.
- The CGAC should engage with Visions or a similar consultant every other year to re-establish Common Ground values.
- The CGAC should be adequately staffed for scheduling, keeping records, and producing reports.
- CGAC will set deadlines and expect reports on planning and progress from the leaders of various units that have assigned action items.
- CGAC will collect, establish, and publish (website) the benchmark data against which institutional progress will be measured.
- CGAC will provide the President with semi-annual summaries of action taken and progress toward goals,
- In collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, CGAC should conduct the campus-wide Diversity Climate Survey every 2-3 years to assess progress.

## **CONCLUSION**

The 2004-2005 Common Ground Action Committee respectfully submits this report to President Cooper for consideration. We believe that the Embedded Action Plan that is offered meets our charge to develop action steps that will both increase diversity in all its dimensions at this institution, and create a campus culture that will be ever more welcoming and fully inclusive of diversity. The Plan is predicated on the assumption that the vision for Richmond's greatness as an educational institution cannot be fully realized unless the ideals of human understanding and social justice are demonstrated as well as taught here. Therefore the Plan does not aim to manage the here and now with one-time fixes, overly-specific programs, or splashy ideas. Instead the Plan maps out a tougher road of long and hard work to make sure that the values of inclusive diversity are continually enhanced and sustainable for future generations of students, faculty and staff, and fully realized as a source of creative and educational power for the institution.

**Executive Summary**  
**Diversity Climate Survey: 2004 - 2005**  
**University of Richmond**

Overview of Survey: A Diversity Climate Survey was administered to students, faculty, and staff at the University of Richmond during the spring semester of 2005. The survey was designed by the Office of Institutional Research in conjunction with the Common Ground Action Committee and the Institutional Review Board which gave final approval to the survey. The instrument was composed of 48 items and included demographic information on related attributes such as gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, years of service at the institution, and departmental affiliation. Approximately 675 students, 135 faculty, and 370 staff members participated in the survey. These numbers represent an excess of 30% of each population (faculty, staff, and students). Versions of the survey varied slightly as needed for each population. Variations in sexual orientation were too small to draw meaningful conclusions, though some statistical differences were revealed, but the factors emerging from the survey responses were examined for gender differences and differences in ethnic and racial background.

General Conclusions

While conclusions were consistent and analyses were conducted at great depth, the effort here is to provide highlights that represent the essence of the findings. As stated above, conclusions regarding differences in survey factors based on sexual orientation are not included in this summary. Sample sizes were too small in all populations from which to draw valid conclusions. However, the general pattern of responses based on sexual orientation were remarkably similar to patterns based on ethnic and racial background with target populations expressing general concerns about the lack of tolerance for outlying subgroups.

Below are key findings:

**All Populations**

- Diversity is an important concern to students, faculty, and staff.
- The level of diversity at the University of Richmond is inadequate.
- Public relations materials misrepresent the level of diversity on campus.

**Students**

- Non-white students feel diversity is more important than white students.
- Non-white students feel the level of diversity is less satisfactory than white students.
- Females feel more strongly that the university should hire a more diverse faculty and staff and to recruit a more diverse student body than males.
- Students of all ethnic backgrounds are neutral on the question of whether or not the university provides a welcoming environment but disagree that university provides a welcoming environment for those with disabilities.

- Non-white students feel as if they are subjected to negative comments and are made to feel uncomfortable because of their ethnic and racial background.
- Students of all ethnic backgrounds feel the university is welcoming of both genders and all religions but slightly disagree that the university is welcoming of people of color and people of varying sexual orientation.
- While students feel that the environment at UR is generally welcoming with policies that reflect equity, they still believe there is some tension because of the diverse groups on campus.
- Non-white students feel more strongly that the university should do more to hire a more diverse faculty and staff and to recruit more diverse students than do white students.

