

Alexandria Community & Technical College

Hennepin Technical College

Developing a Pipeline for Increasing Adjunct Faculty of Color at Technical Colleges in MnSCU

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## Project Overview

Two-year colleges in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU/Minnesota State) system have seen dramatic changes in their student populations that correspond with the increase in racially diverse students in the metropolitan and greater Twin Cities area. At Hennepin Technical College (HTC), from Fall 2009 to Fall 2014, the number (%) of students of color has grown from 1,978 (32%) to 2,408 (40%) (MnSCU, 2016).

In contrast, the demographics of MnSCU/Minnesota State's teaching workforce is not reflective of its student populations or the communities they serve. In HTC's 2008-10 Affirmative Action Plan (AAP), only 3.16% (5 out of 158) represented unlimited faculty of color. With a census availability of 10.00%, HTC had an underutilization of 11 faculty of color. In HTC's 2014-16 AAP, only 3.70% (5 out of 135) represented unlimited faculty of color. With a census availability of 24.9%, HTC has an underutilization of 29 faculty of color (MnSCU, 2016).

One of the ways to diversify the faculty workforce in MnSCU/Minnesota State to be more reflective of its increasingly diverse student population and surrounding communities is to develop pipelines to increase the pool of adjunct faculty of color. However, there are challenges in developing these pipelines including:

- Technical program instructor vacancies in areas such as manufacturing, transportation, and construction, have been historically filled by Caucasian males.
- Even with the increase of students of color graduating from technical programs, this does not necessarily translate into a desire to be an instructor and teach in these areas.
- There is an increase of work experience as part of the technical education instructor credentials, in particular a requirement of four-years related experience in the trades.

## Terminology & Definitions

In our efforts to develop recommendations for increasing underrepresented faculty candidates in MnSCU/Minnesota State and specifically into technical education programs, we began by clarifying our terminology and dividing the priority of work into three areas listed below. We note that the focus is on two-year technical colleges; however, the scope could be broad enough to be applied system-wide. As the project evolved, our action learning team opted to make the following minor adjustments and clarifications in consultation with project sponsors in order to expand the possibility for inclusivity :

- Pipeline: 1) recruitment; 2) development; and 3) retention
- Adjunct Faculty: Expand scope to include all faculty positions
- Faculty of Color: “Persons of Color” as defined by Federal Rules, Laws and Regulations as African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans. Discussed increasing diversity of staff/faculty to be reflective of student diversity as well.
- Technical Colleges in MnSCU: Two-year colleges (technical and community colleges; public as well as for-profit and private institutions) with focus on applicability to sponsor institutions (Hennepin Tech and Alexandria) as well as MnSCU/Minnesota State more broadly (and surrounding communities).

## Background

In the United States, the demographics in higher education are changing. The fastest growing groups of students attending colleges and universities are non-white or students of color. However, when one examines the demographics of faculty and staff, particularly faculty,

one finds that people of color are underrepresented in relation to the communities that house institutions and in relation to the demographics of the student populations of the institutions themselves. Colleges and universities have tried to address this problem. Many have affirmative action policies, although they are implemented to varying degrees. But even in light of affirmative action the number of faculty of color in higher education remains low.

One must be aware of the fact that current hiring practices have been developed over a long period of time and within a system that values a dominant culture. Inadvertently or by design, hiring practices have served to maintain the status quo and retain high numbers of white faculty in colleges and universities. Until there is a profound shift in hiring practices, change in faculty demographics will not be seen.

When hiring faculty, institutions release a position description and then recruit faculty from which to solicit applications. Recruitment tactics have varied by type, size and location of any given college or university and have met with varying degrees of success.

Studies have shown that students of color benefit from working with faculty who look like them and share at least some of their cultural values. It has long been understood that racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity among students and faculty benefits learning and academic success more broadly.

### **An Overview Recruiting and Retention of Faculty of Color in Higher Education**

Many believe that a primary goal of higher education is to help construct not only a stable and productive society, but a just society. When we as higher education professionals look to future relationships between our institutions and society at large, we must look at multiple elements – changing social contexts for higher education; mechanisms of interaction

between higher education and society; and the impact of higher education on society (Brennan, 2008). Diversity and equity are included in this and must be acknowledged; a large part of this is the need to work towards an equitable representation of faculty of color in higher education.

