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## Diversity in the college curriculum : overview of the literature

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## Diversity in the college curriculum : overview of the literature

### Abstract

The colleges and universities in the United States that have adopted a proactive commitment to diversity in the curriculum have done so because they understand how their central mission is linked with the future of a diverse society. They are aware that, in the new millennium, most new jobs in the economy require a postsecondary education, and women and racial/ethnic minorities compose a majority of the workforce. One result of this awareness is the transformation taking place at many institutions that links diversity in the curriculum with the development of new teaching practices and learning practices.

This review of the literature explores the research and current developments in the general education curriculum transformation. It attempts to provide an insight into what these changes seek to accomplish and what they mean for today's college students. It concludes with the consideration that higher education efforts to address diversity issues in the general education curriculum are fostering intellectual development, cultural knowledge, and interracial understanding among all college students.

**Diversity in the College Curriculum:**

**A Review of the Literature**

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## **Introduction**

The colleges and universities in the United States that have adopted a proactive commitment to diversity in the curriculum have done so because they understand how their central mission is linked with the future of a diverse society. They are aware that, in the new millennium, most new jobs in the economy require a postsecondary education, and women and racial/ethnic minorities compose a majority of the workforce. One result of this awareness is the transformation taking place at many institutions that links diversity in the curriculum with the development of new teaching practices and learning practices. According to Hurtado (1999), changes to higher education practices and curricula began nearly 40 years ago, when institutions first opened their doors to groups that previously had been excluded from higher education including African-American, Hispanics/Latino, Asian-American and Native American students. As student bodies become more diverse, scholars are generating a wealth of new knowledge about the diversity of cultural traditions and histories in this country and around the world. Correspondingly, these institutions have implemented a wide variety of programs and new curricula to effectively educate all students for a diverse society and interconnected world.

An increasingly comprehensive body of research is now emerging that documents the effects of diversity on student learning and campus relations. Just how students are affected, however, has been a matter of some controversy. Astin (1993) contends that diversity in the curriculum has positive impacts on the attitudes of students toward racial

issues, on opportunities to interact in deeper ways with those who are different, and on overall satisfaction with their higher education experience. These benefits are particularly powerful for white students who have had less opportunity for such engagement during their high school experience. Musil (1993) reveals that women's studies courses encourage more debates among students than other kinds of courses and in fact, improve women's attitudes towards men. However, some critics present opposing points of view on what developments in curriculum transformation mean for today's students. Thernstrom and Thernstrom (1997) argue that, through diversity programs, colleges reinforce negative stereotypes even as they seek to broaden students' understanding of different groups. "Elite schools admit minorities with lower test scores than whites. White students on those campuses may be given a false sense of superiority" (p. 388). Bunzel (1992) report ignore the renaissance in curriculum, teaching, intercultural understanding and civic dialogue that characterizes how colleges and universities are transforming what and how they teach.

This review of the literature explores the research and current developments in the general education curriculum transformation. It attempts to provide an insight into what these changes seek to accomplish and what they mean for today's college students. It concludes with the consideration that higher education efforts to address diversity issues in the general education curriculum are fostering intellectual development, cultural knowledge, and interracial understanding among all college students.

For the purpose of this paper, *diversity* is defined as the increasingly complex mix of races, cultures, languages and religious affiliations on college campuses.

Socioeconomic dynamics, gender, sexual orientation, and exceptionality are also considered in this context.

## Research and Developments in Curriculum Transformation

In its first issue for 1992, *Change* magazine presented an article by J. Graff (1992), senior staff member of the Association of American Colleges. It reported results from an earlier study of three hundred colleges and universities in America. Graff found multiculturalism to be "very much on the ascendancy," (Graff, 1990, 2) with schools requiring "more studies of international topics or other cultures, more courses on racial and ethnic minorities and greater attention to gender and human relations." (Graff, 1990, 2) The question "is no longer whether students should learn about diverse cultures, but how" (Graff, 1990, 3).

These changes have not occurred, however, throughout all aspects of the higher education curriculum and institutional structure. According to the *Change* survey report, adjustments were not taking place across all academic departments. They were largely occurring in English, history, and the social sciences. It was also noted that many of these changes included only the addition of new material to existing courses and less than half of the institutions surveyed offered separate courses in women's studies, Hispanic studies, Native-American studies, Asian-American studies, African-American studies, and gay and lesbian studies.

