INS Diversity, Culture, and Respect Working Group (DCRWG) at STScI

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DCRWG Report

I. Background

Since 2002 the Institute has been working with several committees, both internal and external, to address concerns based on evidence of diversity, communication, and respect issues. These committees lead the investigation to identify problems that affected various groups within the Institute and to provide recommendations for potential solutions. As a result, several initiatives were implemented in an attempt to optimally address the concerns of staff at the Institute. Although improvements to the work environment at STScI were realized, issues specific to the INS division remained a concern. This concern would require a more in-depth understanding of internal and external group dynamics in order to develop adequate solutions specific to the needs of the INS staff.

As part of a search for a solution to these remaining issues, the STScI Director, Matt Mountain, and INS management (then under the lead of Chris Blades) asked Ivan Rosenberg to assist in identifying and solving these problems. Near the completion of Ivan Rosenberg’s study, new INS management was established under the lead of Jerry Kriss. The new INS management team used the results of this study to re-organize the Division. However, INS management desired a mechanism to extend the work of the Rosenberg study and to continue to address newly arising concerns related to the work environment in the Division.

The Division therefore decided to create a Diversity, Culture, and Respect Working Group (DCRWG). This group would be given the task of identifying issues of concern to the INS staff and to provide recommendations on how to address them. It was further hoped that the DCRWG would provide a new channel of communication between the INS staff and INS management. The group would be made up of a wide-cross section of the Division from candidates nominated by the Division members. The final make-up of the group would be decided upon by the Division Core management, who used a combination of the number of nominations for a given individual as well as a desire to span the diversity of INS as their primary selection criteria.

This nomination process resulted in the selection of Alessandra Aloisi, Rosa Diaz, Scott Friedman, Andy Fruchter, Kevin Lindsay, Dixie Shipley, and Linda Smith as DCRWG members. Sheryl Bruff was then invited to participate in the working group as a consultant. The group was initially chaired by Rosa Diaz, and then later by Kevin Lindsay. The group began by working to revise its charter such that a clear understanding of its direction was established (see the final charter immediately below). Additionally, the group decided that a report on their
findings would be completed in a term of approximately six months, with periodic updates or preliminary recommendations every two months.

DCRWG Charter:

The Diversity, Culture, and Respect Working Group is a committee constituted within the Instruments Division to promote awareness and enhance consideration of all aspects of diversity within the Division and in its interactions with other counterparts internal and external to the Institute. The Group reports to the Division Office.

The Group is charged with considering all issues that are of concern to the ability of Division personnel to work harmoniously and maintain a high level of morale and job satisfaction. The Group will focus especially on issues that have their root in various aspects of diversity and culture differences, including gender, race, ethnic and cultural background, religion, educational background, and job title. The Group will develop and recommend solutions that will improve teamwork within the Division and help the staff address the needs of the Institute and Missions, while achieving their career goals and working in a respectful and professional environment.

Members of the Group will represent a broad cross-section of the Division, including a diverse range of characteristics and background. Members will be selected by the Division following recommendations from the staff. Members will be responsible for becoming familiar with and representing the concerns and ideas of the groups they are part of, and will collect input from their groups as necessary. The Group will conduct regular meetings and present status reports to the Division staff on a regular basis, with an initial set of recommendations due after two months of activity.

II. Process

The DCRWG met once per week starting June 7, 2007. The group began by identifying, discussing, and prioritizing diversity, culture, and respect issues within the INS Division. The list created in this endeavor was based on input from the group, other members of the INS Division, and the Institute as a whole. Once complete to the extent of our current understanding, the list was divided into two groups:

1) All issues that were felt to be the responsibility of Human Resources
2) All issues that were believed to lie within the scope of action pertaining to the INS Division and its management

For specific cases, the working group was able to recommend immediate action to address issues requiring minimal start-up time. For those cases where further input was necessary, the DCRWG chose to organize and facilitate a set of roundtable discussions. The goal of these roundtable discussions was not to identify new problems or concerns, but rather to develop informed and plausible solutions to the issues presented at that time. All roundtables were given the task of discussing a single broad topic. Individual roundtable topics were developed from a subset of defined cases that fell into category 2 mentioned above. After condensing the issues, the following roundtable topics were established:
1) Research Scientist-Data Analyst relationship
2) Advancement and Rewards
3) Project Assignments
4) Tolerance
5) Teamwork

Each roundtable discussion was organized around a set of pre-defined questions, seeking solutions to issues relevant to the topic of the roundtable.