### **Globalization and Diversity**

In higher education, we hear much rhetoric about preparing students for a global society. Increased globalization will include aspects of standardization over many disciplines as we work to bring the world closer together via communication and collaboration. This change will require us to examine and honor the contributions made to such disciplines by traditionally marginalized groups. To fail to do so would mean further marginalization of these groups.

We have seen in recent years that it is increasingly important for an individual in the United States (and around the world) to possess some sort of higher education credential in order to obtain any degree of success or social equity. If we cannot provide equity in the attainment of higher education, we will see continued increases in credentials gained by the dominant culture and a relative growth in the disadvantages faced by people without educational credentials (Brennan, 2008). It can be argued that societal equity cannot be achieved without increased success on the part of students of color in higher education, and this will not be realized without increases in the numbers of faculty of color. This issue's importance is further compounded as we must also consider the impact in our global society as a whole.

### **Diversity as Educational Value Added**

In addition to a push for equity, there are other reasons to work toward a more diverse and equitable academe. There is overwhelming sentiment and evidence that increased faculty

diversity at colleges and universities proves helpful for retaining students as well as providing global and diverse perspectives (Mayo & Chhuon, 2014). This is, of course, increasingly important in light of both globalization and changing United States demographics. Beyond this, faculty from diverse backgrounds bring with them new and innovative approaches to scholarship.

When surrounded by people similar to ourselves, we are easily influenced by and more likely to fall prey to conformity and so-called "group think." Diversity helps to prompt critical thinking by offering broader perspectives and contributing to error detection. Levine, Sheen and Stark (2015) found that it is indeed the case that racial and ethnic diversity matter for learning, and therefore to the core values of higher education. Increasing diversity is not only a way to promote equity in higher education, but will also serve to promote deepened learning and thinking for all.

According to Levin et al, (2014) faculty of color tend to value the student-centered approach to teaching and learning that is espoused in many community colleges. However, when some faculty were asked about this, they felt that the idea of "student-centered" varied when framed by faculty of color versus white faculty. Faculty of color were found to be more likely to contribute to the student-centered environment by getting to know their students and relating to their background and experiences, often on a cultural level. A common complaint was that white faculty often were not familiar with the challenges faced on a societal level by both students and faculty of color.

Zamboanga and Bingman (2001) stress that colleges and universities should make sure that their commitment to diversity is supported at all levels and that this should be reflected in

job posting announcements. Furthermore, when job descriptions stress the added value brought to an institution by increasing diversity, this will help to allay notions that people of color have an added edge only by virtue of their race or ethnicity – rather, it is the applicant’s broad experiences that are the desired qualifications.

### **The Challenges of Increasing Diversity in Higher Education**

Historically, academia in the United States has been populated by United States-born white males. Although students of color continue to be underrepresented in terms of numbers, achievement, and opportunity, faculty of color are even more underrepresented (Thompson, 2008). Student diversity has been increasing steadily over the past few decades. This is due to both internal factors, such as specific recruitment initiatives, as well as those factors external to institutions such as changing national demographics overall (Arnett, 2015).

Particularly telling when addressing the issue of underrepresentation of some faculty groups is the fact that student demographics are changing at a different rate than faculty demographics. According to Minor (2014), from 1996 to 2006, minority students saw a 63% increase in the number of degrees earned. In contrast, although the numbers of minority faculty and administrators is increasing, the percentages of representation are dismal; as of 2008, African Americans comprised 3% of faculty, Latinos comprised 2% of faculty, and Asians comprised 6% of the faculty. Arnett (2015) argues that recruitment such as is applied to students of color should also be intentionally used towards hiring faculty of color.

## Recruitment

Traditional practices employed in faculty candidate searches have failed to attract and retain sufficient numbers of faculty of color (Mayo & Chhuon, 2014). As colleges and universities try to diversify their faculties, hiring committees must realize that minority candidates may not follow the same life trajectories as traditional candidates (Hamilton, 2003). Hamilton (2003) asserts that since faculty of color in essence are not “supposed to be” in higher education, they often have more varied pathways into their faculty positions. Many faculty of color work in the private sector first, or gain their graduate education later in life than their white counterparts (Hamilton, 2003). It must be taken into account that minorities in higher education are not necessarily part of a long-standing tradition. As a group, they have only had a stake in academia for the last few decades.

