The Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan:
A Window of Opportunity

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> We must define the issue of diversity as a dynamic, changing concept, leading us to explore problems of human relations and social equality in a manner which will expand the principles of fairness and opportunity to all members of society (Marable 1995:118).

Introduction

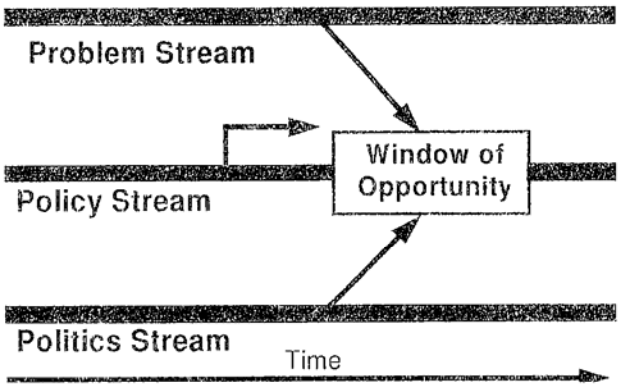

Figure 1: Kingdons Streams Metaphor. From Birkland 2004:225.

The Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan policy will soon be in the process of implementation. This policy has resulted from the culmination of previous diversity policy efforts and mandates from President Ed Ray. It requires every administrative and academic unit of the university to develop a plan with concrete objectives to improve the diversity and campus climate of Oregon State University. These individual plans in aggregate will form the Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan. Although this policy is quite comprehensive in its scope, the vision of the Diversity Action Plan is characterized by a considerable amount of ambiguity and nuanced implications. The Diversity Action Plan exemplifies the interaction of a variety of preexisting policies and processes at Oregon State University and is one of the most significant steps in the pursuit of those policy objectives. Based on the complexity and interaction of many contextual factors, John W. Kingdon's *Streams Metaphor* (See Figure 1) is an appropriately descriptive framework for

analysis of this Diversity Action Plan process. Thomas Birkland concisely summarizes this model in his text, *An Introduction to the Policy Process*:

> Kingdon argues that issues gain agenda status, and alternative solutions are selected, when elements of three 'streams' come together… One stream encompasses the state of politics and public opinion (the *politics stream*). A second stream contains potential solutions to a problem (the *policy stream*). The third, the *problem stream,* encompasses the attributes of a problem and whether it is getting better or worse, whether it has suddenly sprung into public and elite consciousness through a focusing event, and whether it is solvable with the alternatives available in the policy stream, (Birkland 2001:223).

Based on the interaction of these streams at Oregon State University, I would argue that the culmination of shifting policy mandates and diversity initiatives coupled with a recent change in the top level administration in the Office of the President have resulted in what Kingdon terms a *window of opportunity*, fostering the initiation of the Diversity Action Plan process. This window of opportunity culminates a series of other policy windows in which an environment conducive to the Diversity Action Plan process was generated. Following this understanding, this paper will explore focusing events that are a part of understanding the history of diversity at Oregon State University, the factors that have contributed to the initiation of the Diversity Action Plan process, and how those factors will inform the implementation of the Diversity Action Plan.

The Problem Stream

While it is tempting to engage the comprehensive history of Oregon State University to problematize the current issues associated with diversity policies on campus, John Kingdon observes that there are focusing events that identify problems in the process of agenda setting. Kingdon notes,

> Problems are often not self-evident by the indicators. They need a little push to get the attention of people in and around government. That push is sometimes provided by a focusing event like a crisis or disaster that comes along to call attention to the problem, (Kingdon 1995:95).

Using this understanding of problem identification, several focusing events which prompted shifts in the policy direction of the university will be elaborated in this analysis. These focusing events include the international students of the Cosmopolitan Club of the early 1900s, the Non-Discriminatory Housing Policy of 1967, the Black Student Union Walkout of 1969, student action in the 1990s, and contemporary iterations of modern racism. As problems and challenges in these focusing events are further explored, it will become apparent that these focusing events are inextricably entwined with the politics and policy streams of Kingdon's agenda setting framework.

Discrimination and the Appearance of International Students

Intolerance for all forms of diversity has been an apparent problem at Oregon State University for quite some time. Some of the challenges that students face today are influenced by the residual elements of oppression in the history of the state of Oregon and the development of Oregon State University.

These challenges reflect the history racial intolerance at Oregon State University that has mirrored the history of racial hatred throughout the United States.

What is now Oregon State University has had a number of configurations and names since it was first established in Corvallis, Oregon. According to Oregon State University Archives, "Corvallis College, formally Corvallis Academy, incorporated by six local citizens on January 20, [1858]" (2004a). Corvallis College then became Corvallis Agricultural College in 1868 when it was established as Oregon's land grant university (Oregon State University 2006). Corvallis Agricultural College later became Oregon State Agricultural College in the 1920s to later become Oregon State University in 1957 (Oregon State University Archives 2004b).

Since the establishment of the university in 1858, people of color have had a challenging experience in Oregon. In 1844 Oregon legislator Peter H. Burnet, "... felt a black exclusion bill necessary to 'keep clear of that most troublesome class of population," (Taylor 1994:78). His sentiments led to an exclusion act in 1844 that required African Americans who entered the area to leave within 40 days except for those already living in the Oregon territory. Quintard Taylor observed, "The territorial exclusion law remained in effect until supplanted by provisions of the 1859 Oregon constitution which continued the ban of black migration into the state and specifically denied black voting rights," (1994:79).

Like other legislation throughout the nation banning many communities of color from establishing lives in the United States, the general sentiment towards people of color in Oregon was hostile. At the Corvallis College in 1859, "A

Nigger Lecture on Woman's Rights" occurred as a part of an entertainment benefit event for the university (Corvallis College Benefit Broadside 1859). Based on the historical context of the event and other forms of "entertainment" this event occurred with, it is likely this event was performed by a European American in blackface (see Figure 2). This event reflected the poor sentiments towards non-Europeans that were prevalent throughout the nation at this time.

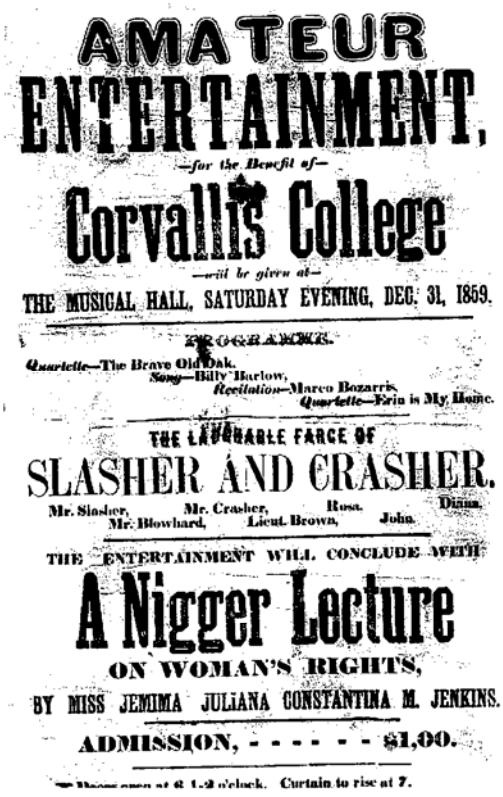
AMATEUR
ENTERTAINMENT,
—for the Benefit of—
Corvallis College
—will be given at—
THE MUSICAL HALL, SATURDAY EVENING, DEC. 31, 1859.
PROGRAMME.
Quartette—The Brave Old Oak.
Song—Billy Barlow,
Recitation—Marco Bozarris,
Quartette—Erin is My Home.
THE LAUGHABLE FARCE OF
SLASHER AND CRASHER.
Mr. Slasher, Mr. Crasher, Rosa. Dinah.
Mr. Blowhard, Lieut. Brown, John.
THE ENTERTAINMENT WILL CONCLUDE WITH
A Nigger Lecture
ON WOMAN'S RIGHTS,
BY MISS JEMIMA JULIANA CONSTANTINA M. JENKINS.
ADMISSION, - - - - - - $1,00.
Doors open at 6 1-2 o'clock. Curtain to rise at 7.

Figure 2: Corvallis College Benefit Broadside 1859. Courtesy of Oregon State University Archives, Corvallis, Oregon.

Despite the challenges associated with a historically hostile campus climate at the earliest iterations of Oregon State University, a number of students of color graduated in the early 1900s. Research demonstrates that the Cosmopolitan Club was associated with the success of a number of these early graduates. The Cosmopolitan Club was one of the first support mechanisms for students of color on campus. Most of the early graduates of color were members of this student organization. However, it seems that this organization was not highly regarded by the campus community. The Cosmopolitan Club identified its purpose and history in the 1913 Orange (the Oregon Agricultural College yearbook):

> The Cosmopolitan Club of the Oregon Agricultural College was organized in the fall of 1900 with a membership of thirteen, representing eight different

> nationalities, and about as many associate and honorary members… The object and purpose of this club is to promote a better understanding of the political economic and literary conditions of the different countries, and to cultivated social intercourse among students of different nationalities at the college and thereby foster the spirit of universal brotherhood. It also aims to cultivate the art of peace, to establish strong international friendship and to carry out the motto of the association, "Above All Nations Is Humanity," (Oregon Agricultural College 1913:258).

