2004 President's response

June 25, 2004

Keith Champagne
Chair, Diversity Council

I am writing to provide a progress report on the university's activities of this past year to meet its diversity goals. First I will respond to specific goals the administration agreed to pursue for the year. Then I'll talk about other initiatives that are in place.

Progress on Specific Goals:

Summer Transition Program

Goal: Institute a summer transition program for at-risk incoming freshmen, including those from diverse groups, to increase their retention and graduation rates by providing them with the skills needed to negotiate and succeed in a university environment.

Progress: Representatives from Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, and the President's Division have worked together to create a pilot program - Wildcat Transitions - that will be initiated in fall 2004. This program will invite up to 50 freshmen, who would otherwise be denied admission because their admission index is below the established cutoff, to participate in a year-long mentoring program. Students, who will be asked to sign a contract committing to full participation in program activities, will arrive on campus the week prior to orientation. They will participate in diagnostic testing, specialized training activities, and intrusive mentoring designed to ensure their success in college-level classes and activities. They will participate in special sections of University 101 with their faculty mentors. They will also be required to meet with their faculty mentors regularly throughout their freshman year. Two faculty members have been selected to serve as faculty mentors, and an outline of program activities has been developed. Faculty mentors will be assisted by staff members from student affairs and academic affairs.

International and National Exchange Opportunities

Goal: Expand international and national exchange opportunities for students including those in teaching and social service fields.

Progress: OISP is dedicated to expanding and diversifying international and national exchange opportunities for all CWU students. OISP seeks to accomplish this goal by not only utilizing CWU's dedicated exchange partner institutions, but also through national student exchange and study abroad consortia. An example of such innovation is the recently completed spring break study abroad program to Vietnam and Cambodia, two countries to which we have never before sent students or faculty.
We have expanded international and national opportunities for CWU students in 2003-2004. The headcount for 2003-2004 academic year is 293 students compared to 225 for 2002-2003, a 30% increase. CWU is at the national average for minority student participation in study abroad programs. However, in an attempt to increase minority student participation we will continue our outreach activities to CAMP and other student organizations.

We count 29 education majors in our programs for the 2003-2004 academic year compared to 18 for 2002-2003. Heather Barclay-Hamir will be meeting with Dr. Connie Lambert (Associate Dean, CEPS) to discuss ways of increasing the participation of education majors in SA programs. Many pre-education majors participate in SA activities, but since they are not formally declared, we cannot track them.

We have not tracked "social services" majors because we're not sure what majors the Diversity Council has targeted here. It could refer to students in the social services program associated with the Department of Sociology? Since students often do not identify themselves this way, it is not possible to accurately track them.

**Optimizing Classroom Instruction with Students From Diverse Populations**

**Goal:** Organize and implement forums to promote exchange of ideas for optimizing classroom instruction with students from diverse populations.

**Progress:** Members of cabinet suggested that it might be most effective to have the Diversity Council take responsibility for planning and sponsoring these forums.

**Sharing Perspectives Gained During International Exchange**

**Goal:** Encourage faculty chosen for international exchange opportunities to incorporate experiences into classes and share them with a broader campus audience as well as participate in pre-departure orientation sessions for outbound study abroad students to provide historical, socio-economic, educational, and cultural information on target countries.

**Progress:** Historically, CWU faculty going on international exchanges are not only encouraged, but also expected, to incorporate their experiences into their classes and to speak at campus/community events about their experiences. In fact, willingness to engage with the campus community following the exchange is a criterion for selection. OISP is planning on starting a faculty speaker series in 2004-2005, which will provide a venue for interested faculty to share their insights on the value of studying and teaching abroad. Currently, from three to four faculty a year participate in long-term exchanges with partner institutions and eight to ten faculty lead short-term study abroad programs.

OISP views the exchange opportunity as an exercise in professional development, as well as a chance to diversify cultural outlooks. Former exchange faculty may be invited to talk to outbound study abroad students in pre-departure orientations when appropriate. However, this is not always possible or practical.
Provide Comprehensive Training

**Goal:** Design and make available to university personnel comprehensive training, including online components, for the purpose of improving knowledge and skills related to diversity, cultural differences, and disability accommodation.

**Progress:** Both the work of the Diversity Education Center and the Ombuds Office make education, training, and mediation available to the campus community related to diversity, inclusiveness, and accommodation.

**I. Activities of the Diversity Education Center 2003-2004**

The following is a summation of the work of the Diversity Education Center for 2003-2004.

The Diversity Education Center increased its student programming staff from four to seven during 2003-2004 and continued to benefit from the services of several volunteers, an intern, and a practicum student. They also have the services of a fiscal technician who supports the Empowerment Center, Diversity Education Center, the Center for Excellence in Leadership, and the Equity and Service Council. In fall quarter 2003, they implemented a Social Justice Series, a weekly program that highlighted and inspired conversation about social change issues. Each week, the SUB Pit was the site of a panel or forum discussing current and controversial topics. These programs were well attended. The center also co-sponsored a mentorship program for underrepresented students in cooperation with CAMP and the Empowerment Center. This new program was designed to assist traditionally underrepresented populations with support and advocacy during their first six weeks of school.

During winter quarter, the center hosted the first ever and very successful CWU Black Greek step show. It also sponsored a presentation by nationally recognized actor Blair Underwood in conjunction with the Martin Luther King holiday.