The participants for each roundtable discussion were themselves a member of the division who either volunteered or were nominated by their fellow colleagues within INS. Each roundtable discussion was facilitated by two volunteers from the DCRWG, whose responsibility was to maintain the structure and timing of the meeting based on the following format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration (minutes):</th>
<th>Activity:</th>
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| 5 to 10             | - Brief introduction  
                      | - Explanation of the roundtable’s purpose based on topic, where emphasis is given that the round table is not a forum for new issues, but for developing solutions to the specific points presented  
                      | - Miscellaneous questions from the participants are answered |
| 15 to 30            | - Break the participants into groups of two and three  
                      | - Brainstorm (Do Not Discuss) to develop solutions to the questions presented, grouping the solutions by question  
                      | - If participants get stuck or have questions, do not hesitate to help them along  
                      | - Take notes |
| 30 to 60            | - Spend time recording all of the solutions  
                      | - The solutions are taken from each team, one team at a time  
                      | - All solutions are collected for one question at a time  
                      | - After all solutions have been recorded for each question and team, spend the remaining time discussing and prioritizing all solutions  
                      | - One facilitator records the solutions, while the other takes notes to capture as much of the discussion as possible |

Upon completion of each roundtable discussion, the DCRWG compiled and analyzed the results so that trends could be isolated. From this analysis, recommendations were formulated with the intent of addressing as many suggestions as possible into each recommendation. Not all of the potential solutions were included in the recommendations, although many of the suggested solutions were feasible. It was determined by the working group that by focusing on solutions addressing the broadest grouping of issues, as opposed to isolating individual concerns, the greatest level of benefit would be provided to INS and the Institute as whole. As each set of recommendations (i.e. for a given roundtable) progressed to a state of final revision, they were
provided to the members of the original roundtable from which they were created, and to upper
INS Management for final comments and review. Prior to release to the larger INS community,
the DCRWG met with upper INS Management for a final discussion of the recommendations. In
this meeting, the final wording and methods for implementation of the recommendations were
discussed.

III. Results

After each focus group had met, we discussed the findings in detail at our weekly meetings.
Broadly, we found that the participants' responses to the questions posed were well focused and
often emphasized training as a means of solving problems. We also found that there was some
overlap between the different groups. For example, several focus groups recommended a
mentoring program, as well as better definitions of both career paths and projects. We were thus
able to combine many of the proposed solutions into a coherent set of recommendations that
reflected the common desires of the different focus groups.

We considered for inclusion in our final recommendations to INS management, the top two to
four recommendations as prioritized by each focus group, although all recommendations were
reviewed. The top recommendations were as follows:

1. DA/Scientist Relationship
   o Establish a division-wide mentoring program within INS
   o The current promotion and advancement process for Data Analysts should be
evaluated and revised
   o To improve morale and the social atmosphere within INS, groups should be
assigned to organize social events
2. Advancement & Rewards
   o Establish a division-wide mentoring program within INS
   o All ISRs published by members of INS should be searchable and retrievable
through ADS.
   o Within six months after appraisals, feedback would be provided by supervisors
and project leads regarding progress made toward the completion of goals and
objectives
3. Project Assignments
   o Develop project-planning standards at the outset of new projects
   o Encourage broader access to projects and work assignments
4. Tolerance
   o Reestablish the STScI ombudsperson program
   o Offer STScI/INS employee conflict resolution and communication training
   o STScI and INS should be proactive in its attempt to support diversity
5. Teamwork
   o Project management training should be available
   o Meeting protocol standards should be established and training given
   o Offer teamwork and team-building training
   o Establish an on-line calendar for STScI/INS
Several recommendations were already being implemented by Human Resources, such as the ombudsperson program, but were retained in our final recommendations to indicate our support. Others were inconsistent with Human Resources policies and regulations, and were removed from consideration.