Juxtaposed to this description of a positive organization that works to encourage cross-cultural communication and understanding is an image prepared by a yearbook staff member. In this image, characters from different cultural groups (depicted through highly exaggerated stereotypes of each of these cultures) line up in front of a European American to receive an education or *civilization*. This image, which completely contradicts the self-defined objectives of the Cosmopolitan Club, seems to represent the perceptions of the dominant cultural group members on the campus at that time (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: The Cosmopolitan Club, as it was perceived by yearbook staff. 1913. *The Beaver.* Courtesy of Oregon State University Archives.

As observed in a content analysis of the 1900 and 1905 yearbooks of Oregon Agricultural College as well as early issues of the Barometer (1900-1906) available in the OSU archives, it was not until October 1905 that the presence of students of color at Oregon Agricultural College was even acknowledged in publications. In the October 1905 issue of the Barometer (a monthly publication at that time) M.C. Sinha wrote an article titled "O.A.C. and India." In this article, Sinha reported on the statements of individuals that attended the 1905 Pacific Coast Educational Conference. Sinha noted that Ide Wheeler of the University of California suggested, "...if we can make arrangements for the education of Orientals in our schools, colleges and universities, the students from the East not only will learn useful things for themselves, but will understand us (the Americans) better;" (Sinha 1905). Sinha agreed with the goal identified by speakers at the conference of "...the assimilation of the East and West," (Sinha 1905). Sinha noted some of the earliest students of color at O.A.C. in his statement, "As practical proof of the steps taken by Oregon to assimilate the East and West, we may quote O. A. C.'s work last year. We had two Hindoo students and one Persian student in the college," (Sinha 1905). Sinha believed these students were well received by the university and concluded with a call for the future, "We hope Oregon will do for India what California did for Japan," (Sinha 1905). Sinha's article was the first mention of students of color at Oregon Agricultural College even though it was purported that the Cosmopolitan Club was founded in 1900.

Key observations such as the establishment of the Cosmopolitan Club and Sinha's article on Oregon Agricultural Colleges' relationship with India provide an intriguing, yet limited look at some of the historical origins of diversity at Oregon State University. However, it is apparent that the statements in Sinha's article and the establishment of the Cosmopolitan Club reflect the transition of university policies to accept the presence of international students. Up until the 1960s, a number of international exchange programs emerged from this shift in the ideologies of the university. These instances demonstrate a historical turning point in policy mandates and establish a historical context that informs the challenges and incidents that were on the horizon in the 1960s.

Indicators: Shifting Student Housing Policies

Several long standing exchange relationships emerged between Oregon State University and other countries and territories between the 1920s and 1960s, particularly with China, India, and Hawaii (Ava Milam Clark Papers). However, significant policy changes in the 1960s marked a turning point for the university to truly acknowledge the contributions of underrepresented students and faculty. A number of significant events paralleling the culmination of the Civil Rights Movement led to these policy changes and spurred the development of various support services for underrepresented students and faculty.

John Kingdon observes that "fairly often, problems come to the attention of governmental decision makers… because some more or less systematic indicator simply shows that there is a problem out there," (Kingdon 1995:90). At Oregon State University, international students had established a place by the

1960s. However, some indicators demonstrate that the campus and the surrounding community were less than hospitable to international students and domestic students of color. By 1967, the increasing presence of students of color at Oregon State University necessitated the development of a non-discriminatory housing policy. In a December 11th, 1967 memorandum from Franz Haun, Assistant Director of Housing to Robert W. Chick, the Dean of Students, Haun made a number of critical observations that can serve as important indicators about the cultural climate for housing on campus and in the surrounding community of Corvallis. At this point in time, Housing and Dining Services listed off campus landlords that were supervised and approved for student housing. Discussing the need for a non-discriminatory housing policy, Haun states:

> The supervised housing landlords are visited each year and there is some Indication that they are reluctant to offer cooking facilities to foreign students because of a smell from their food, but they do take them as boarders or roomers. We also get some indication from this group that they will take the foreign students, regardless of nationality, but are somewhat reluctant to take the American negro, (Haun 1967).

This memorandum serves as a significant indicator that the university administration acknowledged the challenges experienced by students of color in finding adequate housing in the Corvallis community. The dialogue associated with this event did result in a shift in the policies and practices in the university and a "Non-Discriminatory Housing Policy" was proposed with the memorandum from Franz Haun. The university made a key statement in this policy by

asserting, "Hereafter the University will not include on either of these listings the name of any householder or landlord who practices policies of discrimination based on race, color, creed, or national origin," (Haun 1967). However, it was apparent that by only not listing landlords, the discrimination prevalent in housing throughout Corvallis would not end. To some extent, discrimination in housing was an acknowledged fact of life at that time. In a letter to the editor of the Barometer opposing a student boycott in 1969, one student stated, "Clearly there is racial discrimination at OSU in housing and other areas, but not in athletics," (Angel 1969). Even in this letter criticizing the assertion of rights among athletes of color in the 1960s, the sentiments of other dominant cultural group students at that time are reflected in the statement. This statement acknowledged that it was commonly understood throughout the student body that cultural identity was a significant limiting factor in the availability of housing. While the university may have shifted its policies to address these issues, it would become clear in the events of upcoming years that more significant policy measures would need to be taken.

The Turning Point: The Black Student Union Walkout of 1969

Even with the shift in housing and its associated indicators of campus climate, it was apparent that the challenges to the experiences of students of color at Oregon State University were not completely acknowledged by the university administration. The Black Student Union walkout of 1969 was one of the most significant focusing events of this era organized against the challenges to diversity that had been observed on the campus and in the community. The

events leading up to the triggering incident in early 1969 were succinctly summarized by the editor of the Oregon Stater, Gwil Evans:

> In January, the Black Student Union, then only two months old as a recognized student organization at OSU, insisted on some kind of administrative mechanism to deal with problems of its members and other minorities. At a mid January meeting between Jensen and the BSU..., it was agreed that a Committee on Minority Affairs be formed and that an Office of Minority Affairs be established with a paid director, (Evans 1969:2).

The Minority Affairs Committee proceeded to discuss the development of the Office of Minority Affairs and developed an "Administrative Proposal" outlining a grievance process for human rights violations, which was rejected by President Jensen on February 24th (Evans 1969:12). While students of the Black Student Union were working with President Jensen to overcome some of the challenges to their identity they observed in Corvallis, a specific incident occurred in the athletic department. A football player named Fred Milton refused to shave his beard during the off-season even though it violated one of the policies for participation on the football team established by Coach Dee Andros. Milton was given a deadline to shave his beard and on "the day of the deadline, BSU announced a boycott of class, asserting that Andros had infringed on Milton's fundamental human rights and was discriminating against him," (Evans 1969:3). The incident with Milton and the football team became a symbolic example of the necessity for the passage of the Administrative Proposal prepared by the Minority Affairs Committee. This boycott continued for a number of days culminating in a

walkout of 47 students from the black student union. Sports Illustrated reported on the incident:

> The BSU claimed there was discrimination in public services and housing. Annette Green, the most eloquent BSU spokesman said, "Corvallis is hostile to blacks." Finally, the 47 blacks staged a walkout. All 18 black athletes—six of them football players—on scholarship at the university took part, (Underwood 1969:22).

The walkout was a symbolic action that led to a number of significant policy changes for the campus. Gwil Evans reported, "…perhaps jarred by the BSU walkout, the Faculty Senate passed the modified version of the 'Administrative Proposal,'" (Evans 1969:9). Passing the Administrative Proposal was a pivotal policy shift in the actions of the university because of its associated channel for grievances in the newly appointed President's Commission on Human Rights and Responsibilities. The proposal made bold statements including:

> …[T]he university cannot justify arbitrary practices which disparage the identity of an individual or limit him in his quest for personal identity; the university therefore will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of an individual student's right to determine what constitutes proper social and cultural values.
>
> A student's right to participate in any university program shall not be restricted by any rule or regulation which infringes upon his freedom to determine his social and cultural values unless the exercise of such freedom demonstrably interferes with the orderly processes of the university in fulfilling its legitimate functions, (Evans 1969:11).

Even with the passage of the Administrative Proposal, many black students felt so disenchanted by the process that they did not return. Several black students

officially withdrew and some finished out the term and transferred (Evans 1969:9).

