

# SAS Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence

## Introduction

As part of its Action Plan for Faculty Diversity and Excellence, the University of Pennsylvania sets forth principles that must also shape the future of the faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences. If a great university must indeed “encompass a universe of backgrounds and experiences, ideas and ideologies, theories and perspectives,” a vibrant School of Arts and Sciences, too, by definition gains its strength from such breadth, which informs everything we do in both research and education. As a school we value and are deeply committed to diversity in all of its dimensions. Diversity embraces race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, and age, those categories that define who we are as individuals, but it also extends to our commitments and beliefs, including religion and politics, and our work as scholars, practicing a multiplicity of different approaches to the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

As our own society is changing, the School must keep pace with that world, while it is also committed to being an agent of change, opening up new perspectives and providing the benefits of an innovative liberal arts education to a wider and ever-changing group of talented students. Because SAS is at the heart of this University, we believe we should lead the way in Penn’s overall mission to further diversify the faculty. We have the opportunity not only to make an impact on Penn’s intellectual community right now, but to help transform the academy for years to come.

The School recognizes that the task of diversifying the faculty is one that requires a sustained and multi-faceted approach that will achieve this short- and long-term impact. This plan therefore has two overarching goals:

- ***Enhance and support the diversity of the SAS faculty today***, by
  - restructuring the process for faculty hiring, to ensure that we are reaching out to as wide a pool of candidates as possible in building the faculty
  - strengthening efforts to create a nurturing and inclusive environment in which all faculty will thrive, particularly in the early to middle stages of their careers
- ***Build pipelines to attract a more diverse group of scholars to the Penn faculty and the broader professoriate of tomorrow***, especially in fields where they are underrepresented, by proactively and strategically reaching out to students at all levels, from high school through post-doctoral.

The planning process for the SAS plan itself has been highly inclusive, engaging all faculty in a discussion of the value inherent in having a more diverse faculty, both for the School overall and their discipline. While Dean Rebecca Bushnell and the SAS senior administrative team have charted the plan’s overall direction, each department undertook a discussion guided by a set of questions that invited them to consider the meaning of diversity in their discipline, and asked them to formulate a strategy for diversity, including a strengthened search process, that was appropriate to their own world. The department reports both stand on their own and have informed the SAS-wide plan, with the latter also taking into account the broader context of the

School's and University's diversity initiatives. The draft of this plan has been circulated widely for comment.

The nature of the conversations about diversity at the departmental level varied widely, reflecting in large part the broad disciplinary range that is inherent in a school of arts and sciences. In some fields in SAS, the concepts underlying diversity, including identity and experience as defined by ethnicity, race, nationality, class, gender, sexuality, and disability, are subjects of research and teaching: these are essential elements in the content of the disciplines. Those fields may (though not necessarily) draw in scholars because of their life experience, and such scholars bring a critical perspective to the debates of the disciplines. Among others, Anthropology, Sociology, English, and History now have sub-fields focused in these areas. Further, our departments and programs focused on East Asia, the Near East, South Asia, and Africa are changing, as those fields become less dominated by white Europeans. In other fields, especially in the natural sciences, the concepts that define diversity are not the object of inquiry, but it is still essential that the faculty in those areas are broadly representative. Acknowledging the variety of diversity contexts among SAS disciplines is therefore a key to the overall School plan: the SAS-wide initiatives put forth in this document must be carried out in combination with efforts tailored to each department.

### **Assessment of Strengths and Challenges**

Given the extreme differences in the areas of research and education encompassed by SAS, it is difficult to make generalizations about the nature and scope of diversity in the School. There is no single national "pool" of Ph.D.s in the arts and sciences for which data is maintained. In some of the disciplines represented in SAS, there are national associations that track pool data, while some smaller and more interdisciplinary fields do not. While data on the number of minorities and women in SAS are readily obtained, there are many other categories of diversity for which there is no data and that would be difficult to measure reliably – even though they are important to the School. What we do know is that there are broad and widely accepted trends that can be articulated with regard to racial and gender diversity in the School's three major "divisions": the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. Several departments also identified subfields that are more diverse than others within their discipline.

