

Motivation to “Keep Pushin’”: Insights into Faculty Development Facilitating Inclusive Pedagogy

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Abstract

This study focuses on the lived experiences of nine university faculty who were attempting to implement inclusive teaching practices following university-sponsored faculty development. While the participants were each successful in their respective implementations, they all expressed anxiety at the beginning of the semester as well as at the end when they reflected upon the changes they made. This occurred despite deeply held motivations to change their teaching and make a difference for their students. The participants encountered barriers that centered on feelings related to self-confidence, student perception, and peer approval. Findings include descriptions of these anxieties and the supports that meaningfully helped them push through difficulties and sustain their journeys toward inclusive pedagogy.

Keywords: inclusive pedagogy, faculty development

Asked how he felt about the changes he had implemented to his teaching in an effort to make his classroom a more inclusive space for learning that addressed issues of race and racism more directly, Antonio

responded, "Nervous, apprehensive, scared, excited, happy, not angry, but everything else. I always wondered, 'Okay, is this gonna be really good? Or is this gonna be stupid and students aren't gonna like it?'" The feelings of trepidation and discombobulation along with the fear of failure that Antonio described are symptomatic of what Stephen Brookfield (2019) has termed the "Ontology of Teaching Race" (p. 14). According to Brookfield, "The fundamental reality and experience of teaching race is feeling as if you're not getting it right" (p. 15). And yet, Antonio and the other college faculty members included in our study of supporting inclusive teaching also reported being "motivated," in the words of Antonio, "to keep pushin'" to address problems related to anti-oppressive teaching in their own pedagogies and classrooms.

The study in which Antonio and others participated was undertaken to better understand the lived experiences and perceptions of faculty who had participated in multiple trainings related to inclusionary teaching practices. Throughout several focus group interviews, certain themes emerged that appeared universally shared. A prominent theme explored in this article is the willingness on the part of faculty to be unsettled or anxious while still taking a risk to implement inclusionary, anti-racist teaching practices. In addition, faculty participants openly shared their apprehension and concerns as well as described supports and motivations that led to their actions and increased motivation to embrace the importance of inclusionary practices in their teaching.

Calls for enhanced attention to the pedagogical development of college faculty have been growing for several decades. Bass (1999) pointed to the first crack in routinized university teaching by proposing the scholarship of teaching as means for improving teacher practice and enhancing student learning. Faculty were encouraged to view problems in teaching as an opportunity for pedagogical change through investigation and analysis of their approach to teaching.

An enduring problem in teaching that has long remained ignored or insufficiently understood is the systemic societal racism reflected in our classrooms and teaching. In the last few years, however, the Black

Lives Matter movement, enhanced national attention to repeated instances of police brutality and violence, and the devastating disparities revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic have brought this problem to the forefront. This racism and bigotry are harmful to everyone—those who experience hatred, violence, and discrimination as well as those who live in fear of the other. Educators are thus confronted with the problem, as Bass (2020) points out in his essay “What’s the Problem Now?” “of reimagining and enacting education so that it plays a meaningful role in creating a more just society and fostering a sustainable human future.” Traditional pedagogy, if it ever was adequate, is now being questioned in earnest as demand for more inclusive pedagogies continues to rise. In our analysis below, we discuss the roles that faculty development and centers for teaching and learning might play in motivating and supporting faculty to confront these problems and transform higher education to meet the needs of society, equity, and the future. We conclude with guidelines for supporting faculty in this work, in addition to recommendations where further investigation is needed.

Literature Review

Goals of inclusion presume a willingness on the part of campus administrators and faculty to learn about the “additional burdens systemic and sustained biases underrepresented groups face” (Wagoner Johnson, 2020, para. 2). Inclusion goals also require that administrators and faculty understand that underserved students often arrive on college campuses with backgrounds and values that fundamentally differ from those of the campus community, leading to qualitative differences in their college experience and that of their majority peers (Phillips et al., 2020). Furthermore, students from racial and ethnic groups that have historically been disparaged come to campus unsure of whether they will be perceived as belonging by their peers and faculty, which makes them susceptible to stereotype threat and continued stigmatization (Murphy & Zirkel, 2015).

