Official Symposium Poster
E110 Honors Students – University of Delaware © 2017

Writing for Social Justice:
Proceedings from The English 110 Honors Campus Climate Symposium at the University of Delaware

**Produced by Professor Emily R. Johnston
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"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."
-Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Introduction to The Book

On Tuesday, December 5, 2017, an English 110 Honors course at the University of Delaware—"Writing for Social Justice: Listening As Rhetorical Practice"—hosted a Writing for Social Justice Symposium in the Memorial Hall Dome. The event was planned by the first-year students in the course, and facilitated by the course professor, Emily Johnston, a Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of English. The Symposium featured student presentations and poster sessions of original research and writing that the students produced to incite change around a wide range of social justice issues impacting the UD community—from racial and socioeconomic diversity on campus, to the sexualization of women in Greek life, the stigmatization of mental illness, and the recruitment and retention of women in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). Made possible by a generous grant from the University of Delaware Honors Program, this book is a collection of student-authored proposals, reflections, and photographs from the Symposium, as well as posters the students designed to advertise the Symposium around campus, the program the students created for the Symposium event, and the professor's introductory remarks at the Sympoium. Please note that while students presented modified versions of their proposals at the Symposium, those versions are not included here. Rather, this book features the full-length proposals individual students composed as part of their work for the class.

Official Symposium Program

"Writing for Social Justice at UD"

Hosts
- Emily R. Johnston, Ph.D., UD Department of English, Postdoctoral Researcher in Writing Pedagogy & Professor of English 110 Honors

- Lauren Bevacqua, Joe Bonacorda, Casey Busch, Adheena Chacko, Amy Ciminnisi, Meilyn Farnell, Jordan Freudenberg, Timothy Mazzarelli, Tanya Nesterova, Annie Porter, Paula Pranda, Victor Ramirez Delgado, Brian Ramirez, Vincent Sikora, Dylan Southwell, Andrew Thompson, Joseph Warrington, Tommy White, Sarah Wojcik, Mark Wolgin, Zihan (Anna) Wu, Ethan Zelesko

Symposium Goals
The goal of this symposium is to raise awareness in the UD community about issues impacting students on campus, to provide a wide range of viewpoints on social justice issues impacting our campus, and to offer examples of how the community can help.

Presentations
Introductory Remarks .... *Dr. Emily Johnston*
Diversity on Campus .... *Amy Ciminnisi*
Vincent Sikora
Integration in STEM ....*Tanya Nesterova*
Sarah Wojcik
Socioeconomic Inequality .... *Dylan Southwell*
Tommy White
Greek Life .... *Joe Bonacorda*
Jordan Freudenberg
Paula Pranda
Joseph Warrington
Q&A and Concluding Remarks .... *Students of English 110*

Acknowledgements
A special thanks to the University of Delaware Department of English and the University of Delaware Honors Program for sponsoring the event.

The proposals from this symposium will be published in a book by the University of Delaware Honors Program. For more information, contact honorsprogram@udel.edu or (302) 831-1195.

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Feel free to peruse the student posters and ask questions!

Introductory Remarks on Symposium Day

Welcome! Thank you for coming to our Writing for Social Justice Symposium. I'm Emily Johnston, "Dr. Emily" or "Professor Emily," and a Postdoctoral Researcher in Writing Pedagogy here in the English Department. I teach UD's first-year writing course—fondly referred to as "E110" (English 110). This semester, the students in my E110 Honors class studied the relationship between writing and social justice, and developed the Symposium on campus climate that you will experience here today.

Writing is a way of communicating, but it's also a way of being—a general orientation to the world that expresses the power of language to shape our daily realities. Social justice is about human rights and equality. So "writing for social justice," as the class has defined it, is a way of being that is compassionate, responsive to others, interactive, and questioning; it is an attitude of openness towards changing our minds, coupled with a willingness to hold our ground; a willingness to risk confronting injustice *where*ver and *how*ever we encounter it.

Our class focused specifically on social justice issues in our campus community. Today you will witness the fruits of the students' labor. All the students have designed posters based on proposals they wrote on improving campus climate, which are displayed in the adjoining room. You'll also hear several students give presentations on issues the class studied this semester. The students elected 1-2 speakers to represent these issues: Diversity on Campus, Integration in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), Socioeconomic Inequality, and Greek Life. There will be a brief Q&A following each presentation. There will also be breaks in between each of the presentations, at which time we encourage you to peruse the posters and talk with the students about their work. The Symposium will end with concluding remarks from the students about their experience putting this Symposium together. Our class will be creating a book that showcases their proposals, which will be available through the UD Honors Program.

On behalf of the entire class, I would like to say a special thank you to the Department of English and to the Honors Program for generous grants that made this event possible. The Composition Program aims to teach students to consider issues of audience and context in their writing; to research various perspectives on a question or topic; and to contribute to the scholarly conversation. The UD Honors Program promotes learning as an immersive experience, learning beyond the classroom, and the foundational role of collaboration in learning. Today's Symposium, as well as this class as a whole, enact the values of both Programs.

What you will experience today is about envisioning a campus that is just, equitable, connected, and engaged. Please enjoy the refreshments and the eclectic music (playlist, compiled by the students of the class). We are so glad you're here!

Student Proposals

A Proposal to Improve Diversity at the University of Delaware
By Anonymous Student

Abstract

The University of Delaware (UD) has been heavily criticized for its lack of diversity by members of the UD community, lawmakers, and civil rights leaders. Both the student body and the faculty lack diversity, as they are both dominated by white students and faculty. This proposal seeks to respond to the issue of an undiverse undergraduate student body with a reasonable and attainable solution. First, the university must increase its number of minority groups, by changing the financial aid system which would allow more academically competitive students form lower socioeconomic status to attend UD. After the admittance of more diverse students, the university should create retention programs to increase graduation rates amongst these groups, as well as support them academically and socially. By implementing these changes, the University of Delaware could see an increase in students from lower socioeconomic status and minority groups and retain them across the four undergraduate years.

An Introduction to the Problem

The University of Delaware (UD) has been heavily criticized for its lack of diversity from lawmakers to civil rights leaders. Delaware State Senator Harris McDowell, co-chair of the Joint Finance Committee, and other state leaders have come together to say "that it is untenable for the state's flagship university to have only one in 20 students enrolled be black when one in five residents statewide are black" (Albright). The university is severely lacking a mass of African-American students, as the fall 2016 undergraduate body of almost 18,000 consisted of 73.3% white students. Leland Ware, a black professor of law and public policy who has taught at UD for more than 15 years, regarding UD's appeal to minority applicants states, "You have to have a reputation as a warm and welcoming environment… and UD doesn't have that" (Bies). Despite years worth of efforts to make the campus more diverse, critics claim the school still has a long way to go.

In 2016, about 5,046 minority students applied to UD's class of 2020, but they only accounted for 18 percent of the total application received (Bies). But the percentage of African-American students at UD was once again at 5.8 percent, the same number that it was in 1998. The total number of Delawareans was 3,886 and 1,141 of those applicants are from Delaware's underrepresented racial/ethnic groups. While it is good UD is increasing its number of minority applicants, it does not mean much unless the university actually enrolls more minority students. Doug Zander, executive director of admissions at UD, says a sizable portion of students don't apply because they assume that because of their test scores, they won't be admitted. And for those who admitted to UD, but go elsewhere, cite better financial aid offers at other universities.

Diversity in college is important for a multitude of reasons, as it enhances self-awareness, prepares students for future careers, etc. College creates a foundation for being comfortable working with a variety of individuals of all nationalities, as it may be the first opportunity many students have real interactions with people from other ethnic groups. But a lack of being educated on other cultures can create racial indifference and a vicious cycle that can create a hostile environment.

What UD Has Done to Solve the Problem

For decades, UD has tried combating its low numbers of minority students. In 2012, the university launched the President's Diversity Initiative, spurring the creation of new programs and Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) designed to make campus more inclusive. There are RSOs from the Asian Student Association to the Indian Student Association. RSOs hold events all throughout the school year open to all students, promoting multiculturalism and typically educating students on the culture. RSOs are limited in many capacities, not allowing them to be very successful. Examples of these limitations include: not being able to talk about certain topics, difficulties finding diverse advisors because there are so few and most of them are already advisors of a club, a lack of ability to reach out to students for smaller clubs, and the challenge of getting people to come out to entertaining events, while tying them into tough topics like race. In a survey, 8 out of 10 white students stated they were interested in joining multicultural RSO, but haven't taken any action to get involved because they feel out of place (Anonymous. Survey). RSOs face limitations on both ends, and thus cannot be super effective in promoting multiculturalism.

The University of Delaware also advertises heavily for its "diverse" and open community, but it does not truly live up to its claims. The top picture is from the "Plan Your Visit" page on the university's website to

Photo: Evan

prospective students, regarding nursing tours. The middle photo is from "Pathways for Delawareans" page under the university's apply page. Pictured are groups of diverse students, looking friendly and studious. The university is advertising to prospective students that UD is a diverse and open community. These ads generate misconceptions about the school leading schools to think UD is more diverse than it actually is. The bottom photo is from the 2016 Twilight Induction ceremony, in which one can see the majority of students are white. This photo is much more representative of the UD student body. The first two photos are marketing tools of the university to it seem like this is representative of the undergraduate student body.

Emails are a main communication tool of the university. They are used to send out important information regarding the university, but also advertise events, RSOs, etc. In an interview, a student's remarked that they clicked away from an email, regarding a forum being hosted on the development of a multicultural center, thinking it was spam from the university (Anonymous. Personal Interview). Their remark suggests that one of the very platforms through which the university makes diversity efforts, mass email, is ineffective. The university pushes for diversity, but its methods from the diverse range of students included in UD advertisements to the RSOs that promote multiculturalism are highly ineffective.

An Introduction to the Solution
Colleges and universities cannot add a diversity initiative without serious thought about how it will be implemented across campus. From admissions to deans, students to staff, everyone should be actively working to aid in the creation of a diverse campus. But one cannot simply make a campus diverse through RSOs or monthly events held to promote multiculturalism, if the student body is predominantly white.

A variety of factors influence the ability of colleges and universities to make their students, faculty, and staff more diverse. Obstacles like changing federal and state guidelines, money, judicial interpretations, etc. can make it harder to come up with innovative and creative approaches to building diversity across campus. Diversity can be costly, but for well endowed schools like the University of Delaware, there are more options. American colleges and universities must use their tools, especially financial aid, to build diversity. In a research paper commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, Dr. Jeffrey Milem, a professor of Education Policy and Reform at the University of Arizona, and other distinguished professors came to the conclusion that "institutional programs and policies that increase the compositional diversity of a campus play an important symbolic role by communicating to interested internal and external constituents that diversity is a priority for the campus and its leaders" (Milem *et al.*). Compositional diversity refers to the numerical and proportional representation of various racial and ethnic groups on a campus. Too many higher education institutions use financial aid as a way to fill their freshman class, rather than meet their mission

and strategic goals. Financial aid is where every dollar counts, and it must be used more intelligently and comprehensively. The University of Delaware should offer more financial aid to students of lower socioeconomic status and first generation students and create retention programs because it would become a more economically competitive school and increase graduation rates, as students are supported economically and academically.

Solution Part 1. Revamping Financial Aid
At Princeton University, they have seen an increase in both the quality and diversity of the undergraduate student body as a result of improving their financial aid over recent years. Princeton admits students on a need-blind basis, meaning a candidate's financial need is not a factor in the admission decision, it began to make significant changes in its financial aid policies in 2001. As a result of these changes, Princeton replaced all required loans in its financial aid packages with increased grants, which do not need to be repaid, and has adjusted its formulas for determining need to reduce the amount that both students and families are expected to contribute. In the Dean of the College's, Nancy Malkiel, annual report to the faculty on undergraduate admission and financial aid, she noted that the percentage of entering freshmen on financial aid increased from 40 percent for the class of 2004 to 46 percent for the class of 2005 (Stevens). Compared to the class of 2001, the last class admitted before Princeton began instituting its recent financial aid improvements, over four years the number of students on financial aid increased 26 percent, from 432 to 543. The university has also enrolled increased numbers of Asian-American and Hispanic students. Malkiel said that changes increased [the school's] attractiveness to students from all backgrounds.

Princeton's financial aid improvements have clearly and significantly helped achieve increased diversity, as it is making it possible for anyone to attend and graduate debt-free. Princeton's class of 2021 was composed of 22 percent Asian Americans, 11 percent Hispanics/Latinos, 8 percent African Americans, 5 percent multiracial (non-Hispanic), and 13 percent international citizens. Of the about 5,600 undergraduates, 52 percent of students yield from one of these ethnic groups ("Undergraduate"). The university's generous financial aid program has created significant improvement in terms of diversity. Although Princeton holds a much smaller undergraduate community, this change would be feasible to Delaware. With a 1.2 billion dollar endowment, the university has some wiggle room to offer more financial aid. As a need-blind school, offering more aid to those who might not be strong candidates to be able to afford tuition but have the academics to come to the university. It would make UD a more appealing to those students who could be fielding better financial offers from other schools. The University of Delaware would benefit if they were to implement the same or similar financial aid system. If the school were to offer more economic help, it would make UD more competitive with other colleges and universities who offer larger financial aid to applicants, thus it could boost numbers of minority and lower socioeconomic students. With an change in the undergraduate population, the school

would begin to be living up to its advertisements and increase student participation in RSOs as numbers become more balanced.

Solution Part 2. Specifically Designed Retention Programs
While RSOs and events are a good start to be an inclusive school, the school must also account for students academically, socially, and culturally after they enter the university. Underrepresented students typically have lower retention rates across majors, therefore colleges developing programs have shown to improve the retention and success of students of color. UD has programs like NUCLEUS, an undergraduate support program that offers additional academic advisers, a dedicated study space, work-study positions, and opportunities to do research as an undergrad., but it is only open to students in the College of Arts and Sciences, as it is targeted at students of STEM. The university should create a retention program tailored to the educational needs of minority students and offers tutoring support, academic advising, and financial aid counseling. "Participation in a support program was shown to have a significant impact on the retention of African American students, and tutoring and study skills training were identified the most helpful services" (Johnson). A study done at Jackson State University, about the benefits of a retention program for African American students at a predominantly white university, found that retention programs had a positive influence on student success and resulted in students receiving innumerable academic, social, and cultural benefits. Academically, the mentoring program helped with their coursework and internships. Socially, students stated it increased their socialization with faculty, program staff, and other students. Culturally, attending a predominantly white university made these students very aware of their culture, and their pride in their cultural heritage made them feel it was important to participate in cultural activities and classes.

To create these retention programs, the school would need to provide space and funds for the program. The space would provide private study areas, as well as offices for advisers. And funds allocated could go towards private tutors and other academic resources. The program would adapt as needed to meet the main goal, which is to meet the needs of the students. Adding a specifically designed retention program could benefit the school, as minority students graduation rates could increase. The study at Jackson State University provided a positive influence on student success, and implementing such a program at UD could also show positive lasting effects on these students.

In Conclusion
The University of Delaware pushes for and highly advertises its diverse community, but from the standpoint of many students they have not created a diverse community. With changes to their financial aid and implementation of retention programs, the university could see significant change in terms of the undergraduate body. Colleges and universities all have their own

strategies and plans about how to create a more diverse community; and while some have found what works for them, there is always room for improvement. UD thrives to be the best and most innovative school and with these changes the school could find itself leading the way in yet another field. The success of these changes could have other colleges across the nation looking to follow in Delaware's footsteps. During and after the admissions process, colleges and universities should be committed to leveling the playing field and creating a diverse student body. Financial aid and specifically designed retention programs are essential tools to help build diversity at a school community, but these are only the first steps. Once a more diverse body, faculty included, is created, everyone from students to deans must actively work to create a diverse community.

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Writer's Reflection

This class has opened my eyes to many issues, especially on campus. Over the course the semester, we researched and and made strides to Propose reasonable and attainable solutions for issues right here on campus. We all chose topics that we're passionate about—all culminating in the campus climate symposium. I was able to grow as a writer, especially because I was given the opportunity to write about a brand new topic. I was able to read a wide range of works all related to social justice, and use them to help build my own writing. I learned to better focus on audience and context, to shape and support my ideas toward certain readers. I was also given the opportunity to participate in many discussions with classmates who had varying perspectives. Everyone saw and analyzed things differently, but this helped me as a student and a citizen to see new ways of thinking. English 110 helped me grow as a writer and as a citizen seeking change.

Proposing a Better Honors Program for the University of Delaware
By Anonymous Student

Abstract

This paper addresses the issues that the honors program has caused, and proposes an entirely new problem to help eliminate the problem. The University of Delaware Honors Program needs to end the honors program as it is, and create university-wide honors courses in all colleges that anyone can take if they qualify, because having a separate community with special privileges compared to the rest of the student population means that the University of Delaware is not following its own mission statement. This proposal talks about the problems caused by the honors program, proves they're real, talks about how to fix the problems, and proves why it is the best proposal.

Introduction

"This isn't fair" is a common phrase used by children, teenagers, and adults all across the country. Perhaps the most common place this phrase is used is on college campuses. Any place on the UD campus, whether it be in class, in the residence halls, or in the dining halls, someone will be complaining about how something isn't fair. Most of the time, people are complaining just to complain. However, there are absolutely valid complaints and problems on the University of Delaware campus. Perhaps one of the most unfair aspects of campus is the University of Delaware Honors Program, which isolates its very own community, and gives its students unfair opportunities and privileges that the non-honors students never get. Because of this, the honors program needs to be completely re-worked. The University of Delaware Honors Program needs to end the honors program as it is, and create university-wide honors courses in all colleges that anyone can take if they qualify, because having a separate community with special privileges compared to the rest of the student population means that the University of Delaware is not following its own mission statement.

Why the UD Honors Program Is A Problem

Many people on campus hardly even realize what's going on with regards to the honors program. Most don't care. In fact, in an interview with five students that were not in the honors program, and just one even had an opinion on the honors program. Perhaps, this is the biggest problem. The students who are getting the short end of the stick do not even realize or care. In order to make a change, everyone needs to be on the same page.

However, in order for people to care, they need to see what the problem is. The problem is the fact that honors students receive privileges and opportunities, that non-honors students don't

receive, and also that honors students are isolated from the rest of the university. What does this mean?

To understand the problem, we have to start from the very beginning of the admission process. When students are admitted into the University of Delaware Honors Program, they are instantly placed in a separate community from the rest of the students. They are already placed on a higher pedestal than everyone else and they haven't even done anything. They are placed into higher level courses with special mentors, with their very own clubs, all while living within their own community. They also have their very own special network for jobs after college as well. And after college, according to surveys given to alumni by the University of Delaware Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, honors students on average make more money and are employed at a higher percentage than their non-honors counterparts.

This is all without talking about the non-honors students. Many don't even realize how they are not on an even playing field. There are fantastic students that don't make it to the honors program because their SAT scores were 50 points lower than they needed to qualify for the program. These students miss out on all the great benefits there are to being an honors student, and from their perspective, are being treated poorly. Another unfortunate effect of the honors program is that it creates an "us versus them" mentality. Non-honors students feel like they are not as good as the honors students, which creates animosity between the two groups. Honors students even begin to feel like they are better than the non-honors students.

In my research, I interviewed thirty people, fifteen of which were honors students, and fifteen of which were not. Twelve of the honors students stated in some way that they deserve everything they have in the honors program, and five of the same students said that non-honors students were just jealous. In interviewing non-honors students, no one said that they were jealous, but eleven out of fifteen said that they believed honors students were treated too well. The VIP treatment given by the UD Honors Program to honors students has created needless animosity between two groups.

Who benefits from honors programs? The Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council published a report titled *Who Benefits from Honors: An Empirical Analysis of Honors and Non-Honors Students' Backgrounds, Academic Attitudes, and Behaviors*, written by Ted Brimeyer, April Schueths, and William Smith. Within this report, the authors collected data to determine who exactly benefits from honors programs. They found out that typically, the honors program population was more white and female than the rest of their student body. The fathers of these honors students were also more educated. They found that honors students cheated less, and more believed hard work paid off compared to non-honors students. Non-honors students were also more concerned with their GPA, as opposed to honors students who were more concerned

about what they were learning in class. It's important to realize that honors students typically are harder working, and more concerned about what they are learning, so some level of honors program will be necessary.

Why is there an honors program at UD? In Peter Sederberg's *The Honors College Phenomenon*, he takes a survey from 35 public universities. In this survey, he asks what the motivations for the honors colleges are? All of the universities said to recruit stronger students, with many schools saying that they want to improve campus academic quality as well. However, he also asked about their endowments, which ranged from $500,000 to over $25,000,000. And despite the size of these endowments, the schools did not want to pay higher dues. Based on this, it's a reasonable conclusion that money is a huge factor in honors colleges, perhaps the biggest. This really conflicts with the whole idea of education, and UD's mission of "*cultivating learning...promoting an environment in which all people are inspired to learn*" as well. The honors students are VIP's, the non-honors students are angry, and the University of Delaware Honors Program is raking in the cash. Without a doubt, something needs to change.

What Makes A Good Honors Program

It's important to determine what makes a good honors program, in order to create the best possible system. In order to do this, I first looked at the pros and cons of honors programs, in order to determine the benefits, and the drawbacks, so that the benefits would be maximized, and the drawbacks would be minimized. The pros of honors programs at public universities include smaller class sizes, better employment opportunities after college, a better reputation for the university, and students can get a private school level education at the discounted price of public universities. The cons include creating a group of students considered elite and above the rest of the class which creates animosity, and isolating a group of students from the very beginning (Nachbar). Based on this, it is important to realize that there are many benefits to honors programs, and made me start to think about how to get away from the negative aspects.

After this, I looked at the characteristics of a fully developed honors program. These characteristics included a program that is designed to specifically serve its own students, it should have a specific mission statement, it should be highly reputed, and it should always be open to criticism, so that it might improve. All of these characteristics are vital, but the last one is the most important. There is not a single system that's perfect, and systems grow old, so change is almost constantly needed. Knowing what makes a good honors program lead to the solution.

What's the Solution?

This solution is several steps put together in order to really fix the problem long term. There are things that can be solved short-term, but change needs to be for everyone. The first step of my solution is to end the honors program as it is. The system needs to be completely gone in order to

create a new one. But this will take time, as something like this is quite drastic. But it's completely understandable in the scope of my entire solution.

What does it mean to end the honors program? By this, I mean there should be no one admitted into an honors program anymore, there should not be a specific living community, and no special privileges for incoming students. Everyone starts on an even playing field, for the most part.

The second step of the solution is to create a "bigger" honors program. I don't mean more students, but a more campus-wide reach for honors. Every subject, math, science, history, English should all have honors level courses. There should be plenty of opportunities for all students to take honors courses.

The third step of this plan is to create the criteria for taking honors courses. No students coming in for their first semester will take honor courses. This is to ensure that everyone begins on the same playing field. However, after their first semester, if a student has a 3.2 GPA or higher, they will qualify for honors courses. Sophomore year they will need a GPA of 3.3, junior year a 3.4 GPA, and senior year a 3.5 GPA. This is similar to what is already in place here at the University of Delaware.

The fourth and final step is to create an end-goal for the honors students. This comes in the form of an honors degree. Students who take 30 honors credits throughout their college career would earn an honors degree. Students who take 40 honors credits would earn a higher-level honors degree.

Why the University of Delaware Has Not Adopted This System
As with any system, there are benefits and losses. Benefits include a level playing ground for all students from the beginning, honors level courses for those who want them, and a decrease in the animosity between students. Some of the losses are the fact that there will be no specific set of "elite" students in their own group. This might cause the University to lose out on prospective students who would be treated like this at other schools. A downsizing in the scale of the program would also cause a loss of money.

UD hasn't adopted a system like this because from their point of view, there's nothing wrong. However, looking at animosity between students and the disadvantages for non-honors students, there is a problem. Looking at the proposed change, the university and honors program might just see it as a loss of money, a loss of good students, or just not enough of an improvement on the current system to warrant any thought.

However, this system will not cause a loss of money, a loss of good students, or just a small improvement on the current honors program. The best students, and the most motivated will want to challenge themselves. This system will allow them to this. Students who might not qualify for the current honors program in their senior year of high school will be motivated to come to the university because they will have the chance to take honors courses. More students means that more tuition money will be coming in, and thus revenue is generated. Also, better students lead to a more reputable program, which in and of itself will attract more students.

Conclusion

There is a serious, un-talked about problem on the University of Delaware Campus. Honors students are treated like VIP's, with special opportunities and privileges. These students are the best of the best, but they are placed on a pedestal and isolated from the rest of the student body. Because of this, the non-honors students feel animosity towards the honors students, and the school creates an "us vs them" situation between its own students. Because of this, the program needs to be completely reworked. A completely separate honors program needs to be ended, and an overlay structure of honors courses needs to be put in its place. This removes the isolation and adulation for an "elite" group of students. Students can still take honors courses and push themselves at the highest level. The honors courses will still be highly reputed, but they are no longer separate. This system will allow all students to work hard and receive the many benefits that an honors education has to offer.

