Faculty Diversity and Excellence:
A Compelling University Interest (6/11)

Vision:

Faculty diversity, broadly defined, is a compelling University interest. It is compelling because it is a necessary condition, among others, to fulfill our mission as a public university that excels in research, teaching, and service. "Enhance diversity in order to ensure excellence in education and research" is one of six key priorities in our Strategic Framework for 2009-2014.

Purpose of document:

This document explains the relationship of faculty diversity to excellence and our mission. It defines diversity broadly, to encompass both social and intellectual aspects, and their interrelation. It considers faculty diversity essential in all three domains of our mission – research, teaching, and service.

Faculty Diversity and the Research Mission:

A great public university must take seriously the mission of research – the production of original knowledge that moves academic fields forward by extending established ideas, by unsettling or revising once accepted wisdoms, and by placing new research questions on the intellectual table. To accomplish this task, universities recognize the value of diversity, and the interplay of its intellectual and social aspects, in several ways. Examples are listed below.

1. *Generational diversity.* Universities seek a generational balance that assures an infusion of up-and-coming scholars, less tied to established research ideas, and a cadre of wise senior scholars, experienced in the art of pushing fields forward. Generational mixing helps spark new intellectual questions, or new ways to look at old questions.

2. *Field/subfield diversity.* Universities see value in having different subfields of knowledge rub up against one another. We seek a balance between "building on strength," and avoiding narrow specialization. Too much homogeneity within a narrowly defined range of fields carries a cost. Cross-field talk sparks the unexpected question, juxtaposition, or association – in a word, creativity.

3. *Inter-field/inter-disciplinary diversity.* Universities create resources to hire in knowledge fields that cut across disciplines or departments. Programs such as cluster hires (theme hires) and federal Title VI centers (area studies) seek to build critical mass of inter-field and inter-departmental research scholars within the overall faculty mix.

4. *Institutional diversity.* Research universities limit the extent to which they hire their own PhD graduates, in order to avoid an intellectual or social cloning that can stifle creativity. They value recruitment of professors trained in other institutional cultures, or who built careers in a distinct institutional climate before returning to the alma mater.

5. *Social diversity.* Bringing together faculty of distinct backgrounds and experiences, like generational and field diversity, affects research. Social diversity includes not only racial-ethnic experience linked to issues of power and underrepresentation, but also other forms of distinctiveness – for example, socioeconomic, gender/sexual, international/linguistic, and disability related.

<u>The Interplay of Social and Intellectual Diversity</u>:

Social diversity sparks new research questions, new ways of looking at old questions, and sometimes, new fields or subfields. It is too simplistic to reduce the shape of research questions, field interests, or interpretive lines of analysis to the social backgrounds of scholars. A male medical researcher may be profoundly interested in women's health. Some white historians made profoundly important contributions to the new "Black history" that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. But it is *also* simplistic to suppose that individual life experiences, and a social and campus climate open to more diverse influences, have no impact whatsoever on the intellectual questions we ask or the new knowledge fields we create.

Consider two examples: women's health, and U.S. history. Women's health is today a vital field of research in its own right, and clinical trials today do not treat the male body as universal. The field gained traction after the 1970s, when women's increased presence on campuses, their visibility in professional and cultural spheres where they were once excluded, and the creation of Women's Studies as a new interdisciplinary field of knowledge changed the climate of academic knowledge production and dissemination.

In U.S. history, the emergence of prominent Jewish scholars in the profession in the 1950s and 1960s brought new sensibilities and research questions to the fore, and reshaped historical writing about Populism and race. The development unsettled influential narratives of the nation and even led the president of the American Historical Association to decry, in 1962, the "products of lower middle-class or foreign origins" who did not truly understand American culture (Novick 1988: 339). Most Gentile historians rejected that claim, and welcomed new research and interpretations that moved the field forward. A similar point emerges when considering women and African-Americans as newly visible actors in the historical profession.

The larger point is that social networks and climates affect how fields advance, and how intellectual paradigms change. For analysis of knowledge fields, please see sources listed at the end of this document (section "B").

<u>The Teaching and Service Missions</u>:

The core purpose of the public university is not only original contribution to knowledge, but also effective teaching of a new generation of citizens, and service to the community. (See Curti and Carstensen I: 3-4.) Faculty diversity is a compelling University interest for reasons of teaching and service in the public good, in addition to the research-oriented reasons given above. Some examples follow.

