

# **Report on African American Faculty Diversity at SDSU**

## **Committee on Diversity, Equity and Outreach**

**May 3, 2005**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The paucity of African American faculty at SDSU has been a chronic problem for at least the last thirty years. Overall faculty diversity at SDSU increased from 14% in 1992 to 24% in 2004. However, the University has not been as successful in recruiting and retaining African American faculty members as it has been with other groups (for all groups of faculty of color, SDSU is above the national average except for African American faculty, for whom SDSU is below the national average).

Concerned about this state of affairs, Provost Marlin and Senate Chair Hornbeck charged the Diversity, Equity and Outreach Committee to investigate African American faculty diversity and to provide recommendations on hiring and retention in August, 2004. In response to this charge, the DEO presents this report, which includes concrete recommendations as summarized below.

To enhance the recruitment of African American faculty, the DEO recommends:

- disseminating and using best recruitment practices
- developing outreach programs in selected departments in order to build the most diverse applicant pool possible
- directing new positions to disciplines that graduate relatively greater percentages of African American PhDs and that attract the most African American students at SDSU
- developing cluster hiring
- recruiting an outstanding, high profile scholar with expertise in African diaspora issues

To enhance the retention of African American faculty, the DEO recommends:

- providing effective mentoring and implementing a formal campus-wide mentoring program
- protecting faculty members' workload
- ensuring opportunities for ethnically diverse faculty and/or faculty who understand and advocate multicultural and interdisciplinary research to be elected to RTP committees
- recruiting African American graduate students

San Diego State University is committed to furthering social justice, one of the five aspects of its Shared Vision. The University's position on diversity is outlined in the Policy File, which states that diversity shall be an essential consideration in all University policies and decisions. SDSU recognizes that having a diverse faculty has a positive impact on the quality of education for all students because students are exposed to a variety of scholarly perspectives, teaching methods, and new fields of inquiry.

The paucity of African American faculty at SDSU has been a chronic problem for at least the last thirty years. In 1975, SDSU had 23 African American faculty members. In the fall semester of 2004, there were 28 African American tenure/tenure track faculty, divided as follows: 18 full-time instructional faculty, 5 FERP faculty, 4 non-instructional faculty, and 1 with a primarily administrative position. Concerned about this state of affairs, Provost Marlin and Senate Chair Hornbeck charged the Diversity, Equity and Outreach Committee to investigate African American faculty diversity and to provide concrete recommendations on hiring and retention in August, 2004.

To do so, the Diversity, Equity and Outreach Committee constituted a subcommittee composed of members of the standing DEO committee and additional African American faculty, administrators, staff, and student members. The subcommittee met regularly between November and April to investigate the issue and prepare a report. We gathered information in several ways: obtaining data from the Office of Faculty Affairs and the Office of Analytic Studies and Institutional Research; doing a literature search on hiring and retention of diverse faculty; surveying college deans as well as African American faculty currently on campus and formerly affiliated with SDSU; contacting relevant personnel at a few other universities; consulting and discussing earlier reports written by the Study Commission on Black Affairs and the California Black Faculty and Staff Association; and brainstorming recommendations in the subcommittee and the DEO committee (see appendices A, B, and C for survey questionnaires).

Some University policies that have been in place for a number of years provide a strong foundation for our efforts to recruit and retain African American faculty members. For example, the Provost has encouraged all departments to reduce teaching loads as a matter of policy for probationary faculty in their first and sometimes second years. Departments and schools are urged to protect the time of probationary faculty members, who are actively discouraged from taking on inordinate amounts of University service. When necessary, administrators will intervene to reduce teaching and service loads. The Research Foundation assists faculty in obtaining outside funding for professional growth, and the University provides almost one-half million dollars per year in intramural funding. Some departments have formal or semi-formal mentoring programs for tenure-track faculty, and at least one college (PSFA) is moving towards instituting a college-wide mentoring program. The Office of Faculty Affairs and the Center for Teaching and Learning provide an orientation to incoming faculty members at the beginning of the fall semester, follow-up activities during the first two years on campus, and various workshops open to all faculty. SDSU's status as a national, urban university increasingly draws to it a diverse, motivated, and highly qualified faculty and student body. Overall faculty diversity has increased from 14% in 1992 to 24% in 2004. Between 1998-99 and

2004-05, 34% of newly hired faculty were persons of color. In 2004-05, 56% of newly hired faculty were persons of color.