Jo Anne J. Trow, the Dean of Women and Associate Dean of Students during the late 1960s at Oregon State University observed in an interview that an awakening occurred on campus as a result of several incidents and student demonstrations:

> As a result of concerns for minority students for more identity on campus and for increased support in what might be seen by them as an unfriendly environment, two things happened. A series of cultural centers, physical facilities, were set up and an academic support program, the Education[al] Opportunities Program (EOP), was established, (Wolf-Wendel et. al. 2004:289).

As Trow observed, one of the oldest support mechanisms for underrepresented students on campus is the Educational Opportunities Program. According to the Educational Opportunities Program website, "The Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) was created at Oregon State University in 1969 to provide support for non-traditional students. These include students of color, older than average students, students with disabilities, single parents, low-income students, and students who have been rurally isolated," (Educational Opportunities Program 2005). To serve this mission, EOP has provided tutoring, classes, and other academic support for underrepresented students. The development of the EOP demonstrated a significant shift of the policies of the university to acknowledge the challenges with recruitment of underrepresented students and disparities in the K-12 education system.

After the Educational Opportunities Program was established, the cultural resources centers were developed to create safe spaces for underrepresented students gather socially and collaborate towards academic success. These resource centers have also provided numerous outreach opportunities to foster the development of an inclusive and cultural competent community. The Diversity Development office provides a succinct history of the centers on their website:

> The Native American Longhouse was established in 1971, but moved into the current location in 1972. The Black Cultural Center was established in 1975. In 1981, the Center was renamed the Lonnie B. Harris Black Cultural Center after the first director of OSU's Educational Opportunities Program. The Centro Cultural Cesar Chavez was established in 1975 as the Chicano Cultural Center, changed to the Hispanic Cultural Center in the mid 1980's. Its final name change came in 1996 in honor of Mexican farm worker activist Cesar Chavez. The Asian Cultural Center was established and open its doors in 1991. The name was recently changed to the Asian & Pacific Cultural Center in spring of 2003, (OSU Diversity Development 2004).

As these cultural centers were created and became more established in the campus community over the years, Oregon State University has sought to overcome the challenges to the cultural identities of underrepresented students and campus community members. As John Kingdon observes, "Problems are not simply the conditions or external events themselves; there is also a perceptual, interpretive element," (Kingdon 1995:110). In this sense, the focusing events of this era led to collabortions fostering the development of the

aforementioned diversity support services. These collaborations interpreted the necessary responses for some of the problems with the campus climate and generated support services in accordance with these perceptions.

Some of the services inspired by these events and later initiatives brought forward by students were the precursors to the development of more contemporary integral services such as the Minority Education Office and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. Unfortunately, the presence of these services and offices has not completely diminished the presence of overt racial hostility and modern discrimination. However, the interaction of these services and programs has given the concept of "diversity" a symbolic value at Oregon State University.

Incidents and Student Action of the 1990s

A number of developments throughout the 1990s were focusing events that further increased the acknowledgement of the challenges experienced by underrepresented students and faculty at the university. These events shifted the symbolic meaning of "diversity" at the university and the priorities associated with this term.

One critical office that was developed in this era was the Office of Multicultural Affairs. This office was an integral administrative arm that addressed the needs of faculty and students of color. Its origins could be traced back to the creation of the Office of Minority Affairs in 1969, but the scope of this office was more comprehensive. According to the Oregon State University Multicultural Resource Guide:

> Since 1991, the Office of Multicultural Affairs has assisted the University in promoting cultural diversity, awareness, and sensitivity throughout the campus community. It provides leadership in promoting an environment responsive to the diversity of groups represented at OSU. Its programs, services, and activities promote cultural identity within a multicultural environment, and encourage and support cooperative and collaborative relationships within the University community and the University's external stakeholders, (Robbins ed. 2004).

As a liaison and coalition coordinator between diversity support services throughout the campus, the Corvallis community, and ethnic communities, the Office of Multicultural Affairs has coordinated a number of efforts including the management of the recurring Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration at Oregon State University. While this office was responsible for a number of achievements and increasing affirmation of diversity throughout the campus community, a number of incidents continued to occur on campus that shaped how diversity would be defined by the university.

As espoused by Herbert Blumer, "individual and joint actions are framed by historical and cultural meanings," (Adams and Sydie 2001:504). In this sense, the hostile actions taken by various students in the contemporary context have had historical grounding in the incidents that occurred throughout the 1990s. A series of racist and homophobic incidents in the 1990s prompted protests and several initiatives to make Oregon State University a safer and more inclusive environment.

In 1991, a member of the United Black Students Association entered a Corvallis bookstore requesting children's material on Black history when a store

employee instructed the student to "give them a Sambo doll and forget about it," (President's Office Records – RG 13; SG 15; VIII. Affirmative Action). This event prompted student action and a boycott of the store in question. Also in 1991, a number of students expressed their discontent with a sign posted in Wilson Hall that stated "Saddam is Gay," referring to the previous leader of Iraq (Student Affairs – RG102. Gay and Lesbian Association 1991). This event prompted the development of policy recommendations to the university administration to broaden the scope of the commissions and initiatives that were primarily focusing on racially motivated hate crimes at that time. In the following year, a large group of fraternity students accosted the Native American Longhouse and removed Columbus Day protest posters while yelling racist slurs at staff members (Briggs 1992). Students responded with a candlelight vigil attended by more than 200 people to protest racism at OSU (Briggs 1992). While a number of other incidents occurred throughout the 1990s targeted at a wide range of identity groups at OSU, several of these incidents happened to one student:

> Frederick Harris, now a senior, was walking home May 1 [1999] when a pair of freshmen allegedly called out racial insults and threw firecrackers at him from a fraternity house window. The incident recalled a 1996 attack on Harris, then a freshman. He was taunted by students on a dormitory balcony who also urinated on him, (Black Issues in Higher Education 1999).

As the sociologist Erving Goffman believed, "the nature of society and its structures or institutions is discovered in the behaviors of individuals," (Adams and Sydie 2001:509). Thus, the individuals that perpetrated these hateful acts made it apparent that Oregon State University had a tremendous amount of work

ahead to create an inclusive community. Black Issues in Higher Education (1999) also noted, "In response to the 1996 incident, 2,000 students rallied to protest racism on campus. It was one of the largest demonstrations in the schools history and students and school leaders hoped it marked a turning point."

The 1996 incident was a focusing event that interacted with other campus initiatives, eventually leading to the development of the Minority Education Office. As Herbert Blumer theorized, "interaction involves giving social objects symbolic value," (Adams and Sydie 2001:503). Thus, the symbolic value of acting affirmatively with regards to diversity truly emerged with the development of the Minority Education Office (MEO). In 1996, President Risser opened a window of opportunity for future initiatives in his approval of the development of three culturally specific offices modeled after the Office of Indian Education that was established as a unit of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in 1991. The coalition Together Everyone Accomplishes More (T.E.A.M.) was responsible for the proposal and participated with community members in the development of these offices (President's Office Records – RG13; SG 17; V. MEO). These offices have acted as community liaisons and advocates for the success of underrepresented students. The coordinators of the Minority Education Office have also been very outspoken on a variety of issues impacting campus life by serving on numerous committees and acting as resources for a variety of campus programming.

Following the development of the MEO, Frederick Harris's experience in 1999 made it quite apparent that there was still a significant amount of bigotry

and hatred. In response to this incident, the group T.E.A.M. was reconvened and students organized a protest of more than 40 students pressing the university administration to respond to several demands and reparations for Harris's experiences (Hernandez 1999). President Risser observed that some of the demands were not legally possible, but encouraged the T.E.A.M. representatives to continue their efforts (President's Office Records, RG13; Student Affairs – Diversity Information). This focusing event inspired a number of policy actions integral to diversity development on campus.

While the 1990s were rife with incidents of intolerance on the Oregon State University campus, these incidents inspired the development of a number of programs and initiatives. In this manner the policy actions of the 1990s were pivotal in the development in the resources that currently exist on campus. These policy actions will be elaborated in the policy section of this document.

The Contemporary Context

A significant problem that has been the site of extensive recent debate at Oregon State University is the prevalence of modern racism. Mooney, Knox, and Schacht characterize modern racism as:

> ...the rejection of traditional racist beliefs, but a modern racist displaces negative racial feelings onto more abstract social and political issues. The modern racist believes that serious discrimination in America no longer exists, that any continuing racial inequality is the fault of minority group members, and that demands for affirmative action for minorities are unfair and unjustified, (Mooney, Knox, and Schacht 2002:198).

