



FOSTERING EQUITY: THE ROLE OF CAMPUS LEADERS

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Agenda

- Introductions
 - *Name, Department/Unit, Pronouns*
- URI leaders: 10 Strategies for Inclusion & Equity
- Discussion & Action Planning
- Q & A

My Background

- Professor, Education; Program Director, CSP Program
 - *Prior roles in administration (Faculty Director, Associate Dean)*
- Ph.D. Higher Education Administration
 - *Cognate on Teaching Diversity & Social Justice*
 - *M.A. Sociology; MA Education*
 - *Initially trained to be a H.S. teacher*
- Scholarly Foci
 - *Experiences of minoritized college students, faculty and staff*
 - *Inclusive/critical pedagogy in higher ed; Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*
- Service
 - *Facilitate inclusion workshops for faculty and staff at URI and across the country*

Discussion

As a leader, what is your role in fostering equity and social justice at URI and in your unit?



Equity Efforts: Why Focus on Faculty and Staff?

- Leaders create campus climates and microclimates where faculty and staff feel supported and validated
 - “You don’t look like a professor” ([Garcia, 2018](#))
 - *“I think theoretically I know that [it is an LGBT friendly campus] . . . I think I personally work in a very safe environment, but when I step outside of my own immediate work environment I don’t always necessarily notice that guarantee.”*
- Fosters satisfaction and retention
- It is the right thing to do
- Reduces liability

(Bell et al., 2016; Eagen & Garvey, 2015; Harley, 2008; Reyes & Rios, 2005; Turner, 2002; Turner, González & Wood, 2008; Turner, González & Wong, 2011; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Wyche & Graves, 2010; Vaccaro 2012).

Ensuring Inclusion for Minoritized Faculty & Staff

Research shows universities often:

- Hire minoritized faculty and staff, but do not empower them in their roles;
- Fail to provide effective mentoring;
- Overburden with service commitments that don't contribute to tenure/promotion
- Culturally tax them (advising, diversity committees, recruitment of diverse students);
 - "There's a way to get the job done to meets the expectations of the university, but doesn't move the ball forward in ways that are important to you. Folks will say, "What's the big deal?" The big deal is your five hours [of service] took me 15, and there is a dramatic impact in term of how many more of these students [of color] are here." (Reddick et al., 2020)
- Do not respond appropriately to bias incidents;
- Devalue or undervalue their work;
- Require them to teach devalued courses;

(Bell et al., 2016; Eagen & Garvey, 2015; Harley, 2008; Reyes & Rios, 2005; Turner, 2002; Turner, González & Wood, 2008; Turner, González & Wong, 2011; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017; Pitcher, 2017; Wyche & Graves, 2010).

I think sometimes I don't feel like I'm being heard. For example, in meetings, I'm not usually the first one to speak up . . . I do a lot of internal processing. If I have something to say, usually I have worked it out in my head. If I don't feel like I'm being heard after I've taken the time [or] if you interrupt me while I'm talking, that is a huge thing. For me, I feel my voice isn't valuable enough or not as valuable as yours that you feel you need to be heard over me right now. And it's a respect thing. I wonder if it's a race thing or a gender thing as well. It's kind of those frustrating moments where my voice is not valuable right now. . . this happens a lot. . . . And they probably don't even realize they are doing what they are doing, but the impact on me is frustrating. I don't feel like I'm valued or heard.

I hadn't been asked [to take on leadership roles]. No one had said "These are the new committees that the President is creating. do you want to go?" [If I had been asked by] my boss [I would have said] "Oh, yeah."

[Colleagues] simply do not acknowledge my existence. . . I [also] feel marginalized by people in upper administration in my college every day. . . Marginalization is. . .when I'm simply ignored. . . It feels very disrespectful.

#1: Start with self

- How do you feel about equity initiatives at URI?
- How comfortable and confident are you in using inclusive and affirming language?
- How effective are you at recognizing not just overt, but covert forms of exclusion?
- How open are you to learning? Being challenged?
- How often do you seek out professional development, read scholarship, or converse with colleagues about issues of anti-racism, equity, and social justice?

#1: Start with Self: Reflection Point

- How do you feel about equity initiatives at URI?
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- In small groups, discuss how “self” guides your work as a leader.
- What do you need to learn to effectively infuse equity and social justice into your specific job role?