In an influential article, Musil (1996) states that college courses today offer students a deeper and more complete picture of the culture and history of the United States. "These courses are instrumental for expanding diversity perspectives within the increasing multicultural campus environment. Professors are utilizing new texts and



teaching techniques designed to prepare students for increasingly complex and diverse communities and workplaces" (p. 61).

Struggles about what sorts of courses should be taught in college are not new and are no more heated today than they have been in the past. Schlesinger (1986) argues that multicultural education threatens to divide students along racial and cultural lines, rather than unite them as Americans. He believes that a core curriculum focused on "classic" texts and "western civilization" is threatened by current curricular innovations. Lawrence W. Levine (1996) of George Mason University reminds us, however, "The canon and the curriculum . . . were constantly in the process of revision with irate defenders insisting, as they still do, that change would bring instant decline. The inclusion of "modern" writers from Shakespeare to Walt Whitman . . . came only after prolonged battles as intense and divisive as those that rage today" (p. 187). According to Hurtado(1999), diversifying and expanding the knowledge base of the college curriculum does not prevent students from studying traditional texts. Contrary to some reports, faculty members are not ignoring traditional texts as they expose students to new voices that have also shaped our heritage and culture. In fact, students report that they are gaining a deeper understanding of classic texts through these new courses.

There are no fool-proof steps to making diversity work on a college campus, but lessons learned from various diversity initiatives in this arena are helpful in guiding others over the sometimes challenging issues. Valverde & Castenell (1998) maintain that colleges and universities across this nation are transforming their curricula because college leaders increasingly recognize that knowledge about the diversity of this country's history and culture and understanding about international diversity are essential tools for

today's students. The study, *"Beyond Zero-Sum Diversity: Student Support for Educational Equity"* by Lopez, Holliman, & Peng (1995) asserts that when diversity is perceived as a broad educational goal, all students are much more likely to be supportive of its principles. Results from this study at the University of Michigan reveal that there is overwhelming support for diversity on campus in several areas. Lopez et al. (1995) report that students clearly recognize the presence of inequality and racial discrimination, and they recognize, too, that something needs to be done to address these problems. They also offer a broad support for the development of an inclusive, multicultural curriculum.

An increasing number of colleges and universities now require students to take at least one diversity course in order to graduate. Many of the courses that students take to fulfill these requirements are offered through ethnic studies or women's studies programs. The ALANA (African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American) Studies program at the University of Vermont (UVT) recently undertook a self-study in order to assess the impact of its ethnic studies courses on students.

The study examined the reasons students took the ALANA Studies courses and the impact these courses had on increasing students' understanding of race and U.S. diversity issues. The UVT study revealed that students taking ALANA courses to fulfill a diversity requirement seemed to be learning a great deal about U.S. diversity and were highly satisfied with their experiences. Furthermore, students surveyed by UVT's ALANA Studies program were almost evenly split between those who were enrolled to satisfy a college requirement and those who were not. However, the survey also found that those students taking the courses to satisfy the requirement were clustered in only a

few lower-level courses. According to Grinde (1997), fifty-eight percent of all students taking courses to satisfy a race and ethnicity requirement were in a freshman-level Sociology course, "U.S. Race Relations." In fact, about two-thirds of the students satisfying the requirement took either "U.S. Race Relations" or similar content freshman-level course. This pattern may indicate popularity of the course among students or the influence of limited options such as scheduling times, perceived content, or faculty assigned to deliver the course. Grinde (1997) also found that many students taking these courses intended to take other ALANA courses in subsequent semesters. In the courses where most of the students were attending to fulfill the requirement, 23 percent of the students became motivated to take other ALANA courses in subsequent semesters. In the remaining ALANA courses surveyed, 46 percent of the students indicated a desire to take more ALANA Studies courses.

The study also reveals that students highly approve of their ALANA Studies classes and the faculty who teach them. Grinde (1997) reports that fifty-three percent of the ALANA Studies courses in the sample were taught by faculty of color. The data also indicate that faculty of color and white faculty members' approval ratings were virtually the same. "Students seemed to appreciate the varying viewpoints and the mix of white faculty members and faculty of color in ALANA Studies courses" (p. 2).

In addition to information about why they were taking these courses, the survey also asked students if they agreed with statements about whether their courses had "strengthened their understanding of issues of race" and "their understanding of and appreciation for cultural diversity in the United States." They were also asked to agree or disagree that the courses had "cultivated critical skills and provided valuable theoretical

and/or historical frameworks to examine racial and cultural diversity in the United States." More than 85 percent of the student respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with these statements.

