Advancing Diversity
Mid-Year Summit

January 17, 2020

#VTAdvancesDiversity
#AdvancingDiversity2020
We acknowledge the Tutelo / Monacan people, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognize their continuing connection to the land, water, and air that Virginia Tech consumes. We pay respect to the Tutelo / Monacan Nations, and to their elders past, present, and emerging.

We also acknowledge the university’s historical ties to the indentured and enslaved whose labors built this institution. We pay respect to these people for their contributions to Virginia Tech.
Opening Remarks: Menah Pratt-Clarke

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Progress Toward an Inclusive Campus

President Timothy Sands
Responding: Achieving an Inclusive Academy

Dr. Abigail Stewart, University of Michigan
Creating an Inclusive Culture in a University
Academic institutions claim to represent core social values, including inclusion:

- Search for truth
- Freedom to pursue all ideas
- Respect for knowledge and expertise
- Valuing of creativity and innovation
- Commitment to merit
- Access/Inclusion

- Problems in judging merit
- Exclusionary practices
Academic institutions are not inclusive

- In terms of
  - Students
  - Faculty
  - Staff
How do we “create inclusion”?  

- Access is a precondition to inclusion  
- Fair judgments of merit are precondition for access  
- Structural issues affect who applies/has access  
  - Differential information  
  - Differential preparation  
  - Culturally-shared schemas
“Access” in inclusion?

- Differential access to information and professional socialization
  - Types of institutions of prior training and experience
    - resources
  - Experience and qualities of mentors (time in field, their training, size of labs/doctoral programs, style)
Obstacles to access in recruitment

- **Structure of networks**—evidence here for faculty
  - 461 doctoral departments in North America (history, computer science, and business)

- 19,000 faculty in those departments
  - 86% had received doctorate at one of the sample departments
  - 25% of the institutions produced 71-86% of the faculty
  - Top 10 institutions produce 1.6 to 3 times more faculty than the next 10
  - Only 9-14% of faculty are placed at institutions more prestigious than their degree
  - Phenomenon applies to all prior levels of education and experience

Practices to increase access in recruitment

Transparency about information needed

- Detail about precisely what the application, cover letter and other statements should cover
- Information about how to choose evidence of your own best work
- Detailed information about the process of applying, including interviews as relevant, ideally including questions to ask
- Detailed information about the process of on-campus interviews, when relevant
Access linked to merit via judgment

Assessments of “merit” hinge on accuracy of judgment

Academy requires many judgments of merit

- Many informal judgments
- Formal, consequential judgments
  - Of particular work (papers, exams, lab reports, books, grant proposals)
  - Of students in course of education
  - Of scholars over course of career
Judgments of merit are intrinsically complicated

Early on, include an element of **forecast**
- Admission of students (to college, to major, to graduate school, etc.)
- Hiring of staff and faculty
- Tenure and promotion of faculty

Forecasts always include **uncertainty**
- Weather
- Earthquakes
- Elections
- Athletic competitions
- Feelings
Two threats to the validity of our forecasts

Fundamental attribution error
- Incomplete information
- Overvaluing of some information
  - Attribution to person rather than situation
  - GPA vs. information about leniency of grading
  - Just World/Blaming the Victim
- Tendency to attribute success and failure to person

Reliance on group based schemas/”implicit biases”
- Resume studies demonstrate reliance on these schemas in hiring, salary setting, promotion
- Applies to gender, race, sexuality and parental status
- Some research on fellowships and grant applications
- Leadership outcomes
Influence of schemas can be reduced

- Screens help with musical auditions
- “Blind review” may help (but so many internal cues make this difficult)
  - Evidence people search for cues even when blind
- More information does help
  - “individuating” information reduces reliance on schemas
  - schemas still have an effect
Other irrelevant factors influence judgment:

**Halo effects**

- Appearance/likeability affects other judgments
- One performance influences judgments of others
- Influence of own mood
Reliance on proxies for excellence: prestige (special case of halo)

- Structure of networks
- Prestige
  - Prestige of institution predicted fate of resubmitted papers


Evaluation of fellowship applications: Gender

“...the success rate of female scientists applying for postdoctoral fellowships at the [Swedish Medical Research Council] during the 1990s has been less than half that of male applicants.”

Women applying for a post-doctoral fellowship had to be 2.5 times more productive to receive the same reviewer rating as the average male applicant.

“Friendship bonus”: applicants affiliated with a committee member rated higher. Friendship and Gender had similar size effects.

Similar findings:
- USA/GAO report on Peer Review in Federal Agency Grant Selection (1994)
- European Molecular Biology Organization Reports (2001)

Persistent impact of “nepotism” in peer review (homophily? proxy for excellence?)

