Proposed Content for Diversity Counts!

SUNY will issue a Baseline Report on May 17 and then report progress in report card format annually in September. It seeks to track progress in achieving three critical goals as outlined in The Power of SUNY: 1) Building a competitive SUNY, 2) Driving a competitive New York and 3) Promoting diversity opportunities. To that end, the SUNY report card will be divided into three sections. This document outlines current thinking around the Diversity Counts section.

*Diversity makes us stronger and smarter.* We respect, encourage, and promote all aspects of human difference whether in terms of background, interests, age, race, or stage of life. Diversity enriches our lives and the educational experience: it invigorates conversations, awakens curiosity, and widens perspectives. Diversity also ensures that our campuses mirror the rapidly changing world, creating an environment that prepares our students to be culturally competent so they can succeed anywhere. Our diversity is SUNY’s edge.

Note: This list is intended to be a summary of the elements comprising the Diversity Counts! section. Each has a corresponding definition and explanation document.

**Section One: Repeating or expanding on elements of a Competitive SUNY**

- Retention rates by race/ethnicity and gender
- Graduation rates by race/ethnicity and gender
- Success rates by race/ethnicity and gender
- Application of students from historically underrepresented and/or economically disadvantaged populations (repeat)
- Graduates in support of New York State’s workforce needs by race/ethnicity and gender
- Diversity content in the curriculum (repeat)
- Proportion of students by level (undergraduate, graduate and professional), ethnicity, gender and military status
- Average time to degree by race/ethnicity and gender
- Diversity of faculty and staff by race/ethnicity, gender and military status *[include breakdowns by part-time, full-time and tenure status]*

**Section Two: Tracking the Diversity Counts commitments in The Power of SUNY**

**I. SUNY and the Entrepreneurial Century**
Graduates in STEM fields by gender and ethnicity

**II. SUNY and the Seamless Education Pipeline**
Intervention Strategies Developed/Implemented/Success of for historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged populations
III. SUNY and a Healthier New York
Graduates with healthcare credentials by ethnicity

IV. SUNY and an Energy-Smart New York
Measure campus-based programs designed to educate/support low income families in becoming Energy-Smart (goal is reduce amount of disposable income spent on energy costs)

V. SUNY and the Vibrant Community
Certified Diversity Counts! service learning opportunities

VI. SUNY and the World
Study abroad and international students by ethnicity

Additional Context Text:

Diversity makes us stronger and smarter. We respect, encourage, and promote all aspects of human difference whether in terms of background, age, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, military status or stage of life. Diversity enriches our lives and the educational experience: it invigorates conversations, awakens curiosity and widens perspectives. Diversity also ensures that our campuses mirror our rapidly changing state, country and world, creating an environment that prepares our students to be culturally competent so they can succeed anywhere.

Diversity in thought increases organizational strength, creativity, innovation and productivity—and there is significant evidence that people’s identity groups matter when it comes to diversity in thinking. Research has confirmed numerous benefits associated with a diverse learning environment. Diversity enhances the educational experience, fostering students' academic and social growth. It encourages students to think critically, enhances communication skills and fosters civic engagement.

The social science evidence-based outcomes associated with student diversity documented in the Supreme Court record of Grutter v. Bollinger (2003) included: improved teaching and learning, enhanced civic values, and better preparation for success in a 21st-century global economy. Among others, Fortune 500 corporate leaders effectively made the case that America’s economic future depended on the education of a diverse workforce. The business-related benefits, which they convincingly pointed the Supreme Court to, included the ability of individuals educated in diverse settings to work better with others from different backgrounds, to view issues from multiple perspectives, and to respond appropriately to cultural differences of customers, colleagues and employees. Four years after Grutter, all nine justices of the Supreme Court recognized the decision as binding in higher education settings.

Education remains the strongest suit of American democracy and its innovation capacity. Our nation’s colleges and universities have the responsibility of forging diverse learning environments, and helping tomorrow’s workers become critical thinkers, effective
communicators, ethical decision-makers and effective team members. The diversity imperative has significant implications for our nation in nearly every professional field and corresponding academic discipline.

The American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association of American Universities have argued that “we must increase participation of minorities and women in STEM fields…[or] the nation’s economic strength, leadership in innovation, and security may be expected to decline appreciably.” The very benefits associated with a diverse group of students engaged in learning in general have even greater significance in science and math related fields. The fact that there may be specific answers to questions involving science, math or medicine doesn’t eliminate the need, frequently central in key advancements around science, to ensure that the right questions are being asked, and that the many pathways toward resolution are being fully explored.

Education of diverse communities is the single greatest challenge of public higher education in the 21st century United States. The promise of land grant universities in the 21st century is a new version of an old theme: to forge a nation out of many and to fulfill our quest for democratic greatness by educating an increasingly diverse public. Only through education, especially higher education, can our common good be realized to its fullest potential. Public education in New York must forge the new New York in the New America.

Within a generation, the white population will comprise less than half New York’s population. Very few states have been as influenced by the forces of globalization and immigration as has New York, which is the third most populous state in the nation and one of the most culturally diverse. By Academic Year 2021-22, New York’s population of public high school graduates will consist of 43% students of color and 57% non-Hispanic whites. By 2025, New York’s population will consist of 47% minorities and 53% non-Hispanic whites, and by 2030 we will serve a “majority-minority” population of public high school graduates.

SUNY was created to help address inequities of the prevailing educational system that stymied New York State’s ability to respond to the momentous challenges of the times. In addressing the issue of diversity through higher education, SUNY “promotes equal access, meaningful academic and intellectual inclusion of diversity in the curriculum, research and service, and integration of our state’s underrepresented and economically disadvantaged populations into the academic culture of higher education.” New York State’s demographic transformation, marked by unprecedented growth of Latino and Asian America residents, has challenged SUNY to develop cost-effective programs that enhanced inclusion and representation. For the state and the nation to remain competitive, we must develop the knowledge, cognitive skills and cultural competence to respond to new opportunities and challenges propelled by the forces of globalization. Those universities that conceptualize diversity as a holistic enterprise will very likely succeed in creating an intellectual climate that fosters respect for differences, stimulates innovation, encourages collaboration, and prepares students to live and work productively in a multiracial and multiethnic society. In short, diversity is critical for academic excellence and economic renewal.
It takes committed leadership to help create a campus community that is inclusive and contain civil environments wherein students, faculty and staff feel welcomed, are encouraged to do their best work and are valued for who they are.