The qualitative results of this study are also very revealing. Grindy (1997) found that in written comments, students stated that they were given an excellent grounding in theories and cultural perceptions about race and diversity issues and that they were encouraged to apply this knowledge to the experiences of U.S. peoples of color. One student remarked that the courses had "given [her] a better understanding of racism and its origins." Another student suggested that the courses taught her "the necessity to look at all perspectives, not just mine. And not to be afraid to ask questions." Finally, a student made this remark about the course that he took on African American history: "I was aware of surface issues, but this course went beyond what I had always thought. I feel that I have a better understanding and thus greater empathy for interracial tensions." (Grinde, 1997, p. 4).

While some new courses are being added, many of the changes in the college curriculum include improvements to existing courses. The School of Management at Arizona State University undertook a revision of its undergraduate curriculum to better promote integration, critical thinking and knowledge and impact of global issues for business students entering upper division courses. According to Malekzadeh (1998), the result produced a relatively different curriculum, which included four new courses. The most important component of these changes was the introduction of a new course called "Gateway." This course provided the transition of undergraduate students into the upper

level business courses with better understanding of global issues and the internationalization of the business curriculum.

After reviewing the literature on business education, examining the requirements by the accreditation authority, and considering the wishes of some of the major constituencies, Malekzadeh (1998) identified four goals for the new curriculum: diversity and change, globalization, curriculum integration, critical thinking and communication skills. This proposal was justified in part by the ever-changing global business environment: "Students need to learn how to deal with constant change and the increasing demands for multicultural integration in the workplace" (p. 592).

Malekzadeh (1998) proposed to enhance the integration of functional areas and to introduce students to fundamental curriculum themes. A new international business course was proposed to the required curriculum to enhance globalization. A new course on culture and change was aimed at further focusing on diversity, culture, and change. In addition, a course on relationship management focused on integration and communication skills development. According to Malekzadeh (1998), faculty were asked to include as much writing and as many presentations as possible in their courses to enhance the critical thinking and communication skills of the students. These new courses replaced many electives; some other required courses were dropped or sent to the lower division (e.g., business communication), and some existing courses were renamed and their content was upgraded.

The Gateway team leaders were joined by two experienced faculty to develop and implement the course. The faculty approved the following objectives for the course: "introduce the functional areas of business and the integration among them, give the

students a strong awareness of the global issues, and develop students' critical thinking skills through extensive writing and other activities" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 601). The course was designed to be the first required course for all business students entering the upper division. "If students can think critically and are familiar with the forces of diversity, globalization, and integration, they will have higher chance for success in their business education and business careers" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 597).

It became evident to Gateway team members that in order to accomplish some of the course objectives, other experts in the university would need to participate. Two librarians who were experienced in business research joined the team. "They brought a wealth of expertise about how to gain access to information and how to use the latest technology in on-line research" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 597). In addition, the director of the Center for Writing across the Curriculum helped in creating course assignments challenging students to develop and master writing skills. "He helped to develop students' critical thinking skills through assignments that became progressively more complex and not only required increasingly higher levels of research and analysis but also demanded reasoning, evaluation, synthesis, and persuasion skills" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 603). This combination of class discussions, team activities, and intensive research and writing allowed the Gateway course to achieve its goals of integration, globalization, and critical thinking while also serving as a successful entry course for the upper division business students. "Through student evaluations, assessment questionnaires by the writing and library colleagues, and evaluation of the business folders, faculty team systematically ascertained the positive aspects of the course and set out to adjust some of its relatively minor difficulties" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 604).

The results of this study reveal that the curriculum revision process and the design of Gateway were positive and constructive learning experiences for most team members. As one faculty member states, "I found myself to be a coach, a facilitator, a listener, and a student. I removed barriers, answered questions when possible, and pointed the students in a general direction. Often, they asked me to be more precise; I refused. I simply let them discover, choose among alternatives, and make decisions. Collectively, we failed, we learned, and we pushed on" (Malekzadeh, 1998, p. 604).

In a different study at the University of Houston, Gonzalez (1995) disputes the approach that many educators embrace when addressing issues of sexuality in diversity courses. Many who do incorporate these issues into their diversity classes frame their discussions around the issue of homophobia. "Homophobia describes the fear of homosexuality and the resulting denigration of gay and lesbian people" (p. 328). According to Gonzalez (1995), in most college classrooms the tendency to neglect and ignore gays and lesbians is common practice. "If we truly want students to confront issues of identity and discrimination in all their complexity" states Gonzalez, "we should not ignore an important element of identity that conditions other factors like racism and sexism" (p. 328).