The remaining recommendations were discussed by the DCRWG over the course of several meetings, with the goal of advancing to INS management, a tractable number that the group felt could be implemented within the Division. Support for each final recommendation is not unanimous in every case, but each is supported by a majority of members of the group.

IV. Recommendations

1. A division-wide mentoring program should be implemented for INS.

High-level Program Description
The benefits of mentoring have emerged in several forums within INS as a channel for the staff to identify potential paths for reaching desired career goals, better integrating with the organization, and helping them successfully accomplish the goals and objectives of their current position. We recommend that INS Management should seek the help of HR in implementing a mentoring program in such a way that it maintains the formality required for its success, while at the same time allowing flexibility to maximize the time invested in this activity. This program should not be constrained by the boundaries of the INS division, but rather should span the extent of the organization so that limits regarding the inclusion of potential mentors and mentees do not exist. Inline with this thinking, the mentoring program should not be confined between two groups nor should individuals from one group be limited in their selection of mentors to a single group, division, or direction of mentoring, i.e. reverse mentoring should be considered as well. Furthermore, this initiative should be defined by those involved, as a formal activity, that is recognized in the appraisal process. This process should maintain flexibility in its area of focus for the mentee, but should be specific and well defined with respect to the relationship between the mentor and mentee, and the end goal of the process. For example, mentoring could focus on career development, institute networking, leadership development, training, or addressing diversity, to mention some. Our vision for these areas of focus is provided below. The program should provide third party monitoring and evaluation to verify process implementation and progress toward the end goal. Finally, this program should be strictly voluntary for any individual, either mentor or mentee, unless specified by INS management in conjunction with HR for the purpose of resolving uncivil interactions within INS, or between members of INS and external parties.

NOTE: For further information regarding the details of this recommendation per the intentions of the Diversity Culture and Respect Working Group, please see the following link:

http://www.stsci.edu/institute/org/ins/files/Mentoring_Program

Mentoring: Our Vision
Mentoring is a recruiting and training tool: A mentoring program provides a key link between potential employees and the organization. By maintaining an intimate level of knowledge
regarding the mindsets and skill sets of the current employees, target recruitment and hiring can become an increasingly efficient process; through an understanding of current employees, future employees can be more accurately targeted so as to fill in the gaps within the organization. Additionally, mentoring programs can help to ease the transition of new employees by more efficiently incorporating their efforts into the framework of the institution. During this process, the organization is able to gain a more complete understanding of the new/potential employee in a shortened time frame. As well, mentoring may help reduce the anxiety towards assimilation felt by new or prospective hires, while assigning value to these individuals.

Mentoring is a developmental tool: Mentoring provides a framework for developing a deeper level of understanding with regards to the level of talent resources available within an organization. As this level of understanding grows, talents can be identified and developed at all levels, employee effectiveness can be improved, and career paths can be defined and developed with a greater level of detail.

Mentoring is a retention tool: Critical relationships that are built and nurtured within the framework of an inclusive and innovative program provide an environment conducive to the success of the participants and the organization. As well, new employees are able to navigate the long-held political and cultural terrain so as to be more efficiently integrated into the workplace of the organization.

Mentoring is a Leadership development tool: Leadership is essential in every organization, and as such, can and should be developed among a broader spectrum of employees. Mentors act as guiding leaders, while mentees are able to mature into leaders, contributing to the health of the entire organization. This process affords mentors and mentees the opportunity to develop personally and professionally, as they build a new level of awareness based on the experiences of others.

