Winter Symposium 2016

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Table Discussion Notes - The Significance of Equity and Inclusion in Education

Portland State University

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Winter Symposium 2016 - What Does It Mean to be Educated in the 21st Century?
Wednesday, January 20
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Ballroom, Smith Memorial Student Union

Table Discussion Notes - The Significance of Equity and Inclusion in Education Panel

Members

● Identity
  ○ Students’ Own
  ○ perceived by faculty
● Identity Impacts performance & Faculty perception of success
● How do we engage faculty in PD. / communities of practice to develop their own equity lens to engage students - no matter the content area?
● Access - Study of disability as it intersects with a variety of students. How do we know/address the gap between k-12 experience and PSU?
● Recognizing the multidimensionality of identity

● How can we learn about subtle offensive actions and words?
● How can we better recognize braces and change in behavior?
● How do we avoid making assumptions about cultural identity?
● Answer: Embedded (Mandated) Training
  ○ From the beginning - at hiring
  ○ Resources for helping everyone be aware
  ○ leadership is needed to prioritize
  ○ work to break the cycle of stereotyping
  ○ engage in educational activities that break down barriers, improve communication
  ○ Make an example of sensitivity and take it the community we served

● Note/appreciate the power of panelists (Students + faculty) in framing the issue for us
● Practical structural approaches
  ○ faculty need to learn how to engage these issues
  ○ activists for students to do this work
● Our students care - both current and alumni are driving us to improve
● Preparation of faculty who have not been exposed to concepts or had experience with dynamics of equity and inclusion?
  ○ incentives? - promotion, tenure, merit donut depend on this work.
  ○ people say they are already overworked
  ○ how do we present it so that people want to be involved?
  ○ Fit it to multiple initiatives (example: equity lens on strategic plan)
● How willing are we to spend time to apply the equity lens?
  ○ Takes time
  ○ takes support of institutional authority
● Example: Tuition is high at engineering (or other schools) - maybe barner to diversity
  ○ Would we spend the time studying, thinking, examining implications of different approaches?
● What if equity + inclusion metrics were part of program review? (or, are they?)
● look at degree completion rates by demographics. Metrics like that actually benefit PSU vis a vis OSU, U of O.
● Campus wide learning outcomes. Is equity + inclusion on this list?
● Being deliberate about hiring faculty with knowledge + Experience
● Notes
  ○ Symposium readings were from all-white authors: most male, one female
  ○ Inclusion thru turning part of curriculum to the students from the perspective
  ○ Create an environment where inquiry is perceived welcomed by students of color where they won't be looked down upon.
  ○ Give individual feedback + vary approached
    ■ only works with smaller classes
● Faculty so focused on content that we don't understand what our students are experienceing the challenges they are facing (IE. What can a faculty member do to support inclusion of parents, transgender students, etc.)
● We can also modify our content
● How is equality different from equity? (IE. Programs open to all get only some cav affoted)
● How do we shift culture so that students have an educational experience that goes beyond the transactional?
● How do we teach and model equity and inclusion in our current political climate? (I.e Anti-immigrant rhetoric)
● Begin with simple fact that PSU is on tribal land
● make process/procedure transparent and accessible and equitable (I.e study abroad)
● Faculty and staff need ongoing professional development in this
  ○ Can OSU provide and to support these trainings? Perhaps in a departmental or level as opposed to campus wide?
Listen Listen Listen
use your power to advocate
teach out to students to make them awake if opportunities, scholarships etc.
provide creative ways to mix general requirements for mk diverse student body (IE. Expand services for students with disabilities)
Elevate diverse voices in the classroom

Work with people rather than on behalf of people
is equity just a buzzword?
Engagement + communication.. How do we embrace comfort? Don’t like it, but it can be healthy. Safe place. No right or wrong.
Mandatory vs, Voluntary. How do we hold ourselves accountable? Do we have the courage.
Give people more credit for the conversations that are happening,
How do we incentivize? How do we encourage faculty to engage in topic?
Figure out where we are now. What are we doing well? Where are the gaps?
Assessment lacking. Graduation gaps.
  ○ How do students really feel?
Listening is key.
Best practices - make sure they are authentic. Student driven.
Bottom-Top rather than top-Bottom. Grassroots. But use our influence to create change
Students are becoming more vocal to administration.
Leadership matters = decision making = influence
This is a chance for PSU to do something special. systemic issue.
Also figure out a way to retain faculty of color.
What resources do we provide students?
How do students really feel?
Grad students of ed study that examines students of color and thier experiences.
Define where we want to go. What is our goal?
  ○ What does a school with true equity look like?
Not us or them - all of us

