

# STIRRING THE POT

RECIPES FOR INCLUSIVE DIVERSITY



# OVERVIEW

## ABOUT DIVERSITY



When it comes to diversity, societal focus rests mainly on race and gender. However, there are multiple components to diversity that are often overlooked. Diversity as race and gender is not enough. Over the past ten years, universities have transferred their notion of diversity to be more than just quotas to reach admissions diversity. With a lack of diversity on college campuses, universities have incorporated diversity into their mission statement to try to reach this sense of inclusion. Ferris State University defines diversity as "the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs" (1). Though the attempt to reach invisible diversity is evident, more needs to be done on college campuses to achieve an inclusive environment for students of every background. The inclusion of students with various backgrounds encourages critical thinking and fosters educational growth, benefiting all students (3). The importance of diversity should not be overlooked on college campuses as universities wish to foster an accepting and respectful environment.

## BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

Inclusion for all students drives diversity on college campuses, but respect is not the only benefit of diversity. By 2050, one in two workers will be a person of color according to the Census Bureau statistics and projections (2). With the workforce and nation as a whole becoming more diverse, so too should the places of higher education. Diversity on college campuses will prepare the future of America for the quickly changing workforce of society.



## OPPOSITION AND LIMITATIONS

Although diversity is held as a common value among universities and workplaces, there is opposition and limiting factors to achieving inclusive diversity. College campuses spend millions of dollars and time creating programs focused on strengthening diversity. However, though the presence of diversity may be evident, often people from diverse backgrounds can still feel segregated and isolated. At the same time, the majority may feel uncertain about how to interact with the minority. "Research has demonstrated that a lack of previous positive experiences with "outgroup members" (minorities) causes "ingroup members" (majority members) to feel anxious about interactions with minorities. This anxiety can cause majority members to respond with hostility or to avoid interactions with minorities" (3). In like manner, The University of Wisconsin-Madison researched and surveyed how minority faculty feel among the majority at a plethora of universities and colleges. The studies show that often the minority faculty feel separated and valued differently from the white faculty. The words to describe their separatism were "exclusion, isolation, alienation, and racism" (3). Alike, when there are fewer women faculty as compared to men, they often do not feel welcome. For example, when a class is primarily male, women are subject to sexual harassment, harmful language, and mistreatment. Overall, whether the minority on campus is due to race, disability, national origin, ethnicity or gender, there are challenges to feeling included. Thus, these challenges must be overcome to reach the goal of invisible diversity on college campuses.

# DIFFERENT APPROACHES



## APPROACH ONE: INCREASED FINANCIAL AID

High tuition and living costs at four year institutions selects against low income students who also have an increased likelihood of being a minority due to an inability to afford the cost of attending the institution. This limits socioeconomic and cultural diversity on campuses. Better education about financial aid as well as more financial aid for low income students can improve these students' chances of attending a four year school, remaining enrolled at the institution, and feeling included within the student body.

## APPROACH TWO: UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

Diversity on campus often does not extend past the admissions office, leaving the student body mostly separated by ethnicity. University led and mandated events and programs can promote diversity within the student body. One option approaches the issue by appropriating sufficient resources to the culture, diversity programs and clubs to give the University a greater ability to influence students to participate in diversity encouragement events around and on campus. Incentives to students, funding for clubs, and adjusting admission quotas are ways that the University can achieve a greater balance of diversity.



## APPROACH THREE: HOUSING

Dormitory life is a significant component of college culture. Dorms have a unique capacity for socialization and community growth among students, and are much more than just a place to stay. However, this capacity for growth is limited by the self-segregating nature of student interactions, shown to occur often by a variety of studies. Taking advantage of the possibilities offered by different living options could yield promising results; universities should take more initiative for housing with diversity in mind. If steps are taken to create housing conducive to forming diverse and inclusive living spaces, the overall campus community will be positively affected. Students will learn how to cooperate and simply live life with others of all kinds of backgrounds when they are at home, and will take this knowledge into their classrooms, club meetings, and eventually the world.



