Because the campus environment is often the most diverse residential community many students have experienced, they need practice in order to develop the skills needed to interact effectively in this pluralistic context.

According to the American Council on Education (1998), college enrollment among students of color has increased by 22.2 percent since 1991 and by 61.3 percent since 1986. Today, approximately one-fourth of those participating in higher education in the United States are students of color. While geographically isolated campuses still struggle to increase the diversity of their student body, almost all colleges and universities have felt the impact of the United States' changing demographics. Faculty, students, and administrators alike identify campus diversity as an important factor in creating the kind of learning environment that will prepare the next generation for effective participation in a pluralistic world (AACU 1995). Yet, is this preparation really taking place? Are all students, both white and of color, developing both the academic skills and the social skills they need for success in the twenty-first century? What institutional policies and practices need to be addressed in order to create learning environments that both support and challenge all our students? Our answer to these questions at Mount Holyoke College is informed by research on both the educational benefits of diversity and research on the experiences of Black students on predominantly white campuses.

The growing body of empirical research demonstrating the educational benefits of learning in a diverse community (Hurtado 1999) confirms that the diversity of the student body is one of an institution's greatest assets. Based on analyses of national data drawn from nearly 200 colleges and universities as well as data specific to the University of Michigan, social psychologist Pat Gurin (1999) concluded that those students who experienced the most racial and ethnic diversity in and out of their classrooms benefited in terms of both "learning outcomes" and "democracy outcomes." In terms of learning outcomes, these students showed the greatest growth in intellectual engagement and motivation, as well as academic skills. In terms of democracy outcomes, during college these students were the most engaged with various forms of citizenship, with people from different races and cultures, and were the most likely to acknowledge that group differences are compatible with the interests of the broader community. These results, which persisted beyond the college years, reflect the kind of outcomes we seek at Mount Holyoke where we describe our mission as "linking academic excellence in the liberal arts to purposeful engagement with the world."

Though clearly requiring concerted effort, issues of engagement and achievement are quite related and should be of central impor-
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tance to every educational institution. The challenge is to translate concerns about these issues into a coherent set of practices. We have been guided by our goal to seamlessly link the curricular and cocurricular dimensions of campus life in a way that increases the likelihood that all our students will achieve their potential, both in terms of learning outcomes and democracy outcomes. The college has intentionally directed its human and physical resources toward what Dean of the College Beverly Daniel Tatum (1998) has called the ABCs: a) affirming identity; b) building community; c) cultivating leadership.

**Affirming identity**
The college years are an important time of identity development for all students. For students of color, issues of racial/ethnic identity are particularly salient, especially in the context of living in a predominantly white residential community (Tatum 1997). It is important to assure that all students see themselves reflected in the environment around them, to avoid feelings of invisibility or marginality that can undermine their success.

To affirm the identity of all students at Mount Holyoke, we have worked to create an increasingly diverse student body, faculty, and staff. Many course offerings mirror the diversity of our student body. One cocurricular approach to affirming identity institutionally is through the establishment of cultural centers. We have five such spaces, serving the needs of the African-American/Afro-Caribbean, Latina, Native American, Asian and Asian American, and lesbian/bisexual/transgendered student populations. The importance of the centers is that they provide an opportunity for students to briefly retreat from environments that, despite our best efforts, can at times be alienating.

Some argue that the existence of such spaces affirms identity but works against building community. As paradoxical as it may seem, the opposite is more often the case. As Daryl Smith and her associates (1997) report, one persistent research finding is that student involvement with campus groups reflecting personal, cultural, or service interests helps students feel that they belong on campus, that they are contributing to the campus culture, and that their interests are reflected in the institution. Acknowledging different needs and experiences in this way strengthens community. When an important need is met, students don't have to spend energy pursuing it. Rather they can use their energy to push themselves academically and socially. Most of us are more willing to engage in the oftentaxing work of crossing social borders when operating from strength.

**Building community**
While we affirm individual and group identities, we also want to encourage a sense of belonging to a larger, shared campus community. The goals of affirming identity and building community are not in tension, but are complementary. Affirming identity and building community should not be seen as an either-or choice, but a both/and solution. A both/and approach is more complex, but ultimately more effective. Learning to build community is both a challenge and a benefit of joining a diverse student body. Because the campus environment is often the most diverse residential community many students have experienced, they need practice in order to develop the skills needed to interact effectively in this pluralistic context. To that end, we are intentionally creating formal and informal opportunities for students to actively engage in cross-group dialogue.

In the classroom, we are promoting pedagogical strategies that build community, including small group discussions, group projects, inquiry-based experimentation, and community-based learning. Through the initiatives of the Speaking, Arguing, and Writing Program in the Weissman Center for Leadership, we are working to assist faculty in incorporating these strategies, an effort that can enhance the sense of community among faculty as well as students.