In assessing the School's record of enhancing diversity over the past decade, one must also consider the context in which SAS was operating during this period. The size of the SAS standing faculty in AY2002 was 461, and is 472 ten years later in AY2012: on the surface, this represents a modest increase in size. But in the intervening decade, the size of the faculty rose, peaking at 499 in AY09, and then it has gradually contracted again, settling at a size we believe the School can sustain for the foreseeable future. Since AY2009, the pace of faculty hiring has been significantly slower than in the past. It is therefore important to understand that while SAS has remained open to pursuing faculty targets of opportunity, the overall number of regular faculty search authorizations made by the School in recent years has been relatively small, and thus our overall ability to diversify the faculty has been constrained, and it will continue to be limited in the foreseeable future.

Tables 1 through 3 detail the number of underrepresented minority standing faculty in SAS during the past decade. The primary conclusion is that the percentage of faculty who are black and Hispanic has remained steady, but not increased. The representation of Asians on the faculty has increased from 5% to 10%. While in many disciplines in SAS, Asians are not considered an “underrepresented” minority, this increase should not be discounted; there are in fact departments in the School where the number of Asian faculty was previously quite low relative to national pools. Native Americans were not represented on the SAS faculty in either AY2002 or AY2012. In this period of time the SAS administration has been attentive to the retention of minority faculty, but with the slow pace of hiring it has been difficult to make progress.

Table 1

SAS MINORITY STANDING FACULTY						
Year	Total Standing Faculty Size	Black, Non-Hispanic	Hispanic/Latino/a	Asian	Native American	Total
2001-02	461	3%	3%	5%	0%	11%
2011-12	472	4%	3%	10%	0%	17%

The breakdown of minority faculty varies by division (Table 2), in ways that are consistent with national patterns in these areas. The proportion of Ph.D.s in the humanities and social sciences who are minorities is simply larger than it is in the natural sciences, in part because of the reasons discussed above. Most of the minority faculty in the natural sciences are Asian, underscoring the critical issue of the underrepresentation of blacks and Hispanics in those areas.

Table 2

SAS MINORITY STANDING FACULTY, BY DIVISION			
Year	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences
<i>2001-02</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>8%</i>	<i>16%</i>
Black, Non-Hispanic	5%	1%	4%
Hispanic/Latino/a	3%	1%	5%
Asian	4%	6%	7%
Native American	0%	0%	0%
<i>2011-12</i>	<i>20%</i>	<i>12%</i>	<i>21%</i>
Black, Non-Hispanic	7%	1%	5%
Hispanic/Latino/a	4%	1%	4%
Asian	9%	10%	12%
Native American	0%	0%	0%

There are also clear generational differences in the representation of minorities (Table 3). Nearly one third of the current junior faculty are minorities, while just one in ten of the full professors

are. The former is certainly the result of the fact that the pool of new Ph.D.s is more diverse overall than those of previous decades, and also that the vast majority of SAS hiring over the past ten years has been at the junior level.

Table 3

SAS MINORITY STANDING FACULTY, BY RANK			
Year	Full Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor
2001-02	5%	13%	25%
2011-12	11%	23%	31%

Benchmarking this data against our peer schools of arts and sciences is challenging. Not only is the disciplinary make-up of every arts and sciences school different, but most of the figures available on diversity are for entire institutions, not their individual schools. The most recent University *Progress Report on Minority Equity* provides data from our peer institutions from 2007: see [http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v57/n14/pdf\\_n14/Minorityequity.pdf](http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v57/n14/pdf_n14/Minorityequity.pdf).

Over the past decade, the proportion of women on the SAS faculty has grown from 25% to 31% (Table 4): this is tangible progress, but still short of representing the distribution of women in many of the disciplines in SAS.

