

Wartburg College
Diversity and Inclusion Plan
May 2007

What goals and strategies must be in place for Wartburg College to produce globally educated students for the 21st century?

Wartburg College's Diversity Vision Statement

The Diversity Vision Statement continues to serve as an effective and shared understanding of diversity. It was developed by the Global and Multicultural Studies Committee (GMCS) as part of the initial Diversity Plan and approved by the President's Cabinet in the academic year 2004-05.

The Wartburg College Community is committed to creating and maintaining a mutually respectful environment that recognizes and celebrates diversity among all students, faculty, and staff. Wartburg values human differences as an asset, works to sustain a culture that reflects the interests, contributions, and perspectives of members of diverse groups, and delivers educational programming to meet the needs of diverse audiences. We also seek to instill those values, understandings, and skills to encourage leadership and service in a global and multicultural society.

Introduction and Background

President Jack R. Ohle appointed a diversity study group in Fall 2006. Among its several tasks, this group was charged to “update and reinvigorate” the initial Diversity Plan offered by the GMCS Committee in 2002. The earlier plan drew on the work of Commission Wartburg, and that planning document has shaped much of what has happened at Wartburg these past six years.

This 2007 iteration of the Diversity Plan represents some significant changes to the earlier plan. The changes are based on a number of factors: experience with the Diversity Plan during the past four years; an assessment of the most pressing campus needs; recognition that both global and domestic forces are reshaping our understanding of diversity; and a re-conceptualization of how diversity and inclusion should best be considered at Wartburg College. While the 2002-03 Plan asserted the importance of diversity, we also believe **it is an educational imperative that Wartburg prepare its students to live, work, and serve as global citizens.**

As an institution that exists to prepare students who will succeed in a diverse world, the college has a responsibility to provide a campus environment – academically and socially – that equips students with the necessary tools to become positive contributors to diverse, global communities.

The heart of a Wartburg College liberal arts education is critical thinking, which requires varied methods of inquiry, an understanding of the vital interplay between the individual and community, and openness to new ideas and global narratives. In this context, diversity is intrinsic to critical thinking.

Local community and world community narratives or stories are intertwined. This Diversity and Inclusion Plan encourages everyone in the Wartburg community to recognize that our lives are shaped by narratives and traditions that range from Neuendettlesau, Germany (locale of the college's historic roots and a model for the college's ethos of service), to Capetown, South Africa (a recent relationship connected to our musical traditions). In the same manner, Waverly narratives contribute to and influence life in Tokyo, Japan, and Cuernavaca, Mexico. Therefore, we need to learn, to listen, to respect, and to honor the traditions and narratives of all communities.

We are educating students to work and live in a historical period that increasingly values diversity in populations, perspectives, and narratives. Consequently, it is incumbent on Wartburg College to create a campus environment that reflects a deeper understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion. Attention to diversity and inclusion are all too often at the margins – an afterthought. Instead, they must be recognized as central to what we do.

We believe the goals and strategies of this Diversity and Inclusion Plan can provide direction in the college's efforts to create environments that foster learning through mutual respect and diversity of opinions. As a learning community, we as students, staff, and faculty can grow to appreciate the narratives of others while at the same time more deeply valuing our own.

Diversity Challenges and Paradoxes

The use of the word “diversity” often focuses on difference from an assumed norm. This Plan calls for refocused attention to the responsibility we all share to learn about and understand the multiple perspectives, affinities, traditions, cultural backgrounds, and identities that exist in every society, and by extension, on this campus. This focus recognizes the positive value of diversity and inclusion rather than viewing difference as a barrier to mutuality.

A model proposed by Edgar Beckham suggests that while “diversity denotes difference, it connotes inclusive context” (paper presented at fourth biannual meeting of AAC&U, 2002). We recognize and value contributions of individuals who are part of the Wartburg community, and we value the richness of our community life that results from our diversity. However, it is important to acknowledge that resistance to diversity and inclusion has negatively affected educational and other human processes around the world and here in the United States. While issues of race, ethnic diversity, religion, sexual orientation, gender, socioeconomic status, and ability remain key features of diversity and inclusion, we must recognize that excluded voices will rise up and insist on being heard.

