Inclusive Excellence, Intercultural intelligence, and the Status of Diversity Education

Whitworth University
Inclusive University Classroom Lecture
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Historical background

• W.E.B. DuBois asserted that:
  • “The world problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line—”

• He was convinced that colleges and universities have a duty to play a leadership role in redressing inequities by leading change as teachers, researchers, activists, and public intellectuals.
Historical Background

- DuBois’s vision has yet to be realized
- The problem of the color line has persisted
Historical background

- American Society that is deeply divided

- This divisiveness has become
  - deeply personal
  - private homes and families.

- This divisiveness threatens the very nature of our democracy.
Historical Background

• Struggle for racial equity (Christopher, 2016)
  • young activists
  • college student
  • higher education institutions

• Universities were the backbone of the civil rights movement

• Community Activists
  • Cherokee activist Rebecca Adamson
  • Cesar Chavez & Dolores Huerta
Historical Background

Although significant progress has been made...

• Laws and court rulings have not changed minds and hearts
• Laws and courts have not brought racial healing to communities
• Nor have they jettisoned the belief in a hierarchy of human value that discriminates based on skin color
• Racism still affects children, families, and communities
• Residential segregation must be addressed and reversed – to eliminate school segregation

• Safety and crime control are of paramount importance
• As well as the epidemic of racialized mass incarceration
Current Status

• Critical thinkers and strategic leaders
  • grounding them in an inclusive narrative (Christopher, 2016)

• There is a slow and reluctant integration of college campuses across the South (Peter Wallenstein, 2015)

• The United States needs transformation; needs to develop a new national narrative rooted in the belief in the equal humanity of all Americans.
Current Status

• AAC&U and the Kellogg Foundation made an urgent call to action:

• To make explicit the connections between the work of higher education in promoting racial and social justice and the lives of those in surrounding communities and across the country.
Current Status (from McNair & Veras, Peer Review, 2017)

• Focus on the Equity imperative in Higher Education

• Step Up and Lead for Equity: What Higher Education Can Do to Reverse Our Deepening Divides
  • Highlighted the continuing inequities in educational outcomes

AACU
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Reversing our Divides

• Presented evidence:
  • US Students will very soon be majority students of color.

• Deep Economy Gaps Persist for Latinos and African Americans

• Completing College Improves Economic Mobility
Reversing our Divides

- Too few Low-Income Students Complete College
- Too few Students of Color Complete College
- Inequities in College Readiness
- Inequities in Education Opportunities in College
Current Status (from McNair & Veras, Peer Review, 2017)

- AAC&U initiative focuses on addressing equity gaps through the following objectives:
  - Increase access to an participation in high-impact practices
  - Increase completion, retention, and graduation rates for low income students, first generation students, adult learners, and minority students.
  - Increase achievement of learning outcomes for underserved students using direct assessment measures (including VALUE Rubrics)
  - Increase student awareness and understanding of the value of guided learning pathways that incorporate HIPS for workforce preparation and engaged citizenship
Current Status  (from McNair & Veras, Peer Review, 2017)

• Institutions are encouraged to address the following questions:
  • How can we build capacity for educators to ask and respond to questions about equity that can lead to campus change?
  • How can we move the dialogue about student learning and success from deficit-minded approaches to asset-based approaches?
  • How do we motivate faculty and staff to address equity as intrinsic to higher education’s mission?
  • What does it mean to be an equity-minded practitioner? What does it mean to have an equity-minded pedagogy?

• We need clarity in language and goals, intentionality and accountability
Current Status (from McNair & Veras, Peer Review, 2017)

- We need to ask ourselves:
  - How are equity and excellence defined at our institution?
  - How does our campus define and model inclusion?
  - Who is currently excluded from achieving excellence?
  - How do we engage cultural differences through civil discourse?
  - How do we strengthen our democracy while respecting our diversity?
Current Status (from McNair & Veras, Peer Review, 2017)

- “Making excellence inclusive is thus an active process through which colleges and universities achieve excellence in learning, teaching, student development, institutional functioning, and engagement in local and global communities”

- “The action of making excellence inclusive requires that we uncover inequities in student success, identify effective educational practices, and embed such practices systematically for sustained institutional change”
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

• To continue to grow our democracy, inequities must be addressed.

• A focus on diversity education and inclusion is critical in addressing the inequities.
  • Incorporation of diverse voices in curriculum
  • Inclusive pedagogy

• We must find ways to engage with difference in more intelligent and nuanced ways, and train our minds to entertain more complex views of the world.
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

It is a schema that provides an alternative framework for understanding the causes of equity gaps in outcomes and the action needed to close them.

