

Diversity Plan for Edgecombe Community College

Defining Diversity

Diversity can be defined in a wide variety of ways. Throughout the course of this document, “diversity” will be defined as all of the ways that people are different. This includes individual, group, and cultural traits that manifest in such dissimilarities as race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnic origin, learning styles, physical disabilities, veteran status, and others. Due to the similarities in many of their goals, the Diversity Committee and the Global Education Committee were merged in January, 2007. The new committee, the Diversity and Global Connections Committee, was formed to "foster an environment inviting educational and cultural opportunities designed to heighten awareness of diversity and global issues affecting Edgecombe Community College students, employees, and the community."

Why Have a Diversity Plan?

Throughout the country, most colleges and universities recognize that all students benefit when campuses reflect a “broad range of intellectual and social perspectives.” A well-written diversity plan will ensure such a broad range of perspectives, thereby attracting a diverse student population.

The research also suggests that institutions that have staff who are “Diversity Conscious” tend to exhibit greater flexibility in thinking and take into consideration a variety of learning styles. This flexibility of faculty and staff will lead to greater student success in the classroom.

In addition, changes in our cultural landscape have precipitated the need for such a plan in order for both the student's and institution's success. Such changes include, but are not limited to, changing national and local demographics, heightened awareness of diversity due to terrorism, and globalization of technology. In comparing the census data from 1990 and 2010, the Hispanic population has grown in the United States by over 500%, and there has been a sizeable increase in other populations due to an influx of immigrants from Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. The 2010 census counted 50.5 million Hispanics in the United States, making up 16.3% of the total population. Research suggests that diverse student populations are more successful when served by faculty and staff having similar ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In the aftermath of September 11, the topic of diversity has been frequently addressed in the media. These stories tend to deal with such issues as affirmative action, global conflict, the impact of immigrant workers, and religious differences. As a result, diversity has become more visible in everyday life and is more apt to be discussed and debated both publicly and privately.

Although changing demographics and heightened awareness weigh heavily on the establishment of a diversity plan, the most significant factor may be the institution's need to educate students in such a manner as to ensure their viability in a diverse workplace. We currently are living in what Marshal McLuhan terms a "global village." In other words, we live in an environment where computers, satellites, television, and other technology have brought us closer together, making cross-cultural encounters an almost

every day occurrence. As a major provider of workforce development and training, community colleges must prepare themselves to meet the needs of all students.

“Colleges, businesses, and nations that ignore or fail to recognize the growing diversity of their, students, employees, or markets” will suffer grave consequences. On the other hand, those that thoroughly seek to embrace the concept of diversity consciousness will see an increase in the number of students and employees who are more innovative and adaptable, better communicators, and more productive. Retention will also improve.

Current Diversity Profile of Edgecombe County and Edgecombe Community College

Edgecombe Community College (ECC) is located on two campuses in Edgecombe County, North Carolina; one in Tarboro and one in Rocky Mount. It is also important to note the demographics of Edgecombe County taken from the last U. S. Census of 2010. The Edgecombe County 2010 census population was reported at 56,552 people with the following race designations: 57.3% Black; 37.8% White; 3.9% Hispanic/Latino; 0.1% Other/Two or more races; 0.6% American Indian; and 0.3% Asian. The census report also shows that 53.5% of the population was female and 46.5 % of the population was male in 2010. (See chart below.)

**Edgecombe County U. S. Census Figures
2010**

Population, 2010	56,552
Population, 2011 estimate	56,041
Population, percent change, 2010 to 2011	-0.9%
White persons, percent, 2010 (a)	40.7%
Black or African American persons, percent, 2010 (a)	57.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.6%
Asian persons, percent, 2010 (a)	0.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2010 (a)	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2010	1.0%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2010 (b)	3.9%

(a) Includes persons reporting only one race

(b) Hispanic may be of any race

Fall 2011, 2012, and 2013 demographics of the workforce at Edgecombe Community College provide snapshots of campus diversity in terms of race and gender. A total of 189 people were employed fulltime at ECC at the start of Fall Semester, 2013. Of this total, 66.7% were female and 33.3% were male. A slight decrease (1.1%) in male employees has occurred from 2011 to 2013. ECC employees were 67.7% white, 30.2% black, and 2.1% other races at the start of Fall, 2013. This represents a small increase in the number of minority employees at ECC employed since Fall 2011. Importantly, significant strides are being made in recruitment of qualified minority candidates, with 5 of 11 hires (46%) being minorities in 2013. A complete analysis of the five areas of the College and their respective diversity in terms of race and gender for Fall, 2011, 2012, and 2013 is provided below.

