Welcoming and Mentoring All: Building Inclusive Communities in Colleges and Universities

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Still Doing Field Work

“Picking tomatoes and cutting apricots with my family in California. I played games and scenarios in my mind to keep me otherwise occupied. I never dreamed of becoming a professor or ever going to college. I grew up doing field work and now, as a qualitative researcher, I find it amusing that I still find myself doing field work.”

Caroline with her Mom, Gabriella, taken at a farm labor camp in California circa 1947
Session Outline

- Personal Narrative: Lessons from the Field
- Inspiration from Montana
- A Guest in Someone Else’s House
- Faculty of Color in Academe: Bittersweet Success
- Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committee
- Mentoring as Transformative Practice
- After the Search and Hire: Intentional Cultivation of Nurturing Environments
- When do you feel valued and welcomed?
Advancing the Dialogue on Faculty Gender & Racial/Ethnic Diversity

Faculty of Color in Academe: Bittersweet Success (2000) with Samuel L. Myers, Jr.

Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees (2002). Sold over 17,000 copies; Referenced as a critical resource and adapted for inclusion in faculty hiring manuals at several colleges and universities.
“Diversity, undertaken simply to increase the number of minority faculty on campus, stops short of exploring the full implications of diversity as an institutional endeavor which involves transforming its own culture so as to truly open the doors to new values, perspectives, pedagogical styles, and research knowledge.”

Tenured Faculty of Color Study Participant; Administrator
We are not succeeding and I think it's because we are still looking at this process as a *sorting* and weeding, rather than an affirming and building.

I am **expected** to teach and do research as well as represent a whole ethnic group, something that is not expected of White faculty members.

The competence of minority faculty is **more apt** to be questioned and challenged.

People ask me, Why do I speak English so well?...They’ve already superimposed on me that I don’t belong here...
Why Stay?

- Intellectual challenge, autonomy, and freedom to pursue their own interests
- Promotion of racial understanding as one of their most important personal goals
- Promotion of a multicultural environment
- Professional satisfaction in teaching
- Supportive administrative leadership
- The opportunity to build mentor relationships
- Collegiality
- Interactions with other faculty of color as well as students of color
- A sense of accomplishment— that they are helping conditions change
Translate Research to Practice

- Diversifying the Faculty: A Guidebook for Search Committees

  Before the Search Begins – Creating a context within which search committees can successfully hire and retain diverse faculty

  The Search Process – Suggestions for the search process itself

  After the Search – Suggestions for retaining and advancing faculty of color
Before the Search Begins

- Communicate the Educational Rationale
- Aligning Departmental and Institutional Commitments
- Creating a Welcoming Environment
- Securing Resources
- Countering Segregated Networks
The Search Process

- Establishing a Successful Search Committee
- Educating the Search Committee on Legal Issues
- Debunking the Myths
- Constructing a Position Description
- Reexamining and Changing Hiring Biases
- Hosting the Campus Visit
- Making the Offer
After the Search

- Supporting the New Hire
  - Regularly follow up with a new faculty member of color soon after he or she is hired to help ease the transition and uncover any issues that may have developed in the first few months.

- Assessing the Search Process and Outcome
Faculty of Color in Academe: What 20 Years of Literature Tells Us

Literature analysis and synthesis of 242 studies (from 1988-2007) on faculty of color with the goal of informing scholars and practitioners of the state of the field; of interest, based on the literature, locations detected

- Supports (+) & Challenges (-): Within and Across Departmental, Institutional, and National Contexts
- Recommendations for Departmental/ Institutional/ National Contexts
- Transcending context and time frame, mentoring is imperative to faculty of color hiring and persistence.
Recommendations for Departmental/Institutional/National Contexts

**Departmental**
- Establish More Inclusive Standard for Judging Faculty Yearly Performance
- Provide Opportunities for Authentic and Spiritual Expression

**Institutional**
- Institutionalize Diversity Goals
- Promote Strong Leadership for Diversity

**National**
- Provide Connections to Diverse Communities
- Reduce Salary Inequities

Additional Recommendations:
- Establish Recruitment / Hiring / Retention Plans
- Diversify Student Body / Faculty
- Provide Training on Faculty of Color Issues
- Provide Opportunities for Collegial Networks and Collaborations
- Provide Research Support
- Promote Mentoring Programs
- Promote Policies Supportive of a Diverse Faculty
- Establish More Inclusive Standards for Tenure / Promotion
The goal of mentoring is not simply to teach the system, but also to change the system so that it becomes more flexible and responsive to the needs and pathways of its members – mentors and proteges. (Bernstein et.al., 2010)

Center on the individual need/Center on the organization (socialization)

...there’s also a transformational, even revolutionary goal underlying the whole program [Mathematical & Theoretical Biology Institute - MTBI] which is to change the face and the nature of the scientific endeavor...At a more fundamental level by changing who’s involved in it and also by changing the way the research agenda is set.

Mentoring for faculty of color and American Indian faculty can be framed as a deficit model
Research points to...

- **Role of leadership** – stated and enacted intentions toward the goal of diversifying the faculty; Evident that the university board, president, provost, the college dean, and the department chair play an important role in encouraging and supporting faculty members to remain engaged.

- Leadership within the academic department can **set a tone** of collegiality, tolerance, and acceptance of differences. Efforts can be made to foster collaboration.

- **Cohort hiring** to cultivate a critical mass of scholars. Increasing numbers can help URM faculty build a sense of community.
Research points to...

- Making **diversity in faculty a shared responsibility** – cannot only fall on faculty of color or the diversity officer
- Enact reward systems that take into account **“diversity work”** (e.g., mentoring, community engagement, public scholarship); diversity based performance ratings; Reward scholars who conduct research that advances equity and community interests
Research points to...

- Emphasizing recruitment, but also retention – building supportive climates where faculty can find sense of belonging; Build campus climate of care; create social/informational networks
- Mentoring and grooming for success in faculty role (have credentials but need to understand campus culture); Counter Deficit framing
- Provide leadership development opportunities
- Intentionality: Institutions committed and deliberate in addressing challenges and strengthen support structures
Changing Landscape...

- Challenges to Affirmative Action
- Faculty across Institutional Types
- Increase in Adjunct Faculty and Decrease in Full Time Tenure Track Positions
- From Associate to Full Professor
Emerging Themes from Literature 2008–present

- Mentoring
- Campus and Departmental Climate
- Cultural Taxation
- Experiences of Women of Color
- Teaching and Research Questioned
- Re–conceptualize Scholarship
- Faculty to Leadership Positions
- Discipline Specific
- Recommendations
Reflections on Bloom Where You Are Planted
Intentional Cultivation of Nurturing Environments

- Sufficient water and sunlight
- Fertile soil
- Protection from pests
- Unpredicted disasters can curtail plant growth: storms, temperature fluctuations, drought

- Sufficient encouragement, support, validation
- Institutional Responsiveness: Intentional Retention; Defining in Structural pathways for growth
- Unpredicted disasters can curtail learner growth: Hurricane Katrina, plight of the undocumented, Ferguson tragedy
Call to Action

- Underrepresentation represents a tremendous waste of talent, the scale of which is increasing as minority populations grow (Tapia & Johnson, 2009)
- Conversations across difference yield multiple perspectives on solutions to critical issues. Bring in those missing from the table. Scale up what is working. Work toward transformation not status quo.
- Taking responsibility for the cultivation of nurturing environments for all to bloom bodes for a brighter future.