

Bridging the Divide: Faculty Engagement and Students' Sense of Belonging through Anti-Racism Work

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Agenda

I. Introduction

II. Institutional Policy Development

III. Faculty Engagement in Curricular Spaces

IV. Employee Retention

V. Recommendations

Who we are and why we are here...

We are a group of diverse scholar activists from colleges and universities across the state of Colorado. United by our shared commitment to equity and social justice, our work seeks to dismantle structural barriers that limit minoritized students from accessing and persisting in higher education and to reimagine and transform policies and practices in order to be more inclusive for all students and faculty.

In working towards these goals we believe that this work must be grounded in anti-racism, justice, and an unwavering commitment to those who have been historically excluded. We recognize that this work is dynamic, complex, and ongoing, and call for immediate and continued action to undo the long history of exclusion and oppression that has precluded diverse students from accessing and persisting in higher education.

“It is dangerous to believe the cure for racism and white supremacy is contained in law and policy alone. Their effectiveness is closely linked to how they are interpreted and implemented.”

- Dr. Lori Patton, 2016

Institutional Policy Development & Decision Making

Policy Development

- Disproportionate impact
- Discernment around language
- Equity-minded focus

Decision Making

- Exploitation and commodification of decisions (Taylor, 2020)

Challenges for Faculty & Staff of Color

- **Tokenism** (Loveless Morris & Reid, 2018)
 - Additional work with no additional compensation (Baez, 2000)
 - Multiple roles (mentors, advocate, committees, etc.)
 - Sense of representation
- **Lack of Mentorship & Growth Opportunities**
 - Collaboration and mentor groups
- **Hiring Practices & Bias** (Kayes & Singley, 2010)
 - Degree Requirements without continuing education support
 - More Degree = Better Quality Mentality
- **Low Sense of Belonging & Inclusivity** (Flaherty, 2021)

Faculty Engagement

Anti-Racism

- Faculty of color should not be the only ones carrying the burden of racism.
- Institutions should provide the necessary resources to educate all faculty and staff about the burden of racism.



Faculty Engagement

Belonging

- Students of color being grouped together is helpful, but not when you have to interact with the rest of the campus.
- Faculty of color interacting and supporting students of color is wonderful, but all staff should be helping to support them.



Recommendations: Our Call to Action

- We need to move beyond ideation and implement action for equitable change
- Consider the roles of faculty and staff for their accountability in engaging with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work
- Everyone must carry the burden of racism, not just staff, faculty, and students of color.
- We must consistently and intentionally interrogate decision making and policy development practices.
- CRT - alex will elaborate

Selected References

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