**Edgecombe Community College
Administration, Staff, and Faculty
Fall 2011**

	Admin.	Faculty Curr./Con. Ed.	Professional	Clerical/ Secretarial	Technical	Service/Maint.	Total
<i>Race</i>							
Black	1 (20%)	31 (22%)	15 (79%)	6 (60%)	16 (34%)	8 (80%)	57 (29%)
White	4 (80%)	71(76%)	3 (16%)	3 (30%)	30 (64%)	2 (20%)	134 (69%)
American Indian	0	0	0	1 (10%)	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	2 (2%)	1 (5%)	0	1 (2%)	0	4 (2%)
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Sex</i>							
Female	2 (40%)	61 (65%)	15 (79%)	19 (95%)	27 (57%)	4 (40%)	128(66%)
Male	3 (60%)	33 (35%)	4 (21%)	1 (5%)	20 (43%)	6 (60%)	67 (34%)
Total	5	94	19	20	47	10	195

**Edgecombe Community College
Administration, Staff, and Faculty
Fall 2012**

	Admin.	Faculty Curr./Con. Ed.	Professional	Clerical/ Secretarial	Technical	Service/Maint.	Total
<i>Race</i>							
Black	1 (25%)	20 (22%)	4 (14%)	7 (37%)	15 (34%)	9 (82%)	56 (28%)
White	3 (75%)	69 (76%)	24 (74%)	12 (63%)	33 (68%)	2 (18%)	143 (70%)
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	2 (2%)	1 (3%)	0	1 (4%)	0	4 (3%)
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Sex</i>							
Female	2 (50%)	59 (65%)	15 (51%)	18 (95%)	28 (57%)	5 (46%)	127(64%)
Male	2 (50%)	32 (35%)	14 (49%)	1 (5%)	21 (43%)	6 (54%)	76 (36%)
Total	4	91	29	19	49	11	203

**Edgecombe Community College
Administration, Staff, and Faculty
Fall 2013**

	Admin.	Faculty Curr./Con. Ed.	Professional	Clerical/ Secretarial	Technical	Service/Maint.	Total
<i>Race</i>							
Black	1 (25%)	10 (13%)	15 (33%)	11 (48%)	12 (44%)	8 (73%)	57 (30%)
White	3 (75%)	65(83%)	30 (65%)	12 (52%)	15 (56%)	3 (27%)	128 (68%)
American Indian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic	0	3 (4%)	1 (2%)	0	0	0	4 (2%)
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Sex</i>							
Female	2 (50%)	50 (64%)	34 (74%)	21 (91%)	14 (52%)	5 (45%)	126(67%)
Male	2 (50%)	28 (36%)	12 (26%)	2 (9%)	13 (48%)	6 (55%)	63 (33%)
Total	4	78	46	23	27	11	189

A more complete picture of campus diversity at ECC includes student numbers. In Spring 2010, 4,890 curriculum students were enrolled at ECC with the following race designations: 63% Black; 31% White; 0.3% Asian; 1.3% Hispanic; 0.8% American Indian; and 3.6% Other. These numbers changed only slightly in 2011 and 2012 with slight increase in percentage enrollment by White students, and corresponding slight decreases in all other categories. No significant change in racial designation of student population between 2010 and 2013 has occurred. The male/female ratio remained basically the same during this time as well.