Mentoring is a tool for addressing diversity: Employees are able to learn and grow within their organization as they encounter and address new challenges, responding to opportunities at any level, and cultivating emotional intelligence, to provide for a more harmonious work place.

2. All published ISRs should be searchable and retrievable through ADS.

This initiative will provide an increased level of visibility and recognition for all authors and co-authors of ISRs, while establishing a forum in which HST and future JWST data users can more efficiently be directed to specific information regarding the calibration and development of current and legacy instrumentation. Furthermore, a larger audience would be provided with a more in-depth perspective of the work done at STScI. The STScI librarian, Jill Laegerstrom, and assistant librarian, Amy Gonigam, are currently in the process of implementing this initiative; an example of which can be found at: http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2007acs..rept....9M.

3. Within a period of time, no greater than six months after the completion of the formal appraisal process, feedback should be provided to all INS employees by direct supervisors and project leads regarding progress made towards the completion of goals and objectives.
This initiative will provide INS staff the opportunity to revisit the personal, professional, and institute-based expectations outlined in their Goals and Objectives. INS employees will be able to develop an action plan for accomplishing their personal objectives, those of their supervisors, and for dealing with any unforeseen issues that may have arisen since the initial drafting of their goals and objectives. This initiative will also provide management, team leads, and team members with the opportunity to identify and address issues as a means to improve productivity and performance of INS staff. The primary objective of this recommendation is to maintain an open channel of communication between INS management and staff regarding assignments, responsibilities, and expectations.

The Performance Appraisal Review (PAR) tool is currently structured to provide this feature, the use of which is strongly endorsed by HR. With further instruction and guidance from HR, we are encouraging INS management to implement this tool to be used by all managers within INS.

4. The current promotion and advancement process for the position currently identified as “Data Analyst” should be evaluated and revised.

As one potential solution for revision of the DA promotion and advancement process, it has been suggested by a subset of INS staff, that a formal Data Analyst (DA) committee should be formed for all DA promotions, analogous to the promotion process overseen by the Science Personnel Committee (SPC) for all scientist promotions. Such a committee would evaluate promotions of DAs in a similar fashion as compared to the SPC, and would be composed of DAs, Scientists, and Managers. This process would also provide DAs with the opportunity to present information that supports their promotion, improving personal confidence in the fairness and clarity of the process.

HR is currently working on defining a clear process for DA advancement and promotion as a component of their revision of the DA profession. Based on this information, it is premature to define a clear solution or means of implementation for the above recommendation. It is plausible that once HR has completed the professional characterization of the DA profession, other avenues may become apparent for addressing the concern of many DAs, which is based primarily on a lack of transparency in the current process. The future implementation of 360-degree reviews and the obligations defined for the future/new DA group lead may potentially provide a simple solution to the problem.

5. To improve the morale, social atmosphere, and level of interpersonal connection within the INS division, groups/subgroups should be assigned the duty, in turn, of organizing a social event for all of INS.

The INS Division should assign the duty of planning and organizing social events to individual groups or subsets of groups within INS. Generally speaking these groups will be work teams and work groups, e.g. instrument teams. Each group or subgroup will be responsible for one social event per year. We believe that such actions will allow for an improved sense of connection and partnership within the division. The groups and subgroups are to be defined and coordinated by INS management. Upon implementation of this recommendation by INS management, either a WBS number should be specified to designate official support, or, it
should be made clear to the participating individuals that their involvement is strictly voluntary and all activities conducted towards these efforts will be performed during personal time.

