

Cultivating Attention to DEI in Curricula

Incorporating Diversity and Inclusion Principles into Core Curricula

KEY FINDINGS:

- Requiring courses which incorporate diversity principles improves students' interaction with diverse peers and awareness of social issues.
- Courses do not have to be strictly "diversity courses" to teach inclusivity; rather, any course which has inclusive principles woven into its curriculum can have the same effect as a course targeted strictly at teaching about diversity.
- Students' levels of empathy and social awareness improve after 1-2 courses that teach diversity principles; however, these levels do not continue to scale with the number of courses taken. This means a student that has taken 5 diversity courses is unlikely to gain more social awareness than a student that has taken 1-2 diversity courses.

Matthew Mayhew, Heidi Grunwald, Eric Dey, "Curriculum Matters: Creating a Positive Climate for Diversity from the Student Perspective," *Research in Higher Education*, 46, 2005. Pg 389-412. DOI: 10.1007/s11162-005-2967-0

The purpose of this paper is to identify the factors that predict students' perceptions of their institution's success in achieving a positive climate for diversity. This study examines a sample of 544 students at a large, public, predominantly White Mid-Western institution. Results show that students' perceptions of the institution's ability to achieve a positive climate for diversity is a reflection of students' precollege interactions with diverse peers and the institution's ability to incorporate diversity-related issues into its curriculum. Results also indicate that these perceptions differ by race and gender. Implications for institutional researchers are discussed.



Thomas Laird, Mark Engberg, Sylvia Hurtado, “Modeling Accentuation Effects: Enrolling in a Diversity Course and the Importance of Social Action Engagement,” *Journal of Higher Education*, 76(4), 2005. Pg 448-476. DOI: 10.1353/jhe.2005.0028

Using data obtained from 367 students in a Northeastern university, the writers examined the influence of diversity courses on students' interaction with diverse peers and the value they place on social action engagement. They present results that show that enrollment in diversity courses positively and significantly determines quality of student interaction with diverse peers and positively influences student commitment to social action engagement.

[Mitchell Chang, “The Impact of an Undergraduate Diversity Course Requirement on Students’ Racial Views and Attitudes,” *The Journal of General Education*, 51\(1\), 2002. Pg 21-42.](#)

The findings from this study show that students who were about to complete their undergraduate diversity requirement, compared to those who were just beginning it, exhibited significantly less prejudice and made more favorable judgments about people of color. These opinions were shown to be significantly related to the chances that students would become acquainted or have serious discussions with students of another race or ethnic background. The study further suggests that students who take multiple diversity courses do not continually become more tolerant; rather, a small number of well-executed courses is effective in decreasing student prejudice.

Lori Carrell, “Diversity in the Communication Curriculum: Impact on Student Empathy,” *Communication Education*, 46(4), 1997. Pg 234-244. DOI: 10.1080/03634529709379098

This study explores the impact of integrating cultural diversity into the communication curriculum. Students in control and experiment groups (N=237) were pre/post-tested for empathy, a central component of intercultural communication competence. Results indicated significant gains in empathy as a trait, attitude, and behavior for students completing a course in “Intercultural Communication” and significant gains in empathy as an attitude and behavior for basic speech course students receiving interpersonal communication instruction which had been infused with diversity. No significant gains were demonstrated by basic course students who completed one speech or assignment on a “diversity and communication” topic.

Eugene Parker III, Cassie Barnhardt, Ernest Pascarella, Jarvis McCowin, “The Impact of Diversity Courses on College Students’ Moral Development,” *Journal of College Student Development*, 57(4), 2016. Pg 395-410. [DOI](#)



This study utilized data from a multi-institutional longitudinal study to investigate the association between diversity-related coursework and moral development among students over 4 years of college. The findings parallel the prior research, which support the positive effects of diversity on college students, by offering new evidence that diversity experiences positively impact moral development. Further, the findings revealed that students who enter college with lower pre-college academic ability might experience greater gains relating to the impact of diversity coursework on their moral growth.

Sylvia Hurtado, Matthew Mayhew, Mark Engberg, “Diversity Courses and Students’ Moral Reasoning: A Model of Predispositions and Change,” *Journal of Moral Education*, 41(2), 2012. Pg 201-224. [DOI](#)

The purpose of this study was to examine how moral reasoning develops for 236 students enrolled in either a diversity course or a management course. These courses were compared based on the level of diversity inclusion and type of pedagogy employed in the classroom. The authors used causal modelling to compare the two types of courses, controlling for the effects of demographic (i.e., race, gender), curricular (i.e., previous course-related diversity learning) and pedagogical (i.e., active learning) covariates. Results showed that students enrolled in the diversity course demonstrated higher levels of moral reasoning than students enrolled in the management course. In addition, results show that previous diversity courses as well as current enrollment in a diversity course contributed to moral reasoning gains.

