Faculty Emphasis on Diversity Topics and Conversations with Diverse Others

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Abstract

Using data from the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), this study examines how often faculty structure class sessions around diverse topics and how often faculty report students having serious conversations with diverse others in their courses. Findings suggest that faculty most often structure course sessions around economic and social inequalities and report students having the most conversations with people of differing economic or social backgrounds. Faculty members' gender and race matter in predicting these measures of diversity in the classroom, but disciplinary area was the strongest predictor. Implications for assessment and institutional research are discussed.

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College campuses are environments that uniquely position people who represent a diversity of backgrounds, experiences, values, and perspectives to interact with one another. If fostered, these interactions can develop into unique learning experiences. Haines (2007) provides examples of how students' different life experiences and perspectives manifest on one campus:

> A foreign Chinese student explains in impeccable English to an angry American student after 9/11 why it is that people in the world are unsympathetic to America; two Mexican-origin students falter in their class discussion of immigration when they realize they are from completely different social classes; a young Cuban woman comes to realize she is comfortable in both Cuban and Anglo society precisely because she saw how comfortable her parents also were in both worlds; a West African woman struggles to reconcile her own Christian beliefs with her developing critique of the role of missionaries; a presumed Black African patiently explains to his fellow students in an immigration class that he is French. (p. 400)

These examples highlight the fact that campus diversity is multifaceted, including such differences as nationality, language, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, race, and culture, amongst others. As such, the concept of diversity is growing increasingly complicated and more difficult to research (Haines, 2007). Yet, it remains important to understand how campus diversity impacts the student experience.

Previous researchers (e.g., Denson, 2009; Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1998) have grouped research on diversity in higher education into three categories. The first, structural diversity, involves the study of diversity representation on campus. While diverse student representation is a prerequisite to the attainment

of positive diversity-related outcomes, it is only valuable if it creates student engagement in diversity-centered curricular and co-curricular activities. The second group of studies, which Denson (2009) refers to as "classroom diversity," actually includes any "institutionally structured and purposeful programmatic efforts to help students engage in diversity in the form of both ideas and people" (p. 806). These studies focus on institution-wide diversity initiatives aimed at increasing student knowledge and experience. Finally, the study of informal interactional diversity, or cross-racial interaction, has focused on the amount and quality of intergroup interaction during students' college experience. It is important to note that given the complexity of the term "diversity," interactions across difference can include more than just race and ethnicity. These other forms of diversity have also captured the interests of scholars (e.g., Chatman, 2008; Pascarella, Edison, Nora, Hagedorn, & Terenzini, 1996; Haines, 2007). Together, such research has not only given us crucial information regarding how students and institutions are engaging in education for democracy, but has also helped us to identify positive educational and developmental effects associated with diversity on college campuses.

Numerous studies have documented the benefits associated with diversity experiences in higher education. Research shows that interactions across difference influence a host of important student outcomes. These include improved critical thinking and increases in the skills needed to function in a diverse society (Antonio et al., 2004; Hurtado, 2001; Gurin et al., 2002), as well as higher levels of self-efficacy and self-change concerning general academic skills and racial-cultural engagement (Denson & Chang, 2009). Furthermore, diversity in terms of race, interests, and values helps students develop a greater openness to diverse perspectives and a willingness to challenge their own beliefs after the first year of college (Pascarella et al., 1996). Along these lines, research also supports that when diversity initiatives are properly

implemented, they can reduce racial bias (Denson, 2009). Overall, these findings suggest that

exposure to diverse others in college can help to produce citizens who are aware and

knowledgeable about differences, are more comfortable among different people, and can

possibly help to improve race-relations. These are all important attributes in a democratic

society.

Further research has demonstrated that such benefits are not limited to those who directly

participate in diversity activities. Denson and Chang (2009) found that campuses where students

were more engaged with racial diversity (both through knowledge acquisition and/or cross-racial

interaction) had measurable positive effects on *all* students, regardless of their own participation.

Interactions across difference also influence students' perceptions of the college environment.