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Writer's **R**eflection

This course was a tremendous learning experience for me, especially for my freshman year. On campus, there are definitely issues that are much easier to see than others, such as diversity or the underrepresentation of women in STEM. But I wanted to research something that maybe not a lot of people realized was going on. So while walking into my dorm, I thought about the advantages of the honors program and went from there. I learned how honors students are better off than non-honors students, both during and after college, and I also learned how the two groups of students felt about each other. Because of this, I researched how I could develop an honors program that didn't separate people, but gave everyone an even playing field to challenge themselves. Throughout this process, the biggest thing I learned was how my advantages can be someone's disadvantages, which now makes me see things from a different perspective.

Solving the Problem of Alcohol Abuse at UD and Beyond
By Anonymous Student

Abstract

Alcohol abuse is an issue at the University of Delaware and other universities nationwide. This is even worse at UD, however, as the university is known as being a top party school. Two solutions are proposed in the writing. One solution is to inform the community about the issue. Another is to change the way that local police forces look at underage drinking. The proposal concludes with a summary of the ideas and how these ideas can be used to help other universities.

Proposal

Drinking alcohol can be a lot of fun, but it would be hard to honestly say that there were no negatives that came with drinking. Beyond the social benefits of alcohol, which seem to be amplified at a college campus setting where drinking alcohol seems to help many students fit in, there are a lot of factors that negatively impact the abuser and even some that impact others in the area. Are these factors to be dealt with by the non-drinking bystanders, such as fellow students and nearby Newark citizens? Or by the abusers? It is unlikely that drinkers would be willing to advocate against abuse of alcohol, at least without encouragement from others. Fear that they would be labeled as someone who can't be trusted scares away most potential advocates who drink. So, this challenge then rests on the shoulders of the bystanders that want change. From informing the population to even enacting new laws or policies, the possibilities of change have a lot of potential, but they are nothing if these bystanders do nothing to change anything. But wanting to make change and actually doing it are two very different concepts. A lot of people may think something is wrong, but if they do nothing, the problem is still there. Therefore, these 'fed-up bystanders' need to work together towards a common goal, eventually figure out how to solve the issues, and then implement that solution. This proposal serves as a guideline for those that are willing to take a stand, specifically at the University of Delaware. One of the key solutions proposed in this essay is making the police departments less strict on alcohol punishments and more focused on helping those that have drank too much. Another is informing the local community about both the dangers one must accept when drinking alcohol and also the dangers that nondrinkers face when around those that abuse alcohol. This leads into the idea that more research is needed to help convince drinkers that they should drink responsibly. These solutions will play a large role in slowing the alcohol problem at UD and eventually help to slow the alcohol usage of other universities.

Alcohol abuse can be a difficult subject to talk about because so many people drink and enjoy drinking that they'd rather not have a discussion that could change their views on drinking. On

top of that, everyone knows that alcohol has strong effects on the mind. This is not new information. The issue is that most people think they can control themselves and that they'd never do anything wrong, even when intoxicated. But what happens when you drink more than you were expecting to, and that idea that was unthinkable earlier all of the sudden doesn't look so bad? Alcohol clearly affects the mind and it influences choices that the drinker makes. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism describes the effects of alcohol best on their webpage: "Difficulty walking, blurred vision, slurred speech, slowed reaction times, impaired memory: Clearly, alcohol affects the brain." A study carried out in 1997, which while being 20 years old is still relevant due to the fact that the changes alcohol causes to behavior would not change very much over time, by Lonn Lanza-Kaduce, Donna M. Bishop, and Lawrence Winner set out to see exactly how alcohol affects the decision-making process. They went to college parties and interviewed partygoers before and after partying to see if there were shifts in morals and beliefs due to alcohol. The evidence from this study was clear: alcohol certainly affected the partygoers. The answers from the interviews showed that those who drank the most had "become most approving of the criminal acts", drinking heavily "lowered risk perceptions regarding crime", and drinking heavily also "enhanced the desirability of crime". While these findings certainly do not indicate that drinking a lot will cause you to commit crimes, it does seem to indicate that drinking more may increase your chances of committing crimes. Combine this with the fact that in 1998 the "Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS, 1998) reports that 41% of violent male inmates in local jails admit to drinking at the time of the offense" and "An estimated 37 percent of sexual assaults and rapes are committed by offenders who were under the influence of alcohol" and a connection between alcohol and criminal behavior can certainly be made.

We have now established that alcohol can be an issue if abused, but you may be wondering how often that kind of behavior happens on college campuses. The University of Delaware is known to have a prominent Greek life presence on campus and many of these fraternities often throw parties with plenty of alcohol. In fact, a quick Google search of the top party schools in the US will bring you a list made by the Princeton Review showing UD as the 6th best party school in the nation. The Princeton Review also ranked UD 11th for "Lots of Beer". In addition, according to AlcoholEdu, an online program that the University of Delaware requires all incoming freshmen to complete, 54% of UD students admitted to "binge drinking"(which was defined as having 5+ drinks in one sitting) at some point in the month before they asked. Drinking culture is very prevalent in the University of Delaware and this puts all of the UD students and citizens in the surrounding Newark area at risk of having to deal with the previously discussed issues involved with the abuse of alcohol.

One solution that would help in solving the issues of drinking too much would be to have less strict punishments for underage drinking. While the introduction of the amnesty program, which allows students to call emergency services to help someone who may have alcohol poisoning and

then be free from punishment, at the University of Delaware was a great start, it would be best to continue to head in that direction. The focus of the police, regarding underage drinking, should be helping students, not threatening or punishing them. Students may stop avoiding the police if they know that they can trust the officers. Currently, police will walk around and occasionally break up parties going on and everyone that is there will run away. Where do they run to? Usually, they end up going to a different party and will continue to drink more at that party. What did that accomplish? Maybe a few people went home and called it a night. Maybe they stopped some questionable behavior. But now they have a bunch of intoxicated youth that are still out drinking more. If there was a trust between officers and students, the students would be more willing to get help from the police, and the police would be able to keep better track of what is going on. While it would take a long period of time to develop this relationship between the police officers and the students, due to the fear that many students currently have of the officers, a trusting relationship would allow students to feel comfortable calling police to come to a party where the students see questionable behavior occurring, even if that student is drinking underage. If a student feels that they are being touched inappropriately by another student, they could call the police without having to fear that they themself would be charged for underage drinking. It is time that the local police admit that they can't stop underage drinking near or on the campus, but with the help of students, they can stop other suspicious or criminal behavior.

Another method to help reduce the drinking problem at the University of Delaware is to inform the Newark community, including both students at UD and people that live nearby, about the problem. Letting both drinkers and nondrinkers know what issues there are is a great way to inspire them to change. A related idea that is certainly worth trying was brought up by Donald A. Misch, who wrote about fixing the alcohol abuse problem on campuses in an article that was included in the Journal of American College Health. Basically, Misch proposes that we focus on empowering non-drinkers by explaining to both them and those that drink that the abuse of alcohol affects both groups of people. Misch states that "In 1995 Wechsler et al reported that students at colleges and universities suffered frequent adverse consequences caused by drinkers; indeed, 66% of college students reported experiencing one or more secondhand effects of drinking behavior. More specifically, the percentages of college students experiencing secondhand alcohol effects were as follows: violence including being pushed, hit, or physically assaulted (13%); unwanted sexual advances (21%); sexual assault (1% to 2%); serious quarrels or arguments (22%); humiliation or being insulted (27%); noise or other disruption of study or sleep (43%); personal property damage (12%); and having to 'babysit' a drunken student (44%)." After explaining that nondrinkers have to deal with these issues because of excessive drinking from other students, Misch goes into further detail about his plan when he states "The campaign would emphasize that how a college student peer drinks alcohol is his or her own business as long as the individual does not endanger himself or herself and others are not adversely affected." Letting the drinking students know that the drinking by itself is not wrong,

but the abuse of alcohol and subsequent behaviors is the problem is very important in convincing them that they should not drink irresponsibly. They will most likely not stop drinking altogether, however they may drink more responsibly if they are convinced that this is the better option. Misch focuses on the similarities of alcohol abuse and smoking in America and argues that the U.S. should employ a strategy that is similar to the secondhand smoking campaign for alcohol abuse. He explains that "The key to such a campaign is to empower college students—to provide them with license—to confront their peers on abusive drinking that results in secondhand effects, just as secondhand smoke campaigns have done in the domain of public tobacco consumption."

But how can non-drinking college students be empowered to say something to their peers, especially at somewhere like the University of Delaware where drinking alcohol regularly seems standard? The answer is the collection and distribution of research. In Misch's article, he states that "Secondhand smoke campaigns were built on a foundation of scientific research demonstrating that secondhand smoke was dangerous, not simply annoying, to others. From there, however, individuals found themselves more and more comfortable—indeed, empowered—to speak up and ask, and ultimately insist, that they not be subjected to another's smoke." Basically, after people see that there is research backing up their views, such as the abuse of alcohol negatively affecting non-drinkers, they are much more inclined to ask for and even demand change. In *Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Cardiovascular Effects: Making Sense of the Evidence* by the Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Secondhand Smoke Exposure and Acute Coronary Events, the importance of research to the second-hand smoke campaign is shown in this passage: "In the 1980s, several reports… concluded that involuntary smoking has adverse effects. Increasing activity of nonsmokers' rights organizations and shifts in public opinion led to implementation of more comprehensive bans" Knowing how crucial research was to the secondhand smoking campaign, research should be critical to the campaign to end alcohol abuse at UD. We must convince governmental organizations to research the negative impact that excessive drinking has on non-drinking students and then help distribute their findings to students at UD. In addition, we must conduct our own research that is more specific to UD. Once these non-drinking 'bystanders' see the research that shows they are not alone in being affected by their peers' drinking habits, they will feel more empowered to make the change that needs to happen to fix this problem.

The University of Delaware is in a great position to be a model of what can be done to solve the issue of alcohol abuse for other universities. Since the party and drinking culture is so prevalent at UD and UD has that reputation, they are in a great spot to first fix their problems and then be able to say "look how far we have come". However, get to that spot by fixing the alcohol abuse issue on our campus, we must relax the punishments on underage drinking and also inform the community about the impact that drinking has. Only then can the University of Delaware serve as the model for change for alcohol abuse.

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Writer's Reflection

In the beginning of the year, Professor Emily told us we needed to pick a social justice issue that existed on campus and write a report and proposal for change. If I'm being completely honest, this frustrated me. I was not aware of any of those issues. But then I started looking harder around campus and started noticing things that were not obvious. But still, I didn't think there could be *that* many social justice issues on campus. That changed once I started to talk to my peers from this class and learned about the issues that they had discovered and began researching. This experience showed me that even though something may not be obviously wrong because it is not affecting you, it can still be affecting a lot of other people. It also proved to me that even at places where things seem equal and progressive, not everything may be right.

UDecide to Make a Difference:
Promoting Change to Mental Illness Stigmas
at the University of Delaware
By Lauren Bevacqua

Abstract
Mental illness stigmatization has plagued the human population for decades, most notably on college campuses across the globe. However several mental illness studies report that college students are the least likely to seek help or treatment for their struggles with mental illness. The University of Delaware is no exception to this statistic and students and faculty of the UD community must dare to be the first college campus to eradicate the stigma. Through the implementation a mandatory educational program, the practice of using mindful language, and the collective effort to reach out to friends and family, the members of the UD community have the ability to really make a difference in the perception of mental illness on campus. The purpose of this proposal is to identify and suggest ways to reduce the effects of mental illness stigmatization in the University of Delaware community, so as to equip students and faculty with the resources they need to fight the stigma and eventually serve as a model for change for other college campuses.

Introduction
Mental illness is very prevalent on college campuses and presents itself as a major hindrance to academic success of college students. Findings published on the Active Minds national website report that "An estimated 26 percent of Americans ages 18 and older – or about 1 in 4 adults - live with a diagnosable mental health disorder." Moving away from home and into a new environment, surrounded by new people and living in an unfamiliar place can be very stressful for incoming college students. In addition to the stress of a new environment, the teaching style and workload often varies greatly in the transition from college to high school, which also causes many college students to feel overwhelmed and inferior to their peers. Active Minds also reports that "Mental health issues in the college student population, such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders, are associated with lower GPA and higher probability of dropping out of college." However despite the clear negative implications of mental illness for college students, " the 18-24 year old age group shows the lowest rate of help-seeking" (Active Minds). Many college students feel that they are alone in the mental battles they may be fighting and are influenced by stigmas that make them feel as if it is not okay to be vulnerable or seek help. These stigmas prevent them from receiving the help they need. It is important to understand how these stigmas surrounding mental illness evolved so that college campuses can become more equipped to fight mental illness stigmatization.

History of Mental Illness

Mental illness has existed since the origin of the human race. However up until the last few decades society viewed mental illness from a very negative perspective. Thus just as mental illness has existed since the beginning of time, so has the stigma associated with it. As stated by a representative of the Museum of Healthcare, "Two hundred years ago, mental illness was not an ailment that drew much sympathy from the public" (Cressman 2014). Having what is today called a mental illness was in ancient times and during the middle ages considered witchcraft and possession. As a result, people who experienced or were affected by mental illness were shunned and excluded from society, often facing severe punishment. The idea that individuals with mental illness were "wild beasts" that needed to be confined shaped treatment practices for hundreds of years" (Cressman 2014). Over time, this exclusion and punishment took on the form of mental hospitals designed to "fix" the problem that was mental illness. Treatment was the stated goal, but it also served as a way to prevent people struggling with mental illness from interacting with the rest of society (Duverge 2015). This supposed solution was implemented for centuries and the treatment of individuals dealing with mental illness has since improved. Though despite the improvement, these longheld practices still influence stigma as it affects mental illness stereotypes today.

Mental Illness Stigmatization at The University of Delaware

Stigmatization is damaging to the human psyche because it creates false perceptions of how a person should or should not go about living their daily lives. People who deal with a mental illness already struggle with troubling thoughts and ideas. But stigmatization influences those troubling thoughts, causing any negative thoughts, feelings, and emotions that already exist to intensify. This discourages and deters people experiencing mental illness even further from seeking help or treatment. This lack of willingness to seek treatment is prevalent in the University of Delaware Newark campus community. I have witnessed first hand the experiences of my peers as they become stressed and overwhelmed by their workload and dealing with the transition from highschool to college. The idea that college is "supposed to be stressful" is a mindset that many of my peers have adopted, and which I have seen professors use to justify the workload they place on their students. I have observed that this often results in students sacrificing their mental health in order to receive satisfying grades in their classes. Students and faculty need to be educated about mental illness and ways to seek help and fight the stigma because they make up the majority of the campus community and can thus make the largest impact.

The Need for Education and Awareness

At the University of Delaware the lack of education contributes to mental illness stigmatization. Trained professionals who work in the field of mental health and mental illness know the effects of mental illness and stigmatization. For instance, the staff at the counseling center are well

educated on mental illness and combating the stigma associated with it. It is their job to be. The counseling center offers individual and group counseling and actively promotes and holds workshops pertaining to mental health. They are doing the best with the resources that they have. But the education and hard work of just the twenty-four staff workers at the counseling center is not enough to change the prevalence of a stigma affecting the entire campus population of over 27,000 students and faculty.

Only one other publicized resource exists in addition to the Center for Counseling and Student Development at the University of Delaware–that is, the Active Minds at UD registered student organization. This organization is a student run organization on campus promoting awareness and understanding of mental health issues as it attempts to contribute to the elimination of stigmas associated with mental illnesses. While advocating and serving a just cause, this registered student organization is difficult to get in contact with as it's announcements and social media accounts are neither well advertised nor consistently updated.

When I first attempted to contact the chapter of Active Minds at UD, I checked the Active Minds at UD student central page and sent an email request in September of 2017 that still remains unanswered. The two social media accounts listed on student central have not been consistently updated since May of 2017. Only three updates have been posted during the entire Fall 2017 semester, one of which promoted an event after it had already occurred, World Mental Health Day. I had found out about this occasion on the national Active Minds website and had actively checked the facebook and twitter pages for updates regarding the event so that I could use it to supplement my research. Only after searching other forms of social media, namely Instagram, did I actually find information about what the Active Minds at UD chapter is doing on campus. This form of social media is not advertised through the club's student central page or very publically on campus, thus making it difficult for anyone to contact them.

Since the Active Minds organization is student run and led, it has the potential to educate a great percentage of the student population. But it needs to be more consistent in its advertising so that it can effectively do so. Effective advertising is essential to promoting awareness, especially for this organization whose primary goal is to promote awareness. In today's technology saturated culture, social media plays a big part in getting people's attention and promoting awareness. Upon finding the Active Minds Instagram page it is extremely evident that they consistently update their page with information regarding their club. But none of their other advertised forms of social media tend to follow suit, making it difficult to gather proper knowledge about Active Minds at UD. This may discourage people on the UD campus who want to get involved or learn more about Active Minds from pursuing the club. Thus, causing the club itself to become associated with the exact stigma it battles against.

Despite the inadequacies of UD's resources for combating mental illness, there are several other steps that can be taken by staff and students at the University to help eliminate the mental illness stigmas existing on campus.

Strategies to Help Reduce Mental Illness Stigma at UD
- Properly educating staff and students about mental illness
- Being mindful and actively changing the way we speak about mental illness
- Reaching out to close friends and family, asking about what they're going through, validating feelings

Proper Education of UD Students and Faculty
There is a need for official education of students and faculty about mental illness at the University of Delaware. Every University of Delaware student and faculty member has to complete educational programs about sexual misconduct and alcohol use. These programs have been effective in educating the UD student and faculty population and promoting awareness because they are required in order to register for classes, and even more significantly, for students to graduate and for faculty to work at the university. In the same way, a program educating the University of Delaware community about mental health and mental illness could very much so contribute to the reduction of stigmas regarding mental illness and seeking help. Students are not likely to complete a program like this if it is not mandatory. However some ways in which this mental illness awareness program could be implemented are to integrate it into other mandatory events that students and faculty must attend. For example, each incoming freshman and each new faculty member must attend either New Student Orientation or New Faculty Orientation before beginning their time learning or teaching at the University of Delaware. Additionally the First Year Experience class is a mandatory class that all UD freshmen must take in order to graduate. Incorporating an educational program into the curriculum of that class could also be an effective strategy for educating students. However in order to keep students and faculty up to speed on mental illness stigmatization each student and faculty member should be required to complete an educational mental illness program every two years they are at the University.

So what information will an educational program like this consist of? Topics that must be included in this educational mental health/mental illness program are what the definition of mental illness and its various forms are, but more importantly how to be aware of signs and symptoms that suggest mental illness may be affecting someone. Some signs and symptoms the National Alliance for Mental Illness provides are:
- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning

- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable "highs" or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people

(Source: https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Know-the-Warning-Signs)

These signs and symptoms could be incorporated into the program so that students and faculty know what to look out for in their peers and colleagues, but also for faculty to be mindful of their students and any mental illness that may be adversely affected by factors such as increased workload or difficult course material.

Mindful Language Resulting From Education
An important way to apply education from a mandatory educational program is to act in a way that reflects effective education by being mindful about how you talk about mental illness to other people. As the National Alliance for Mental Illness puts it "focusing on healing won't fix a shattered bone." The real change to this problem of mental illness stigmatization can not be seen unless attitudes about mental illness are changed. Mindful language results from attitude change which results from internalizing learned information. Thus the next step in the process to eradicating mental illness stigmatization at UD is to let one's language reflect one's education; thus applying the knowledge gained about mental illness by actively change the way we talk about it.

For centuries people with mental illness have been dehumanized and labeled not as people, but rather as the diseases and illnesses they struggled with. There is a large misconception in today's world that mental illness can be controlled by the person struggling with it. An important part of eradicating mental illness stigma today, and a way the students and faculty of the University of Delaware community can help eradicate the stigma is to avoid defining people by the mental illness they are experiencing. However as defined in the most recent version of the Diagnostical and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), "A mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. Mental disorders are usually associated with significant distress in social, occupational, or other important activities". Thus mental illness is not something that a person chooses to turn on or off, rather it is a cognitive defect that causes the brain to function improperly. Therefore how we talk to and about people with mental illness is extremely important to fighting the stigma

The following chart created by the National Alliance on Mental Health suggests ways in which we can change our language so as to abstain from using offensive phrases or remarks about

mental illness.

(Source: nami.org/Get-Involved/Take-the-stigmafree-Pledge/StigmaFree-Me)

These phrases are important for both students and faculty to consider as they are interacting with each other on a day to day basis. Knowing what phrases might make someone dealing with a mental illness feel objectified or as if their feelings are invalid, can help to eliminate some of the unintended but nonetheless detrimental collateral damage of how mental illness is spoken about.

Reaching Out Through Conversation
A significant, yet minimally demanding way to help reduce the stigma associated with mental illness is to simply just speak about it. In today's society there is a tendency to avoid talking about topics that may seem touchy or uncomfortable for people. In such a highly competitive world, mental illnesses such as depression are viewed as weaknesses. People don't like to feel vulnerable, therefore they don't like discussing any mental struggles they may be having. It's intimidating for many people to be able to put themselves out there because they feel like no one really cares or has time to help them deal with their problems.

Contributions that the students and faculty of the University of Delaware can make to this problem include being open to and about discussing mental illness with each other. For example if a student notices their friend hasn't been as social as they usually are, or if a professor notices that a student hasn't attended class for a while, it's important to recognize their feelings and let them know that someone cares about them and their well being. Simply asking a close friend how they are doing and validating their feelings can really help change a person's life. A study performed by Kosyluk et al. found that "interpersonal contact with the students with mental illness who shared their personal stories" was beneficial to both the student with the mental illness and the person trying to learn more about mental illness (Kosyluk et al., 329). Thus treating people with mental illness like any other person and encouraging them to seek help can alleviate some of the stresses and pressure that stigmatization creates.

Conclusion

According to figures produced by the Mental Health First Aid organization, the state of Delaware has one of the lowest population percentages of first aid personnel trained in mental health first aid. That is, out of all fifty states and U.S. territories, Delaware is one of five of the least equipped for dealing with mental illness in emergency situations; as only 0.05% to 0.09% of the population is trained to handle those types of situations (ALGEE-Ometer). As members of a large and well-known university in the state of Delaware, students and faculty have a considerably large sphere of influence. Changes made at the University of Delaware can serve as a model for change in the entire state of Delaware.

As students continue along their career paths they can use the education they gained through programs implemented at UD to educate and empower others. Just as the information students learn to earn their degree is applied to their lives after they graduate and pursue a career, information students gain from being educated through programs about mental illness can be applied to how they interact with others in their work environments and beyond college. Educating students and faculty while they are a part of the campus community now, can set the stage for how their attitudes will changes and influence the attitudes of other as they advance in their careers.

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Lauren's Reflection

Coming into this class, I felt fairly intimidated. I had never expressed any interest in anything related to social justice; I did not even fully understand what the term social justice meant. As a Pre-Vet major I have always loved math and science. This topic just did not seem like it would be a good fit for me. But what I learned about myself and the importance of language has far exceeded what I expected to receive from taking this class. I didn't even know it was possible for me to be this passionate about something outside of my major. The topic I chose to research this semester, mental illness, was something I didn't realize I had such a strong connection to until I learned more about it. The information I discovered not only helped change how I view mental illness and the stigmas associated it, but it made me realize that the exact stigma I chose to argue against was something I've bought into for my entire life. And that's something that I find truly beautiful about this class—its ability to transform not only mindsets, but lives.

Lauren at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Sexual Misconduct:
A Letter to President Assanis
By Joseph Bonacorda

Abstract

Sexual misconduct is a topic of mass concern at college campuses around the United States. We oftentimes hear of sexual misconduct violations but rarely do we ever witness them ourselves. I decided to take a deeper look into the sexual misconduct climate here at UD to see if the systems put in place truly do their job to protect students and prevent violations. I used online studies from other universities as well as personal experience and student interviews to conduct my research about the climate here at UD. I then used online resources to determine the most effective methods of reducing sexual misconducts impact. I hope that by reading my proposal readers will gain a better understanding of just how serious this issue is, as well as what individuals as well as the University as a whole can do in order to have a positive impact on the climate here at UD.

Proposal

Dear Dr. Dennis Assanis,

As you well know, sexual misconduct on the campus at UD has become a topic of great concern in recent years. No longer are we sweeping issues under the carpet or looking the other way for the sake of simplicity. Much attention has been brought to the issue, driving action and change. The University of Delaware has taken many lengths to attempt to combat sexual. misconduct. "Haven", "kNOw MORE", "Alcohol Edu" and other programs have been instituted in order to directly or even indirectly reduce the number of incidents as well as reduce the effects of such an event. Yet, while these initiatives have pushed the cause in the right direction, there is more to be done in terms of reducing secxual misconduct at UD. Sexual misconduct at UD is still too large of an issue and additional measures and research need to be instated. The implementation of hands-on education and the improvement of the victim support system is crucial if the University of Delaware wishes to significantly improve the conditions of sexual misconduct on campus.