6. Develop and implement project-planning standards to be defined at the outset of new projects

These standards would be developed at the outset of a new project for each individual working on the project. In this instance, project should be defined as an activity, functional or scientific in nature, in which INS staff members are involved. Standards may include definitions and documentation of essential elements of the plan such as scope of work, goals and expectations, deliverables, contingencies, milestones, work assignments, responsibility, authority and accountability as well as a time-line including key dates. The planning would involve and include all affected parties. Project plans and level of involvement and inclusion would be negotiated directly between the project lead and the project participants. If it is determined by those defining project parameters that the scope of the project is significant enough, such involvement should then be documented in one’s formal goals and objectives. All of the recommended points mentioned above should be facilitated to the extent that they not impede the mission of the Institute or the INS Division. Additionally, the level of effort spent on planning should be commensurate with the expected time-span of the project. Regardless of a project’s time-span, the project lead should be required to draft a minimal project definition, providing high-level details (as listed above), to be used as a benchmark should the need arise for adjustment of project parameters. If the scope of the project expands beyond the parameters outlined in the initial project definition, further involvement for given individuals would require immediate reevaluation.

7. Encourage broader access to projects and work assignments

Encourage broader access to projects and work assignments by publicizing projects openly (web announcement, team/group/branch meetings, etc.) and soliciting expressions of interest. This may or may not include the involvement of other divisions as dictated by the discretion of their managerial staff. During long-term periodic team goal setting (e.g. calibration plans), new project opportunities would be made known to all team members. Projects may, if applicable, be advertised beyond the team/group, but within the Division. Criteria based on input from appropriate stakeholders (i.e. team/project leads, management staff, etc.) would be established for project participation which may include, but is not limited to, expertise, opportunity for career/skill growth, seniority, professional interests, work style, and ability to effectively work with a team.

8. Project management training

Project Management training should be required for all staff in management positions, to include any individual in the lead position for a project, science- or functional-based, whether provided within the Institute or through external sources. Such training would not be required, but would be encouraged for all other staff. This initiative will provide INS staff the opportunity to gain the skills necessary to:
- Define the scope of the project, and develop and execute a project/action plan for successful and efficient completion of the project
- Plan and run projects
- Manage personnel, keeping in mind their work style, skill sets, experience, short-term and long-term work load, and personal goals
- Implement risk management techniques and mitigation strategies
- Estimate and schedule task work and duration with confidence
- Implement monitoring techniques and establish standards so that control of the project is maintained
- Recognize, adopt, and practice the leadership skills needed to run a motivated team

9. Meeting protocol and oral presentation training

As a potential solution to promoting and facilitating teamwork, we recommend that INS staff should receive training to become proficient in meeting protocol and oral presentation skills. This may include, but is not limited to, learning how to prepare a written agenda and distribute it prior to the meeting, distributing all data and information necessary for decision making in advance of the meeting, starting meetings on time, appointing a facilitator/leader/timekeeper, using a “parking lot” or offline system for detailed issues to be resolved outside of the meeting, and to encourage individuals in the reporting of their activities, progress, and accomplishments. In addition, such training should provide individuals with the skills necessary to establish a level of confidence and positioning as an equal opportunity member of the INS “team”.

10. General teamwork/teambuilding training

This training should provide team and project leads with the tools necessary to provide team members with a feeling of involvement, belonging, and comradery, while focused on a single mission. A team is a group of people who are jointly responsible for achieving a shared goal. Some of the recognized values that help to identify and connect team members to a shared goal are as follows:
- Motivating, encouraging, assisting, and acknowledging the performance of individual team members, so as to increase efficiency and product quality with the effect of increasing the probability of success in completing the collective goal.
- Developing a level of social-connectivity with the result in mind of establishing a synergistic work place in which both the individual members and the team as a whole can fulfill their potential.
- Developing a common framework for understanding and commitment for the shared goal in an attempt to build better collective performance.

11. Develop and implement an online calendar system for STScI/INS

An STScI/INS electronic calendar should be established within the Internal STScI website, together with standards for its use. This initiative will provide INS staff members with a simple system to remain current with the scheduling of Institute, Division, and Team/Group event calendars, with the further advantage that it would assist in preventing meeting conflicts. Additionally, key holidays and religious holidays and their associated restrictions should be included within the framework of said calendar. Such observances would not only allow for
cross-cultural education, but also will allow meeting organizers to coordinate the schedules of meeting participants more efficiently. All recommendations and requests for the inclusion of specific unaccounted events and holidays made by staff members should be evaluated.