The majority of our students are from Iowa, and many students come from small rural communities. Consequently, they may find much more intellectual and human diversity and many more cultural traditions on campus than they have ever experienced before. At the same time, students from larger communities and broader geographic regions may be accustomed to much more human diversity and inclusion than they encounter at Wartburg. One of our challenges in the Essential Education plan and in our efforts to build community lies in educating students from varied backgrounds and various levels of openness to diversity and inclusion.

Some of the other distinctive dimensions of the diversity paradox and resulting tensions include:

- The religious heritage of this institution and some of the people who have served it *and* the increasing religious diversity within U.S. society and the college.
- The Western academic tradition, which posits abstract thought as predominant and in which most members of the faculty and staff have been educated, *juxtaposed with* our desire to broaden our intellectual understandings of how others see the world in which they live.
- The increasingly global world in which we live and learn and for service in which we want to educate students, *contrasted with* the current climate in U.S. society and elsewhere that makes respectful debate in the best traditions of the academy difficult to initiate and sustain.
- The focus on “world communities” as an orienting educational premise in this Diversity and Inclusion Plan *and* a concern that this approach deemphasizes the responsibility to diversify our campus and to educate under-represented U.S. groups.

Finally, campus references to “diversity students” and “diversity faculty and staff” assume a predisposed norm. This creates an undesirable “othering” that improperly merges, confuses, and denies the multiple identities existing at Wartburg.

Funding the Plan

For Wartburg College to succeed in its attempt to become a leader in diversity and inclusion, adequate funding and resources are imperative. Budgetary commitment is fundamental to supporting curricular and co-curricular initiatives and staff and faculty development. In addition, we envision strong leadership from the Advancement Office in communicating needs and identifying donors and other funding sources.

Implementation and Oversight for the Plan

To ensure the successful implementation of this Plan, it is important to create an organizational and reporting structure that enhances rather than impedes its progress. At

present, no one organization, committee, or program oversees campus diversity and inclusion. In fact, three programs specifically intersect with diversity and inclusion – Student Diversity Programs, International Programs, and Global and Multicultural Studies. In addition, there is a Coordinator of IS 201 and Diversity Across the Curriculum (DAC) courses, a Diversity Issues Coordinator and a newly appointed Saemann Chair in World Communities. While each program or position does important work, none has the responsibility or support to coordinate a comprehensive campus-wide plan.

Clearly, a broad-based committee is needed to coordinate implementation of this Diversity and Inclusion Plan. This need has also been recognized and is a topic of ongoing discussion by the GMCS Committee. Adequate support staff and resources will be necessary for the committee in order to carry out its work.

Creating and supporting this organizational structure, as well as a structure that coordinates and helps support campus diversity and inclusion programming, will demonstrate the college's commitment to providing exemplary leadership in matters of diversity and inclusion.

The following section describes the vision, hopes, and strategies to make Wartburg College a leader in matters of diversity and inclusion. The proposed strategies are presented in a form to invite broad conversation and energetic participation, so that we can actualize this evolutionary Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

The Proposed Diversity and Inclusion Plan Vision and Strategies

The approach that structures this Diversity and Inclusion Plan is informed by the question posed at the beginning of this document:

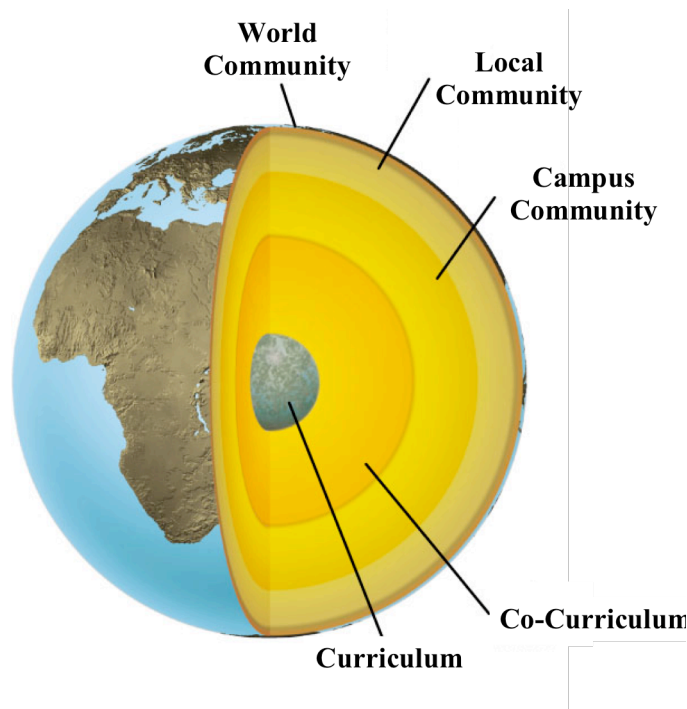
What goals and strategies must be in place for Wartburg College to produce globally educated students for the 21st century?

This approach allows us to maintain the focus on Wartburg’s mission as an institution of higher education and, specifically, as a liberal arts college of the church. As such, the “vision” proposed by this Plan identifies five areas of focus for the articulation, implementation, and assessment of goals and strategies. All five areas are essential in educating students who are prepared in every sense—academically, experientially, and ethically—to go forward and become constructive leaders and participants in our global world.

These five areas are best envisioned as concentric, in which the core is always the college’s role as an educational institution:

- The Curriculum
- The Co-Curriculum
- The Campus Community
- The Local Community
- The Global World Community

Visually, this approach takes the following form:



I. The Curriculum

“The Curriculum” refers specifically to the course work (36 credits) required of students to complete requirements in Essential Education, majors, minors, and certifications, as well as the electives available both within and across departments. It defines the central core of what Wartburg, or any college or university, simply **is**.

In many ways, Wartburg College can pride itself as being “ahead of the curve” in the inclusion of diversity issues within the curriculum. The Plan of Essential Education implemented in 1999 includes the second-year required course, “Inquiry Studies (IS) 201: Living in a Diverse World,” in which sections focus on specific areas and disciplines. In addition, our Diversity Across the Curriculum (DAC) component requires all students to complete at least one approved DAC course to fulfill their Essential Education requirements. Venture Education and off-campus May Term courses also offer opportunities for students to challenge and enhance their understanding of global and diverse world views.

That said, there are a number of ways global and diversity and inclusion issues within the curriculum can be enhanced and refined:

1. Maximize the possibilities offered by both IS 201 and DAC:
 - a. Continue to develop and support the diversity component in the curriculum.
 - b. Provide incentives for creating curricular connections across academic disciplines.
 - c. Explore the possibilities and benefits of team teaching.
2. Explore strengthening or expanding our curricular offerings:
 - a. Wartburg currently offers majors or minors in Modern Languages (French, German, and Spanish); International Relations; Intercultural Studies; and Women’s Studies (which could be renamed Gender Studies to reflect current disciplinary nomenclature).
 - b. We have no substantive courses in area studies, as defined by cultural theory/practice, in (not limited to) Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, and within the United States.
 - c. We offer no courses or programs in languages that are important in emerging markets and politically important regions, such as Asia and the Middle East, or in other areas to which we have important ties (often church-related), such as Africa.
 - d. We offer no courses or programs in TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages), even though many of our graduates over the past years have done so both internationally and in the U.S. Such courses or programs could also assist our international students.
3. Secure funds for the expansion of our study-away and study-abroad programs.

4. Continue to expand faculty development resources for cross-cultural research, contacts, and immersion programs.
5. Identify faculty who are already trained to offer diversity-related courses and allow them to develop courses to benefit the students, even if it means freeing those faculty from departmental loads.
6. Compile and disseminate a yearly internal report that:
 - a. outlines diversity and inclusion assessment in Essential Education courses, as well as other classes across campus;
 - b. emphasizes quality and academic standards for inclusive diversity;
 - c. includes student research that presents a breadth of world view in order to model the potential of such courses;
 - d. advertises faculty development opportunities.