### **Faculty**

- There is a significant gender difference across all factors.
- Female faculty members feel the environment is less welcoming in every facet than do male faculty members.
- Female faculty members feel there is insufficient diversity at UR to a greater extent than male faculty members.
- Female faculty members feel that policies and procedures in place to handle harassment and assault are less adequate than male faculty members.
- While faculty of all ethnic and racial groups report that they are not subjected to negative comments or actions, all ethnic and racial groups report the need to hire for a more diverse faculty and staff and to recruit a more diverse student body.
- Faculty of all ethnic and racial groups are neutral on questions of whether or not the environment at UR is welcoming, the level of acceptance of diverse groups, and the adequacy of policies and procedures to handle harassment and assault cases.
- Faculty of non-heterosexual orientation generally feel that the UR environment is less welcoming than heterosexual faculty members.
- Faculty of non-heterosexual orientation generally feel more strongly that UR should recruit a more diverse faculty and staff and recruit a more diverse student body than heterosexual faculty.
- Faculty of non-heterosexual orientation generally feel more strongly that there is not a sufficient diversity of sexual orientations on campus than heterosexual faculty.

### **Staff**

- Staff of all ethnic and racial groups generally disagree somewhat that they have been subjected to negative comments and actions. White staff members disagree more strongly than other ethnic or racial groups on this issue.
- Non-white staff members more strongly agree with items regarding the lack of comfort in all venues of campus activities than white staff members.
- Non-white staff members report a greater need for diversity and report that the environment at UR is less welcoming than white staff members.
- Staff members in general agree that there is a need to hire a more diverse faculty and staff and to recruit a more diverse student body regardless of ethnic background.

Themes in the Comments Sections

Below are some general themes that emerged in the comments sections of the three versions of the Diversity Climate Survey. These are separated by target population.

**Students**

- Of the 674 students submitting the survey, 30% provided comments.
- Eight percent of the comments expressed the concern that diversity be viewed as more than race, numbers, or tokenism. There were several subsets to these comments listed below.
  - Ten percent expressed the need for more socio-economic diversity.
  - Three percent wished to see more consideration for persons with disabilities and access to the campus for the disabled.
  - Ten percent expressed the need for more political and religious diversity.
- Ten percent wished to see decisions for recruiting to be based solely on merit.
- Nine percent see the need for greater integration of minorities into campus life. A large portion of these comments included the need for a change in pre-orientation activities to accomplish this goal.
- Eight percent saw no need for change and believed the university is as adequately diverse as it needs to be.
- Seven percent expressed regret at the diversity initiative and felt as if there will be a backlash of reverse discrimination.
- Eight percent expressed the view that there need to be more activities that promote diversity on campus.
- Female students were significantly more likely to comment on the need for more activities to promote diversity than male students.
- Male students were more likely to take issue with the survey itself.
- Male students were more likely to express the view that merit alone be the basis for decision making regardless of diversity.
- Some students offered suggestions among which were the following:
  - Broaden support for College Town as a diversity activity.
  - Promote activities off campus.
  - Better communication between the administration and the students regarding diversity.
  - Incorporate Black organizations into Greek life.
  - Hold forums to promote diversity conversations.

**Faculty**

- Thirty-nine percent of the faculty responding to the survey submitted comments (exactly half the comments were by women and half by men).
- Of the respondents the following generalizations may be made:
  - Thirty-nine percent of those responding offered some critique of the survey itself. These comments generally fell into two categories:

- A survey cannot delve deeply enough into the more subtle aspects of diversity. These respondents went on to offer lengthy comments about various problems at UR (hidden problems).
- The survey did not include items regarding ideological diversity. These respondents felt as if this was a problem among the faculty that should be further explored.
- Twenty-three percent asserted that UR fosters an environment of harassment and insensitivity.
- Thirteen percent wish to see all promotion and recruitment decisions made solely on the basis of merit without considerations of group affiliation.
- Thirteen percent strongly support the university's efforts to examine diversity issues and strongly support the survey.
- Nine percent wish to see more sensitivity training required of the various constituencies.
- There were some gender differences in the comments with female faculty lamenting the hostile environment to a greater degree than males and calling more strongly for sensitivity training.
- Females on the faculty were more likely to be positive about the Diversity Climate Survey and the university's efforts to examine diversity issues.
- Some comments offered suggestions which are listed below:
  - Insure that recruiting efforts include various minority groups.
  - Insure that decisions regarding recruitment, tenure, promotion, etc. are not made on the basis of group membership.
  - Provide diversity workshops for the white majority.
  - Provide mandatory diversity workshops for first-year students.
  - Extend the faculty orientation to include opportunities for interaction with the larger Richmond community.

