Building an Inclusive and Diverse Institution of Higher Education

Changing Programs, Policies and Practices
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In Memory of Maya Angelou

1928 - 2014
Maya Angelou
1928-2014

Still I Rise

“You may write me down in history
With your bitter, twisted lies,
You may tread me in the very dirt
But still, like dust, I'll rise.”

“You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise.”
The Campus Climate: Hostile, Negating and Invalidating

Students, staff and faculty from marginalized groups report:

- experiencing the campus climate as isolating, alienating, extremely stressful, risky and invalidating (Harlow, 2003; Stanley, 2006; Turner, Gonzalez & Wood, 2008);

- often being “the only one” that leads to feelings of isolation and loneliness (Alexander & Moore, 2008);

- lacking mentors who possess knowledge of the experiences of marginalized groups (Stanley, 2006);

- having their intelligence, competence and scholarship devalued and considered illegitimate (Guzman, Trevino, Lubuguin, & Aryan, 2010);

- having their racial, gender or other group identities assailed (Harlow, 2003);

- experiencing elevated levels of stress and distress (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2008);

- being subjected to biased criteria for graduation, promotion and tenure decisions (Fenelon, 2003), and

- having many more White students and professors question their qualifications or credentials (Harlow, 2003).
A MULTIDIMENSIONAL MODEL FOR DEVELOPING CULTURAL COMPETENCE

SOCIETAL

ORGANIZATIONAL

PROFESSIONAL CULTURE BOUND

INDIVIDUAL
- ATTITUDES
- BELIEFS
- EMOTIONS
- BEHAVIORS
- DISCRIMINATION

EUROAMERICAN HISTORICAL BIAS

MONOCULTURAL STRUCTURES

ETHICAL CODES OF CONDUCT

MONOCULTURAL PRACTICES

DEFINITION OF PSYCHOLOGY

BIASES

MONOCULTURAL PROGRAMS

POWER TO DEFINE REALITY

MONOCULTURAL POLICIES

ETHOCENTRIC MONOCULTURALISM
A Multicultural University Is....

- Genuinely committed (action as well as words) to diverse representation throughout its organization and at all levels.

- Sensitive to maintaining an open, supportive, and responsive environment.

- Working toward and purposefully including elements of diverse cultures in its ongoing operations (organizational policies and practices are carefully monitored to the goals of multiculturalism).

- Authentic in responding to issues confronting it (commitment to changing policies and practices that block cultural diversity).
1. Culturally competent and inclusive universities are ones which evidence multicultural commitment from the very top levels.

Diversity implementation is most effective when strong leadership is exerted on behalf of multiculturalism. Faculty, staff, and students are most likely to watch the actions (not just words) of those in leadership positions.

For higher education, it may be the Board of Trustees, Provost, Chancellor, President, Dean, or Chair of the Department.
2. Culturally competent and inclusive universities have a written policy, mission or vision statement which frames the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity into a meaningful operational definition. This allows an organization to monitor its progress toward becoming more multicultural.

The multicultural statement cannot be simply an “add on” but must be stated in such as manner as to infuse the concepts throughout its operations, structures and policies. Otherwise, such statements must serve real not just cosmetic features.
CULTURALLY COMPETENT UNIVERSITIES

3. Culturally competent and inclusive universities have developed a multicultural and diversity action plan with clear objectives and timelines.

The existence of multicultural units or committees for discussion and exploration is not enough unless expected actions are the outcome.

Thus, universities must develop action plans which directly outline specific time frames for implementation of multicultural goals.
4. Culturally competent and inclusive universities have created a superordinate or oversight team/group which is empowered to assess, develop and monitor the organization's development with respect to the goals of multiculturalism.

- Such groups have the power to operate rather independently and/or share an equal status relationship with other units in the organization.

- It must have the ability to influence, formulate and implement multicultural initiatives.
5. Culturally competent and inclusive universities actively solicit feedback from employees related to issues of race, culture, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.

Feedback from underrepresented faculty, staff, and student groups provide a rich source of information (campus climate issues, educational policies and practices, etc.) that may prove useful in their movement toward valuing multiculturalism.

Such organizations send a strong message to its workers and consumers about the importance they place on identifying their needs and concerns; it also is a powerful statement of organizational inclusion.
6. Culturally competent and inclusive universities build multicultural accountability into the system.

Certain divisions, departments and individuals must be held responsible for achieving the goals of diversity and multiculturalism.

For example, Deans and Chairs of institutions of higher education might be held responsible for recruiting, retaining, and promoting minorities and women within their own units.

Professors might be held accountable for incorporating diversity into their curriculum; recognize the need for alternative teaching styles; and be unafraid to address topics likely to create difficult dialogues in the classroom (race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).
7. Culturally competent and inclusive universities infuse multiculturalism into evaluation criteria used for hiring and promotion of faculty administrators and staff.

For example, promotion and tenure criteria at a university considers good teaching to entail knowledge, sensitivities and skills related to multicultural competence in all courses taught, not just those designated as “cultural” in nature.

By incorporating multicultural competence into performance evaluations, the issue of race and gender would be minimized because EuroAmericans with multicultural competence would also be valued.
8. Culturally competent and inclusive universities recognize that mentoring and support networks for marginalized faculty and staff are vital for success and that the presence of an “the old boy’s network” may adversely impact them.

In the past, it was predominantly White males who enjoyed both formal and informal mentoring and support networks which either shut out people of color and women, or did little to provide them with such important help.
CULTURALLY COMPETENT UNIVERSITIES


- They recognize that being a culturally different individual in a primarily monocultural work situation can deplete energy, alienate and discourage the minority employee; thereby reducing work productivity.