Sexual misconduct is still a very prevalent issue on campus despite the University's efforts thus far. Through research as well as speaking to the student body, it can be seen how impactful sexual misconduct remains. In late 2015, UDaily surveyed 2,500 students, more than 1/8th of the undergraduate population. The results of the survey were rather surprising. Almost half of the female students surveyed (48.5%) reported unwanted sexual contact and almost half of all surveyed (45.4%) reported feeling that sexual assault is a big problem on campus (UDaily, 1).

And although I have only just arrived on campus this past fall, these numbers still seem very reflective of my own beliefs as well as the students I've spoken with. The issue of sexual contact can be remedied through more active bystander intervention. Someone intervening in a potential situation can stop unwanted contact before it occurs and prevent it from swelling to something more serious such as assault. The Udaily survey also reported that only 36.2% of those surveyed knew where to seek help for sexual harassment issues (UDaily, 1). UD's support efforts are clearly not reaching a wide enough audience and need to be increased to help those who in need.

Speaking to the current student body resulted in very similar findings to that of the 2015 survey. Just about everyone I spoke with could name a case of sexual misconduct that impacted them or a close friend, the majority of which were never reported. It is saddening to see those around me impacted in such negative ways and have little power to counteract it. Many, in fact, simply shrug off the cases claiming that it is simply part of college, which should never be the case.

When asked about the presence of sexual misconduct on campus, one student had this to say: *"I feel it's only super present at frat houses. There are a specific few frats that I typically avoid because they are known for those things. But besides frat parties it doesn't have much of a foothold,"(Interview A)*. It is unsettling to hear that these types of situations are common at University sponsored greek life houses. Although it is the party scene, it is still a university organization, making it very much a concern for UD.

I asked some students about personal impacts of sexual misconduct and some students had this to say: *"Yes, a few times at a party, a guy would grab me. I was able to quickly get them off and tell them no..."(Interview B)* and *"No, but my friend did. She was taken advantage of by someone she thought was very trustworthy while she was blacked out...It was never reported because she blamed herself..." (Interview C)*. As upsetting as it can be to hear these stories from those attending the same school as me, they truly speak volumes for the amount of issues on campus and how little searching you must do to uncover them.

Every person interviewed could speak on a situation that either directly occurred to them or else occurred to a friend. The answers varied from simple unwanted contact to full on rape as described above. Now rape is not as common as it may seem, since only two responses are listed above, yet it only took a few conversations to find someone who has had experience with such a scenario, a bad sign. Lastly, the majority of students felt UD's efforts thus far to be satisfactory. Those who did think UD should take further action focused on better education or victim support. It is clear that UD has made great efforts but there is still more to be tackled.

Solutions

Sexual misconduct is a very complex issue. There are multiple sides to it; victims, offenders, bystander etc. This means that there is no single solution that will be able to effectively eliminate it once and for all. In fact, no solution may be able to ever completely rid UD's campus of sexual misconduct. However, there are ideas that can be implemented in order to significantly reduce sexually related incidents. Solutions that focus on hands on bystander intervention and victim support are the best path for the University of Delaware to travel.

Many of the current programs to counter sexual misconduct are simply read and recite types of material. Handouts, flyers and other mediums of information simply present information for the viewer to take in. Education must take it a step further in order to have better effect.

Many people understand the basics behind sexual misconduct. One party oversteps boundaries that another does not consent to, yet many are ineffective at recognizing these situations in action. Further, many are unsure of themselves, doubting what action to take, and simply ignore the situation altogether rather than reacting to it. Hands on practice scenarios are a great method to overcome these obstacles.

Many people take a CPR course during their high school years. You are not simply presented with information and expected to be able to transfer that knowledge into real life actions. You practice potential occurrences with dummies and other students. You are instructed on how to analyze a situation in real time and what to say and how to say it as well as what actions to take and how to properly execute them. A similar approach needs to be given to sexual misconduct education. Allowing students to practice their actions, word and decision making will make it much more comfortable during a real scenario. A mandatory sexual assault instruction needs to adapt to a similar hands on take like that of CPR.

A peer reviewed study by the *Journal of American College Health* run in 2014 across seven college campuses came up with a very similar conclusion. The study involved using different teaching methods at each campus to determine which were most effective and how much of an effect they truly had. The study concluded that "...students need time to learn, process, and practice skills that will increase their knowledge about sexual misconduct policies and their confidence to act in prosocial ways to help themselves, friends, or someone they do not know," (Potter 1). It was found that while many of the teaching techniques increased students understanding of policies, what remained unchanged was their confidence to act or seek help. So while it is great that education improves knowledge, it does not matter how much knowledge one holds if they cannot act with it.

The implementation of such an idea can be tricky, but the best plan seems to be as follows. Students are already given education on sexual misconduct during their first year experience courses. As of right now, this first year class is simply lecture and notes where you listen to someone speak about topics such as "Conflict Resolution" and "Safer Sexuality" It should be made mandatory that certain hands on procedures are discussed and practiced by each and every student. These procedures could include identifying if a situation is hazardous as well as stepping in a saying something if it is. Students can also practice mock conversations in which they learn how to approach a victim and enable them to seek help. Practices such as these would give students a boost in confidence and allow them to take action in a real life scenario rather than being frozen.Examples of this can be seen in a second peer reviewed article "Manning Up Against Campus Rape". The article suggests asking a girl to dance to help her get away from an uncomfortable situation, (Freedman, 1). Doing so may be tough to do, but with practice it can become much easier. Caleb, who is involved with the article stated that "If I can keep a girl from getting hurt and a guy from doing something he'll regret, it's worth it,"(Freedman, 1). Students will see how much their actions can have an impact as Caleb has and be much more likely to act and be confident in future situations. Students will understand that we are not all individuals who need to only be concerned about their own safety, but rather that UD is a family who should watch out for each other and take action to help other Blue Hens.

These practices, much like CPR training will enable students to be much more willing and prepared to act in a potential situation. Doing so will have a ripple effect, reducing the number of situations that can escalate into sexual assault or even attempted or completed rape. But, while bystander intervention can have a drastic effect, it cannot stop all cases of misconduct.

In certain scenarios, there is nothing that the victim or any bystanders could have done to prevent a sexual assault or rape. In these cases we need to focus on helping those impacted recover and heal. Yet looking back on the UDaily survey, almost two-thirds of the student body are unsure where to turn to seek professional help.

Not only are many students unaware of how to seek help, many victims are unwilling to seek help as they do not wish to implicate themselves or make it a "big deal". Students need to be better informed of their rights and privacy when reporting an incident. Victims will hesitate to report if it will implicate them legally, make a big scene, and cause a lot of unwanted stress in their time of recovery and healing. In an article by the peer reviewed journal *Sexuarlity Research and Social Policy*, it was written that "...it is important that reporting policies are included within university sexual assault policies. It is important for students to know what the procedures may entail if they choose to report their assault,"(Steng, 1). Steng states that it is important for students to be aware of what they will be getting into if they choose to report. Having uncertainty about the process will certainly deter students.

Remedies to these situations can be implemented in the first year experience class, similar to the bystander solutions. Having Susan Groff, the title IV coordinator, speak to students would be very beneficial. She could go into detail about exactly how reports are handled and how to reach her. Students can begin to grasp the process and understand what lies ahead should they choose to report. This could also lead to hands-on practice, such as mock reporting scenarios or pretending to speak with a friend and encourage them to report.

Another method UD has not implemented is online anonymous reporting. Temple University launched an online program just this fall in order to allow online submissions of sexual misconduct reports (Palestino, 1). The title IX coordinator at Temple states "We're trying to break down barriers on reporting any type of sexual misconduct." Having this type of anonymous reporting will certainly allow students to feel more comfortable. No longer do they have to speak with someone one on one, which can be nerve wracking. Rather, they can submit the information without even implicating themselves. This is a fantastic idea to improve reporting percentage and is one that UD should consider using as well.

Dr. Assanis, sexual assault is a pressing issue on our campus, but we do not have to let it continue to be. Simple changes in policy that can be implemented in classrooms could be the difference between a fun night and rape. With a focus on hands-on practice and more widespread knowledge about recovery systems we can help reduce the presence of unwanted sexual contact as well as help those to heal in the instances it still occurs. The students at UD need this and it is up to you to provide this for us. Please take my words into consideration and review our current sexual misconduct procedures here at UD. With action we can shape a better tomorrow, a better community, a better UD.

Sincerely,
Joseph Bonacorda

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Joseph's Reflection

Coming into this class, I worried that it might turn into a politically-charged, bi-weekly debate session, but it turned out to be an enriching learning experience. Professor Emily is a fantastic facilitator who kept the class interesting, allowing us to explore social justice without things turning to anger or hate. We covered interesting topics such as mass incarceration, and got to pick our own topics to research further. This allowed my classmates and I to dive into issues that interested us. Since the majority of our work focused on our campus, I was able to uncover issues impacting my peers about which I was previously ignorant. This class helped to broaden my view of not only UD, but the United States as well. It was a valuable experience that I will be able to draw upon as I continue my studies.
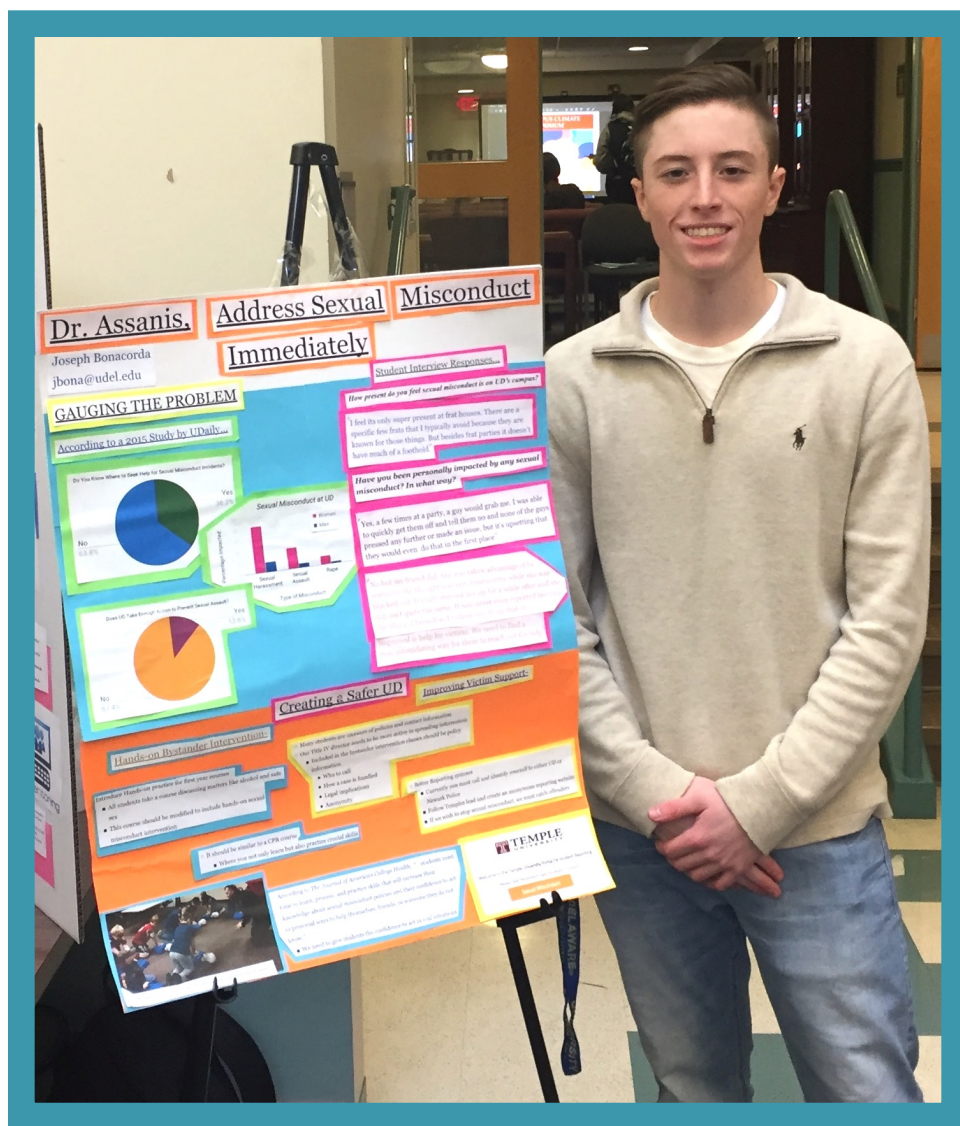
Joseph at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Why are Women Leaving STEM and How Can We Keep Them?
A Proposal to Promote the Involvement and Integration of Fully Capable Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics in Undergraduate Programs

By Casey Busch

Abstract

This proposal for change discusses the issues that exist at the University of Delaware regarding women in STEM and the lack of representation and support for those students. The suggested solution discussed is the development of a professional mentorship program run by staff and faculty at the University of Delaware to specifically support female STEM students and to inform them of opportunities to succeed as well as the existence of female STEM role models. The University has programs in place that are social opportunities for female STEM students to participate in but do not adequately support the success of those students academically. The mentorship program will be a major solution to the retention of women in STEM and to the increase of confidence in women that wish to enter STEM or are already studying STEM.

Introduction

At the University of Delaware, there are roughly 300 majors to choose from when applying for undergraduate admissions. With each choice comes difficult coursework and strict curriculums. When choosing a major, students typically take into account which subject they enjoy most, which subject they are best at, and which subject they can make a career out of. One aspect that many students do not take into account when declaring a major is the availability of mentorship within that major and the number of students in that major that are of similar gender and race. The University of Delaware claims to be a diverse campus, but that claim is invalid in regards to genders in STEM fields, specifically regarding women.

STEM fields are those that include topics regarding science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The University offers over 100 majors that fall in the category of STEM and many of those majors consists of a majority of male students. At the University, there are six significant engineering majors and multiple mathematics and science related majors. Within these majors, the percentage of students that are women is a low 20% (Office of Equity and Inclusion). This is very low considering that UD has roughly 50% female students. The reasoning behind the low percentage of women in STEM undergraduate programs can be pinpointed to the persistent stereotypes and gender norms that surrounds the term "woman". A gender norm can be described as, "the different expectations that individuals, groups, and societies have of individuals based on their sex and based on each society's values and beliefs about gender," (Blackstone, 2). As said in this definition, a gender norm is an expectation one

individual has of another based upon a physical characteristic. Gender norms are what individuals believe is appropriate behavior for a specific race, gender, etc. but those norms do not necessarily reflect what the actual behavior of that specific individual in that specific race, gender, etc. actually is. Gender norms, also described as gender roles, are how men and women are expected to behave because of previous societal traditions. Traditions such as women staying home and being housewives while men go out and work is one example of the specific gender norms that are holding women back from succeeding educationally and financially. Although women have defied barriers and made advancements in workplace environments and in educational discoveries, such as Marie Curie and her discovery of two elements on the periodic table, women still face discrimination when pursuing STEM degrees and when working in STEM related jobs.

The problem at the University of Delaware in regards to women in STEM is that there is a remarkably low number of women in attendance of STEM undergraduate programs. Examples of some of the factors that contribute to the lack of women in another situation, similar to that at UD, can be describe as:

> "We found several important themes including: (1) an overall chilly climate and unwelcoming community for women described by participants as exclusionary, unfriendly, marginalizing, tough, isolating, male-dominated, and silencing; (2) a climate where "everything is negotiable", manifested in perceptions of side deals and of unequal application of procedures; (3) lack of transparency in university rules, policies, procedures and practices; (4) a pervasive lack of mentoring; (5) disproportionate service and teaching pressures faced by women faculty; and (6) unfair or unequal access to/allocation of resources, including purchase of library materials, assistance from teaching assistants, access to services from support staff, travel money, and protected research time," (Bilimoria, 149).

These examples described above are also valid claims in regards to this University. The faculty and staff at the University of Delaware need to develop a mentorship program that promotes success and improves educational and societal conditions for female STEM students while assisting in further education about the presence of women currently succeeding in STEM in order to allow female STEM students to thrive while in attendance at UD and to later thrive in future STEM positions. This mentorship should not be similar to a "club" or "group" but rather more sophisticated, serious, and professional to ensure the proper education for and promotion of female STEM students.

The Issue in Further Detail

STEM related jobs have tendencies to weed out women for many uncontrollable reasons and one of these reasons is said to be, "Working mothers have to find ways to integrate caring responsibilities with work commitments. The heavily masculinised culture of the engineering workplace has been shown to make this particularly difficult for women engineers," (Bilimoria, 82). Describing an 'engineering workplace' as masculine contributes to the persistence of the stereotype of women not belonging in STEM. Women are intended to have babies otherwise the human population would decrease rapidly until non-existence, so creating an unwelcoming, uncomfortable, and unadaptable work environment for working mothers is potentially hurting the population. Women who strongly want to work in STEM fields may decide to not have children because it is unmanageable with work and if all STEM women did this, the population would begin to decrease. Wanting working mothers to fail is similar to wanting the human population to go extinct, and this is an unacceptable aspect of society. A very persistent stereotype that surrounds women is described as, "Women with a STEM degree are less likely than their male counterparts to work in a STEM occupation; they are more likely to work in education or healthcare," (Beede, 1). This idea that women belong in education or healthcare fields is a contributing factor to the discrimination of women in STEM and also contributes to the lack of confidence women have when entering STEM. Telling a woman she cannot participate and succeed in STEM because of her gender is going to decrease her confidence and lead her to leave that field before she even tries. If this stereotype can be refuted, there will be an increase in the opportunity for women to maintain confidence and fully succeed in STEM fields.

A metaphor to describe the educational advancement of women in STEM careers is a leaky pipeline. This metaphor is used to describe the holes within the STEM educational system for women that eventually leads to the decrease in attendance and participation of women in STEM. The author of the novel, *Women in STEM Careers: International Perspectives on Increasing Workforce Participation, Advancement and Leadership,* describes the pipeline as, "The leaky pipeline metaphor has been used to describe institutional level (cultural and structural) impediments to women's participation and advancement in academic STEM careers, describing the problems, barriers and resource inequities faced by women at each key transition point in the academic career pipeline," (Bilimoria, 146). Describing the educational system for women in STEM as a leaky pipeline displays the realism that this does exist and puts into perspective how bad this can get if unattended. For example, if a water plant has a leaky pipeline transporting liquid from one facility to another and that pipe bursts, that can be detrimental to those specific facilities and to the surrounding areas. This example can be translated in regards to women in STEM. Continually weeding out women in STEM will lead to an only male workforce. Considering the characteristics females have that males do not, such as increased communication skills, advances in STEM will eventually become slim leading to events such as a nuclear bomb on the United States where we cannot fight back because we do not know how to. This is an

extreme example, but in everyday situations, women have ideas and contributions to science, technology, engineering, and math that are not being heard because women are leaving STEM due to a 'leaky pipeline', discrimination, and persistent gender norms.

As described in, *Women in STEM: A Gender Gap to Innovation,* "There are many possible factors contributing to the discrepancy of women and men in STEM jobs, including: a lack of female role models, gender stereotyping, and less family-friendly flexibility in the STEM fields," (Beede, 1). Women that choose to enter STEM fields are faced with the lack of mentorship, the lack of representation, and the lack of support from faculty simply because of their gender. In order to eliminate, or rather decrease, the effects of stereotypes and gender norms on the lack of women in STEM, I am proposing the introduction of a mentorship program to promote the success, increase the retention rate, and increase the awareness of females in STEM for student at the University of Delaware.

Current Efforts from the University
Almost any college in the United States offers registered student organizations, or RSO's for short. These RSO's are clubs and committees ran by students that promote student success, offer community service opportunities, and overall offer students multiple opportunities to get involved on campus. The RSO's are in place to encourage students to thrive at their college and are in place to promote involvement in different community environments. At UD, there are two RSO's, in particular, that are available to specifically engineering students. These RSO's are Engineers Without Borders, EWB, and Society of Women Engineers, SWE. As described from their websites, "Engineers Without Borders-USA is a non-profit, humanitarian organization of dedicated and enthusiastic students and professionals who believe everyone should have access to adequate sanitation, safe drinking water and resources to meet their basic needs," (University of Delaware EWB Chapter) and "The Society of Women Engineers (SWE), is a non-profit educational and service organization. SWE is the driving force that establishes engineering as a highly desirable career aspiration for women. SWE empowers women to succeed and advance in those aspirations and be recognized for their life-changing contributions and achievements as engineers and leaders," (University of Delaware College of Engineering). These two organizations are in place to promote success of engineering students, including women. While both of these organizations have been in existences for many decades, there is still an astonishing low percentage of female engineering students at UD. With these organizations in existence at other campuses, why is there still an issue with the integration and retention of female STEM students? There needs to be more in place and more influence from faculty and staff to promote the success of female STEM students at UD and that's where an additional mentorship programs comes into play. Creating a more direct and personal program for women to participate in will potentially increase the number of female students that want to join and stay in engineering. The two RSO's mentioned above are organizations that are focused on

integrating the students already on campus with engineering opportunities, but how are they supposed to integrate female engineering students when there are a very limited number at UD. The proposed mentorship program will be a direct way of intriguing female students to join and stay in STEM while promoting the awareness of female mentors already in STEM, while diminishing the stereotype that women belong in healthcare or the humanities, and while improving the existent gender norms surrounding women.

Changes to be Made

In order to improve the environment for and the success of female students in STEM majors at UD, a mentorship programs ran by the faculty and staff must be developed. This mentorship program must be exclusive to female students in order to allow those students to interact with other students that are similar to them and experiencing similar discrimination and lack of support as them. This will be different from the already in place clubs or organizations, such as SWE and EWB, because it will maintain a formal and professional environment and connection between staff and student.

At a young age, many male students have a role model to look up to that pushes them to succeed, but for female students, there are not many role models that are publicly recognized for them to thrive to be. A study of the effects of a mentor draws the conclusion that, "Specifically, when reading about a talented role model, people reported that they were more motivated to rely on their talents; when reading about a hard-working role model, they reported that they were more motivated to work hard, (Fortune, 52). This report discusses the beneficial nature of a role model on success. This mentorship program, or educational resource, can provide informational sessions that discuss the present female engineers and scientists that exist in order to promote success of female STEM students that lack the confidence to succeed. This mentorship program can also inform the outside population about how successful women can be in engineering and other STEM fields. Research shows that,

> "The scientists and engineers mentioned or pictured in textbooks are almost always male. Publishers have responded to complaints of bias by inserting photographs of women, blacks, Hispanics and other minorities at the beginning of recent editions. They have failed, however, to integrate these pictures with the text. When a discovery made by a woman is discussed, she is often not given credit," (Brush 4).

Women outside of the University of Delaware are experiencing discrimination and under-representation when making developments in STEM fields. This is a huge issue for UD because if the outside society isn't making a change to incorporate women more, then why would the University make an effort to do so? This is why UD should take the first step in making change

for women all over that wish to join STEM, are already in STEM, or are thinking about leaving STEM.

Why?
In my opinion, I believe there are five main contributors to the lack of women in STEM and the same five reasons are why there should be a mentorship program at the University of Delaware for female STEM students. These five reasons include confidence, gender norms, perception of women, discrimination, and ignorance.

Beginning with confidence, women that feel unconfident in their abilities are more likely to quit while they're ahead. This lack of confidence derives from the stereotype that women cannot do STEM. According to, "The Loss of Women from Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Undergraduate Majors", the lack of women in STEM fields is due to "...an early loss of confidence in [a female student's] ability to 'do science'..." (Seymour, 1). An article about women in engineering and science discusses the present stereotypes by saying, "The stereotype seems to be directed more at boys than at girls, but this is part of the problem. 'Nerd' is not a genderless noun; the young scientist, unattractive though he may be, is understood to be male. This dovetails with other media portrayals of scientists. When women scientists are featured in mass-circulation magazines, they are often portrayed as "atypical scientists and atypical women," (Brusch, 4). Eliminating the presence of this stereotype with a mentorship program that supports female STEM students will increase the ability of those students to rebuild their confidence and use that confidence to thrive in STEM.

I believe ignorance is one of the biggest contributing factors of the lack of and the low retention rate of women in STEM. The ignorance of males and of society, in general, to the idea that women are capable of succeeding in STEM fields and that there are females in STEM currently directly affects female STEM students. As discussed above, the benefits of a mentor are very clear and when the media lacks to present the presence of women succeeding in STEM today and in history, that limits the opportunity for women STEM majors to find a mentor and work to be them. The mentorship program will be designed to present all successful women engineers, scientists, and mathematicians in order to promote the use of a mentor as a driving force for success.