### **Staff**

- Of the 382 staff members taking the survey, 24% offered comments.
- Fifteen percent lamented the staff/other divide and the rigid hierarchical nature of the university.
- Thirteen called for more tolerance of political views especially conservative views.
- Twelve percent asserted the need for more diversity at the senior administrative level.
- Twelve percent felt the administration was overemphasizing diversity.
- Eleven percent wished to see hiring solely on the basis of merit without consideration of diversity issues.
- Seven percent expressed concern that the climate at the university is negative and fear inducing for minority groups.
- Six percent wished to see stronger policies and guidelines in Human Resources to support diversity hires.

Methodology: The diversity items on the survey are comprised of 48 statements such as “A diverse college environment is important to me” followed by a four-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The instrument was administered on-line through

the university intranet; duplication of responses was prevented through the use of internet cookies, and all data transfers were encrypted using SSL technology. No “not applicable” was included though respondents could leave items blank and still complete the survey. This lack of a “not applicable” was intentional to provide a clearer factor structure by assuring greater variation in item responses. After the closing date, the survey data were brought into SPSS for analysis.

Data from the three target populations were analyzed separately, and analyses included the following:

- Descriptive statistics for each item; each item was examined for normality.
- Frequency distributions on all items.
- A principle components analysis to examine the factor structure; factor scores were saved.
- ANOVA on the factor scores to examine differences in gender and ethnic background.
- Items with the highest factor scores in the first three factors were included in the charts.

The psychometric characteristics of the instrument were robust with strong construct validity (based on the principle components analysis) and reliability (internal consistency). Cronbach’s alpha ranged from approximately .6 for the faculty and student surveys to .7 for the staff survey. This represents strong internal consistency of each version of the survey.

Factors emerging from the principle components analyses were stable for all three participant groups though not all emerged in the same order. Three important and consistent factors were the following:

- The level of welcome perceived in the UR environment
- The level of negative responses to diverse groups by majority groups
- The current level of diversity in the UR environment

Full results of the Survey can be viewed at <http://commonground.richmond.edu/progress/stats.htm> and are also on reserve at Boatwright Library.

**Implementation Plan for  
Common Ground Action Committee  
Embedded Action Model**

<b>Goals, Strategies, Recommendations</b>	<b>Responsibility and Cost</b>	<b>Possible Assessment Methods</b>
<i>Recruitment and Retention</i>		
<i>Students</i>		
Hire an admissions officer	Responsible: Provost and Admissions Cost: Salary and benefits	Annual performance review, task analysis
Develop strategies for new recruiting methodology to enroll students who have a commitment to inclusive diversity.	Responsible: Dean of Admissions and Director of Financial Aid Cost: Publication, travel, programming	Yield rates; admission outcomes
Establish formal articulation agreements with community colleges to facilitate transfer students.	Dean of Admissions Cost: No direct cost	Yield rates; admission outcomes
Continue to expand financial aid for international students.	Responsible: Provost and Director of Financial Aid Cost: As funds are available	Quarterly reports
<i>Staff</i>		
Create a new position: Associate Vice President for Organizational Learning (VP Org Learning).	Responsible: Provost and VP for Business Affairs (VPBA) Cost: Salary & benefits, programming	Needs assessment of training programs; Annual performance review, task analysis
Develop new strategies to recruit and hire employees who have a commitment to inclusive diversity, especially in management positions and in senior administration.	Responsible: Associate Vice President Human Resources (AVP HR) Cost: Advertising, recruiting, programming	Monthly review of employment statistics and other personnel data; employee satisfaction survey