Much of spring quarter was devoted to supported many of the annual programs focused on specific populations and sponsored by student groups: Indian Country, Cinco de Mayo, and Disability Awareness Week. In response to criticisms that the campus promotes a liberal political agenda to the exclusion of other points of view, the Diversity Education Center initiated a conservative ideology program to ensure that all voices are heard on the campus. As part of this effort, the DEC worked with College Republicans to bring Star Parker to campus to provide her perspective on how to end poverty.

Last, a number of LGBT initiatives were undertaken for the first time this year through funding allocated from the Services and Activities Fee committee.

**II. Cooperative Problem Solving Training - Ombuds Office**

Based on the recommendations of a May, 2001 Ad Hoc Dispute Resolution Committee, the Ombuds Office is making available a 15-hour experiential training workshop designed to help employees (management and staff) understand and practice the Cooperative Problem Solving
model of conflict management. The process focuses on encouraging mutual agreement and developing positive relations. Members of cabinet endorsed the training, and top-level administrators were encouraged to participate in the first wave of trainees. Participants meet for a three-hour segment each week for five weeks. Two workshops are scheduled each quarter. The workshop is based on the work of the Harvard Negotiation Project, which is summarized in the book Getting to Yes, by Fisher and Ury. The strategies embodied in the workshop have been endorsed by UNESCO and the Search for Common Ground, an international non-profit, non-governmental organization based in Washington, D.C.

Other Initiatives:

In addition to our progress on the goals we had agreed to, we have also made significant progress in other areas. The following will provide an update on these additional initiatives:

- **We are in the process of establishing an external diversity council.** Early in spring quarter, I asked members of the university community to recommend individuals from outside the university who might be able to assist us in furthering our goal of full inclusion. The President's Cabinet reviewed the nominees and selected twelve individuals who could provide broad representation on the committee. They have received letters inviting their participation, and we are awaiting their response. The first meeting will be scheduled for fall 2004.

- **We converted the Diversity Council to a standing university committee.** In spring quarter, PAC voted to include the diversity council as a standing university committee. We have divided current members into three-year terms, and will appoint the 2004 - 2007 members before fall quarter begins.

- **We celebrated Brown v. Board of Education.** The executive assistant to the president, deans of CEPS, COTS, and CAH, the director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, the directors of the Diversity Education Center, and the associate vice president for student affairs and enrollment management arranged three events in conjunction with the 50th year anniversary of the 1955 Brown v. Board of Education decision. These included a showing of the film, Separate but Equal, a panel discussion that featured four CWU staff: Dr. Keith Champagne, Dr. Daniel Fennerty, Dr. Charles Reasons, and Mr. Scott Volyn, and a stirring presentation by Dr. Walter Leonard, a nationally known scholar on the impact of the Brown decision.

- **We are in the process of developing and promoting curriculum related to diversity.** The General Education Committee has come to the unanimous conclusion that a diversity ("D") requirement or some other form of much enhanced attention to diversity issues is very appropriate within the general education program. At the December 2003 faculty development day, the committee began the process of documenting which courses might be eligible for the D designation and plan to continue this work at the General Education Institute scheduled for fall, 2004. The general education program already dedicates two of its eight breadth areas to diversity topics. However, there is some evidence that the courses in the two areas don't always align with the committee's (and university's) intent. Discussions have begun among faculty about how to improve this alignment. The completion of this task alone will go a long way toward the much-needed reform of the general education program.
with respect to diversity issues and opportunities.

Four courses from the 100 and 200 level have been revised and upgraded to the 300 level including "The Asian American," "Survey of Chicano Studies," "Contemporary Chicano Issues," and "Survey of American Indian Studies." These modifications set the stage for discussions, which can begin as soon as the interdisciplinary program template is completed, about the development of one or more diversity-related interdisciplinary programs.

- **We met with Hispanic leaders.** On April 28, university administrators and staff, including some members of the Diversity Council, met with leaders of the Hispanic community to provide a progress report on concerns that had arisen at a meeting in spring of 2000. We also asked for feedback from these community leaders and are beginning to assign tasks as appropriate based on their feedback. The feedback we received has been summarized, and plans are underway to take action on some of the most pressing issues that were raised.

- **We are working toward signing a Memorandum of Understanding with local Indian tribes.** We are continuing to pursue a memorandum of understanding with the three Indian tribes in our immediate vicinity: the Yakama, the Colville, and the Umatilla. We have been slowed somewhat by tribal elections, but hope to be able to have a signing event in fall 2004. I am scheduled to visit the Colville on July 13, and we are hopeful that we can schedule a signing ceremony in early fall.

- **We continue to increase the number of students of color in Ellensburg and at our university centers.** We continue to show growth in students of color, particularly Hispanic students. Current data reveal that 12.7% of students on the Ellensburg campus (and 14.6% when our university centers are included) are students of color. Interestingly, even though the percentage of citizens of color for Kittitas County did not increase dramatically between the 1990 and 2000 census, recent evidence from the Ellensburg schools reveals a steep increase in students of color since the 2000 census.

- **We are hiring staff of color to assist in recruitment of students of color:** We have been very purposeful in our efforts to attract staff of color into our admissions office as a way to improve our recruitment of students of color. Most recently, we hired an African-American admissions officer to assist us in recruiting African-American students.

Sincerely,

Jerilyn S. McIntyre
President, Central Washington University