1. *Role models and mentorship for students, both minority and majority.* Faculty diversity contributes to the educational experience and needs of students, by providing a wider array of role models and mentors, and a wider range of social networks, experiences, and perspectives relevant for student knowledge and success. In a world of increased racial/ethnic and gender diversity in the professions and the work place, such exposure benefits not only students of color and women, but also majority students and men.

2. *Recruitment of under-represented students.* Faculty diversity is one factor that helps a university build and sustain student diversity – a value and goal in a democratic society. Public universities have a social responsibility to enhance the effort to utilize the talents of all and to create opportunities for all. In fields where manifest gender imbalances, as well as racial-ethnic imbalances, are important, the presence of successful women faculty and minority faculty can be important to the recruitment of undergraduate, graduate, or professional students.

3. *Teaching effectively to all learning styles, and to students of diverse backgrounds.* Faculty diversity can enhance or stretch the shape of teaching, and contribute faculty who can relate to the learning styles and interests of all kinds of students. In an increasingly diverse society, gaps between learning styles and pedagogical styles may intensify rather than diminish, if faculty diversity fails to keep up with student diversity. For example, our First-Wave/Spoken Word student program has created a critical mass of spoken-word creativity, performance, and learning style that arguably outstrips faculty capacity.

4. *Service to the larger community including business.* Business cultures value multi-cultural competence and experience, and the relevant diversities are both domestic and international. The Wisconsin and national populations are becoming increasingly diverse in the twenty-first century. Under such circumstances, faculty diversity is more vital than ever. It helps the University prepare students to become effective professionals for business, public service, and non-governmental organizations. It helps the University engage many kinds of people and social experiences within the Wisconsin Idea tradition of direct outreach and service.

UW-Madison Experience:

Institutional experience shows that concerted initiatives to advance diversity can make a difference. (1) Efforts to build awareness, and more inclusive search, recruitment, and mentoring practices, appear to have had some success in changing the profile of the faculty. In 1987, female faculty headcounts amounted to 15.2%; in 2000, they had risen to 23.9%; in 2009, they amounted to 30.5%. In 1987, minority faculty headcounts amounted to 6.2%; in 2000, they had risen to 12.1%; in 2009, they amounted to 16.7%. (2) The cluster hiring initiative created 49 inter-fields, and integrated inter-disciplinary knowledge into the faculty research mission. (3) Analysis of institutional trends since 1987 shows that central campus initiatives including shared-funding and bridge-funding resources have contributed to the dual career, gender, and racial-ethnic diversity of the campus. (APA 2010, 2009)

Summary:

Faculty diversity constitutes one compelling University interest, among several. It is a compelling interest in all three domains of the public university's mission – research, teaching, and service. Therefore, the University embraces faculty diversity as a goal important to our excellence and mission, and devises policies and practices to promote it.

At the same time, our policies and procedures must comply with state and federal laws that protect employees and candidates for hire against unlawful bias based on age, race or ethnicity, and gender. Precisely for this reason, our strategic pipeline and recruitment fund emphasizes strong faculty pipeline development, not predetermined outcomes in any given search. It also emphasizes the availability of resources to assure that best-practices related to diversity, excellence, and competitive recruitment will not falter as a consequence of stringent economic times during the next several years.

Useful Resources (with brief annotations):

A. Institutional and Legal Analysis:

AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science), with participation by AAU (Association of American Universities), *Handbook on Diversity and the Law: Navigating a Complex Landscape to Foster Greater Faculty and Student Diversity in Higher Education* (Washington, D.C.: AAAS, 2010). *Thorough legal analysis, with emphasis on science/stem fields, and including compelling-interest analysis and relevant case law.* Cf. Vaughan 2009.

Alger, Jonathan. "Diversity in the Age of Obama: New Directions or Status Quo? (Employment Context)." 2009. OxCHEPS Occasional Paper No. 37, Oxford Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies, at "Resources" link, http://oxcheps.new.ox.ac.uk/. *Legal analysis of practical tools including pipeline and compelling-interest aspects, by experienced senior legal counsel (Michigan, Rutgers).*

APA (Academic Planning and Analysis, Office of Provost, U. of Wisconsin-Madison), at http://apa.wisc.edu/. "Faculty and Staff Trends by Gender and Ethnic Status" (March 2010 Report to the Committee on Women), "Faculty Trends – Racial/Ethnic Diversity and Gender" (March 2009 Report to Leadership Council), both at Diversity Tab; see also 2009-2010 Data Digest link. *Institutional analysis and trends.*

