PROVOST'S INITIATIVE ON MINORITY ISSUES

ANNUAL REPORT

AY 2003–04

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF AY 2003–04

We would like to take the occasion of our second annual report to observe that it has been almost two decades since the University of Chicago Faculty Committee on Minority Concerns published its landmark report, "Black Enrollment at the University of Chicago," commonly known as the Norton Report. In 1983, in response to a significant decline in African-American student enrollment at the University of Chicago, the Faculty Committee on Minority Concerns embarked on a two-year effort to identify issues specific to the situation of African Americans at the University, present the facts on African-American student matriculation in all the educational units of the University, and make recommendations consistent with the University's mission and long-term goals.

In making its recommendations, the Faculty Committee on Minority Concerns placed the effort to reverse the trend of declining African-American student enrollment in the context of a belief that "advanced education in a nation composed of people from many origins should develop scholars, professionals, and leaders who will draw on that diversity to contribute to a more enlightened, productive national environment" (*University of Chicago Record,* April 10, 1986). The Norton Report notes that although there were, and are, issues specific to improving the quality of the intellectual and social experience of African-American students at the University, these issues implicate the University as a whole in an effort to understand the full nature of its intellectual mission.

Since the publication of the Norton Report, the University has made varying degrees of progress in important areas. During this period, the proportion of our faculty of color has increased by 50 percent; unfortunately it is still unacceptably low, particularly the proportion of African-American and Latino/a faculty. At the same time, we have made substantial advances in developing resources provided for the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, & Culture. This growth in the activity and influence of the Race Center, especially over the past few years, presents an important opportunity to develop more focused curricular choices which, in turn, might spur the hiring of more faculty of color who specialize in these areas.

Our student body continues to grow—slowly—in terms of racial and ethnic diversity. Fully 22 percent of all students in AY 2003 were of African-American, Latino/a, Asian-Pacific Islander, or Native-American descent, with the greatest gains in recent years coming from Latino/a undergraduate students and Asian-Pacific Islanders. At the same time, we have successfully increased our retention of these students so that the percentage persisting to graduation is higher than ever before. The Amandla Student Resource Center—a student-driven initiative—opened in February 2003 and is in the process of being much more fully utilized concomitant with the reorganization of the Office of Minority Student Affairs.

The University has also made substantial commitments in recent years relative to its role as a major economic engine on the South Side of Chicago, committing tens of millions of

dollars to the hiring of minority-owned businesses, including construction firms, service providers, and product vendors.

While we have made noticeable progress in many of these important areas, we must note that the University has substantially higher aspirations for itself relative to the diversity of our community. In dissecting our statistics on students, for example, we find that we have made minimal progress in recruiting African-American students, and the overall proportion—approximately 5 percent—remains frustratingly low. The same is true for Native Americans who account for a fraction of 1 percent of our total student body.

Our slow progress in recruiting faculty of color highlights the challenges faced by our peers across the country, underscoring the necessity for a holistic, "pipeline" approach to creating opportunities for students of color to successfully pursue careers in research and teaching at the collegiate level. Although African Americans make up only 2.7 percent of faculty, this is approximately the same percentage represented at places like Harvard and Princeton—institutions that house two of the most highly regarded African-American studies departments in higher education. In addition, the fact that only 1 percent of faculty are Latina/o and none are Native American, points to a troubling lack of progress relative to faculty representation of these populations. And, while nearly 11 percent of our faculty are Asian, this representation is concentrated in a handful of disciplines.

How should the University proceed to match its actions to its aspirations? Why is diversity so important to the University of Chicago in particular? How do we build on the gains made since the Norton Report to establish the future that we envision for this great institution? These questions are at the heart of the Provost's Initiative on Minority Issues (PIMI) and are or will be answered by this annual report and the processes which the PIMI subcommittees will undertake this year.