# FINANCIAL AID

MORE ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID EQUATES MORE DIVERSITY

## ABOUT APPROACH ONE

High tuition and living costs have made four year bachelor's degrees less accessible for potential students but especially those with low incomes. This limits diversity on campuses by hindering students of many different socioeconomic backgrounds from attending college and maintaining a happy lifestyle while there. There is also a link between low income students and minority students as well as first generation college students. Fifty-four percent of low-income first generation college students are minorities, and sixteen percent were not born in the United States (1). This correlation implies that high tuition costs also impede cultural diversity on campus.

## WHAT INSTITUTIONS ARE LOW INCOME STUDENTS ATTENDING?

Low-income students (coming from families in the bottom quartile of income) in 1995-96 were underrepresented in not-for-profit four year colleges which were dominated by the highest income quartile students (2). The lowest income quartile of students in 1995-96 were overrepresented in for-profit institutions as well as two-year institutions (2).

Recently, enrollment in four- and two-year universities for low income students (bottom twenty percent of income) coming out of high school dropped by ten percentage points from 2008-2013 (3). Although percentages decreased for all income levels, the drop was by far the steepest for the lowest income group (3). This drop in enrollment comes even though aid from Pell Grants and government subsidies has increased by seventy-four percent and aid from institutions has increased by fifty percent (3). This is partly due to the fact that, even with this aid, college tuition for four year schools increased by twenty one percent from 2008 to 2013 (3).

Demographic Characteristics by Income and Generation Status

	Low-Income, First-Generation	Low-Income or First-Generation Only	Not Low-Income and Not First-Generation
Age When First Enrolled	23	22	20
% Female	64%	58%	52%
% Minority	54%	35%	26%
% Disability	14%	11%	10%
% Non-Native English	18%	12%	9%
% Not Born in U.S.	16%	13%	11%
% Have Dependents	38%	30%	14%
% Single Parents	30%	11%	4%
% High School Equivalency	12%	6%	4%
% Financially Independent	74%	54%	27%

Source: NPSAS: 2004 UG.

# FINANCIAL AID

MORE ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID EQUATES MORE DIVERSITY

## HOW ARE LOW INCOME STUDENTS FARING IN COLLEGE?

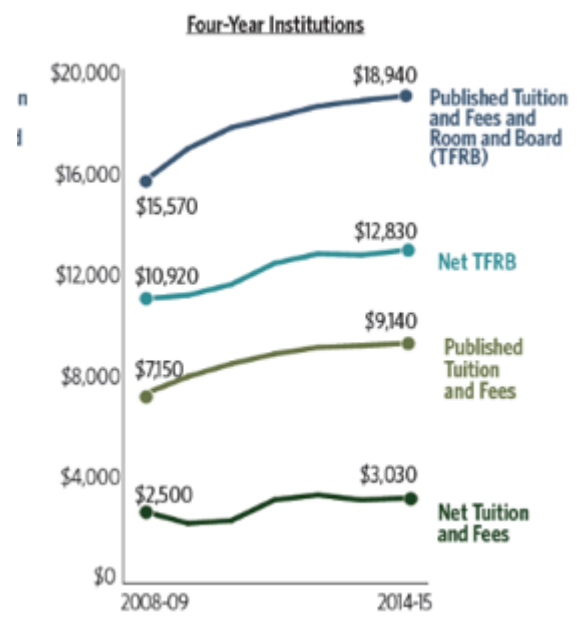
Studies have outlined multiple risk factors that cause students to be more likely to fail to earn a bachelor's degree. These risk factors include: delaying entry into postsecondary education after high school, attending institution part-time, working full-time while enrolled, being financially independent from parents, having dependent children, being a single parent, and having a GED (1). Minority and low income students are more likely to have multiple risk factors and more risk factors relative to traditional students (1).

Students who were both low-income and first generation college students, and students who suffered from just one of these characteristics were more than twice as likely to not return for their second year across all institutions (1). Low income, first generation students who started in public, four-year institutions were three times more likely to leave after the first year relative to not low income and not first generation students (1). After six years, forty-three percent of low-income, first-generation students had left postsecondary education. Among those who left, 60 percent did so after the first year (1).