How do we prepare administrators to be looking thru lens of equity
Mandatory faculty dev.
Students as a resource
  ○ Honor work students are already doing. listening
Zero incentive for faculty to do the work
One cannot be educated in 21st c. without addressing equity and inclusion
What makes people want to do it? or feel like they need to?
Faculty should reach out to individual students when appropriate
Mandatory, regular trainings for faculty at dept level
Diversity requirement (?) for students
Assess faculty intercultural competency during annual reviews
Assess student’s incoming cultural competency
Should include financial diversity
What do students know before they begin your course? (pre-test/ post-test)
How do we define “quality” of education for students who are not like us?
Think of educational experience as continuing beyond classroom.
Faculty members reaching out to students with opportunities make more impact than flyers posted + email (e.g. student representation on committees)

Faculty need training to address equity and inclusion in the classroom faculty also need time to learn this.
Create an atmosphere where this really matters
what are other universities doing?
What are we doing to attract our heritage students? Is there administrative support for developing heritage programs
Develop writing, a love of culture, language & heritage students who should not be taught their own language as a “foreign language”
How do white faculty learn to integrate equity and inclusion into their courses - learn how to do it?
Provide a safe space for students to share with each other their experiences
Students can participate in educating faculty about their experiences
What are we doing for recruitment of students with diverse backgrounds by providing heritage language instructions as well as writing
When students abroad - their eyes are opened to new cultural experiences and understanding. And the ability to think critically about their own culture

How to think about curriculum in a complex way
  - engage students
opening up definitions of what’s included (or not...) asking questions about institutional and other privileges
Structure and process + promoting dialogue: how to define structures to promote dialogue
  - experiential learning as a pathway to this?
Teaching together with others (E.g. with someone of another gender, ethnicity,
  - More collaboration across these delimitations
Use critical theory to think about language, choice of examples, etc.
interrogating terminology and implicit attitudes (e.g. “illegal alien”) our professional role is to provide context

How to become aware of unintended consequences? elicit useful/honest student feedback
what does “safe” mean in a way that also allows for uncomfortable discussion

Cultural competence
  ○ is this incorporated as part of accreditation
  ○ constructing an environment that is safe to discuss topics that are traditionally undiscussable
  ○ ‘skills’ for transitioning uncomfortable situations into learning moments
  ○ as a privileged white male - what can I even say?

What can we do?
  ○ Workshops, training
  ○ open dialogue
  ○ being open
  ○ inclusion vs acceptance vs access

What about generational differences (also tied to technology)?

Facilitating a conversation vs being the ‘expert’ representing all possible opinions/ views - facilitating skills

self awareness - grounding ‘self’ in context

Inclusion vs representation
be careful of tokenism
have diversity requirement not only in gen ed but in all curriculum
consider dominant vs nondominant cultures
ask them about their experience
  ○ build their experience into pedagogical practices
Give support and advice on how to proceed in next steps to social change

Listen!
  ○ Facilitation skills - sharing experiences
  ○ learn to engage

Need training + ongoing professional development
  ○ faculty
  ○ staff

Curriculum
  ○ require in disciplines, not just Gen Ed
Use equity lens

assess cultural competencies
○ p+t process

● Structures
  ○ Equity services - part of program review
  ○ institutional caring
  ○ track degree completion

● intention vs Translation
● more careful assessment of authentic student needs
● ongoing educational program: self education
● inclusive values must be internalized, rather than imposed through mandate (mandate builds resistance)
● Just because we come from our own minority niche does not mean we understand the niches of other minorities
● Implement through promotion, tenure and hiring guidelines
  ○ require (or encourage) faculty to write up their approaches to inclusion
  ○ conveying criteria (equity scorecard)

● Now:
  ○ people with strong grievances
  ○ people with guilt
  ○ people with inclination
    ■ Expression of/denial (arrow to the two below, dotted arrow with ? on top two)

● Be kind while being passionate
● common problems addressed outside of trad. language
● reassess assignment: step outside of frameworking

● We need to be there for students who need help - personal
● students are going to respond to people they believe cares about them
● Faculty development related to caring, cultural competence, interpersonally, relating to students, fostering caring - encouraging risk taking
● Have to convince certain faculty/ departments that equity is even an issue
● equity scorecard
● analyze barriers to students retention and graduation rates
● look at gaps
● institutional caring -creating structures