**Cultivating leadership**
Our institution, like many colleges and universities, sees leadership development as one of the goals of a liberal arts education. In order to prepare leaders for the twenty-first century, we must ensure that our students develop leadership skills in a pluralistic environment. We are examining the various ways students acquire leadership abilities, and are increasing the numbers of venues in which leadership can be purposefully cultivated. In addition to the traditional opportunities in student gov-
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The advisory group fronted with this challenge early in his tenure. The CDC office is intentionally designed to emphasize two of the three ABCs, affirming identity and cultivating leadership. Because the CDC handles recruitment and placement for students seeking employment or applying to graduate school, as well as helping students to secure internships, domestic and international fellowships, and on campus employment, every student will make use of the CDC at some point in her undergraduate career. At the core of the career counseling process is the question, “Who are you?” In the career development process, students should be able to explore, define, and articulate what their interests are, what their values are, what motivates and inspires them, and how they are able to define success in terms that accommodate not only their multiple identities but also their multiple communities. In terms of cultivating leadership, students are encouraged to reflect on the compelling experiences they have had in and out of class and how they can integrate and apply these experiences in a variety of contexts. Integral to this process are the counselors who help students think through these challenging questions.

We want all students to fully use the Career Development Center, but for that to happen, all students need to see themselves reflected in it in meaningful ways. A diverse staff is probably the most tangible way for that reflection to happen. Previous efforts to diversify what had historically been an all-white staff had met with very limited success. The opportunity to address this dilemma came unexpectedly. When two of the five counselors left at the same time to take new positions in September, there was a sense of crisis because of the tremendous workload that had to be absorbed by the remaining staff during the fall, a very busy time in any career center. However, the turnover also allowed us to think about the ways the CDC staff did not reflect the diversity of our community and what we were missing as a result. We recognized that the key to increasing diversity on our staff was to increase the diversity of our applicant pool and we made a commitment to doing so. We recognized that if we did what had traditionally been done in our search process, we were likely to get the traditional results. We needed to think more creatively and perhaps move more slowly.

But this is where the harder moments come. With an overburdened staff and a search process that takes longer than anticipated, the pressure to make an expedient choice is strong. We had to ask ourselves how important the diversity in this office is to our overall mission. Is it worth waiting for? It is a hard conversation, especially when people are tired. But collectively we agreed it was very important and that we would wait, allowing the recruiting networks we had tapped into more time to work. We filled one position immediately, but waited to fill the second one. Ultimately our patience paid off, and, in the meantime, we identified other innovative strategies that we might successfully use in future searches.

Sharing the space

Staffing is not the only challenge. Space is another precious resource on a college campus. Negotiating the use of resources is also central to the implementation of the ABCs, as this example from our Office of Religious Life illustrates. We have a campus that is not only ethnically but also religiously quite diverse. In fact, on our campus we have nine active faith groups: Muslim, Baha’i, Jewish, Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, Buddhist, Wiccan, Protestant, and Hindu. In her effort to apply the ABCs, Dean of Religious Life and Protestant Chaplain Andrea Ayvazian recognized that some faith groups had privileges (funding, chaplains, worship space, institutionally observed holidays), while others did not. In this context some groups were affirmed, while others did not see themselves reflected in the environment at all.

To address this situation, Andrea started having conversations about resources with the Religious Life Advisory Board, a group made up of faculty and staff, and the Multi-Faith Council, a group of thirty student representatives, three representatives for each of the nine groups plus 3 students representing "unaffiliated seekers." It was evident that Christians had the most (a large and small chapel, plus Protestant and Catholic chaplains), the Jews had a part-time rabbi and no space, and
the Muslims had a chaplain and a small prayer room that they were rapidly outgrowing. Everybody else had nothing. The advisory groups talked about what it meant to be a religiously pluralistic campus, what it meant to share power and resources, and how that might look and feel.

Two things were decided right away. One was to find religious advisors for all those groups who were without one. Andrea successfully identified from the appropriate faith groups members of the faculty and the wider community who were willing to serve as religious advisors. These advisors agreed to meet with their groups for a weekly gathering, prayer, or sharing service, and to meet regularly with the religious life staff, all on a volunteer basis.

The second was to find worship space. The campus has a large cathedral-style chapel which seats 1,000, and an adjoining small chapel that seats 100, both clearly designed for Christian worship. Most of the other faith groups were consigned to an overused lounge in the Office of Religious Life that offered little quiet or privacy for devotional activity. The advisory groups concluded that the obvious thing to do was to convert the small chapel into an interfaith sanctuary. In fact, the pews were removed and replaced with eighty movable chairs, and the stone floor was covered with a beautiful Oriental rug rescued from storage. The Christian cross, carved in the center altar, was covered with decorative fabric. These changes, along with fresh paint and increased lighting, transformed a traditional chapel into a lovely interfaith sanctuary, now decorated with symbols and signs of every faith. For example, there is framed Muslim writing on the wall, a student Torah in an ark, a wooden cabinet containing Hindu icons, and a table which holds sacred texts from every tradition. A space once only used on Sunday afternoons by Protestant students is now in daily use by students from every faith group.

While this was a creative solution, it was
To truly create a climate of achievement, an institution must be intentional about its use of resources in the service of that goal. Articulating a clear vision, creating a shared language to describe our efforts, and establishing mechanisms to support that vision has helped us to move closer to the ideal of affirming identity, building community, and cultivating leadership for all our students.

WORKS CITED