Students who feel welcomed and respected in the campus community have an increased sense of competence, improved academic performance, and more stable persistence (Booker & Campbell-Whatley, 2018; Murphy & Zirkel, 2015; O’Keeffe, 2013). Relationships between faculty and students figure prominently in students’ senses of belonging on campus (Kim & Sax, 2017; Wilson & Gore, 2013; as cited in Booker & Campbell-Whatley, 2018). Thus, college faculty are central to university efforts to establish a climate of inclusion for all students and can either help or hinder inclusion processes (Booker & Campbell-Whatley, 2018; Gordon, 2007). Furthermore, as Booker and Campbell-Whatley (2018) point out, faculty are pivotal in the instructional triangle that links professors, students, and course content.

While some faculty may be willing to adopt actions leading to a more inclusive campus climate, they are often unsure how to contribute (Gordon, 2007). Faculty often see their first responsibility as teaching discipline content and engaging in outside of class responsibilities (e.g., committee assignments) required of faculty members. Thus, they feel challenged to attend to issues of inclusion in their practice. This is particularly true for nontenured faculty who are concerned their inclusion efforts will not figure prominently when it comes to tenure and promotion (Perez, 2016; Wagoner Johnson, 2020).

Others may take a transmission approach to teaching (Johnson, n.d.) and are thus teaching the core content of their respective disciplines. They often do not see the connections between inclusivity (e.g., issues of race, socioeconomic status) and their disciplines; they also may simply be uncomfortable discussing social justice issues such as race and privilege (Gordon, 2007; Lewis, 2000). For some faculty, not knowing how to teach one’s discipline from an inclusive perspective is disquieting. Many feel that as academics with facility in their subject matter, they should know how to be flexible in terms of teaching what they know (Gordon, 2007). Faculty resistant to making their classrooms inclusive spaces are often unwilling to reflect on how to make their learning environments more conducive to inclusion.

Faculty development is essential for transforming colleges' and universities' climates into inclusive spaces (Wagoner Johnson, 2020). Faculty development sessions are often transactional in focus (Johnson, n.d.) and provide strategies that attend to the diverse learning needs of students in their courses (Dwyer & Smith, 2020); the construction of more inclusive classroom environments (Booker & Campbell-Whatley, 2018); and how to infuse pedagogical strategies that support equity as they teach (Tanner, 2013).

Some faculty believe campus and classroom inclusion must move beyond transactional pedagogy and practices alone. Transactional approaches to pedagogy, when joined with transformational approaches to teaching, make for formidable learning experiences for students (Johnson, n.d., para. 6). These faculty members are interested in having a more profound influence on students by having them analyze and interrogate their personal beliefs and consider the perspectives of others in ways that could subsequently lead to changed behavior (Wong, 2014). Also, faculty are interested in engaging students in the analysis of the state of diversity and inclusion at their institutions, as the impetus and basis for change that embodies diversity and inclusion (Danowitz & Tuitt, 2011).

The pedagogical goals of these faculty are in concert with transformative approaches to teaching where both faculty and students are changed in ways that allow them to "discover their full potential as learners, as members of society, and as human beings" (Johnson, n.d., para. 5). Additionally, learning as a result of transformative teaching leads to an openness to understanding and caring about others, a stance instrumental to building inclusive climates in and beyond the classroom (Johnson, n.d.). Faculty assist students in transformative learning by engaging them in "critical reflection and discourse, [and] structuring learning events or experiences to allow for discomfort and a move away from 'safe' spaces" (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2019, p. 553). They create learning environments in which students are unable to remain in places that harbor the privilege and prejudice that underscore denigrating beliefs and practices that hinder inclusion (Wong,

2014). With transformative pedagogy, both faculty and students are positioned to recognize an “uncertainty that acknowledges the complexity of the world we live in and questions what we believe we know about it” (Van Schalkwyk et al., 2019, p. 547).

The need for deep and meaningful faculty development has been emphasized as prerequisite for inclusive teaching and learning environments (Kose & Lim, 2010; Wagoner Johnson, 2020). Kose and Lim (2010) discussed the need for faculty development that is less equivocal in terms of conceptualizing transformative professional learning that supports inclusion. They proposed transformative professional learning was needed to facilitate transformative teaching and that faculty insights can contribute much to our understanding of transformative growth opportunities.