We recall the Norton Report and its conviction that diversity is essential to the mission of the University of Chicago in order to remark that the existence of PIMI stands both as a testament to the progress the University has made over the past two decades in addressing minority issues and as an admonishment that much work remains yet to be done if the University is to fulfill its broader mission. A commitment to diversity is not merely or even primarily a matter of public relations. The production and the testing of knowledge for the benefit of all demand intellectual and social restlessness. We must be willing to ask whether or not our visions of the true and good are shared or contradicted by those whom we deem different from us. We must be willing to hear from a variety of sources to determine if our research agendas and priorities suffer from unintended biases rather than reflect a proper estimation of the state of knowledge in our respective fields. We must understand that we do not exist outside of the society we study but that we act within it and upon it, and that part of our responsibility as an institution for reflection and research is to be aware of and to assess how what we do affects the world around us. All of these activities and responsibilities presume diversity as a necessary condition of their fulfillment. To fail to ensure social and intellectual diversity at the University of Chicago is to fail to realize our educational and research missions in a fundamental way.

In our first annual report, we highlighted our efforts to collect and assess baseline data, to identify areas for further study, and to develop an organizational structure to address these areas. For this report, we would like to note some important strides that have been taken by the subcommittees comprising PIMI in the past twelve months. In so doing we should recognize that many students—as well as some faculty and staff—have voiced consistent frustration with the pace of PIMI's work. In many ways, the act of opening up broad campus dialogue between various stakeholder groups and decision makers itself represents important progress. Among other things, these conversations have led to strengthened definitions of institutional accountability while putting a refined focus—and direction for priority setting—on the specific issues that must be addressed to meet PIMI's central objectives.

It is our goal in this annual report to:

- Establish goals for AY 2004–05 and beyond.
- Present a set of critical recommendations for action items which we urge the senior administration of the University to begin addressing strategically and holistically.

We conclude this report by noting that our 2004–05 annual report will likely recommend evolving PIMI's charge into a central, senior-level administrative office responsible for enhancing and monitoring campus diversity. We also anticipate that a modified form of PIMI will serve as an advisory board for that office.

PIMI adopted a new structure in academic year 2003–04 by launching five subcommittees, some of which were composed of yet another layer of advisory committees and workgroups. The primary objective for developing these subcommittees was to provide a more focused and actionable approach to understanding and addressing the following crucial diversity-related issues: the recruitment and retention of students of color, faculty of color, and staff of color, programming and support for students of color, and community affairs. An additional advantage to the subcommittee format was that it allowed us to engage a broader set of constituents in this important work.

PIMI also took on a much more public role this year, primarily through a set of three open fora/workshops as well as through ongoing consultation with a dedicated student advisory committee and other students. A set of themes emerged from these public discussions that will continue to inform and challenge the work of the various subcommittees that comprise PIMI throughout the following year. These themes focused on *communication, transparency, accountability,* and *measurable outcomes*. While not every issue that PIMI will address is comprised of elements that are easily measured in units of time or product, it is still incumbent upon PIMI to be effective in communicating what we're learning about ourselves vis-à-vis our efforts in enhancing diversity on campus as well as the status of our near- and long-term plans in the most transparently public manner possible.

As the year progressed, many students expressed frustration over the perceived lack of real progress on diversity-related issues, particularly in the areas mentioned in the

following section of this document. From their collective viewpoint, our subcommittees engaged in considerable amounts of discussion and analysis but didn't meet student expectations relative to producing timely, tangible improvements. In the coming months, some of this frustration should be addressed by communicating publicly and in substantive detail the systemic/procedural challenges inherent in many of the faculty, student, and staff recruitment processes, for example. These communications must be supported by concrete action timelines wherever possible.

Recommendations and Action Items

We have distilled five central issues from the extended list of subcommittee recommendations for special emphasis in the context of these introductory remarks. These central issues provide the essential framework for the action items in which PIMI will engage in AY 2004–05, particularly as they relate to the recruitment, retention, and quality of life of the University's community of color. Our students in particular have pointed to these five issues as those having the most impact on the overall quality of their experience at the University and those that must be addressed systematically if we are to make ourselves more attractive to a deeper and broader pool of students of color.

