Sample Presentation & 2015 Diversity Catalyst Lecture

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April 14, 2015

www.oxide.gatech.edu
Structural changes in the department in efforts to enhance diversity

*In the faculty ranks* (admittedly focused on gender equity):

**Main point:** Requires unambiguous bye-in by the upper administration.

**Make your goal, their goal.** “We’re doing this to enhance the excellence of the department.” Be proactive in seeking out that support.

- **Search committee function.** Helps to ensure a diverse pool of applicants selected for campus interviews

- **Proactive in offering FMLA-qualifying leave (tenure-clock pause)**

- **Aggressive recruitment of dual career chemists.** One open slot becomes TT + lecturer (Chem); 2 TT (Chem); 2 TT (one in Chem; one outside Chem)

- **Aggressive retention of chemists from URG.** Still very difficult (culture)
Structural changes in the department in efforts to enhance diversity

**Department level:**

- *Established and funded a new standing committee, Diversity Affairs Committee.* Members of DAC are members of other standing committees; this elevates awareness of diversity equity issues throughout the department in a non-threatening “bottom-up” way.

- *Established and funded ChemGRC (Chemistry graduate representative group):* Empower the graduate students (a far more diverse group than the faculty) to shape their own programs. Funds travel awards, and in partner with the local section of the ACS, a student-sponsored seminar series.

  Enhance the graduate student experience of students from all URGs

- *Strengthened mentoring structure:* Expectations, two-way street; establish a culture in which mentors share in mentee success

- *Match service responsibilities with faculty member’s interests/passions*
Diversity Equity in Department Policies & Programs

OXIDE’s Presentation for Faculty Meetings
What is Diversity?

Inclusion of the “other”

- Gender
- Race & Ethnicity
- Disabilities
- LGBTQIA+
  - Lesbian
  - Gay
  - Bisexual
  - Transgender
  - Queer
  - Intersex
  - Questioning
  - Allies
  - Other Identities and orientation
- Socioeconomic
- Culture
- Life experiences
- Ideas
- Political Ideologies
- Religion
- Geography
- University Pedigrees
- Place of Origin
- Etc.
What Does Diversity Mean to You?

- Diversity with respect to the right hand column has traditionally been associated with success.
- Diversity with respect to the left hand column needs to be similarly associated with success.

**OXIDE** focuses on Gender, Race & Ethnicity, Disabilities and LGBTQIA+ because these areas have been identified as those in which we are underrepresented and that are critical to competitiveness in this century.
Does Our Nation Have a Problem?

• “... our nation needs to take advantage of the excellence inherent in the growing percentage of URM in order to maintain a sufficient supply of domestic Ph.D.’s.”*

• A crisis exists in our international competitive position if we access less than 50% of our population

• By 2050, the US will no longer have a majority population and our scientific workforce needs to reflect that
Underutilization of Human Capital

2010 Number (Chemistry)‡

- 2306 PhDs
- 37.4% Female
- 1323 U.S. Citizen or PR
  - 0.4% Native American
  - 10.9% Asian
  - 4.1% African American
  - 4.8% Hispanic
  - 76.1% White

% of U.S. Population 2010*

- 50.8%
- 1.7%
- 14%
- 16%

‡ Advancing Graduate Education in the Chemical Sciences (2012)
* United States Census (2010)
Faculty are Central to the Solution

- URMs represent approximately 20% of undergraduate degrees who we trained and who should go on to grad school in equitable numbers.

- Within our chemistry programs, we effectively reduce the URG demographics at every stage from B.S. degree to tenured faculty, but the reduction at the postdoc level is particularly severe.

- So we can do something about it!

* From: “Workshop on Excellence Empowered by a Diverse Academic Workforce: Achieving Racial & Ethnic Equity in Chemistry” (DOE/NSF/NIH Report) [http://chemchairs.uoregon.edu](http://chemchairs.uoregon.edu)

* Underrepresented Minorities

![Graph showing from B.S. to Faculty: The pipeline for U.S. citizen ethnic group representation in chemistry in 2003.](image)
Enlightened Self-Interest

Competitive advantages for faculties that are diverse

• Expanded pool of candidates (Lessons from corporate America)

• Increased influence within the scientific community

• URG faculty will help to recruit the best diverse student cohort

• Increased competitiveness for external funding

• Responds to the changing demographics of the US, moving us towards proportionation with availability
Implicit (Unconscious) bias is a major impediment
  - Leads to incorrect judgments and lack of sensitivity
  - Data shows that bias has been a barrier to success of Women, Minorities, LGBTQIQA+ individuals and people with Disabilities

There are many additional barriers and burdens that have also impeded the success of URG faculty
  - Excessive Committees, Solo Status, Stereotype Threat, etc.
Implicit Bias

On the context and implication of implicit bias

• Are we objective when it comes to diversity?
  — Better yet, are we ever objective?