Even in diverse states such as California and Texas, for the most part college faculty are white. In places where diversity is increasing, albeit slowly, faculty of color are overrepresented in some areas and underrepresented in others (Levin et al., 2014). Engeman and Waller (2000) also touch on the challenges in recruiting faculty of color. They maintain that there are “significant barriers within academia itself that discourages people of color from becoming productive and satisfied members of the professorate. These barriers include (1) isolation and lack of mentoring, (2) occupational stress, (3) devaluation of “minority” research, (4) the “token hire” misconception, (5) racial and ethnic bias in recruiting and hiring, and (6) racial and ethnic bias in tenure and promotion practices and policies.” It is often the case that community

colleges will undertake initiatives that systematically exclude people of color from candidate pools in job searches. In Levin et al., an example was given wherein a community college was pushing to hire more doctoral-level faculty. This was not a credential held by many potential faculty of color even though those individuals had experience and expertise that would help create a truly student-centered environment.

The literature on faculty of color in higher education includes many personal accounts of recruiting and support (or lack thereof). Mayo and Chhuon (2014) both identify as faculty of color. In their research, both employ narrative as a tool to express some of the issues with recruitment and retention of faculty of color. They received little guidance in their first positions and had trouble adjusting to life in a new city. Furthermore, as persons of color, they had to carry the extra baggage of wondering if they belonged at all. The privilege afforded to persons in the dominant culture allow them to interpret rocky beginnings as just that, whereas Mayo and Chhuon had to wonder constantly if the right path had been chosen (2014).

Mayo and Chhuon (2015) advocate for institutional support for recruiting and then continued mentoring of faculty of color. Indeed, both of them, for lack of this, considered leaving positions. It is suggested that institutions of higher education create summer research or teaching fellowships geared towards diverse graduate students who may be potential applicants (Zamboanga & Bingman, 2001). Such a program may also employ faculty members that are people of color (Zamboanga & Bingman, 2001). However we need to be cognizant that faculty of color are often overtaxed as they are asked to mentor quite often. Recruitment programs for diverse candidates have the potential for myriad positive outcomes. Prospective faculty of color could experience the campus climate and community surrounding an institution

and could make connections with other faculty in departments of interest (Zamboanga & Bingman, 2001).

Arnett (2015) interviewed several faculty who shared the same sentiment – that they had to perform even better than their white counterparts in terms of publications, research and teaching in order to be considered for tenure and promotion. Furthermore, the “invisible work” undertaken by many faculty of color – serving on diversity committees, mentoring students, and mentoring other faculty of color – cut into the time that these faculty could spend on tasks that would prepare them for promotion or tenure (Arnett, 2015). In light of this Arnett argues that it should be the case that “diversity is everyone’s job.”

When we discuss increasing the numbers of faculty of color in higher education, we need to consider both recruitment and retention. Minor (2014) discusses the so-called “glass ceiling effect” – defined by Bain and Cummings (2000) as “attitudinal or organizational biases that prevent minorities and women from advancing to leadership positions” – and holds that in order to rectify this problem, we must examine practices surrounding academic governance.

Minor (2014) argues that it is not sufficient for institutions of higher learning to simply comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. Indeed, we need to address the very culture of the academy, and Minor points to two phenomena specifically – academic freedom and structural looseness. Academic freedom gives faculty control over college and university curriculum. Minor’s (2014) concern is that faculty have not internalized the mission of increasing diversity and tend to honor academic traditions. Traditions, at their very core, may be problematic in that they are inexorably linked with dominant culture privilege. Furthermore, faculty autonomy dictates that there are few, if any, consequences for tenured faculty that

actively disregard diversity imperatives. Minor (2014) sums up the problem bluntly, "... improving faculty diversity remains the responsibility of mostly middle-aged, white males who suffer no consequences for maintain the status quo."

Minor (2014) also speaks to the issue of so called "structural looseness" as pertains to the increase of diversity in higher education. Institutions of higher education can be thought of as a loosely structured town or city where one academic unit may have very little knowledge of another academic unit. That is, academics exist in disciplinary silos. From an organizational perspective this leads to duplication, inefficiency, and lack of communication. Furthermore, structural looseness can lead to a lack of standard practices and procedures across an organization (Minor, 2014). For example, different disciplines might exercise different criteria when considering candidates for hire, promotion, or tenure. Although this is not necessarily a bad thing – indeed it may be necessary, depending on the discipline – this practice of autonomy may hinder top-down diversity initiatives.