10 years later estimated impact of gender and reviewer affiliation on research grants in Medicine

• Gender no longer significant after practices altered
• Reviewer affiliation equally significant

Belief in our own expertise at decision-making

• Experts rely on “fast” (intuition) more than “slow” (deliberate) process and have high confidence
• Intuition is reliable when based on
  • An environment that is regular and predictable (a “high-validity” environment)
  • Opportunity for prolonged practice
• Fields differ
  • Compare Anesthesiology vs Radiology

Improving judgment:
Some internal factors help some

- Recognition of uncertainty
- Commitment to consider role of situation in producing outcomes
  - Access to resources (human, time, and material)
  - Accumulation of advantage and disadvantage
- Examination of own process of developing opinions
  - Acknowledgment of irrelevant reactions/interpretations
  - Explicit consideration of alternative interpretations
  - Search for evidence to help decide
- Lower confidence in judgments

Improving judgment:
Change the context by changing practices

Some situational factors help

- Comparative pool (haloes very likely when no comparisons)
- Enough information
- Avoidance of “evidence” that is likely to include bias
- Avoidance of proxies for excellence

Improving judgment: changing practices

Some situational constraints help

- Establishment a priori of **detailed criteria** that can be observed
- Reliance on **specific evidence** in judging each criterion
- Avoidance of halos, intuition, and global judgments
- **Disciplined evaluation** of criteria across individuals
- In group process
  - Diversity in group membership
  - Enough time
  - Explicit process for correcting inaccuracies
Creating Inclusion

- Once expand access, increase support for success and retention
  - Capacity for fair judgments within institution
- Others’ expectations (implicit biases)
  - Patronizing feedback vs. “wise” feedback
  - Avoid stereotype threat
    - About performance
    - About potential racism/sexism/homophobia, etc.
- Sense of belonging
Focus on practices that enhance access

- Development of fuller information and careful distribution of it to applicants
- Education of faculty about the importance of adopting careful practices to enhance fair judgment
  - Assess practices that may introduce biases
  - Include more reliance on good evidence
- Adoption of practices that enhance fair judgment
  - One thing leads to another: bystander education
Focus on practices that enhance inclusion

Capacity for fair judgments
- Practices that increase likelihood
  - Adopt fair evaluation practices
    - Explicit transparent criteria
    - Multiple performance opportunities

Others’ expectations (implicit biases)
- Patronizing vs. “wise” feedback
  - Educate faculty and graduate students on how to give wise feedback and danger of patronization
- Absence of stereotype threat
  - Reduce ambient cues of not belonging

Sense of belonging
- Increase ambient cues linking success with people with many different social identities’
- Normalize anxiety about performance
At institutional level: Many programmatic efforts

VT has lots of these

• Study, evaluate and tweak them
• Study who they benefit and how much
• No doubt will need more!
Making changes stick

Rely on data
- Institutional data can tell you where your problems are most acute
- Social science research can offer guidance about possible practices to adopt
- Assess the impact of the practices and change as you go

Focus on practices
- Then create policies that institutionalize practices

Adopt changes widely, provide educational and informational support widely and quickly.
Being a difference maker + Challenges ahead

Laura Belmonte
Roseanne Foti
Wanda Smith
Break + Posters
Students’ experience of an inclusive campus

**With**
What does the **data** tell us?

**By**
What are students personally experiencing?

**For**
What can the institution do to enhance the culture of inclusivity and ensure that students are working towards that goal?
My campus is Friendly

OVERALL: 88% GRADUATE STUDENTS; 90% UNDERGRADUATE

Percent Agree or Strongly Agree

- Female Graduate: 87%
- Male Graduate: 89%
- Female Undergraduate: 90%
- Male Undergraduate: 88%

VIRGINIA TECH
My campus is Friendly

OVERALL: 88% GRADUATE STUDENTS; 90% UNDERGRADUATE

Percent Agree or Strongly Agree

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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>92%</td>
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My campus is Inclusive

OVERALL: 88% GRADUATE STUDENTS; 74% UNDERGRADUATE

Percent Agree or Strongly Agree

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<tr>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
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Percent Agree or Strongly Agree

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<tr>
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<td>83%</td>
<td>89%</td>
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<td>60%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under Graduate</td>
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Familiarity with & Importance of:

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<th>VT Principles of Community</th>
<th>Inclusive VT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Familiarity:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Familiarity:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Students: 74%</td>
<td>Graduate Students: 55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undergraduates: 73%</td>
<td>Undergraduates: 40%</td>
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Importance in maintaining a positive and productive environment on campus:

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<th>Graduate Students</th>
<th>Undergraduates</th>
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<td>65%</td>
<td>62%</td>
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<tr>
<td>48%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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Want to know more?

Survey Research Application is being developed for the University DataCommons

- This system will contain a variety of survey research projects conducted in Institutional Effectiveness and across the institution.
- Access to university-level data for the entire graduate student and undergraduate student surveys will be available in the coming weeks.

Contacts:

Bethany Bodo, Director, Institutional Effectiveness, Office of Analytics and Institutional Effectiveness

Kacy Lawrence, Director, Assessment and Strategic Data Initiatives, Graduate School
Meet the Cultural and Community Center Directors

Search underway for Black Cultural Center Director
What can WE do (as individuals and as an institution) to enhance the culture of inclusivity and ensure that students are working towards that goal?
Lunch

Setup for the afternoon Lightening Sessions begins at 1:45 pm.

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Lightening Sessions

1. Building inclusive environments for undergraduates in your department
2. The VT Food Access and Security Study—Next steps
3. Ways we can support you: Graduate School Retention and Support Programs
4. I am First Gen: An update on the development and implementation of First Generation programming
5. New Interfaith program at Virginia Tech
6. Serving students with disabilities
7. The LGBT Faculty and Staff Caucus in 2020 and beyond
8. Indigenous Outreach and Activities, 2019
9. The Virginia Tech Disability Alliance and Caucus