A. Executive-Level Communication

First and foremost, every subcommittee cited the urgent need for the issuance of a strong and consistent message from the President and the Provost about the importance of diversity to the mission of the institution. This statement will reaffirm and strengthen the University's commitment and will provide language for future University written and public statements on the topic.

B. Recruitment and Retention of Faculty of Color

While this is perhaps the most complex and most vexing of diversity-related issues at all institutions across the country, it remains one of the most frequently mentioned objectives in a majority of our student interactions. The Faculty Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee report points to a variety of fronts on which we should be attacking this issue, emphasizing that this is very much a "pipeline" issue that cuts across the charges of the various subcommittees and that necessitates a collaborative plan for addressing the various elements it comprises. An important first step will be to develop a document for general communication that describes the faculty hiring process in substantive detail so that everyone involved in these conversations—students, faculty, and staff—share the same basic understanding of this necessarily complex process.

At the same time, we must develop and refine effective strategies to improve the diversity of our faculty, share these strategies with the entire campus, and, eventually, implement and measure the effectiveness of these strategies over time. As detailed in their annual report, the Faculty Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee has identified the following action items to address these issues:

1. Review existing strategies for recruiting and hiring faculty of color in all divisions and professional schools.

   • Request that all Deans detail their strategy and goals regarding recruiting and retaining faculty of color.
   • Invite department chairs to meet with Faculty Subcommittee members during 2004–05 as follow-up to the survey.
   • Establish and/or improve the lines of accountability within departments, divisions, and schools; and throughout the University.
   • Emphasize formal mentoring of junior faculty to improve likelihood of retention and promotion.

2. Administer and analyze a survey of minority scholars who have been hired recently, have been retained, or have left the University.

   • Coordinate this effort with Ingrid Gould, Assistant Vice-President and Associate Provost, who is in the process of conducting a similar survey for all faculty.
   • Use these data to improve the work environment of faculty of color.

3. Benchmark Chicago's diversity efforts against those of peer institutions who are regarded as successful in recruiting and retaining faculty of color.

C. Curricular Development

Closely linked to the issue of low numbers of faculty of color is the small proportion of curricular and academic program choices in areas of special interest to students of color. Students have complained consistently and pointedly in public venues, in advisory committees, and in focus groups about their concerns in this area. In response to student concerns, an ad hoc subcommittee to study these issues and to make recommendations was formed midway through the 2003–04 academic year. The Steering Committee voted to make this group a formal subcommittee in AY 2004–05 with a faculty chair whom we hope to name by the beginning of the academic year. Much like the issues faced by the Faculty Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee, important first steps for this group should include documentation of the processes employed by various departments when developing curricula that can be shared with the community. Once these processes are demystified and made more transparent, next steps should include recommendations as to how we might expand these focused curricular offerings across a broad range of disciplines.

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D. Reconstitution and Repositioning of OMSA

This initiative was the primary focus of the Student Programming and Support (SPAS) Subcommittee, which generated both a workgroup that focused on benchmarking successful offices at peer institutions and a student advisory committee. The work of this subcommittee (in addition to a separate consultant's report commissioned by the Vice-President and Dean of Students in the University) resulted in a number of highly detailed recommendations regarding OMSA that can be found later in this report. The two key recommendations are:

1. OMSA should be reorganized to meet more effectively the needs of students of color and the University's need for diversity.

   The impact of the groundwork laid by SPAS and its workgroups can best be summarized by the following excerpt from a letter from the Provost and the Vice-President and Dean of Students to the University community:

   "For the past two years, a key component of the University's focus on diversity-related issues has been the evaluation of the nature and effectiveness of the various support programs that the University provides to benefit students of color, with particular emphasis this year on the Office of Minority Student Affairs (OMSA). These efforts have included the subcommittee work of the Provost's Initiative on Minority Issues and the review, analysis, and recommendations of an outside consultant. We would like to express our gratitude to the many students, faculty, and staff who are providing such thoughtful feedback throughout these ongoing processes.

