Supporting the Development and Achievement of Students of Color

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May 29, 2003

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Learning about cultural differences doesn't eliminate differences. Cross-cultural communication helps one to understand that each individual's style is valid based on her/his individual experiences. This perspective allows for the possibility that *there is not just one right answer or view*.

Deborah Tannen
You Just Don't Understand

Cross-cultural understanding can allow the person who realizes that communication is not working to take the initiative to bridge gaps and produce more rewarding interactions.

Four approaches to developing cultural competence

- **Education**
- **Training**
- **Orientation**
- **Briefing**

Dr. Robert Kohls, SF State University

Students don't have interactions with institutions, they have encounters and interactions with individuals.

Institutions don't change.

Institutional/organizational change happens only when <u>individuals</u> take the initiative to <u>create change</u> in their areas of responsibility.

Peter Senge, MIT Center for Organizational Learning

The interactions students have in the academic and social domains are critical to their satisfaction, achievement and success.

Professor Vincent Tinto, Syracuse
Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition

Small encounters can and often do make a difference.

Transforming Students Through Validation

- Involvement for non-traditional students is not easy--adults, first generation, students of color.

- Success appears to be contingent on whether [faculty, staff] can validate students in an academic or interpersonal way.

- Even the most non-traditional students can be transformed into powerful learners through in- and out-of-class academic or interpersonal validation.

Dr. Laura Rendon, 1994

Real reasons students leave

What they expected college to be isn't what they find it to be.

Isolation and marginalization.

Feelings of marginality often occur when individuals take on new roles, especially when they are uncertain about what the new roles entail.

Marginality is the experience of not fitting in….

Nancy Schlossberg, 1989 Marginality and Mattering:
Key Issues in Building Community

"Not everything that is faced can be changed.

But nothing can be changed that is not faced."

James Baldwin, Author

Diversity is a reality of the real world.

Creating *Unum* from the *Pluribus* is a challenge that begins with noticing what we already know that we notice.

Many kinds of diversity

Seven categories of "otherness"

- Race or ethnicity
- Gender
- Religion
- Affectional Orientation
- Socioeconomic Status
- Age
- Physical and Mental Ability

Beverly D. Tatum, 1997

Categories of "otherness"

Beverly D. Tatum, 1997

"Otherness"

- **Race/ethnicity**
- **Gender**
- **Religion**
- **Affectional Orientation**
- **Socio-economic status**
- **Age**
- **Physical/Mental Ability**

Form of oppression

- **Racism/ethnocentrism**
- **Sexism**
- **Religious oppression**
- **Heterosexism**
- **Classism**
- **Ageism**
- **Ableism**

A Principle:

Human beings seek to economize on the energy required to make distinctions.

Example:

Most houseplants die because we treat them all the same.

Despite many similarities, plants have differing needs that must be met if they are to thrive.

Treating everyone the same may be equal treatment, but it may not be <u>equitable</u> treatment.

The World as 100 People

If the world's population was shrunk to 100 people…

52 would be women
48 men

70 people of color
30 white

57 Asian
21 European
14 Other Western Hemisphere
8 African

70 not Christian
30 Christian

89 Heterosexual
11 Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual

The World as 100 People

If the world's population was shrunk to 100 people…

6 US citizens would hold 59% of the total wealth of the world

80 living in substandard housing

70 illiterate

50 suffering from malnutrition

1 with a computer

1 with a college-level education

Projected US Population Growth (1995-2025)

White	17.8%
Black	45.8%
American Indian	50.6%
Hispanic/Latino	103%
Asian Pacific American	164%

Source: US Census Bureau

Access to higher education continues to be problematic for American Indian, Black, Latino, and many Asian Pacific American students. Even when they are admitted to college, attrition studies find them withdrawing as higher rates, and they are far less likely to achieve their educational goals than their white peers. The attrition rate of these students is not only a personal tragedy for them and for the communities that need their skills so desperately, it is also a significant loss of human capital for a nation that can ill afford to lose the vase potential represented in this growing proportion of its population.

"Academic Advising for Student Success & Retention."
Mario Rivas and Tom Brown, 1997

The unfamiliar "world of college" can be a daunting experience for new students, especially first-generation students, who are unable to draw on the experiences of parents or relatives.

PCCC Title V Grant
Rationale for Implementation Strategy

Only 27% of Native American students who enter college will ever earn a degree.

50% of Native American students withdraw from college before the end of their first year.