Modern racism has persisted on the Oregon State University campus in the form of articles in campus print media such as the Daily Barometer and the Liberty. In April of 2004, David Williams wrote an opinion column for the Daily Barometer titled, "A message from a white male to the African American community." In this article David Williams discussed a number of reasons why he believes racial disparities still exist, stating, "For some time now I have felt compelled to voice my opinion as to why African Americans have not made the leaps and bounds necessary to close racial disparity gaps," (Williams 2004). Based on the condescending portrayal of his message and displacement of racial beliefs on abstract political thought, there was a rally to protest the Daily Barometer. This event led to a number of discussions about the content of the Daily Barometer and the persistence modern racism in the Oregon State University community. It was apparent in the subsequent discussions following this event that the persistence of such problems reflects a stigma associated with diversity. This stigma is characterized by some dominant cultural group members giving a particular meaning to diversity on our campus that envisions the empowerment of underrepresented groups as a threat to the privileges of the dominant group. As noted by conflict theorists, "Inequalities in power and reward are built into all social structures. Individuals and groups that benefit from any particular structure strive to see it maintained," (Wikipedia 2005). In this sense, the perceived threat of diversity is perpetuated by campus media outlets and is at the core of many issues including the perpetuation of myths regarding affirmative action and other policies.

Besides overt racially motivated conflict, modern racism has persisted as discrimination against all underrepresented groups. During the campaigns for the recent 2004 Oregon ballot measures, student proponents of Measure 36 (the measure to limit marriage to a union between a woman and a man) vandalized the Oregon State University Pride Center with campaign materials. Theresa Hogue reported that the vandals"…filled the center's lawn with signs that read 'Yes on 36: One Man, One Woman,'" (Hogue 2004). The Pride Center is a support service and resource center for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning members of the campus community. By transmitting their intolerance through campaign materials, the proponents of Measure 36 could rationalize their hatred through abstract political thought. Unfortunately, other groups on campus have also experienced this type of modern discrimination and it still persists. In response to a column by a student on "The Islamic Double Standard," Muslim students organized a silent demonstration protesting the hatred on March 2, 2006 (Wallace 2006). A student named Nada Mohamed observed, "Our campus has recently witnessed a trend toward intimidation and racism against the Muslim and Arab communities through different offensive writings. While staying loyal to the main values of freedom of expression that founded this country, we also feel the need to reflect on values of tolerance and acceptance on this campus," (Wallace 2006).

The persistence of these types of incidents could be conceptualized as joint actions of symbolic interactionist theory because they are patterns of behavior that, "…have a history that is 'orderly, fixed and repetitious' [and] the

participants have a common definition of the situation," (Adams and Sydie 2001, 504). Unfortunately, the common symbolic meaning of diversity held by the individuals that participate in these acts is that diversity on a college campus means opportunity for some individuals and not everyone. Thus, the contemporary context of diversity challenges at Oregon State University has been characterized by the persistence of modern racism and challenges to the identities of students and faculty from underrepresented groups on campus.

Problem Stream Conlcusions

Students have served an integral role in the problem recognition of the Oregon State University campus community. Different focusing events throughout the history of the university have inspired collaborations between motivated students and administrators to develop policy responses and navigate the politics of each era. In this manner, the problem stream is inextricably enwtined with the policy and politics. This inseperability is consistent with John Kingdon's assertion, "sometimes, the recognition of a pressing problem is sufficient to gain a subject a prominent place on the policy agenda... But just as often, problem recognition is not sufficient by itself to place an item on the agenda," (1995:114). This interaction is also observed in the challenge of excluding policy responses in the discussion of these focusing events. At many points in this discussion, briefly introducing policy responses was necessary to maintain the continuity of problem stream and the continual reassesment of the univeristy's commitment to the education of all people. Although not a completely exhaustive list, these focusing events have served as indicators in the

agenda setting process of the university. Therefore the Diversity Action Plan, being the critical culmination of these efforts, should be informed by the historical evolution of these incidents and political developments.

The Politics Stream

Much like the problem stream, the politics stream serves an important role in agenda setting and problem recognition. As John Kingdon observes, "...developments in the political stream have a powerful effect on agendas, as new agenda items become prominent and others are shelved until a more propitious time," (1995:145). In this sense, contextual political developments and conflicts can highlight the importance of different agenda items and motivate policy action. As previously noted, the problems stream in this analysis explored the historical evolution of problem recognition on campus. However, more contemporary political developments are important to understanding emergence of the Diversity Action Plan and how it will be shaped by culmination of historical events on campus. One of many critical precursors to the Diversity Action Plan that is important to understanding the history of comprehensive plans at the university is the Minority Action Program mandated by President John Byrne in 1989. The Minority Action Plans that resulted from this initiative eventually lost agenda prominence, but are important to consider in the politics of sustaining any diversity related policy. It is also important to note that the Minority Action Plans resulted from a window of opportunity generated by President Byrne, which contributed to the development of a political environment conducive to the

current Diversity Action Plan. Several recent political developments have also contributed to the agenda prominence of the Diversity Action Plan. The transition of President Edward Ray to Oregon State University and the transition of the Office of Multicultural Affairs to the Office of Community and Diversity have been critical political developments. However, other recent politicized debates have also contributed to the agenda prominence including the release of the Campus Climate Assessment in January 2005.

President Byrne and the Minority Action Program

The Minority Action Program of 1989 was one of the first attempts to develop comprehensive university policy to address the experience of faculty, staff, and students of color at Oregon State University. President John Byrne contributed to the leadership of this effort with the Board of Visitors for Minority Affairs, which he had convened in 1986. The Minority Action Program initiative was prompted by the report "Working Together for the Future: Towards Racial and Cultural Diversity at Oregon State University" prepared by the Board of Visitors for Minority Affairs in 1987 (President's Office Records – RG13; SG 15; VIII. Affirmative Action). This report explored recruitment of students of color, professional development for faculty of color, cultural sensitivity training for campus community members. Consistent with the basic, yet profound assertions of the report, the Minority Action Program espoused three primary goals:

> Goal 1: Increase the number of African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American students graduating from Oregon State University.

Goal 2: Increase the number of African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, and Native American faculty, staff, and administrators.

Goal 3: Create an environment supporting and accepting of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans (Minority Action Program 1989).

To aspire towards these goals, each academic unit was given the responsibility of developing a Minority Action Plan that would be revised and updated each year. This mandate was even extended to each department of Student Affairs. Reports on each plan were expected yearly and the Board of Visitors for Minority Affairs and the Minority Affairs Commission were given the responsibility of program evaluation. In a press release on the Minority Action Program the important role of the Board of Visitors was acknowledged and President Byrne supported the initiative in his statement, "The program moves us in the right direction. It's a natural progression in our efforts to boost minority representation among our faculty staff and student body," (President's Office Records – RG13; SG 15; VIII. Multicultural Affairs). Thus, through the establishment of the Board of Visitors for Minority Affairs, President Byrne generated a window of opportunity for the development of Minority Action Program.

Interestingly enough, the structural characteristics of the Minority Action Program of 1989 bear significant resemblance to the current Diversity Action Plan. It is clear from university records that units did submit Minority Action Plans, but these plans were lacking in accountability and were not truly integrated into the structure of the university (President's Office Records – RG13; SG 15; VIII. Affirmative Action). Even though President Byrne had initiated the

development of a political environment conducive to diversity policies, the plans eventually lost agenda prominence with the transition of top administrators in the following years. However, it is not clear whether the emergence of new programs and support mechanisms throughout the 1990s prompted by student actions also contributed to the reduced the agenda prominence of the Minority Action Program. By giving some administrators the perception that challenges to the experiences of underrepresented community members had been *dealt* with, the need for continual reassessment of unit and department level action may have been dismissed.

In recognizing the political contribution of the Minority Action Program it is important to ask, do the goals espoused by Minority Action Program really differ from the desires of administrators today? It is clear that the language used to define identities has changed and the current goals reflect a broader, more nuanced definition of diversity. This shift has been tempered by the emergence of a tremendous amount of research that has changed how identity is understood in American culture since 1989. However, the Minority Action Program was a critical focusing political event that resulted from a window of opportunity generated by the establishment of the Board of Visitors for Minority Affairs. The Minority Action Program will continue to be important to reference in the creation of sustainable inclusive community fostering policies.

President Ray and the Office of Community and Diversity

President Ed Ray was previously Executive Vice Provost of The Ohio State University before coming to Oregon State University. It was there that he

worked with Ohio State President, William "Brit" Kirwan to develop a comprehensive diversity action plan for that university (Kirwan and Ray 2000). Based on his experiences at The Ohio State University, President Ray questioned the comprehensiveness and commitment to diversity development at Oregon State University when he arrived. As planned before his arrival the Office of Multicultural Affairs was changed to the Office of Community and Diversity, (as mandated by the OSU 2007 Plan) to foster more collaborative diversity development. The director of this office was elevated to a member of the president's cabinet in accordance with the recommendations of the Board of Visitors and the efforts of the previous Office of Multicultural Affairs. Dr. Phyllis S. Lee retired from her role as the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in 2003. In this transition, Dr. Terryl Ross was named Director of the Office of Community and Diversity in 2004. Dr. Ross was charged with developing more opportunities for collaborative and comprehensive efforts towards inclusive community building.