First to Second Year Persistence by Type of Institution First Attended

	Low-Income, First-Generation	Low-Income or First-Generation Only	Not Low-Income and Not First-Generation
<b>ALL INSTITUTIONS</b>			
Attained or returned after Y1	66%	69%	79%
Transferred after Y1	9%	12%	14%
Did not enroll Y2	26%	19%	7%
<b>PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS</b>			
Attained or returned after Y1	59%	63%	63%
Transferred after Y1	10%	11%	22%
Did not enroll Y2	32%	26%	15%
<b>PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS</b>			
Attained or returned after Y1	76%	76%	84%
Transferred after Y1	12%	14%	12%
Did not enroll Y2	12%	9%	4%
<b>PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS</b>			
Attained or returned after Y1	77%	78%	89%
Transferred after Y1	11%	15%	9%
Did not enroll Y2	11%	8%	2%
<b>FOR-PROFIT INSTITUTIONS</b>			
Attained or returned after Y1	68%	72%	74%
Transferred after Y1	6%	6%	8%
Did not enroll Y2	26%	22%	18%

Source: IPEDS 2011



# FINANCIAL AID

MORE ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID EQUATES MORE DIVERSITY

## WHY ARE LOW INCOME STUDENTS LESS SUCCESSFUL?

Low-income students are less likely to be involved in social and academic activities (studying in groups, interacting with faculty and other students, participating in extracurricular activities, and using support services) that promote success in college (1). This lack of integration can be partially explained due to low income students' financial situation. These students have an increased likelihood of living and working off-campus and taking classes part-time while working full-time, which limits the amount of time they spend on campus (1). Receiving more financial aid, such as grants, scholarships, and work-study, has been proven to increase the odds that low income students will stay enrolled in school (1). Working more than twenty hours a week while enrolled has an adverse effect on the persistence of students, and low income, first generation students are more likely to work over twenty hours compared to students who are neither low-income nor first-generation (sixty-three percent to forty-three percent (1). A decrease in work burden through financial aid has been shown to increase students' ability to integrate which improves academic performance (1). Low-income students were also found to be loan adverse because of the accompanying debt, but this takes a valuable funding resource off the table (1).

## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL AID IN INCREASING AND PERPETUATING DIVERSITY?

Financial aid for low income students serves as a tool for universities to achieve their institutional goals of diversity by providing the student with services that make it possible for them to attend college (4). Financial aid and race-conscious scholarships are looked at, in a legal sense, similarly as affirmative action and through a lens of strict scrutiny (4). Scholarships and financial aid provided by the university help the institution to achieve their diversity goals without necessarily denying non-minority students from admission like affirmative action would. As previously mentioned, financial aid helps retain minority and low-income and, as a result, minority students throughout the 4-year degree program.

# FINANCIAL AID

MORE ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID EQUATES MORE DIVERSITY

## WHAT ARE SOME SOLUTIONS?

To expand and make financial aid more accessible at the federal and institutional level, two things must be done. First, universities must employ a team to improve programs that teach prospective students about financial literacy in paying for college. Specifically, the programs would include informing students about work-study scholarships and teaching students the best options for loans (1). While programs like this do exist in high schools today, it will not hurt to expand upon it so that prospective students can be more knowledgeable. For example, financial aid offices could even pair with banks to create a campaign that teaches students about how to apply for and finance their education through loans. This could help students make smarter financial decisions so their loans do not become a large source of stress and debt. The second way to expand financial aid for low-income students would be to allocate more funding towards government aid and grants to public universities or to shift money for merit-based scholarships towards need-based ones as well. The additional grants can help subsidize and lower the cost of schools or could allow schools to offer greater need-based scholarships to minority and low-income students (1).

## WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS?

Increasing grant aid would require shifting away from merit aid. This would mean that students, who may be equally or more qualified from a GPA, SAT, or extracurricular involvement standpoint, may receive less aid than before. It is important to remember that financial aid will only help to create and perpetuate an accepting and diverse community on campus if paired with inclusion. Another drawback of financial aid is that it does not prevent poor high school preparation from negatively affecting persistence for low-income students. In other words, financial aid may not be able to bridge the gap for a student who does not have the sturdiest base. Another potential con arises when we try to raise taxes to obtain financial aid funds. For example, a family of higher income, who would theoretically pay higher taxes, would not receive the direct benefits in the form of their children receiving the financial aid. One could counter that investing in others' future will increase economic prosperity for all, but that will not stop the original argument from being made.