Nicholas Bowman, “College Diversity Courses and Cognitive Development Among Students From Privileged and Marginalized Groups,” *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 2(3), 2009. Pg. 182-194. DOI: 10.1037/a0016639

Previous research has suggested that diversity courses generally have positive effects on college students' cognitive development. However, it is unclear how many courses students need to take to maximize their cognitive gains, or whether some groups of students benefit more from taking these courses. Within a longitudinal sample of over 3,000 first-year students at 19 institutions, students who take at least one diversity course have greater gains in their general interest in ideas and effortful thinking than those who take no courses; however, taking more than one course is not associated with greater benefits than taking a single course. In addition, the number of diversity courses taken is virtually unrelated to gains in critical thinking and moral reasoning. Further analyses reveal that students from middle- or lower-income families and White students experience the greatest cognitive growth from taking diversity courses.

Heather Hussey, Bethany Fleck, Rebecca Warner, “Reducing Student Prejudice in Diversity-Infused Core Psychology Classes.” *College Teaching*, 58(3), 2010. Pg 85-92. DOI: 10.1080/87567550903418560



The authors obtained pretest and posttest data on students' attitudes toward a number of different minority groups and on their levels of course content knowledge. The authors also examined two questions: first, whether exposure to diversity would reduce prejudice, and second, whether inclusion of diversity content would reduce the amount of core course content learned by students. At post-test, significant differences were found in terms of positive attitude change; infusing diversity into course content did not affect content knowledge. This paper describes how students' levels of prejudice were reduced through course materials and methods involving diversity, and adapted to prepare students for a global society. Although this paper is limited to a specific course (i.e., social psychology), many of the elements of this course (e.g., type of readings, guest speakers, and projects) are adaptable to courses in other disciplines.

Diversifying Scholarship

KEY FINDINGS:

- Faculty members belonging to diverse or minority backgrounds are more likely to incorporate diversity principles into their curriculum.
- Curricula that emphasize analyses and evaluations of diversity principles are more effective at teaching inclusivity than curricula that provide this information in a straightforward, non-critical manner.
- Successfully obtaining the benefits of a diverse curriculum is dependent on the willingness and capabilities of faculty members to embrace diversity principles.

[Sandra Mahoney, Jon Chamber, "Exploring the Application of a Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity to a General Education Curriculum on Diversity." *The Journal of General Education*, 53\(3/4\), 2004. Pg. 311-334.](#)

This study examines intercultural sensitivity development from a diversity curriculum in two university general education courses. The results indicate the instructional strategies addressing complex levels of student engagement elicited movement from an ethnocentric to an ethnorelative worldview as described in Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. The study found that a curriculum on diversity that employs analysis and evaluation is more likely to be associated with improvements in students' levels of intercultural sensitivity than a curriculum that simply employs comprehension of information.



Matthew Mayhew, Heidi Grunwald, "Factors Contributing to Faculty Incorporation of Diversity-Related Course Content," *Journal of Higher Education*, 77(1), 2006. Pg 148-168. DOI: 10.1353/jhe.2006.0005

This study examines the factors that contribute to 336 faculty members' decisions to incorporate diversity-related content into their course materials. The final model has an 86% success rate in predicting likelihood to incorporate. Significant predictors include a race by gender interaction, participation in diversity-related activities, and perceived departmental commitment to diversity. When all other variables are held constant, on average, male faculty members of color were much more likely than white male faculty members were to incorporate diversity-related content into their course materials. Female faculty members of color were also more likely to incorporate diversity related content than white females were; however, the differences were much less pronounced.

Ann Morey, "Changing Higher Education Curricula for a Global and Multicultural World," *Higher Education in Europe*, 25(1), 2000. Pg 25-39. DOI: 10.1080/03797720050002170.

Dramatic demographic changes in the cultural and linguistic diversity of people are occurring in many nations throughout the world. These changes have challenged higher education institutions to modify their curricula and instructional strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners and to prepare all graduates to have the awareness, knowledge, and skills to be effective in a diverse society. This article outlines a framework for changing curricula in higher education in order to prepare students to succeed in the culturally diverse, globally interdependent world. It argues that an overall enabling environment is crucial in this preparation, and necessitates faculty expertise, the recruitment of diverse students, consortia with other universities, and increased research in order to gain the full benefits of a diversified curriculum.

Christina Bennett, Karen Dielmann, "Weaving the threat of implicit bias through health administration curricula to overcome gender disparities in the workforce," *The Journal of Health Administration Education*, 34(2), 2017. Pg 277-294.