Methodology, Context, and Participants

Washburn University is a medium-sized, teaching-focused, public, and open-admission institution located in the midwestern United States. Washburn’s Center of Teaching Excellence and Learning (CTEL) identified inclusive pedagogy as a focus of professional development programming since 2014, and in 2018–2019 offered a Certificate of Inclusive Teaching and Learning to faculty who participated in at least nine professional development trainings. Trainings that were offered ranged from traditional workshops on topics such as universal design for learning (UDL) to book study groups on titles such as *Exploring Race in Predominantly White Classrooms* (Yancy & del Guadalupe Davidson, 2014). The trainings provided by CTETL were based upon teaching and learning goals that included the following: learning to recognize and respond to one’s own biases; incorporating students’ diverse learning needs; developing and helping students develop intercultural competence; and learning to be sensitive to issues of power, privilege, and inclusion.

A total of 32 faculty members earned the Certificate of Inclusive Teaching and Learning in the program's first year. While faculty were willing to attend workshops on inclusive pedagogy, it is not clear how this training translates into classroom practice. Faculty self-selected training events, allowing them to identify topics and formats that were most attractive or pertinent to their needs. This flexible training structure, however, may also result in more variances in classroom practice.

Participants in this study included faculty who successfully earned the Certificate of Inclusive Teaching and Learning in the previous academic year. They represented a variety of disciplines and levels of instruction (e.g., undergraduate and graduate; online and face-to-face courses). The purpose of this study was to examine how faculty expectations compared to their understandings of implementation when they attempted to become more inclusive teachers. It utilized a mixed-method process and followed faculty experiences throughout one academic semester (August to December 2019). Throughout this period, researchers emailed an electronic Likert survey at three intervals: the week before the semester started, the week following mid-term, and the week following finals. In addition, researchers held focus group interviews at the beginning and at the end of the semester. Focus groups included two to four participants and followed semi-structured interview protocol. This article will not include the full scope of our data; rather, we will discuss here a portion of the qualitative data collected from focus group interviews that uncovered universal feelings of discomfort among participants as they endeavored to become more inclusive teachers.

To recruit participants, an email invitation was sent to the 32 faculty and staff who had earned a Certificate of Inclusive Teaching and Learning during the previous year. Nine individuals responded to the invitation and completed all aspects of the study. While the majority (7) of the participants were white, and only two of the participants were tenured, otherwise a variety of experience levels, ages, and positions

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Years teaching	Position	Race	Gender
Kayla	39	6	Lecturer	White	Cisgender woman
Renee	43	12	Professor & administrator	White	Cisgender woman
Jay	66	25	Lecturer	White	Cisgender man
Jessica	46	15	Assistant professor	White	Cisgender woman
Antonio	36	5	Assistant professor	White	Cisgender man
Jane	38	10	Lecturer	Latina	Cisgender woman
Jake	39	3	Lecturer	Asian	Cisgender man
Karen	68	34	Associate professor	White	Cisgender woman
Brad	69	45	Lecturer & administrator	White	Cisgender man

were represented (see Table 1 for specific participant demographics). All demographic information was self-reported.

While the quantitative piece to our study focused on *what participants did* with their faculty development, the qualitative data focused on *how they experienced* the resulting pedagogical goals and actions. Therefore, this study is framed through a phenomenological lens (Patton, 2014; van Manen, 1984, 1995). Participants were asked to share their own experiences as well as their feelings about the experiences. Researchers did not evaluate teaching materials, classroom artifacts, or other data beyond participants' own reflections.

Focus group interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Analysis occurred in two phases. First, we analyzed the data through an inductive approach. The four researchers read through the data and identified themes; then we came together and negotiated and clarified themes we found in common. Second, we used the themes to deductively code the data and once again discussed and consolidated our coding. Two of the predominant themes that we found in the data were also interconnected: participants' *motivations to do the work* to make changes to their teaching and their *willingness to be unsettled*, or, in other words, to "push through" feelings of discomfort and anxiety in pursuit of more inclusive, transformative pedagogy. Findings shared in this article come from data coded within these two themes.

Findings & Analysis

How does it feel & why does it feel this way?