# FINANCIAL AID

MORE ACCESS TO FINANCIAL AID EQUATES MORE DIVERSITY

## INCREASING ACCESS TO AID

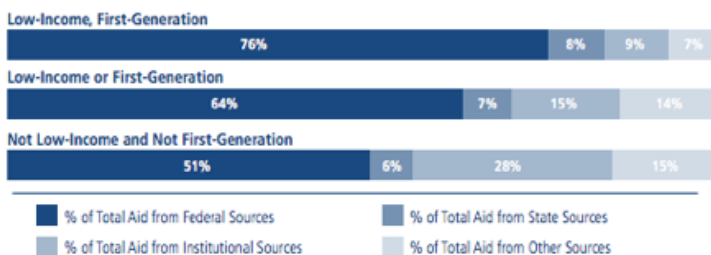
- Educational sessions to increase financial literacy about students' options for paying the costs of attendance at four-year institutions including the prudent use of loans, how to budget and use the banking system, and the pros and cons of credit card use (1).
- Increases in grant aid from institutional, state, and federal sources (1)
- Greater assistance with covering unmet financial need like expanding work-study programs (1).

### Average Cumulative Loan Debt for Students Completing Degrees in the 2003-2004 Academic Year

	Certificate	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree
Low-Income, First Generation	\$7,079	\$10,909	\$21,670
Low-Income or First-Generation	\$8,048	\$10,196	\$19,152
Not Low-Income and Not First-Generation	\$8,254	\$11,633	\$17,646

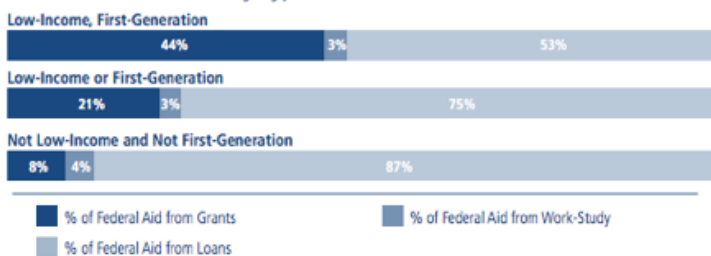
Source: NPSAS: 2004 UG

### Total Financial Aid by Source



Source: NPSAS: 2004 UG

### Federal Financial Aid by Type



Source: NPSAS: 2004 UG





# UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY THROUGH UNIVERSITY LED EVENTS

## ABOUT APPROACH TWO

This option outlines some of the actions that Penn State University could take directly in order to promote more diversity on campus. The admission office attempts to foster diversity by admitting a wide variety of students, however, in practice we find that the student body is still over 80% white in colleges across the nation (1). We could attempt to solve this by restricting admissions to accurately reflect the American population as a whole, accounting in the admissions stage for everything from race to socioeconomic status, although this could potentially lower the caliber of admitted students. As well, official quotas could not be established, so the university would have to use Affirmative Action to account for the sudden change in the college's admissions. As diversity is the most important thing, the government would certainly understand.



The university currently attempts to encourage diversity in the Liberal Arts College through classes and events, yet some of the other Colleges here at Penn State offer little to none in the way of diversity related equations. This could be expanded to the rest of the Colleges to improve the diversity of some of the currently more technically-oriented degree programs. Finally, while cultural clubs and organizations have events and tables in the HUB, Penn State can increase the allocations that these clubs and organizations receive to help reach wider audiences.

# UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY THROUGH UNIVERSITY LED EVENTS

## HOW CAN WE GET STUDENTS MORE INVOLVED?



There are a small variety of programs and activities held every day on college campuses and a chunk of them are either related to promoting diversity or organized by student groups with diverse membership. Despite the presence of these activities or programs, student involvement tends to be scant or limited to the cultural/ethnic/nationality groups that the program is about. As a result college campuses tend to be somewhat segregated along cultural or ethnic lines. A university can attempt to foster a greater sense of community amongst various groups by actively encouraging and rewarding students for participating in diversity-related programming. Most people act in their own self-interest, and although the conventional belief is that people will come to support and interact with various groups solely for the experience, very few people will attend if they find no self-benefit (2). To that end Penn State as well as other Universities can take it upon themselves to offer something to its student body in return for attending and attempting to break the cultural or ethnic separations. The "trade-off" could be professors offering extra credit to students or offering credits in exchange for taking courses on the subject matter. Some professors may not want to hand out credit for events that do not directly concern their class. Worries about students getting higher grades through attending events rather than a mastery of the subject matter could also potentially undermine this option. There are currently some general education requirements about taking cultural classes, but the one International Cultures class requirement, is not enough to truly let the students explore diversity and the role it plays in their lives.