This paper seeks to address the problem of repetitive barriers and ineffective strategies identified within the peer-reviewed literature by positing new education-based strategies focused less on the organizations where women work and who works there, and more on the academic programs that train administrators working in healthcare organizations. While educational changes would not provide immediate realization for women seeking to become administrators or assume executive roles, we advance that they would lay the groundwork for future changes by developing awareness and tools to recognize and combat gender bias within a healthcare organization. Specifically, this paper will draw on pedagogical and interdisciplinary literature to provide specific suggestions for overcoming the barriers previously identified by research studies as limiting women's success in the arena of healthcare administration.



Thomas Laird, Mark Engberg, “Establishing Differences Between Diversity Requirements and Other Courses with Varying Degrees of Diversity Inclusivity,” *Journal of General Education*, 60(2), 2011. Pg 117-137. DOI: 10.5325/jgeneeduc.60.2.0117.

This study examines how diversity requirements differ from courses that are highly inclusive or less inclusive of diversity. Results suggest that instructor characteristics are statistically different and that highly inclusive and less inclusive diversity courses score highest and lowest, respectively, on measures of effective teaching compared with required diversity courses. This is significant as it suggests that previous studies on the effects of required diversity courses are skewed low, as researchers have likely been including significant curricular experiences with diversity in their comparison groups.

Colgan, J. (2017). Gender Bias in International Relations Graduate Education? New Evidence from Syllabi. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 50(2), 456-460. DOI:10.1017/S1049096516002997.

Gender diversity is good for the study of international relations (IR) and political science. Graduate training is an opportunity for scholars to affect the demographics of their field and the gendered practices within it. This article presents a first-cut investigation of the degree to which gender bias exists in graduate IR syllabi. The author found that the gender of the instructor for graduate courses matters significantly for what type of research is taught, in two ways. First, on average, female instructors assign significantly more research by female authors than male instructors. Second, women appear to be considerably more reluctant than men about assigning their own research as required readings. Some but not all of the difference between male- and female-taught courses might be explained by differences in course composition.

Diament, S., Howat, A., & Lacombe, M. (2018). Gender Representation in the American Politics Canon: An Analysis of Core Graduate Syllabi. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(3), 635-640. DOI:10.1017/S1049096518000392.

Core graduate-level seminars, in many ways, establish the “canon” literature for scholars entering a discipline. In the study of American Politics, the contents of this canon vary widely across departments and instructors, with important implications for the perspectives to which graduate students are exposed. At a basic level, the demographic characteristics of the authors whose work is assigned can have a major impact on the diversity (or lack of diversity) of viewpoints presented in these introductory courses. Using a unique dataset derived from a survey of core American Politics graduate seminars at highly-ranked universities, this project assesses the gender diversity of the authors whose research is currently taught—overall and within a comprehensive list of topics and subtopics. We also assess the “substantive representation” of women (and other underrepresented groups) within the American Politics



canon by examining the frequency with which gender, racial, and other forms of identity politics are taught in these introductory courses.

Sumner, J. (2018). The Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT): A Web-Based Tool for Estimating Gender Balance in Syllabi and Bibliographies. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 51(2), 396-400. DOI:10.1017/S1049096517002074.

This article introduces a web-based tool that scholars can use to assess the gender balance of their syllabi and bibliographies. The citation gap in political science is described briefly as well as why under-citing women relative to men is a problem that should be addressed by the field. The Gender Balance Assessment Tool (GBAT) is presented as a way to make assessing gender balance easier with the aim of remedying the gender gap. This is followed by an outline that explains in nontechnical terms how the tool identifies author names and then predicts their gender to produce a single document-level percentage of women authors. Finally, best practices for diversity in syllabi and bibliographies are discussed, and various public sources that can be used to find scholarly work by women, as well as scholars of color, are listed.

Heidi Hardt, Amy Erica Smith, Hannah June Kim and Philippe Meister. (2019). 'The Gender Gap in Assigned Readings in Graduate Training'. *The Journal of Politics* 2019 81:4, 1528-1532. [DOI](#)

What influences gender representation in assigned readings during graduate training? Whereas recent studies have identified gender gaps in citations and publications, less is known about the readings used to train future political scientists. Introducing a unique dataset of 88,673 citations from 905 Ph.D. syllabi and reading lists, we find that only 19% of assigned readings have female first authors. Scholarship by female scholars is underrepresented in all subfields, relative to several benchmarks. Both supply and demand side factors affect gender representation. First, representation of female-authored readings varies by the size of the pool of female scholars, over time and across subfields. Second, instructor gender and department composition affect demand for female-authored scholarship. As departments hire more female faculty, instructors of both genders become more likely to assign female-authored work. This article contributes an original dataset to the study of graduate training and advances understanding of gender diversity in political science.