For example, Nelson Laird and Niskode-Dossett (2010) found that those who engaged in these

types of interactions more frequently noted greater institutional supportiveness and better

relationships with other students, faculty, and administration. Interestingly, these differences

varied across racial and ethnic groups, further complicating notions of diversity. Bowman and

Denson (2012) similarly noted that as the frequency of college interracial interactions increases,

so does overall college satisfaction. However, these scholars also found that the quantity of pre-

college diversity experiences created more differences than racial and ethnic background.

Despite differences in moderators, scholars agree that diversity positively impacts the collegiate

experience.

A few scholars maintain that diversity components work together and strengthen each

other (Zúñiga et al., 2005; Nelson Laird, 2005). To illustrate, Denson and Chang (2009) found

that the value of campus diversity is enhanced by the existence of both curricular diversity and

the opportunity for cross-racial interaction. However, while co-curricular initiatives are certainly

important, it is curricular initiatives demonstrate institutional commitment to diversity (Mayhew, Grunwald, & Dey, 2005). In other words, "the magnitude of an institution's commitment to diversity is measured by its willingness to integrate different racial and ethnic perspectives into its curricular initiatives" (Mayhew et al., 2005, p.408). Thus, the curriculum, and especially the faculty who create the curriculum, can serve as the strongest reinforcements of an institution's diversity goals (Mayhew et al., 2005). As a result, institutions of higher education should be monitoring and assessing how much students participate in these types of interactions and how much faculty emphasize diversity in their courses.

While most research on diversity in higher education has focused on students' engagement with diversity (Denson, 2009; Nelson Laird, 2011), there is still a great deal left unexplored about faculty shaping diversity experiences. Haines (2007) notes that attempts to construct student experiences with diversity are likely to achieve more success within formal academic spaces, writing that "the classroom emerges as a place where diversity can often be addressed and used in productive ways, especially as compared to more personal areas of social interaction where diversity results in segregation rather than interaction" (p. 405). Because of these unique properties of the classroom environment, we sought to further understand how much topics of diversity are addressed and how much students interact across difference within courses.

When considering studies focused exclusively on curricular diversity, very little is known about the role of faculty (Nelson Laird, 2011). In an examination of which faculty and what types of courses are more likely to integrate diversity into the curriculum, Nelson Laird (2011) found that faculty report including diversity in their courses across nine course elements: purpose

and goals, content, foundations and perspectives, instructors, learners, pedagogy, classroom

environment, assessment and evaluation, and adjustment.

Interestingly, but not necessarily surprisingly, an aspect of course content was found to

be the least likely conduit for the inclusion of diversity among the items tested, with 60% of the

faculty in Nelson Laird's (2011) study indicating that "their course content emphasized

contributions from multiple cultures 'Very little' or 'Some'" (p. 583). Unfortunately, none of the

items tested whether faculty encouraged interaction across difference in their courses, though

this is certainly a pedagogical approach indicative of diversity inclusivity.

A few other studies have examined the inclusion of diversity by faculty members, among

them studies on including diverse course content or readings (Hurtado, 2001; Mayhew &

Grunwald, 2006), including feminist or minority perspectives (Milem, 2001), emphasizing

diversity experiences (Kuh et al., 2004; Umbach, 2006), promoting student encounters with

difference (Reason, Cox, Lutovsky Quaye, & Terenzini, 2010), structuring a course to

understand and resolve diversity issues (Smart & Umbach, 2007), and generally addressing

diversity in one's teaching (Maruyama & Moreno, 2000).

In general, these early studies show that gender, race/ethnicity, age, years teaching, rank,

employment status, political orientation, beliefs about diversity, perceptions of department and

institutional commitment to diversity, and prior participation in diversity activities, influence

faculty members' inclusion of diversity into some aspects of their courses. All of the studies that

tested whether academic discipline affected inclusion of diversity show it is a strong predictor

(Milem, 2001; Mayhew & Grunwald, 2006; Smart & Umbach, 2007; Umbach, 2006). In

addition, course characteristics, such as active or student-centered teaching methods, influenced

different measures of diversity inclusion, when such measures were included.