   Collectively, this work has highlighted the University's responsibility to re-envision and develop a student affairs office that enhances the campus experience of students of color. This office should be seen as the central provider of important programs and events that focus on matters of diversity and as an effective advocate for issues important to students of color.

   Provost Richard Saller and I have decided that these important objectives would best be met by a complete reorganization of the Office of Minority Student Affairs. One part of this reorganization will be to transfer institutional oversight for the federally funded Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) from OMSA to the Office of the Dean of Students in the College, the office that currently oversees the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program.

   The other part of this reorganization will be to restructure OMSA so that it will be able to provide a higher level of support for students of color. To achieve this, we are launching a national search for a new Deputy Dean of Students/Director under whose leadership this restructured office will be organized."

By the time this annual report is submitted, the search for the new Deputy Dean of Students/Director will be underway. As we move forward to reconstitute the office, we will do so guided by the organizing principles detailed in the SPAS Subcommittee recommendations that follows.

2. The Amandla Center should be more centrally located in larger space, and OMSA should be located within or directly next to it.

Institutionally speaking, space continues to be one of our most valued and constrained resources, particularly in the central campus locations requested by students for the relocation of Amandla and OMSA. As we continue to search for appropriate space, we will have to reprioritize and balance the following attributes relative to availability—size, centrality of location, and time horizon.

E. Diversity/Sensitivity Training

The closely related issues of diversity education and sensitivity training are multitiered and, consequently, require multiple strategic responses. Students of color have related incidents of insensitivity and a perceived lack of personal agency in dealing with faculty in the classroom; they have related stories of insensitive comments from fellow students; and they have compiled a long list of offices that work closely with students whose staff they would like to see receive focused education in the following areas:

- Sensitivity training—how to interact with someone whose race, ethnicity, religious background, etc., are not the same as your own.
- Situational training—understanding the impact of certain responses and words with meanings that may vary from culture to culture.
- Customer service training—what it means to be a service provider.

The long list of individuals, offices, and services of concern listed by these students to a special SPAS workgroup on the subject included a variety of central student services offices as well as faculty. We have much more work to do to begin tackling this wide-ranging challenge, including the evaluation of existing training programs, beginning internal dialogue between students and various offices, and speaking with Deans and department chairs about faculty-oriented initiatives. We expect to continue with this topic via further workgroup study and implementation in the upcoming academic year.

SECTION II

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SECTION III

MASTER LIST OF SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
AY 2003–04

A. Faculty Recruitment/Retention Subcommittee Recommendations

1. The University's diversity efforts need to be supported by strong written statements by the President and Provost.

2. We need to develop arenas and forums to discuss openly why diversity matters across the schools and disciplines. For example, justifications for diversity in the humanities and the social sciences do not necessarily carry the same weight in the disciplines within the physical and biological sciences.

3. Given that successful faculty recruitment depends on the availability of a pool of qualified candidates, we need to address the "pipeline" issue, which cuts across the charges of various subcommittees. We need to develop a plan within PIMI for addressing these issues.

4. In all likelihood, the University will need to move towards institutionalizing a process, probably to be administered through a high-level administrative office, to monitor and assess diversity on an ongoing basis. If not a part of routine reporting, diversity issues tend to fall off the radar.

5. Emphasize mentoring of junior faculty to improve likelihood of retention and promotion.

B. Student Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Recommendations

1. Communicate an official University statement articulating our understanding of diversity and why it is essential to our educational mission.

2. Increase the number of minority faculty members.

3. Make financial aid awards competitive with those at our peer institutions.

4. Establish a comprehensive divisional graduate recruitment plan with responsibilities and accountability assigned for the various stages of recruiting (from identifying a strong applicant pool to convincing students that they are a good match for our programs). This effort should have central direction and be shared by OMSA, divisional Deans of Students, and departments.

5. Develop a tracking system for divisional graduate admissions, in conjunction with central systems, which records initial contact, application submission, admission decision, accept or decline response, academic progress, degree completion, and placement.

6. Fully understand the reasons for the gap between the graduation rate of African-American and Hispanic students and that of Caucasian and Asian-American students at the undergraduate level.