Minor (2014) points out what many have noticed for a number of years; principles of diversity are promoted without follow through or assessment. For example, although affirmative action policies exist, there is little information as to how rigorously there policies are followed where colleges and universities hire new faculty. Minor (2014) asserts that the responsibility for minority hiring initiatives rests mainly with higher education administration, who need to support such hires with positions, financial support, and direction.

In the realm of promotion and tenure, in many cases, whether or not junior faculty are given such awards comes from a vote of senior faculty. Women and minorities are much less

likely to be among the ranks of senior faculty. In a sense, faculty are not, then, judged by their peers (Minor, 2014).

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Unions can be an ally in the recruitment of faculty of color. It is important to get bargaining units on board.
- Faculty, students and staff need to be involved with recruiting new colleagues.
- It is important that our colleges and universities portray an immediately welcoming environment to potential faculty, staff, and students of color. This should be reflected in all marketing materials, mission statements and vision statements.
- Zamboanga and Bingman (2001) stress that colleges and universities should make sure that their commitment to diversity is supported at all levels and that this should be reflected in job posting announcements.
- When job descriptions stress the added value brought to an institution by increasing diversity, this will help to allay notions that people of color have an added edge only by virtue of their race or ethnicity – rather, it is the applicant's experiences that are the desired qualifications.
- Create a pipeline for recruitment of faculty of color. There are already some programs geared towards increasing faculty of color in higher education. These programs include the Preparing Future Faculty Program, the Mellon Minority Undergraduate Fellowship and the Ronald E. McNair PostBaccalaureate Achievement Program.
- In order to make jobs more attractive to potential faculty of color institutions must take active measures. These include grant writing and editorial assistance; funding for

development, travel, and graduate assistants; and supportive family policies like longer maternity leave and work-life flexibility.

- As colleges and universities diversify their faculties, hiring committees must realize that minority candidates may not follow the same life trajectories as more traditional candidates (Hamilton, 2003).
- Create a welcoming climate in academe by encouraging the establishment of networking, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. Supportive networks and mentoring opportunities are needed and should be a feature of advertised positions.

## **Development**

In examining areas of development, we recognize diversity is not going to be addressed by a one-line process and that it is a much more complicated effort requiring multiple approaches in combination. The following assumptions underlie our development analysis: the focus of increasing faculty of color is part of a broader effort to further enhance the overall quality of our education and not simply policy compliance or meeting a quota; development should begin before the hiring process in order to attract and ensure a sustainable pipeline of qualified applicants; and campus and community climate must be addressed to promote a safe and welcoming environment for all faculty - especially faculty of color.

Development is a unique element in the recruitment through retention process because it needs to happen both before and after recruitment. In light of this, we will address the four following sub-topics: (a) Pipeline - Pool of Candidates; (b) Pipeline - Academic Preparation; (c)

Development of Campus and Community Climate; and (d) Continuing Development After Hire.

The fourth area of development will be covered in detail in the retention section of this report and is only mentioned in the development section to acknowledge that development is an ongoing process and must continue after hiring in order to truly meet the needs of all faculty.

### **Pipeline – Pool of Candidates**

One of the main obstacles in increasing the number of diverse faculty at two-year colleges is the “shallow pool of potential minority candidates” (Rifkin, 2016). Open faculty positions often lack applicants of color. There are a number of reasons for this. Sociologically, there may be an untapped pool of candidates based on a lack of modelling in the classroom. “Role models help to promote acceptance and understanding of differences. They also play a critical role in serving as mentors and in inspiring others to believe that they are capable of higher achievements” (Hibbard, Irazabal, Thomas, Umemoto, & Wubneh, 2011). To generate a broader pool of candidates in the future, we need to be more intentional with our efforts today.

The pipeline for many two-year technical programs may also suffer from leaks due to monetary disparity between industry salary and faculty salary. For example, the typical salary for a nurse practitioner in Minnesota with a master’s degree is over \$100,000; while the average salary for a college nursing instructor with a master’s degree is \$70, 211 (CAREERwise, n.d.). A college instructor in information technology earns approximately \$71,000 (with a doctorate); while a computer systems analyst makes nearly \$90,000 with a baccalaureate degree (CAREERwise, n.d.). There is clearly a need to incentivize faculty careers to attract a deep and diverse pool of candidates.



**Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Targeted recruitment strategies – Consider required versus recommended credentials in hiring practices; post positions in diverse publications; use inclusive language; consider more than traditional qualifications.
- It is legal to recruit underrepresented minorities and women to the faculty. Executive Order 11246 requires universities and other federal contractors to make good faith affirmative action efforts to hire and retain women and people of color. It is legal to place emphasis on criteria such as “academic experience with diverse students,” (Squires & Mendoza, 2012).
- HLC expects that credentials will be the primary mechanism used by institutions to ascertain minimal faculty qualifications. Yet HLC recognizes that experience may be considered in determining faculty qualifications (Higher Learning Commission, 2015).

**Pipeline – Academic Preparation**

According to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), “a missing link in the community college faculty academic labor market and minority pipeline is the formal academic preparation of community college faculty” (Rifkin, 2016). In order to increase the number of faculty of color at two-year colleges, we need to create programs intentionally designed to recruit, train, and place interested applicants. These programs may function to offset some of the costs of academic training or provide the on-the-job training and mentoring that helps new faculty be successful. One such program is the Regional Faculty Internship Program at the San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College Association (SDICCCA).

The SDICCCA program recruits interns that are interested in teaching in the community college system, matches applicants with a mentor, provides training for classroom management, and places successful program completers in positions within the association. This program has been successful at increasing the number of faculty of color within its colleges (Jeffcoat & Piland, 2012).

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- San Diego and Imperial Counties Community College Association program - training and internship to job placement program.
- Blue Ridge Community and Technical College alternative credentialing - Requires one of the following: a degree at least one level higher than the program in which they are teaching, a nationally recognized certification relevant to the program they are teaching, a certification required by an accrediting body specific to the program they are teaching, or years of experience (Blue Ridge Community and Technical College, 2014).

### **Development of Campus/Community Climate**

**Campus Climate** - There are some inherent problems in the current structure at two-year colleges. The Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) assembled a task force which identified a number of factors that have constrained many institutions from diversifying faculty. “These factors include an unwelcoming institutional climate, institutional and social barriers in the academy, historical legacy, racial/ethnic stereotyping, the lack of role models or mentors with whom to identify, the lack of institutional support, and the “revolving door” syndrome of minority faculty” (Hibbard et al., 2011). On the issue of institutional climate, the task force found “that a large group of minority faculty members feel that the institutional

environment is unwelcoming and that problems of racial/ethnic bias are present in the academic workplace” (Hibbard et al., 2011).

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Need a champion for diversity.
- Conduct a climate assessment: Assessing and improving the campus climate for diversity might be beneficial as part of an ongoing effort to identify, “current attitudes, behaviors, and standards held by faculty, staff, and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential” (Carleton.edu, n.d.).
- Incorporate intentional/inclusive practices across campus as a whole.
- Generate widespread faculty buy-in.
- Stop talking about the problem and do something about it.

**Community Climate** - Fostering an inclusive community climate both on and off campus is critical to our commitment to diversity. “Building an environment that is perceived inclusive to all people will go a long way in helping a person to feel safe and comfortable in their new position (Guenter-Schlesinger et al., 2009). By being intentional in efforts to sustain a positive community climate, we can develop a campus community where faculty feel welcome, valued, engaged and empowered to achieve their full potential. Some questions to consider might include the following: What are the needs of faculty of color? What is the demographic composition of the campus and surrounding communities? Are there services in the community to support faculty of color? Where can faculty of color and their families live and feel safe in a

welcoming environment? Are there networking opportunities in the community for faculty of color and their families?

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Develop a multicultural resource directory for candidates and new hires to contribute to efforts to provide a welcoming environment. Items for inclusion in the directory include schools, community agencies (non-government and government), cultural and religious organizations, multicultural media outlets, multicultural businesses (e.g. ethnic food/markets, restaurants, hair care salons, translation support, etc.), and other resources.
- In order to promote inclusion of all faculty, and especially faculty of color, it is important to seek input about events and programs they want.

Best practices/recommendations were included for each sub-category above. Below are additional recommendations for consideration in development of all faculty, and especially faculty of color.

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Translate rhetoric into action; diversity is not going to be addressed by a one-line process. It is a much more complicated process requiring multiple efforts in combination.
- Establish clear principles of diversity follow through/assessment.
- Invest in quality professional development for faculty of color and all faculty.
- Ensure faculty have the time, tools and trust to do their jobs effectively.