During focus group conversations, participants first shared their expectations about the coming semester and then reflected on how they felt about their attempts to make their teaching more transformative. Participants described a range of emotions that varied from excitement to nervousness to real fear. Jessica, for example, stated her enthusiasm for the planning stages of her course and syllabus creation: "Doing the syllabus stuff, I'm always excited about that, always excited." But, as she continued, she revealed that the actual class sessions ahead of her inspired her to feel "nervous, anxious, [and] scared." Later in the focus group session she reaffirmed feeling this way, stating, "Yeah, I'm nervous." Another interviewee reported that though she had labored for an entire semester crafting her syllabus, the thought of sharing it with others nevertheless made her feel "kind of anxious." Such comments indicate the tremendous pressure our participants placed on their respective commitments to inclusive and anti-oppressive praxis.

That faculty members dedicated to this work would feel such pressure is not unusual given stakes that could not be higher. The thought of failure is devastating in the pursuit of inclusive, anti-oppressive pedagogies designed to overturn systemic discrimination and racism, to advance equity and social justice, and to transform our classrooms, academe, and society to become more equitable and socially just.

Respondents' answers in the focus group interviews provided some clues on what it meant to fail in pursuing anti-racist pedagogy. Several faculty members suggested failure meant losing control of what happened in their classrooms. This resonates with Hodges's (2006) study of faculty fears toward pedagogical change, which argued that most concerns surrounded perceptions of loss, including loss of control. In the first round of interviews early in the semester, Jake, who had recently

joined the faculty, recounted how he had confronted this reality in a previous class after he had screened a video that discussed police violence. He recalled, "After that, the classroom was just complete silent [sic]. Then, I don't know how to—what to do with it. I realize I'm just—maybe I'm not there yet." In this description of a classroom moment, Jake understood the students' silence to reflect his inadequacies as a teacher. Of course, there could be many other reasons for the silence, but because this work is inherently personal and unsettling (Brookfield, 2019; Tuitt et al., 2018), Jake's reflection was focused upon his own failure and his desire to do better for his students. Jessica similarly admitted that much of her anxiety stemmed from awareness that her teaching would likely lead to "difficult conversations" in the classroom and that "those can go totally awry." Whether it be awkward silence or an angry exchange between students in the classroom, our participants suggested that they considered both examples as evidence of their own failure and that the careful forethought they had put into their courses and class sessions was insufficient.

Respondents further suggested that failure could mean being revealed in front of the classroom as impostors, lacking in expertise. As Renee, a white female faculty member, acknowledged, "I feel so backwards sometimes . . . when I'm learning things and doing things in diversity inclusion, like, 'That's a thing?'" Renee's feelings are in concert with findings by Tuitt et al. (2018), who explained in their essay that teaching with attention to inclusive pedagogy essentially requires white faculty to re-envision core beliefs of the teaching context:

We acknowledge that engaging in this work is often difficult for most educators to translate into practice because their faculty preparation likely trained them to think of the classroom, and the knowledge constructed in that space, as race neutral. Thus, as we have discovered in our daily praxis as critical and inclusive pedagogues, much of what was learned about teaching (in the respective disciplines) has to be unlearned.

It is no wonder our participants so often reported feeling like novices in this work.

Relatedly, faculty also noted that their efforts to change their teaching in these ways resulted in making them more conscientious of their own positionalities and intersectional identities. In other words, their efforts to be more inclusive in their pedagogies forced them, in the words of Tuitt et al. (2018), to "bring their whole selves into the learning environment." This was discomfiting, as Tuitt et al. (2018) point out, because it challenged Eurocentric norms of the academy that suggest faculty should remain disconnected from their students. As Jake, a lecturer from a minority group and an immigrant, stated, "Yes, and also, I feel. . . [it's] hard to talk about this, still, in the classroom. Because every time I touch on the topic, I feel I'm from a minority background. . . . It's a little tricky." Meanwhile, Renee, a white tenured professor from a middle-class upbringing in the Midwest, revealed the following about her own experiences of bringing more inclusive pedagogy to her teaching praxis: "I sat in guilt, and maybe I still sit there." In both cases, these instructors' efforts to be anti-racist had made them more conscious of the white normativity that typically characterized their classrooms. For Jake, this had the effect of further emphasizing his own non-white racial identity in a way that made him feel more vulnerable in the classroom. In Renee's case, she was left feeling a sense of white guilt that made her deeply uncomfortable.