Women have most certainly made strides in history in regards to equality. The right to vote, the right to get an education, and the right be successful are all examples of how women in past times broke through the male dominated culture and gained equality. Despite these efforts, there are still situations where women are inferior to men. Women suffer from discrimination when applying for jobs and regarding equal pay for same jobs. Women have succeeded in so many situations for equality but another one has arose and what is stopping women from excelling in

STEM in the gender norms that persist and the perception of the 'ideal' woman. With a mentorship program at UD, the faculty and staff as well as involved students can raise awareness and disprove these norms and ideals about women both locally, at UD, and publicly. There has to be an initializing step towards change, and if the public cannot make this step, it is time for the University of Delaware to.

Conclusion

Women deserve to succeed just as much as men do in both educational situations and financial situations. Introducing a mentorship program at UD, facilitated by the faculty and staff, to promote the success of female STEM students, to diminish the stereotypes and gender norms surrounding women, and to support and boost the confidence of these women will not only benefit the undergraduate STEM women but also the entire UD campus population. If this becomes a successful program, it can be publicized and potentially support female STEM students at other universities. This mentorship program will not only directly support female STEM students in the now but if successful, will support and open up opportunities for women all over the nation. Women deserve to be recognized for their abilities and accomplishments so instead of covering them up by the work of male contribution, calling specific, direct attention to how smart, capable, and powerful women can be will be a driving force to eliminating gender norms and stereotypes that still exist.

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Casey at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Proposal to Increase Diversity at the University of Delaware
By Adheena Chacko

Abstract
Racial diversity has been a controversial issue on the University of Delaware campus since its founding. This is a problem because it can affect the academic environment of the students. In order to produce an effective proposal, the following will address the effect of diversity in learning environments through previous studies, past attempts proposed by UD to fix this problem, and how the university as a whole can successfully solve this issue now. In order to fix the lack of diversity on campus, UD should encourage diverse relationships between students by admitting more diverse students, promoting and creating more multicultural clubs and fairs, and getting more of the faculty involved because a lack in diversity results in detrimental learning environments.

Introduction and Statement of Problem
Racial diversity has always been a problem in the United States, specifically college campuses. Students are afraid to step out of their comfort zones and intermingle with people from different cultural backgrounds, tending to stay with people of their own ethnic backgrounds. This tendency for humans to create and stick with groups of similar others is known as homophily. In regards to racial minority groups, it is more specifically known as ethnic homophily.

Diversity has also been an issue at the University of Delaware (UD) since its origins in the 1700s. Like most U.S. colleges in the 18th century, UD was founded as an all-white college. However, after the era of the Civil Rights Movement and Reconstruction, UD started to implement diversity more to improve faculty and student experiences. Although UD has made improvements for this issue on campus, the problem of a lack of diversity can still be seen around on campus. The University still fails to successfully culturally integrate its wide variety of students. An evaluation team representing the Middle States Commission on Higher Education stated in a 2011 evaluation of the University of Delaware:

> Most particularly, however, diversity in such contexts and in American higher education discourse in general refers to racial/ethnic diversity. In this regard, UD comes up short [...] We recommend that the university develop plans for increasing the racial/ethnicdiversity of its student body. We also recommend that the university study the reasons for the significantly lower graduation rate for students from underrepresented minorities, especially African American students, and develop concrete steps for improvement. (Cohon 2011)

Ethnic homophily is specifically prevalent at the University of Delaware. Walking around the UD campus, one can observe that students from minority groups spend most time with those of similar backgrounds. Although these students are more comfortable sticking to their peers of the same racial background, this is detrimental to the academic enrichment of students. However, the problem is that students are not aware of the importance of diversity and how it can aid in their own academic experiences. Another way that diversity is possible is through a more diverse faculty on campus. A diverse faculty can bring a more diverse and globalized perspective to the university. They can also bring a variety of experiences to engage students. Because students look up to faculty members and view them as their role models, a diverse faculty would influence the students' view of the university and the world as well. In order to fix the lack of diversity on campus, UD should encourage diverse relationships between students by admitting more diverse students, promoting and creating more multicultural clubs and fairs, and getting more of the faculty involved because a lack in diversity results in detrimental learning environments.

At UD, there are many different cultural organizations such as the Indian Student Association, the Filipino Student Association, the Hispanic student association, and many more. These organizations, created by students, bring together students of those specific ethnic backgrounds and welcome others to join as well. These Registered Student Organizations, also known as RSOs at UD, hold cultural events in which students bring food, music, and entertainment from their countries, giving the guests a taste of their own country. However, although they say that anyone is invited, oftentimes only students from that specific racial group go to the events. Although there are many different cultural groups on campus, there is no communication between these groups. These RSOs are not working because this encourages ethnic homophily. Only students of those racial groups attend the specific meetings without any knowledge of other groups. The campus needs a point of convergence between these cultural groups to show students the importance of having a globalized perspective. Although it is beneficial for students of the same racial background to be a part of something together and have a sense of belonging, it is equally as important for them to learn and meet those from other backgrounds as well. Walking around campus, one can observe that students of similar backgrounds can be seen walking around in groups. College is a place where students should be able to be comfortable meeting different people and learning on a more global scale. However, with the lack of diversity on the UD campus, this is unlikely.

This is a problem because ethnic homophily influences the academic mindset of minority and domestic students. Studies have shown that diversity can help aid the efficiency of a learning environment. In a study conducted by Gerald Gurin at the University of Michigan, he researched the relationship between students' experiences with diversity in universities and the educational outcome of the students. "Their results suggest that experiences with diversity are important

influences on the development of student learning and democratic outcomes, including students' intellectual engagement and motivational as well as citizenship engagement" (Laird 2005). The researchers concluded that diversity on campuses were linked to increases in students' intellectual, educational, and citizenship values. In a learning environment, a globalized perspective is necessary because it brings more diversity to ideas and learning foundations. When students are open to a more diverse setting in their learning environments, they are faced with this global perspective of the world and learn to adapt to that mindset. This is how the University of Delaware should approach the problem of diversity on campus, by exposing students to a more culturally diverse campus and learning environments, increasing their performance in academics as well. The reporters from the Middle States Commissions on Higher Education said, "We heard several times that the campus community does not reasonably reflect the diversity of the larger society. More importantly, it was also observed that this relative lack of diversity disadvantaged students in their educational experience, which is enriched by studying, working, and living with students from varied backgrounds" (Cohon 2011). Because diversity is not apparent on the UD campus, the researchers have realized that this is a disadvantage to learning environments.

Assessment of Past and Current Efforts at UD

As mentioned earlier, UD has identified this issue in the past years and have made significant efforts to reverse this problem of a lack of diversity on campus. Around 25 years ago, UD adopted a mandatory multicultural course requirement, understanding the importance of students to have a more diverse and comprehensive understanding of the world. This was to show students that a full academic experience is not based on just stellar academic achievement but also a wider understanding of people from different backgrounds, beliefs, and circumstances. There are a wide variety of courses offered in order for students to fulfill this requirement. These include Race and Ethnicity in Latin America, Indian Religion and Philosophy, Modern Israel: History and Culture, History of Modern Vietnam, and hundreds more. The Center for the Study of Diversity at UD strives to promote diversity on campus. It's mission statement reads: "The mission of the Center for the Study of Diversity (CSD) is to promote academic research and scholarship that facilitate dialogues about and understanding of the social and academic impact of diversity [...] The Center believes that diversity is and ought to be an important academic aspect of the University curriculum" (UD "Mission"). In order to bring this mission plan to action, the Center for the Study of Diversity initiated a research project called the MultiDiversity Project in 2014. Led by the director of the CSD, James Jones, the center conducted this 2014 research study (which is still in progress) to explore the learning outcomes that result from taking multi-cultural designated courses. Jones stated, "We live in an increasingly diverse society, and have set diversity as an important part of the educational mission at UD. It becomes important then to assess ways in which multicultural courses increase self-awareness, perspective taking, cultural diversity knowledge, personal and social responsibility and global understanding" (Jones

2014). Jones identifies the importance of having a diverse mindset before entering into the real world because the world is becoming more diverse with each year and it is vital to be accustomed to this first.

Another significant project was initiated by UD's Office of Equity and Inclusion. This department strives to promote inclusion of all students and faculty no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc. It's vision statement reads, "The Office of Equity and Inclusion serves as an ally and thought leader in developing a more diverse, accountable, educated and inclusive University of Delaware community. OEI works to institutionalize diversity as a fundamental transformative force that fosters personal and professional growth and academic excellence" ("Mission").

The Inclusive Excellence Plan: An Action Plan for Diversity at UD was started by the OEI to promote diversity on campus. This plan included a list of steps that the university has to undertake in order for the goal to be achieved. These steps include recruiting and retaining a more diverse faculty, continuing to create a more diverse student body, taking advantage of community outreach and engagement, and building community and campus climate and UD. Although this plan sounds foolproof, it was never fully initiated as it was just a blueprint. Many people are not aware of this plan and it cannot easily be found on the website of UD unless further research is undertaken. If the campus as a whole was aware of this plan, more benefits could have been evident.

Proposed Strategy to Bring Change

Although UD has formulated these plans, more action needs to be taken. Through these actions, UD can solve its problem of a lack of diversity over time. Initially, UD has to focus on incoming classes. A freshman college student's first year is important as it is the first time they get a taste of the real world after being contained in their hometowns in high school. This marks an important transition between grade school years to a taste of the real world in which everything that happens influences their flexible minds. College needs to reflect the real world in which there are so many different people from different countries. They are going to face diversity in the future, however they need to be accustomed to it in college so they can be more accepting of others differences. For incoming freshman classes, the Office of Admissions need to focus on increasing the number of non-domestic students on campus. As of 2016, white students account for 73 percent of the entire campus. The second largest racial group are Hispanics which account for 7.6 percent (UD Facts & Figures). This is a huge gap that needs to be closed. By gradually admitting more diverse students on campus every year, this gap can eventually be closed to a more acceptable size.

The next step is to create more and promote multicultural clubs and fairs. As mentioned earlier, there are many separate cultural groups involved on campus but rarely is there a convergence of these groups. This is because students are afraid to step out of their comfort zones and try something new for a change. The University Student Center (USC) is most likely to be best help to this cause. It needs to start a larger multicultural club in which many students would enjoy attending. Along with initiating a large multicultural club, there also needs to be publicity. Many students are not aware of how beneficial a club like this could be to their lives and by persuading them to attend at least one event could change their perspectives. Students are also prone to conforming. When they see their peers creating such multicultural clubs, they will also want to partake in these events.

Diversity at UD could also be achieved through hiring a more diverse faculty. This does not require changing the faculty already on campus, however including this aspect into employment for future hirings. As of 2016, 71.4 percent of the UD faculty are white. The next largest group, Asians, consist of 11.6 percent of the faculty (UD Facts & Figures). This is also a large gap similar to the student body. Rebecca Gleditsch, from the University of North Dakota, writes, "The gap in diversity between faculty and students poses questions about the reality of universities' commitments to diversity and promises of inclusion" (Gleditsch 2017). She argues the claim of universities' promises of inclusion for all students and faculty while they have such a large gap in diversity. Students look up to faculty members as role models for mentorship, advisement, etc. With a diverse faculty, students have close to first hand experience with globalized perspectives.

In a symposium by Thomas Sullivan, he wrote, "We will need more faculty able to provide our students with an opportunity to directly participate in a vibrant, pluralistic, multicultural learning community. These experiences will be essential for [students] who serve (and will serve) as leaders in public service and community life" (Sullivan 2004). Experiences with diverse faculty will also allow students to be leaders in the future because they have already had a taste of the real, diversified world we live in today.

Conclusion: How UD Can be a Role Model for Change on Other College Campuses
Many colleges and Universities around the United States also suffer from a lack of diversity similar to UD and sometimes even worse. UD can be a role model for change by bringing about the enactment and publicity of this proposed plan. Students go to college to learn about the real world. In order for this to be fully achieved, campuses need to be diverse because this is what students are going to face in their future experiences with the real world.

By admitting diverse students and faculty and promoting multiculturalism through student-run clubs and fairs on campus, diversity can be achieved at UD. This is beneficial to UD because it

will increase the academic environment of the students, therefore making it a role model to other universities and campuses that struggle with the same problem.

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Adheena's Reflection

Through my experience in this class, I have learned about identifying social justice issues on campus and conducting the necessary research to propose and communicate change to these issues. The readings that we were assigned throughout the semester, such as *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander and various excerpts about problems in the society we live in today, helped me to understand that by taking a stand on issues that we feel strongly about, through discovering the most productive ways to persuade the targeted audience, anyone can bring forth change.
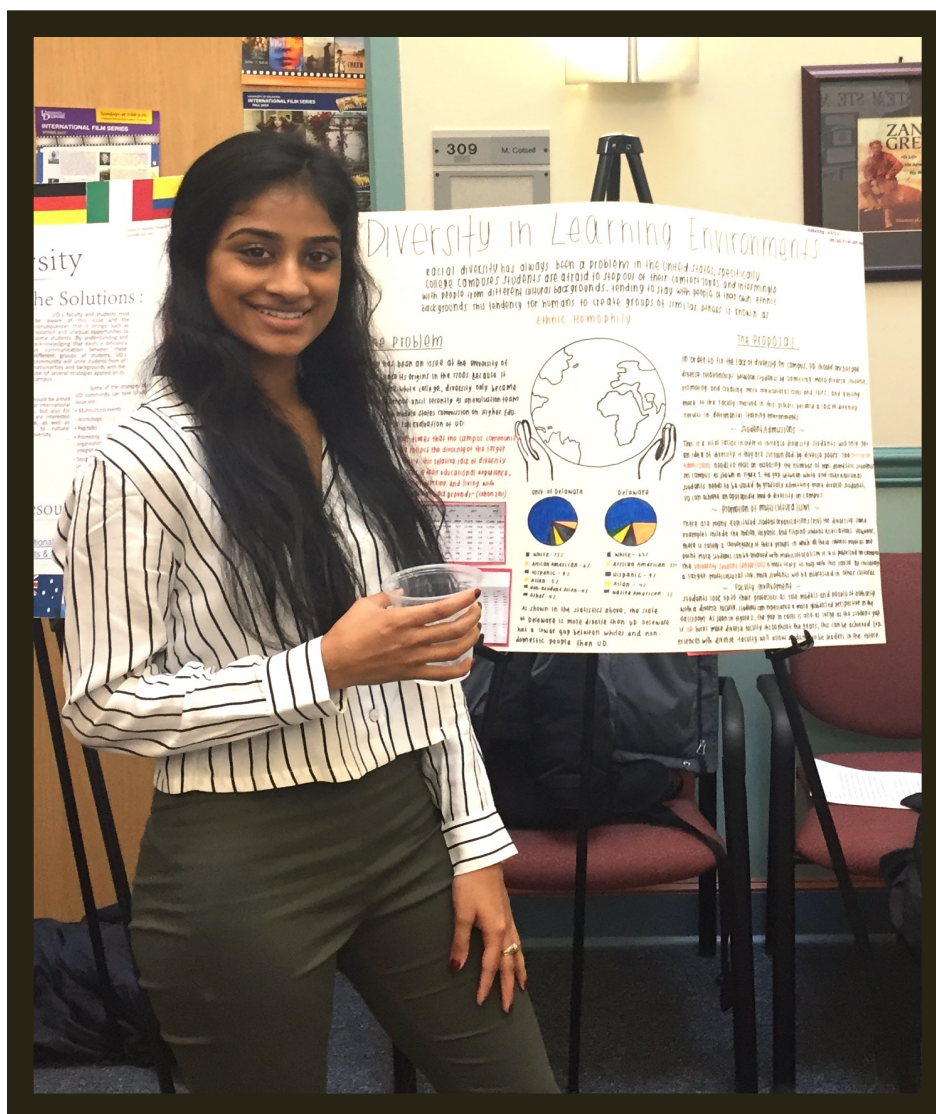
Adheena at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Proposing Change:
Increasing Cross-Cultural Participation at the University of Delaware
By Amy Ciminnisi

Abstract
Cross-cultural interaction is crucial to the immediate well-being of international students and the future of domestic students at United States universities. Unfortunately, at the University of Delaware (UD), many international students complain that they feel excluded from the campus community. It is important for the Office of International Students and Scholars, as well as UD's administration, to emphasize domestic and international students' interaction because complaints of ignorance and apathy are not currently being heard or addressed. There are a few changes that UD can make to rectify this: 1) Implement an optional peer mentor program, assigning two or three interested international students to one volunteer domestic student, 2) Improve the advertisement of international students' events, 3) Come up with new events for the purpose of international and domestic students getting to know one another on a deeper level, et cetera. The researcher combed through academic journals to find background information, UD's website to look at statistics and patterns, and spoke with both international and domestic students about their experiences. This proposal hopes to guide UD to not only become more attractive to international students, but become a leading university for giving students the ability to gain benefits from cross-cultural interaction.

Introduction
One of the most important and powerful ways in which college students spend their time is socialization. From eating meals to bonding over difficult exams to doing homework in residence halls, students are around their peers all hours of the day. As a student, the researcher knows firsthand that when coming to college, one of the most exciting challenges is meeting new people who come from various places, cultures, ideas, and standpoints. College socialization is much different than kindergarten through high school socialization; many students come from areas that are predominantly one ethnicity; however, in college, students feed in from various places around the country, and even the world. Therefore, students have a greater opportunity to interact with a diverse array of people and cultures, which is necessary for a successful future in the workforce and society in general. The same is true for students at the University of Delaware (UD); however, many students are not satisfied with the amount of diversity experiences on campus. Specifically, there is an overwhelming absence of participation on the part of domestic students in the few events designed to unite them with international students. Many domestic students do not know about the events or consciously choose not to attend. The existence of ignorance and apathy toward a specific group at UD is a dangerous issue that has the potential to unconsciously or consciously cause harm. Therefore, it is important for the Office of

International Students and Scholars (OISS), as well as UD's administration, to focus on emphasizing domestic and international students' interaction because complaints of ignorance and apathy are not currently being heard or addressed. The University has a responsibility to implement opportunities for students' academic and social success, and the first step to improving international students' experiences is increasing domestic and international students' levels of interaction.

Background Research

Creating a more culturally sensitive campus benefits both domestic and international students. Cross-cultural experiences have the potential to cultivate life-long patterns of proactive behavior. Professor Bowman of University of Iowa shows in her study of graduated students that domestic students' participation in university-sponsored multicultural events is directly related to character growth, "recognition of racism, and volunteering behavior." Having friends from the same culture and background as a support system is "easier and comforting," especially when making the transition to a new country (Dorsett). However, higher levels of anxiety are seen in students that have language and cultural barriers and new academic challenges. Therefore, it is important for international students to have a "sense of belonging" on campus because it is shown to "positively influence students' persistence and academic success" (Yao). Feelings of discomfort with domestic students often lead to isolation, which leads to a decreased sense of belonging, creating a vicious cycle.

Many international students at UD complain about feeling separate from the campus community. In interviews during Coffee Hour, international students talked about valuing the opportunity to become close with domestic students (Anonymous). Many international students, however, have not had that opportunity because there is a noticeable lack of domestic student interaction with them. Domestic students' actions in this regard do not immediately affect them; instead, international students are left to bear the repercussions, often feeling isolated or disconnected from UD's larger community. These emotions have the ability to "fuel international students' perceptions of discrimination and lessen their university experience" (Gartman). Concerns about international students' experiences of isolation at UD are not "heard, fixed or improved," claims Paul Sulzer, an academic advisor at the College of Arts and Sciences (Li). This is not due to a small amount of international students at UD; according to Yanxin Li from *The Review*, there were 143 Chinese students at the University in 2009, and seven years later, more than 2,000. With this quickly growing number, concerns need to be met with a willingness to act. Providing opportunities to international students to increase their sense of belonging will likely improve their overall wellbeing.

Suggestions

There are five key components that UD should implement in seeking to improve the current amount of participation:

- Implement an optional peer mentor program, assigning two or three interested international students to one volunteer domestic student,
- Improve the advertisement of international students' events,
- Come up with new and interesting events for the purpose of international and domestic students getting to know one another on a deeper level,
- Utilize information from the International Student Barometer (ISB) to improve conditions,
- Do not seek to increase the rate of enrollment of international students in the next few years to more than UD can handle to integrate.

Peer Mentor Program

When international students come to UD and do not know much English, they usually attend the English Language Institute (ELI), which provides an immersive English learning experience, and then enroll in UD afterward. Although in ELI students gain enough experience with English to attend classes, many international students still struggle with feeling comfortable enough with their communication abilities to interact extensively with domestic students. Establishing a peer mentor program at UD would help solve this issue. If international students sign up for this program, two or three could be assigned to each volunteer domestic student, helping them "develop social relationships with English-speaking students to improve their language abilities, communication confidence, and increase opportunities for cultural exchange" (Ralarala). As part of its program, Delaware Diplomats gives the domestic students the ulterior motive of earning study abroad scholarship money through attending events. This does not ensure willing participation or a genuine interest in getting to know international students. Therefore, a volunteer program is necessary to ensure that everyone's needs and interests being met. At ELI, international students are surrounded by those who speak the same first language as them and/or share the experience of leaving one's home country behind. Once they enter UD, they lose common ground with most of the students and must figure out how to navigate the new context. Therefore, international students need to have consistent interaction with reliable peers who want to help them adjust to university life and connect with other domestic students, organizations, and events on campus.

Additional Advertising

There are a few opportunities for international and domestic students to forge relationships, such as the iHouse Living Learning Community and International Coffee Hour. Coffee Hour. iHouse, as well as other Living Learning Communities, are not often talked about as an option for residential students when they consider upper-division housing. Although limited space is

available in iHouse, further advertising would be useful to expose domestic and international students to the exciting opportunity of living with one another and contributing to a "cross-cultural exchange" ("Living Learning Experience").

International Coffee Hour, which takes place every Friday at four o'clock, is another program that is poorly advertised and, as a result, has very few, if any, American students in attendance. Furthermore, when asked whether or not they knew the event existed, most students in the researcher's English class either did not, or thought the event was only for international students. When domestic students feel excluded, it creates the illusion for them that the lack of interaction between the two groups of students is not an issue, because international students are supposedly happy with the way things are. Better advertising of Coffee Hour would likely increase the amount of domestic students in attendance.

Advertisement of events, through any media source, is a legitimate method to increase the amount of students interested in the events. Affective conditioning, or the transfer of positive emotions from one thing to another, is very effective. As shown by Mitchell and Dempsey in a study appearing in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, pairing a concept or item with images people have positive emotions toward will improve the chances of people "buying into" what the advertisement is trying to sell. Following this logic, if advertisements for cross-cultural events with positive images (such as diverse students talking, smiling, and laughing with food nearby) were to be posted in areas where students were likely to see them, it is probable that all will actively consider coming to the events.

Create New Events
There are three strategies known to the researcher that have the sole purpose of getting international and domestic students involved with one another: participation in the Global Games, Coffee Hour, and iHouse. The first is a two-hour event in the gym where international and domestic students team up and play sports with one another. The second, as previously mentioned, is a chance for students to eat food, stand around, and make small chat. The third is a Living Learning Community that is much more involved and enables students to be more active in interacting and sharing cultural traditions.

Despite these three opportunities, many students interviewed mention the limited number events as the biggest problem next to failure to participate. Out of the three things mentioned above, one is a single period that overlaps with class times, another is poorly advertised, and the last is a year-long commitment with limited room that conflicts with students' desires to live off-campus or become Resident Assistants. Furthermore, several domestic students, when questioned what prevented them from attending existent events, answered they they were "just not interested" (Anonymous).

For this reason, many international students want OISS, ELI, and UD to create and promote new events that are "specifically for bringing international and domestic students together" and would "get students excited" (Anonymous). At Coffee Hour, one student suggested a diverse array of workshops, such as learning to cook international and American foods, playing sports, and going on trips to Washington, D.C. together (Anonymous). Events that allow students to be active, and not merely sit around a table and discuss diversity, will help students form shared experiences and closer bonds. They may even prompt students to initiate contact outside events or academic activities, something that does not currently happen often, according to students (Anonymous). These new events would likely pique all students' interests and bring an influx of students to cross-cultural events.

Utilize ISB Data
Beginning in the Fall of 2017, UD is asking international students to complete the International Student Barometer (ISB), a survey that asks questions about how international students' academic, social, and living experiences are going ("International Student Barometer"). This survey is an excellent way to allow international students to voice their concerns and begin to address the diversity issues that plague UD. The ISB prioritizes areas of interest to international students so that UD knows where to begin to make change. Once the survey is complete, it is crucial for a team of administrators and members of OISS and ELI to meet in order to analyze the data and make improvements they see fit. With this survey, UD has an incredible opportunity to conveniently gather information from a large amount of international students. These students who choose to take the survey should answer honestly because of their ability to remain anonymous; therefore, if UD wishes to further improve its reputation and the quality of its services for international students, the team of analysts should seriously consider every individual answer they receive.