Along with Nelson Laird's (2011) work, these early studies in this area are limited in two important ways. First, they tend to focus very broadly on general diversity inclusivity (e.g., Nelson Laird, 2011) or very narrowly on a particular way diversity is included (e.g., Milem, 2001) and several studies were limited to analyses of a very small number of survey items (sometimes a single item) to represent diversity inclusion.

Given Haines' (2007) assertion of the classroom as an environment poised to productively address diversity, Denson's (2009) recommendation to focus on intergroup interaction as a major component of any diversity activity, and the very limited or general ways inclusivity has so far been measured, we focused our study on the inclusion of diversity in two areas: interactions within classrooms across several areas of difference and inclusion of a variety of diversity-related course topics. Understanding these dynamics of the classroom is vital to deepening our knowledge of diversity inclusivity in the college curriculum.

Our specific purpose was to explore more deeply the faculty role in including diversity into their course content and pedagogy. This was accomplished using two measures: the inclusion of diversity topics in the classroom and faculty perceptions of serious conversations between students who differ from one another. The following questions guide this research:

1. How often do faculty structure course sessions around various topics of diversity?

2. How often do students have serious conversations across a variety of differences in the classroom environment?

3. Which faculty and course characteristics predict the inclusion of diverse course content and student interactions across difference?

Methods

Data

This study draws from the 2011 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), an annual survey of faculty designed to complement the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). FSSE items ask faculty members about their expectations for students, their observations of student behaviors, how they spend their time on professional activities (e.g., teaching, advising, and research), and how they structure classroom activities and course assignments to encourage certain student behaviors and outcomes. FSSE offers participating institutions two survey options, one where each faculty member responds to several questions about a particular course s/he taught during the current academic year and the other where faculty respond to several questions about the typical first-year student or senior taught during the current academic year (for more information about the survey options, visit fsse.iub.edu).

In addition to the core survey items, each year FSSE offers sets of items that can be added to the end of the questionnaire. Prior to administration, institutions either actively select an extra set of items to administer to their faculty members or, in the event that no active choice is made, get assigned an extra set for administration. In 2011, an extra set that included items about student serious conversations across difference and faculty structuring their courses around diversity-oriented topics were administered at 38 colleges and universities in the US and Canada.

Because this study focused on these extra items as well as aspects of particular courses, the data for the study come from the 26 U.S. baccalaureate-granting colleges and universities that administered the course-based survey option and the extra items on diversity topic and serious conversations across difference. Response rates at the 26 institutions ranged from 22% to 77%, with an average response rate of 43%. Half of the institutions were public and half were private.

Of the 26, 4 (15%) were doctoral/research universities, 13 (50%) were master's institutions, 8 (31%) were baccalaureate colleges, and 1 (4%) was of another Carnegie type (e.g., a baccalaureate/associates college or a school of business or management). Undergraduate enrollments ranged from about 1,000 to more than 15,000 and selectivity ranged from noncompetitive to most competitive according to Barron's ratings, with more than half the institutions in the competitive or very competitive categories.

Sample

After listwise deletion for missing data, the sample for this study contained 2,240 faculty members. Almost half (48%) of the respondents were female and nearly four-fifths (79%) were White (with 5% Asian, 4% African American, 2% Hispanic, 3% other racial/ethnic minorities including American Indian and multiracial faculty, and 7% indicated a preference not to respond to the race/ethnicity item). Less than one-tenth of the faculty members were non-US citizens (7%). Slightly less than three-quarters (73%) of the respondent held a doctorate. The median number of prior years of teaching was 14 and the median course load was 6 for the 2010-11 academic year. Of the respondents, 10% were part-time lecturers or instructors, 11% were full-time lecturers or instructors, 27% were assistant professors, 26% were associate professors, and 26% were full professors.