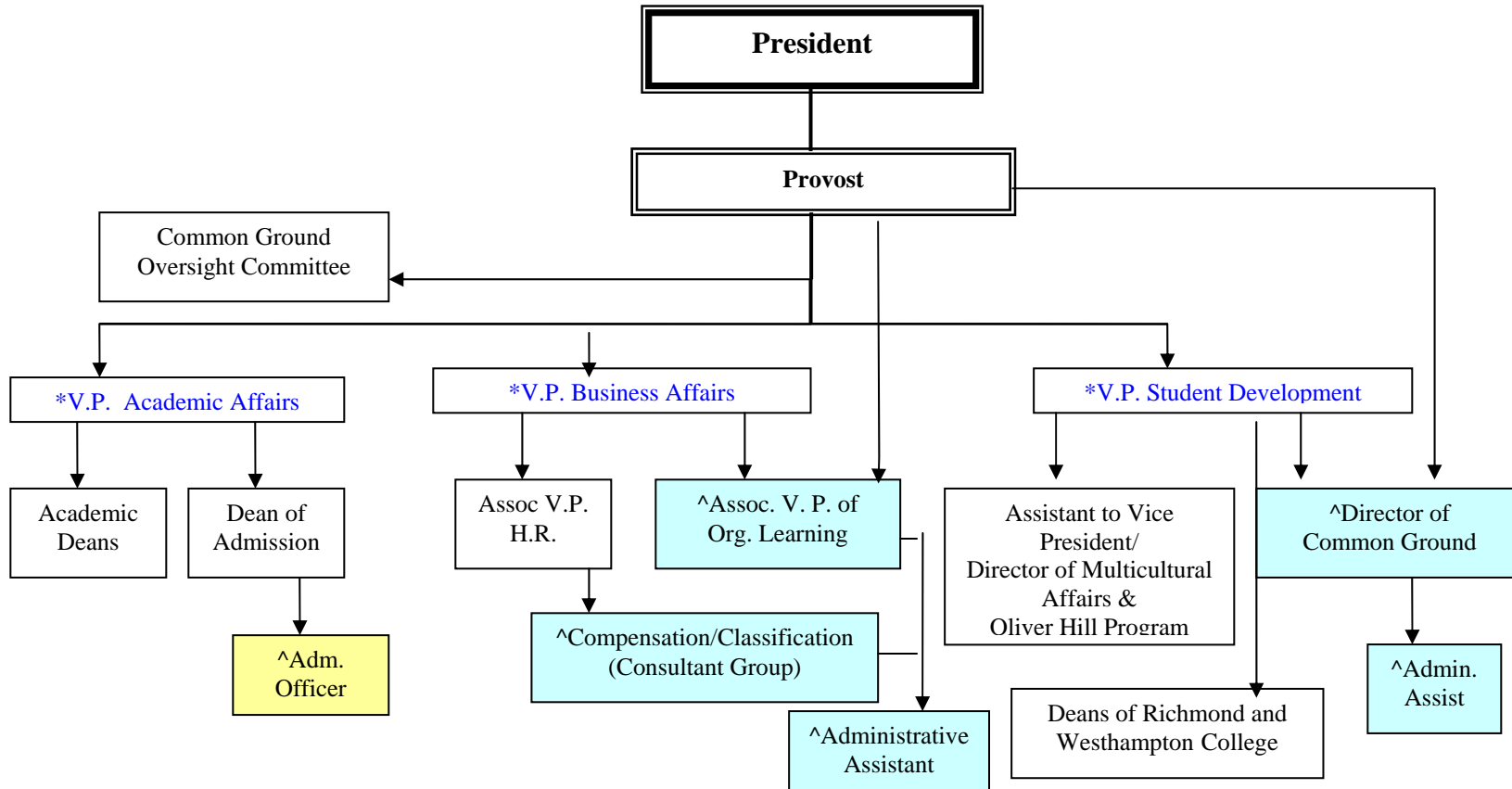
<b>Goals, Strategies, Recommendations</b>	<b>Responsibility and Cost</b>	<b>Possible Assessment Methods</b>
Develop a rigorous process for all staff job searches to include a commitment to diversity among the valued qualifications that are used to evaluate all candidates.	Responsible : AVP HR Cost: No direct cost	Hiring protocols
Make sure staff has confidential processes available for getting help with workplace circumstances that create anxiety, suppress creativity, or appear unfair.	Responsible: AVP HR Cost: No direct cost	Climate/employee satisfaction surveys
As appropriate, fund adjustments to staff compensation levels to be internally equitable and competitive in the job marketplace. Undertake a further study of HR staff and operations to assess the need for an in-house compensation/classification specialist.	Responsible: AVP HR Cost: As funds are available	Comparative market analyses; market benchmarking
<b><i>Faculty</i></b>		
Develop new strategy for hiring and retaining faculty with a commitment to inclusive diversity.	Responsible: Provost, Common Ground Action Committee (CGAC), University Faculty Council (UFC), School Deans Cost: Advertising, recruiting, programming	Employment statistics; satisfaction survey; survey non-hires
Investigate convenient childcare facility.	Responsible: Provost, VPBA Cost: TBD	Needs assessments; climate survey
Create a policy for spouse/partner job accommodation.	Responsible: Provost, School Deans, UFC Cost: TBD	Employee satisfaction survey
<b><i>Common Ground Center</i></b>		
Hire a Director of Common Ground (tentative title) (CG Director) and administrative assistant.	Responsible: Provost, VP Student Development (VPSD) Cost: Salary, benefits, programming	Performance evaluation, task analysis
Establish a centrally located “Common Ground” space (ideally in Tyler Haynes Commons proximal to Center for Civic Engagement -CCE) that becomes a visible campus magnet for student social gathering and activities that promote inclusive diversity.	Responsible: Provost, VPSD, VP BA Cost: Renovation	Climate survey; evaluate traffic patterns