7. Evaluate the current model for supporting students. With multiple offices/individuals involved in working with undergraduates, who becomes accountable for retention? How is information shared among College advisers, financial aid officers, faculty, and others who work with students? We need to develop more student-driven approaches to our service.

8. At the undergraduate and graduate level, continue to explore the extent to which financial aid packages—aid, stipends, and scholarships—impact retention.

9. At both levels, benchmark the experiences and delivery systems at peer institutions. Benchmark the retention experience across different departments and schools at the University.

10. Review the "exit interview" strategy for students leaving the College.

C. Student Programming and Support Subcommittee Recommendations

1. The senior administration must communicate explicitly the importance of diversity at the University of Chicago.

   - A strong and consistent message from the executive level of the institution must be articulated and reinforced through communication from the officers of the University, Deans, directors, staff, and faculty.

2. OMSA should be reorganized to more effectively meet the needs of students of color and the University's need for diversity. The key points are:

   - OMSA should be a strong advocate for minority students' interests and should manage campus community support programs.

   - OMSA should facilitate mentorship programs and access to academic support programs to ensure the continuing success of students of color.

   - OMSA should be a dynamic place for students to gather, network, and build community for the entirety of their time at the University.

   - OMSA should act as liaison to all University student affairs offices and

departments to ensure that they are responding to and aware of the needs of students of color.

- OMSA should help provide central communication coordination regarding diversity issues across campus through its Web site, publications, and forums.

- The OMSA staff should reflect the diversity of the communities that OMSA represents, but not rigidly so.

  o OMSA should have a diverse staff that represents to the greatest degree possible the populations that it serves: African American, Asian American, Latino American, and Native American.

- OMSA must be recognized as the collaborative central location for multicultural student affairs.

  o The office needs not only to offer support and programs to target student populations but should also provide expertise and guidance on diversity issues across campus.

  o For target student populations, OMSA should serve as a clearinghouse resource for information geared towards these groups and as an advocate for issues affecting individuals and groups of students. For example, students should be able to seek guidance from OMSA staff on issues concerning academic support, financial support, counseling, and scholarships and fellowships, and be directed to the appropriate office/person. Students should also be able to turn to OMSA when faced with personal incidents or actions involving their race or ethnicity.

  o Offices and student organizations across campus should be able to turn to OMSA for expertise and guidance on diversity training, speakers, seminars, workshops, etc. The office should plan and execute various programs throughout the year to educate the entire campus on diversity issues. These programs should be presented in collaboration with offices across campus such as Admissions, Alumni Association, CAPS, Center for the Study of Race, Politics, & Culture, CPO, DOS, ORCSA, UCSC, etc. All of these programs should be evaluated formally on a regular basis.

  o OMSA should create events and programs through which majority students are encouraged to collaborate with minority students on issues of diversity. Suggestions to enlist majority students in minority issues include diversity training for all RSOs, leadership training for cultural RSOs, and Allies workshops.

- The current Student Advisory Committee should instead provide two different standing advisory committees to a reorganized OMSA, one for graduate

students and one for College students. There should continue to be meaningful student input into the discussion about the mission, goals, and activities of OMSA.

- It is of critical importance that there be meaningful and effective relationships between OMSA and the faculty. The development of strong collaborative ties with the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, & Culture is critical to the success of the new OMSA. Other faculty connections might take place through the codevelopment of academically oriented events, as well as informal opportunities for faculty to spend time with students and staff in Amandla.

3. The size and location of Amandla Center and OMSA require improvement.

   - The Amandla Center requires a larger and more centrally located space.

     o The Amandla Center's location on the upper floor of Harper is not conducive to high traffic volumes or informal drop-in activity that defines the successful kind of daily student interactions that take place in the Reynolds Club, for example. In addition, its hours of access are limited, making late-night and weekend activities difficult to manage.

