

The State University System Access and Diversity Team

November 17, 2005

In its 2005-2013 Strategic Plan, the Florida Board of Governors has expressed a commitment to improving access and diversity in the State University System (SUS). One specific goal for the System is to increase the ratio of the percentage of all graduates from the SUS who are from underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups (Black, Hispanic, and Native American) to the percentage of 18-44 year-old individuals in Florida from these same groups. In addition to the broad issues of race and ethnic representation, there may be diversity issues related to students' socioeconomic status, age, gender, disability status, family educational background, etc.

An interinstitutional team has been established to assist the Student Affairs Committee, the full Board of Governors, and the State universities as they strive to increase access and diversity in the System. Initially, the State University System Access and Diversity Team will focus on undergraduate education. The Team will:

- **Gather and analyze data to determine patterns and trends regarding undergraduate access and diversity in the SUS within the context of State and national trends.**
- **Identify specific barriers to undergraduate access and diversity in the SUS.**
- **Identify and target areas where efficiencies might be gained in student services to increase undergraduate access and diversity in the SUS.**
- **Identify and target best practices that might be leveraged to improve undergraduate access and diversity in the SUS.**
- **Provide the Student Affairs Committee with a set of highly focused recommendations for systemic action, as well as recommendations for consideration by individual universities, in the areas of:**
 - **Academic and Social Preparation [e.g., student/family perception of value and possibility of higher education; college academic readiness].**
 - **Financial Access [e.g., assistance with negotiating the financial aid application process; sufficient financial support for entrance into and progress through higher education].**
 - **Support for Academic and Social Integration for Enrolled Students [e.g., academic and student support services; student perception of campus climate].**
- **Identify those recommendations that would require Board leadership, funding, State-level policies, and/or collaboration with other agencies.**

The Access and Diversity Team should be prepared to provide an initial report to the Student Affairs Committee at the Committee meeting scheduled for February 23, 2006.