II. The Co-Curriculum

“The Co-Curriculum” refers to the many college-sponsored programs and activities, apart from the completion of course work, in which students are involved. While the Curriculum is the bedrock of the college’s role as an institution of higher education, the Co-Curriculum is extremely important in informing and shaping the ethos of Wartburg College, reflected in students’ experiences at the college, relationships with the college, and relationships with each other. Indeed, it is in the context of co-curricular activities that many students first seriously encounter, work closely and live with others who come from different backgrounds and hold different world-views. As such, the Co-Curriculum represents a vital arena for challenging and fostering students’ understanding of others as well as themselves.

At Wartburg, the Co-Curriculum includes (but is not limited to) student organizations, musical ensembles, intercollegiate and intramural athletics, campus ministry, and service trips. Specific interest and emphasis groups regarding issues of diversity and inclusion are Alliance, Black Student Union, Gospel Choir, International Club, and Mosaico Latino. These groups contribute actively to the co-curricular arena as do a number of other student organizations and groups. Contributions to issues of diversity and inclusion from all co-curricular organizations, programs, and activities need to be recognized and encouraged.

We see the need to enhance the Co-Curriculum programming activities in the following manner:

1. Encourage co-curricular programs and organizations to reflect diversity and inclusion in their planning, activities, memberships, and campus leadership.

2. Highlight the role of the organizations' faculty/staff advisor regarding diversity and inclusion issues.
3. Create and publicize recognition for co-curricular programs and organizations that develop and execute initiatives that integrate themes of diversity and inclusion in the fulfillment of their stated mission.

III. The Campus Community

The many ways in which students understand diversity and inclusion are not informed solely by “official” college course work and activities. Here, we identify the “Campus Community” as the larger space in which students live, perceive, engage, and develop. This includes the faculty, staff, administrators, and the student body as a whole. Although this area is more general than the previous two and therefore more difficult to define, it might best be described as “campus climate.” To what extent do students feel welcome—or not? In which ways is the importance of diversity and inclusion reinforced—both in what is said and how things are done? What are the messages that students receive—both “officially” and “unofficially”—about how seriously the college reflects and acts on any issue of world communities or diversity and inclusion?

As evinced by the length of the following list, this is one area in which we believe Wartburg College will benefit from more vigorous conversation and self-scrutiny.

1. Support diversity and inclusion programs and international programs as ways to encourage interaction among U.S. “majority” students, U.S. students of color, and international students.
2. Recruit and retain faculty, staff, and students from diverse life experiences and world views.
 - a. Encourage each department to develop a long-term diversity plan for staff.
 - b. Provide resources to search committees on how their efforts may become more fruitful, including early notice of faculty and staff positions and strategic placement of ads.
 - c. Set professional development programs in place to cultivate outstanding staff rather than to “use them up.”
 - d. Systematically monitor and assess workload and professional satisfaction.
 - e. When recruiting faculty and staff,
 - i. replace the emphasis on fit with the expectation of contribution;
 - ii. recognize challenges to integration and potential difficulties of adjusting to life at Wartburg College and in Northeast Iowa rather than assume that neither the communities nor the persons involved can adapt to changes brought by new staff and faculty;
 - iii. look for opportunities to highlight new skills and styles brought by arriving employees and their families.

- f. Interview current students to ask them what a “welcoming culture” may look like to them and use that as a basis to develop a plan.
 - g. Conduct a campus climate survey or contract professionals to conduct a campus climate survey.
3. Include the Diversity Vision Statement in recruiting and orientation materials for faculty, staff, and students, including an area on the Wartburg Web site.
4. Continue funding opportunities for faculty and staff to attend diversity and inclusion workshops.
5. Provide faculty, staff, and students (especially student leaders) with orientation and ongoing development in diversity and inclusion through regular on-campus training programs and funding for participation in off-campus development experiences, such as cultural immersion, summer workshops, and conferences.
6. Disseminate the college’s Diversity and Inclusion Plan and emphasize its importance to the academic goals of the college via new and traditional media.
7. Encourage academic departments and college offices to:
 - a. identify strategies and annually review their implementation in order to foster a welcoming environment that is supportive of diverse opinions and perspectives;
 - b. distribute this report to all constituents in the unit, to the appropriate VP, the Saemann Chair, and other interested external constituencies, such as the National Diversity Advisory Board and Board of Regents;
 - c. perform a follow-up assessment and evaluation for accountability.
8. Encourage committees and groups to meet with diversity and inclusion resource people to assist in planning for speakers and performers.