   - OMSA should be housed in, or adjacent to, an expanded Amandla Center to take advantage of potential programming, community building, and student support synergies.

     o In general, OMSA should be a dynamic place for students to gather, network, and build community. OMSA's current location in the Administration Building is too isolated from the rest of the major student services offices on campus and does nothing to encourage students to view OMSA as an effective resource for informal student activities and community building.

4. The ongoing design of integrated student information systems must take into account access to, and management of, those data that support our understanding of the academic progress of those students of color who identify themselves as such.

   - This information is critical to our ability to track and better understand the needs of students of specific ethnicities in order to support their academic success and, consequently, their persistence toward graduating from the University.

   - It is also very helpful to have updated contact information in order to target specific events and programs to these populations of students.

5. Develop diversity/cultural awareness training for University staff, particularly those who have substantial contact with students.

- Students listed enough departments that it became clear diversity/cultural sensitivity training would be a good idea for all University staff. How the training should be delivered would be more of an HR decision, but programming should include a combination of sensitivity, situational, and customer service training. A suggestion would be to have an initial training session (possibly during new employee orientation) and then have a mandatory refresher course after a given amount of time.

6. Develop curricula that are academically strong and ethnically diverse

- PIMI will launch a sixth subcommittee to focus on curricular issues.

7. Recruit more faculty of color.

- While the Faculty Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee will be making specific recommendations focused on this need, students consistently named this as a critically important element in our ability to recruit and retain a more diverse student body.

D. Staff Recruitment/Retention Subcommittee Recommendations

1. *The President should issue a very public statement describing the value of diversity and its importance to the institutional mission.* This statement should provide language for future University written and public statements on the topic.

- Supporting steps:
    - o Reaffirm and strengthen vision, goal, and definition.
    - o Top leadership should communicate this.
    - o Define concrete examples of what University leadership would like to see as a result.
    - o Distribute the statement widely (Web site) and talk about it often.
    - o Focus University communications so that the diversity theme is consistently reinforced.

2. *The University should develop tools, processes, and outreach that will improve the effectiveness of recruiting to result in an increasingly diverse workforce.*

- Create and update an ongoing Recruitment Source Directory listing diversity-focused recruitment agencies, publications, job posting sites, and job fair resources so that users can easily identify the most useful sources for their particular recruitment needs. Feature resources with success in reaching strong minority candidates for higher-level positions.

- Link University job postings to other, more broadly viewed job posting sites.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of resources to attract qualified minority job applicants.

- Develop relationships with representatives of these agencies.

- Work with unions and contractors to improve recruitment and retention of minority employees.

- Establish a staff search protocol wherein the hiring manager or committee creates a search plan up front that articulates the extra efforts that will be made to generate a diverse applicant pool.

3. *The University should focus on developing training and educational resources and programming to create an environment that fosters diversity and inclusiveness.*

- Sponsor minority employee networking events and facilitate the creation of affinity groups.

- Promote comprehensive diversity-related programming to create an environment that both educates and celebrates diversity.

4. *The University should develop mentoring and internship programs that will make minority staff more competitive candidates for higher-level positions in the organization and recognize managers who promote such programs.*

- Foster training on leadership, culture, skills, and sensitivity.

- Create an internal Internship/Mentoring/Apprenticeship program. Identify talented minority employees and provide them with the opportunity to work with and learn from high-level administrators.

5. *The University should require an annual reporting of progress on diversity initiatives to be made by all academic and administrative units.* This report should be circulated broadly and featured in University publications. Outstanding progress should be recognized and rewarded.

6. *The University should create an office for organizational diversity that reports to the President.* The office will guide and coordinate the broad range of university diversity initiatives, develop key outreach contacts, and oversee communication on these initiatives within and outside the University. The work of this office should be supported by the permanent Council on Diversity described under Goals for Next Year.

E. Community Relations Subcommittee Recommendations

1. Reaffirm the University's commitment to working respectfully and in partnership with its diverse community as reflected in University policy, including the Diversity Statement.