This could help spur participation if the students can benefit in some way for exploring different cultures. A more heavy handed approach such as the one that UCLA has taken implementing mandates such as a "diversity requirement" in the University's general education requirements for certain majors (3). Offering courses that educate about other cultures can help students participate in a structured attempt to break barriers on campus. However at the end of the day unless a requirement similar to that of UCLA is imposed to make these classes mandatory, it faces the same issue, participation.

# UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY THROUGH UNIVERSITY LED EVENTS

## HOW CAN WE EXPOSE STUDENTS TO DIVERSITY?

"An approach where the spotlight falls on the numerous cultural clubs and organizations are university sponsored "Culture Days". This event could allow clubs to use university funds to set up displays, performances, or food stands in order to promote the cultural traditions of groups that the clubs represent. By assembling all the clubs into one venue, students have the opportunity to wander through intermingling with people of various backgrounds. The exposure that such an event could offer to clubs and organizations would allow students and faculty to experience various different cultures that they normally would not come across. Campuses such as Ohio University have experimented with International Week and an International Street Fair in an ongoing effort to embrace the various backgrounds and experiences of the student body (3).



# UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY THROUGH UNIVERSITY LED EVENTS

## HOW CAN WE CREATE A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY?

Another approach is to modify diversify admissions standards such that students accepted more accurately reflect American population demographics. This could help create an environment more reflective of students lives once they begin life in the non-academic world. This option could help admit students from otherwise underrepresented groups. Admission policies may often need to be combined with some sort of financial aid policy to support students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Admission policies based on race beg the question of the purpose of universities. The overall purpose of a university often varies depending on who you ask. Students in the College of Liberal Arts or Arts and Architecture may look to seek out a more complete college experience and a diverse student body can help offer the various perspectives needed to help create a well-rounded education. Meanwhile students in the College of Engineering, or Science seek out a more technical education. Since these majors are often about technical knowledge, the presence of diverse opinions or beliefs does not play as strong a role. UCLA addresses this by only making their diversity requirement necessary for Liberal Arts and Arts majors, and does not require it for Science and Engineering majors. Is it the goal of Universities to provide the best education possible to the brightest students, or provide a more well rounded experience with the help of a diverse student body? When you admit less qualified students because you wish to improve diversity, you may be sacrificing the admission of the best and brightest.



**Admitting a more diverse student body through creating a diverse class profile is a step forward towards having more diversity on campuses, yet that alone is not enough to actively integrate the various groups in the student body. Universities can truly embrace diversity by actively promoting clubs, organizations, and courses that explore diversity and the issues that accompany it. At the end of the day it will require some sort of funding on the Universities' part, but even a little bit of funding can go a long way to creating a more diverse campus.**

# UNIVERSITY HOUSING

ASSIGNING STUDENT HOUSING TO FOSTER DIVERSITY

## ABOUT APPROACH THREE

Dormitory life is a significant component of college culture. Dorms have a unique capacity for socialization and community growth among students, and are much more than just a place to stay. However, this potential for growth is limited by the self-segregating nature of student interactions, shown to occur often by a variety of studies. Seeing the potential of living options for the shaping of students, universities should take more initiative for housing with diversity in mind.

If steps are taken to create housing conducive to forming diverse and inclusive living spaces, the overall campus community will be positively affected. Students will learn how to cooperate and simply live life with others of all kinds of backgrounds when they are at home, and will take this knowledge into their classrooms, club meetings, and eventually the world.



# UNIVERSITY HOUSING

ASSIGNING STUDENT HOUSING TO FOSTER DIVERSITY



## ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

When students first arrive at college, they are presented with a new and unfamiliar life that can be stressful and overwhelming. Hundreds of people who have never met before are thrust into social interactions in class, clubs, and university activities. One way that universities try to mitigate the dramatic transition to college life is through orientation activities that create bonds between students that make them more comfortable in their new homes.