Slightly more than half (53%) of the courses faculty responded about were upper division (about 40% were lower division and 6% were other courses). More than half (57%) of the courses had between 21 and 50 students, with 30% smaller courses and 12% larger courses. Over two-fifths of the courses fulfilled a general education requirement (43%) and 7% were taught online. Also, the courses faculty responded about came from a variety of disciplinary areas (categories were based on Biglan's, 1973a,b work; also see Nelson Laird, Shoup, Kuh, & Swartz,

2008): 8% were in hard-pure-life fields (biological sciences), 13% were in hard-pure-non-life fields (e.g., mathematics or physics), 1% were in hard-applied-life fields (e.g., agriculture or medicine), 2% were in hard-applied-non-life fields (engineering), 11% were in soft-pure-life fields (e.g., psychology or sociology), 25% were in soft-pure-non-life fields (e.g., English or history), 18% were in soft-applied-life fields (e.g., education or social work), 14% were in soft-applied-non-life fields (e.g., business administration or communications), and 8% non-classified fields (e.g., gender studies or computer science).

Measures and Analyses

We focused our study on faculty responses to ten survey items about their courses, five of which addressed how often students had serious conversations with people who differ from them in several ways (e.g., political views, economic or social background, racial/ethnic background) and five others that addressed how often faculty structure class sessions around diversity-oriented topics (e.g., economic or social inequalities, issues of race, ethnicity, or nation, or issues of gender or sexual identity). See Table 1 for the wording and response options of the survey items. These 10 items were used for descriptive analyses and to construct two internally reliable scales ($\alpha = 0.93$ for both scales). Simple frequencies were used to examine how often faculty reported students in their courses participated in each type of conversation or how often their courses dealt with diversity-oriented topics. For each scale, frequencies and means were used to understand how regularly faculty members' courses included these interactions and topics.

Although the data were nested (faculty within institutions), three factors led us to use ordinary least squares regression. First, we were concerned with the effects at level one for this study. Second, the institution-level variability was fairly small in these measures indicating no need to model institution-level variance and suggesting that separating the variance and

modeling at the institution level would not affect faculty-level estimates. Finally, with only 26

institutions, we had little predictive power at the institution level. Two regression models were

run, one for each scale, to understand how characteristics of the faculty members and their

courses predicted these practices. Each dependent measure was regressed on faculty

characteristics (gender, race/ethnicity, U.S. citizenship status, highest degree earned, years of

teaching experience, rank and employment status, and course load) and course characteristics

(disciplinary area, level, size, whether the course is a general education requirement, and whether

the course is taught in a distance education format). See the Appendix for independent variable

descriptions. We standardized each dependent measure prior to running the analyses.

Consequently, the unstandardized coefficients for dichotomously measured independent

variables are equivalent to standardized mean differences with pooled standard deviations (i.e.

effect sizes). Standardized coefficients yield effect size estimates for the continuously measured

indicators (years of teaching experience and course load).

Limitations

This study has two primary limitations. First, institutions select into FSSE and determine

which faculty members are invited to participate. Some institutions, presumably based on

interest, decide which extra items will be asked of their faculty. Further, invited faculty members

decide whether to participate or not. These selection processes may limit the claims that can be

made about the representativeness of the sample. However, based on several institutional and

faculty characteristics, participating institutions represent a wide variety of U.S. colleges and

universities and a wide diversity of faculty members.

Second, the courses at participating institutions were not sampled. Rather, faculty

members chose the courses about which they responded. This approach, while it produced a wide

variety of course types, makes it impossible to determine whether the courses in the study are representative of all courses at participating institutions, which may further limit the study's generalizability beyond the institutions and courses covered by the faculty in the sample.

Results

Table 2 shows scale means and item frequencies for the serious conversations across difference and diversity topics items. The item distributions show that three-fifths to three-quarters of the faculty respondents, at least sometimes, had students in their classes having serious conversations across differences in political views, economic or social background, racial or ethnic background or country of origin, religious beliefs or philosophy of life, or sexual orientation. Faculty were most likely to report students having serious conversations in their courses across economic or social backgrounds (72% indicated this occurred at least sometimes) and least likely to indicate serious conversations across differences in sexual orientation (59% indicated this occurred at least sometimes).