Committee on Institutional and Policy-Level Strategies for Increasing the Diversity of the U.S. Health Care Workforce, Board on Health Sciences Policy, *In the Nation's Compelling Interest: Ensuring Diversity in the Health-Care Workforce*, eds., Brian D. Smedley, Adrienne Stith Butler, Jonnie R. Bristow (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2004. *Analysis and recommendations of project report commissioned by National Research Council, attentive to legal aspects, on diversity in relation to mission of health profession educational institutions and to heath care delivery.*

Curti, Merle and Carstensen, Vernon. *The University of Wisconsin: A History, 1848-1925* (Madison: U of Wisconsin Press, 1949). *Origins and evolution of the "state university idea" in theory and practice, as seen through the history of the University of Wisconsin.*

Linda S. Greene and Margaret N. Harrigan, "Strategic Priorities and Strategic Funding: Minority Faculty Hiring at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1988-2003," in Frank W. Hale, Jr., ed., *What Makes Racial Diversity Work in Higher Education: Academic Leaders Present Successful Policies and Strategies* (Sterling, Va.: Stylus Publishing, 2003). *Analysis of impact of specific practical tools to improve faculty diversity.* Cf. APA 2010, 2009.

Smith, Daryl G. et al. "Interrupting the Usual: Successful Strategies for Hiring Diverse Faculty," *Journal of Higher Education* 75:2 (2004), 133-60. *Analysis of effect of specific institutional tools on diversity of faculty pipeline and recruitment.*

Vaughan, Brian. "Diversity White Paper," UW-Madison Office of Administrative Legal Services Memorandum, 8 September 2009. *Analysis of legal developments.* Cf. AAAS 2010.

WISELI (Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute, U. of Wisconsin-Madison), at http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/. *Research and workshops related to gender and racial-ethnic diversity, unconscious bias and climate, and women and stem fields. For an introduction and guide to resources, see "Reviewing Applicants: Research on Bias and Assumptions" (2006), Resources link, "Brochures and Booklets."*

B. Knowledge Fields: Social and Intellectual Dynamics:

AHR, "AHR Forum: Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream*: The Objectivity Question and the Future of the Historical Profession," *American Historical Review* 96 (June 1991), 675-708. *Commentary and debate on the history of the historical profession, and the impact of social composition of the profession and sociopolitical climate more generally on intellectual life.*

Antonio, Anthony Lisiing. "Faculty of Color Reconsidered: Reassessing Contributions to Scholarship," *Journal of Higher Education* 73:5 (2002), 582-602. *Data-driven study of the ways faculty of color appear to extend scholarship, in dialogue with E. L. Boyer's influential 1990 study of four-fold domains of scholarship (discovery-integration-application-teaching).*

Carnes, Molly, Morrissey, Claudia, and Geller, Stacie E. "Women's Health and Women's Leadership in Academic Medicine: Hitting the Same Glass Ceiling?" *Journal of Women's Health* 17:9 (2008), 1453-62. *Update and extension of the foundational analysis in Weisman 1998 on women's health; considers impact of women's leadership in the profession on biomedical research as well as delivery of care.*

Hong, Lu and Page, Scott E. "Groups of diverse problem solvers can outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 101: 46 (November 16, 2004), 16385-16389). *Formal mathematical analysis of research on group problem solving ability and diversity presented at greater length, for a more general college-educated audience, in Page 2007.*

Leavitt, Judith Walzer. "Introduction to the Second Edition," in Leavitt, ed., *Women and Health in America: Historical Readings* (2nd ed., Madison: U. of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 3-8. *Succinct analysis of how the field of the history of medicine changed over time, and of trends in journal publications on the history of women's health.*

Novick, Peter. *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988). *A history of the U.S. historical profession, and how social networks and climate influenced scholarship and debates about objectivity and relativism.* Cf. debate on the book in AHR 1991.

Page, Scott E. *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). *Leading-edge study of conditions under which problem-solving teams comprised of high individual ability and high team diversity produce stronger results than those comprised of highest individual ability and low team diversity.* For formal mathematical modeling, see Hong and Page 2004.

Schiebinger, Londa, ed., *Gendered Innovations in Science and Engineering* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008). *Case studies of the ways gender bias or gender analysis have affected culture and content of specific science and engineering fields.*

Weisman, Carol S. *Women's Health Care: Activist Traditions and Institutional Change* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1998). *Analysis of intersections of women's activism and sociopolitical climate on the one hand, and institutional change related to women's health including research and NIH programming.* Cf. Carnes et al 1999.