In order to have diverse and active campus living communities, efforts to orient and integrate students to college life are essential. Most universities already have an orientation infrastructure in place focused on grafting undergraduates into the campus culture, but a more direct approach of creating diverse dormitory communities could be useful.

One essential component of orientation is the implementation of freshman seminars. According to a 2001-2002 academic paper on college retention, "Many studies found that freshman seminars contribute to academic performance and retention over time and provide opportunities for academic and social integration (1).

Academic and social integration are fantastic occurrences for universities seeking to have inclusive and diverse communities, and higher retention rates help encourage long-term relationships and networking between students. Strong integration of the student body is one of the main goals of diversity initiatives, so freshman seminars would be ideal additions to universities lacking them as they encourage cohesive community.

While many schools may already have seminars, a new approach can integrate this into the living experience. Students living in the same dorms would attend the same seminars in order to build interpersonal skills and deep relationships that could be cultured in their living together and later applied to the wider campus. This approach would help put them into contact with their neighbors who most likely will not share the same majors, increasing intellectual diversity and creating valuable networks. Studies show that a seminar can help a group of students "work together to solve problems and share ideas," thereby increasing communication and interaction (1). Seminars are especially important for low-income students who have little time to engage in extra-curricular activities otherwise.

Among the many other approaches to orientation programs are pre-college orientation days, group community service projects, icebreaker events, and more. These initiatives could be used to supplement the main orientation seminar and residence hall activities and increase the efficacy of said approaches. A 2013 study discovered that general orientation programs "ease the transition for new students into the collegiate environment" and "improve new student self-esteem", both of which are useful for dormitory and overall campus community interaction and growth (2). If these initiatives are followed and properly funded, they could have an enormously beneficial effect on campus diversity and unity, making college a better experience for everyone involved.

# UNIVERSITY HOUSING

ASSIGNING STUDENT HOUSING TO FOSTER DIVERSITY

## HOW CAN WE DESIGN LIVING SPACES WITH INCLUSION IN MIND



"Dormitories are far more than just places to stay. With the accessibility granted by today's technology, college students have the ability to work, play and live within one cohesive building unit. Where dorms were once just the "room" component of room and board, they're now frequently furnished with comfortable lounges, study rooms, and other spaces that help to establish a community atmosphere.



However, it is not enough to simply design non-residential rooms in addition to dormitories. Amenities such as kitchens and lounges encourage interaction between students while design elements such as openness and natural light create a more comfortable space for socialization. In a study by the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (hereafter the MSCBA), campus residential buildings were evaluated on their effectiveness as living communities. It was found that "lighting schemes that combine daylight and hidden artificial light sources produce inviting atmospheres and excellent light levels. They highlight the architecture and emphasize activity areas" (6). The cinder block and stone dorms of the past are thus not only outdated but actually detrimental to students' perception of the space.

The character of a space is also important. Students are drawn to rooms that are accessible and visible. "Open spaces are far more likely to be active social spaces than closed rooms," as any "barrier diminishes the likelihood that a student will enter the space and engage in activities" (6). This is doubly important because "closed or less visible spaces can also feel unsafe" (6). It follows that an open space can also be a larger space suited for many types of activities. "Students find it less intimidating to enter a space where many things are happening," and this explains the layout of many dormitory recreation rooms: pool tables, pianos, ping-pong tables, couches and chairs can all be commonly found housed in one room (6). It was found in the MSCBA study that "at a residence hall with a large multi-activity area next to the entry, students in the same space were playing pool, studying, cooking, and watching TV. They were talking from one group to the other, and there was no sense that the many activities were impinging on each other," whereas in buildings with less versatile spaces that could be filled by one group for one purpose students would feel less comfortable socializing as it was "not their crowd" (6).

Two residence buildings that best exemplify these characteristics are Van Meter Hall at the University of Massachusetts Amherst as described in the aforementioned study and the North Quadrangle at the University of Michigan (5). Both make use of open spaces, mixed natural and artificial lighting, comfortable furniture, and multifunctional rooms to draw students for activities. Interestingly, in 32% of the observed cases at the North Quadrangle, it was actually in use by non-resident students, emphasizing its prominence as a community space.