Goals, Strategies, Recommendations	Responsibility and Cost	Possible Assessment Methods
<i>Curricular/Multicultural Competencies</i>		
Use the Common Ground (CG) website to promote a comprehensive list of courses and programs that feature inclusive diversity and multicultural competency as learning objectives.	Responsible: CG Director Cost: Web management	Satisfaction survey; monitor visits to site
Offer course development grants to increase the quality and number of courses with inclusive diversity as a focus.	Responsible: CG Director Cost: Faculty Stipends	Course evaluations
Provide opportunities for faculty to prepare to teach multicultural competency, and more generally to model the values of inclusive diversity in the classroom regardless of subject matter.	Responsible: Provost, PETE Cost: Faculty Stipends	Workshop evaluations; evaluation of courses generated
Pilot a ‘cultural immersion’ option for the Experiential Learning requirement (analogous to requirement proposed by Task Force on Undergraduate Education (TFUGE)).	Responsible: CG Director Cost: TBD	Curriculum assessment
Strongly advocate the incorporation of multicultural competency in the Humanities Core and in Inquiry Courses proposed by TFUGE.	Responsible: CG Director Cost: TBD	Curriculum assessment
<i>External Relations</i>		
Encourage and prepare staff to participate in community organizations by allowing for time spent in lieu of on-campus hours.	Responsible: All unit supervisors Cost: No direct costs	Staff evaluations; monitor volunteerism
Extend student service projects to include ongoing active and sustainable relationships with neighborhoods and schools through the CCE.	Responsible: CCE Director Cost: TBD	Survey of external constituents
Support the Law School’s intent to establish an urban center for law school and University engagement in the city.	Responsible: Provost, Dean of Law School, CCE Cost: No direct cost	Survey of external constituents

<b>Goals, Strategies, Recommendations</b>	<b>Responsibility and Cost</b>	<b>Possible Assessment Methods</b>
Explore ways to improve transportation between campus and the city.	Responsible: CCE Cost: TBD	Needs assessment; survey of external constituents
<b><i>Policies, Practices, and Representation</i></b>		
Include the mission statement, as appropriate, in university publications and representations.	Responsible: All units Cost: No direct cost	Document evaluations
University policy documents should be revised in accordance with the recommendations of the CGAC Policies, Practices, and Procedures subcommittee.	Responsible: CGAC Cost: No direct cost	Document evaluations
Screen all university documents and representations both existing and new with inclusive diversity in mind.	Responsible: All units Cost: No direct cost	Document evaluations
Pay increasing attention to handicapped access, modifying facilities as needed for disabled students, faculty and staff, and exceeding code when possible in new construction.	Responsible: VPBA Cost: TBD	Satisfaction survey
Modify campus signage to be more informative and thus more welcoming to the public.	Responsible: VPBA Cost: TBD	Satisfaction survey
<b><i>Common Ground Action Committee</i></b>		
Appoint a new CGAC to be comprised of members representative of faculty, staff and students who have sufficient expertise to make sound judgments about plans and progress in each of the recommended areas and overall.	Responsible: President and Provost Cost: No direct cost	Fulfillment of committee charge
The CGAC should engage with a consultant every other year to re-establish Common Ground values.	Responsible: AVP Org Learning Cost: Consultant fees	Evaluation of the process
The CGAC should be adequately staffed for scheduling, keeping records, and producing reports.	Responsible: President and Provost Cost: TBD	Desk audits

