SWOT ANALYSIS ON STUDENT DIVERSITY IN ENROLLMENT

February 28, 2007

Introduction

The summary analysis presented below was prepared by SWOT Team #11 and addresses one component of Goal #4. The relevant component of this goal states: “Student diversity has been demonstrated during a period of enrollment growth at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.”

STRENGTHS

• Effective recruitment, enrollment and retention efforts of the College Now Program
• Centers and offices prominently supporting student diversity, i.e., Frederick Douglass Unity House, Women’s Resource Center, Disabled Student Services Office
• Academic programs and initiatives addressing diversity issues, i.e., African/African American Studies Program, Indic Studies, Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture, Women’s Studies Program, credited Cape Verdean language course, World Music Program
• Numerous student cultural identity clubs and organizations for students of color, women, international, GBLT, and religiously affiliated students
• Some semblance of a cross section of students racially, culturally, geographically, etc.
• Presence of administrators, staff, and/or faculty representing the diversity of students and consequently, representing a supportive feature for those students

WEAKNESSES

• University culture not always conducive to fostering diversity
• Debilitating recruitment and enrollment factors, i.e., lack of specific targets or goals for enrollment and retention of a racially and culturally diverse student body, inadequate resources allocated for a comprehensive plan to recruit a diverse student body into each college, excessive reliance on College Now for recruitment and enrollment of students of color
• Underrepresentation of staff and faculty by race and gender in several contexts, i.e., dearth of Black and Latino faculty, small # of female in selected fields, no Latino professionals in Admissions Office


• Need for a “multicultural student service office” to promote and coordinate a university-wide acceptance for responsibility for providing a conducive “multicultural” student service/academic environment for all students
• Insufficient resources to adequately serve disabled student population and academically underprepared students
• Limited intercity public transportation linked to UMD
• Campus areas of inaccessibility for disabled students

**OPPORTUNITIES**

• Geographic favorability, i.e., located near urban areas with significant populations of color, easy access to Providence and Boston, nearest university to Cape Cod
• Organizations and entities in surrounding community, i.e., CEDC, United Way, WIB, with whom UMD could develop partnerships
• Availability of community college graduates of color in the recruitment area

**THREATS**

• Unfavorable educational demographics, i.e., high drop-out rates for students of color, low levels of family income in the region, low levels of educational attainment of adults in region, lower levels of academic preparation and standardized test performance for students of color in the region
• Public transportation constraints, i.e., no commuter rail, poor bus service to surrounding communities
• Competition from nearby institutions, particularly Bridgewater State, other institutions offering more attractive “award packages”, better accessibility to public transportation for other campuses
• Potential State and Federal budget cuts