EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One of the primary missions of higher education institutions is unearthing and disseminating knowledge. Academic communities expend a great deal of effort fostering an environment where this mission is nurtured, with the understanding that institutional climate has a profound effect on the academic community’s ability to excel in research and scholarship. Millersville University seeks to create an environment characterized by equal access for all students, faculty and staff regardless of cultural differences, and where individuals are not just tolerated but valued. Creating and maintaining a community environment that respects individual needs, abilities, and potential is one of the most critical initiatives that Millersville University supports.

It is a crucial part of the University’s mission to increase multicultural awareness and understanding, within an environment of civility, mutual respect and cooperation. A welcoming and inclusive climate is grounded in respect, nurtured by dialogue and evidenced by a pattern of civil interaction. The first step in creating such an environment is assessing the current campus climate in order to identify important issues and then to create ways for individuals, departments and the University to address them. These steps were accomplished in 2009 and 2010, when campus climate surveys were administered to the campus community. After careful analysis and dissemination of the data to various constituency groups throughout campus, areas with opportunities for growth were highlighted and incorporated into the attached SPEDC document.

During the 2011-12 academic year, the Office of Social Equity & Diversity, in partnership with the President’s Commission on Cultural Diversity & Inclusion and Commission on the Status of Women, initiated the updating and reiteration of objectives, actions, and expected outcomes within the University’s SPEDC. The attached planning document directly supports the University’s strategic direction of “cultivating a community of diverse people, thoughts, and perspectives”. It provides an update of initiatives, identifying specific actions and responsible person, unit or groups.

The SPEDC is an important document for the Office of Social Equity & Diversity, as well as the University as a whole. Important to note, is that the document may not reflect an exhaustive list of outcomes and accomplishments throughout the University. It is our expectation that campus departments, divisions, and/or groups link their diversity-related outcomes within their annual reports with the appropriate associations to the SPEDC within Weaveonline.

The proposed strategic goals, objectives and actions reflects the collaborative thinking of a diverse cross section of the campus community, most notably, the President’s Commission on Cultural Diversity & Inclusion (PCCDI) and Commission on the Status of Women, and specifically the tireless efforts exhibited by Ms. Jan Bechtel, PCCDI graduate assistant.

The following list outlines Millersville University’s SPEDC goals and objectives:
GOAL 1: Institutional Commitment—Continue to cultivate a University climate in which the quality of life is affirming, nurturing and strives for the well-being of the entire campus and local community.

Objectives
1.1: Continue to cultivate an environment that encourages civility, respect and an appreciation for diversity.
1.2: Increase the level of alternative funding to support new and existing programs and services that support diversity.
1.3: Enhance and expand upon communications and marketing for diversity-related publications, web pages and other information resources.
1.4: Audit University equity-related policies and procedures for best practices and compliance.
1.5: Continue to shape the University’s strategic diversity framework and structure.

GOAL 2: Academic Environment - Research, Education and Scholarship: Create an academic environment that encourages teaching and learning about social and cultural differences and similarities.

Objectives
2.1: Continue to provide faculty, administrators and staff with professional development opportunities to enhance performance.
2.2: Continue to periodically facilitate campus climate survey implementations.
2.3: Increase learning opportunities to interact with an increasingly diverse world.
2.4: Expand immersion experiences for students to connect cross-culturally and globally.

GOAL 3: Academic Environment - Curriculum and Pedagogy: Continue to develop and expand upon a curriculum that guides students to think critically about societal diversity issues.

Objectives
3.1: Provide all students with opportunities leading to active citizenship, social responsibility and life-long learning.
3.2: Expand and enhance academic programs specifically focused on underrepresented populations.

GOAL 4: Recruitment and Retention of Students, Faculty, Staff and Administrators.

Objectives
4.1: Develop enrollment management strategies designed to ensure the success of all students.
4.2: Increase enrollment of international students.
4.3: Recruit and retain a highly talented and diverse faculty.
4.4: Recruit and retain diverse administrators and staff members.
4.5: Develop systematic and thorough understanding of the support needs of under-prepared or at-risk students and provide intrusive interventions.
4.6: Address the specific needs of our transfer students to ensure their success.
4.7: Address the specific needs of our graduate students and adult learner students.
4.8: Increase awareness of Counseling Center services among students (i.e., LGBTQIA, non-traditional students, and Veterans).

GOAL 5: Internal/External Community Relations and Outreach.

Objectives
5.1: Integrate the creation of the Multicultural Center (MCC) into the fabric of the University with emphasis on collaboration and student success.
5.2: Support local civic and community organizations serving underrepresented populations within the Lancaster region.
5.3: Enhance Millersville’s educational opportunities delivered in urban centers.