The development of the Office of Community and Diversity, empowered by the transition of President Ray to Oregon State University, has carried on the work of the Office of Multicultural Affairs in the interpretation of several large scale assessments of academics, organizational structure, and campus life. As President Ray noted in his September 21, 2004 University Day speech, "Last spring we completed a climate survey for the first time in the University's history," (Ray 2004). Based on these survey results and the culmination of problem considerations, President Ray's 2004 University Day address emerged as a

political window of opportunity to mandate measurable action towards diversity development. The measurable action emphasized in his statements could be considered a source of campus law, which is referred to as academic custom and usage. This source of law "...is important in particular institutions because it helps define what the various members of the academic community expect of each other as well as of the institution itself," (Kaplin and Lee 1997:18). President Ray used a significant portion of his address to establish this form of campus common law and emphasize several of the diversity related issues that emerged from the campus climate assessment. To provide context for the results of the campus climate assessment, President Ray presented other data that demonstrated significant disparities in graduation and retention rates of students from different cultural backgrounds. In his address, President Ray asserted, "Unfortunately, I also cannot help but note that our first year retention rate for fall quarter freshman is only 80% and our six year graduation rate is only 60%. Retention and six year graduation rates for minority students are significantly lower than those figures," (Ray 2004). Based on these figures President Ray continued his speech stating:

> The results of that survey must be used forthrightly to develop effective strategies to improve retention and graduation rates. Survey results aside, some of the challenges that students from diverse backgrounds face on this campus, and in the community, should be readily apparent. My own experience has taught me that because I look the way I do, and because of who I am, I can never feel the sense of outrage, imperative for change, and feeling of isolation that can be common to those among us who feel marginalized and excluded because of who

> they are or how they look. If this is true for me as an individual, I believe it must also be true for any predominantly white institution like Oregon State University. Improving the quality of the learning experience both inside and outside the classroom requires us to honestly assess whether or not we have a learning environment that is welcoming, supportive, and excellent for all of our students. Following that assessment we must deal with our shortcomings, (Ray 2004).

To address the shortcomings of Oregon State University in the realm of creating an inclusive community, President Ray continued his speech by observing the synonymy of excellence and diversity:

> I genuinely believe that excellence is achieved through diversity. Therefore, creating a more inclusive and welcoming community both on and off campus is not simply a way to improve the learning environment for some of us. It is an essential improvement for all of us. We will each more fully realize our individual potential if we are able to recognize and celebrate our differences and learn from each other, (Ray 2004).

Other diversity development efforts and plans with similar intentions have had very little follow through because of a lack of accountability for outcomes among university leadership. To differentiate the Diversity Action Plan from previous efforts and foster accountability for this process, President Ray mandated:

> Just as we have goals, objectives, implementation plans, and metrics to assess progress with respect to the strategic plan, we need them for the Diversity Action Plan. Accordingly, I am asking that we produce our first Diversity Action Plan annual report during spring quarter. Plans alone do not ensure speedy and appropriate actions. I have made it clear to all of my direct reports - and through them to everyone in a leadership position in this university - that advancement

> and job performance evaluations will reflect the extent to which efforts to enhance our diversity and our sense of community succeed, (Ray 2004).

Thus, the 2004 University Day speech represented a culmination of diversity development concerns at Oregon State University and an optimization of an environment conducive to diversity policies, which was generated by the actions of previous leaders such as President John Byrne and President Paul Risser. This speech was also a political event that has redirected the university's diversity development efforts. Kingdon observes, "...agenda setting may involve the transfer of items from a nongovernmental, 'systemic' agenda to a governmental, 'formal' agenda, partly through the mobilization of the relevant publics by leaders," (Kingdon 2004:566). Thus, the systemic agenda of the extensive and historical diversity development efforts on campus were formally reaffirmed through President Ray's 2004 University Day speech.

The Campus Climate Assessment

Within the context of the OUS (Oregon University System), Oregon State University has consitently emerged as the model institution for diversity support services and initiatives. According to the OUS Diversity Report 2005, Oregon State University is on the cutting edge of diversity policy development. Besides the programs and services previously discussed, Oregon State University has the most extensive list of initiatives and ongoing programs. However, some of the initiatives listed are still in development and have received criticism from the campus community. For example, the OUS Diversity Report 2005 observes:

> The *Campus Climate Assessment,* sponsored by the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Faculty Senate, was conducted during spring term 2004 and the results were disseminated in winter 2005. Students, faculty, staff, and administrators assisted in refining the survey instrument. The results are providing data to assist in the further development and implementation fo the Strategic Plan, including unit level and university-wide Diversity Action Plans (OUS Diversity Report 2005:20).

The use and interpretation of the results of the Campus Climate Assessment has been hindered by critical review of the methodology. Community members observe that "...the six percent response rate raised questions about scientific validity," (El Yaaqoubi 2006). Community perceptions that the methodology used in the assessment was less than sound have further marginalized the responses the assessment participants by casting doubt on the validity of their assertions. However, the information that the climate assessment has provided the community with in terms of the high response rate from underrepresented students faculty and staff has been very valuable. Terryl Ross (2005) observed the importance of the campus climate in that "...the study provided 'voice' to 1289 respondents representing a 17% response rate from faculty of color and a 23% response rate from staff/administrators of color." Although critics may believe the document cannot be generalized (Ross 2005), the information from the assessment is critical for its documentation of the experiences of vulnerable identity communities on the Oregon State University campus. Thus, the criticism of the recent campus climate assessment also demonstrates a key political debate that reflects the politics of diversity on campus.

Politics Stream Conclusions

The political developments and instances discussed in this section illuminate a number of considerations for the Diversity Action Plan. John Kingdon states, "the political stream is an important promoter or inhibiter of high agenda status. All of the important actors in the system, not just the politicians, judge wheter the balance of forces in the political stream favors action," (Kingdon 1995:163). In this manner, the political developments discussed in this section have served as imporant factors for promoting or inhibiting action. President Byrne's Minority Action Program developed a historical political context for action and the transition of President Ed Ray coupled with the development of the Office of Community and Diversity have promoted action within the political stream. However, the conflict surounding the Campus Climate Assessment has hindered its use as a tool to promote decisive action.

The Policy Stream

Kingdon observes that windows of opportunity "...are opened either by the appearance of compelling problems or by happenings in the political stream. Thus agendas are set by problems or politics, and alternatives are generated in the policy stream," (Kingdon 2004:569). As diversity development agendas at Oregon State University have been set by problem recognition and political developments, policy frameworks and processes have been used to develop alternatives for action. Curriculum integration, recent student driven policy development, and the Cultural Center Covenant all represent important focusing

events in policy that should be considered as the Diversity Action Plan proceeds. The Oregon State University Strategic Plan has served as the primary instrument for negotiating the adjustment of diversity services and resources. Thus, the policies contained in this document will also be very important to consider in the implementation of the Diversity Action Plan.

Curriculum Integration

As espoused by the Board of Visitors report of 1987, "students who find support and a curriculum relevant to their concerns will be motivated to complete their undergraduate work and to pursue graduate degrees," (Jaramillo and OSU Board of Visitors 1987). To meet this expectation and the demands of students, a Baccalaureate Core Committee was formed which was responsible for additions to baccalaureate core requirements that emphasized cultural awareness and diversity in the late 1980s (Academic Affairs– RG622; Difference, Power, and Discrimination Course). This process consisted of review and documentation of all courses with content related to diversity. However, it became clear that only acknowledging currently present curricula, would not truly integrate a discussion of diversity. After the Affirming Diversity Course Development Committee was formed in 1991, they made a proposal for an addition of a course requirement category that the committee suggested should be called "Difference, Power, and Discrimination," (Oregon State University Affirming Diversity Course Development Committee 1992). In an op-ed submitted to the campus community through the Daily Barometer campus newspaper, the Affirming Diversity Course Development Committee presented

their proposal on what would later become the Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program. In this proposal the committee identified the structure of the program and they concluded that the proposal was "...a well grounded plan which fulfills the goal of infusing our curriculum with issues of diversity, rather than isolating minority perspectives into a single class," (Oregon State University Affirming Diversity Course Development Committee 1992). According to the Difference, Power, and Discrimination Program (2006), "by fall, 1994 enough DPD courses were in place for the DPD requirement to become a part of the Baccalaureate Core for all incoming first-year students." This requirement was a significant policy shift in curriculum development that paved the way for other initiatives to make the curriculum relevant to the experiences of underrepresented students. Although the program faced significant challenges including discontinued funding in 1998 (Memorabilia Collection - Difference, Power, and Discrimination), the importance of the program was fortunately recognized and the program continues to contribute significantly to the discourse of diversity at the university.

