Launching a New Diversity Office: Success for the Long Term

AAC&U Annual Meeting
Building Public Trust in the Promise of Liberal Education and Inclusive Excellence
27 January 2017
Discussion Questions

• Where is your institution in the process of creating/redefining/advancing a diversity office?

• How does/can your department collaborate with your diversity office to promote student learning and institutional change (or vice versa), i.e. for long term success?

• What are some opportunities and challenges on your campus?
9 Lessons Learned for Starting a New Diversity Office

1. Hone The Elevator Speech
2. Fly the Plane While It’s Being Built
3. Remember that Perfection is the Enemy of Good
4. Be Data Driven
5. Partner, Partner, Partner
6. Beware of “Projectitis”
7. Keep Friends Close But “Resistors” Closer
8. Understand That Allies Can Also Be Resistors
9. Put Your Oxygen Mask On First
Building Partnerships
Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Dan Shapiro
Director

Vivian Waldrup-Patterson
Inclusive Excellence and Assessment Analyst

Faculty Associates
• Jennifer Fletcher, Inclusive Teaching Strategies
• Rebecca Kersnar, Reading Apprenticeship
• Sam Robinson, Communications
• Corin Slown, Student Learning in STEM
Building Partnerships
Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment

Inclusive teaching areas

1. Identity, power, and privilege
2. Belonging
3. Academic skills
Identity, Power & Privilege

Faculty Learning Communities

- Incorporating the Writings of Cornel West into Courses
- Micro-aggressions
- Race Talk: Creating Racially/Ethnically Inclusive Classrooms
- Political Correctness: Understanding the Backlash
- Race Talk: Creating
- Difficult Dialogs in Turbulent Times
- Inclusive Teaching Strategies
Belonging

1. Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs)

2. Vivian Waldrup-Patterson, Inclusive Excellence and Assessment Analyst

Activities

- African-American Heritage Faculty and Staff Alliance
- Living Learning Community for student of color
- Mentoring Program
- African-American Student Reception
- Office of Inclusive Excellence Search Committee
Academic Skills

Habits of Mind  Reading Apprenticeship
Personal Growth and Counseling Center

Combined Destinies: Whites Sharing Grief About Racism

Ann Jealous
LMFT

Caroline Haskell
Founding Director, PGCC
Coping with Racism & Discrimination

Considerations for students of color and white allies

The first year of college marks a significant milestone in your transition to adulthood. As you settle into a campus routine, you will most likely be tasked with adjusting to being separated from your family, forming new friendships, and coping with a more rigorous academic curriculum. Although it is often exhilarating to gain a new sense of independence and responsibility during this process, at times you may find it difficult to juggle the demands of your social and academic life. Unfortunately, among students of color, the common stressors of the college experience are often compounded by the burden of race-related stress. Racism and discrimination continue to be a fact of life for many students of color on college campuses. At times, racism is overt, such as the use of racial slurs, graffiti, or even violence. However, it can also frequently arise in more subtle forms, such as stereotyping, assumptions, or exclusion. In any form, racism and discrimination add stress and challenges to the lives of students of color. Finding ways to cope and bringing concerns to the forefront are important steps in owning personal power.
Major Challenge

Building Partnerships:
Office of Sustainability

- Environment
- Social
- Economic

Natural Resources
Social Justice and Equity
Economic Growth
The Relationship Between Equity, Inclusion and Sustainability

Understand that education for sustainability is a lifelong learning process that leads to an informed and involved citizenry having the creative problem-solving skills, scientific and social literacy, and commitment to engage in responsible individual and cooperative actions to support strong communities.

Support sustainability through classroom instruction, learning opportunities (including service learning)

Acknowledge the disproportionate impact environmental degradation has on low-income and/or minority populations and communities.
Observations, Opportunities and Challenges

- Both areas valued by campus administration and leadership
- Require the need for adaptive change within an institutional setting
- Require individual actions: education/training, behavior change and self-awareness
- Student passion, interest and advocacy in both topics
- Both can be perceived as “additional work” for campus staff and faculty members
- Both are operational (need to be ingrained into campus practices) and academic (addressed through classroom and co-curricular learning opportunities)
Realistic Synergies

What are some of the things that pull us to our corners?

• Lack of diversity within the field of Sustainability
• Maintaining the core issues (Fear of loss or minimization, weakening of diversity as a core issue being co-oped by sustainability).
• Creating a space for people to feel engaged working on both issues
• Address issues as they arise find a way to ensure both are welcomed and accepted by the other.
How to be...

...an ally (combine or unite a resource or commodity with (another) for mutual benefit)
- Verbal support for the other topic – when the other isn’t present.
- Educate and Inform yourself on the others topic, for example: Safe Zone training for SO; story of stuff for DO)

...a collaborator (work jointly on an activity, especially to produce or create something)
- Trainings and Education Opportunities
- Events
- Being on Advisory Committees
- 1:1 meetings (challenge yourself, be open and self-aware)
What You Should Know

• It is helpful but not essential that there be positions dedicated to “non-regulatory” aspects of each topic.

• LEARN – about the other topic, intimately, step outside your comfort zone.

• These issues demand a deepening of discourse...
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Pairs then large group

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Thank you!

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