Stabilize Rate of International Student Enrollment
Although more information needs to be released in order to make an accurate judgement, UD's interest in enrolling 1,000 more international students will likely cause more harm than good. The researcher received confirmation on the amount of students but was unable to get information on the amount of years the change will be over. Many international students at UD are unsatisfied with the amount of interest domestic students currently have in interacting with them; increasing the number of international students before the problem is resolved with a lower amount of international students may contribute to the issue. There are at least three possible outcomes:

- Having more international students on campus will make them more visible and increase domestic student participation in events (desirable),

- Having more international students on campus will encourage international students to remain amongst themselves and domestic students to stay away, creating an even larger divide between students (undesirable),
- Having more international students on campus will distract UD from the real issue plaguing international students: not the *amount* of international students, but the *lack of interest* domestic and international students display in each other's events (undesirable).

UD's issue is not the amount of international students enrolled, but their experiences on campus. Until UD facilitates a community encouraging interaction and the probability of the first outcome becomes significantly greater than the others, UD should not risk exacerbating the problem and should maintain the current rate of international student enrollment. UD needs to focus on motivating students to take advantage of cross-cultural opportunities through the above methods. Although not talked about extensively, this also means encouraging international students to push themselves a little further out of their comfort zones and actively introduce themselves to domestic students, and vice versa.

**Conclusion: UD as a Role Model for U.S. Universities**
Universities around the world have noticed the trend of international student dissatisfaction, but most researchers agree on one thing: there is little being done about it. Whether because there appear to be more pressing issues or it is too complex an issue to tackle, a large (and growing) proportion of higher education institutions are feeling isolated from their peers. The high amount of ignorance and apathy with regard to cross-cultural experiences is a problem. UD needs to address this issue in order for students to gain benefits from going to a diverse university. Students in the western hemisphere tend to be individualistic and assertive, contradictory to the interdependence many international students display (Gautam); these simple proposed solutions emphasize the importance of emotional investment in friendships and increase students' desire to become closer friends with more diverse groups of people, with the intent to close the gap between the cultural behavioral tendencies. In hearing and acting upon the concern of international students, UD has the potential to not only become more attractive to international students, but become a leading university for giving students the ability to gain benefits from cross-cultural interaction.

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Amy's Reflection

This was my first research project at UD, and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in the symposium. Presenting with Vincent Sikora on behalf of those who proposed changes regarding diversity on campus was an amazing and unique experience that I would not have been able to get in any other English class here. I am so glad that I signed up for this course section because everything we learned was so meaningful: the importance of rhetorical listening and the power of stepping forward to incite change and topple injustice. The course and the symposium made me aware of these values. It is incredible that my classmates and I are going to move throughout college with the shared experience of building our symposium and expanding our worldview in common.
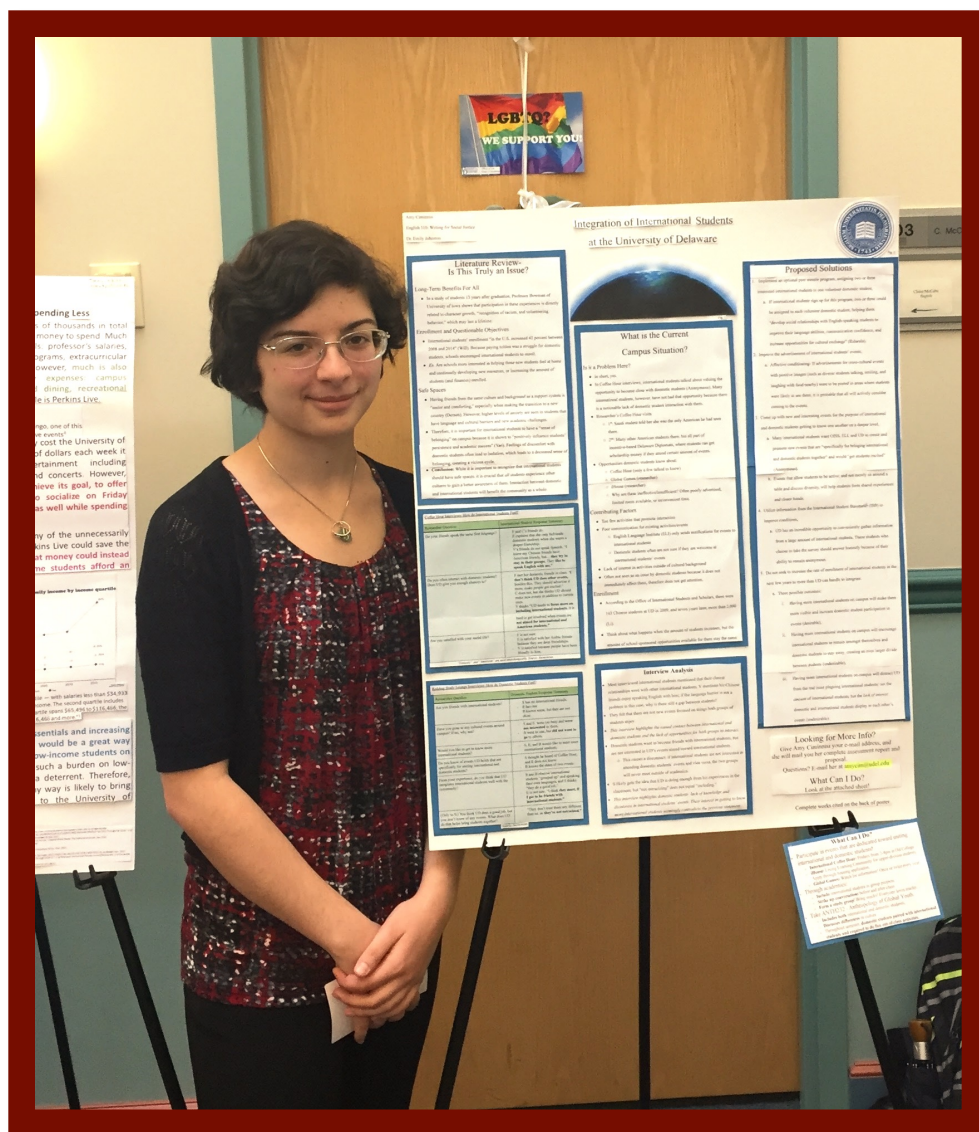
Amy at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

A Step Towards Gender Equality in STEM:

Increasing Public Awareness of Campus Initiatives to Improve the Retention of Female STEM Students Through Graduate Programs Into Faculty Positions at the University of Delaware

By Annie Porter

Abstract

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields are some of the fastest growing in academic studies and workplace job openings. While these occupations are growing rapidly, women still only make up approximately one-quarter (25.8%) of those workers (Landivar, 7). As a result of this gender gap, many universities and other institutions have made concerted efforts to improve female participation in STEM fields. At the University of Delaware, this encompasses programs to increase female undergraduate enrollment in STEM, and to encourage women to remain in STEM fields through graduate studies and into academia, but these programs have not been as successful as they could be. To improve this, the University must do two things: they must increase public awareness that the retention of females in STEM through graduate programs and into academia is still an issue on campus, and increase awareness of and access to initiatives on campus to improve the retention of female students. By implementing these changes, the University of Delaware would continue improving their retention of women in STEM, and overall campus diversity.

Introduction

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields are some of the fastest growing in academic studies and workplace job openings. The US Department of Commerce projects the number of STEM occupations will have increased by 19% in the ten years from 2008 to 2018, whereas non-STEM occupations are only projected to have increased by 9.8% (Langdon, McKittrick, Beede, Khan, 2). While these occupations are growing rapidly, women still only make up approximately one-quarter (25.8%) of those workers (Landivar, 7). This gender gap within STEM has become a high profile issue in recent years. One of the most influential voices who has highlighted the gender gap is former President Barack Obama. In a Google Plus Forum from February 2013, he said:

> *"One of the things that I really strongly believe in is that we need to have more girls interested in math, science, and engineering. We've got half the population that is way underrepresented in those fields and that means that we've got a whole bunch of talent…not being encouraged the way they need to."*

Obama's statement was significant because it was one of the first times someone who was not directly involved in by the issue of women in STEM brought attention to it. This statement and his following efforts to improve female representation in STEM brought the issue before the broader public for the first time.

As a result of this attention to the issue, many universities and other institutions have made concerted efforts to improve female participation in STEM fields. This encompasses programs to increase female undergraduate enrollment in STEM, and to encourage women to remain in STEM fields through graduate studies and into academia. Such programs include but are not limited to: guidelines for educators to support females in STEM (Wiest, 1), increasing funding for financial programs supporting females' education in STEM, developing mentoring networks within universities, and encouraging research and other out of class activities specifically for females (Committee on Trends … Earth and Life Studies, 42 - 43). These programs are intended to encourage female involvement and retention in STEM by building a supportive community for females.

The University of Delaware has undertaken similar efforts and more to improve the retention of female STEM students. These initiatives are outlined in the 2017 Inclusive Excellence Action Report from the Office of the Provost. While the University has taken the initiative to increase the retention of female STEM students, it is not well known that they have done so. Even female STEM students at UD are unaware of the new resources and programs available to them.

The University of Delaware must increase public awareness that the retention of females in STEM through graduate programs and into academia is still an issue on campus, and increase awareness of and access to initiatives on campus to improve the retention of female students. By continuing to call attention to the issue, people will stay mobilized trying to fix the problem. Increasing awareness of the initiatives the University has taken would show female students in STEM that UD is committed to building a positive and supportive community within the STEM departments for women. Increasing access to the programs and resources would provide current female students and faculty the ability to further build the supportive community themselves.

Assessment of Current Efforts
The University has made efforts to improve the retention of female STEM students, but they have not been as effective as possible. The University still has a problem with the leaky STEM pipeline. This leaky pipeline is the lack of retention of women through graduate programs and into academia (Chen, Kelly, 2). At UD, females have a 20-25% STEM-wide dropout rate after the first year, which is 10-15% higher than the rate for males (Chen, Kelly, 17). Females also are less likely than males to return for a graduate degree, and even less likely to enter into academia. In the biomedical engineering program, females were 13% less likely to return for a biomedical

engineering masters degree than males were (UD Office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, 5). In the biological sciences department, even though females account for 58% of the undergraduate class, only 47% of faculty are female (UD Office of Equity and Inclusion, 2). So even in STEM departments with majority female students, there is still a problem on campus with retaining females into academia.

The reason the University's efforts are not as effective as they should be is because the efforts are not being actively publicized both on campus and to the public. While researching this paper, the 2017 Inclusive Excellence Status Report, which outlines efforts to increase diversity on campus, was found only after extensive research. The report is only published on a separate UD webpage specifically for diversity. This webpage is not linked to any other parts of the website that may be related. For example, there is no way to access this report from the section of the UD mechanical engineering site that explains "Why engineering at UD?".

The efforts by the University outlined in this report to improve diversity including within the STEM fields should be a major factor in why someone may choose engineering or any STEM field at the University of Delaware. Instead, the report is nowhere to be found. The information can only be found if someone is specifically seeking it out. The lack of access to information highlights the problem that females in STEM and others interested have in finding resources on the issue. A problem cannot be solved without knowing specifically what the problem is, and what steps have already been made to address the issue.

Recommendations
Increase Awareness of Initiatives Specifically Relating to Females in STEM
The University could best continue to highlight the lack of retention of females in its STEM departments by publishing specific data on the issue in a manner that is easy to access. Since the University has committed to improving diversity on campus, statistics on both student enrollment and faculty positions have been published yearly. This data is broken down statistically into almost every demographic possible, but is presented in 35 different multi-page reports solely containing full-page data tables (Institutional Data on Diversity, UD Institutional Research). While this information is useful for research, it is the only available presentation of all of the data. The information is not easy to understand without in depth reading of the data, and in many cases much of the data is irrelevant to what a reader is looking for. For example, if someone wants to learn more about the diversity of females in STEM, it is unlikely that they would also care about the ethnic breakdowns of every non-STEM degree. Unfortunately, all of this information is included in the same report, and contained in the same data table.

The University should create a better way to present relevant data pertaining to the diversity of female students and faculty within STEM departments. As the University does with data such as admissions statistics, annual reports that graphically represent the relevant data would provide a much simpler way for a reader to get the information.

These reports could be distributed to students, faculty, and department leaders within the STEM departments, but also to outside organizations such as the Society of Women Engineers and other recognized student organizations on campus that support female involvement in STEM.

It is essential that this data is continuously published until there is no longer a gender gap within STEM fields. It is easy to forget a problem exists once it is not continuously identified. By providing the relevant information directly to people involved or impacted by the issue of the lack of retention of females in STEM, as the data reports would, it keeps the issue in the forefronts of people's minds, especially those who are directly impacted. This encourages those who have the power to make changes, specifically heads of faculty and department leaders, to continue making changes. By providing data on the issue in a way that is easy to understand, the issue continues to stay relevant even though the lack of female involvement in STEM may not currently be as mainstream an issue as it was a few years ago.

Increase Access to Resources to Create a Supportive Community within STEM Departments
The University must increase access for current students and faculty to the programs already created to improve the retention of females in STEM. All of the programs that have been started or planned are outlined in the previously mentioned 2017 Inclusive Excellence Status Report from UD's Office of the Provost. This report outlines the current initiatives being taken by the University to increase diversity on campus, and specifically for female representation in STEM continuing through graduate programs and into academia.

One initiative proposed is to provide mentoring to lower level faculty within the University by more established faculty, and also provide both faculty and peer mentoring to students. Mentoring is especially important for women in STEM. One of the most cited reasons for women leaving STEM fields is the lack of support in their educational or professional community (Drury, Siy, Cheryan, 2). The lack of STEM mentorship available at the college level continues the lack of STEM mentorship girls receive at younger ages. This contributes to a feeling that there is not a supportive community within the STEM departments at UD because no one introduces such a community to incoming students.

As a first-year undergraduate female in mechanical engineering, I was not previously aware of such mentoring programs available. The only mentorship or advisement that I had been told of was the faculty advisement that is available to all students. It is important that the University makes female students in STEM aware of all of these new programs from the start of their time at UD. This shows new students that the University is committed to creating a positive and supportive environment for women in STEM. This sets the women on a path to be more likely to succeed.

Benefits of Change

By implementing the recommended changes, both female students and faculty within STEM and the University as a whole would benefit substantially. The proposed actions would go a long way in preventing burnout. According to Daphne Pedersen and Krysta Lynn Minnotte, researchers of sociology at the University of North Dakota, burnout is emotional exhaustion to the point where a person is unable to perform his/her job requirements. Females in STEM are statistically more likely to experience burnout than their male counterparts (Pederson, Minnotte, 47). The actions proposed herein are intended to not only continue calling attention to this issue, but also foster a supportive environment for women in STEM departments. Creating such an environment is identified as one of the best ways to prevent burnout, and increase overall happiness and satisfaction for females in STEM (Wiest, 2-3). This would be the most effective way the University could increase the retention of females in STEM.

By benefitting women in STEM, the University also benefits. UD has clearly made improving campus diversity an issue they are working towards. By retaining more female STEM students and faculty, they are achieving that. Increasing the satisfaction and happiness of females in STEM also directly benefits the University. Employees who are happier with their workplace conditions are more likely to be successful and produce higher quality work. At a research institution, this should always be a goal. Implementing the proposals would help achieve that.

Conclusions

In an effort to improve the retention of female STEM students through graduate programs and into academia, the University of Delaware has created many new programs to increase diversity on campus, and specifically within the STEM fields. In order for these programs to be as successful as the University intends for them to be, they must make two changes. First, they must start to advertise that the gender gap in STEM fields is still an issue. Change is only possible if people are aware that the problem exists. Second, females in STEM must be made aware of the programs that the University offers. The programs will not be successful in retaining female STEM students if the students are not aware of how to take advantage of them. The University has an obligation to support females in STEM, and continue to improve the retention of females through STEM graduate degrees and into academia. By adopting these two proposals, they would continue to improve in their attempts to do so.

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Annie's Reflection

This English 110 class has been interesting for me in seeing how many of the social justice issues I had heard of before apply in situations I see everyday. I always tried to stay up to date with issues in the news, such as claims of lack of diversity and the lack of fair treatment. While I found these interesting, I didn't really have a context with which to apply what I learned by following the news to something closer to home. They were always of people in far off places. This English class has helped me learn to identify issues of social justice that affect me and my peers everyday, here on the University of Delaware's campus. Not only did I learn how to identify these issues, but I learned how to research them further, and write to encourage further action to address the issues. This class has better prepared me to be active in improving my community.

Campus Climate Proposal:
How to Cease the Objectification of Women in Greek Life at the University of Delaware
By Paula Pranda

Abstract

The University of Delaware is one of America's top party schools; at fraternity parties, the brothers of the house enforce a "ratio" rule that demands there be as little men to as many women possible entering their social events. This requirement creates an unsafe atmosphere for women, who are objectified and used as "currency" to get into fraternity parties. Through interviews with campus members and research about college campus culture, the dangers that women face at fraternity parties fall into three main categories: drinking culture, victim-blaming, and toxic masculinity. The University of Delaware must urge students to recognize their party actions through educational workshops and informative posters, which will ultimately lead to students urging each other to think about and change attitudes about these pressing problems; through a combination of the efforts of the University and of the students, there will be a greater recognition of the risks of party culture, which can have the long-term effect of minimizing the sexual objectification of women at fraternity parties.

Fraternity Customs

At the University of Delaware, a major aspect of socialization and of the student culture is partying. Being rated one of America's top party schools, the University of Delaware takes pride in itself for its ability to have a good time. However, with the emphasis on partying comes an unfortunate issue: the objectification of women. Upon arriving at a fraternity house for a party, there are usually fraternity brothers checking on the male to female "ratio," i.e., checking that there are many girls entering the house and as little men as possible. This activity creates divides between fraternity brothers and non-fraternity brothers, as men outside the fraternity can seldom enter, and it also labels women as "currency" for getting into a party and ultimately dehumanizes a women into nothing more than a female body, there for the other males at the party to gaze at and possibly to hook up with. Not only does the "ratio" requirement exclude most men from popular social events that the University of Delaware is known for, it more importantly traps women into being the "entertainment" at a party. This causes an unsafe space for women, because they are in a fraternity-owned house, probably drinking alcohol provided by the fraternity, under the rule of the fraternity. Furthermore, there are no official University laws governing objectification of women. Bottom line, there does not exist a completely safe scenario for college women to enjoy themselves without objectification from others. Unfortunately, the idea that a "successful" party includes a large amount of alcohol and a large amount of girls is deeply ingrained into college party culture in America. With the right steps towards changing

attitudes of college students at the University of Delaware, there can exist a safer partying scene which can ultimately serve as a model for Universities everywhere. The University of Delaware must urge students to recognize the signs of toxic masculinity and their party actions through educational workshops and informative posters, which will ultimately lead to students urging each other to think about and change attitudes about these pressing problems; through a combination of the efforts of the University and of the students, there will be a greater recognition of the risks of party culture, which can have the long-term effect of minimizing the sexual objectification of women at fraternity parties.

Drinking Culture
It is imperative to ask why students value excessive drinking when there exists a myriad of bad consequences: hangovers, risk of being arrested/losing scholarships if caught, desensitized judgement, lack of focus on school work, etc. But, according to the book *Getting Wasted: Why College Students Drink Too Much and Party So Hard* by Thomas Vander Ven, while scholars try to prove why drinking is so appealing, they overlook the simple opinion that students plainly find it "fun." This is an opinion ingrained by American party culture: it is a societal consensus. Jack Katz, a sociologist who studies "the seductions of crime," notes the "positive, often wonderful attractions within the lived experience of criminality" (Vander Ven). Fraternities should not be providing alcohol for others, especially not underage students and especially not targeting women to drink the alcohol, but as Katz researched, breaking rules is simply exciting.

Since the role of alcohol is already a major component of partying, reducing alcohol consumption or outright banning it will most likely not show any results. However, what the University of Delaware can enforce is practicing safer drinking. University students are required to complete an AlcoholEDU course before enrolling in classes, but evidently that is not enough. An article in the journal of American College Health argues that because of the success of secondhand smoking campaigns, "secondhand alcohol" campaigns can be implemented onto universities, as alcohol becomes the next great threat after cigarettes (Misch). The National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism recommends that involving a mix of strategies that target individual students, the student body, and the entire campus gives the most effective results for safer drinking. The NIAAA stresses on educating higher risk students the most: first-year students, student athletes, and Greek Organization. In terms of creating attitude changes, the NIAAA recommends motivation and feedback-related approaches, behavioral interventions by health professionals, and a range of counseling options ("College Drinking"). The NIAAA notes how the best advancements will result when students influence each other to make better decisions. With safer drinking decisions, students will have a better grasp on their actions and health, and be less likely to create dangerous situations at parties.

Keeping Parties Safe

"Party School" is a label that the University of Delaware shows off proudly, therefore it would be irrational and unrealistic for the University to ban or decrease partying in order to stop objectification of women at parties. Instead, the University can focus on more responsible ways of partying. For example, at the University of Maryland's fraternity Sigma Chi, 21 year old Patrick McMahon was hired as the "fraternity risk manager." McMahon's job entails him to keep the party as safe as possible while not ruining the enjoyment of the students. His responsibilities include that only beer is served as parties, (University rules that only beer be served at on-campus fraternity parties,) strictly limiting beer smuggling to make sure no one is drinking more than six beers, maintaining a strong presence at the door and checking IDs, ensuring that there is enough food and water bottles at the party, and arranging rides home for drunk people and making sure people get home safe ("How a fraternity 'risk'"). This concept of a "fraternity risk manager" not only ensures that parties stay safe and under control, but it also allows student to party and have somewhere to relax and let loose at the end of the week, while also having a fellow student serving as a role model for others which can stimulate positive partying habits in other students. The University of Delaware could consider hiring a fraternity risk manager; the person could be appointed by the fraternity and then endorsed by the University Student Centers leaders. Implementing a fraternity risk manager; however, places a lot of pressure and responsibility on one person. If that person does not strictly follow protocol, then the risk manager would create a false atmosphere of safety. For example, a fraternity risk manager may want to drink and party with his fellow brothers, which would ultimately put the safety of the party-goers in danger. Nonetheless, a fraternity risk manager is a feasible option in attempting to keep parties safe. Fraternities could have test runs with possible fraternity risk managers to determine if the manager is a good fit for the frat and efficient at doing his job; having an overseer is a potential step in reducing dangerous situations at parties and can possibly keep women safer.

Toxic Masculinity

Negative fraternity actions are mostly due to societal perceptions of masculinity; in this case, drinking lots of alcohol at parties and attaining many girls at parties to heighten chances of hooking up. Toxic masculinity sets back the solution for liberating women from objectification at parties. In a research paper done by Brian Borsari and Kate Carey, researchers for the Center for Health and Behavioral Sciences at Syracuse University, it is recognized that alcohol consumption is viewed as a social event in college, rating the importance of social functions. Likewise, drinking games facilitate friendships with strangers. Combined with peer pressure, many student drink to make new friends, which makes college freshman especially vulnerable. Because much of socialization occurs in fraternity houses due to American college tradition, fraternity houses are locations for the heaviest drinking on campus (Borsari, Carey). The common history of drinking at fraternities leads society to glorify drinking at fraternity houses,

which adds pressure to fraternity brothers to drink in order to "fit in," and this perception adds to toxic masculinity. Furthermore, it is expected for men to hookup with girls at college parties, and this also harms a man's masculinity and gives him strict expectations. According to the book *College Men and Masculinities: Theory, Research, and Implications for Practice*, the hegemonic definition of masculinity is "being white, heterosexual, aggressive, dominant, competitive, muscular, class privileged." Traditional fraternities maintain themselves through the exclusion of both women and marginal men who do not fit the labels of hegemonic masculinity (Harper, 149). This aspect of masculinity is seen on campus at the University of Delaware, and the student body needs to bring to light the implications of this masculinity in order to break it; one way to make others aware is through educational posters that highlight signs of of negative masculinity, such as putting oneself in risk to impress others (drinking too much), prioritizing how many women one hooks up with, and denouncing feminine characteristics/items. With these posters, students will subconsciously recognize the signs of toxic masculinity through repeated exposure of these warning signs. The University could also potentially invite a guest speaker who is knowledgeable in gender roles and relations to speak to the student body about what healthy masculinity looks like. Once this toxic masculinity begins to break down, there will be less emphasis on using girls as sex objects, and women will be able to enjoy themselves at parties more freely without the worry of being used as sex in order to heighten a man's "worth."