Overall, fewer faculty structured their courses to address diversity topics. The item distributions show that about three-fifths to slightly less than half of the faculty members structured their courses to address economic or social inequalities, issues of race, ethnicity, or nationality, religious or philosophical differences, differences in political views, or issues of gender or sexual identity. Faculty were most likely to report structuring their courses around economic or social inequalities (58% indicated doing so at least sometimes) and least likely to structure a course around issues of gender or sexual identity (47% indicated doing so at least sometimes).

Our regression findings indicate that several faculty and course characteristics affect how much students had serious conversations across difference in faculty members' courses and how

much those courses deal with diversity topics even after controlling for the other variables in the

model (see Table 3). After controlling for other faculty and course characteristics, women

reported that their students had serious conversations across difference 0.13 of a standard

deviation more than their male colleagues. Black/African American faculty and faculty from

other racial/ethnic groups indicated that their students had serious conversations across

difference more than their White colleagues (B = .37, p < 0.001, and B = 0.34, p < 0.01, for each

group respectively), while Asian faculty indicated that students in their courses had these serious

conversations a quarter of a standard deviation less than indicated by their White colleagues. No

other faculty characteristics were significant in the serious conversations model.

Interestingly, the difference between lower division and upper division courses, after

controlling for other factors, was near zero (B = -0.02, p > 0.05), but faculty teaching courses

that did not fit the lower-upper division dichotomy reported two-tenths of a standard deviation

more serious conversations across difference in their courses than faculty teaching upper division

courses (B = 0.20, p < 0.05). Faculty teaching small- and medium-sized courses indicated

slightly more than a tenth of a standard deviation more serious conversations across difference in

their courses than large courses, though the difference was only significant for medium-sized

courses. Faculty teaching general education requirements also reported significantly more

serious conversations across difference in their courses (B = 0.19, p < 0.001).

By far the biggest differences in the serious conversations measure, even after controlling

for the other factors in the model, were in the comparisons by disciplinary area. Hard fields

scored, on average, approximately half to three-quarters of a standard deviation below soft-pure-

non-life fields (e.g., English), with non-life fields (e.g., mathematics and engineering) scoring the

lowest. Soft-pure-life fields (e.g., psychology) scored a quarter of a standard deviation above and

soft-applied-non-life fields (e.g., business administration) scored about a quarter of a standard deviation below soft-pure-non-life fields.

For the indicator of including diversity topics into one's course, the regression results show that women, on average, scored two-tenths of a standard deviation above their male colleagues ($B = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$) after controlling for other factors. Black/African American faculty and faculty from other racial/ethnic groups scored higher than their White colleagues on this indicator as well ($B = .25$, $p < 0.05$, and $B = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$, for each group respectively), while all other groups scored about the same as their White colleagues. Structuring one's course to include diversity-oriented topics was related to the highest degree earned by a faculty member. Doctorate-holding faculty members scored about a quarter of a standard deviation higher than their colleagues who do not have a doctorate ($B = 0.24$, $p < 0.001$). No other faculty characteristics were significant in the diversity topics model.

Course size and whether a course met a general education requirement were the only two course characteristics significantly related to the diversity topics measure after controlling for the other measures. Surprisingly, faculty teaching small courses indicated including diversity topics slightly less than large courses ($B = -0.17$, $p < 0.01$). Faculty teaching general education requirements reported including diversity topics more than other courses ($B = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$).

Again, the biggest differences were apparent in the comparisons by disciplinary area and mirrored those in the previous model, though the magnitude of the differences was larger. After controlling for the other variables, hard fields scored, on average, approximately nine-tenths to one and a tenth standard deviations below soft-pure-non-life fields, with non-life fields scoring the lowest as in the other model. Soft-pure-life fields scored 0.37 of a standard deviation above and soft-applied-non-life fields scored half a standard deviation below soft-pure-non-life fields.