• Of course, we can judge quality...
  — Publications, Grants, Fellowships
  — Pedigrees, Experience in Top Labs
  — Letters of Recommendation

• Of Course, Our Evaluations are Independent of...
  — Race
  — Gender
  — LGBTQIQ
  — Disabilities

• All Social Science Studies Say **NO**!
• We **DO NOT** Understand Unconscious Bias!
Implicit Bias

Do you really trust what you see?

- What color is this dress?

http://www.wired.com/2015/02/science-one-agrees-color-dress/
Implicit Bias

“White and Gold” or “Blue and Black?”

- Buzzfeed Poll
  - 70% see blue and black
  - 30% see white and gold

- The dress is blue and orange
  - Probably

http://www.wired.com/2015/02/science-one-agrees-color-dress/
Implicit Bias

everyone has implicit biases

Are squares A and B the same color?

Adapted from B. Nosek, U.Va
Implicit Bias

context leads to different observations
Implicit Bias

How can you be completely objective in the complex analysis of science/people?
Example of Bias in Science

Science faculty’s subtle gender biases favor male students

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Despite efforts to recruit and retain more women, a stark gender disparity persists within academic science. Abundant research has demonstrated gender bias in many demographic groups, but has yet to experimentally investigate whether science faculty exhibit a bias against female students that could contribute to the gender disparity in academic science. In a randomized double-blind study (\(n = 127\)), science faculty from research-intensive universities rated the application materials of a student—who was randomly assigned either a male or female name—for a laboratory manager position. Faculty participants rated the male applicant as significantly more competent and hireable than the (identical) female applicant. These participants also selected a higher starting salary and offered more career mentoring to the male applicant. The gender of the faculty participants did not affect responses, such that female and male faculty were equally likely to exhibit bias against the female student. Mediation analyses indicated that the female student was less likely to be hired because she was viewed as less competent. We also assessed faculty participants’ preexisting subtle bias against women using a standard instrument and found that preexisting subtle bias against women played a moderating role, such that subtle bias against women was associated with less support for the female student, but was unrelated to reactions to the male student. These results suggest that interventions addressing faculty gender bias might advance the goal of increasing the participation of women in science.

gender disparity in science (9–11), and that it “is not caused by discrimination in these domains” (10). This assertion has received substantial attention and generated significant debate among the scientific community, leading some to conclude that gender discrimination indeed does not exist nor contribute to the gender disparity within academic science (e.g., refs. 12 and 13).

Despite this controversy, experimental research testing for the presence and magnitude of gender discrimination in the biological and physical sciences has yet to be conducted. Although acknowledging that various lifestyle choices likely contribute to the gender imbalance in science (9–11), the present research is unique in investigating whether faculty gender bias exists within academic biological and physical sciences, and whether it might exert an independent effect on the gender disparity as students progress through the pipeline to careers in science. Specifically, the present experiment examined whether, given an equally qualified male and female student, science faculty members would show preferential evaluation and treatment of the male student to work in their laboratory. Although the correlational and related laboratory studies discussed below suggest that such bias is likely (contrary to previous arguments) (9–11), we know of no previous experiments that have tested for faculty bias against female students within academic science.

If faculty express gender biases, we are not suggesting that these biases are intentional or stem from a conscious desire to impede the progress of women in science. Past studies indicate
Implicit Bias

Implicit bias affects perception of capability

“A broad, nationwide sample of biology, chemistry, and physics professors (n = 127) evaluated the application materials of an undergraduate science student who had ostensibly applied for a science laboratory manager position.

All participants received the same materials, which were randomly assigned either the name of a male (n = 63) or a female (n = 64) student; student gender was thus the only variable that differed between conditions.”
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We Must Admit the Hard Truth…

• Implicit bias is a challenge to even the most enlightened faculties

• Admitting that we (all of us) have a problem is the first step

• Unconscious bias/schemas are natural
  – You are not a bad person for having bias

• We must accept there is a problem and compensate for bias
Implicit Bias is Only One of the Barriers

**Implicit or Unconscious Bias**

- Schemas
- Accumulation of Bias
- Lack of Universal Design
- Insufficient Mentoring
- Insufficient/Unequal “Family Friendly” Policies
- Overburdening the Few
- Unwelcoming/Non-Accommodating Climate
- Unwelcoming/Non-Accommodating Professional Cultures
- Qualitative vs. Quantitative Assessment
  
  **Solo Status**
  
  **Stereotype Threat**
  
  **Minimizing Differences/Colorblindness**
  
  Depoliticization and Meritocratic Ideology

Implicit Bias is Only One of the Barriers

E.g., traditional evaluation criteria can be flawed

• Flawed Hypotheses (Myths):
  - Talented URM scientists are out there; They need to be identified, encouraged and recruited
  - But we should be aware that the academic climate for URMs has been largely unsupportive, indifferent, or in some cases even hostile...