- Provide compensation for “invisible work” undertaken by many faculty of color – serving on diversity committees, mentoring students, and mentoring other faculty of color, etc.
- Promote and provide resources for alternative credentialing opportunities.
- Promote formal academic preparation of community college faculty; pre-faculty programs (e.g. University of Minnesota Preparing College Faculty Program).
- Emphasize conferences and other means as well as informal outreach to acquaint talented minorities with the option of becoming community college faculty; targeted outreach.
- Allocate significant funds (from corporate and foundation resources, as well as grant funding) to institute a pipeline process that yields results.
- Recognize faculty of color and all faculty for excellence in teaching and learning (to include adjunct and part-time faculty awards).
- Recognize faculty of color and all faculty for excellent in promoting diversity and inclusivity (e.g. culturally relevant pedagogy, etc.).

## **Retention**

The U.S has occupied a premier position in the world primarily because of its eminence in education and innovation. For the U.S to remain a competitive leader, it must engage all its citizens. This is a matter of great urgency and will require the adoption of many different approaches to increase the diversity in the workforce and maintain the prominent role of the U.S. in the world, both in education and in the economy. Freeman Hrabowski III, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County said, "It's well-documented that the United

States needs a strong diverse work force to maintain global leadership and competitiveness."

He also said, "The minds and talents of underrepresented minorities are a great, untapped resource that the nation can no longer afford to squander. Improving the representation of our diverse citizenry in our workforce will strengthen our workforce and boost the U.S. economy." National efforts to strengthen the United States must include all Americans, especially minorities, who are the fastest growing groups of the U.S. population but the most underrepresented in the labor domain.

Hughes (2015) points out that even though some institutions have been successful in diversifying faculty to a point, experiences of faculty of color must not be dismissed. Having diversity among faculty does not ensure faculty feelings of safety, or that faculty of color will not feel misunderstood or isolated. This illustrates the need for ongoing institutional commitment to purposefully creating and equitable workplace. The institution must be committed to intentional action, strategic decision making surrounding diversity, and forming positive community and internal relationships (Hughes, 2015).

Research has shown that the conventional wisdom that paints community college faculty as homogeneous in views and experiences is incorrect. In particular, the experiences of community college faculty of color are negated or ignored (Levin, et al., 2014). It has often been the case that community college culture has been looked at as "monolithic." However, according to Levin et al. (2014), when we examine community colleges through the lens of postmodernism, we see not only cultural and ethnic pluralism, but a plurality of cultures overall.

An informal assessment of five different institutions ranging from a private HBCU, public research university and a two-year community college yielded several conclusions. Institutions must match their rhetoric on faculty diversity with action. Faculty diversity is enhanced by student diversity, having explicit policies, infrastructures, and a reward systems with an eye towards diversity. This must occur at all levels of the institution. Faculty diversity is enhanced by diverse curriculum and support for research on diversity topics and issues. There must be attention paid to faculty and staff diversity training and campus community preparation for increased diversity. While recruitment of diverse faculty is important, mentoring and support leading to promotion and tenure of diverse faculty hires may ultimately be more important.

Thompson (2008) begins by citing a 2006 statistic that 69 percent of faculty in higher education believe that their institutions “value racial and ethnic diversity.” Sadly, in contrast to this apparent dedication to increasing the numbers of underrepresented groups in academic, the racial and ethnic makeup of faculty has not changed along with increasing student diversity. Thompson (2008) argues that part of the problem of continued white dominance in faculty demographics is that attention is misplaced onto recruitment rather than retention. Though there is a nationwide push towards recruiting faculty of color, the fact remains that attrition rates are high among faculty of color, accompanied by feelings of frustration, invisibility and discrimination (Thompson, 2008).

Faculty of color have run into roadblocks when seeking tenure and promotion. Some of these impediments include the following: marginalization of academic pursuits by faculty of color; faculty of color publishing in venues that are not looked upon favorably; lack of

mentorship for teaching or research; lack of knowledge of the political systems inherent to the dominant culture; and lack of an equitable evaluation system (Thompson, 2008).