Faculty members' fears of failure also extended to concerns that their efforts to make their classrooms more inclusive could make their students feel uncomfortable, which could, in turn, lead to poor results in student perception surveys of their teaching. Such fears were more acute if participants lacked the protection of tenure or seniority. One interviewee acknowledged her anxiety that she would be perceived by students as attempting to "engineer conflict" through her efforts to be anti-racist and inclusive in her teaching. To mitigate such resistance from students, Jake explained, "I'm trying to make it as fun as possible so that students won't feel pressured, and gradually they start to realize, okay, it's nothing to be worried about." Vasey and Carroll (2016) demonstrated that

student evaluations of teaching are of real concern to faculty members even when they are not also focused on changing their pedagogy.

In addition to concerns of students' evaluations of their teaching, participants also voiced much anxiety surrounding colleagues' perceptions of the changes they had adopted to their teaching. This could be because only two of our nine participants had earned tenure at the time of the focus group interviews, and several had spent time in adjunct or non-tenure-track positions. For example, Jane, who was a full-time lecturer, had previously spent a number of years as an adjunct instructor and shared the extreme insecurity that was connected to that position: "Sometimes as an adjunct you feel like you're flying solo a lot. . . . Because, especially in that capacity as an adjunct, you do feel a little bit more apart from the department, that fear of, okay, maybe I'm—I'm told I can do whatever I want, but what if I won't know that it's too far until it's too far." Jane describes the ambiguity that creates so much uncertainty. Faculty are often told that institutions care about diversity and inclusion, but there is still a sense that there is a point where one may go "too far." That point is rarely clarified and often adjunct or non-tenured faculty comprehend institutional expectations by seeing what colleagues are doing. If colleagues do not seem to focus much upon inclusive pedagogy, it may seem especially risky to do so because of a fear of standing out. Brad, who also was a lecturer and administrator, shared a similar concern:

I'm kind of anxious. I think the students are okay. What I'm worried more about are my colleagues because it is so different. It's like when you come and you get all these people's syllabuses and they all look alike and a step to do something that drastic is kinda scary. Cause I do care maybe a little bit what other people think about it, but I know it's the right thing to do. I'm anxious to see how the students—the student reaction to it.

Brad stated that he knew it was "the right thing to do," and he was not afraid of the students' reactions. Instead, his concern was that his more

inclusive syllabus would look drastically different from his colleagues’ and because of this he may face repercussions.

Participants reported experiencing these discomfiting feelings throughout the period of the study; the feelings did not wane over the course of the semester. In fact, as participants became more involved in the work of transforming their teaching to be more inclusive, they reported that the feelings typically increased. As Jake stated at the end of the semester, “I want to bring up a lot of kind of tensioned topics and issues, but I haven’t made my decision yet because I don’t know where it will lead me to, and I’m not sure if I understand enough to really bring it up so that’s what I’m afraid about in my classroom.” Jake’s concern that he doesn’t “know where it will lead” him is based in the assumption that he doesn’t know enough and he is not ready to address issues of diversity and inclusion in his teaching. This concern was present despite the fact that he had just spent the previous semester endeavoring very diligently to make his teaching more diverse and inclusive.

How are people still motivated to do the work?

Despite the insecurities and fears, most of our participants found strategies that helped them continue to push forward. Again, many of these were inherently personal and based upon beliefs that what they were doing was worth the effort. Karen, who had taught for over three decades, described transformative teaching as part of how she saw her role as an educator: “To me, education is a vocation. I come from that worldview. Education is a vocation. If you’re going to be an educator, then you need to stay abreast of where your—who your students are, where they’re at, and what you can do to communicate your discipline to them. That’s a lifelong belief.” Karen believed teaching was a vocation and at its heart a student-centered rather than content-centered endeavor. She saw her job as bringing her content to where her students were, and, in that act, she had to take time to understand the perspectives and experiences of her students.

While Jane did not describe teaching as a vocation, she did focus on meeting students where they were as a way to motivate herself to do the hard work of inclusive teaching. She shared her belief that it only takes one student to make the challenges worth it:

I think whenever I am pushing through something that is difficult that I am changing, I ask myself to reflect back on the times where I've been successful in the past, or I've—maybe not successful's the right word, but I've tried something and I've looked out, and I've seen. It only takes one student, and realizing that you've established that connection, you've validated their presence in the classroom. Then you're just like, this is the right thing. I have to keep trying. I think that that's all it takes. Of course, we've all done this many times. You don't just have one case. It's every time you at least have one person. That just motivates you to keep pushin'.