However, the University has not been as successful in recruiting and retaining African American faculty members as it has been with other groups (for all groups of faculty of color, SDSU is above the national average except for African American faculty, for whom SDSU is below the national average). Indeed, the numbers of African American full-time instructional faculty dropped precipitously in 2004-05 from 24 to 18 in part because a relatively large number of senior African American faculty elected to take the retirement incentive at the end of the 2004 academic year. The five additional faculty members who are in the FERP program will all be leaving within the next 1-3 years (three of them will complete their five years in 2005-06, one in 2006-07, and one in 2007-08). Thus, it is imperative that the University take strong and immediate action to significantly improve our efforts and outcomes with respect to recruitment and retention.

It should be noted that this is not a short-term challenge with short-term solutions. There are no steps we can take that will make an immediate and dramatic change in the number of African Americans on the faculty. That is all the more reason to begin working now on the long-term strategies we propose below. The sooner we begin, and the more focused and energetic our efforts, the sooner we will see results.

It is recognized that the issues of access, recruitment, and retention are critical to a highly efficient, cost effective work environment. It is also acknowledged in virtually all corporate, academic, and non-profit sectors that diversity is a wise business decision, excessive turnover is costly, and the workplace, to the greatest extent possible, should attempt to reflect the clientele served. In academia, we believe that when students are able to see their professors as credible role models, and are able to identify with staff and administrators whom they might seek to emulate, they are more likely to seek out these individuals for guidance, or, at a minimum, see these individuals as persons after whom they might wish to pattern their own paths to success.

Proposition 209, although it has had a chilling effect on the “traditional” recruitment/retention tools, has not foreclosed all avenues for diverse, effective recruitment. To that end, we offer in I-A a list of recruitment strategies which may effectively be used to develop a diverse applicant pool of excellent candidates for various positions. These techniques would be used in addition to the standard recruitment avenues (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, CSU website, etc.). The UC Office of the President, as well as UCSC and UCLA, maintain helpful information for those who might want more detailed information on what we are allowed to do under Proposition 209. See <http://www.ucop.edu/pres/affirmguide.html>, <http://www2.ucsc.edu/eo-aa/Post209.html>, and <http://www.chr.ucla.edu/chr/sa/saa0209.html>.

Research shows that in order to attract and retain African American faculty members, a university needs to have a strong commitment to diversity at the highest institutional levels (from the President and Provost, through the Deans, to department chairs and faculty) and provide concrete programs in order to achieve results (see bibliography). It is

in the spirit of respect for our efforts to date and enthusiasm for the challenge ahead of us that we offer the following recommendations.

## **I. Recommendations to enhance the recruitment of African American faculty**

A. Departments may wish to improve their recruitment practices, but not have specific ideas about how to go about it. To that end, we have developed the following list of “Best Recruitment Practices” which can be disseminated through the Office of Diversity and Equity and the Office of the Vice-President for Faculty Affairs:

1. In order to attract a diverse candidate pool, a job description should, when possible, consider:
  - a broad range of skills and interdisciplinary perspectives
  - a focus on subject areas that attract large numbers of African American scholars such as urban issues and multicultural issues;
2. Draft the job announcement to include experience in and/or commitment to working in a multicultural environment with large numbers of students of diverse backgrounds and learning styles as a desired qualification;
3. Advertise the announcement in diversity publications such as *Black Issues in Higher Education*, including specialized listserves such as Afroam-L;
4. Contact academic institutions which serve diverse populations to request names of possible applicants;
5. Ask colleagues for specific referrals of possible candidates and follow up;
6. Provide sub-committees, as well as the traditional “employment boards” at conferences with recruitment announcements;
7. Recruit potential candidates through the Forgivable Loan Program;
8. Recruit candidates from our PhD programs where applicable;
9. Ensure a quick and early job search process (start early fall and end early winter);
10. Search committees should meet with the Director of the Office of Diversity and Equity at the beginning of the search process to learn about proactive practices;
11. Establish relationships with African American communities and organizations as well as Historically Black Colleges and Universities;
12. Provide a strong commitment to diversity from College leadership;
13. Elect a search committee that is diverse in terms of rank, ethnicity, and gender (including someone from outside the department if needed);
14. Elect a search committee chair who is committed to diversity and knowledgeable on the issues;
15. Be open to partner hires;
16. Have a retention plan for new faculty hires and share it with applicants during the campus visit;
17. Apprise candidates that diversity is one of the five priorities of SDSU’s shared vision statement;
18. Ensure that the candidate's visit to campus results in meeting, sharing meals, and exchanging information with a diversity of persons reflective of the diversity on the SDSU campus and the San Diego community;
19. Ensure that departments are offering equitable salaries and perks to all new hires;

20. Follow up with the new hire and assign a mentor, as well as perform a “checking in” with the employee to determine if indeed, all is well;
21. Apprise the Office of Diversity and Equity when an individual is severing their service from SDSU in order for an exit interview to be conducted by the ODE, which is outside the individual’s chain of authority.