Taking the integration of course material relevant to students of color one step further, campus community members worked towards establishing an Ethnic Studies department in the early 1990s. Campus community participants of the Faculty Senate Ethnic Studies Committee led the effort with a report titled "Proposed Ethnic Studies Model for Oregon State University," which was released in June 1993 (Office of Multicultural Affairs – RG 225; Ethnic Studies Proposal). This proposal explored the need for an Ethnic Studies department

based on minority views of existing curriculum, specifically based on the concept that "...many of the ways of constituting, transmitting, and evaluating knowledge common in ethnic minority communities have been undervalued in U.S. education," (Office of Multicultural Affairs – RG 225; Ethnic Studies Proposal). Thus, the creation of an Ethnic Studies department would give value to the academic discourse of minority communities on the Oregon State University campus. The Daily Barometer reported that the proposed Ethnic Studies department "...would serve as an independent department, as well as a core which other departments would be affiliated with through already existing courses involving ethnic studies in their individual departments," (Kinman 1993). Emphasizing a collaborative interdisciplinary education model with direct community application, this department would be on the cutting edge of curriculum development. Like many other initiatives on the OSU campus, the Ethnic Studies department proposal was met with significant opposition from other academic units. The History department was very vocal in opposition to the Ethnic Studies department proposal. Paul Farber, the chair of the History department cited a number of reasons for not establishing a separate department in a letter he submitted to the Ethnic Studies Committee on November 8, 1993, including:

> The creation of a Department of Ethnic Studies will promote an unfortunate divisiveness among the faculty. By defining such a department as speaking with another voice(s), it sets up an opposition with those disciplinary departments that are currently teaching courses on ethnic subjects (Office of Multicultural Affairs – RG 225; Ethnic Studies Proposal).

Despite opposition, the Department of Ethnic Studies was established in 1995 and began full operation in 1996 (Ethnic Studies 2006). Over the years it has become clear that the policy decision to establish the department has not promoted divisiveness among the faculty, but has actually fostered more collaboration and provided an important alternative perspective in the dominant academic discourse of the university. Thus, the Department of Ethnic Studies and the Difference, Power, Discrimination Program have become integral to the consideration of inclusive curriculum at the university.

Contemporary Student Driven Policy Development

As expressed in the discussion of historical problem recognition at Oregon State University, there has been a significant amount of student driven policy action at the university. One important recent policy development happened in 1999. In a response to the initial pleas of students regarding reparations for the student that was assaulted and called racial epithets while walking by a fraternity, President Paul Risser submitted a letter to the campus community on June 8, 1999. In this letter President Risser encouraged the development of policy alternatives instead of reparations and stated, "We will only be successful when diversity is not a goal, but a way of life on this campus," (President's Office Records, RG13; Student Affairs – Diversity Information). Consistent with similar actions discussed in the politics stream, President Risser's letter created a political opportunity for students mobilize in the development of viable policy actions. The coalition called Together Everyone Accomplishes More (T.E.A.M.) was reconvened over the summer to seize this opportunity. Under the direction of

Larry Roper, these students worked throughout the summer advised by Angelo Gomez and Susan Longerbeam to generate policy options. The students involved in this effort consulted faculty from the Minority Education Office, Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Educational Opportunities Program and Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. With the support of this unique collaboration, the T.E.A.M. Task Force developed a number of recommendations to the President's cabinet to improve the racial climate of the university. These recommendations appeared succinctly reported in El Hispanic News:

1) Strongly endorse race sensitivity training for all employees…
2) Create a mechanism for coordinating efforts among appropriate university units and offices for responding to racial incidents
3) Support the expansion of the memberships of the Associated Students of OSU Student Activity Committee and Student Conduct Committee…
4) Provide and disseminate quarterly reports from the President's Office on the current state of race relations on campus…
5) Promote improved access to campus resources for students of color through internal marketing efforts.
6) Provide or co-sponsor race sensitivity training to targeted groups, for example, University Security, the Oregon State Police stationed at OSU, the Corvallis Police Department, and on-campus vendors.
7) Hold the Greek system accountable for living up to its commitment to its professed values of "virtue, scholarship, ethics, justice, and friendship."
8) Advance the university's commitment to diversity by implementing new initiatives…

9) Conduct an annual evaluation of the past year's progress each spring term (Floyd 1999).

These policy recommendations were adopted by university administrators in fall term 1999 and efforts were made towards the recommendations in the following years. As reported in the Gazette-Times, "students were deeply involved in creating these measures. This is not a 'top-down' response from administrators, but one grounded in the daily experiences of students and faculty," (Gazette-Times 1999). However, the since the development of these policy recommendations was bottom-up, this policy development style may have led to only some of the recommendations receiving true consideration. Unfortunately, not all of the recommendations were backed with accountability and administrative buy-in. As Birkland notes, "the bottom-up approach does not require that there be a single defined 'policy' in the form of a statute or other form… Thus, implementation can be viewed as a continuation of the conflicts and compromises that occur throughout the policy process, not just before and at the point of enactment," (Birkland 2001:182). In this manner, some of the recommendations were compromised and received less agenda prominence. In 2001, Phyllis Lee observed this continuous nature of policy in her report that steps had been taken to implement some of the T.E.A.M. recommendations. However, Phyllis Lee asserted, "We must ensure that each recommendation has been fully implemented, recognize those that require continuous and ongoing efforts and remove obstacles to their integration into the institution's policies and practices," (Lee 2001). Thus, bottom-up policy action towards campus climate improvement has been responsible for a number of achievements on campus,

but not completely successful. A shift in the perceptions of university administration and leadership would be necessary to fully integrate the ideals of the T.E.A.M. recommendations into the Oregon State University institutional framework.

The Cultural Center Covenant

Throughout the late 1990s numerous attacks on the necessity of the cultural centers at Oregon State University and the conspicuous absence of some cultural centers in the OSU Campus Master Plan (Godwin 2003) prompted students to take action to ensure their continued existence. Student action eventually led to the signing of the Cultural Center Covenant on January 22, 2002, which made a number of commitments to guarantee the continued existence of the cultural centers (Student Affairs – RG 102 Cultural Center Covenant). The covenant asserts, "Through this document we make the future status and institutional commitment to the Cultural Centers an unambiguous matter for future leaders," (Student Affairs – RG 102 Cultural Center Covenant). This bold policy statement encapsulates the importance of the covenant and the significant policy shift that it represented. In a climate that has continually questioned the need for diversity support resources, making a legal commitment to the perpetuity of a specific resource represents policy action at the highest level. It could be said that this document marked a dramatic shift towards true institutional commitment to diversity support services and resources.

The OSU Strategic Plan

Developed from the OSU 2007 planning process that began in early 2002, the Oregon State University Strategic Plan was completed in February 2004. This comprehensive collection of campus policies and initiatives has incorporated a number of diversity related initiatives. As a driving force of the development of the OSU Strategic plan, diversity was espoused as one of the five core values to be incorporated in every initiative. The Aspirations and Beliefs portion of the plan asserts:

> Diversity: We recognize that diversity and excellence go hand-in-hand, enhancing our teaching, scholarship, and service as well as our ability to welcome, respect, and interact with other people, (OSU Strategic Plan – Aspirations and Beliefs 2004).

Based on this understanding of diversity, measurable initiatives and policies were developed. Of the concrete initiatives in the plan, the second goal is particularly pertinent to the diversity development initiatives. The second goal of the strategic plan states:

> Goal 2. Provide an excellent teaching and learning environment and achieve student access, persistence and success through graduation and beyond that matches the best land grant universities in the country, (OSU Strategic Plan – Preliminary Implementation Plan 2004).

As much scholarship has shown, an excellent teaching and learning environment must be inclusive and foster an open environment for a diverse array of perspectives. Thus, this was an appropriate goal for the plan, measured by comparison with other top land grant universities throughout the nation.

As a part of the Preliminary Implementation Plan for the second goal of the OSU Strategic Plan, two sections emerged directly related to diversity development efforts. The first section that emerged is directly related to the criteria used to support student experiences on campus:

> Goal 2. § 3. Implement an admission and retention policy that achieves a diverse spectrum of experiences, perspectives, beliefs, and cultures from domestic and international students of high academic achievement and promise, (OSU Strategic Plan – Preliminary Implementation Plan 2004)

In terms of admission policy, this has taken the form of challenge profiles that are now used to measure aptitude for achievement at Oregon State University rather than just the traditional measures of grade point average and SAT scores, which have been shown to have significant class and racial bias. By measuring aptitude in different ways, students from backgrounds that are marginalized by traditional measures can have an opportunity to succeed and contribute to the learning environment of Oregon State University.

