



Strategies for Effective Diversity Programs in Graduate Schools: Promoting Inclusiveness

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My Basic Premise

- Diversity programs can only be successful if the climate for *all* graduate students is one that promotes:
 - Inclusiveness
 - Academic success
 - Self-confidence
 - Life balance
 - Professional development

With the university as a whole serving as a mentor to shepherd each student



Meyerhoff Scholarship Program

- To recruit, nurture, and develop a diverse group of high-achieving domestic students who have an interest in pursuing doctoral study (Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D.) in STEM.
- Students also must have an interest in the advancement of underrepresented groups in the sciences and related fields.

Meyerhoff Program Outcomes

As of February 2010:

267 Meyerhoff Scholarship Program alumni have completed graduate degrees at prestigious universities across the nation. This group of graduates includes **65** who have earned Ph.D.s, **22** M.D./Ph.D.s, **65** M.D.s, and **115** who have earned master's or professional degrees in engineering and other STEM-related fields.

300 Alumni are currently enrolled in graduate and professional schools.

230 Scholars are currently enrolled at UMBC: 51% African American, 25% Caucasian, 18% Asian American, 5% Hispanic and 1% American Indian

** Students were **5.3** times more likely to have graduated from or currently be attending a STEM Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. program than those who were invited to join but declined and attended another university.*

Meyerhoff Scholarship Program: Learn More

- The Meyerhoff Scholarship Program at UMBC celebrated its 20th year in 2008
<http://www.umbc.edu/meyerhoff/>

Alumni at reunion in 2000



What Makes the Meyerhoff Program Successful?

- Fully integrated into the academic affairs infrastructure:
 - Reports to the Provost's office.
 - Advisory board of STEM department chairs.
 - The most productive research faculty serve as mentors and advocates.
 - Faculty are proud of the program and are eager to have brilliant undergraduate students work in their labs beside graduate students and post docs.

Why Do So Many Programs Fail?

- Self-contained programs not integrated into the mainstream of academic affairs.
- Defeatist attitude: “The problem is too large for us to make a dent.”
- Deflecting the problem: “We don’t have funding from NSF or NIH so we can’t do all those things.”
- “Committed to being committed” but never quite turn ideas into action with proper support.



Translating the Meyerhoff Success to Graduate Students

- Funding:
 - Meyerhoff Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences funded by NIH IMSD training grant
 - PROMISE: Maryland's AGEP
 - GAANN and IGERT training grants
 - Ph.D. Completion Project
- Institutional transformation:
 - Discussions at graduate program director (GPD) meetings
 - Discussions at President's Council
 - Discussions with individual department chairs and GPDs

Outcomes



- 44% increase in enrollment of and 45% increase in Ph.D. degrees to underrepresented minorities in STEM disciplines.
- Chemistry department has adopted Meyerhoff Graduate Program activities for all students including summer bridge for all domestic students.
- Buy-in from faculty to include diversity initiatives in their grant applications.

What Can You Do?

- Implement policies, practices and programs listed on the CGS Ph.D. Completion Project “Factor Assessment Template”

<http://www.phdcompletion.org/tools/index.asp>

- Admissions
- Advising, Mentoring, and Research
- Financial Support and Funding Structures
- Program Environment
- Administrative Processes and Procedures

What Can You Do?

10 Lessons Learned

- CGS Occasional Paper Series on Inclusiveness

“University as Mentor:
Lessons Learned from UMBC
Inclusiveness Initiatives”



<http://www.cgsnet.org/Default.aspx?tabid=290>

10 Lessons Learned

- **Lesson 1:** Identify and cultivate the campus leadership—administrative, academic, and intellectual—to assist in developing initiatives that foster student retention and success.
- **Lesson 2:** Work continually to gain faculty and staff engagement, involvement, and ownership in creating a campus atmosphere that fosters student success among an inclusive community of scholars.

10 Lessons Learned

- **Lesson 3:** Work with graduate program admissions committees to establish appropriate recruitment strategies and admissions criteria.
- **Lesson 4:** Ensure that every graduate program has in place a system that supports a successful mentoring relationship throughout the student's progress.

10 Lessons Learned

- **Lesson 5:** Have in place a mechanism for record-keeping and reporting to monitor graduate student and departmental successes and failures.
- **Lesson 6:** Provide an extensive orientation to new graduate students and establish a support system to assist in the transition to the culture of doctoral education and research.

10 Lessons Learned

- **Lesson 7:** Establish within each program a clearly articulated policy regarding financial support for doctoral students.
- **Lesson 8:** Establish recognition and rewards for students and mentors as they progress over the academic hurdles.

10 Lessons Learned

- **Lesson 9:** Recognize that underrepresented minority and women doctoral students are especially vulnerable, and put into place programs and services that foster engagement and minimize potential marginalization.
- **Lesson 10:** Prepare students deliberately and explicitly for the next phase of their lives—life after graduate school.