B. To enhance the effectiveness of departmental recruitment, the DEO suggests the following use of resources. The Provost and/or Deans should provide assigned time and/or summer funding for a faculty member in selected departments to develop outreach programs in order to build the most diverse applicant pool possible through year-round, pro-active, intensive outreach. This outreach may include, but would not be limited to: developing personal contacts with faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other relevant departments, universities, and with the local community, in particular departments and universities identified as producing the largest numbers of African American scholars; attending regional conferences for the Compact for Faculty Diversity; contacting relevant professional caucuses; and obtaining and consulting lists of PhD recipients through the Minority and Women Doctoral Directory <http://www.mwdd.com/index.asp> and lists of minority doctoral fellowship and grant recipients. (See appendices D and E for a list of leading institutions granting doctorates to African American scholars and a list of institutions offering the PhD in interdisciplinary African diaspora studies.)

C. National statistics show great differences among fields of study in the numbers of PhDs awarded to African Americans. To make the most effective use of resources, the Provost and Deans can direct new positions to disciplines that graduate relatively greater percentages of African American PhDs, such as education, psychology, sociology, biology, history, and English. They can direct new positions to departments that graduate the most African American students at SDSU (such as criminal justice administration, public administration, psychology, sociology, and biology), that have the most African American majors on campus (such as criminal justice administration, psychology, biology, public administration, nursing, and sociology), and that have the largest numbers of African American graduate students (such as counseling and social work). (See appendices F, G, H and I for a list of disciplines that graduate relatively greater percentages of African American doctorate holders and lists of SDSU departments that graduate the most African American undergraduate students, that have the largest concentration of African American majors, and that have the largest numbers of African American graduate students.)

D. African American faculty often report that they are the only “token” member of their department. Isolation is a serious block to retention. To alleviate this situation, the DEO recommends developing cluster hiring (seeking to hire cohorts of diverse faculty instead of one or two per year) in order to build a critical mass. An example could be to develop a three-year plan to hire ten faculty members with expertise in an area of African American, African, African diaspora studies and/or urban studies at open rank. These faculty members could have appointments across a wide range of departments and colleges. The literature indicates that cluster hiring is one of the most effective ways to

ensure retention as it helps alleviate isolation and alienation (see bibliography). The University has been successful in attracting diverse faculty members with expertise in Asia Pacific studies and border studies in part because of the efforts of individual faculty members over decades to develop programs, centers, and departments. These efforts can be and have been accelerated by support from the Administration. We suggest that the University now focus on urban studies and African diaspora issues, which could have as a consequence the building of a critical mass of African American faculty. We identify these two areas because they dovetail with established University priorities and programs: urban studies because of the City Heights initiative and many academic programs focused on addressing urban challenges; African diaspora studies because of our international commitment and our existing and potential research and teaching on African American communities, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa itself. We propose as a beginning that a prominent scholar in each area be invited to campus to give a public lecture and conduct workshops with selected departments on integrating these areas into their academic plans and tenure-track faculty requests.

E. To expand upon the previous point, departments may consider recruiting an outstanding, high profile scholar with expertise in African diaspora issues. This academic “star” will be well established and connected in his or her field of research. The presence of this faculty member will attract highly motivated, diverse graduate students, research money and positive visibility for SDSU.

## **II. Recommendations to enhance the retention of African American faculty**

A. Mentoring is a key factor in faculty retention. The DEO recommends that all levels of the University engage in providing effective mentoring, especially for assistance in the promotion and tenure process and to avoid isolation. Consider implementing a formal campus-wide mentoring program. Provide department chairs and tenured faculty with cross-cultural and cross-gender coaching to improve their mentoring skills. Encourage faculty to seek more than one mentor, including at least one outside the department, and including at least one African American mentor for African American tenure-track faculty. Encourage tenure-track faculty to form small peer-mentoring groups, such as a career-advancement discussion group or writing group.