Table 4

SAS FEMALE STANDING FACULTY			
Year	Total Standing Faculty Size	Female Faculty	Females in STEM Fields*
2001-02	461	25%	8%
2011-12	472	31%	15%

\*Departments of Chemistry, Earth & Environmental Science, Mathematics, and Physics & Astronomy

Tables 5 and 6 show that again, these figures vary by division - with the humanities having the most gender diversity, followed by the social sciences and then the natural sciences – as well as by rank.

Table 5

SAS FEMALE STANDING FACULTY, BY DIVISION			
Year	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences
2001-02	34%	16%	24%
2011-12	44%	20%	29%

Table 6

SAS FEMALE STANDING FACULTY, BY RANK			
Year	Full Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor
2001-02	19%	30%	25%
2011-12	27%	33%	42%

The focus on increasing the representation of women in the fields known nationally as “STEM” ([physical] science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) has long been a priority for SAS and will continue to be an area of emphasis in the School’s recruitment strategy in the physical science departments: Chemistry, Earth and Environmental Science, Mathematics, and Physics & Astronomy. But these are not the only areas of the School where women are significantly underrepresented: other fields include the life sciences (Biology, Psychology) and Economics. Data on gender representation at our peer universities appears in the most recent University *Progress Report on Gender Equity*: see [http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v55/n29/pdf\\_n29/GenderEquity.pdf](http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v55/n29/pdf_n29/GenderEquity.pdf). As noted by many departments in their plans, our ability to change the composition of the faculty going forward will be limited by constraints on the growth of the size of the faculty. Given the nature of tenured appointments, opportunities to appoint new faculty will be dependent on attrition and retirements. This constraint puts all the more pressure on enhancing our search processes, to make sure that all of our searches are broadly inclusive. At the same time, we should take advantage of target of opportunities to make essential new hires in expectation of future attrition or retirement.

## **Building and Supporting Diversity in SAS: The Next Five Years**

### ***a. Faculty search initiatives***

One of the most important roles of departments and deans in SAS is the appointment of new faculty. SAS has a strong record of success in faculty recruitment in the past ten years: bright young scholars and distinguished mid-career and senior faculty want to come here, attracted by the interdisciplinary environment, the excellent students and colleagues, and the environment of the city and campus. We have everything we need to recruit a more diverse faculty but we must do a much better job of identifying the best candidates in the search process. We must take every step possible to ensure that every search in SAS is structured in a way that seeks the broadest possible pool of candidates, and that we succeed in recruiting and then retaining the best here in SAS.

We recognize that in order to succeed in this effort, the School must continue to take advantage of opportunities to diversify the faculty outside of the context of regularly authorized searches. One strategy to promote this activity is for SAS to provide bridge funding for such appointments made in advance of anticipated retirement or attrition. Programs such as the Penn Faculty Fund for Excellence and the new Presidential Term Professorships offer outstanding support for such

recruitments, and the School will make the fullest use of them, while committing its own resources to this effort.

The majority of the School's effort, however, will involve strengthening the process for carrying out regularly authorized faculty searches requiring attention to matters of diversity at several key stages of the search process. As in previous years, the likelihood that there would be a highly diverse pool in a field for a regularly authorized search will be one of the criteria that counts in determining annual search authorizations. In an environment in which there are 15 to 20 searches in SAS in a given year, plus targets of opportunity, SAS proposes the following system, in which the Dean of the School and divisional associate deans partner with School- and departmentally-based Diversity Search Advisors (DSA).

Two School-level DSAs will replace the current Affirmative Action Officer position; the duties of the latter will be incorporated into the new role. One DSA will be responsible for the natural sciences and social sciences, and one for the humanities. DSAs will be senior faculty members in those divisions, trained by the Provost's Office and supported by a faculty affairs staff person in the SAS Dean's Office. For continuity, the term of appointment will be three years.

- *At the beginning of a search*, one of two School-level DSAs will meet with the department and/or search committee to provide:
  - awareness about the effects of what is known as “unconscious bias”
  - assistance with guidelines for best practices for searches
  - access to specialized databases
  - review of the job advertisement, together with the associate dean
- *As the search proceeds*: The DSA will continue to be a resource throughout the search process, advising both the department chair or search committee chair and the relevant associate dean.