Students of Color

Most Black and Hispanic students are enrolled in high schools where they can't get prepared for college. [Their schools] don't have the necessary courses at the right level to get students prepared.

**Metropolitan Opportunity Project
University of Chicago, 1988**

Latino students are more likely to attend schools segregated by race and poverty, and there is strong evidence that Latino students have difficult hurdles to overcome in the quest to achieve quality education.

Latino Education: Status and Prospects
State of Hispanic America, 1998
National Council of La Raza

Between 1989 and 1995, there was an <u>increase</u> from 89.3% to 92.5% in White high school graduation rates.

During the same period, the percentage of Latinos completing high school _<u>declined</u>_ from 61% to 57.2%.

Latino Education: Status and Prospects

National Council of La Raza, October 1998

Hispanic girls [are] dropping out of school at a far greater rate than any other group in the U.S.

26% of Hispanic girls leave school without a diploma.

The only group that has a higher dropout rate is Hispanic boys

31% of Hispanic boys drop out

Troubling Label for Hispanics:
"Girls Most Likely to Drop Out"
New York Times, March 25, 2001

A recent study by the Economic Policy Institute found that despite increased academic achievement over the past 20 years, the disparity in wages paid to college-educated Blacks and whites has <u>widened</u>.

"*Minorities in Higher Education: A Status Report*" 1997 American Council on Education

Black Students Rates of Degree Completion by Ability Quartile
(Test Scores and high school grades)

	Completers	Departers
Lowest quartile	17.2	70.2
Second quartile	29.2	52.2
Third quartile	35.1	54.8
Highest quartile	26.2	61.3

Source: *Undergraduate completion and persistence at four-year colleges and universities: Detailed findings.*
National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities, 1990

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In spite of their high propensity toward college attendance, not all Asian Americans are high achievers in education. The popular stereotype of "model minority" has had an adverse impact on Asian American youth, especially those from poor and non-English speaking backgrounds.

Asians reflect both the highest and lowest levels of academic achievement….Hmong, Cambodians, and Pacific Islanders have some of the <u>lowest</u> academic achievement and high school graduation rates, while Chinese and Japanese have some of the highest.

Higher Education Issues in the Asian American Community

Suzuki, 1994

All ethnic groups in this nation are an aggregate of many distinct subgroups.

Diversity in Diversity: Who's "Italian"?

- **Bolognese**
- **Milanese**
- **Luchesse**
- **Siciliano**
- **Florentine**
- **Venetian**

As the result of intermarriage, ethnicity has become less an issue for many Whites in America.

Beverly Tatum
Mount Holyoke College

Asian Pacific American Groups

Asian Indian Chinese   Filipino   Guamanian
Hawaiian Hmong   Japanese Korean
     Laotian   Pakistani Samoan   Thai
          Vietnamese

Philippines: **7000 islands**
                     100 languages

Principle: *Diversity in Diversity*

Diversity in Diversity: Latino/Hispanic

Twenty Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Often "Latino" is used in contrast to others who are not Spanish speaking.

Often identify based on country of origin (e.g., Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba).

Diversity in Diversity: American Indian

545 Tribal groups recognized by the US government.

250+ languages spoken.

Many identify as members of a specific tribal group and may not consider members of other groups as "Indians."

Wells, 1989

Diversity in Diversity: Black

Is the "Black" student US born, or from a Haitian, West Indian, or African immigrant family?

As with all groups, it is important to make distinctions based on socio-economic class, gender, and other elements.

Critical Issues for Students of Color

- **Difference between college and previous educational settings**
- **"Minority" for the first time**
- **Lack of mentors and role models**
- **Issues of identity development**

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Many students of color come to college without having had to confront issues of race in their lives.

"I knew this college would be white, I just didn't think it would be *this* white!"

First-year Latina student

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Perhaps the greatest inequity on our nation's campuses is the <u>unequal</u> ability students have to get others interested in them.

Professor Robert Keegan

Harvard University

The Evolving Self, 1983

African American students are more likely to find faculty members remote, discouraging, and unsympathetic.

Exploring Distinctions in Types of Faculty Interactions Among Black, Latino/a, and White College Students. Cole and Anaya, 2001.

Critical Issues for Students of Color

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It is important to have some understanding of student development because a student's personal development has a direct bearing on whether s/he is ready to pursue academic and personal goals.

Howard K. Schein
Giving Advice to Students, 1987

Failure to understand students' ethnic and racial identity development can lead to inappropriate and ineffective responses on campus.

Hardiman and Jackson, 1992

Student development is far too important to be viewed only as a role for student affairs professionals.