Implementing Self Defense Lessons
With all the precautions taken for safe drinking and safe partying, there still exists risk for physical and verbal assault, especially against women, and especially in an atmosphere where many people may be inebriated. For safety measures, the University could offer free self-defense lessons for women that would include how to protect oneself under attack, how to bring attention to oneself in a dangerous situation, how to deal with catcalling, and how to intervene when one sees an assault happening. For example, two women run a company called "Damsel in Defense:" the women offer workshops for other women where they provide the women with non-lethal protection and teach them how to utilize the skills. The company sells items such as pepper spray, flashlights, stun guns, and self-defense keychains. With these protection skills, the women learn valuable skills on how to protect themselves in worst case scenarios ("Women learn safety"). The University of Delaware often gives out free items such as flashlights and snacks; the University could also hand out rape whistles for students to use in emergencies. While Damsel in Defense is targeted towards women, the University of Delaware should implement defense classes for women and men, where workshop leaders would teach not only how to defend oneself and how to intervene in dangerous situations, but the leaders would also work to change attitudes about assault. This sort of workshop that involves men and women showed positive results when implemented in Kenyan schools. In Kenya, one in four girls are raped. In an attempt to fix this problem, the organization No Means No Worldwide taught girls verbal and physical self-defense techniques in a school program. The girls were also told information on

how to get help if they were assaulted. In ten months after following the program, the percentage of girls that reported being raped fell from 24.6 percent to 9.2 percent. No Means No Worldwide also teaches a curriculum for boys on rape culture and teaches them not to perpetrate sexual assault (Digitale). By training students on how to protect themselves, teaching students to not commit sexual assault, and promoting healthy masculinities, the University of Delaware could create a safer partying scene by offering adequate safety knowledge and training.

Changing Attitudes: For the Students, By the Students
The previous tactics mentioned all act as damage control for objectification of women; however, to truly begin eradicating the problem, the change must come internally from the campus as a whole. Ultimately, women deserve to have a good time together with friends, dress up as they please, and party without the worry of being overly-sexualized or receiving unwanted and unwarranted attention from other people. Unfortunately, the "ratio" requirement for parties immediately places hypersexualization on women, especially since women are expected to be dressed "scandalously" to enter parties. Other than affecting women and how they are perceived, men not in fraternities are socially outcast as they cannot attend a fraternity party unless they personally know someone in the fraternity and are allowed to come. While women have no trouble entering parties, staying complacent about the basis of which they can enter only reinforces the patriarchy. The University could attempt to enforce rules about inclusivity when it comes to who can enter parties; however, it would be challenging to persuade Greek houses to comply with these rules. A better solution would be for the student body to change ingrained attitudes by reminding each other about problematic opinions. This can be achieved by creating and actively displaying educational posters, and also running workshops that focus on healthy masculinities and safe partying. For this change to work, students need to urge each other to be mindful of actions that lead to objectification of women, as well to question their opinions on women and how they are treated. The change must come from the student body as a whole, but the University can begin by promoting that change.

One crucial issue is victim-blaming. The University of Delaware does highlight the importance of sober consent, but it needs to be extended to other issues, such that being drunk is not an excuse to objectify women. Ultimately this leads to the issue of slut shaming: there is no excuse for slut shaming, but the thoughts still exist within many students and it worsens the objectification of women. According to an article that analyzed slut shaming on a college campus, participants have significantly identified with judging a woman by the way she dresses. The article suggests creating a multicultural awareness of slut shaming in order to make students aware of these subconscious thoughts and encourage students to change their inherently prejudiced attitudes (Almazan, Bain). While the University can start the impetus for students to analyze their possibile slut-shaming through possible informative flyers and posters, again the most powerful change comes from students urging each other to stop slut-shaming and changing

the opinion as an entire community. This must manifest itself by peers calling out others on problematic language, encouraging each other to stay safe and open-minded, and actively questioning University party customs.

Conclusions

Women at fraternity parties are at risk for sexual objectification due to alcohol consumption, slut shaming, and the results of toxic masculinity. By shedding light on these issues, students can begin to think why these societal rules are in place and begin to break down these rules. The University of Delaware must urge students to ponder these ideas through workshops while also offering support such as self-defense classes, but the most important and effective change will happen if students put in the effort to change attitudes about partying themselves, and especially what defines masculinity by coaxing others in making the conscious change of these problematic opinions. By showing that the University can enjoy itself with partying while also creating a safe and inclusive atmosphere for its students, the University of Delaware can act as a model for other Universities and begin a new era of safer partying.

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Paula's Reflection

This English class opened my eyes to issues on campus that I am affected by, and ones that I am not affected by. The class emphasized how even though I am one person, through the right strategies and research, I have the power to initiate positive change. The symposium showcased months of hard work that my peers completed, and it manifested itself into an astonishing experience for all the guests to recognize the University's areas of improvement. This class taught me how to identify important problems, how to research them further, and how to effectively write about those issues while also considering my audience. I believe that after taking this class, I am a more active and aware citizen.

Paula at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Diversification in College Education:

The Task of Integrating Student Minorities Such As International and Immigrant Students in the College Environment Without Losing Their Unique Differences and Cultures

By Victor Ramirez Delgado

Abstract

International and immigrant students face lots of different challenges when starting college. The language and cultural barriers are some of the main factors that makes adaptation harder for them than most of students. The result is that these students usually do not have the chance to have meaningful connections with domestic students, affecting their social lives and their learning experience. In this project it will be discussed the bases of the issue, how it affects the students, and what are the solutions that can be taken to make a lasting change in society. All of this is focused only on the situation of international and immigrant students in the University of Delaware, as well as the strategies proposed to improve the situation are based on the resources that UD has at its disposal.

Introduction

The United States is one of the nations around the world whose population is made up of many diverse groups of people. According to the US Census Bureau, in 2010 the major group is made up from the white population, which represents a 63.7 percent of the total population. The rest of the population consists of several minority groups, such as African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and Hispanic or Latino. Minority groups are a "culturally, ethnically, or racially distinct group that coexists with but is subordinate to a more dominant group". As previously defined, these groups are subordinate to the majority, who posses more political and economical power, which can cause serious consequences, such as discrimination, segregation lack of opportunities and economic inequality. Therefore, regardless the fact that minorities are a very important part of the American population, they are still vulnerable to the decisions of the majority.

The trend of increasing diversity is visible in almost any aspect of the United States. Most companies, public institutions and communities consist of people from different backgrounds races and ethnicities. Now, questions that may emerge when you see these people is, do they feel welcomed in this environment, do they adapt their principles and behaviours with the ones of their community, do they have meaningful relationships with members of the majority? It is hard to have an answer to these questions, especially because every environment is different. In some parts of the United States, where the percentage of minority groups is even lower than the

national average the answer might be no to these questions, while it happens the opposite in communities made up of a large minorities.

In this case, the study focuses specifically on international and immigrant students that attend the University of Delaware. First of all, these two groups may sound very similar, but they have several differences that make them two separate groups. International students are people from other countries who came to the United States for a determined time with the purpose of pursuing some sort of education in the country by having a particular type of study visa (usually F-1, F-2, J-1 and J-2). While immigrant students can be students born in another country or born in the U.S. but whose parents are from another country, and are permanently residing in the nation, giving them the right to have access to public education and even higher education. Each one of them have their unique characteristics but also a very common point, the challenge of integrating in this new environment. A very large amount of these students, especially the non-native English speaking, struggle to adapt to the college because of cultural and language barriers making interaction with domestic students harder and sometimes unfruitful.

There is a lack of interaction between these groups causing the existence of ineffective relationships between international and immigrants students with domestic students. This is the issue that has to be addressed in the University of Delaware in order to provides its students an excellent education not only in academics, but also in social relations with people from all over the world. UD´s faculty and students must be aware of this issue and the consequences that it brings, such as isolation and unequal opportunities to some students. By understanding and acknowledging that exists a deficiency in communication between these different groups of students, UD´s community will unite students from all nationalities and backgrounds with the use of several strategies applied on its campus. For example, we could promote diversity on campus by hosting multicultural events, workshops, pep talks and giving recognitions to offices and student organizations that promote interaction between diverse groups of students.

Factors Affecting the Issue
In just a matter of years a lot of things have changed in the United States, mainly the new political path that the nation has been taking. The new government has been a fundamental aspect of the circumstances which immigrants, travelers and students have faced in the U.S. The new elected government has shown several times its conservative, discriminatory and xenophobic views towards people who arrive to the country. It has passed legislations that limit the entrance of people from certain countries, ended the program that allowed young immigrants to have a legal status that ensure simple rights as residents of this country, and now they are trying to put more limitations to the people that travel to the U.S. These are some of the reasons why is so important to put an emphasis on listening to the voices of these people and helping them in these moments of uncertainty and fear.

All these new events have had repercussion in international and immigrant students. There are cases of students from the banned Muslims-majority countries who were denied their entrance to U.S., as much as students who were part of DACA and since it has been terminated their future in the following years is uncertain for them. Unfortunately, this is the current context that international and immigrant students must deal when they enroll in any higher education institution, at the end this will only make interaction between these different groups harder than what it normally is. In consequence, universities must show their support towards this minorities to prevent the isolation of these students. In the case of UD, president Dennis Assanis addressed all students after the end of DACA, stating that UD focuses on providing equal treatment and opportunities to any student regardless of citizenship status and that the university will focus its efforts in protecting students affected by the new legislation.

UD´s Situation Regarding the Issue
UD needs to focus on decreasing the imbalance between international student and immigrant student populations on the one hand, and the white/domestic student population on the other, which represents the majority of the student population on campus. UD has a low percentage of admissions on international and immigrant students compared to the white population admitted. Even though, these numbers are one of the highest in recent years, meaning that the institution is pushing for a more diverse community.

However, the problem is not only the amount of these students, the most important problem should be how is their lifestyle at UD, how are their interactions with domestic students, and if they feel welcomed by their community. In this case, the normal circumstance UD is that similar groups stick together almost all the time. One of the reason of this behaviour is the gap of understanding that exists between the two groups; it comes to the fact that most of them have different native language and because there is a lack of cultural knowledge within both groups. These two main factors make communication harder two any student, which can cause anxiety and frustration to some people, leading to the behaviour of spending more time with similar groups. To change this trend it is necessary to make dialogue between these students more natural and friendly; by promoting more multicultural with the purpose that international, immigrant and domestic students can interchange stories, experiences and cultural characteristics.

Besides, making minorities more involved with the majority will bring as a consequence more diverse group of friends, which will show that UD promotes diversity. Within international and immigrant students, non-native English speaking students are usually the ones that spend more time among themselves, because of the big impact that this causes to the students. This causes some students from countries like China, India and Saudi Arabia (largest international students populations at UD) to limit themselves to very short conversations with americans. A strategy

that can be applied is to make events focused only on explaining the unique qualities of these countries to domestic students, and to any other person interested. Students native from these countries can help organize the event and can be part of sharing their culture to the university. Transmitting knowledge about other nations in the institution will make its students recognize the differences of some students, and will help form new friendships that accept these particular qualities.

Breaking the Barriers
Starting a new life in very different environment is also a chance of meeting new people and learning new experiences. As an international student I surrounded myself with a wide variety of people from all sorts of different places and with whom I share friendly relationships. Some of them are also international students that just moved or have years living in the United States, while others are domestic students from all parts of the country. From the international students I have met, some of them speak the same language as I do, come from countries similar to mine and understand the experience of going through a lot of change in a very short period of time. Meeting them made me feel that I have people who I can relate with in a lot of different aspects. Nevertheless, this does not mean that I would spend all my time with them because of the similarities that we share; I also share very good connections with many of the domestic students that I known regardless of all the differences that we may have. I have learned that international students and americans can have a lot of things in common, and that we can also develop deep friendships between us.

The fact of having friends from all sorts of groups only means the expansion of the range of people I get to know and that now can learn from more than one culture. Besides, I can also arrange meetings between these two different groups of friends to hang out together and be able to exchange stories, opinions and cultural characteristics. Promoting the existence of multicultural friendships is a very efficient method to deal with the lack of interaction between different groups of students. This can be achieved by promoting and publicizing events that encourage the interaction between different diverse group of students where everyone is invited to participate. The best example that I can give for personal experience is the International Coffee Hour, hosted by OISS, it is a perfect opportunity to meet foreign undergraduate and graduate students from all parts of the world, in a very friendly and environment.

Furthermore, what are other actions that immigrant and international students can take to feel more invonvelved at UD? According to the academic article *Immigrant College Students´Academic Obstacles,*one way to make immigrant students feel more involved in their community is by encouraging them to join student organizations and leadership programs. This can be a very effective solution to the lack of interaction that international and immigrant students have with domestic students. Luckily, UD has several student organizations that

promote intercultural relations, such as HOLA, the Center for Black Culture, the and China-American association and the Global Language & Culture Partnership Program, as well as direct branches of the university like the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS). All of these organizations are in charge of promoting cultural events and supporting minority students in their college experience through events like the International Coffee Hour, Fiesta Latina, workshops, outdoor events, pep talks from renowned people in the community, etc.

UD As A Role Model
Certainly, the University of Delaware might not be the most diverse college in the U.S. but that does not mean that the it cannot be a role model for other institutions. UD has showed that it is concerned about the issue of the lack of interaction between minority students and domestic students. The strategies that the university has put into action, such multicultural events and the student organizations, have had a an important impact in reaching minority students. However, they should be aimed and publicize not only for international and immigrant students, but also for domestic students who are interested in meeting new people, as well as sharing and listening to cultural differences within our university. It is clear that these strategies should continue to be implemented around campus, but it is also very important to create new ones that can attract even more attention and that can assure the formation of deep bonds within different groups of students.

Besides, faculty has also showed their concerns about the issues that these students must deal with in their daily routine. Altogether, it exists a community that cares about its students and how they feel in the university. UD is willing to hear the students' advice to create new methods that would help solve the issue of lack of interaction between students, as well as ensuring that everyone receives equal opportunities regardless of their background.

From my personal opinion I consider that I have felt welcomed at UD and I have managed to interact with people from all sort of different groups. I am certain that I am not the only international student that feels welcomed by the University of Delaware, and I hope that most of students will be able to feel like me. Promoting diversity and the value of accepting people from different countries must be modeled and improved, to make sure that UD becomes a role model in not only accepting more minority students, but also ensuring that they feel at home on campus.

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Victor's Reflection

The English 110 course taught me lots of different things. At first, I thought that I would not find any social injustice on campus within my first weeks after arriving at the University. Now I realize that there are many issues in our environment, and all of them deserve our attention. Reading *The New Jim Crow* gave me the idea that the situation that the author explains in the book is not so different from the problems at UD. There many issues, but not everyone is aware of them, making them even more harmful and dangerous; therefore, that is one of the reasons that sharing these issues in our classes and explaining them to our campus community are fundamental. The Symposium is only one way that we can contribute to solve these problems and we should keep working on new methods to contribute even more; that is one of the main lessons that this class taught me during these past months.
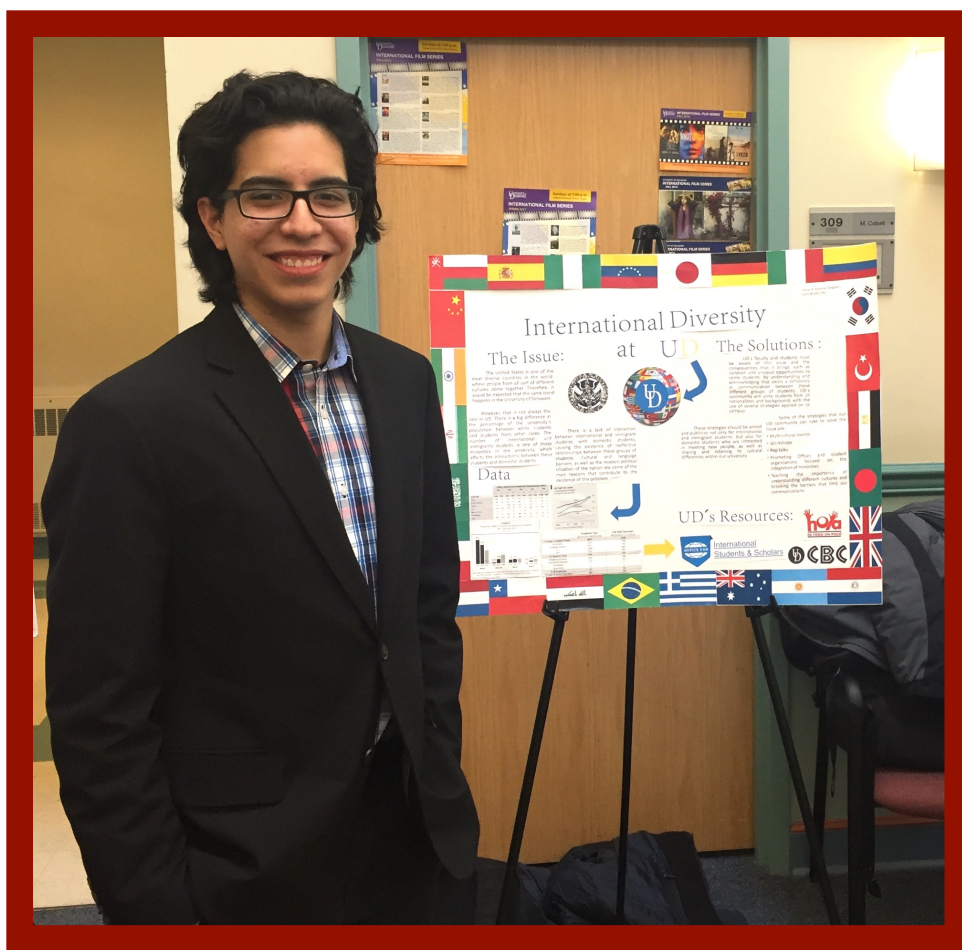
Victor at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Academic Stigmas, Race, Income, and How to Remedy the Need to Resolve Racial and Income Inequality at the University of Delaware

By Vincent Sikora

Abstract

The word 'diversity' is hammered into our minds by a constant push for political correctness and sensitivity. But racism and classism are antiquated concepts and we must be past them as a modern society, right? Unfortunately, no. To assume the veracity of this statement is quite dangerous; however, many do, and they become unaware of the implicit and explicit biases that still exist today. Even in the most benevolent of institutions, the stigmas targeting racial stereotypes and socioeconomic standing are engrained into their framework. Moreover, they usually reflect the social dynamics of the nation as a whole, making the problems within an institution more covertly tucked behind a facade of brick and mortar academic buildings and clean-cut lawns. The truth of the matter is that the University of Delaware has a diversity problem, and the problems it creates for minority and poor students exist within and go beyond the campus itself. This paper will explore some of the damning statistics behind the lack of diversity at the University of Delaware and offer some proposals about how to remedy inequality; however, it will take a collaborative effort on the part of all of the University's departments to bring about a change and stop the perpetuation of inequality created by the university system.

Introduction

There is a problem with racial and income diversity at the University of Delaware. The University of Delaware is a "university [...] committed to embracing a diverse and inclusive campus that reflects our collective views, experiences, capabilities, cultures, aspirations, and ultimately our commitment to excellence" (Office of the Provost); however, there are a few areas in which the University is lacking, causing the campus climate to suffer. The admissions department at the University of Delaware should reinvigorate its focus on diversifying its campus and prioritizing support systems for students of color before and after their university careers, because the gap between rich and poor, further widened by race, hurts the nation' social standing and further divides classes.

A Problem with UD's Environment

A study from the New York Times cited that "the median family income of a student from Delaware is $147,300, and 68% come from the top 20 percent." and that "less than 1% of students at Delaware came from a poor family but became a rich adult." Moreover, The University of Delaware, while focusing on improving the problem, is often criticized for its lack of racial diversity, even in comparison to other universities President of Carnegie Mellon

University, Jarod L Cohon, said that "with few exceptions, [...] the university trails its peers in every measure of diversity in every constituency of the institution." A *Delaware Online* article quoted then incoming Faculty Senate President Robert Opila, who noted that "the student body isn't diverse. The faculty isn't diverse. But the state of Delaware has a sizable African American population," ending with a simple call for change (Albright). The fact of the matter is that in-state tuition may be the only option for many people, and the abysmal 5% African American population within the hallmark university of a state whose population is nearly 21% black shows a real threat to equality in the future. Opila is correct to call for a change; the opportunity of education needs to be afforded more equally in order to reach the full potential of the population, not just to white people or the wealthy. It is easy to look at some of the initiatives that the University has started in efforts to increase diversity; however, these statistics point to the realization that these efforts are not nearly enough.

UD Efforts

The "Inclusive Excellence" action plan released in 2015 on increasing diversity at the university, says that the University of Delaware has made progress "slowly, but surely" (Henderson 2); however, action plans that it suggests are strictly rhetorical. For example, it mentions diversity statements and proposals to re-engineer college departments using data from institutional research, but it is not specific. Although this is good for agenda setting, it is not definitive. It gets better when it prioritizes staff training and outreach, but does not include any logistics as to how it may be implemented. The university needs to have a discussion about how the system can change, especially in what the Office of Admissions can do to accept a more diverse student body and offer them the means to become enrolled.

Racial Stigmas

I talked to Alexis Harrison, who is part CBC's (Center for Black Culture) 'Each One Reach One' program, which provides a mentorship to black students at UD. First and foremost, this program advises black students to go to extra study sessions organized by the CBC in order to 'prove themselves' because of the stigma that surrounds black students and their academic capabilities. She also said that a lot of the time, black students will opt not to go to the University of Delaware because they are uncomfortable about the university's low black student population. Moreover, according to Harrison, if a black student was born and raised in a primarily black neighborhood, they might be 'on edge' surrounded by mostly white people, something that she has observed among friends on campus. People who are 'on edge' might not be as comfortable pursuing extra academic help, or be discouraged from even pursuing their field of interest, suggesting that academic environment is a determinant of academic success. Academic stigmas and more having to do with race, gender, etc., are very powerful determinants of what somebody can achieve, and how easy it might be for them to achieve it. Evidence shows that these stigmas exist right here at the University of Delaware.

Social Stigmas

I was informed of another concern while visiting a presentation about international students and recipients of DACA on the UD campus. Nancy Contreras, a presenter on a panel following a short clip and a member of the "No Blue Hen is Illegal" collective expressed frustration towards the administration about ten demands that she had to assist these students in achieving their academic goals despite their demographic. These demands have the potential to set the agenda and get the ball rolling on a stale problem. The first demand that she had was sensitivity training for faculty; however, she was irritated that the university failed to provide (Contreras). The United States Department of Education let out a study called "Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education" in which they concluded that Universities are encouraged to adopt special training programs for their faculty, and that Universities with these programs see more contentedness among minority students in respect to how comfortable they feel in the environment of the University (United States Department of Education). Seeing as how sentiment can affect a student's academic performance, it should be a focus of the university. This can involve physical security, protection and support with pertinence to immigration documents and acclimation, clubs and organizations that create a support system, etc. The report also delves into an institution's prioritizing of diversity, saying, "mission statements and strategic plans that promote student body diversity and inclusion on campus establish priorities that can, in turn, lead institutions to allocate the necessary funds and resources for those purposes" (United States Department of Education). This could be mere correlation, but it is indeed an indication of a university that is focused on diversity.

Class Stigmas

Class stigmas are less of an explicit problem at the University of Delaware. A mere 1.8% of the student body comes from the bottom 20% of the general population (New York Times). The University does offer an adequate amount of merit-based scholarships in terms of breadth, but not a large amount of money is granted to a large amount of individuals, so there is not much of a dent made in the out-of-state and in-state costs of attendance alike. According to the university's website, the average amount given is about $2000. Therefore, the problem lies mainly within the $147,000 figure aforementioned, especially when the average family income in the United States is about $52,000. While juxtaposed to the average family income at UD, the figure does raise some eyebrows. The obvious solution to this would not be more scholarships, but more substantial ones. But who would pick up the cost? This is where the problem becomes much larger, and, in my perspective would have to delve into the structure of the university system in the United States - really, in the cost of college overall. The problem of perpetuation of elitism through education is not an easy one to grasp, but in focusing on improving diversity at universities like Delaware, perpetuation of inequality in the professional or political worlds will improve as well. The damages of class inequality are deeply rooted into the United States' political system as well as the private sectors. Stigmas are a direct effect of historical systems of

oppression and inequality and permeate societal structure in many ways. One way in particular is within Congress, where elitism and positions of power are very strongly correlated. Educational patterns have very much to do with elitism as expensive and not-very-diverse feeder schools are guarantors of an Ivy graduate-level education, not to mention, the way somebody grows up bears unprecedented weight towards what that person will be able to do with their intellectual potential. Moreover from the raw cost of college, academic stigmas having to do with race, gender, etc. are very powerful determinants of what somebody can achieve.

Why Stigmas Are So Bad

Stigmas can come in all shapes and sizes, and can be as explicit as they would like to be. There are different forms of academic stigmas, but all of them have the same effect. Stigmas within the realm of academia inadvertently create an environment that is not conducive to equality. If there is a stigma that a certain trait impede learning abilities, somebody with that trait will find it harder to be motivated in their education, not to mention they might lose certain opportunities because of said trait. According to the report entitled "Growing Income Inequality Threatens American Education," black and brown students are often faced with the preconceived notion that they do not have the same abilities as white students; however, this is proven untrue once the variable that systematically enforced poverty and rising wealth inequality cause is taken away (Duncan). UD is not above this problem, as I gathered from interviewing Harrison. Moreover, the issues surrounding the stigmas are correlated. According to the New York Times, "the gap in scores of high and low-income students has grown by 40 percent, even as the difference between blacks and whites has narrowed" (DeParle). This is direct indication that race is not inherently connected with merit, but opportunity is.