The second section of the Preliminary Implementation Plan that emerged directly related to diversity development is the mandate to develop the Diversity Action Plan:

> Goal 2. § 9. Configure academic and support units and programs to optimize the level of achievement of this goal. To this end:
>
> - Align diversity and multicultural education efforts to provide comprehensive diversity support to students, faculty, and staff, (OSU Strategic Plan – Preliminary Implementation Plan 2004).

This objective has characterized the driving force behind the Diversity Action Plan process. Colleges and other student support divisions have already met to establish the alignment of their plans. This information has yet to be disseminated to smaller academic and student support units, but a process for the development of individual action plans for diversity will soon take place.

Part of the alignment mandated in the Preliminary Implementation Plan of the OSU Strategic Plan has taken the form of the development of the Committed 2 Diversity Task Force coordinated by the Office of Community and Diversity. This large network of individuals from throughout the entire university has been consistently meeting since Fall 2004 to develop specific initiatives regarding the nuances of diversity development among students and faculty. The Committed 2 Diversity Task Force and the Office of Community of Diversity have developed the Committed 2 Diversity Action Plan, which will serve as a core component of the Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan. Regarding the Committed 2 Diversity Action Plan, Katie Gill reported:

> The idea was put forth by OSU's Director of Community and Diversity, Terryl Ross, who felt the school was at a point where it needed a renewed commitment to action. He saw it as a way to provide under-represented populations with a stronger voice. Developed in 2004, the plan's initial draft was forged to combat one of the main challenges facing the school, described in the plan as follows: "OSU has underachieved in its commitment to diversity," (Gill 2005).

Thus, it is the hope of the many entities and coalitions involved in the development of the Diversity Action Plan that their efforts will turn the

underachievement of diversity at Oregon State University into a true commitment to diversity through measurable policy.

Policy Stream Conclusions

Although not an exhaustive list of the policies that inform the current Diversity Action Plan, the documents and policy statements discussed in this section will be important to consider in the future implementation of the Diversity Action Plan. John Kingdon asserts that policy development often "...takes place communities of specialists. These communities can be quite tightly knit or quite fragmented. Among the consequences of fragmentation are disjointed policy, lack of common orientations, and agenda instability," (1995:143). A campus community exemplifies a community of academic specialists. Therefore, the success of the Diversity Action Plan will hinge on the ability of the campus community to overcome fragmentation and develop collaborative efforts.

Diversity Action Plan Implementation: Sociological Theory Review

In order to look towards the future of the Diversity Action Plan on the Oregon State University campus it is important to look at the factors that have hindered the implementation of previous diversity policies and recommendations. As discussed in the previous sections of this paper, a number of diversity policies have emerged throughout the history of the university. Unfortunately, many of these policies have ended up as academic exercises in that they have received only limited implementation and lack accountability. After only limited implementation of the policies discussed throughout this paper, President

Edward Ray initiated the Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan process, which has been outlined in this document. As a culmination of all previous plans and policies, this process is intended to add accountability and encourage collaboration in the efforts to make OSU more inclusive. Thus, to examine the roles and shortcomings of previous diversity policies, the sociological theories of Max Weber, Dorothy Smith, Richard Zweigenhaft, and G. William Domhoff are particularly relevant. Based on an understanding of these policies it is possible to prescribe considerations for the implementation of the Oregon State University Diversity Action Plan that is currently in development.

The Theories of Max Weber

Weber's exploration of the structure of bureaucracy identifies many of the challenges that have led to shortcomings in the implementation of diversity policies at Oregon State University. These policies have worked towards diversity development, which implies the equitable redistribution of power and opportunity to empower groups that have been historically marginalized. In this sense, bureaucracy stands as a mechanism that has rationally organized the current distributions of power. Weber asserts:

> Bureaucracy is the means of transforming social action into rationally organized action. Therefore, as an instrument of rationally organizing authority relations, bureaucracy was and is a power instrument of the first order for one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus," (Weber 2004:105).

Traditionally European American men have controlled the bureaucratic apparatus. Thus, the principles that characterize the structure of bureaucracies reflect their dominant cultural perspectives.

Dominant cultural perspectives have implications in what Weber outlines as the characteristics of a bureaucracy. Weber asserts that a bureaucracy is characterized by jurisdictional areas, office hierarchy, written documentation, specialization, full working capacity, and general rules. Some of these characteristics of bureaucracy may illuminate some of the shortcomings of previous policies. For example, Weber believed that, "permanent agencies, with fixed jurisdiction, are not the historical rule but rather the exception," (Weber 2004:99). In this sense the modern development of bureaucracy has created specialization among public entities. On the Oregon State University campus, this could be characterized by the variety of diversity support services such as the Minority Education Office, which is responsible for recruitment and retention of students from the four major underrepresented cultural communities on campus (Black/African American, Indian/Native American, Latino/a, and Asian/Pacific Islander communities). Other departments that focus on different aspects of the campus climate have other specific jurisdictions such as the Diversity Development Office, which administers the cultural resources centers on campus. While they serve an overarching goal of improving campus climate, it has been noted in the previous diversity policies and recommendations that academic units have been less than forthcoming with their support for and collaboration with these efforts. This has been particularly exacerbated by a lack

of understanding of the nuanced jurisdictions of these support services. This example illuminates that each of Weber's characteristics of bureaucracy could potentially be a separate research question related to the implementation of diversity policy.

While Weber believed that bureaucracies have many advantageous characteristics, these characteristics may also lend themselves to stifling change, which is the central drive of diversity policy. Weber asserts that bureaucracies have technical superiority compared to other forms of administration. He states, "Precision, speed, unambiguity, knowledge of the files, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs—these are raised to the optimum point in the strictly bureaucratic administration, (Weber 2004:102). If bureaucratic administrations thrive on unambiguity and the reduction of friction in achieving goals, then the drive of diversity policy counters the ideals of bureaucratic administrations. Finding language that encompasses a broad enough array of identities to achieve the objectives of diversity policies can at times require ambiguous language. Also, the participation and acknowledgement of those that are not in unity with the bureaucratic administration requires democratic processes that are not characterized by speed and minimal personal cost. Therefore, the shortcomings of previous diversity policies could be contributed to the extent to which previous efforts were truly embraced by the university administration. These challenges could also be attributed to the extent to which previous policies adhered to the ideals of the university administration. Since Weber states, "Once fully

established, bureaucracy is among those social structures which are the hardest to destroy," (Weber 2004:105), policies that try to change bureaucracies too swiftly will be met with significant opposition. In this manner, Weber's sociological theories regarding bureaucracies have numerous implications in diversity policy implementation.

The Theories of Dorothy Smith

The post-classical feminist theories of Dorothy Smith illuminate the persistence of prevailing standpoints that resist the provision of opportunities to marginalized groups. In *Women's Experience as a Radical Critique of Sociology*, Smith specifically engages the study of sociology. Smith states:

> The governing of our kind of society is done by abstract concepts and symbols, and sociology helps create them by transposing the actualities of people's lives and experience into conceptual currency with which they can be governed, (Smith 2004:372).

The conceptual currency of sociology is one of the factors that influence the outcome of diversity policies. The experiences of those that have been marginalized must be validated in order to necessitate policy action to improve their situation. In this manner, sociology has tremendous power in influencing policy. It could be argued that some of the historical shortcomings of diversity policies could be attributed to sociological theories not sufficiently validating the importance of perspectives from marginalized groups to the governing dominant cultural forces. Although there has been a tremendous amount of relevant theory available to achieve this end, it may not have reached a critical threshold or been

packaged in a manner that is acceptable to the governing dominant cultural forces until now.

Smith's call for understanding society from a woman's standpoint directly critiques the established powers that perpetuate oppression. This critique of sociology has far reaching implications in policy matters. Smith asserts:

> The theories, concepts, and methods of [sociology] claim to be capable of accounting for the world we experience directly. But they have been organized around and built up from a way of knowing the world that takes for granted and subsumes without examining the conditions of its own existence, (Smith 2004:375).

By critiquing sociology, Smith questions the social construction of knowledge and the forces which have the most influence on that knowledge. At Oregon State University the recommendations of entities such as the Minority Affairs Commission and the T.E.A.M. Task Force questioned the reproduction of knowledge that did not include the experiences of marginalized groups. These policy documents asserted that in order to create an educational experience that does account for the world we directly experience it is necessary to include the experiences of marginalized groups. To achieve this, Smith has a specific prescription for a reorganization of the sociological method:

> This reorganization involves first placing sociologists where we are actually situated, namely, at the beginning of those acts by which we know or will come to know, and second, making our direct embodied experience of the everyday world the primary ground of our knowledge, (Smith 2004:376).