2. Support and promote the Vision and Guiding Principles for University-wide Community Engagement.

   a. Value Statement

      i. The University strives to be an "engaged University" inviting and strengthening partnerships that support strong communities.

   b. Guiding Principles

      i. The University's excellence in education, scholarship, and research, as well as its commitment to institutional citizenship, form the bases for community engagement strategies and initiatives.

      ii. The University will strive for mutually beneficial outcomes in our work with community partners.

      iii. The University's community involvement is concentrated primarily in nearby South Side Chicago neighborhoods, but the experiences and expertise in community development, urban education, and urban health care are shared to help address these challenges faced by many cities, states, and nations both here and abroad.

      iv. All appropriate areas of the institution periodically review their involvement with the community and strive to honor the University's commitment to community engagement.

      v. The University strives to be transparent and broadly consultative, welcoming broad participation in the decisions and activities that are relevant to community life.

      vi. All community members can expect behavior from the University's administration, faculty, staff, and students based on personal integrity, open communication, respect for diversity, and an appreciation for partnership.

      vii. The University is committed to rigorous and public evaluation of major community programs.

3. Encourage better communication and positioning of the University's commitment to engagement with its community, its expertise on urban issues, and our unique South Side location. This should be viewed as an important "positive" and a valuable point of differentiation in comparison to other schools in our competitive set.

4. Fund the community survey project.

SECTION IV

MASTER LIST OF SUBCOMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
AY 2004–05

A. Faculty Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Goals

The faculty subcommittee will need to continue to meet during the 2004–05 academic year to complete its work, most notably in two areas:

*   To administer and analyze a survey of minority scholars who have been hired by, left, or been retained by the University of Chicago. We will coordinate this work with Ingrid Gould, who is in the process of conducting such a survey for all faculty.
*   To benchmark our diversity efforts against those of our peer institutions.

B. Student Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Goals

The subcommittee has identified the following goals for AY 2004–05:

*   Collect current data on recruitment and retention.
*   Communicate again with leaders of all the admissions offices to update and complete the interview templates.
*   Gather more data on benchmarking.
*   Gather more information on best practices with particular attention to gathering opinions from enrolled students.
*   Monitor response to recommendations in this report.

C. Student Programming and Support Subcommittee Goals

1. Financial Aid Workgroup

The group will continue:

*   To identify those financial aid policies that disadvantage or advantage students of color.
*   To analyze the cost to the University of making policy changes.
*   To consider what other strategies the University can employ to support students of color in completing applications, budget planning, etc.

2. Communications Workgroup

Recommend an annual survey instrument to ascertain if students are familiar with and utilizing communications outlets. It is probably not necessary to convene another workgroup in AY 2004–05.

3. Forum Workgroup

Future PIMI fora should focus on presenting quarterly workshops along with an annual State of Diversity at the University of Chicago presentation in Spring Quarter. Ongoing communication of general information should take place via Web sites, listhosts, and related media.

These workshops should be focused around a specific issue, sufficiently narrowly defined so that the key individuals who "own" the area or areas can be present. The workshop needs to be able to come up with tangible goals that achievable within a well-defined timeline with clear accountability for action or intentional inaction. While there are many long-term issues and concerns that can not be addressed in this format—and students understand that many of these issues require long-term initiatives—they are interested in feeling that they are able to have a visible, concrete impact on important issues while at the University. For those students who are interested in focusing on longer-term initiatives, there are many committees in place for students to get involved in.

The workshop fora should be scheduled to run once per quarter and the schedule with topics should be posted at the beginning of the year. Should an issue come up that might be best addressed by this format, additional workshops can be added. The proposed topics for next year include:

Fall Quarter: University Police and the Community
Winter Quarter: Faculty Hiring and Retention
Spring Quarter: Student Admissions and Retention

An additional State of Diversity at the University of Chicago should be a one-hour presentation followed by one hour of Q&A. Depending on administrative availability, this presentation should be held twice to allow all interested students to attend. This presentation should be divided into ten-minute presentations that reflect the work of the current PIMI subcommittee structure.

Background material and related information should be posted either in advance or immediately following the presentation so that students can seek out more details on subjects that are of interest to them. There should be virtual boards created to allow for post-presentation discussion, follow-up, etc., with appropriate staffing to ensure timely and accurate administrative responses.