• Distortion (Error) in Objective Perceptions & Implicit Bias
  - Awareness: We need to recognize that our HR skills are not always perfect.
  - Systemic actions/corrections are more difficult because training classes are often ineffective

• Accumulation of micro-aggressions & misuses of schemas
  - The accumulation of the effects of implicit biases and micro-aggressions is a subtle factor pervading all our interactions and undermines the progress of URM candidates at all levels of the pipeline from B.S. to faculty.

* “Workshop on Excellence Empowered by a Diverse Academic Workforce: Achieving Racial & Ethnic Equity in Chemistry” (DOE/NSF/NIH Report) http://chemchairs.uoregon.edu
Policy and Programs

What can we do as a department to create an environment that support diversity?

Creating programs to flatten diversity inequities and recognize diversity in excellence
Policy and Programs

Re-imagining the academic ladder: What should we do?

- Design targeted goals for every step of the ladder
- Identify/recruit talent at undergraduate, graduate and postdoctoral levels
- Broaden the pool of applicants with respect to academic pedigrees
Policy and Programs

Lay the foundation for success through the ladder

• Arbitrarily populating the ladder is not enough

• Some losses are good
  – Individuals choosing “better” jobs / working climates
  – But why were we not the number one choice?

• Pulling someone up a rung arbitrarily is not an effective response
  – Why was the rung difficult to reach in the first place?
  – What can we do to eliminate the obstacles we impose?
Policy and Programs

The context of URG scientist’s climb up the ladder

• How does your department’s diversity climate compare to comparable choices outside of academia?

• Do you have an effective mentor program?
  – Does everyone on the ladder have a mentor?
  – Does everyone on the ladder have a village of mentors?

• Do students know their options?

• Do parents understand student’s options/future?

• Who bears the risk for failure?
  – AND the responsibility for ensuring success?
Policy and Programs

Lessons from Industry

• Have authentic conversations with faculty

• Top-down non-voluntary diversity training exercises tend to be ineffective

• Mentoring is effective and should be implemented throughout the entire ladder

• Mentoring should be intentional and organized
  - Should include: peer to peer, senior mentors, etc

• Affinity groups tend to be affective only if they have longitudinal participation

Policy and Programs

Graduate Student and Postdoc Climate

- Build a village of mentors, letter writers, champions!
- Evaluate diversity climate regularly
- Affinity groups can be helpful if implemented longitudinally
Encouraging Ph.D. and Postdoc to Faculty Transition

- Mentoring
  - Insure the Ph.D. committees engage students throughout their career
  - Provide opportunities for students to display their scientific potential
  - Do not overburden or peg particular students for volunteer tasks

- Overall Vision:
  - Provide a track for success
  - Institutions should take the financial burden, not students
Policy and Programs

Developing and Recruiting Faculty

- Diversity is a planned event

- Mentoring
  - Peer-to-Peer
  - Senior Mentors
  - Mentors outside of the department

- Need role models (from diversity groups)
  - Don’t overburden
  - But if you are going to burden them... 
    reward them, don’t penalize them

- Academic pedigrees should be contextualized, and individuals judged on what they do thereafter
Policy and Programs

Retention of Faculty

• Quantify the value of the individual to the collective and reward her or him for it

• Additional administrative responsibilities should be correlated with additional staff support
Policy and Programs

Promotion of Faculty

- Ensure that evaluations are based on quantitative statements not “feelings” or schemas
  - Relevant to hiring and promotion
- Provide resources to temper the overburdening of URG faculty
- Always reward success
Programs and Procedures

Condensed action list for Chairs and Departments

1. Conduct a faculty meeting on diversity excellence:
   - Walk your faculty through the generic department presentation given at NDEW 2015 (or a version customized to your department).
   - Make sure that you do not advertise the event as diversity training.
   - Emphasize strategies that mitigate stereotype threat.

2. Create mentoring programs (vertical and horizontal).

3. Create a department diversity committee
   - Broadly reflective of your faculty’s perspectives (e.g., include straight, able-bodied white male faculty)
   - Don’t overburden URG (under-represented groups) faculty.
   - Establish deliverables to measure the committee’s success.
Condensed action list for Chairs and Departments

4. Conduct faculty searches in broad areas

5. Develop a department Diversity Statement and Vision

6. Conduct a climate survey in your departmental and use it to identify needs for advancing inclusive excellence

7. Respond to current & future OXIDE surveys
   - e.g., workshop evaluation, demographics, & climate

8. Implement a policy/program (such as the ones discussed at NDEW) targeted to address climate and/or demographics
   - Partner with OXIDE to assess it!
Questions / Comments

This is an ongoing conversation.
Please give us your feedback.

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