Discussion and Implications

Given the established benefits of diversity for students (Gurin et al., 2002), it is important to understand how and where experiences with diversity are occurring on campus. With this study, we have attempted to whittle down into one such space, the classroom, to gain a better understanding of (a) how often serious conversations across difference are occurring, (b) how often faculty structure their courses to address a range of diversity topics, and (c) the combination of faculty and course characteristics that are most likely to lead to these types of diversity inclusion.

When examining the first two questions, a pattern emerges. Topics of economic and social inequalities and race or ethnicity were more frequently addressed in classes and these areas of difference were the most regularly cited by faculty as the differences across which students had serious conversations. More than 70% of faculty members reported that their students interacted at least sometimes across these differences and more than half of the faculty reported that they, at least sometimes, structured their courses to address these topics. This suggests that, on average, students at the institutions in this study have ample opportunity to engage diversity topics and interact across difference. This is good news for educational outcomes given the demonstrated benefits of such diversity experiences.

Even though the other topics considered in this study—religious or philosophical differences, political views, and issues of gender or sexual identity—were emphasized less in the classroom, both as topics of course sessions and in the serious conversations that occur among students, there were still many faculty indicating inclusion of diversity in these ways. About half of the faculty/courses in this study dealt with these issues as topics for the course at least sometimes and 59% to 68% of faculty reported at least some interactions across these differences

in their classrooms. While there is room for more courses and more faculty members to emphasize these types of diversity inclusivity, this shows a fairly remarkable widespread inclusion of diversity, which should result in improved outcomes for many students.

The results, however, point us toward interesting follow-up questions about how and why some areas of diversity are most frequently reported by faculty than others. For example, do the differences in which issues are emphasized more relate to with visibility or media coverage? Is it related to how society has dealt with these issues? Does it relate to course popularity and the sizes of different fields (i.e., more faculty teach in areas related to economic and social differences than religion and philosophy)? Or, is this related to faculty comfort dealing with diversity issues and interactions in class?

For institutions, these differences suggest that there is room for important discussions about what issues, if any, should be emphasized more and what types of interactions faculty should be encouraging. Continued faculty development regarding how to consider and incorporate diversity seems needed if institutions wish to increase these types of diversity inclusion in the courses.

The third question of interest in this study was about the faculty and course characteristics that are predictive of diverse interactions. Our findings indicate that female and African American faculty members include diversity more, a finding alligned with past studies of diversity inclusion and good teaching, more generally (Nelson Laird, 2011). Given the marginalization that women and faculty of color face, it would seem a heightened personal sensitivity to topics of diversity and difference may be part of the reason faculty include diversity in the ways examined in this study. In addition to these faculty characteristics, having a doctorate degree and teaching a general education course were also significant predictors of structuring

course sessions around diverse topics and reporting more serious conversations across difference.

For the former, a rationale for this effect is not clear. Perhaps it has to do with valuing

differences in thought and approach that may be emphasized in doctoral training. Those assigned

to teach general education courses may feel a greater responsibility for include diversity given

the goals and purposes of general education.

Although we do not have information on the political views, religious beliefs, sexual

orientation, and social and economic backgrounds of the faculty in this study, we do know their

race, ethnicity, and gender orientations. The majority of the faculty in this study identified as

White (79%) or male (52%). The relative lack of diversity, especially in terms of race and

ethnicity, among faculty members affects the experiences of students. Previous research on the

student experience suggests that students who belong to the racial minority may feel less

included in environments where their identities are not reflected. In a study of faculty practices at

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly White Institutions

(PWIs), Shaw, Cole, Harris, and Nelson Laird (2012) found that active classroom practices (such

as interactions across difference) are more likely to occur on campuses with more diversity

among faculty. Shaw et al. (2012) conclude that "PWIs could get closer to HBCU practices and

outcomes if they either employed faculty members with characteristics (race and rank) more like

those of faculty at HBCUs or reduced the effects" of faculty characteristics (p. 15). Similarly, we

suggest that increased diversity amongst faculty members and increasing the amount male and

White faculty, for example, include diversity should lead to an increase in the opportunities for

students to be exposed to diverse topics and engage in conversations across difference.