12. **Reestablish the STScI Ombudsperson Program**

STScI has made significant efforts toward improving its working atmosphere to provide a more welcoming environment for its diverse workforce. In conjunction with these efforts, it is the goal and intent of this committee to improve the ability of all Division personnel, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender, lifestyle, or status, to work harmoniously and maintain a high level of morale and job satisfaction. Based on individuals’ past experiences and level of comfort, an apprehensive and fearful environment currently exists within INS and STScI, which dramatically reduces the possibility of action being taken that would hold others accountable for disrespectful behavior. Such fear stems from the inherent belief by individuals that actions taken will lead to retribution upon them. It is necessary to provide a resource such that residual fear and hesitation are removed.

We therefore recommend that the Institute reestablish the Ombudsperson Program. The ombudsperson should be a consultant from an outside firm, neutral within the STScI framework, and skilled in assisting with difficult personnel issues. As the ombudsperson will practice informally, he/she will possess no management decision-making power. The ombudsperson may assist employees with ethical concerns, participate in conflict mediation, track repetitive issues and bring new issues to light, recommending policy changes when applicable. The ombudsperson will keep no records for use by STScI and will maintain near absolute confidentiality; exceptions may arise in situations where immediate danger of serious harm exists, or where the ombudsperson is obliged to take action by law. An ombudsperson will not only provide new resources to the Division in addressing problems, but will work to empower individuals who have personally experienced uncivil behavior and to provide policy and procedural recommendations. We feel that although its initial use may be rare, the availability of such a resource will reflect the level of seriousness with which the Division is dedicated to establishing an optimal work environment for all of its employees.

NOTE: Sheryl Bruff is currently awaiting feedback from potential ombudspersons, and expects an initial visitation rate of once per month for the program.

13. **STScI/INS Employee Conflict Resolution & Communication Training**

We feel that such an initiative will allow individuals to communicate their feelings, opinions, and beliefs without hesitation, in a civil and professional manner. Additionally, such training would be beneficial to all individuals as a means of instruction in appropriate workplace behavior and communication practices. We believe that many of the issues of "respect" between co-workers at the Institute are rooted in the ability of staff members to politely but effectively resolve conflicts. Such training should be organized, scheduled, and required of all STScI INS employees.

14. **STScI and INS should be pro-active in its attempt to support diversity by working to heighten interest in Astronomy among youth minorities**
We recommend the use of the summer student programs, and the inception of other programs, to help expose young students from groups rarely found in physics and astronomy (e.g. African-Americans) to these fields. In addition to expanding the level of diversity within these fields, we believe that this would initiate a process for developing a pool of young astronomers from which the Institute could eventually look to as a potential employment resource. We believe that such a program should include high school and undergraduate level internships.

V. Implementation Being Considered

1. Establish a mentoring program

The Division Office will develop a mentoring program for all division staff. The program will be voluntary but highly encouraged, especially for staff with short service at the Institute and those in the junior grades of their career path. A staff member can identify a mentor either from the same or from a different career path, depending on their career plans and future progress. We note that the Science Mission office already has a mentoring program meant for staff in the Tenure and Science tracks; the INS program will be developed in cooperation with SMO to insure that all staff have access to comparable support and guidance.

2. Make ISRs available through ADS

This item is already progressing. Several ACS Instrument Science Reports have abstracts online and available through ADS, and Amy Gonigan is expected to submit more ISRs in the next few months. Making the full ISRs available requires a stable repository, which the Library has signed up to do.