Since 1991, Gonzalez has made the topic of sexual identity a vital component in teaching literature courses. A major author in Mexican-American literature classes is Gloria Anzaldua, who directly addresses issues of homophobia and heterosexism from a personal perspective. According to Gonzalez (1995), the incorporation of gay or lesbian personalities in literature reveals that students are more resistant to learning about sexual identity issues than they are to addressing issues of race or gender. "By dismissing and

limiting their participation in class discussions, students expose their own fears and homophobia, understandable given the heterosexist world we occupy" (p. 339). In the class, Gonzalez (1995) introduces the subject of homosexuality by helping students to see that they live in a heterosexist world. "Sometimes, it seems that students are incapable of addressing these issues with the same maturity that they bring to other classroom subjects. Much of their emotionally immature responses result from the lack of adult dialogue about sexuality among students" (p. 342). Gonzalez argues that this ability to openly and maturely discuss sexuality in the classroom certainly has profound implications beyond students' abilities to learn about the diversity around them. It also helps students assess their own attitudes and perceptions on other sensitive and controversial issues.

Another study by Kiang, Emura, Koo, Koyama, Lee, Mach, Matsubara & Pires (1997) at the University of Massachusetts in Boston analyzed what meaning and impact Asian American Studies courses have had over time in the lives of alumni. "Asian American Studies" at the University of Massachusetts is described "as an interdisciplinary academic field dedicated to the documentation and interpretation of the history, identity, social formation, contributions, and contemporary concerns of Asian and Pacific Americans and their communities living in the United States" (Kian et al., 1997, p. 1). Much of their research supports continued program development for Asian American Studies at UMass Boston as well as a concrete assessment of the university's Diversity Course graduation requirement which most of the Asian American Studies courses satisfy. This work also informs national debates about diversifying the curriculum and about the long-term impact of ethnic studies courses in higher education.



The results of the study are based on mailed surveys with both closed and open-ended questions and informal individual interviews and on focus-group interviews with alumni. "Designed as a student-faculty-alumni collaboration, the research process has integrated explicit goals of training/mentoring and community-building among different generations of students" (Kian et al., 1997, p. 4).

The results of Kian et al. (1997) also reveal that Asian American Studies courses have had an overwhelmingly positive impact in areas that include jobs/careers, education, family life, friendships and interpersonal relationships, community involvement, social awareness, and personal identities. While these positive impacts cut across all groups, regardless of race, gender, courses taken, or year of graduation, Kian et al. (1997) found some meaningful differences in emphasis based on race. "Asian alumni, for example, specifically point to personal identity and becoming more aware of who they are in U.S. society" (Kian et al., p. 5). In Kian's et al. (1997) paper, "Asian" refers to alumni of Asian origin who may have been immigrants, refugees, U.S.-born, or international students. According to Kian et al. (1997), white alumni highlight areas of social awareness such as interacting more comfortably with Asian Americans, learning more about the immigrant experience, and becoming more aware of racial stereotypes.

The survey responses of Black and Latino alumni are quite consistent with the responses by Asian students, but their sample sizes are not large enough to generate reliable data. Kian et al. (1997) argue that this also reflects a programmatic need to encourage greater numbers of Black and Latino students to take Asian American Studies courses. The responses to both the survey and interview questions are consistently thoughtful. In the report "many informants agreed that they did not consciously recognize

the impact of their learning from Asian American Studies courses until they were asked these research questions" (Kian et al., 1997, p. 6). A 1994 alumna explained, "It just makes me remember how valuable the courses were and how much of an influence it's had in changing my life, you know, changing the way I look at things... I feel like it's just a part of me now."

While some students elect to take Asian American Studies courses for personal or academic and professional reasons, others enroll simply to fulfill the university's Diversity Course graduation requirement. From their experiences, however, alumni interviewees consistently stress the importance of the Diversity Requirement as a valuable and essential learning opportunity. Again, these findings are consistent with similar initiatives and longitudinal studies currently underway throughout higher education. The increasing efforts to diversify the curriculum are yielding positive experiences from students who take these courses. According to Musil (1996), statistics reveal that too many colleges and universities are still racially homogeneous; too many general education classrooms remain all white or predominantly white. "In 33 out of 50 states in the U.S., minority students make up 20 percent or less of the college population. In 14 states, minority enrollment is less than 10 percent. Promoting the study of diversity under such circumstances is a special challenge" (p. 62).