This logic also applies to our results regarding fields of study. To increase how much

diversity is included in the curriculum, institutions could hire more in the soft fields and spend

time finding appropriate ways for those in hard fields (e.g., physical and biological sciences and engineering) to include diversity, which may, due to subject area, focus more in pedagogy (e.g., interactions across difference) and elements other than content (diversity topics). Improving diversity inclusion in hard fields may well be part of the solution to the often-cited lack of and need for minority representation in STEM disciplines.

Conclusion

In this study, we explored two specific ways faculty members include diversity in their courses with two sets of items that cover a variety of diversity topics and interactions across diverse groups. We found that many faculty members include a range of diversity topics in their courses and slightly fewer report students interacting across differences in their courses. Racial and ethnic and social and economic differences were the most common topics and types of difference across which students had serious conversations. Women and African American faculty as well as those holding a doctorate, those teaching general education courses, and those teaching in soft fields reported including diversity topics and serious conversations more than their colleagues. Our work, which was largely exploratory, points toward future studies examining why certain faculty include particular types of diversity more. It also suggests productive avenues for institutions to question who should be responsible for including diversity and what courses should include diversity.

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Appendix
Faculty and Course Characteristics

Variable	Description
Female	1 = Female (48%), 0 = Male (52%)
Race/ethnicity[a]	Black or African American (4%); Asian American or Pacific Islander (5%); Hispanic (2%); Other (3%); Preferred not to answer (7%); *White* (79%)
Non-U.S. citizen	1 = non-U.S. citizen (7%); 0 = U.S. citizen (93%)
Doctorate	1 = Doctorate earned (73%); 0 = No doctorate (27%)
Rank and employment status[a]	*PT Lecturer* (10%); FT Lecturer (11%); Assistant professor (27%); Associate professor (26%); Professor (26%)
Years teaching (in decades)	Number of decades teaching (mean = 1.62, sd = 1.09)
Course load	Number of courses taught in 2010-11 (mean = 5.90, sd = 2.59)
Disciplinary area[a,b]	Hard-pure-life (8%); Hard-pure-non-life (13%); Hard-applied-life (1%); Hard-applied-non-life (3%); Soft-pure-life (11%); *Soft-pure-non-life* (25%); Soft-applied-life (18%); Soft-applied-non-life (14%); Other fields (8%)
Level of students taught[a]	*Upper division* (53%); Lower division (40%); Other (6%)
Course size	0 to 20 students (30%); 21 to 50 students (57%); *more than 50 students* (13%)
General education requirement	1 = Yes (44%); 0 = No (56%)
Distance education format	1 = Yes (7%); 0 = No (93%)

[a] Dichotomous indicators created for each sub-group (1 = in sub-group, 0 = not in sub-group). All but one indicator was included in the regression analyses. The indicator for italicized sub-group was left out, indicating it served as the reference group.
[b] Categories from Biglan (1973a,b); see Nelson Laird, Shoup, Kuh, & Schwarz (2008) to see fields by category.

Table 1
Dependent Variables

Scales and Component Items

Serious conversations across difference ($\alpha = 0.93$)

  During the current school year, about how often have the students done each of the following in your courses:

  a. Had serious conversations with people whose political views are very different from their own

  b. Had serious conversations with people who differ from them in economic or social background

  c. Had serious conversations with people who differ from them in race, ethnic background, or country of origin

  d. Had serious conversations with people who differ from them in religious beliefs or philosophy of life

  e. Had serious conversations with people whose sexual orientation is different from their own

Diverse topics ($\alpha = 0.93$)

  During the current school year, about how often have you structured a class session around each of the following topics:

  a. Economic or social inequalities

  b. Issues of race, ethnicity, or nationality

  c. Religious or philosophical differences

  d. Differences in political viewpoints

  e. Issues of gender or sexual identity

Note. Response options for each item were 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often