Evans, Forney, Guido-DeBrito, 1998

Collaborative efforts [with] faculty are necessary to provide developmental programs and services.

Chickering and Reisser, 1993

I went to school with kids I grew up with. They always accepted me for who I was and the fact that I'm Asian didn't ever really come up. Now, I'm in college and I'm a "minority student," and people have all kinds of preconceived ideas about who I am. They don't know even know the difference between a Filipino, a Chinese, or a Korean. I find myself wanting to know more about my ethnicity and sometimes I get angry at how I'm being treated.

First-year Asian American woman

Adolescents of color are more likely to be actively engaged in an exploration of their racial or ethnic identity/identities than are White adolescents.

Search for Identity

Who am I?

Who will I become?

What does it mean to be…..
   Black?
   Latino/Hispanic?
   Asian?
   Bi-racial/Multi-racial?

Minority Identity Development A Stage Model

- Pre-encounter/Conformity
- Encounter/Dissonance
- Immersion/Resistance
- Emersion/Introspection
- Internalization/Commitment

(Cross, 1971; Atkinson, Morten, and Sue, 1983)

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- **Lack of mentors and role models**
- **Issues of identity development**
- **Undermining ability attributions (self and others--faculty, staff, peers)**

Many non-traditional students want their doubts erased about their being capable of learning….

This is especially true for first generation students, Hispanic and African American students….

Laura Rendon, 1994

Hope a better predictor of first semester college grades than SAT scores.

University of Kansas study

HOPE...

believing you have the will and the way to accomplish your goals, whatever they may be.

Optimism a better predictor of first-year college grades than SAT scores or high school grades.

University of Pennsylvania study

OPTIMISM…

Having a strong expectation that things will turn out all right, despite setbacks and frustrations.

What is missing in tests of ability is motivation. What you need to know about someone is whether s/he will keep going when things get frustrating.

Achievement is not just a function of talent, but also of the capacity to stand defeat.

Emotional Intelligence
Daniel Goleman, 1995

The Pomp of Graduation After Overcoming Difficult Circumstances
New York Times, June 14, 2000

Knowing that I have confronted and overcome these obstacles, I now realize how powerful I am. I an no longer content with getting my bachelor's degree. I want my Ph.D.

Mara Chavez-Diaz

McClymond's HS, Oakland, CA

My first day, I looked around this beautiful, lush, rich campus and thought, "what the hell am I doing here? It's only a matter of time before they realize that I'm not one of them. I am not rich. I don't have a loving family to go home to on holidays. [Only] foster parents who don't want me, a stepdad in prison, and a dead mother...

And, I am not smart. I scored 580 on my SATs…."

Professor Tammy Ramos
        BA and BS, St. Mary's College of California JD, Notre Dame Law School

The Pomp of Graduation After Overcoming Difficult Circumstances
New York Times, June 14, 2000

The [students] who make it under a variety of circumstances have key features in common—most notably relationships with confident, competent adults who believe in them.

Ann S. Masten, University of Minnesota

Success or Failure:
A Shared Responsibility

When educators place the blame for minority students' poor achievement on factors for which the school cannot be held responsible, such as innate lack of ability, or inappropriate cognitive style, then there is little perceived need for major alterations in the organization.

Dennis McInerney

MacArthur Institute of Higher Education

1983

Nearly 30% of all school dropouts in America would test as gifted.

D. Fetterman
Stanford University
***Wasted Genius*, 1990**

Their enrollment rate clearly demonstrates the high value Latinos place on higher education. Most of the Latino achievement gap is the result of what happens <u>after</u> they begin postsecondary studies.

Latinos in Higher Education:
Many Enroll, Too Few Graduate
PEW Charitable Trust, 2002

Studies have shown that faculty members often have low expectations from minority students, contributing to poor academic performance; and majority students usually mimic the attitudes of faculty, thus creating an overall climate of "isolation".

Morrison and Williams, 1993

Dispositional Barriers

- **Undermining attributions**
- **Ego involvement**
- **Reluctance to seek assistance**

Attribution Theory

<u>How</u> students perceive the causes of their prior successes or failures is the most likely determinant in choosing or not choosing to work on a particular task, and for deciding how long to persist once the work begins.

Bernard Weiner
***Achievement Motivation and Attribution Theory*, 1974**

Academic Achievement Attributions

- **Ability**

- **Time and Effort**

- **Task Difficulty**

- **Luck**

Bernard Weiner, 1972, 1977

Ability or Effort?