B. Faculty members report that heavy workloads, including service, can impede progress toward achieving tenure. It is important to protect the faculty member’s workload by providing a reduced teaching load for probationary faculty as a matter of policy and ensuring that service requirements are kept to a minimum for probationary faculty. This is particularly important given that student mentoring and service loads increase in a manner that is inversely proportional to the numbers of members of a given group on the faculty.

C. Within the parameters of the MOU and the Policy File, departments should ensure opportunities for ethnically diverse faculty and/or faculty who understand and advocate multicultural and interdisciplinary research to be elected to RTP committees at the departmental, college, and university levels.

D. As a research and graduate institution, we know that faculty are often drawn to a university because of the opportunity to work with excellent, diverse students. To that end, the DEO recommends recruiting African American graduate students. Their research interests will often match those of African American faculty, which, in turn, will enhance retention of African American graduate students and may encourage them to pursue academic careers. We can find out about excellent undergraduate students of color to recruit through a variety of resources such as the National Name Exchange Program [www.grad.washington.edu/nameexch/national/](http://www.grad.washington.edu/nameexch/national/) and the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship Program [www.mellon.org/awmf.html](http://www.mellon.org/awmf.html). We should also encourage our own excellent African American undergraduate and master's students to pursue graduate education and to become future faculty. Some colleges such as Sciences and Engineering have been taking advantage of many federal programs to increase numbers of underrepresented students in graduate education through preparing undergraduate students to do research with faculty members.

The DEO requests that this report be disseminated by the Provost's office to all Deans, and that Deans disseminate this report to all departmental Chairs. We further request that the report be discussed by the Council of Deans and that Deans discuss it at their Chairs' Councils.

Assessment: The DEO welcomes the opportunity to work with faculty and administrators to support them in their efforts to act on this report's recommendations. The Office of Diversity and Equity is willing to prepare and administer an exit survey to all faculty members who leave SDSU in order to find out the recurring reasons why faculty members leave in order to continue to devise strategies for better retention. This exit survey should be provided to faculty members prior to their departure from campus. The DEO is willing to provide a yearly assessment report on University practices and outcomes. The DEO is willing to appoint a subcommittee composed of members of the standing DEO committee and additional faculty, administrators, staff, and student members as appropriate to conduct an assessment of the effectiveness of this report to facilitate changes in recruitment and retention efforts at the end of three years. This will provide a systematic approach to determine which strategies have been implemented, which of these strategies worked, which did not and why. We can also, at that time, measure the results of our efforts to recruit, hire, and promote African and African American faculty.

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## Appendix A

### Survey questionnaire for African American faculty currently at SDSU

#### QUESTIONS

1. Why did you come to SDSU?
2. How were you treated in the recruitment process?
3. How have you been treated since joining the faculty?
4. Why have you stayed? Would you consider leaving?
5. SDSU wants to recruit more African American faculty. Are there specific things that we could do to be more effective?
6. SDSU wants to retain its African American faculty. Do you have any suggestions for improving the conditions for and numbers of African American faculty in your department and/or the campus as a whole?
7. Do you have any additional concerns or input pertaining to African Americans at SDSU?

#### IF YOU ARE NO LONGER AT SDSU

Why did you leave?

The committee modeled this questionnaire on a Spring 2004 UCSD questionnaire. See <http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/offices/apo/reports/UFTF/Attachment8.pdf> for the UCSD questionnaire.

## Appendix B

### **Survey questionnaire for African American faculty who are no longer at SDSU**

#### QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose to come to SDSU?
2. Could you please describe the treatment you received during the recruitment process? In particular, could you describe what was positive? Also, could you describe what was negative?
3. Please describe the kind of support you received from your department and college while you were a faculty member at SDSU.
4. Did you have a mentor while at SDSU? If so, please describe how you were mentored.
5. Please describe the reasons for your leaving SDSU.
6. What could SDSU have done to entice you to stay?
7. SDSU wants to recruit more African American faculty members and retain them. What would your recommendations be for improving the hiring and retention of African American faculty at SDSU?
8. Do you have any additional concerns or input pertaining to African Americans at SDSU?

The committee modeled this questionnaire on a Spring 2004 UCSD questionnaire. See <http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/offices/apo/reports/UFTF/Attachment8.pdf> for the UCSD questionnaire.