Departments also have the option of appointing their own trained DSA in addition to the one at the School level, to be a resource with specific knowledge of the fields. Physics has suggested an excellent model in which the DSA would serve on all search committees to help identify a diverse pool; identify targets of opportunity by working with the department's Planning Committee, regularly attending national meetings of key organizations in the field, and developing a longitudinal database of URM graduate students who might become future targets of opportunity; and engage long time leaders of Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) programs that have a substantial track record of attracting women and URM physics majors. The challenge with the department-based DSA model is department size, which varies in SAS from 37 to 4. Most larger departments have expressed an interest in designating their own DSA, while all smaller departments (except German) have said it is impractical for them, but that they would welcome the assistance of the School-level DSA. Where there is not a department DSA, a liaison with the School-level DSA (such as the search committee chair) should be designated for each search to create an official channel of communication.

- *Before finalists are identified and invited for on-campus interview*, the associate dean, in consultation with the appropriate School DSA will review search process and the final pool

to ensure that it has been as inclusive as possible. This is a process that SAS began this year and that has been very successful in serving as an additional “check” for all departments.

- *At the end of the search* the appropriate School-level DSA will review the appointment dossier before the appointment is submitted for approval by the Provost.

***b. Faculty Development and Mentoring***

SAS takes great pride in its tradition of hiring the best junior talent and bringing these faculty up through the ranks – a system that differs from some of its peer institutions who focus more exclusively on senior hiring. The institutional loyalty that so many faculty demonstrate toward Penn must be earned: the School must be invested in the success of its faculty at all stages of their careers, and must provide an environment that offers not only academic and financial resources, but also the personal support of a community that helps them to make the most of those resources. The School is committed to the following initiatives that are designed to benefit all faculty in the relevant cohorts:

- *Orientation for New Faculty:* The School currently offers a one-day orientation for new faculty, but will develop that into an extended program over the course of the first year to enhance the process of faculty “on-boarding.” This program will address teaching, expectations regarding research, and general matters of faculty culture, including discussion of values and resources relating to diversity in SAS. These activities will take place in groups and one-on-one.
- *Assistant Professor Mentoring:* SAS has a program of junior faculty mentoring in which senior colleagues are assigned to help to monitor the faculty member’s progress toward tenure; provide guidance on scholarship and teaching; and discuss overall career development, including within the context of personal circumstances such as family issues, level of experience in American higher education system, gender, race, and sexual orientation. While understanding that mentoring relationships vary by field and by individual, the School will implement steps to make participation in the program more consistent, with better training, a required annual reporting mechanism, and stronger coordination with chairs and deans to allow for their timely involvement as required. SAS will also continue to enhance centrally-based group mentoring efforts for junior faculty, such as sessions on obtaining grants and workshops on teaching offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning.
- *Associate Professor Mentoring:* While great attention is paid to faculty in the years leading up to their tenure review, the life of a newly-tenured faculty member brings several new opportunities and challenges as these individuals set their next career goals and get called upon for additional responsibilities at the department and School level. SAS will launch a program of mentoring for associate professors to provide ongoing career development advice, ensure that they maintain balance in their duties, and are properly educated about School and University affairs.

- *Leadership Training Opportunities:* Service in leadership roles is not simply an obligation of our system of faculty governance, but also a vital opportunity to shape research and teaching programs. In a school of our size, where all faculty undertake such duties, appropriate preparation for these roles is critical. SAS will work with departments to establish more systematic pathways for faculty to assume increasingly responsible leadership roles. It will also offer (on its own and in conjunction with the Provost's office) specific training opportunities on topics of interest to chairs and directors. Through all of these efforts, SAS strives to encourage more underrepresented minorities and women to undertake senior leadership positions across the School.

### *c. Academic Programs*

As a leading school of arts and sciences, SAS is committed to the study of American and global cultures, including those of underrepresented populations. All undergraduates in the College undertake one-course requirements in both "Cultural Diversity in the US" and "Cross-Cultural Analysis," the latter aimed at increasing students' knowledge and understanding of socio-cultural systems outside the United States.