In order to address the problem of lack of mentoring from faculty of color, institutions may need to look to cross-mentoring in some instances. Since there are few faculty of color in senior positions, it may be necessary for non-minority faculty to mentor faculty of color. This may provide a mutual appreciation of cultural plurality and must be supported (Thompson, 2008). Furthermore, mentoring must be seen as a legitimate scholarly pursuit that is looked upon favorably when a faculty member is considered for tenure or promotion (Thompson, 2008). This is important for two reasons. First, it encourages cross-mentoring, and it acknowledges the “invisible” work of mentoring that is often piled on the existing few senior faculty of color.

There have been some changes designed to support more inclusion in college and university faculty such as funding, mentorship, expanded family leave, and a plurality of ways to achieve tenure. However, Thompson (2008) points out that lack of commitment at all levels of an institution lead to many of these changes to falling by the wayside or be abandoned altogether.

Clearly, recruitment efforts can lead to more faculty of color in colleges and universities. However, increased numbers of such faculty will not translate to real changes in demographics unless appointments are renewed and we see increased in promotion and tenure for faculty of color (Thompson, 2008). Furthermore, in an atmosphere where assessment is valued, this assessment push must include monitoring efforts in recruiting and retaining faculty of color.

Institutions need to incorporate policies that help to recruit and retain faculty of color and identify quantifiable measures to ensure that such policies are followed (Thompson, 2008).

### **Best Practices/Recommendations**

- Commit funding to diversification which demonstrates dedication to retention. Funding can be used for Diversity Award, Grant Program, Visiting Scholar and Exchange Program and for conducting assessment of retention studies, campus climate and retention measures.
- Existing faculty of color on the campus, to act as ambassadors to help in the retention of the new faculty of color by helping them integrate into the community. Soon after hiring, the senior faculty /administrators can get together with the new faculty of color to develop a welcoming, inclusive environment.
- The Dean or Department Chair can ensure clarity of communication by outlining rules, norms of the campus and periodically check in to make sure that the faculty of color have a comparable experience like the other faculty.
- Provision for a clear pathway to tenure and promotion for faculty of color
- Grant Program to provide financial support to faculty of color to fund conference participation, research projects and to enroll in classes for career advancement
- Cluster Hiring: The advantage is to have a cohort of faculty of color hired at the same time to minimize feelings of isolationism and to provide peer support for the challenges facing them that prevent them from being retained.
- Mentoring of faculty of color by senior faculty and/or administrators : Mentoring has been widely demonstrated to be a critical factor in the retention of students of color.

Following the same principles, mentoring of junior faculty of color should help in their retention. The mentors do not need to be faculty/administrators of color. Several universities have started mentoring programs to improve the retention rates of minority faculty and reinforce a respectful, positive work environment and have reported success.

- Campuses that have a low presence of diversity among faculty on campus could start a Faculty Exchange program or a Visiting Scholar Program to provide the opportunity to the campus to see the benefits of the presence of faculty of color . A critical mass of faculty of color is needed to create a less alienating and isolating atmosphere on campus.
- Provide leadership opportunities for faculty of color.
- Exit Interviews with faculty of color to determine the reasons for their desiring to leave the teaching position. The information obtained could be used to modify the retention efforts.
- Tracking of the faculty of color hired and the retention efforts and their success.
- Diversity Award to a faculty/administrator, nominated by a faculty of color, who made the faculty of color decide to stay on campus despite all odds.
- Invite leaders of the community to which the faculty of color belong, to the campus.

## **Conclusion**

We are at an important time in history as we are faced with an aging workforce in higher education along with underrepresentation of women and minorities in most areas of

higher education (Minor, 2014). This means that changes must be made, but most importantly that changes *can* be made.

According to Thompson (2008), “Although academe is viewed as a liberal place where individuals are free to express their thoughts, those individuals are often from similar backgrounds or share similar experiences. Creating a multicultural climate entails broadening the expectations for what is seen as quality work, appropriate behavior, and effective working styles.” Thompson is speaking to some profound changes. The dominant culture is being asked to change fundamentally. This change may be difficult and even frightening to the dominant culture but it must come to pass. Perhaps we need to make more room to acknowledge this fear and unease. This is by no means a method to curb change, but a way to embrace change while being open about what that change means for various groups.