By renovating or designing new residence halls with community spaces in mind, social interaction between students is thus more easily achieved. When students feel comfortable with shared spaces in their buildings, they are better equipped to engage socially by talking freely or inviting others to join them. Living-learning environments conducive to socialization, will naturally encourage a dynamic diversity, creating opportunities for interaction between residents with distinct and varied cultures.

# UNIVERSITY HOUSING

ASSIGNING STUDENT HOUSING TO FOSTER DIVERSITY

## DORMITORY DISCUSSIONS

Many residence halls are effectively multicultural in nature, with many people of different backgrounds living together in the same space. Some residence halls, though, take this approach a step further by actively engaging students to share their experiences with one another. One example is the Multicultural Learning Community in Witte Hall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dedicated to embracing identity and cultural differences, the floor involves its members in group discussions, dinners and events to help them grow as leaders and as people.

Penn State has its own global community. Located in Simmons Hall, the GLOBE floor is a special living option for students with multicultural interests. Residents have hailed from countries like Germany, Ireland, Russia, India, China, Egypt, Vietnam, Ukraine, and Poland, and they are all committed to connecting with each other in a living-learning environment.

A unique aspect of the GLOBE is its point system. Residents are required to attain a number of points per semester, and these points can be obtained in various ways., the most common activities by far are Global Discussions. Each GLOBE resident is also required to host at least one discussion per semester, and these talks can be on any topic relating to international affairs and culture. This system encourages hall residents to build the community environment and share their unique perspectives on issues.

Maria Badanova, a Russian GLOBE resident and the freshman representative of the executive board, offers her opinion on the distinction between coexisting with others and actively communicating with them in activities. "While we all live here that doesn't necessarily give us a chance to talk about our experiences from different backgrounds. But when you come to a discussion you start with a topic and people will talk about places they've lived and offer their perspectives. It gives an opportunity to bring diversity out whereas you might not get that from simply living next to someone."

The Penn State university-wide class of 2020 is fairly diverse. International students compose 8.2% of the class student body, making them one of the most significant minority groups on campuses. Siddharth Patra, an international student from India living in the GLOBE, speaks to cultural events' effectiveness at creating a more welcoming environment. "You won't find a concentration of such diverse students almost anywhere else on campus so when we have events that celebrate what these people do in their home countries it helps an international student adjust to being in a different place. It makes life easier for them and it makes Penn State worth being in."

By encouraging or requiring students to partake in events with a multicultural focus, they become better acquainted with their peers and grow more comfortable with expressing themselves as a member of the living community.





# UNIVERSITY HOUSING

ASSIGNING STUDENT HOUSING TO FOSTER DIVERSITY

## POTENTIAL DRAWBACKS

### Orientation Programs

In general, orientation programs require a large amount of funding, planning, training, and labor to be successfully implemented. Programs and events would require a great deal of organization and leadership structure. A freshman diversity seminar would have to be fit into the course curriculum in universities and may take the place of classes more beneficial/relevant to particular majors. Pre-college orientation initiatives would require the running of university facilities for more days than the normal year and would further increase costs.



### Dormitory Design

For a large scale remodeling of dormitories, the cost would be tremendously high monetarily, and would possibly decrease the student capacity of the school. Building completely new buildings, as of 2008, costs anywhere from 12 to 34 million dollars, all of which are enormous sums of money (7). New I.D. cards would have to be calibrated and the buildings would have to be outfitted with all sorts of amenities for student life that would add to costs.

### Dormitory Discussions

Some students may be reluctant to participate in dormitory events and may seek to isolate themselves despite the best efforts of organizers. Events would need to be monitored by a committee and/or coordinator for the floor, and would require funding occasionally.



# SUMMARY

This deliberation will focus on the ways Penn State can improve diversity on campus. Our deliberation will focus on three major approaches to help this issue. These include increasing access to financial aid, promoting more diversity-focused events for students to participate in on campus, and creating a housing system that highlights and unites people of various cultures to enrich every student's experience at Penn State. Feel free to refer to the tables below at any point during the deliberation for a brief collection of the pros and cons to each of these approaches.