Inclusive Diversity Accountability Structure

This model for realizing Inclusive Diversity recommends several new functional positions (noted<sup>^</sup>) **instead of making one person (such as an Equity Officer or one office) responsible for diversity**. Following a review of the Survey results, and the top recommendations from each subcommittee, the CGAC offers the following strategy for addressing specific action steps that will become embedded in the way UR does business. The objective was to develop action steps that are visible, global in nature, and sustainable. One of the challenges was to formulate a model that includes responsibility and accountability at senior management levels. The three units (noted\*) listed below, along with key members of their respective teams will be held accountable for the deliverables related to inclusive diversity. *New functional positions (^) are necessary to implement action steps recommended by the CGAC.*



The three units marked with \* will work closely with the Common Ground Action Committee on setting specific goals and reporting progress. The CGAC members must be critical thinkers, with a university perspective, willing to ask the hard questions and make tough decisions. It should be made clear to the broader University community that a method for ongoing Community input and a mechanism to produce regular transparent progress reports will be developed.

## Multicultural Proficiency

### A possible measurable outcome:

The University of Richmond community will demonstrate **multicultural proficiency** within a challenging learning environment by embracing diversity and sustaining values of inclusion through recognition, collaboration, respect and appreciation for all individuals regardless of social economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, exceptionality, disability, or language and providing access, equity and excellence in services and resources.

### Ideas, definitions and considerations to support this outcome:

From: Lindsey, R. B., Terrell, R. D. & Robins, K. N. (1999). *Cultural proficiency*. Corwin Press<sup>2</sup>

**Cultural proficiency** is the policies and practices of an organization or the values and behaviors of an individual that enable that agency or person to interact effectively in a culturally diverse environment. Cultural proficiency is reflected in the way an organization treats its employees, its clients, and its community (p. 21). Cultural proficiency in an individual or organization entails:

- Esteeming culture
- Knowing how to learn about individual and organizational culture
- Interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments (p. 22).

Lindsey, Robins and Terrell present the movement toward **cultural proficiency** on a six-point continuum:

1. **Cultural destructiveness:** The elimination of other people's cultures
2. **Cultural incapacity:** Belief in the superiority of one's culture and behavior that disempowers another's culture
3. **Cultural blindness:** Acting as if the cultural differences you see do not matter or not recognizing that there are differences among and between cultures;
4. **Cultural precompetence:** Awareness of the limitations of one's skills or an organization's practices when interacting with other cultural groups; and
5. **Cultural competence:** Interacting with other cultural groups using the five essential elements of cultural proficiency as the standard for individual behavior and school practices: acceptance and respect for difference; ongoing assessment of one's own and the organization's culture; attention to the dynamics of difference; continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources; and the adaptation of one's values and behaviors and the organization's policies and practices.
6. **Cultural Proficiency:** Esteeming culture; knowing how to learn about individual and organizational culture; interacting effectively in a variety of cultural environments (p. 22).

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<sup>2</sup>The authors have published a second edition (2003).

**Multiculturalism:** The definitions of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism provided by VISIONS are good ones.

We define *multiculturalism* as: the process of recognizing, understanding and appreciating one's own culture as well as the culture of others. Multiculturalism stresses learning to appreciate the impact of differences in social location based on such variables as race, gender, class, age, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability and language.<sup>3</sup> (Italics added)

***Cultural pluralism:***

- Refers to cultural diversity within a given political or social structure
- The creation of systems and practices that allow for the recognition and use of the contributions of each group to the whole
- Replaces the "melting pot" conceptualization with the concept of the "salad bowl"
- Stresses the importance of both uniqueness and a commitment to deal cooperatively with common needs, issues and concerns.<sup>4</sup>

Submitted by: Gill Robinson Hickman, October 20, 2004

Adapted by: Kim Joyce, October 29, 2004

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<sup>3</sup> VISIONS, Inc. distributed this definition in an article by Valerie A. Batts, "Is Reconciliation Possible? Lessons from Combating "Modern Racism."

<sup>4</sup> From the VISIONS, Inc. packet titled, "Leveraging Our Diversity: Creating a Culture of Inclusion," 2003.