Best Practices: Recruitment and Retention of Underrepresented Minorities in Anthropology Programs

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Recruitment and Retention

- Develop a pipeline to graduate education

- Practice comprehensive admissions review

- Establish clear benchmarks for progress

NSF: Percentages of Science/Engineering Participants By Race/Ethnicity in 2008 (%)

Race/ethnicity	S&E occupations	S&E degree holders	College degree holders	Total U.S. residential population
Asian	16.9	11.2	8.5	4.7
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.7
Black	3.9	5.5	7.2	11.7
Hispanic	4.9	5.6	6.2	13.9
White	71.8	75.2	76.5	67.6
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1
Two or more races	1.7	1.7	1.1	1.2

NSF: Anthropology compared to Science and Engineering degree holders and the General US Population (%)

	Asian	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Black	Hispanic	White	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Two or more races
US Population	4.7	0.7	11.7	13.9	67.6	0.1	1.2
Science and Engineering degree holders	11.2	0.4	5.5	5.6	75.2	0.1	1.1
Anthropology	?	?	2.7	12.7	79.6	?	1.6

SOURCE: National Science Foundation, National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Scientists and Engineers Statistical Data System (SESTAT) (2008)

"Top 10" Anthropology Departments and Underrepresented Minorities

Graduate students: 1% to 10%

Tenure-track faculty: 0% to 13%

Roberto J. Gonzalez

Anthropology News October 2002

FINAL REPORT 2010
COMMISSION ON RACE AND RACISM IN ANTHROPOLOGY (CRRA)
Janis Hutchinson and Thomas C. Patterson, Co-Chairs

- 70-90% of the minority anthropologists received their degrees of public institutions

- 70-90% of the minority anthropologists are employed by public institutions

- 25-40% of the minority anthropologists have their primary appointments in programs or departments outside of anthropology.

Focus groups: selected comments

(1) many departments devalue the kinds of research questions that minority students want to pursue

(2) many faculty assume that minority students are less capable than other students, do not give them honest feedback on their work

(6) some seek mentors elsewhere (in different programs or even different universities) and others drop out

(8) many faculties and graduate student bodies are not diverse

(9) Some faculty members were in other departments (e.g., African-American Studies, Latin American Studies, or Women's Studies), because their work was not respected in anthropology

Focus groups: Proposed best practices

(1) mentoring is not race-specific; students and faculty need to be mentored by a variety of people inside and outside the departments

(2) mentors need to be aware of the specificity of the needs of the students and faculty they mentor and of their own limitations as mentors

(5) develop something like a "first-generation support system" that takes place during the summer to acclimate students

(6) make more efficient use of the Mellon program for minority students

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DEVELOPING A PIPELINE

- Partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities

- Contact pipeline programs: Mellon Mays, McNair, and others...

- Reach out to AAA sections to recruit graduate prospects

EXAMPLE: UC-HBCU Initiative

"HBCUs have long played a role in providing educational opportunities for those previously excluded from education. The first HBCU was established in 1837, with most other institutions established after the American Civil War. Currently there are 105 HBCUs serving more than 300,000 students."

http://www.ucop.edu/graduate-studies/initiatives-outreach/uc-hbcu-program/

EXAMPLE: MELLON MAYS UNDERGRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

"The MMUF program is administered by approximately one hundred campus coordinators at 42 institutions, and a consortium of 39 historically black colleges and universities within the membership of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). Five rising juniors are chosen on each campus every year, and 25 for the UNCF consortium schools.

As of September 2011 the MMUF program has had over 3,733 participating students; over 405 have earned their PhD with an additional 645 PhDs in progress; the number of participants earning PhDs each year continues to increase."

http://www.mellon.org/grant_programs/programs/higher-education-and-scholarship/mellon-mays-fellowship#MMUF

http://www.mmuf.org/

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PRACTICING COMPREHENSIVE ADMISSIONS

- Use *comprehensive* evaluation approaches

- Don't use GREs to screen applicants out

- Pay attention to patterns of improvement in undergraduate achievement, not just final GPA

- Look for applicants who have participated in pipeline programs

MEMO: Comprehensive Evaluation of Applicants for Graduate Admission

"As a new admissions cycle begins, we commend those departments and admissions committees that have updated their graduate admissions procedures in the direction of a comprehensive review approach. Such an approach avoids over-reliance on GRE scores, especially in the preliminary stages of assessment, in determining a candidates worthiness for admission. Instead, comprehensive approaches infer an applicants potential for success from more reliable indicators such as the applicants general academic record and record of special achievement, letters of recommendation, statement of purpose and writing samples, research experience and drive to succeed, and his or her personal circumstances and goals."

MEMO: Comprehensive Evaluation of Applicants for Graduate Admission

"...the GRE board itself endorses comprehensive review: "Test scores should always be used along with other sources of information such as course grades, letters of recommendation, personal statements, samples of academic work or professional experience."
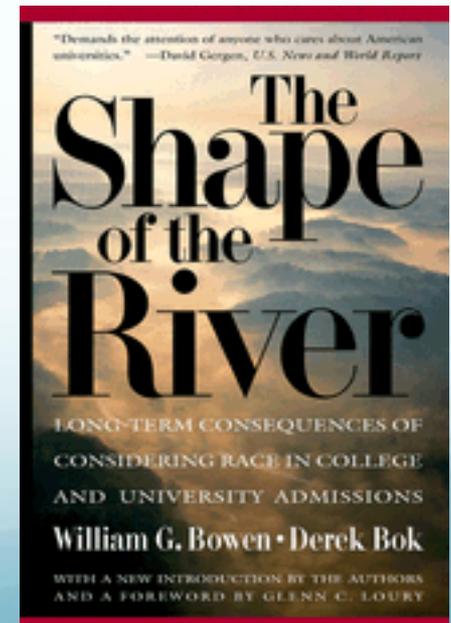
http://grad.berkeley.edu/policies/guides/memo-evaluation-applicants/

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Benchmarks for Progress

- Have clear outlines of your program's benchmarks and measures of progress and communicate them regularly to students

- Have formal required consultations of students and faculty at frequent intervals

- Every graduate student deserves a caring mentor assigned on admission. Don't assume that one faculty member can do this alone.

Key Issues in the Persistence of Underrepresented Minority Students

- having adequate financial aid guarantees increased retention of African-American and Latino students from lower-income, non-college families

- retention improved with learning communities, first-year interest groups, tutoring, mentoring, and student orientation

New Directions for Institutional Research, 130

Deborah Faye Carter, 2006

Funding Retention Efforts: Two examples

Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education (EDGE)

graduate student mentors; faculty advisory team; research funds; social events

consortium of Stanford; USC; Univ Texas, Austin; Texas A&M

https://iriss.stanford.edu/EDGE/about

UC-DIGSSS (Diversity Initiative for Graduate Study in the Social Sciences)

Mentor URM students with one-on-one research traineeships with faculty; Improve retention by focusing on community building

consortium of UC Berkeley, UCLA, UC Santa Barbara

http://ls.berkeley.edu/?q=node/1079

develop a pipeline

do comprehensive admissions review

mentor for retention and completion