- Clustering that allows for support and nourishment may ultimately lead to greater cross cultural interactions in the long term.
10. Culturally competent and inclusive universities have a systematic and long-term commitment to educate the entire workforce concerning diversity issues, to address barriers which block multiculturalism and to increase the sensitivity of workers.

In-service multicultural training should be an intimate part of the organizations activities. This includes not only employees at the lower levels of employment, but should include the entire workforce up through the administration to include the chairs, deans, chancellors/provosts and president.
11. Culturally competent and inclusive universities are viewed as both part of and a reflection of the wider community.

No organization exists apart from the wider community or society. Community linkage are very important to aid in the recruitment, retention and promotion of underrepresented employees.
MULTICULTURAL INFUSION STRATEGY

Making Organizations Culturally Responsive
1. Identify the core values related to multiculturalism/diversity of the institution. What is the mission statement of the organization? How does it treat diversity and multicultural issues? Does it need to be rewritten to be more inclusive?
2. Develop a working definition of multiculturalism and diversity acceptable to the organization.

3. Translate the definition so it is manifested in all aspects of the mission, curriculum, campus environment and among the faculty, staff and students.
Summary of Strategies

4. Operationalize the meaning of multiculturalism into minimal and aspirational standards.

5. Outline strategies of attaining them.
Summary of Strategies

6. Commit resources, especially financial ones to implement plans.

7. Institutionalize them into the organization’s programs, policies, structures and practices.
Multicultural Implementation Plan (Focus)

1. Faculty and student preparation.
2. Curriculum issues.
3. Diversity group representation.
4. Campus climate.
5. Teaching/learning styles/issues.
6. Support services.
7. Programs, policies and practices.
Multicultural Implementation Plan (Process)

1. Systematically assess the multicultural preparation of students from the time they enter your schools until they graduate.

2. Assess and encourage administrators, faculty, and stuff in multicultural development.
Multicultural Implementation Plan (Process)

3. Analyze and make suggestions regarding the infusion of multicultural content into coursework.

4. Analyze, improve and monitor the campus climate as to issues of diversity, race relations and multiculturalism.
Multicultural Implementation Plan (Process)

5. Conduct an institutional audit of the school district, college, university or organization’s policies, practices and structures as to whether they enhance or negate movement toward becoming a multicultural entity.
Developing Multicultural Teaching Competence

Two aspects of multiculturalism are related to faculty development:

- First, learning opportunities such as how to include multicultural content into class material, how to facilitate difficult dialogues in the classroom, and how to become increasingly multicultural in outlook and practice are important.
Developing Multicultural Teaching Competence

Second, formal means of assessing and monitoring the development of multicultural competence in the faculty need to be developed. Some ideas include:

- (a) how well the teacher has integrated multiculturalism into the content of the course,
- (b) how well they are able to facilitate multicultural discussions in class, and
- (c) their overall awareness, knowledge and skills on the topic.
Multicultural Curriculum Development

Four approaches have been identified:

1. Separate Course Model – involves adding a single multicultural course to the existing curriculum.

2. Area of Concentration Model – includes a core of courses related to multicultural topics.
Multicultural Curriculum Development

3. Interdisciplinary Model – involves taking cultural-focused courses outside one’s program in such disciplines as anthropology, sociology, economics, and ethnic studies.

4. Integration Model – Infuses multicultural issues into all courses and training experiences.
Strategies for Faculty/Curriculum Development

1. Faculty monitoring and evaluation for multicultural competence and a systematic evaluation of course outlines would aid in this endeavor.

2. Formation of faculty working committees divided along course content for specific areas (theories, human development, diagnosis, treatment, etc.) would be charged with working on protocols (readings, content, activities, resources, etc.) which infuse multiculturalism into the classes and experiences of students.
3. Formation of forums or focus groups that involve students, faculty, and staff from marginalized groups in providing feedback about experiences in classes with respect to multicultural adequacy, barriers they encounter and suggestions of how to make the classroom/climate more multiculturally meaningful.
4. Many other institutions have wrestled with integrating multicultural content into regular course work. Compiling data and information on what they have done might prove valuable. Considering other protocols of multicultural infusion saves time by not “reinventing the wheel”.

Moving to a multicultural educational institution is helped immensely by the diversity present in the site. Diversity should be encouraged in the student population, staff, faculty, and administration.

Statistics regarding people of color and other group representation should be constantly updated and the organization should attempt to achieve some representational standard as a measure of multicultural commitment.
Creating a Respectful Campus Climate and Support Services

- Campus climates are often invalidating ones for students and faculty of color.

- Support services sensitive to the “diversity experience” are crucial to maximize learning and increase retention and graduation rates.

- A Multicultural Affairs Committee or some other internal mechanism empowered to supply leadership and support to the institution’s program is often needed.
Institutional Audit of Programs, Policies, and Practices

Multicultural organizational development (MOD) requires audit of organizational culture. Such a culture is oftentimes monocultural but communicate to administrators, faculty, staff, and students the appropriate ways to perceive, think, and feel.

MOD attempts to change, refine, instill or create new policies, programs, practices and structures which are multicultural.

Moving the organization from a monocultural to a multicultural entity becomes the objective.
Institutional Audit of Programs, Policies, and Practices

GOALS:

1. Understand how educational culture of the school enhances or negates the development of multicultural goals.

2. Find/Develop assessment tool to conduct an audit.

3. A systemic analysis of the organization needs to be undertaken: Advising/admissions systems; policies related to hiring, retention and promotion of faculty; staff/faculty, student/faculty, faculty/administration relations, etc.