Most importantly, the School is home to the Latin American and Latino Studies Program (which offers an undergraduate major), the Asian American Studies Program (which offers an undergraduate minor), the Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Program (which offers a major, minor, and graduate certificate and is also tied to the Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality), and the Center for Africana Studies (which administers an undergraduate major, a Ph.D., and a graduate certificate). All of these centers and programs also sponsor events that attract faculty and students interested in these areas. A proposal for a Department of Africana Studies is being put forward this spring. The School's four area-studies National Resource Centers (the Africa Studies Center, the Center for East Asian Studies, the Middle East Center and the South Asia Center) also offer important programming and are directly associated with undergraduate majors focused on these regions.

These programs represent the School's greatest investment in the support of underrepresented minority faculty and students. They are of great importance not only to education in SAS, but also to faculty scholarship, and their presence is often an important factor in the recruitment and retention of underrepresented minority faculty. Sustaining the quality of these programs is therefore an important element of this plan.

### **Building for the Future: Pipeline Programs**

SAS is firmly committed to taking the steps outlined above in order to make progress toward our goal of a more diverse faculty in the short term. But it is also clear that in many fields in SAS the path to this goal is one that will require a longer time horizon to achieve major strides. Many SAS departments expressed deep concern about the pools on which they can draw to increase the diversity of their faculty at this time. Some provided specific pool data from their fields, while others relied on more anecdotal evidence to draw this conclusion. These circumstances make it



all the more critical for SAS to do its part to strengthen those pools. By enhancing the diversity of the pipeline of students entering Ph.D. programs in these fields, we hope to bring more under-represented minorities and women into academia overall – and to bring them to Penn.

The School and its departments, centers, and programs already run a wide range of pipeline programs. As a core part of our plan, we commit to redoubling those efforts, both in strengthening existing activities and in adding new ones, at all stages of students' education as they develop their interests and choose a career path.

- *High school programs:* SAS, through its College of Liberal and Professional Studies, has had great success in running non-credit summer academies for high school students in fields such as experimental physics, biomedical research, and the visual arts. In an effort to promote participation in these programs by underrepresented minorities, women in STEM fields, and students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, LPS funds scholarships for Philadelphia public high school students. The School will expand the summer academy model to other fields with similar opportunities for scholarship support.
- *Outreach programs:*
  - In 2011 the School established an Office of Science Outreach office to assist science faculty with developing outreach ideas and proposals, and to serve as a clearinghouse for the many STEM outreach programs taking place across SAS. The School is now well-positioned to play a more strategic and proactive role in promoting science-related outreach to students of all ages.
  - The School's four Title VI National Resource Centers in area studies centers, focusing on Africa, East Asia, Middle East, South Asia, have as part of their mandate outreach to local schools and the public about the center's international region. The University Museum's programs for middle and high school students offer another target audience for outreach efforts by SAS faculty in related departments.
  - Through the Netter Center for Community Partnerships, SAS faculty and students participate in a range of outreach activities in West Philadelphia and beyond. In particular, SAS is the driving force behind Penn's Academically-Based Community Service (ABCS) program, with the largest percentage of ABCS courses taught by Arts and Sciences faculty.
- *Undergraduate programs:* The College and the College of Liberal and Professional Studies have developed, and are committed to sustaining and expanding, a number of programs to build and support diversity in the School's' undergraduate student body:
  - *Admissions:* The College works with Penn's Undergraduate Admissions office to promote diversity recruitment. College students comprise most of the participants in Penn's Questbridge and Posse programs, and the College works carefully with Admissions and other campus offices to help these students make the transition to college life.
  - *Pre-Freshman Programs:* The College plays a major role in the academic component of the University-sponsored four-week PENNCAP pre-freshman

summer program, which aims to give participating students “an academic and social edge while familiarizing themselves with Philadelphia and Penn's campus.” The Center for Africana Studies sponsors an intensive one-week Summer Institute for Pre-Freshman that introduces students to major intellectual and cultural themes and currents in the 19th- and 20th-century African American experience.