#2: Set the tone for inclusion

- Regularly discuss social justice and equity at department meetings and share best practices in your field
- Create an environment where faculty and staff can ask for guidance and support in managing difficult EDI situations

#3: Thoughtfully infuse inclusion into P & T

- Discuss how to incorporate equity and social justice into promotion & tenure processes in a way that honors:
 - *Various ways of effectively enacting equity and justice in teaching, research and service.*
 - Research: Topics, methods, theoretical frameworks, implications for diverse communities, publishing outlets
 - Teaching: course materials, pedagogical strategies, advising/mentoring
 - Service: committee work, attendance at events, engagement in PD on campus
 - *Diverse disciplinary histories, languages, and literatures*
 - *Unique skill sets of each faculty member*

AAUP & URI “Letter of Agreement” (March 19, 2020)

- Negotiations guided by literature showing:
 - Competency and authority of minoritized faculty often questioned and rated more harshly on evaluations (Bell, Goodman & Varghese, 2016)
 - Pre-tenure or contingent faculty are especially vulnerable to harsh judgement, bias, and pressure/stressors (Eagen & Garvey, 2015; Mena & Vaccaro, 2017)
- Student Feedback (IDEAS) are only ONE source of evidence, and a numeric target cannot be required
- Faculty provide “evidence of effective teaching and advising practices that have an impact on student learning”
 - *Many options for providing such evidence*

#4: Lead efforts to transform the curriculum

- Set up department/program/unit/campus structures to review curricula for inclusion/exclusion
 - *Race only discussed in “special courses” like: The science of inclusion and the brain; Race, class and sustainability*
 - *LGBTQ people only portrayed in relation to diseases or “it doesn’t come up”*
 - *Women’s accomplishments in the field not recognized*
- Encourage transparent discussions about inclusion ACROSS the curriculum
 - *Take a holistic and scaffolded approach to including equity and anti-racism in curriculum*
 - *Discuss DEI in a way that is consistent across the unit*
 - *Do not leave “diversity” (equity, anti-racism) to certain faculty*
 - *Do not assume these topics have no place in your field*

#5: Foster justice in physical & virtual environments

- Post messages of inclusion in your physical & virtual department spaces (websites, bulletin boards, program/event publicity, department marketing, social media)
 - *Safe zone signs*
 - *University and college statements*
 - *Disciplinary statements, values, standards, ethics, etc.*
- Visually represent diverse people and perspectives
 - *Be careful not to tokenize*
- Review department forms to ensure that they have inclusive categories and language
 - *Man, Woman, Transgender, Genderqueer, Nonbinary. Not listed: Please share*
 - *Race, ethnicity,*
 - *Sexuality,*
 - *Pronouns.*

#6: Promote structural diversity

- **Be intentional about hiring and promoting diverse candidates**
 - *Set an inclusive committee charge*
 - *Train the committee about hidden bias (referring to candidates as a diversity hire or “the woman”)*
 - *Seek advice from CED about inclusive campus visits*
- **Support diverse candidates once they arrive**
 - *Develop a “multiple” mentors plan*
 - *Listen, validate, and respond to concerns*
 - *Beware of cultural taxation (Baez, 2000; Joseph & Hirshfield, 2011) in expectations for mentoring, advising, committee work*

