Created in July 1990, the Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity is charged with fostering diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence throughout the Penn State student body, faculty, staff, and leadership. This mission comprises educational access programs for targeted groups of low-income, potential first-generation college students; academic success services and Federal TRIO Programs for low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented/underserved students; and serving as a catalyst, advocate, and resource for Penn State’s diversity and inclusion initiatives by coordinating University-wide strategic planning for diversity and providing University-wide leadership to increase Penn State’s capacity for diversity and inclusion.

We support and evaluate the many diversity initiatives and serve as an advocate for a range of populations. These include historically underrepresented/underserved racial/ethnic groups; persons with disabilities; persons from low-income families who would be the first generation to attend college; veterans; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons; and women. Our development efforts have significantly exceeded our campaign goal, and we award over 1.2 million dollars in need-based scholarships annually to our student constituents. The three President’s commissions for equity are administratively housed and supported through our office: Commission for Women, Commission on Racial/Ethnic Diversity, and Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equity. We believe that diversity and inclusion are central to the University’s overall mission of excellence.

More information about our offices and programs can be found at the following links:

- Educational Opportunity Center (Philadelphia)
- Multicultural Resource Center
- Office for Disability Services
- Office of Veterans Programs
- Student Support Services Program
- Talent Search
- Talent Search York
- Upward Bound
- Upward Bound Math and Science Program
- Upward Bound Migrant

Senior Faculty Mentor: provides a variety of supportive services to tenure track faculty members belonging to underrepresented racial/ethnic groups to facilitate attainment of tenure and promotion
http://equity.psu.edu/sfm

Equal Opportunity Planning Committee: provides seed funding for diversity initiatives
http://equity.psu.edu/eopc (1983)

Diversity Strategic Planning and Assessment (A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State)
http://equity.psu.edu/diversity-strategic-planning

President’s Commissions for Equity:
- Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Equity (1991)
- Commission for Women (1981)
Recognitions:
External Assessment, Halualani & Associates
http://equity.psu.edu/workshop/fall13

Remarks from Daryl Smith (leading researcher on diversity in higher education)
http://equity.psu.edu/workshop/spring-2009

Peer Institution Diversity & Inclusion Comparative Study Report conducted by Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance

Education Advisory Board University Leadership Council’s National Best Practice Report (2009)

Campus Pride (Five –Star LGBT-Friendly Campus Climate Index Rating since the inception of the ratings system in 2008)
http://www.campusprideindex.org/

Insight Into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award, 2013, 2014

U.S. News and World Report, Best Colleges for Veterans Rankings

Penn State was among the first universities to establish a senior executive for diversity, the Vice Provost for Educational Equity (1989); an extensive Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity (1990) to advance diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence throughout the Penn State student body, faculty, staff, and leadership; and a strategic planning approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion (1998). We are also one of the few universities to keep a continuity throughout the diversity strategic planning trajectory, with each iteration of A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State building upon the successes of the last (rather than starting over anew).

External assessment indicates that Penn State is “at the high end of its peers” in terms of the University’s diversity strategic plan, organizational capacity, effectiveness, and impact, and is a leader in strategic assessment. Our institution-wide efforts have also been noted by Insight Into Diversity, which named us one of its Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award recipients (2013, 2014) for our strategic planning approach, robust, institution-wide infrastructure for diversity, and numerous college access and student success programs. Other leading institutions have benchmarked against us and drawn heavily from A Framework to Foster Diversity at Penn State.

The Educational Equity mission is central to President Barron’s imperatives of Diversity and Demographics and Accessibilty, and to Provost Jones’s vision of diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence being a foundational principle of the University’s strategic direction. Our mission intersects with additional strategic priorities and imperatives and is central to the land-grant mission.