4. Diversity Training Workgroup

Begin planning for diversity training:

a. Research outside vendors.
b. Determine format.
   • Meet with the Student Advisory Committee for student insight on potential programming.

D. Staff Recruitment and Retention Subcommittee Goals

PIMI has fulfilled its role in launching the administration's revitalized commitment to improvement in this arena. The University should establish permanently an advisory Council on Diversity to address faculty, student, and staff issues. The council would advise a newly created office for organizational diversity on such issues as diversity communications and continued investigation of best practices for recruitment and retention of minorities, as well as the research, measurement, and monitoring of programs designed to improve campus climate.

E. Community Relations Subcommittee Goals

June 2004: The subcommittee's survey group will work with the Survey Lab to solidify approach and implementation of the survey design.

July–August 2004: The interviewing process will take place in the four community areas.

July–August 2004: The group will evaluate information and recommendations from other PIMI subcommittees and discuss how Community Affairs efforts can be leveraged to assist in the recruitment and retention of minority faculty, staff, and students. A recommendation for further research with internal groups on community issues will also be considered.

November 2004: The Survey Lab will prepare and submit its report to the Office of Community Affairs, and a meeting will be held to review the report with the full subcommittee.

December 2004: After evaluation and discussion of the report, the subcommittee will make final recommendations as to how we can continue to improve both the reality and perception of the University's role as a partner working in our diverse communities.

January 2005: Final report submitted; subcommittee disbands.

SECTION V

CONCLUSION

This report has highlighted the substantial analysis and ensuing recommendations generated by the large number of students, faculty, and staff engaged in PIMI-related work and events over the course of the previous academic year. In turn, the strategic recommendations that have resulted from this work underscore the substantial challenges ahead of the University if we are to make meaningful progress toward enhancing the campus experience of our community of color as well as the entire campus; progress that can be measured concretely via improvements in our recruitment and retention of students, faculty, and staff of color.

Throughout the past year, the concepts of accountability, open and frequent communication, and a desire for measurable outcomes have informed most of the internal and external conversations held by the various elements of PIMI. It is in addressing these critical issues that we face the reality of PIMI's structural shortcomings. We have to recognize that PIMI is, after all, a committee. PIMI does not have permanent, full-time staff to ensure that the various streams of critical activity take place in a timely and effective manner. As a committee we carry neither the intrinsic clout nor the consistent focus of a central, senior-level administrative office. As students continue to challenge us to create and follow detailed timelines associated with our work in AY 2004–05—particularly in the areas that they stress are of most importance to them, e.g., improving the diversity of our faculty and increasing the number of curricular choices in related areas—we will not be able to respond meaningfully to these requests. We cannot develop timelines for improvement of offices that we don't control; we don't have the resources or the organizational weight to measure the progress of academic departments and hold them accountable for lack of progress.

Within the context of these structural constraints, the PIMI Steering Committee believes that AY 2004–05 likely represents the final year of meaningful activity for this body in this form. If we are to make significant improvement in our ability to recruit and retain students, faculty, and staff of color, it will require the establishment of a senior-level office founded on the appropriate guiding principles, goals, and objectives. Cultural change of this order of magnitude requires systemic institutionalization of these guiding principles; committee work alone cannot generate this depth and scope of change over time.

The Steering Committee recognizes that the current-year objectives of the various subcommittees as described above will require all of our energies and commitment over the course of the next twelve months. At the same time, we anticipate that our AY 2004–05 annual report will be centered upon a final recommendation that the current committee structure should be reformulated, perhaps as an advisory board. This board would serve a senior-level office whose mission would be to provide central impetus and administrative oversight to a broad range of substantive initiatives designed to enhance the diversity of the University community. Establishing this office will require a

significant investment in financial and political capital. While we recognize the seriousness of this investment, the Steering Committee also believes that the importance of creating this central, senior diversity office to the success of our broader objectives cannot be overemphasized.