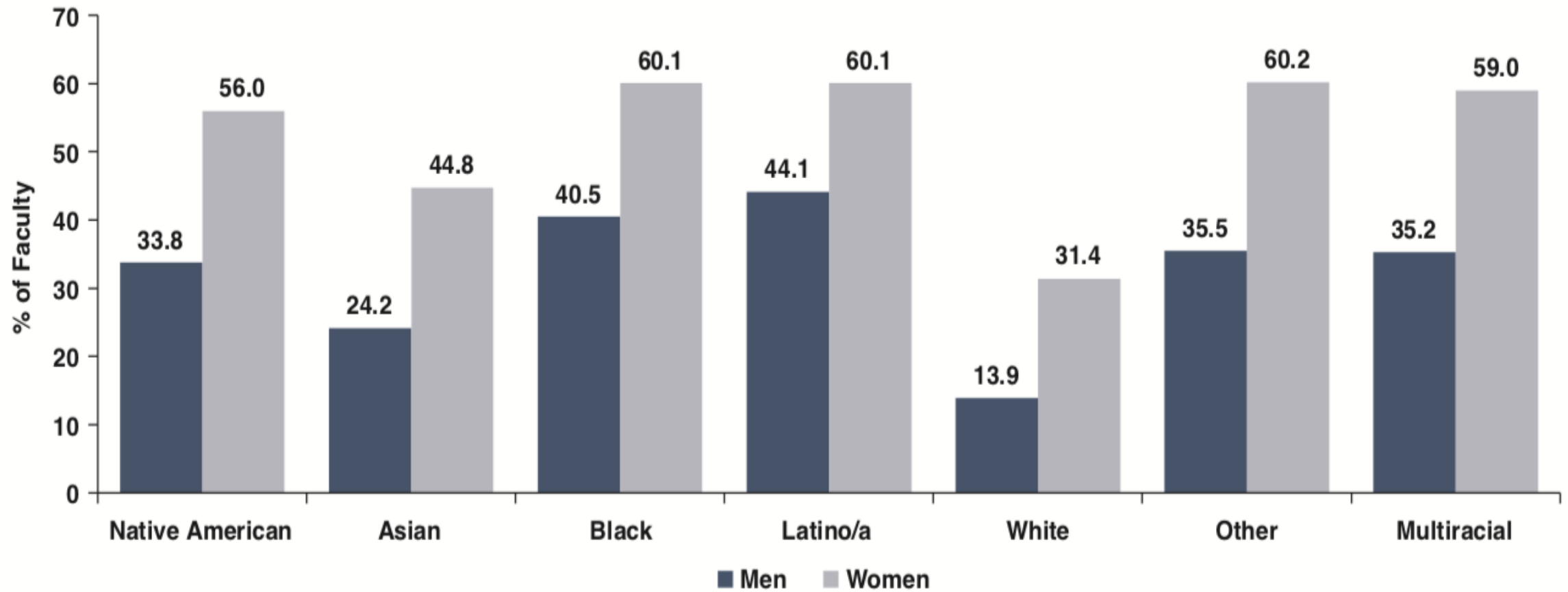
#7: Respond immediately to exclusion

■ Respond immediately to incidents of exclusion (comments, jokes, exclusion)

– *Silence = Acceptance*

– *Silence = Cultural tax and racial battle fatigue on faculty of color*

Figure 1. Discrimination as a Source of Stress, by Race/Ethnicity and Sex
(% Responding "Somewhat" or "Extensive")



#8: Support faculty and staff who take risks

Help colleagues navigate risks of anti-racist teaching/research/advising

- *Inherent risk in challenging traditional norms of teaching and doing research*
- *Labeled as not scholarly or rigorous enough*
- *Racial Battle Fatigue & Exhaustion: “It’s a lot of work to register people through that threshold of understanding something about Black history and culture.”
(Reddick et al., 2020)*
- *Context of 2021: Wave of “divisive concept” policies at state, college, and K-12 school level*

Intervene when

- *Faculty/staff resist, denigrate, or reject inclusion efforts of colleagues*
 - *Example: Implementing Inclusive Demographic Forms*
 - *“There has been quite a bit of resistance to asking patients about gender/sexuality/identity/expression, while I have included it in my skills lab it is not supported throughout the curriculum consistently”
(Professor)*

#8: Support faculty and staff who take risks

- Backlash for socially just teaching and research is a reality

- *Trolling & posting research and lectures on anti-inclusion websites/[news outlets](#).*

- *Flooding of emails & phone lines*

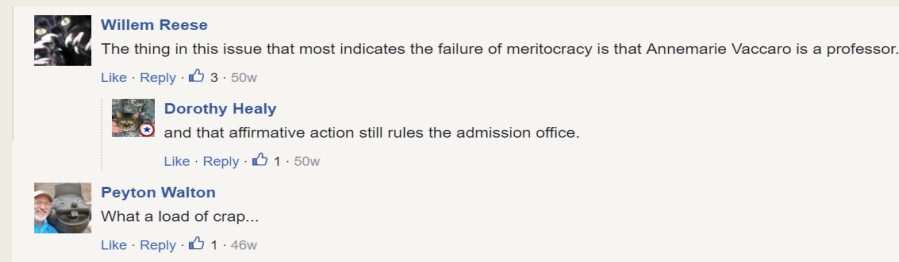
- *Lawsuits*

- *Job Loss*

- [Anti-harassment activist denied tenure](#)

- *Death Threats*

- [When I was trolled, my institution got it right \(Shaw, 2020\)](#)



#9: Foster Faculty & Staff Growth

- Offer training for all employees, including faculty, staff and student workers
 - *(Host: Inclusion for Faculty Workshops; [CED micro credentials](#), [Engaged Department](#), Safe Zone)*

■ URI Equity Workshops for Faculty

Workshop 1: Introduction to Equity

Workshop 2: Equity & Course Design

Workshop 3: Equity in Teaching



#10. Consider the 8 strategies in AAAAC

1. Infuse Anti-Racism, Social Justice, and DEI Perspectives in the Curriculum.
2. Expand Professional Development Focused on Anti-Black Racism and Racism Overall.
3. Transform Search and Hiring Processes. Prioritize Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention of Faculty and Staff of Color.
4. “Build Our Own” Diverse Graduate Programs in Selected Fields.
5. Develop College Plans for DEI and Appoint College Diversity Coordinators
6. Transform and Expand the Multicultural Faculty Fellows Program Into the Distinguished Multicultural Postdoctoral Faculty Fellows Program.
7. Acknowledge and Value Evidenced- Based Faculty Contributions to Anti-Racism and DEI.
8. Implement Annual College Diversity Progress and Accountability Reports.

Discussion

- Discuss 2 takeaways from this presentation
- Identify at least two specific strategies you can implement (short/long term) in your role

Summary

How can academic leaders foster equity, anti-racism and social justice?

1. Start with self
2. Set the tone for anti-racist work and social justice
3. Thoughtfully infuse equity and anti-racism into promotion and tenure
4. Lead efforts to transform the curriculum
5. Create inclusive physical and virtual environments
6. Promote structural diversity
7. Support faculty and staff who take risks
8. Respond immediately to exclusion
9. Host Professional Development (e.g., Faculty Equity Workshops, ATL)
10. Adopt Strategies in the *URI Agenda for Change*

- Questions?
- Thank you

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