"When people who are not smart study, they do not do very well."

About age 13, the importance of effort in success is replaced by the conviction that ability alone is a necessary condition for success and lack of ability is a sufficient explanation for failure.

Harari and Covington, 1981

Ability or Effort?

By the time students reach high school, they generally believe that ability is a relatively fixed, unchangeable capacity.

British Journal of Developmental Psychology 1983

Power of Attributions

The causes to which students attribute their successes and failures has an important impact on subsequent performance.

Jeff Hooper and Ray Hammond
"Rumors of Inferiority"
New Republic, 1985

Achievement behavior in schools can best be understood in terms of students' attempts to maintain a positive self-image. For many students, expending effort is scary because a combination of effort and failure implies low ability.

Martin Covington

***The Will to Learn,* 1998**

Students who are confident of doing well [and fail] tend to attribute their failure to inadequate effort. The likely response to another similar encounter is to work harder.

Students who come to a task expecting to fail, [however], attribute their failure to a lack of ability.

Once a student concludes that "I don't have what it takes," they are not likely to approach a similar task with great vigor.

Jeff Hooper and Ray Hammond
"Rumors of Inferiority"
***New Republic*, 1985**

At the root of the problem [of the achievement gap] is the an enduring belief that there is a widely varying and immutable intelligence among [students]. The American education establishment remains unwilling to internalize the idea that all students can learn at high levels—especially mathematics and science, that academic achievement ids more a function of effective effort than genetics.

No amount of spending, curriculum reform, national testing, or learning technology will solve our education problem as long as teachers believe that the majority of students can't learn.

Access Denied: Race, Ethnicity, and the Scientific Enterprise
Campbell, Denes, and Morrison, 2000
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Much of what can go wrong with achievement—e.g., irrational goal setting, overweening anxiety—is the product of *ego involvement* brought on by *normative comparisons to others*.

Nichols, 1978, 1984

EGO INVOLVEMENT

- **Undermining negative beliefs about lack of ability (shame/doubt)**
- **Interpreting task difficulty as too high/hard (helpless/hopeless)**
- **Comparing self to an idealized reference group (peers, classmates, siblings)**

CHANGE/REFRAME TO

TASK INVOLVEMENT

Reframe ability to consider background/level of preparation

Alter explanations for failure from low ability to inadequate effort and/or ineffective strategies

Present strategy as a resource not a capacity

Strategy Attributions

Strategy attributions provide less secure students with non-ability explanations for performance, thereby freeing them to work harder.

Strategy training also appears to increase intellectual self-confidence.

0 – 100% Competence Advising Method

1. **Review student's academic record and learning history, looking for strengths and weaknesses.**

2. **Help student to define personal, educational, and career goals and skills needed to achieve these goals.**

3. **Assess the student's skill level in areas identified as essential to achievement (0-100%)**

Mario Rivas, 1988, 1990

0 – 100% Competence Advising Method

4. **Establish competency level student will seek to achieve (0-100%).**

5. **Identify curricular, co-curricular, experiential, and community learning experiences that will enable student to develop skills.**

6. **Review and evaluate progress toward goal achievement and skills development.**

Mario Rivas,1988, 1990

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Seeking Help = Incompetence

In the minds of young people, seeking help implies incompetence. [They] have confused *ignorance* – for which help seeking is but one cure – with *stupidity*, with the likelihood that they will remain both ignorant *and* stupid.

Help seeking as an indicator of low ability is especially strong when students are working for extrinsic payoffs like praise or grades compared to those times when they are pursuing learning for no other reason than to satisfy curiosity.

Newman, 1990; Nelson-LeGall, 1985

20% of RIT students indicate that they asked a teacher for advice after class in high school.

2002 RIT First-Year Survey

Quality interaction with faculty seems to be more important that any other single college factor in determining minority student persistence.

Levin and Levin
University of Wisconsin
1991

There appears to be a correlation between informal contact with faculty and both student confidence and student persistence.

Sax, 1994; Pascarella, 1980

Failure to establish personal relationships with faculty represents a major loss to women and all students whose high school teachers gave them considerable personal attention and who fostered their potential.

Seymour and Hewitt, 1997

Intervention programs that depend on student-initiated contacts tend not to be used advantageously by at-risk students.

Three Keys to Influence

Attractiveness

Expertness

Trustworthiness

Goethe

Knowing is not enough

We must APPLY.

Willing is not enough

We must DO.

SUCCESS=

Commitment

+

Determination

+

<u>HARD WORK</u>
Time

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