3. Provide clear feedback to staff during the year

Besides the desirable expectation that feedback to employees be provided on a regular, frequent basis, there is value in establishing a clearly defined checkpoint roughly halfway through the year. The Division will establish a specific time frame - approximately one month, halfway through the evaluation period - during which all managers are required to have an extensive individual encounter with each of their employees to review their progress on each goal. For goals that are carried out outside of the manager's direct supervision, the manager will obtain informal feedback prior to the encounter as appropriate. In the interest of efficiency, in cases of satisfactory performance the only formal feedback required consists in marking the fact that the encounter took place in the comments section of the PAR tool. However, if the review identifies potential problems and areas that clearly need improvement, the manager is required to discuss such areas with the employee and to add a specific note to the PAR interim comments. This policy should be discussed by the end of February, with the month of March targeted to be the time frame for this year's interim review.

4. Clarify and revise promotion procedures
The Division Office is drafting a new promotion procedure that will apply to all staff, except for the promotions that are under the purview of the Science Personnel Committee. This procedure will include clear criteria and timelines for consideration of promotion, and will require that the manager discuss each employee's future career path explicitly as part of the annual appraisal. The new procedure is expected to be ready for discussion by the end of February.

5. Organize more social events

The Division has implemented a number of social events, including (nearly) monthly pizza lunches, a holiday party, and soon a monthly afternoon gathering. More events can be developed depending on volunteer participation.

6. Develop project planning standards

The new DA Lead and the Division Office will work to develop clear requirements on work description, schedules, and deadlines that will apply to new projects involving assignments of INS staff. Expectations on work and outcome will be made clear from both sides. This process is expected to take a few months.

7. Improve access to project and work assignments

The DA Lead will develop, together with the Division Office and SMO, a process to make all Division staff aware of opportunities offered in the science and functional domains. Individual staff members will be able to indicate their interest in such opportunities, and their preferences will be taken into account in deciding on specific assignments. This project is expected to take a few months.

8-10. & 13. Training

This area is under detailed consideration by the Human Resources Office. HR is developing a detailed training curriculum for managers and employees; manager training will be closely connected with 360 reviews that will be announced in February. Project management courses are also under consideration, possibly to be developed internally in order to maximize their relevance to STScI's specificity.

11. Develop an online calendar

One form of online calendar already exists for talks and conferences, but its accessibility is under review. Broader access to an online calendar has been under study for some time. Unless a solution is developed within a short time, a group of savvy INS staff will work to set up a pilot Division-wide calendar that could serve as the framework for a broader system.

12. Reestablish the Ombudsperson program

HR is already implementing this with candidates and schedules currently under examination.
14. Support activities to enhance minorities’ interest in Astronomy

Several initiatives have been suggested in this area over the last year, some actively involving individuals from our Division. We will identify such opportunities and encourage the Division staff to participate; specifics are yet to be defined.

VI. Ongoing Purpose of Committee

The DCRWG feels that it is necessary to carry on with its commitment to improve the work environment within the INS Division. The diverse constituency of the DCRWG provides INS management with a uniquely indiscriminate perspective of the division’s work and social environments as they evolve. The group’s first-hand knowledge of INS staff, culture, and daily activities allow for the identification of concerns expressed by division staff in an efficient manner. Such intimacy provides the group with an opportunity to solicit and develop solutions that will positively affect the ability of our colleagues to work in an optimally harmonious and productive capacity within and away from the division. The ability of the DCRWG to act in this way, as a link between the division staff and management, also allows for the development of metrics to monitor and assure that the community’s desired means of implementation for all recommendations is observed. If it is decided that the DCRWG will continue to function with its present goal, we feel that it will be necessary to revisit recommendations developed in the roundtable discussions that address focused issues or concerns, not mentioned in this document, at a later date. Additionally, were the DCRWG to continue, the frequency of its meetings should be reduced to the extent that its members are able to devote the time necessary to meet the needs of the division, while maintaining their personal obligations. Finally, upon submission of this report to the INS community, the current members of the DCRWG should be allowed to cycle out of the group if they so choose.