Professors can teach about the many cultures that have contributed to American history and society, but frequently their students have little sense of cultures considerably different from their own. According to Tanaka (1996), asking the few minority students in our classes to "enlighten" their classmates and act as "spokespeople" for people of color places upon them an unfair and unrealistic burden. Tanaka (1996) also asserts that

race is only one factor that contributes to personal identity, and no one individual can be a spokesperson for his/her entire group. "By focusing on race in the classroom and on the minority status of a few individuals, we may increase the alienation students of color often feel in racially homogeneous classes" (Musil, 1996, p. 68).

In a unique approach implemented at SUNY-Plattsburg, professionals in the field of computers and writing are promoting the liberating effect of "computer conferencing" on student participation, especially for women and students of color who may feel disempowered in face-to-face classroom environments. The course, "Bridging Differences and Distance" empowers students to express themselves via "computer conferencing" by minimizing anxieties associated with oral discourse in a classroom setting. According to Harris (1999), such conferencing reduces the struggle to monopolize the discourse space and students no longer have to take turns to speak; all can participate simultaneously, as they type their responses via the computer conferencing system. Harris (1999) contends that students can have a greater sense of safety and that students of color in particular may assert their ideas more forcefully and directly.

In addition, technological developments in the educational arena are providing new ways of diversifying the classroom itself. The broad reach of the internet made it possible for this project to pair racially homogeneous classes with more diverse classes at other institutions. "White students who have had little contact with students of color discussed issues of race with those minority students—over e-mail and during real-time class meetings via the internet" (Harris, 1999, p. 8). In an English Composition class on "Families Across Cultures," an all-white class at Susquehanna University was paired with

a more racially diverse class at George Washington University (GWU), and another all-white class at West Virginia Northern Community College was paired with a second class at GWU. Harris (1999) says that students discussed on-line such topics as mainstream and alternative family structures; family patterns in African American, Latino, Native American, and European American cultural settings; and more general issues of racism, discrimination, affirmative action, and immigration. "Inter-class dialogues about such issues proved to be difficult, but also provided valuable learning opportunities not available in traditional classrooms at predominantly white institutions" (Harris, 1999, p. 12).

According to Harris (1999) the liberating effect of the computer-mediated communication (CMC) environment induced more forthright exchanges, although instructors did need to be aware of the potentially inflammatory nature of the discussions. By challenging ignorance and stereotypes as part of a more elaborate curriculum in the study of diversity, this approach promoted greater racial understanding and open-mindedness among students, and perhaps even a new interest in learning from people different from themselves.

Internet and other communications technologies can be essential educational tools to engage today's college students in exploring issues of diversity. Since 1994, through a project sponsored by the Institute for Public Media Arts, more than 12,000 students at colleges and universities across the country have explored their own identities and their relationships with those whose experiences or backgrounds are different from their own by making individual video diaries and group documentaries as part of a variety of diversity courses. Generally, the project provided opportunities for students to examine

the various "isms" (racism, sexism, and classism, etc.), prejudices, stereotypes, and value system and their influences in teaching/learning process. Jackson (1996) states "In order to foster real civic engagement, students need to be given opportunities to take action in a social and political process that entails a diversity of doctrines and theories shaped by gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and other different identities" (p. 235).

According to Jackson (1996), the -ISM(N.) project uses emerging media to develop diversity curricula that are experiential and involve students in intergroup collaboration, personal exploration, creation expression, media literacy, and critical thinking. Students also learn to create media that can have an impact on public consciousness. Over the past two and a half years, -ISM(N.) has developed three pilot programs that have focused on faculty and curriculum development, student leadership, and co-curricular community educational activities within higher education. Jackson (1996) reports that the first project was a curriculum and faculty development project that partnered 60 faculty members from 19 colleges and universities that represent a diverse cross-section of higher education in the United States. "These partnerships have experimented with team-taught diversity courses that integrate the use of media—individual video diaries and group video collaborations—with other forms of experiential learning" (p. 236). In one instance, an English Composition instructor partnered with a Social Anthropology instructor in teaching students the concepts and process to produce a documentary audio-visual ethnographic study of the various ethnic groups represented in the local community.