- *Academic Advising and Support:* The College advising staff works actively to support diversity and partners closely with resources such as the University's cultural centers and College Houses. In addition, Assistant Dean Janice Curington provides leadership in ensuring targeted support of underrepresented minorities by the entire College advising staff. In an effort to support strong performance by underrepresented minority students in gateway courses in Math and Economics, the College is collaborating with the departments and the Provost's Faculty Advisory Council for Access and Academic Support to offer a variety of academic support tools in these courses – tools that benefit all students enrolled.
- *Recruitment Activities in the College of Liberal and Professional Studies (LPS):* LPS undertakes a number of targeted activities aimed at recruiting students from West Philadelphia, from community colleges along the Eastern seaboard, and veterans. LPS continues to offer its Bread Upon the Waters scholarship program for women over 30 who wish to complete an undergraduate degree part-time, as well as scholarships for students who have been elected to the community college honor society Phi Theta Kappa. Via its open enrollment policy during the Summer Sessions, undergraduate LPS courses are intended to be more accessible to those with a high school degree, with one goal to encourage participants to apply for the BA degree program.
- *Post-baccalaureate programs:* Through the College of Liberal and Professional Studies, SAS has built a highly successful model for post-baccalaureate programs that prepare students with a B.A. to apply to graduate school in classical studies and in the health professions. We will expand this model to other fields, and offer scholarship support for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds and underrepresented minorities, to help develop pathways to future academic careers.
- *Graduate level programs:* The Fontaine Fellowship program is the School's most important tool in the recruitment of underrepresented minorities to our Ph.D. programs, and has structured incentives tied to those fellowships to encourage all SAS graduate groups to be aggressive in their recruitment efforts. In addition, staff from the SAS Graduate Division and the College of Liberal and Professional Studies make several targeted outreach efforts to encourage a diverse application pool, including travel to recruitment fairs, historically black colleges, and specific regions (e.g., Puerto Rico), as well as presentations to groups of undergraduate McNair Scholars from Penn and elsewhere. SAS now participates in a program with the Leadership Alliance to host rising seniors from underrepresented minority cohorts for summer research internships in the humanities and social sciences. These are students from across the country who are considering an academic career and plan to apply to doctoral programs after finishing their BA.

- *Pre-dissertation fellowship program:* SAS has been actively involved in working with the Office of the Provost to develop a pre-dissertation fellowship program that would enable underrepresented doctoral candidates at other universities in the humanities and social sciences to spend time working at Penn. The program would promote working relationships between top doctoral candidates around the country and Penn faculty with similar academic interests.
- *Partnerships with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs):* As described above, the School already carries out student recruitment activities at HBCUs. But we would like to expand our relationships with these institutions in other ways, both School-wide and in specific fields.
- *Postdoctoral programs:* SAS will continue to take part in the University's diversity postdoctoral fellowship program, which has already brought several talented underrepresented minorities and women in STEM fields to the School. In order to expand such opportunities, SAS will fund additional similar positions on its own. These fellows would be well-positioned to develop a relationship with a department and to subsequently be considered for a tenure-track opening as a search opens up.

## **Metrics**

Significantly diversifying the faculty of the School of Arts and Sciences will take time: with a faculty that is over 80% tenured at this time, and without a plan for major growth, change will come slowly, but change must come, through the combined efforts of departmental leadership, diversity search advisors, the SAS deans, and the University administration. A strategy of pursuing exceptional areas of opportunity with bridge funding will help to move forward with greater speed. While it is difficult to set specific targets, given the uncertainties of hiring from year to year, with a normal pace of hiring, the objective should be to have measurable progress every year over the next five years in building a faculty of SAS that better aligns with the diverse nature of the student body at Penn. The same level of progress should be demonstrable in the diversification of the graduate student population in SAS graduate groups. The impact of changes resulting from the strategies outlined in the plan on the faculty climate and quality of life can be gauged through the University-administered surveys of faculty, and the School will monitor that data.