This suggestion could be applied to policy in that the development of policies and programs that serve a particular identity group should incorporate the embodied experiences of individuals from that identity group. Since this challenges the established relationships of sociology and policy, it becomes apparent why there has been so much resistance to the ideals espoused by documents like the T.E.A.M. Task Force Recommendations. Documents like these directly embodied the experiences of faculty and students that felt marginalized. Therefore, the sociological theories of Dorothy Smith provide another perspective through which the shortcomings of diversity policies at Oregon State University can be analyzed.

The Theories of Zweigenhaft and Domhoff

Zweigenhaft and Domhoff provide even more contemporary sociological theories that directly address some of the challenges to diversity policy. In their essay *The Ironies of Diversity*, Zweigenhaft and Domhoff explore how identity management, the importance of class, the importance of education, and the importance of light skin have led to uneven assimilation of communities of color into the power elite of the United States. Of these factors, they believe that class origin is the most important factor. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff assert:

> The movements that led to diversity in the power elite have succeeded to some extent, especially for women and minorities from privileged backgrounds, but there has been no effect on the way the power elite functions or the class structure itself, (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2004:250).

Returning to Manning Marable's definition of diversity, which begins this document, the redistribution of power and opportunity are some central objectives of diversity policy. This is particularly the case on college campuses, where tenure and other mechanisms have led to a low level of diversity among top administrators. However, assimilation is not necessarily the goal of diversity policy. The redistribution of opportunities while affirming different identities is the goal of such policies. This understanding of diversity policy can illuminate why previous policies have had shortcomings in implementation when examined through some of the different factors espoused by Zweigenhaft and Domhoff.

The first concept of identity management demonstrates the mechanism by which assimilation into the power elite occurs. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff observe, "We have seen that newcomers who seek to join the power elite have to find ways to demonstrate their loyalty to those who dominate American institutions—straight white Christian males," (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2004:250). While meaningful diversity policies seek to provide opportunities without requiring members of historically marginalized communities to compromise their identity, Zweigenhaft and Domhoff observe that identity management is an expectation established by those currently in power. Since diversity policies oppose those established ideals, this factor put forth by Zweigenhaft and Domhoff may be an important part of understanding the challenges to diversity policies.

Another factor that particularly lends itself to understanding diversity policy in a higher education context is the importance of education. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff observe, "The women and minorities who make it to the power elite are

typically better educated than the white males who are already a part of it... Education seems to have given them the edge needed to be accepted into the power elite," (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2004:252). This being the case, policies aimed at redressing the disproportionate educational attainment among marginalized groups are resisted by those currently in power because it threatens their status. Policies such as Affirmative Action are at the top of this list of threatening policies. Thus, the importance of education can also be a point of further research regarding diversity policy implementation.

Zweigenhaft and Domhoff conclude their piece by observing the ironies of diversity. They assert:

> The impetus for greater diversity... did not come from within the power elite but was the result of external pressures. Generally speaking, members of the power elite reluctantly accepted diversification as a goal for themselves only because they had little choice, (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2004:259).

This reluctance to accept diversification is one of the core concepts of understanding the institutional resistance to previous diversity policies at Oregon State University. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff believe that the irony of this situation is that the reluctant acceptance of diversity has in some ways strengthened the power elite. "Diversity has given the power elite buffers, ambassadors, tokens, and legitimacy," (Zweigenhaft and Domhoff 2004:260). Thus, policies that transcend tokenism to truly empower marginalized groups are threatening to the positions of higher administrators and receive significant resistance. Zweigenhaft and Domhoff's conclusive sociological theories regarding the mechanisms by

which marginalized groups attain an ascribed status can provide a significant contribution to the discourse around diversity policy effectiveness.

Hopefully, examining the consistent themes of these different sociological theories and their implications in diversity policy will inform the implementation of the Diversity Action Plan process at Oregon State University. Further research using the perspectives of any of the aforementioned theorists could yield a number of research papers that may improve the development of diversity policies in the future.

Recommendations for Implementation

In this examination of the problems, politics, and policies that have culminated in the Diversity Action Plan a number of themes have emerged. It is clear that student and faculty response to incidents of discrimination and harassment on campus have been important in the development of diversity support services and resources. Many important policy documents that have resulted from these student and faculty response contain important recommendations that should inform the implementation of the current Diversity Action Plan. The unique roles that many of these documents and initiatives have played on campus have led to the development of the Diversity Action Plan. Therefore, looking at the successes, shortcomings in implementation, and recommendations of these documents will be vital to the successful implementation of the Diversity Action Plan. A few of these documents include (listed chronologically):

- Working Together For the Future: Towards Racial and Cultural Diversity at Oregon State University 1987
- Minority Affairs Program 1989
- Racism at Oregon State University: Findings of The President's Commission on Racism 1992
- Status of Minority Faculty Recruitment and Retention and Perceptions of the Campus Climate by Minority Faculty 1994
- T.E.A.M. Task Force Recommendations 1999
- The Path to Parity for Women at Oregon State University: Progress Report 2004
- Campus Climate Project Final Report January 2005

The policy window presented by the implementation of the Diversity Action Plan is a critical juncture in which decisive action must be taken. John Kingdon asserts, "...policy windows, the opportunities for action on given initiatives, present themselves and stay open for only short periods," (1995:166). Therefore, it is imperative that the opportunity presented by the Diversity Action Plan is optimized to actualize the vision of some of these historical initiatives. These documents contain important considerations including the challenge of overcoming the the over-extension of students and faculty from underrepresented groups to maintain support services and the need for professional development opportunities that validate the experiences of students and faculty from underrepresented groups. Exploring the recommendations of the policy documents leading up to (and contributing to) the Diversity Action Plan

may reveal some action alternatives that have not been considered during the development of unit plans.

Conclusion

In the introduction of his text *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies,* John W. Kingdon observes that in the agenda setting process, "...problem recognition, generation of policy proposals, and political events—can serve as an impetus or as a constraint," (Shafritz et. al. 2004:567). In the particular case of the Diversity Action Plan at Oregon State University, these contextual factors served as an impetus for policy development. Diversity development has achieved higher agenda prominence based on the culmination of historical developments in problem recognition, political events, and university policies that have generated a window of opportunity. Kingdon asserts:

> The separate streams come together at critical times. A problem is recognized, a solution is developed and available in the policy community, a political change makes it the right time for policy change, and potential constraints are not severe (Kingdon 1995:165).

Oregon State University is currently at critical time that will significantly transform the university's commitment inclusiveness and a diverse campus community.

In the case of the Diversity Action Plan, the context of problem recognition and the negotiation of the meaning of diversity has been a particular point of emphasis. To return to the opening concept of this piece, Manning Marable

advocates a definition of diversity that would be helpful to efforts on the Oregon State University campus:

> We must define the issue of diversity as a dynamic, changing concept, leading us to explore problems of human relations and social equality in a manner which will expand the principles of fairness and opportunity to all members of society (Marable 1995:118).

Rather than the tendencies outlined in symbolic interactionist theory that maintain the status quo by giving particular meanings to concepts like diversity, we must acknowledge the evolution of what diversity is and create opportunities to empower all citizens. It could be said that the development of policies that foster collaboration and that optimization of resources related to diversity is one of the most important findings of this research into the history of diversity and challenges that have been overcome (and are still being overcome) at Oregon State University.

This paper explored a number of focusing events that were critical junctures in the process of problem recognition at Oregon State University. These focusing events include the international students of the Cosmopolitan Club of the early 1900s, the Non-Discriminatory Housing Policy of 1967, the Black Student Union Walkout of 1969, student action in the 1990s, and contemporary iterations of modern racism. The responses to these focusing events and problem recognition indicators that these focusing events symbolize have contributed significantly to the context of the current Diversity Action Plan.

President Byrne's Minority Action Program of 1989, the transition of President Edward Ray into the Oregon State University community, the

development of the Office of Community and Diversity directed by Dr. Terryl Ross, and the Campus Climate Assessment have exemplified political junctures, transitions, and politicized events at Oregon State University. These instances are important considerations in understanding the Diversity Action Plan. Many other political factors have also contributed, but these instances have interacted significantly with other factors and influenced current initiatives toward action.

Curriculum integration, recent student driven policy development, the Cultural Center Covenant, and the OSU Strategic Plan all represent important policy considerations for the future of the Diversity Action Plan. Once analyzed through a lens of sociological theory, understanding policy actions leading up to the Diversity Action Plan will be vital to the sustained success of future diversity initiatives.

Throughout the nation there are a variety of similar policies on college campuses, but few have such a comprehensive scope. The implementation of this policy will be an opportunity for the Oregon State University to be the state leader of inclusive community building and establish a new policy standard for subsequent initiatives on other campuses throughout the nation with similar objectives.

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