		2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
	Headcount	4890	4441	4151
<i>Race</i>	Black	3076 62.9%	2828 63.7%	2597 62.6%
	White	1518 31.0%	1387 31.2%	1356 32.7%
	Other	296 6.1%	226 5.1%	200 4.8%
<i>Sex</i>	Female	3626 74.2%	3274 73.7%	3001 72.3%
	Male	1264 25.8%	1167 26.3%	1150 27.7%

What Diversity Research Shows

How do students benefit from a strong institutional emphasis on diversity and multiculturalism?

A brief examination of the current literature reveals a comprehensive body of research that supports the premise that students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds benefit from a diverse educational environment. A publication from the Association of American Colleges and Universities, *Diversity Works: The Emerging Picture of How Students Benefit¹* provides the most current review of research reports that support the importance and value of diversity at institutions of higher education. Some of the conclusions of this analysis of diversity research include the following:

1. Diversity initiatives have positive effects on both minority and majority students. These include student's attitudes and feelings toward interactions with diverse groups, institutional satisfaction, involvement and academic growth.

2. Broad campus commitment to diversity increases recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented groups and student's satisfaction and commitment to improving racial understanding.
3. Diversity in the curriculum has a positive impact on attitudes toward racial issues by providing students with an opportunity to interact with those who are different. In addition, cognitive development advances among students participating in a course on multiculturalism.
4. Racially-mixed student populations have positive effects on intellectual and social self-confidence.

Colleges which feature diverse faculty and counselors can benefit both minority and majority students. Studies show that minority professors have a positive impact on the education of 96% of minority and 83% of non-minority students.² They also serve as mentors, advisors and professional role models for all students. Research also suggests that a significant percentage of minority students prefer counselors of the same race³. Minority students benefit from the insight, support, and counseling of those who have similar cultural backgrounds.⁴ In addition, all students should experience different ways of approaching problems, varying perspectives on history, and a variety of cultural traditions.

Strong institutional emphasis on diversity also benefits all faculty and staff. According to the diversity statement from the Society for Human Resource Management⁵, diversity initiatives produce work environments which yield greater productivity and positive

outcomes. A diverse faculty and staff make unique contributions which are an essential part of what makes us able to better serve our students.

Action Plan

After an extensive collaborative effort by the ECC Diversity and Global Connection Committee, a comprehensive action plan has been created focusing on the planning and implementation stages. Several examples of action plan items include the following:

- Host International Events throughout the academic year including the Spring and Fall Global Symposium held on campus.
- Maintain partnerships with China and Finland for student and faculty exchange.
- General Education outcome: Global and Cultural Awareness added for all graduates integrated into curriculum programs of study.
- Diversity and Global Connections Committee will meet regularly
- ECC Travel/Study Abroad Program – Student scholarships and college credit available for students and faculty annually.
- Partnership with Martin Millennium Academy for the Imagine Peace project.
- Establishment of Global Education Instructional Certificate for faculty.
- Support faculty teams to participate in World View educational opportunities annually.
- Support a participant at attend the Global World View week long residential seminar annually.
- Implement new Student Code of Conduct.
- Continue to expand the newly created International Club.

- Support the United Nations World Peace Day.

Action Plan Oversight

The Diversity and Global Connections Committee will work to:

- monitor and evaluate the activities and outcomes of the College's Diversity Plan
- support the efforts of the academy partnerships by writing mini grants for funds from the college foundation.
- annually review and update the College's Plan
- review the status of each of the planned activities in the action plan each semester to ensure that those assigned with the responsibilities for accomplishing the activities are making progress toward their achievement

¹ Smith, D. G., et al. *Diversity Works: The Emerging Picture of How Students Benefit*. Washington, D.C.: Association of American Colleges and Universities, 1997.

²Turner, C.S.V., *Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees*, Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2002; and "Survey Reinforces Value of Faculty Diversity in Classroom," *Black Issues in Higher Education*, August 14, 2003.

³ Bernstein, B.L., Wade, P., & Hofmann, B. (1987). *Student's Race and Preferences for Counselor's Race, Sex, Age, and Experiences*, *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 15, 60-70.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ From *Society for Human Resource Management Diversity Tool Kit*.