In the second project, Jackson (1996) implemented a Multimedia Campus Diversity Summit that brought together students on 86 campuses nationwide for four

weeks of community educational activities via local campus educational forums, the World Wide Web, more than 400 video testimonials, and the culmination of the Summit, via live satellite video conference with noted authors such as Dr. Ronald Takaki and Dr. Michael Dyson. The third project involved the production of a documentary called My So-Called Community. The -ISM(N.) project gave video cameras to eight college students and paired them over nine months with Frances Reid, director of the much acclaimed documentary, Skin Deep. Jackson (1996) reports "the one-hour documentary brought to a national television audience of more than two million people these students' gritty, first-person stories about the challenges and rewards of living in a multicultural society" (p.238). One student who took a course developed through the project describes how she used her video documentary to open up dialogue within her own family: "This weekend I brought home our video to show my parents. Needless to say, it had some effect...following the screening, I talked with my parents for three and a half hours about homosexuality and related issues. It is hard to describe how amazing this conversation was to me...For the first time on Saturday, I felt I was discussing with them instead of talking at them. I guess I just didn't feel like a kid anymore. I argued my position and supported it with qualified statements that kept the conversation interesting and productive....I guess what it comes down to is that if our video can strike up that much dialogue between my parents and I, then we did a good job!" (Jackson, 1996, p. 237).

The -ISM(N.) project at North Carolina Central University, Durham recently completed My So-Called Community, which was scheduled for release in the fall of 1999. The project is also now in the process of building a broader infrastructure for developing, institutionalizing, and evaluating a wide variety of media-based diversity

curricula for higher education and secondary schools. -ISM(N.) also continues conducting gatherings of educators, distributing youth-produced media, and supporting student leadership. In this process, project directors are looking for educators and other professionals who want to be a part of this growing effort to not only promote diversity on college campuses but to actively become involved in this unique personal experience.

## Conclusion

This paper has illustrated, valuable revisions associated with diversity has occurred in American undergraduate education over the past three decades. As society in the United States has become more diverse and modified its attitudes about groups and communities once experiencing invisibility, our colleges and universities have modified what they teach. Among the problems to be faced with respect teaching about diversity one principal question remains, how to convince institutions that courses, programs, and departments focusing on diversity should be not only present in the curriculum, but be continuing and fully integrated parts of the curriculum.

The key issue of how fundamentally to integrate diversity into higher education is vital to making enduring and widespread changes. Furthermore, most curriculum changes concerned with diversity have been "add-ons," that is, new materials about diversity have been inserted into existing course frameworks within some humanities and social sciences programs. In contrast to such modifications, few new courses, new programs and new departments have been developed. Where programs and departments have been established, support levels and organizational developments have been weak, sporadic, and lack the vision of sustainable and systematic change in institutional paradigm.

It is not possible within this literature review to suggest a meaningful strategy for fundamentally integrating the issues and subject matter of diversity into the general education component of higher education. It is clear, however, that any successful



strategy must take into account the need to convince curriculum review committees and other academic decision makers that courses, programs, and general education requirements which teach students about diversity are central to offering high quality educational experiences

What will convince decision-makers of this reality? One tactic would be to demonstrate that such courses and programs directly address valued, long-standing goals of education in the United States which is to provide quality educational opportunities, leadership, and services that anticipate and respond to a diverse and changing global community. A practical and applicable approach would be to demonstrate how diversity courses and programs significantly impact not only on student attitudes and feelings toward intergroup relations on campus and their own identity, but also on institutional satisfaction, involvement, and academic growth. Grinde, 1997; Malekzadeh, 1998 revealed that diversity initiatives impact student to student partnerships in the classroom and consistently result in improved adjustment, retention, and academic success rates beyond the general education curriculum for their participants. Faculty involvement with students produces similar results. In fact, these activities appear to contribute to increased satisfaction and retention, despite continuous commentary of their negative effect on the development of community on campus. Opportunities for interaction between and among student groups are desired by virtually all students and produce clear increases in understanding and decreases in prejudicial attitudes.

The results of student interaction with faculty and other students who actively participate in multicultural co-curricular activities illustrate how key transformations in the curriculum of institutions are linked with understanding and serving a diverse student

body. It requires major changes in our thinking about diversity in the curriculum that, while effective in many institutions it may require a more comprehensive commitment in educating a diverse student body. Both, resistance and change are inevitable parts of the major transformation that is underway in the mission of postsecondary institutions, a mission that includes diversity as a key component in the sustained process of cultivating a multicultural campus.

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