Jane's belief that it only takes one student to make her work valuable allows her to continue to work through the discomfort. Her strategy for motivation is to imagine past students with whom she has connected, and she describes visualizing that connection: "I've looked out, and I've seen . . . and realizing that you've established that connection, you've validated their presence in the classroom." The connection and validation that she knows is possible seems to be something that she reaches back to in order to find her motivation when things get difficult.

Similarly focused upon his connections to students, Antonio described his belief that teaching was a reciprocal relationship and that faculty inherently learned from their students. This view of teaching allowed him to step into the unknown in his teaching. In fact, he shared this with his students:

Like I tell my students, I'm not an expert. I have learned just as much as you—just as much from you as you learn from me . . . hopefully—I know I'll learn a thing or two. You just have to be open to it. . . . I tell

my students, "Cultural competence is a key word in my department. You don't get a certificate at the end. It's not an achievement. I call it an ongoing, life-long learning process. You don't get a plaque or anything like that being culturally competent, but it's something that you should continually strive for."

Antonio tells his students that "cultural competence" is "not an achievement" but rather something worked for throughout your life. He also models this by making himself vulnerable by showing students he is still learning as well. His vulnerability allowed him to push through discomfort, and, probably more importantly, it modeled for students how they must allow themselves to be vulnerable learners as well.

Karen, Jane, and Antonio positioned their students at the center of their teaching practices. This allowed them to be vulnerable, to be learners, to see that their personal insecurity connected to this work was not the most important thing. With their teaching on the periphery and in relation to student needs, these faculty were able to overcome concerns of their own shortcomings and place their concerns instead upon the growth of their students.

What support was useful? What support was needed?

Throughout the course of the focus groups, faculty also discussed what helped them to feel supported in their efforts to practice more inclusive teaching. Again, certain patterns emerged from these conversations. Again and again, respondents suggested that the feelings of unsettledness and discomfort could not be avoided; however, they could be decentralized through certain support measures.

The most important support measure was providing a community of similarly committed faculty for those undertaking this work. Respondents suggested that such a community helped them to realize that they were not alone in their feelings of anxiety and fear and that, in fact, such feelings were not a shortcoming of the teacher but rather part of

the work itself (Brookfield, 2019). As Antonio explained, a CTEL workshop focused on diversifying pedagogy had helped him to change: "I think just . . . getting past that fear of trying new things. Half of them will work; half of them won't. At least I know I can try different things. . . . Whenever I try somethin' new, I tell my students, 'Hey, this may be great; it may be horrible, but we're gonna try it.'" The attitude with which Antonio came away from this workshop—that he would accept that mistakes were an inevitable part of his inclusive pedagogy—embodies what Smith (2019) has called "one of the most crucial aspects of antiracist pedagogy." What is more, in helping him to normalize mistake making, the workshop also emboldened Antonio to share with his students his vulnerability and accept that he would likely forfeit some of the power and prestige he had once been accustomed to holding in the classroom.

This community of like-minded colleagues further helped participants realize not only that they were not alone in their feelings of anxiety but also that, with practice and experience, they could learn to manage and overcome these feelings. Several faculty members, including Antonio in the quotation that opened this article, used the metaphor of "pushin'" to describe how they prevailed over the negative feelings to carry on with their efforts to be more inclusive in their teaching.

Our findings further suggest that, in supporting faculty in this work, it is important to help instructors reflect and recall the instances when their efforts—as uncomfortable as they might have been for them—had nonetheless helped them to connect with a student or to know that a student felt more welcome in their classroom. As described above, respondents repeatedly suggested that their ultimate feelings of support and validation came from such reflection and commitment to putting their students at the heart of their teaching praxis. Late in the semester, Jane reiterated her motivation to "keep pushin'" for the sake of her students, saying, "hey, my students need this." Such reflection on the positive outcomes of the changes they had made and risks they had taken with their teaching seems to have helped

steel faculty against the certain discomfort and unavoidable mistake making.

Conclusions and Implications

The themes connected to discomfort and anxiety identified in the data were present in early interviews but much more dominant in the follow-up set of interviews. This supports Gordon’s (2007) belief that faculty will likely need to reside in places of intellectual and personal vulnerability in order to understand the impact of inclusion on the college climate, their discipline, and the students they teach. Professional development that supports introspection of personal and professional beliefs with respect to diversity, equity, and inclusion supports implementation of anti-racist approaches to teaching.