Table 2
Scale Means and Standard Deviations and Component Item Frequencies for Serious
Conversations across Difference and Diverse Topics

| | Item Frequencies | | | |
Scales and Items	Never	Some-times	Often	Very Often
Serious conversations across difference (mean = 2.01, sd = 0.81)				
Political views	34%	42%	15%	9%
Economic or social backgrounds	28%	42%	20%	10%
Race, ethnic background, or country of origin	28%	42%	18%	11%
Religious beliefs or philosophy of life	32%	43%	17%	8%
Sexual orientation	41%	41%	11%	6%
Diverse topics (mean = 1.90, sd = 0.91)				
Economic or social inequalities	42%	28%	16%	13%
Issues of race, ethnicity, or nationality	43%	26%	16%	16%
Religious or philosophical differences	51%	27%	13%	9%
Differences in political viewpoints	49%	27%	14%	10%
Issues of gender or sexual identity	53%	24%	12%	11%

Note. Scale scores were averages of responses for the five component items and thus ranged from 1 to 4.

Table 3
Serious Conversations across Difference and Diversity Topics Regression Results (N = 2,240)

	Serious Conversations[a]			Diversity Topics[a]		
	B	SE of B	β	B	SE of B	β
Constant	-.23	.12		-0.08	0.11	
Female	.13	.04	0.07**	0.21	0.04	0.10***
Race/ethnicity (White = reference group)						
Asian	-.25	.10	-0.06*	0.03	0.09	0.01
Black/African American	.37	.11	0.07***	0.25	0.10	0.05*
Hispanic	.17	.14	0.02	0.25	0.13	0.04
Other race/ethnicity	.34	.11	0.06**	0.48	0.10	0.09***
Preferred not to respond	.00	.08	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.01
Non-U.S. citizen	-.17	.09	-0.04	-0.11	0.08	-0.03
Doctorate earned	.06	.06	0.03	0.24	0.05	0.11***
Years teaching (in decades)	.00	.02	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01
Rank and employment status (part-time lecturer = reference group)						
Full-time lecturer	-.02	.09	-0.01	0.03	0.08	0.01
Assistant professor	.03	.08	0.02	0.03	0.07	0.01
Associate professor	.07	.09	0.03	0.07	0.08	0.03
Full professor	.05	.09	0.02	-0.01	0.08	-0.00
Course load	.01	.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02
Disciplinary area (soft-pure-non-life = reference group)						
Hard-pure-life	-.53	.08	-0.14***	-0.92	0.08	-0.25***
Hard-pure-non-life	-.73	.07	-0.24***	-1.13	0.06	-0.37***
Hard-applied-life	-.58	.23	-0.05*	-0.86	0.21	-0.08***
Hard-applied-non-life	-.66	.14	-0.10***	-0.98	0.13	-0.15***
Soft-pure-life	.26	.07	0.08***	0.37	0.07	0.12***
Soft-applied-life	.08	.07	0.03	0.03	0.06	0.01
Soft-applied-non-life	-.23	.07	-0.08***	-0.52	0.06	-0.18***
Other field	-.23	.08	-0.06**	-0.42	0.07	-0.11***
Course level (Upper division = reference group)						
Lower division course	-.02	.05	-0.01	-0.05	0.04	-0.03
Other course level	.20	.08	0.05*	-0.03	0.08	-0.01
Course size (more than 50 students = reference group)						
20 students or less	.13	.07	0.06	-0.17	0.06	-0.08**
21 to 50 students	.13	.06	0.06*	-0.07	0.06	-0.03
Gen ed requirement	.19	.05	0.09***	0.27	0.04	0.13***
Distance format	-.09	.08	-0.02	-0.09	0.07	-0.02
R-squared (Std Error)		0.15 (0.93)			0.30 (0.84)	
F		13.91***			33.38***	

$* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001$

[a] Dependent variable standardized prior to entry into the model.