IV. The Local Community

Our students live not only as members of Wartburg’s campus community, but also as residents of the “Local Community,” namely Waverly and the larger Cedar Valley (especially Waterloo-Cedar Falls). Their involvement in the local community plays an experiential role in the way they grow to understand diversity and inclusion issues.

While the relationship between Wartburg College and the local community is positive — indeed, many of our students of all backgrounds establish relationships through internships, employment, and service in Waverly and the Cedar Valley—anecdotal evidence offered by a number of students and others suggests that this relationship would benefit from stronger ties and enhanced dialogue. The reciprocal effect on the community would also have the potential to be very positive.

We suggest the following strategies to foster this dialogue:

1. Communicate the importance and value of diversity and inclusion both internally and externally through informed, concerted, and appropriate college communication efforts.
2. Seek out working relationships with other educational institutions in the area: University of Northern Iowa, Hawkeye Community College, Hamilton College, Upper Iowa University, and public and private elementary and high schools (especially Longfellow School in Waterloo).
3. Collaborate with the Waverly-Waterloo greater community to build partnerships to enhance the support for diversity and inclusion in:
 - a. education, employment, and communities;
 - b. professional development opportunities;
 - c. provision of services appropriate to cultures and organizations not traditionally found in our community.
4. Work with nonprofit support organizations in the area, including but not limited to: Waverly Health Center; Allen and Covenant Hospitals; Chamber of Commerce organizations; cities of Waverly, Waterloo, and Cedar Falls; governments of Bremer, Black Hawk, and Butler counties; foundations, including the McElroy Trust; churches, synagogues, mosques, and faith-based councils; cultural and performing arts groups.
5. Commission art by local artists as part of a permanent collection; fund exhibits and receptions in the Wademar A. Schmidt Art Gallery.

V. The World Community

“The World Community” refers literally to the larger world from which students arrive at Wartburg College to become educated, the world in which they study in structured environments and perform discrete exercises, complete their internships, and live out their lives after completing their degrees. It is the world for which our students need to be prepared in every sense of the word if they are to be successful and constructive global citizens.

At Wartburg, this involves enhancing and facilitating the experience of our U.S. students with “the world out there” *and* the experience of our international students with “the world right here.”

Much of the work to be done in this area coincides significantly with suggestions made in previous sections:

1. Expand and enhance the preparation of students studying away or abroad, including opportunities to process and build on their experiences.
2. Enhance ways of integrating students, staff, and faculty from outside the area into campus and community life.
3. Provide opportunities for academic departments and programs to prepare their graduates for life and work in world communities.
4. Provide opportunities for students to explore post-graduation employment and service opportunities in the larger world (Americorps, Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Peace Corps, AFSC teaching ESL, etc.).

Conclusion

This Diversity and Inclusion Plan is a guide and pathway to the future—a future that we know from census data and other reports will deliver our students to a world far different and far more inclusive than the world in which their parents were educated and prepared for careers. A complex inter-relationship develops from what happens in our classrooms (curriculum), life outside our classrooms (co-curriculum), our campus climate, our local community, and our world community. This inter-relationship, shaped by various community narratives or stories, powerfully influences the educational experience for all of us.

Wartburg is positioning itself to become a more diverse and inclusive community, exercising its leadership and responsibility for educating students to live, work, and serve as global citizens. With such rapid change all around us, this Plan must remain dynamic and responsive to differing needs and interests as they are expressed. The strategies and initiatives identified and suggested in this Plan serve as a means for inclusive community-building and for educational practice. They also serve to bring diversity and inclusion to the core of all that we do, all that we are, and all that we can become.

5/2/07