Appendix C

**Deans' survey questionnaire**

Please provide your responses to the following items:

Name of the person completing this survey \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_

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1. Please describe your College's goals toward ethnic and racial diversity.
2. State how the above goals supports the university's diversity goals expressed in the Shared Vision plan.
3. What resources would help your college advance your ethnic and race-related diversity goals?
4. Please describe the efforts made by you and your colleagues in your college to ensure the ethnic diversity on search/hiring committees.
5. Please describe the efforts made to ensure an ethnically and racially diverse pool of potential faculty and staff.
6. Please describe the types of ethnically related topics discussed at college-wide meetings, if any.
7. Describe the role that the recruitment and retention of African American faculty/staff play in promoting the success of your college.
8. List all African Americans who have been speakers at sponsored programs and/or academic events.

Appendix D

**Doctorate-granting accredited universities having the largest numbers of African American doctorate recipients, 1999-2003**

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| 1 - Howard University                                   | 255   |
| 2 - University of Michigan                              | 147   |
| 3 - Ohio State University                               | 127   |
| 4 - University of Maryland                              | 121   |
| 5 - Loyola University Chicago                           | 120   |
| 6 - University of North Carolina Chapel Hill            | 117   |
| 7 - Wayne State University                              | 108   |
| 8 - Temple University                                   | 104   |
| 9 - Harvard University                                  | 99    |
| 10- University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign             | 97    |
| 11- Teachers College Columbia University                | 95    |
| 12- University of Texas at Austin                       | 95    |
| 13- North Carolina State University Raleigh             | 93    |
| 14-University of California Berkeley                    | 92    |
| 15- Florida State University                            | 91    |
| 16- Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | 91    |
| 17- Michigan State University                           | 89    |
| <hr/>   |       |
| Top 17 institutions                                     | 1,941 |

Source: 2003 Survey of Earned Doctorates  
<http://www.norc.uchicago.edu/issues/sed-2003.pdf>

## Appendix E

### **Departments and universities offering the PhD in African Diaspora Studies**

Harvard University

Morgan State University (History)

Rutgers University (History)

Temple University

University of California at Berkeley

University of Massachusetts at Amherst

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (Literature)

Yale University

### Departments and universities offering a graduate minor in Africana Studies

Duke University (graduate certification)

Indiana University (PhD minor)

University of Nebraska at Omaha (graduate minor)

Source: eBlackStudies

<http://www.eblackstudies.org/graduate.html>

## Appendix F

### **Disciplines that graduate relatively greater percentages of African American doctorate holders**

Education

Theological studies/religious vocations

Social sciences and history

Psychology

Biological sciences/life sciences

Health professions and related sciences

Engineering

Physical Sciences

English

Business management and administrative services

Multi/interdisciplinary studies

Home Economics

Public administration and services

Source: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, "Completions" survey, 1997-98 and "Consolidated" survey, 1998.

## Appendix G

### **SDSU departments that graduate the most African American students (Bachelors' Degrees, 2002-2003)**

|                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| 1 - Criminal Justice Administration | 24 |
| 2 - Public Administration           | 17 |
| 3 - Psychology                      | 15 |
| 4 - Sociology                       | 14 |
| 5 - Biology                         | 10 |
| 6 - English                         | 9  |
| 7 - Child Development               | 8  |
| 8 - Communication Specializations   | 8  |
| 9 - Economics                       | 8  |
| 10- Liberal Studies                 | 8  |

Source: SDSU Analytic Studies

## Appendix H

### **SDSU departments with the largest numbers of African American majors (Fall 2003)**

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 - Business Administration         | 76 pre-majors        |
| 2 - Criminal Justice Administration | 40 (+ 33 pre-majors) |
| 3 - Psychology                      | 36 (+ 69 pre-majors) |
| 4 - Biology                         | 28 (+ 38 pre-majors) |
| 5 - Public Administration           | 28 (+ 7 pre-majors)  |
| 6 - Nursing                         | 18 (+ 26 pre-majors) |
| 7 - Sociology                       | 18 (+ 26 pre-majors) |
| 8 - English                         | 18 (+ 15 pre-majors) |
| 9 - Communication Specializations   | 11 (+ 27 pre-majors) |
| 10- Political Science               | 17 (+ 14 pre-majors) |

Source: SDSU Analytic Studies

Appendix I

**SDSU departments with the largest numbers of  
African American graduate students  
(Fall 2003)**

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| 1 – Counseling                | 20 |
| 2 – Social Work               | 16 |
| 3 – Public Administration     | 7  |
| 4 – Rehabilitation Counseling | 7  |
| 5 – Educational Leadership    | 6  |
| 6 – Public Health             | 6  |
| 7 – Business Administration   | 4  |
| 8 – Education                 | 4  |

Source: SDSU Analytic Studies