Someone who looks like me: Promoting the Success of Students of Color by Promoting the Success of Faculty of Color

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Session goals

- Understand the link between supporting underrepresented minority (URM) faculty and the success of underrepresented minority students

- Learn about a model of supporting faculty of color and engaging a broader community of allies

- Develop a framework relevant to your own campus and region that simultaneously supports faculty of color and addresses systemic changes necessary for their continued success
A few notes about our approach

- We use the term *faculty of color* broadly for the purposes of campus retention efforts.

- We will be focusing mostly on "faculty of color," but issues may also be relevant to women in certain fields.

- We work at small liberal arts colleges in the Pacific Northwest. We will build in time for you to consider how your own institutional and geographic context would affect any approach you might consider.
The link between faculty and students

- The data are clear that when students of color see faculty who look like them, it reduces feelings of isolation, self-doubt, and other factors that impede academic success (e.g., Blanton, et al., 2000; Marx & Goff, 2005)
  - True of women faculty in STEM fields as well (e.g., Stout, et al., 2011)
  - Campus climate studies
The link between faculty and students

- Student activists in the past few years have included “hire more faculty of color” at the top of their lists of demands.

- In order to hire more faculty of color, the campus culture must change, focus on retention as well as hiring.
Small group discussion: Defining the Problem

- Take some time to consider individually the most salient barriers to retaining faculty of color on your campus.

- Share some of the issues you identified with a neighbor.
Some common obstacles to supporting faculty of color

- Faculty unawareness of principles of inclusive excellence (i.e., undoing the diversity / quality binary)
- Lack of training around implicit bias
- Small numbers of faculty of color make it harder to provide a welcoming campus to increase their number
- Cultural tax of increased requests for service, mentoring students of color
- Lack of good mentoring for faculty generally
- Hostile departmental climates
- Uninformed tenure and promotion committees
- Uninformed or unsupportive administrators
Our NW5C Supporting Faculty of Color Initiative

- NW5C consortium funded by Mellon Foundation in 2010 (Lewis and Clark, Reed, University of Puget Sound, Whitman, Willamette)

- Goals
  - Decrease sense of isolation of faculty of color on each campus
  - Improve the diversity infrastructure on each campus by sharing of best practices and training White allies
Our NW5C Supporting Faculty of Color Initiative

- First Faculty of Color workshop in June 2014
  - 25 participants in first year
  - 36 in 2015
  - 39 in 2016
- Workshop location rotates between the five campuses
Our NW5C Supporting Faculty of Color Initiative

- Planning group of faculty development professionals and chief diversity officers

- Facilitators mostly administrative staff and faculty from the five institutions
Workshop Design

- Targeted outreach to faculty of color and White allies in positions to effect change
- Plan for concrete take-aways either for individuals or institutions
- Time for community-building
- Breakout sessions
- Administrative support but intended to be “by faculty for faculty”
- Some new sessions each year based on feedback from prior years’ participants
Funding for 2016 Workshop

- 2 nights lodging, meals, travel for about 40 participants
- Some hotel accommodations for faculty travelling with family
- $750 for each of 5 faculty facilitators
- Total cost of about $13,000
- First three years used NW5C funding; deans so persuaded by success that they committed to using internal funding for 2017
Participant Comments

- There was a sense that we were not simply laboring in the wilderness by ourselves, that there were others who were also struggling and working on the same issues.

- Somehow I think that everyone is more open and receptive when participants come from many campuses. We’re less likely to get mired in the minutiae of our own campus politics and think on a slightly more strategic level.

- It is powerful to hear the same experiences and issues are present across the campuses. This puts our issues into a broader perspective. For example, it is strangely comforting to see parallel issues and concerns echoed at a sister school. This shows that our own college is not uniquely troubled, but that all the schools are working toward a greater expression of justice despite setbacks.
Questions?
Building your own faculty of color network

- Activity I: Identifying challenges
- Activity II & III: Envisioning a consortium
- Activity IV & V: Garnering support
Closing: Next Steps?

- Review the resources list and identify 2-3 sources that look useful to you.

- What is one concrete step you plan to take when you return to your campus?

- Thank you! Any questions, please contact us:
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