1. Student Outcomes and disparities
2. Individual students not responsible for unequal outcomes
3. Respect for aspirations and struggles of students
4. Belief in fairness when allocating resources
5. Recognition of need to deconstruct structures, policies, norms and values assumed to be race neutral
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

- It encompasses: (Bensimon & Malcom, 2012)
  - Race conscious
  - Institutionally focused
  - Evidence based
  - Systemically aware
  - Action oriented

- Practitioners should become more equity-minded and embed equity-mindedness in practices and policies across the institution
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

Equity-Minded Practitioners, Practices and Polices are

• Race-Conscious in an Affirmative Sense
  • Notice racial inequities in educational outcomes and experiences
  • Need to have open discussions of role that race and racism play in perpetuation of educational inequities
• Requires acknowledging that race and class are different
• Eliminating race-based inequities will require a different approach from class based inequities
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

- Reflect an Awareness of and Responsiveness to the Systemic Nature of Racial/Ethnic Inequities
  - Understand structural inequalities
  - Our nation’s schools are more segregated than before Brown vs Board decision
  - Discrimination in employment, lending, voting contribute to racial inequalities
  - Systemic, racial/ethnic inequities were created over time through policy and entrenched racism
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

• View Inequities as problems of Practice and Feel a Personal and Institutional Responsibility to Address them
  • Emphasizes institutional responsibility to create equity and directs practitioners to focus on what they can do to close equity gaps.
  • Instead of focusing on “fixing” students, practitioners should reassess their practices and consider how they can be remediated to achieve institutional goals
• Focus on the circumstances that lead to the problems rather than only on weaknesses of students
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

- Rely on Evidence to Guide their Practice
  - Must rely on evidence to understand the practice- and policy related factors that contribute to inequities experienced by the students
  - Use inquiry to gather evidence about the problem and to carefully examine existing practices to determine how they may be related to inequities
  - Practitioners question their assumptions about students, recognize how stereotypes and implicit biases may harm minority students and use disaggregated quantitative data and qualitative inquiry findings to guide their practice.
Equity-mindedness (Malcom-Piqueux & Bensimon, Peer Review, 2017)

- Take Action to Eliminate Educational Inequities
  - Practitioners must be action oriented
  - Practitioners raise awareness or racial inequities in outcomes
  - Practitioners build understanding of the connection between inequitable outcomes and systemic inequalities
  - Action is based on evidence and data.
Engaging our differences

**What is Intergroup Dialogue?**

...a process for exploring identity, social justice, and communication across differences and within community. IGD externalizes the internalized by breaking the silences created by power/voice, oppression, privilege, trauma and fear.
What is Intergroup Dialogue?

- **Process**: Sustained, structured & focused
- **Dialogue Guidelines**: Group Cohesion
- **Communication Skills Training**
- **Complexity**: Identity, history, social relations
- **Purpose**: Understanding, Not Agreement
- **Conflict & Feelings Externalized**
- **Commitment to Justice**: Being an Ally
What is Intergroup Dialogue?

5 Stages of Intergroup Dialogue Process

[Handout]

Setting Environment for Dialogue

Building Alliances & Working for Justice

Developing Communication Skills

Embracing Conflict, Emotions and Triggers

Exploring Identity and Relationships

Adapted from The National Intergroup Dialogue Institute/The Program on Intergroup Relations/University of Michigan
Stage 1: Setting the Environment

**PEOPLE:** Understanding and connecting with another person is more important than task (agreement or problem-solving)

**PROCESS:** Structured, focused and founded on communication skill development

**COMPLEXITY:** Incorporates identities, systemic issues of oppression, history, multiple truths
Dialogue Characteristics

- Exploring others’ Stories
- Understanding Social Identities
- Identifying *Mutual Contributions* to Problems

- Engaging Conflict
- Challenging Dominant Ideology
- Stepping Up to be an Ally for Social Justice
How do we transcend *debate* to find the reconciling force in *dialogue*?

*Focus on understanding the needs and values of others.*
How do we transcend *debate* to find the reconciling force in *dialogue*?

