Academic Equity and Engagement:

*Incorporating a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Both In and Out of the Classroom*

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Who are we?

Felicia Griffin-Fennell, Ph.D.

- Director, *Hispanics & Low-Income Transformed Education in STEM (HiLITES)* project
- DOE-funded, HSI-STEM grant project
- 2016-2021

Jane Lerner, M.Ed.

- Director, *Decreasing Inequities, Increasing Success* project
- DOE-funded, Title III grant project
- 2015-2020
Takeaways

1. Gain new perspective on defining culturally responsive pedagogy.

2. Cultivate insight on how to develop a classroom environment that is comfortable for all students and meet faculty goals.

3. Identify key campus offices, organizations, and personnel that are critical for students to know and build connections with.

4. Develop ways to foster new connections between faculty and students, both in and out of the classroom.
The Context: STCC
Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield MA, is an urban, 2-year public institution with approximately 5,500 students
- Age Range: 17-83
- Ethnicity: White (42%), Hispanic (29%), Black (17%), Other (12%)
- Gender: Female (58%), Male (42%)
- Enrollment: Part-time (57%), Full-time (43%)
- HSI Designation Year: 2015
The Context: Equity and Student Engagement

Through the U.S. Dept. of Education Title III and HSI-STEM grants, STCC embarked upon a multi-year training program for Faculty and Staff, which included:

- Culturally responsive teaching faculty series
- Establish off-campus collaborators
  - Escala Educational Services of New Mexico
  - Unidos Equity Institute of Adams State University
  - POGIL
  - Local community organizations
- *Building Community* lunch conversation series
- All-campus professional development days
  - *We are HSI*
Questions:

01. What role can faculty have in helping to increase equity and engagement in the classroom between students of color and white students?

02. How does the idea of culturally responsive teaching impact the student experience at college?

03. What do we need to include in our teaching in order to ensure that students connect with each other and their faculty?
Influencing Factors on Equity and Engagement

01 | Faculty connections have a direct positive correlation to retention and graduation rates;

02 | Academic rigor and standards need to be developed and maintained in a way that is equitable to all students;

03 | Understanding of the psychosocial cultural factors at play during classroom interactions is critical.
Tenets of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)
Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Competence:

Cultivating students’ cognitive abilities to organize and study rigorous content
Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Relatedness:

Fostering supportive and positive relationships between professor, students, and rigorous content
Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)

Trust:

Assessment strategies and policies that demonstrate the professor believes that ALL students are capable of learning rigorous content
Tenets of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)
Roles of faculty on college campuses?
Teaching Considerations

- Participation & engagement
- Assessment
- Subject content
Influencing Factors on Student Engagement

01 | Personal challenges that our students bring to the classroom every day;

02 | Explicit and implicit bias, microaggressions, and other forms of discrimination;

03 | The symbiotic affective relationship between students and faculty;

04 | Lack of knowledge regarding campus resources.
Wrap up: Connection between student engagement & CRT

- It is essential to incorporate the three tenets of CRT into the work that you do with your students.
- Learn who your students are.
- Consider what can you do to make the environment comfortable for all students, and meet your own goals for your course content.
Thank you!
Any Questions?

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