Programs, Outreach, and An Early Start

President of Carnegie Mellon University, Jarod L Cohon, said that the University of Delaware is "not diverse in either absolute or relative terms." Due to this, it should pursue programs that focus on recruitment of community individuals who may or may not have the opportunity to even apply to the university. This would include programs within the state of Delaware that would be conducive to inner-city education and get local kids on the path towards a college education. This would obviously start before the college-age. Kedra Ishop, the associate vice president of enrollment management at the University of Michigan addressed the problem with students' skillsets before college, saying, "As strong as the students you admit are, some need help with stocking their tool shed in order to maximize their success. Students from smaller schools, less resourced communities, and first generation students need an institutional commitment to their success, not just their enrollment. Summer bridge and enrichment programs are demonstrative parts of that commitment." (Espinosa, Lorelle L, et al.) Ishop mentions that summer bridge and enrichment programs are the way to go about this. Delaware State University has a plethora of these, and UD has STEM bridge programs to ease the transition into college

life. Remedial education as a focus has proven to be beneficial to students; however, if the university could somehow reach out to the communities surrounding it - communities with high minority populations - as well as the public schools in the area, then students would be on a path towards their future, and even the university's interests. Perhaps there could also be resources dedicated to the school's interests in middle schools and high schools in the area; UD is a school that relies heavily on a strong engineering department, so if the school focuses on recruitment in STEM fields in nearer areas, perhaps there would be an increase in enrollment from a more diverse population. How the university might reach out to nearby communities and work through schools could be accomplished through partnerships, volunteer hours from students in STEM departments (as well as professors), field trips to the University to get kids interested in STEM, and even funding to schools or a magnet school that is affiliated strongly with the University. The university as well as others should also take this approach within the realm of the equally important liberal arts and the arts in general; however, UD being such a STEM-oriented school could benefit the community more effectively with a focus in that realm. The hours, money, and time could be an investment into communities with underutilized human intellectual potential, and help remedy the lack of diversity and perhaps even the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty in poorer areas of Delaware. After all, education can be the "great equalizer" if everyone has access to it, and universities should be in a position to provide.

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Vincent's Reflection

As I was talking to a guest at the symposium, I got the sense she was apprehensive about what I had to say—especially some of the data. Nervously standing in front of my poster, I told her that the data came from anonymous tax records of students' families at UD and was published by the *New York Times*. But frankly, I was apprehensive too! There is absolutely no way that only 1.8% of students could be from the bottom 20%. My perspective changed as I wrote "field notes," one aspect of Professor Emily's course design. These notes required us to explore campus and gather primary evidence. That's when the issue of socioeconomic inequality became evident to me. I had to take off a blindfold created by the American Dream—an aversion we all hold to the reality of injustice at the expense of the underrepresented and marginalized, even in a university setting. The problem gets even worse at highly selective and Ivy League institutions, creating an endless cycle of privilege. This realization is what inspired me to call out UD and make a plea for change. These surprising statistics are, I believe, a result of laziness and missed opportunities on the part of UD which stem from institutionalized injustices of the American system as a whole.
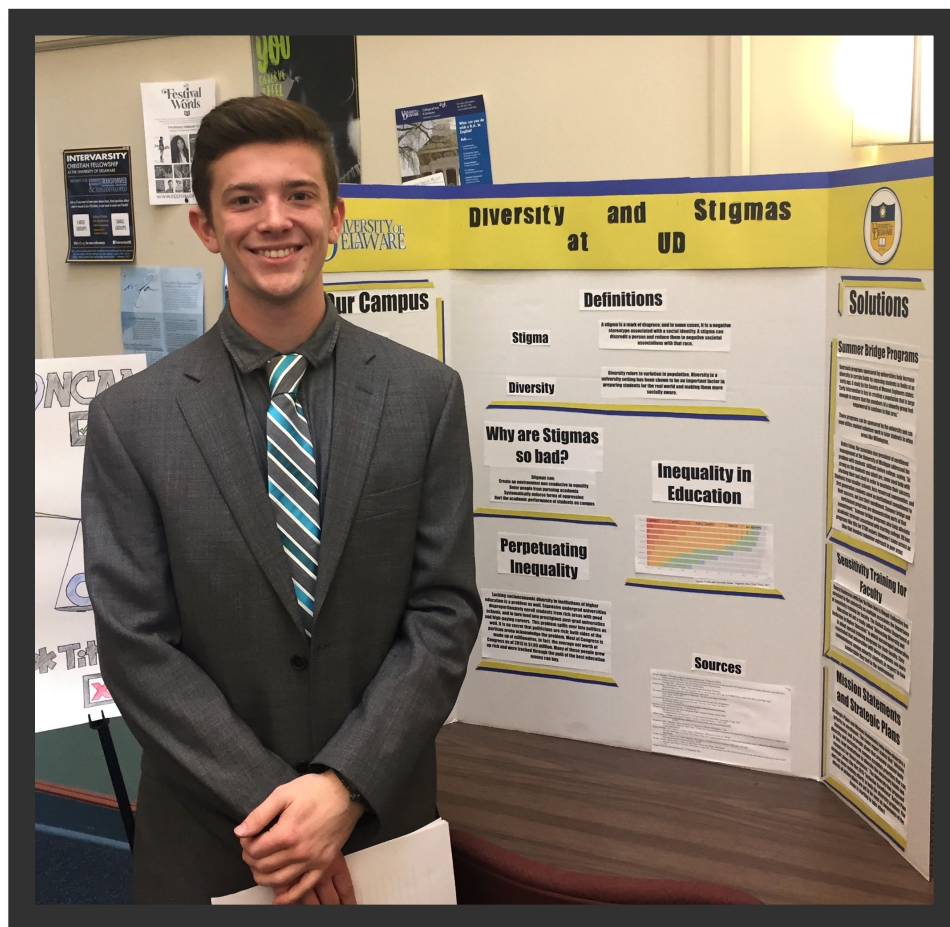
Vincent at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Increasing Gender Diversity in STEM
By Andrew Thompson

Abstract

The fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are some of the fastest growing and highest paying. While they continue to grow, there is a very apparent lack of women that are in these programs, and the University of Delaware is no exception. As a result, there have been pushes to increase the amount of females in STEM programs across universities. This, however, is too late. I propose a change must be made much earlier in a student's education to drive him/her to choose a STEM major in college. I propose that strong STEM programs should be funded and implemented into elementary and middle schools across America. These programs should be very inclusive of gender and race. It is important that young girls be shown women role models in the STEM fields to show that they *can* do STEM. Since universities wouldn't see significant change until these kids grow up, universities should also receive training on how to advertise their engineering programs to different genders.

Summary of the Problem

STEM, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, is one of the fastest growing fields in modern history. Despite this, the range of graduates going into these jobs has a worrying trend: less women. As the fields of engineering increase in popularity, it is important to be inclusive and represent all people equally. The lack of women in the STEM fields originates from the long-held notion that women are somehow naturally inferior to men, at least when it comes to STEM. According to David N. Beede of the Office of the Chief Economist, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, despite women making up half of the overall US workforce, "they hold less than 25 percent of STEM jobs". According to Stephen Kolton, a staff reporter for The Review, UD's newspaper, in 1990, women are less likely to pursue engineering in the first place because they are expected to be the child raisers. If women plan to have children, they are expected to do well in their job at the same time as raising the kids. Therefore, they are less likely to go for a time-demanding career like engineering, despite being fully capable. Benjamin J. Drury, of the Department of Psychology at the University of Washington, says that many women are afraid that they will fail and they have a "fear of confirming these negative stereotypes, known as stereotype threat". That is not the only reason for this disproportion. Nowadays, it has to do with the current climate set by the total lack of women present in institutions such as colleges and universities. The atmosphere created by having a majorly male engineering population makes women more uncomfortable. Women could be intimidated by being surrounded by mostly men, competing for jobs later in life while being aware of the common notion. Donna Milgram, an expert in the field of the underrepresentation of women in the STEM fields, claims that from a young age, girls are not shown that "they *can*"

do engineering. There are few if any strong female engineering role models shown to these young, prospective girls. If a girl who may be interested in STEM does not see strong examples of prior women succeeding, they will be less likely to follow through with their passion.

This issue is felt and evident at most universities, including the University of Delaware where women only account for 21.0% of Mechanical Engineers, 30.4% of Civil/Environmental Engineers, 27.8% of Chemical Engineers, and 8.4% of Electrical/Computer Engineers ("OFFICE OF EQUITY..."). For the four largest engineering categories at the University of Delaware, none are comprised of greater than one third females.

Additionally, an interview of two female junior mechanical engineers shows that they do not directly feel attacked, but they do seem to surround themselves with other female engineers. "I have enough female engineering friends that I don't notice it" (Anonymous 1). This shows that female engineers, or at the very least these two, prefer to be surrounded by those similar to themselves, implying that a higher percentage of female engineers would make them more comfortable. This just simply is not the case today.

What Has Been Done?
There have been many attempts to encourage women that they are equal to men in the past, not just focused towards the women interested in STEM. The classic and perfect example of a push for equality was the "Rosie the Riveter" campaign. The propaganda came from the US Government when a large portion of the men were enlisted in the second World War. The factories were left with a shortage of workers that needed to be filled. "Rosie the Riveter" was meant to show the wives that they can do any job a man can do. This push was very successful as by 1943, "more than three million women had answered the call to serve in defense-related work" as reported by David M. Kopp, Associate Dean for Leadership at Barry University. While this specific example of how a strong role model can influence a group with great success, it needs to have a different target: women who are skeptical about entering the fields of STEM.

A more recent, targeted example of a successful program is the CalWomenTech project by the Institute for Women in Trade, Technology, and Science (IWITTS). IWITTS provided two-year colleges with recruitment strategies and training in order to boost the percentage of women in the City College of San Francisco's computer science program. The training and strategies proved to be somewhat successful as the the percentage of women in the program increased from 18.1% to 30.1% as reported by Donna Milgram, an independent reporter. While the results of the program are promising, they only partially solve the short-term problem. In order to solve the problem, the University of Delaware needs to work with local elementary, middle, and high schools to create a program that is welcoming to female engineers.

What Can Be Done to Help?
In order for long-term change we need to change the mindsets and starting conditions of scholars from the beginning. This is why elementary, middle, and high schools should develop better science, technology, engineering, and science programs that get more kids familiar and more interested in the areas of STEM. It is absolutely critical that throughout the program, especially early on, that a diverse set of teachers and professors not only tell, but show the kids that *anybody* can succeed. For example, it would be beneficial to have volunteers come and talk to the schools about their success as an engineer, scientist, or mathematician. Many of these speakers should be female so that these young girls have a strong role model to follow. As Donna Milgram, says, "Women and girls need to see female role models in the workplace that look like them—over and over and over again. They need to receive the message that women can work in STEM careers and be successful and fulfilled in their work life while still having a personal life, and they need to receive this message repeatedly." If girls a reassured that they can enter the STEM field from a young age, they will be more likely to pursue it in college and beyond.

Obviously, this better STEM program needs to be funded in some way. Larger technology institutions such as Lockheed Martin, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), Tesla, Microsoft, Apple, and others should make large donations to elementary, middle, and high schools. A recent large donation was made towards a specific STEM program: computer science. $300 million was raised towards improving the computer science programs in K-12 grade levels. Many private companies made large contributions including "Amazon, Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Salesforce contributing $50 million each. Lockheed Martin said it would donate $25 million and Accenture, General Motors and Pluralsight, an online education company, said they would give $10 million apiece" (Kang). On top of the money, companies are donating software for the schools to use. A very similar thing can be done with engineering. Companies that do not donate money could donate machines and engineering software.

While implementing a stronger STEM program in earlier forms of education, we would not see any change in universities until those kids grew up. In order to help the short-term problem for the University of Delaware, the university should give higher scholarships to women applying to the College of Engineering. A financial incentive would attract more women into the engineering program here at the University of Delaware and increase the percentage of female engineers. Also, the university should pitch the program in a way that appeals to women. Research has shown that men and women generally have different interests regarding technology. "as a group, women care most about how STEM will be used to make a difference in the world, such as using engineering to make prostheses, while men are often fascinated with the technology itself, such as how big a hard drive is and how fast a processor works" (Milgram). An example of this strategy put to work was when the award-winning TV show *SciGirls* included segments where

"two girls living in Arizona research how to build a doghouse with a cooling system for their dog, and they actually build and test it. In another, SciGirls engineer a giant pig puppet for their community's annual May Day Parade, complete with blinking eyes, twirling tail, and a surprising snout" (Milgram).

If the suggestions for K-12 schools are fulfilled, then this short-term solution will become unnecessary. If everything works like it should, there will be more women engineers at UD, leading to more female role models. Once there are more women enrolled as engineers, there should be a steady rate of women who realize they aren't "alone" and enroll as engineers.

Validation

In order to see if these proposed solutions would do anything, I interviewed two female junior mechanical engineering undergraduates at the University of Delaware to learn from their K-12 experiences. This is significant since these two can speak for what the typical female engineer has gone through in their education.

1. To what extent did your K-12 schools have an engineering program?
    a. My high school had a very nice technology department. I could take classes from my freshman year of high school that I re-learned in my freshman year of college here. I would've liked to take tech classes in middle school, but it wasn't offered. My high school had a full machining shop that we could make anything so that really got me excited to be a mechanical engineer (Anonymous 2).
    b. I didn't really get much experience with engineering and technology until the last two years of high school. My high school didn't have anything fancy, but we had like some basic hand tools that we made stuff with (Anonymous 3).
2. When did you decide that you wanted to be an engineer?
    a. I knew after my freshman year that I wanted to be a mechanical engineer. I liked the idea of making something. My teacher was really cool and let us go into the shop to make various projects like a mousetrap powered car. The later years of high school reassured me that engineering was for me (Anonymous 2).
    b. I was actually pretty unsure coming into UD if engineering was for me. I came in undeclared, but leaned towards mechanical because it seemed so versatile. I like it so far. I didn't realize it would be so much work, though (Anonymous 3).
3. If you were exposed to STEM classes at a younger age, do you think it would've benefited you?
    a. I think it would've helped me decide that I liked engineering at a younger age. Math and science always came naturally to me, so it might actually push some people away that weren't the best at math away from engineering. I personally would have liked that (Anonymous 2).

b. I think it would have been intimidating and I don't know how much an elementary schooler could have learned about STEM. It would have to be very interactive to get the attention of younger kids. If it were like that, I probably would have enjoyed it as a kid (Anonymous 3).

From these two interviews, it's clear that a strong STEM program in high school have / would have benefited these two in their pursuit of becoming an engineer. Anonymous 2 had a strong engineering program that allowed her to find her interest in engineering and experience it for four years prior to college. Anonymous 3 had some experience but came into college unsure about what to do. Both mentioned that a program that starts so early in a child's life could possibly push them away if it seems too hard. Kids are less likely to find something fun if it seems like a lot of work.

University of Delaware: The University on a Hill
Strategies as described above could be tried in the Newark and Wilmington areas, with the proper funding. High schools could develop better engineering programs if local companies sponsor money, equipment, and training. In order to attract more women to apply, the University of Delaware should receive training of how to promote its engineering program to women as described in Donna Milgram's paper. The University could hire experts like her to work on their advertising to women in order to increase the number of applicants. Once there are more applicants, the University should devote more scholarships to women in engineering and accept larger proportions of females than in recent years.

If the University of Delaware and surrounding high schools try to collectively make a larger push than before to integrate more women into the fields of STEM, there will be more gender diversity in the university in the present and future. UD can show the local middle and high schools of Newark, DE the fun and cool aspects of engineering by putting on demos as well as donating to their engineering programs. The university could show young girls how successful female engineers can be here and inspire them to enroll as an engineer at Delaware.

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Andrew's Reflection

I didn't really know what to expect when I was placed in this class. I didn't know what I would learn, discuss, or write. This class has taught me so much about different social issues today, how to conduct research about a certain topic, and what a good assessment report and a good proposal look like. We read the thought-provoking book, *The New Jim Crow*, which discussed the motivations and effects of the War on Drugs. This book argues that the criminal justice system puts people of color or poverty at a disadvantage. We discussed the topics and facts brought up in the book and wrote small pieces about what we thought of it. Then we got to research our own discovered problems. We learned how to gather research and write about how those problems affect UD. We all learned a lot about the causes and effects of social injustice.
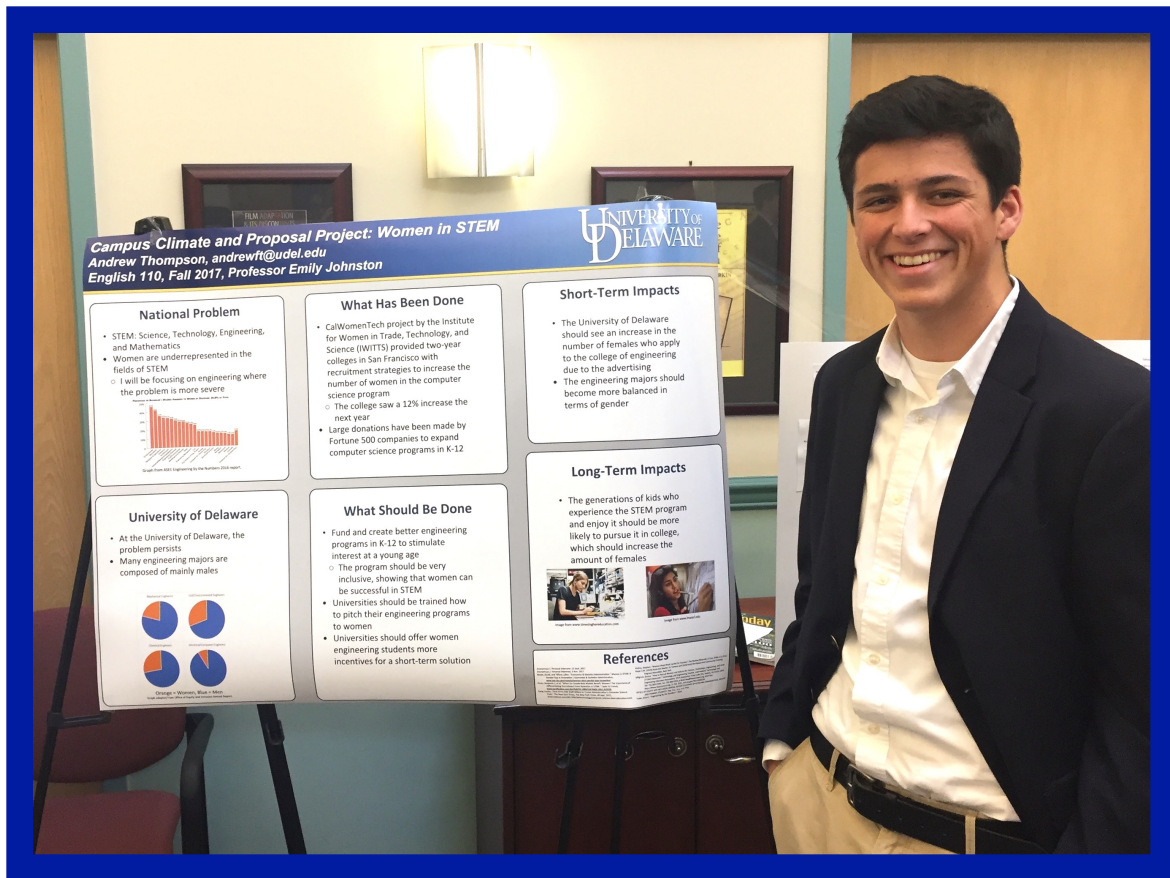
Andrew at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Addressing Socioeconomic Inequality at the University of Delaware
By Tommy White

Abstract

The purpose of this proposal is to offer one approach the University of Delaware could employ to help more low-income students attend the University. The problem being addressed is the socioeconomic inequality found on the University of Delaware's campus, specifically the lack of low-income students at the University. Research was conducted using databases offered by the University of Delaware, official University documents, other online sources, and personal primary research. This research found that the administration of the University of Delaware should redirect money spent on unnecessarily expensive programs to lowering tuition and increasing aid for low-income students. The goal of this proposal is to increase socioeconomic diversity, which is important, especially for low-income students who benefit the most from a college education.

No Options

For many high school students, choosing a college is a tough decision. A student tries to compare the different characteristics of their options: campus, location, academic reputation, and, of course, cost. For many, these characteristics and others can be weighed equally, but for many other students, cost is the determining factor—one that often means not going to college at all. Many students apply to college, feel excitement when they are accepted, but ultimately face serious disappointment when they realize they have not received enough aid to afford it. One mother, Tracy Mayor, poignantly writes about her son experiencing this disappointment: "just like that, a yes becomes a no." This injustice is taking place across the United States, including at the University of Delaware. To address this socioeconomic inequality, the administration should redirect money spent on unnecessary programs to lowering tuition and increasing aid for low-income students. Doing so would be beneficial to the University because socioeconomic diversity is important, especially for low-income students who benefit the most from a college education.

The Big Problem

There are not enough low-income students at the University of Delaware. In 2016, low-income students made up only 7.3% of the student body ("Enrollment by Residency"), despite this same group accounting for 34.5% of U.S. households ("2016 Household Income"). This is a significant underrepresentation which shows the extent to which socioeconomically disadvantaged students are discriminated against at the University of Delaware. Unable to afford a college education, low-income students are much less likely to improve their economic status

over that of their parents. Therefore, these students cannot afford to send their own children to college, creating a cycle of poverty.

There are many reasons for the socioeconomic inequality in colleges that contribute to this cycle, including high and ever-increasing costs, bad academic preparation in poor communities and among poor families, and stigmas surrounding class and college. Because of this variety of root problems, there are several ways to address this issue, none of which will fix the issue entirely. This paper suggests one specific course of action that should help alleviate the situation, but the effort to address inequality at the University of Delaware and other universities should not stop there.

One Part of the Problem
Costs are perhaps the biggest obstacle to entering college for low-income students, an unfair barrier since a student's financial situation is no fault of their own (and maybe not even of their parents'). Costs are high at the University of Delaware, where in-state and out-of-state costs have risen 64% and 72% over the past ten years to totals of $24,898 and $44,318 respectively ("Undergraduate Tuition"). There is a multitude of reasons for this unfortunate spike in costs. Writing about this trend in the U.S. college system, Kevin Carey points out that for decades, federal aid has "sustained higher education even while enabling its worst tendencies." Carey reasons that, while federal aid has helped *some* low-income students afford college, three main abusers (states, for-profit colleges, and traditional colleges) have leveraged this federal aid money in ways that have caused college costs to skyrocket. States have spent less money on students to help balance their budgets, for-profit colleges have been found to use "the federal aid system like a piggy bank while offering students substandard degrees," and public colleges (like the University of Delaware) have drastically increased spending, hoping to become highly esteemed universities (Carey).

Clearly, there is much that the government could do to help alleviate the suffering the college system causes low-income students, since federal aid causes so many issues right now. However, the University of Delaware should not wait for the government to take action, when it is contributing to this problem itself. Christian Schierenbeck notes in his book that colleges spend too much on "bells and whistles – aspects of the educational service experience...that greatly add to educational costs without delivering much of an increase in educational impact" (69). Schierenbeck places bells and whistles into two categories: academics and "campus experience" (69). The University of Delaware has bells and whistles from each category, but those related to academics are much easier to justify. For example, Morris Library could be seen as excessively large, but it could also be seen as large by necessity, as it offers an invaluable educational resource.

The bells and whistles of the campus experience are harder to justify. Schierenbeck defines these as "(1) campus beautification, (2) housing and dining, and (3) recreational facilities," all of which can be seen on the University of Delaware campus (70). None of these are bells and whistles are necessities at a university, especially when the money spent on them could be utilized to help more low-income students onto campus.

The Proposal

The administration of the University of Delaware needs to reassess how money is budgeted at the University in order to reduce unnecessary spending and make it easier for low-income students to attend. The first step in this process is to determine what spending is necessary and what is not. Because the whole point of this effort would be to offer a great education to more low-income students, academic spending (like spending on research opportunities) should be cut last, unless there is very clearly excessive spending. Therefore, the University should look first to campus experience spending for ways to save. Specifically, Perkins Live, a weekly friday night event with various activities and free food, costs the University lots of money, with programs such as weekly game shows, a "Punk Rock Flea Market & Music Festival," comedians, free novelty items every week, and "Blue Hen Bingo with over $6,000 worth of prizes" ("Perkins Live"). The administration would likely feel that Perkins Live is a necessity (and I would agree) because it offers students a way to socialize on Friday nights without alcohol. However, the administration should reconsider if the amount of money spent on the program is necessary. Certainly there are ways Perkins Live can help students avoid alcohol, without costing the University thousands of dollars every week for a relatively small number of students. The University could utilize more inexpensive forms of entertainment, along with food, and still likely attract a similar amount of students. This could include board games, movies, music and dancing (like the swing-dancing already offered), video games, and other simple activities, all of which allow students to have fun with friends or other students.