Although colleges and universities may post job listings that encourage minorities to apply, often missing is an indication that the institution truly values the contributions of diverse faculty (Zamboanga & Bingman, 2001). When institutions encourage diverse applicants, but do not indicate why they are doing so, it causes friction. Zamboanga and Bingman (2001) indicate that friction between Caucasian applicants and people of color may emerge because of the perception that diverse candidates have an added advantage in the hiring process or the perception that an institution’s commitment to diversity is a form of tokenism.

Although there is much discussion about increasing racial and ethnic diversity among the ranks of faculty, gains to this end are not sustainable until we examine the systems and procedures surrounding decision-making in higher education. Adding to the diversity of our nation’s institutions of higher education will help all students to become critical and thoughtful

thinkers as they navigate an increasingly diverse United States and increasingly global workforce.

## Addendum

The Action Learning Team presented project recommendations to sponsors via WebEx on Thursday, July 7, 2016, and below are highlights of questions, feedback and discussions:

### **Alexandria Technical and Community College**

- How does the report specifically address small/rural colleges and communities such as ATCC?
  - Important to consider climate both on campus and in broader community.
  - Leverage technology for outreach and engagement; e.g. faculty of color teaching via online courses as Visiting Scholars as a way to curb costs.
  - Intent of our report was to offer recommendations as a “toolkit” for ATCC and other MnSCU/Minnesota State campuses to consider rather than a prescription to follow.
- Interested in learning more about the Visiting Scholars program referenced under retention; how might this be funded?
  - We hope MnSCU/Minnesota State will earmark funding for Visiting Scholars and other programs to demonstrate commitment to this important initiative.
  - We might also engage industry/community partners to help support/fund programs, perhaps in exchange for eventual work in industry to help diversify as well.

- What about the role of unions, especially regarding general practice of “last in, first out” in downsizing? This may result in high turnover of new faculty/faculty of color and question about “bumping rights” under collective bargaining.
  - Consider increasing voluntary early retirement incentives.
  - Ensure diversity is a consideration in determining who is let go.
  - This is one of the reasons we expanded the scope of our project beyond adjunct.

### **MnSCU/Minnesota State**

- Could mentoring of faculty be conducted regionally?
  - Idea to develop list of faculty mentors, resource directory, and a diverse candidate pool at MnSCU/Minnesota State to increase diversity.
  - Leverage technology for outreach and engagement (minimize costs while still maintaining ability to increase face-to-face interaction, albeit virtually).
- Shared idea of conducting “stay” interviews with faculty of color after one year in position in addition to exit interviews with faculty of color.
- Discussed MnSCU/Minnesota State “toolkit” to ensure search committees are not engaging in implicit bias throughout the process.
- Possible consideration of allowing adjunct faculty to teach at multiple campuses (possibly online) and be considered full time.
- Important to work on climate in our communities as a whole.
- Invitation to share this Action Learning Project MnSCU/Minnesota State Human Resources (HR) and Chief Diversity Officer Committee meetings in future.

### **Hennepin Technical College**

- What about the collective bargaining units, especially regarding “bumping rights” and general practice of “last in, first out” in downsizing?
  - In addition to possible additional incentives for early retirement, might also consider revising system to recognize longevity and service among adjuncts in hiring for full-time positions.
  - Additional incentives may not be needed as retirements are happening.
  - Important to be intentional about considering diversity in hiring new faculty.
- Difficulty for faculty of color (both adjunct and full-time) to find their “space” both on and off campus in terms of resources; like the idea of a Multicultural Resource Directory and it may be important to broaden scope beyond the campus so faculty can find resources for funding, research, projects, etc. with support from administration in a “one stop shop,” both in teaching and in scholarship as well as community service to be shared across MnSCU/Minnesota State.
- Consider earmarking/developing a professional development funding pool in addition to general faculty development to recognize unique opportunities for faculty of color (e.g. conferences focused on diversity, inclusivity, and culturally relevant pedagogy).
- Important to have shared ownership of importance of diversity and inclusion initiatives across campus and system.
- Concern about relative lack of diversity among leadership within bargaining units. Engage in dialogue with faculty of color to promote greater diversity within union bodies to promote diversity and representation.

- Additional considerations include dialogue between 2-year and 4-year unions regarding support for research, inclusive practices, mentoring, etc.
- Appreciated the list of recommendations that various campuses can select/modify to best suit their respective needs as well as available resources.
- Critical to involve students in the process early on to show them how to move in direction of teaching in the future.
- Implement in small chunks, with a clear vision, with a 5-year plan.

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