## APPROACH ONE

**Develop better education programs about financial aid as well as provide more financial aid for low income students.**

### Pros

- High tuition costs would no longer prevent socioeconomic diversity on campus.
- FAFSA workshops and work-study scholarship information sessions would teach students how to finance their education.
- Students would have a better chance of attending a four year school, remaining enrolled at the institution, and feeling included within the student body.
- Increased access to financial aid would decrease students' work burden, therefore, improving academic performance.

### Cons

- Legal barriers on race/discrimination could hold back the expansion of racially-conscious scholarships and financial aid.
- Increasing grant aid would move away from merit-based scholarships.
- Taxpayer money may be used for funding financial aid to lower-income students.

# SUMMARY

## APPROACH TWO

Appropriating sufficient resources to diversity-focused programs and clubs that would give the University the ability to achieve greater diversity. Campus-wide diversity can be achieved through the development of incentives for students, funding for clubs, and the adjustment of admission quotas.

### Pros

- University-led and mandated events and programs can promote diversity within the student body.
- University funding can help clubs afford to hold larger and more engaging events.
- Students could receive extra credit in classes or receive class credits for attending diversity-focused events.
- "Culture Days" would allow students and faculty to interact with cultures they may have not previously been familiar with.

### Cons

- Risk of lowering the caliber of admitted students, if admissions were restricted to matching campus diversity to reflect the American population as a whole
- Unless certain classes were required, students may not feel obliged to enroll in classes focused on diversity or other cultures.

## APPROACH THREE

Universities could take more initiative in planning housing with diversity in mind.

### Pros

- Students will learn how to cooperate and live surrounded by students of various backgrounds.
- Students would develop a more global perspective of cultures around the world.
- Students would learn lessons that would be carried with them beyond the university setting.

### Cons

- Orientation programs require a large amount of funding, planning, training, and labor to be successfully implemented.
- Programs and events would require a great deal of organization and leadership structure.
- A mass diversity seminar may take the place of classes more relevant to particular majors.
- Pre-college orientation initiatives would require the running of university facilities for more days than the normal year and would further increase costs.
- A large scale remodel of residence life would be a very large expense.

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# SURVEY

## Post-Deliberation Survey

Now that you've had a chance to participate in a forum on this issue, we'd like to know what you are thinking. Your opinions will be reflected in a summary report that will be available to all citizens in your local community.

<b>Do you agree or disagree with the statements below?</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
Students tend to surround themselves with students alike, rather than venture out to new cultural communities.					
Support of inclusive diversity will, in the long run, enhance our community.					
Admissions should provide financial aid to certain students to enhance campus diversity regardless of their academic skill.					
Penn State should enforce mandatory events about inclusion on campus.					
More diverse housing communities would allow students to develop social skills with people of all backgrounds.					

# SURVEY

<b>Do you agree or disagree with the statements below?</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
The University should provide more funding for clubs that encourage diversity.					
The University should host more events that spread awareness of the diversity on campus.					
The University should allot more funding for students in need of financial aid, so that they can attend regardless of socioeconomic status.					
The University should create housing more conducive to forming diverse living spaces.					
Students with exposure to more diverse communities will gain a more global perspective.					
Our campus is currently both very diverse and inclusive.					
The University should establish more opportunities for students to create a more diverse campus community.					

# SURVEY

<b>Do you favor or oppose the following statements?</b>	<b>Strongly favor</b>	<b>Somewhat favor</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat oppose</b>	<b>Strongly oppose</b>
It is fair for admissions to accept students simply because they would contribute to a more diverse student body.					
By sharing a common living area with people of various backgrounds, students will become more globally aware.					
Students should attend university for experiences that will prepare them for life after university, rather than to solely obtain a degree.					
Penn State should require students to attend information sessions that discuss the importance of a diverse college experience.					

# *SURVEY*

**1. Are you thinking differently about this issue now that you have participated in the forum?**

YES NO

If so, please explain.

**2. In your forum, did you talk about aspects of the issue you hadn't considered before?**

YES NO

If so, please explain.



# *SURVEY*

**3. What might citizens in your community do differently as a result of this forum?**

**4. Is there anything else you would like to add?**

**5. How old are you?**

17 or younger

18-25

26-40

40-65

65-older

**6. Are You:**

African American

White/Caucasian

Asian American

Hispanic

Native American

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How do you identify in terms of gender?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for participating in our deliberation and survey.**