Faculty included in this study were provided strategies for supporting faculty pursuing inclusive, transformative teaching. These supports include the following:

1. Create opportunities for safe places where faculty, staff, and administrators can share their experiences.
2. Assess for individual faculty motivation and then provide recognition, feedback, and support.
3. Mitigate political ramifications (recognize and address—where possible—the level of risk that may vary across the university).
4. Provide more opportunities for faculty development that address equity, diversity, and inclusive teaching practices.

Such supports would help make it possible for more faculty to pursue transformational approaches to teaching and create change in the academy and society. Faculty cannot create these supports on their own; if institutions truly want to instigate change, it is up to the administration to help faculty push through their discomfort and provide necessary resources.

Recommendations for Further Research

Our study suggested the possible presence across highly motivated faculty of risk to introduce inclusive teaching practices that embraced diversity and equity in the classroom. From our participants we learned that risk is a critical element involved in faculty introducing such pedagogies. This finding was not directly related to the original purpose of the study but was rather unexpected. The faculty who participated in this research were highly motivated toward transformative teaching and had successfully participated in numerous trainings in the area of inclusive pedagogy. What is still needed is an examination of faculty who are just beginning to consider changing their teaching practices to be more responsive and welcoming to all students regardless of culture, race, gender, and so forth. Further research is needed to examine the experiences of faculty at all stages in the process of change.

This study did not compare alternative ways of supporting faculty. No specific efforts were addressed to look at disciplines related to a willingness to embrace transformative teaching. The study only verified that some disciplines may be hesitant or even resistant to inclusive teaching practices where diversity and equity are addressed as essential to the curriculum. The utility for administrative support and recognition of transformation needs to be examined to discern its role and the nature of that role that supports change. Our university has embraced diversity and inclusion as a central feature of the mission of the university. This was not addressed in our study, but it may be a factor. The system itself from the highest levels of administration to the department heads and senior faculty involved in the review processes needs to be examined. There is a holistic aspect in higher education that suggests change must be synergistic and welcome.

As teachers and scholars dedicated to anti-oppressive curriculum and pedagogy, we undertook this study to better understand the lived experiences of faculty members who had endeavored to step into this problem and pursue teaching commitments focused on justice, equity, and anti-racism. We found that, in pursuing such commitments,

these faculty members immediately confronted additional and related problems, including the ontology of teaching about race and their own feelings of self-doubt and pushback (or fear of pushback) from students and colleagues. Faculty members reported that these feelings were consistent throughout their efforts, as powerful in the planning stages of a course as in the final days of the semester. Our study also found, however, that there are ways to help faculty decentralize those feelings and to "keep pushin,'" in the words of Antonio, to continue to strive for a more inclusive and anti-oppressive curriculum and pedagogy.

Biographies

Dr. Kelly Erby is professor of history and chair of Academic Diversity and Inclusion at Washburn University. Her historical research focuses on the increasing fragmentation of United States popular culture along lines of race, gender, socio-economic class, and ethnicity throughout the nineteenth century. She is the author of *Restaurant Republic: The Rise of Public Dining in Boston* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2016) as well as articles and book chapters on related topics.

Dr. Melanie Burdick is director of the Center for Teaching Excellence and Learning and professor in English at Washburn University. She is author of *Literacy Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Women: Sentences and Sponsors*, and co-author of, *At the Crossroads of Pedagogical Change in Higher Education: Exploring the Work of Faculty Developers*, and *Community Field Work in Teacher Education: Theory and Method* as well as articles in the fields of education development, the teaching of writing.

Sandra Winn Tutwiler is professor emeritus of education at Washburn University. She is the author of *Mixed-race youth and schooling: The fifth minority*, and *Teachers as collaborative partners: Working with*

diverse families and communities, in addition to other book chapters and articles that address teachers' diversity praxis. Dr. Winn Tutwiler developed and presented multiple sessions for the Center for Teaching and Learning as the Center's inaugural Diversity Fellow.

Dan L. Petersen is professor emeritus of social work at Washburn University. Dr. Petersen has been instrumental in the development and training related to the *Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime* (OVC, Office of Justice Programs, USDOJ). He has championed the rights of individuals with disabilities presenting nationally on inclusive practices as well as developing national trainings related to client rights. Dr. Petersen served for six years on the Washburn University Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

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