Take winning off the table.
Take agreement off the table.
*Find the 3*\textsuperscript{rd} *Path*...
Stage 1: Setting the Environment

IGD Three Components Model

Cognitive: Readings/Writing

Affective: Dialogue/Stories/Journal Reflections

Experiential: Activities/Simulations
Stage 1: Setting the Environment

Guidelines for Safe Dialogue [Handout]

Recognize and Challenge Power of Voice
Maintain Confidentiality
Embrace Vulnerability
Respect Dignity and Experience of Others
Ubuntu: Recognize Interconnectedness
Appreciate Emotional Expression

Practice Trustworthiness:
Trust your story will be believed. Trust others by believing their story...
Stage 1: Setting the Environment

Building Trust

- To share a story is to **trust** that others will listen and believe.
- What happens if our story is not believed?
- How do we feel when we ourselves are not heard? Not seen?
- What happens when you don’t see yourself in someone else’s story?

Listening to a story is an **act of love** and the window to the soul of another.
Stage 2: Developing Communication Skills -- Speaking

**Speaking**

- Speaking concisely (also related to questions)
- Speaking to specifics (also related to validation)
- *Speaking from own experience*

Baal Shem Tov: Founder of Hasidic Judaism
Stage 2: Developing Communication Skills - Questioning

- Ask Essential Questions
- Ask Single Questions – clear and concise
- Ask Open-Ended Questions (not questions of fact)
- Ask with Open Heart and Intent to Understand

GOOD QUESTIONS… communicate interest and validation and reflect good listening and desire for understanding.
Stage 2: Developing Communication Skills – Listening

- Mindfulness & Listening
- Double-listening in Dialogue:
  - listening with both heart and head,
  - with perspective-taking and multipartiality,
  - attending to verbals and nonverbals
  - as well as what is said and not said
Validation

- Validate = confirm, verify, authenticate verbally or nonverbally
- Invalidate = negate, dismiss, weaken, nullify, or reject
- Society of external validation

Methods of Validation:
- Nonverbal (circle back to trust)
- Questions, Listening & Feelings as Validation (circle back to trust)

Stage 2: Developing Communication Skills – Validating
Stage 2: Developing Communication Skills

- Learn to express and recognize emotions
- Your own and those of others
Stage 3: Social Identities -- LANGUAGE

The Power of Narratives: Our Dominant Culture Heritage

Identities are...
constituted by narratives
damaged by narratives

Identities can be...
repaired through narratives

[Lindemann Nelson, 2001]
Stage 3: Social Identities -- Assumptions

The Power of Assumptions

Dialogue Makes Assumptions VISIBLE
Micro-aggressions: “...micro-aggressions are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities (whether intentional or unintentional) that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative... slights and insults.”

(Feminism & Women’s Rights Worldwide, Vol. 1, pg. 158)
Forms of Microaggressions

- Microaggressions may be human and environmental
- Microassaults
- Microinsults
- Microinvalidations
- Many subcategories with distinct themes have been identified
Stage 3: Social Identities -- Oppression

- A system that maintains advantage and disadvantage based on stereotyped social group memberships
- Operates on individual, institutional, and social/cultural
Stage 4: Embracing Conflict

- Learning to engage conflict
- Recognizing individual privilege
- Recognizing our role in perpetuation of systemic privilege
- Maintain dialogue!
Stage 4: Embracing Conflict

Go to Hot Topics only after understanding of: Dialogue (Stage 1), Communication Skills (Stage 2) and Understanding Social Identities (Stage 3) are established.
Stage 4: Embracing Conflict

Dialogue Makes Privilege Visible

Privilege is…
a taken-for-granted advantage
that makes it easier for some people to engage and succeed in organizations and in society
Stage 4: Embracing Conflict

- Ways to make privilege visible
  - Utilize dialogue: listen to stories
  - Don’t make assumptions about identity
  - Recognize microaggressions
  - Be present for others’ feelings
  - Lean into [conflict] difficult conversations
  - Validate others
  - Acknowledge one’s own privilege
Stage 5: Building Alliances

- Characteristics of an ally
- Allies best practices
- Stages of ally development
- Building allied communities
Stage 5: Building Alliances

Characteristics of an Ally

- Is proud of own identities; Learns about own and others’ heritages
- Listens to and respects others’ perspectives and experiences
- Works to change privileges into rights that others may also enjoy
- Actively works for justice
- Recognizes unlearning oppressive beliefs and actions is a lifelong process
- Stands against injustice out of a belief that it is in his/her self-interest to do so
- Is willing to make mistakes, learn, and try again!

“As an ally, I’m not going to pretend to be a superhero. I am here to ask you how I can help.” - William C. Anderson
Community organizer, DREAMer ally.
Conclusion

• We need to seek Equity
  • We can do it through change in policies, practices and diversity education
  • We can use Intergroup Dialogue as a process to lean into conflict and address our differences