Like Perkins Live, there is a multitude of programs at the University that are too costly. If the University makes cuts to these programs, as well, the University should have much more money to distribute to low-income students. This could come in the form of significant need-based scholarships, which would help more low-income students afford the University, while still bringing in a large sum of money from students of high socioeconomic students. Another option is to use the money to decrease standard tuition. This would also allow more low-income students to afford the University and would appease the more privileged students who may have been upset by the decreased funding to certain programs. However, the University would earn less money from the tuition of those who pay full price. Therefore, the University should find some middle ground. It should use its saved money to both slightly decrease tuition and greatly increase aid to low-income students. This would maximize accessibility for socioeconomically

disadvantaged students, satisfaction of higher-income students, and the amount of money earned from these privileged students.

Justification

Lowering the total costs of attending the University of Delaware for low-income students is very likely to improve the University's ability to accommodate low-income students. Right now, as the graph below shows, total costs ask too much of low-income families.

Average net price as percentage of family income by income quartile
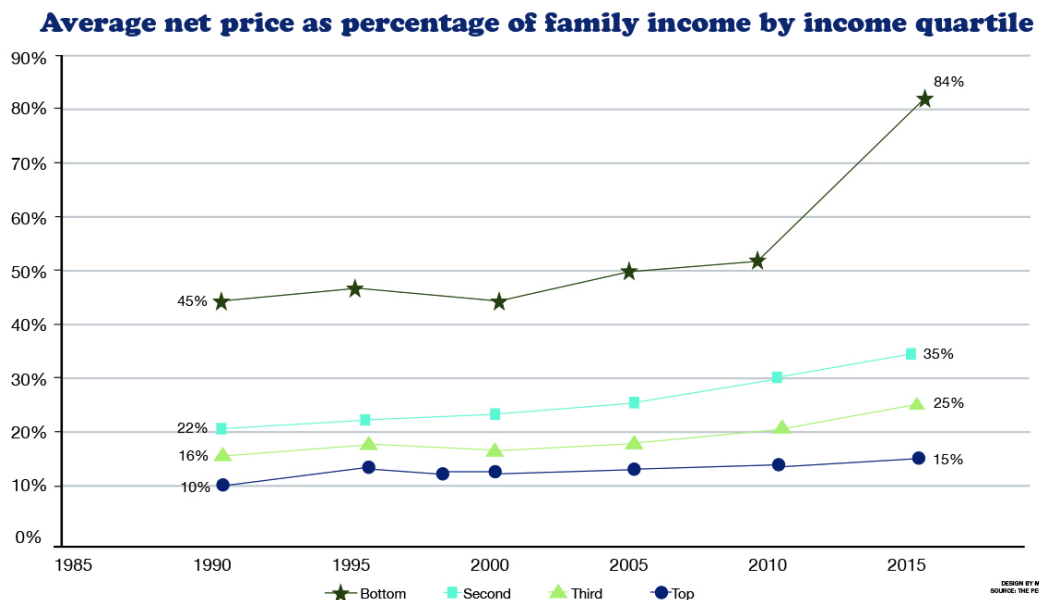
"Nationwide, families in the bottom quartile — with salaries less than $34,933 — pay the highest percentage of their income. The second quartile includes salaries $34,933 to $65,496; the third quartile spans $65,496 to $116,466; the top quartile earns $116,466 and more" (Dwyer). To substantially alleviate this burden on low-income families would help the University increase its population of low-income students. This would be beneficial to the University and its students because it would increase economic diversity on campus, a goal every college should strive to attain. Economic diversity allows students from different backgrounds to learn with and from one another, and can make it easier for students to consider different points of view.

Perhaps the most important reason to cut costs for low-income students is that a college education is vital for these students to improve their economic situation. Without a college degree, 45% of students from the bottom 20% will remain there as adults, but this number drops to 16% when these students earn a college degree (Executive Office). Since college can be so beneficial to low-income students, their small representation at the University of Delaware is a

serious injustice, and cutting costs for these potential students is a major step to correcting this injustice.

Facing Opposition

Should the University implement these strategies to help low-income students it will face much criticism and opposition. The current system benefits a large number of people, especially the more privileged students on the University of Delaware's campus. These students may be unhappy to hear that some of their favorite programs will see severe cuts in funding. I too am one of these students. I would certainly miss the high-quality entertainment of Perkins Live, but if that is the price of better serving low-income students, then I know it is the right thing to do, especially if I can still have alcohol-free fun on Fridays. However, many will not be so easily convinced. Many people do not want the University to change. They might argue that Perkins Live and other extracurricular programs and amenities are essential to providing a quality education, since education continues outside of the classroom. The response to this must be an assertion that these programs, in their current, expensive form, are not necessary. I attended the "Punk Rock Music Festival" Perkins Live this semester. I saw the latter two of the four bands that night in a crowd of about 20 students. Such an expense is hard to justify for so few students, and while there are usually more students at Perkins Live, the number is still small relative to the thousands of students attending the University. There must be an assertion that helping people get an education is more important than having expensive entertainment for a select few students.

Another way to convince students who may feel these changes are only helpful to low-income students is to emphasize that they are also benefiting, as tuition will be decreased. There should be an emphasis that all of the money not spent on programs that students previously enjoyed will make its way back to all students in one form or another. These students should be told that they will be saving enough money to afford to find opportunities off campus or pay for opportunities on campus that were once included in tuition.

Conclusion

Currently the University of Delaware is participating in a college system that has a tendency to help the rich stay rich and the poor stay poor. The number of low-income students on campus is well below what it would be if students from all socioeconomic backgrounds were represented equally. To begin the process of correcting this injustice, the administration of the University of Delaware should significantly reduce spending on unnecessary bells and whistles. The money should then be utilized to lowering tuition and offering more aid to low-income students because this will help more poor students receive an education here and move upward economically. Addressing this issue should not end there, however, as this is only part of the solution. Many factors other than the costs of college prevent low-income students from attending college,

including government policy (Carey), substandard elementary and secondary education in poor communities, lacking financial literacy among low-income families, and insufficient out-reach from colleges that are trying to help low-income students (Engberg and Allen 803). However, the University, in accordance with its motto, must "dare to be first." The University cannot wait for others to take action, it must act first. There are steps the University of Delaware can take right now that will help low-income students. Not to take these steps is to be complicit with injustice.

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Tommy's Reflection

This has been an enlightening course in many ways. I learned about social justice issues of which I had been unaware. As the class read and discussed *The New Jim Crow*, I learned about myself and my thoughts on various social justice issues, and I learned about new forms of writing. Furthermore, my concept of social justice changed. Not only does social justice entail action, it also requires rhetoric that changes people's views of the world. Conducting research about socioeconomic inequality at UD was a fascinating look into a serious issue that is affecting this school that I have been enjoying so much. All of that work payed off at the symposium, where I was able to present my findings and proposal alongside those of my classmates. I am so proud of the event my classmates and I hosted, and Professor Emily was vital to bringing it together and encouraging us to do our best.

Tommy at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

STEM to STEAM: Why the "A" is Important
By Sarah K. Wojcik

Abstract

The following proposal argues for arts integration in K-12 education as necessary to all fields of study, in order to both affirm the importance of the study of the arts, as the current trend is towards STEM, and to show that the arts are essential to STEM fields. One may ask, "What exactly is arts integration?" In its simplest form, arts integration seeks to include the arts into the common curriculum, giving the arts the same emphasis STEM subjects receive in schools; hence, STEM to STEAM. Through the synthesis of reputable sources and historic and scientific evidence, one is guided to the ultimate conclusion: STEM should indeed become STEAM.

Introduction

STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects are incredibly important and germane for students to study in the twenty-first century. The aforementioned is an undisputed truth. The advancement of the world we know depends on focus in STEM areas-- doctors, scientists, engineers, technicians and mathematicians are necessary to ensure progress and innovation. On many levels, society has made great leaps and bounds towards the horizon of tomorrow. However, through the boisterous and celebratory excitement of progress towards the future of STEM, a faint yet incredibly important cry may be heard. As the spotlight focuses on STEM and the fields within the umbrella of that term, what happens to everything else? Where did the arts go? The short answer to the preceding question is: they are still here. But, as focus in schools has been shifted to STEM, celebration of the arts has been unfortunately minimized as tangential to the "core" curriculum. The first programs often threatened when schools fall into financial troubles are arts programs. Although the arts are considered equal in many places, there are far too many more places where proponents of the arts and arts subjects are not viewed as equal to their many STEM counterparts. The purpose of this argument is not to undermine the importance of STEM fields of study. On the contrary, the arguments made in this report should prove that performance in STEM fields will be bolstered if the arguments presented are taken to heart. On K-12 levels, the STEM education initiative should be changed to STEAM--the "A" being for the arts. The arts need to be given equal weight and importance in the modern American education system.

The Background

The Great Push for STEM Education

The early 2000s brought forth a time of great educational reform (Jaschik, para. 5). Many academic articles and reports were published on various topics regarding the future of education in the United States (Hallinen, para. 2). One of the largest growing concerns in these reports was

the international implications of the faults in the American education system--people were beginning to suspect that the United States was falling behind in the new age of technology. While the 108th Congress was in session during the years 2003-2004, the bipartisan Science and Math (STEM) Educational Caucus was passed. Penned by Vernon Ehlers and Mark Udall, the Caucus sought to "strengthen STEM education at all levels (K-12, higher education, and the workforce) by providing a forum for Congress and the science, education, and business communities to discuss problems and solutions related to STEM education" (Mansfield, p. 5 para. 2). As the years have progressed, the title of the agreement has grown and evolved. However, the purpose has remained the same: to make STEM the primary focus of the American Education System, in order to keep up in the international community.

In 2005, a report entitled *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* was published by the U.S. National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. The lengthy and detailed report discussed in depth how the best way to bring America up to speed when advancing into the future would be by "continuing investment in advancing technology—through the education of our children, the development of the science and engineering workforce, and the provision of an environment conducive to the transformation of research results into practical applications" (*Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, p. 67). If all of the outlined provisions for putting emphasis on STEM were met, the report assured that "the full innovative capacity of the United States [would] be harnessed and the full promise of a high quality of life [would be] realized" (*Rising Above the Gathering Storm*, p. 67). After the report was published, concern became further solidified when studies surfaced showing that the United States was ranked twenty-first out of thirty countries on "assessments of scientific competency and knowledge" (Hallinen, para. 3). The publication of the influential report further solidified decisions to make the congressional action a primary focus for years to come.

None of the above information is at all bad. Roseanne Rosenthal describes the situation best in her 2013 article, "Music at the Core: STEM to STEAM Just Makes Sense." Rosenthal says that the STEM push is "a wolf in sheep's clothing" (Rosenthal, para. 3). While having students major in STEM is indeed important to propel the national level of technological advancement into the twenty-first century, the heavy emphasis on STEM has severely damaged the arts. Said emphasis has also affected certain students who exhibit different learning types than those who adapt well to the new form of STEM-heavy education.

The Seven Different Learning Styles
The idea of the existence of many different styles of learning is not a new discovery. As early as 1907, teachers and researchers were looking into the different methods and modes of learning (Chandler, para. 2). Though the topic was put on the back burner for 50-odd years, in the 50s-70s extensive research was administered to define the different patterns of learning. Today's modern

model for learning styles was developed in the 1980s, and has been commonplace since (Chandler, para. 3-4). In an effort to practice proper pedagogy, teachers often administer "What Learning Style Are You?" tests to students. The seven different learning styles are visual, aural, verbal, physical, logical, social, and solitary (advanogy.com, para. 5). Generally, individuals implement a mix of different learning styles when it comes to how each person processes the material being presented (Lane, para. 2). While there is no learning style that is more functional than another, according to the *Overview of Learning Styles*, "Traditional schooling used (and continues to use) mainly linguistic and logical teaching methods. It also uses a limited range of learning and teaching techniques. Many schools still rely on classroom and book-based teaching, much repetition, and pressured exams for reinforcement and review" (advanogy.com, para. 3). Understandably, the extreme use of logical and linguistic learning does not leave much room for the more creative learning styles that lend themselves to Arts education (visual, aural, etc.). The early 2000s push for STEM coupled with the deep-rooted logical/linguistic favoring pedagogy create the conditions for the unfortunate side effect--the decline of the arts.

The Unfortunate Impact

Sir Isaac Newton's third law of physics states that "for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." Though the force of gravity is not being discussed, the statement still stands-- when one event happens, something else has to happen to balance said event. In the case of STEM v. the arts, the arts were the equal and opposite reaction. According to the National Federation of High School Associations, "When cutting programs, superintendents strive to cut those that have the least impact to learning and that create the least amount of controversy" (Dickson, para. 1). Unfortunately, knowledge about the importance of arts integration is not widely known. The arts are still stuck with stigmas of "triviality" and "frivolity", mostly deriving from frantic reformations to place weight on STEM (Hallinen, para. 2). The preceding unfortunate truth combined with the choice of learning styles favored leads many to think that the arts are unnecessary to learning. According to *The Children's Music Workshop*'s most recent data, at least 1.3 *million* American students on the elementary level do not have access to music education (1.3 million students do not, para. 1). How do we fix these issues? *How do we turn 1.3 million into zero?*

The Solution

The way to solve the issue at hand does not require a major reformation. There is no hefty call-to-action, no mass movement. To sum it up in a sentence: the problem only exists because *so few people are aware that there is a problem.* Rosenthal's "wolf in sheep's clothing" adage reigns true--the modern mindset that STEM education is the way of the future has made many forget the implications such ideas have on students of other learning types. So few people in today's world are aware of the implications of the downtrodden arts because of the frivolous stigmas and rhetoric surrounding them. Society needs to begin talking about the different

learning styles possessed by students. Even without the A in STEAM argument, the school system should begin celebrating and fostering the separate, unique learning style of each and every individual child.

If people simply begin talking, the issue practically resolves itself. The arts are often cut because people do not know how important they are. If knowledge on the cognitive benefits of the arts becomes more widely known, the "A" would rarely ever be questioned again.

The Importance of the Arts

Aside from the emotional impact of the arts--the beauty and sincerity in music, the life lessons taught through English and History, and the culture preserved in fine art--the arts have indeed been proven to have a positive cognitive impact on students and humankind itself. Multiple studies have been done on the important cognitive benefits of studying the arts in conjunction with STEM subjects. One of the most important discoveries is that having arts integrated into STEM subjects increases student engagement, because it allows more visually/aurally adept students to celebrate their strengths (Hegedus, Segarra, Allen, Wilson, Garr, para. 2). Integration can include doing art projects to learn more about science, as proved by a 2013 study. Students who did an art project to accompany their science experiment had a better understanding of the material presented in the project than students who did not take this extra step (Hegedus, Segarra, Allen, Wilson, Garr, para. 9). The reason the students who did the accompanying art project had a more firm grasp on the material was because the addition of the art project stimulated both sides of the brain (Pietrangelo, para. 16).

Contrary to popular belief, there is no such thing as being "left-brained" or "right brained" (Kaye, para. 3). Many people confuse the notion of flourishing under different learning types with having an affinity for either the left lobe of your brain or the right lobe. According to *Left Brain vs. Right Brain: What Does This Mean for Me?,* "The two sides of your brain look very much alike, but there's a huge difference in how they process information. Despite their contrasting styles, the two halves of your brain don't work independently of each other" (Pietrangelo, para 3). Old research stated that the left hemisphere of the brain was *only* used for logic processing, like math equations and the like. The right hemisphere was only used for creative endeavors (Kaye, para. 1). The preceding theory has been proven false. However, Pietrangelo states that "whether you're performing a logical or creative function, you're receiving input from both sides of your brain. For example, the left brain is credited with language, but the right brain helps you understand context and tone. The left brain handles mathematical equations, but right brain helps out with comparisons and rough estimates" (Pietrangelo, para. 14). The conclusion based on the examples outlined means that while there is no such thing as being "left-brained" or "right-brained", the two sides do work differently.

If both sides of the brain are naturally used in conjunction, then it goes without saying that exercises to sharpen the brain and to learn should incorporate both sides as well. According to *4 Tips to Master Thinking with Both Sides of Your Brain, and Boost Creativity,* "the more easily you shift between both sides, the more complex and creative a thinker you can be" (Kaye, para. 4). This is why the arts-integrated science project worked so well. In addition to benefiting a wide spectrum of learning styles, the way the experiment was structured caused both sides of the brain to form connections in tandem.

Not only is integrating the arts important for helping more visual and aural learners, such a step benefits the logical and linguistic learners, too. Getting the brain to work at maximum capacity is important to all learning, and celebrating both types of data processing (i.e. arts and STEM) is the best way to achieve these goals. That is why STEM should become STEAM.

Conclusion

The final thought is a cry for a return to the Renaissance way of thinking. As stated by one of the greatest pioneers of STEAM, Leonardo da Vinci, "Study the science of art. Study the art of science. Develop your senses--especially learn how to see. Realize that everything connects to everything else." What da Vinci said over five hundred years ago still echoes through our minds today. As we stand on the horizon of the unknown, we must keep these words in mind. Going forward, we must be sure to maintain the liberal arts way of thinking to cultivate well-rounded individuals, to keep moving into the incredible, bright future, and to keep our world beautiful. If we simply keep da Vinci's words close to our hearts, we will be well on our way.

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Sarah's Reflection

I am incredibly lucky and thankful to have been given the opportunity to present my research at the Honors English 110 Symposium. I found it amazing and eye opening to be able to speak on a topic about which I am passionate. Not only did I appreciate the audience's attention to what I had to say, but I was commended for my work. The Symposium provided an opportune platform to discuss important issues and get them out in the open. For my topic in particular, the main issue is that most do not know much about the problem at all. Getting the word "STEAM" on the tongues of the Symposium guests was unequivocally rewarding. Going forward, I hope to make "STEM to STEAM" my central focus. As a Music Education major, said issue will likely stay with me for the rest of my life. For the sake of my future students, I verily hope to be influential in the push for STEAM. The Symposium was an incredible way to begin on my journey. I am sincerely grateful.
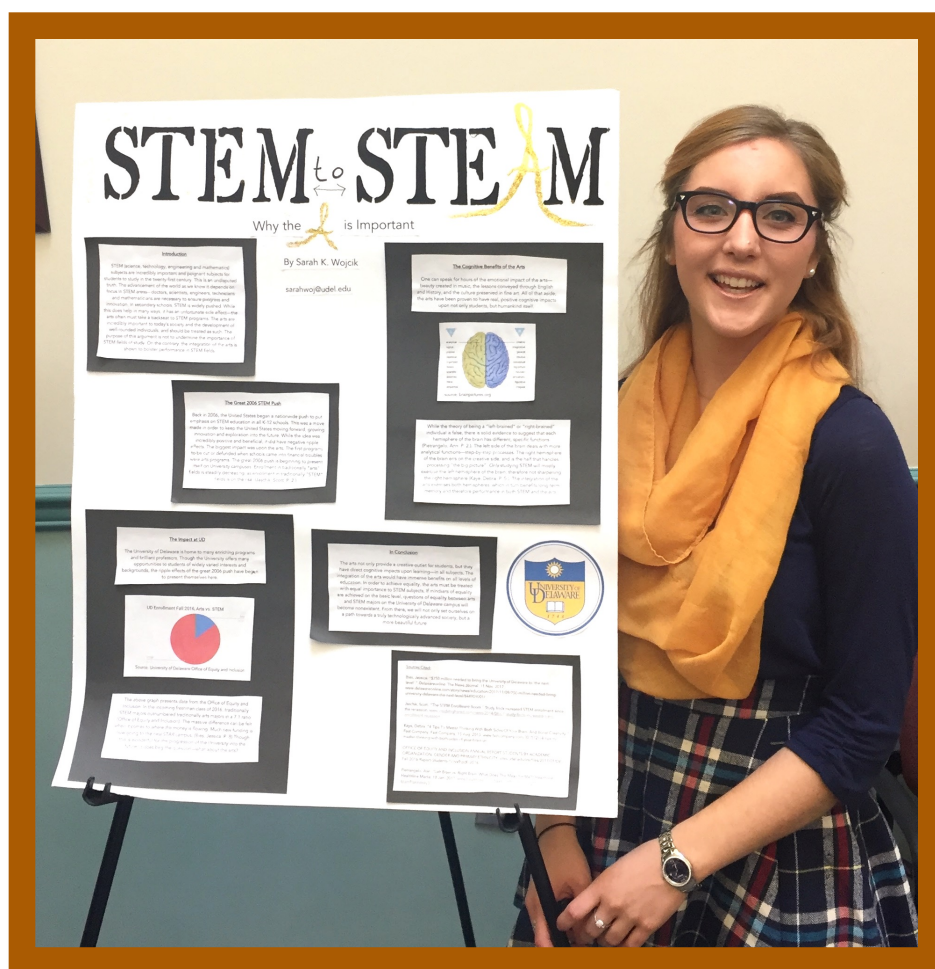
Sarah at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Our University's Lack of Diversity
By Mark Wolgin

Abstract

The University of Delaware has a racial diversity problem. Not only is the University below the average levels of diversity in the State of Delaware, but our practices of letting in more minorities students fall far short of being effective. Despite the best efforts of the University, they should look elsewhere for ideas on how to implement this in a better way. One such place is the University of Texas in Austin, where the diversity on Campus is consistently better than the state its chartered in. There method allows many more students the opportunity to attend a center of higher education, and deserves serious consideration for fixing our own diversity problems.

Proposal Introduction

The State of Delaware has never been diverse, let's not kid ourselves. Despite it being the "First State", it doesn't carry many other first places in the Union. However it is noticeable for two aspects. Despite it being considered a Northern State with regards to slavery, Delaware maintained a de-facto segregationist policy through the use of Jim Crow Laws, educational laws, and the State's Constitution. The law 1935 that stated, "The schools provided shall be of two kinds; those for white children and those for colored children. The schools for white children shall be free for all white children between the ages of six and twenty-one years, inclusive; and the schools for colored children shall be free to all colored children between the ages of six and twenty-one years, inclusive. ... The State Board of Education shall establish schools for children of people called Moors or Indians". Coupled with the State's own constitution, specifically Article X, Section 2 which read "no distinction shall be made on account of race or color", and went on to say "separate schools for white and colored children shall be maintained", segregation was set to stay in Delaware. Despite this stance however, Delaware also has the distinction of holding the trial of Gebhart v. Belton, one of the five court cases that would merge to become Brown v. Board of Education in the Supreme Court, and it was the only of the five cases that had the state side with the African-Americans trying to integrate. It's clear that the effects of this segregation are still being felt today, in spite of efforts made to combat the problem, even in the progressive hubs of our Colleges and Universities.

Let's be clear, the University has not been actively trying to hurt the minority population on campus. The President of the University of Delaware wrote in a letter to DACA Students in early September 2017, "I want to reiterate that the University of Delaware is committed to upholding the principles of academic excellence, broad access to education and equal treatment for all students, regardless of immigration or citizenship status. We believe that students who

were brought to the United States as children through circumstances beyond their control should be allowed to pursue the education that will promote their success and contribute to the betterment of our society." (Assanis). Despite this open commitment its clear that there is much to do. An casual look at statists like the University's Minorities and Females 2016 AAP report, which monitors the affirmative action goals for the University. The results of 2016; only 4 of 23 metrics were met (University of Delaware, OEI). Many different ideas have been attempted, to address the pitfall here. The University of Delaware needs to embrace not one single solution, but instead utilize a large number of different techniques to attempt to address the problem.

A Lack of Diversity
Before a solution can be derived, the root of the problem must be determined. To that end, we must examine how the University's policies have worked over the last few years. Calling upon the data provided annually by the Office of Admission of Institutional Research.

The overall white population at the school is at an all-time low, hovering around 73.3% of the total student body. Since 1996, the average population of students has grown by about 2,000, but the average white population has remained relatively stable. That means that the school isn't letting in any fewer white applicants, but rather the school is accepting a higher number of minority. Figure 2 illustrates this. The African-American population has remained stable with only slight fluctuations over the last 20 years, keeping the overall representation of African-Americans to be around 5.4% of the student body in 2016 and 5.5% in 1996. Since the overall University population was felt specifically on minorities, the actual number of students increased, going from 776 around to 951.

The real change is from outside the African-American Community, with both Hispanic and Non-Resident Aliens, or International Students, growing around 3-4% over the last 20 years.

So why are these numbers concerning? Well looking to a study published in the Journal of Counseling Psychology back in 2014 proves the only way to make progress on this issue is to put students of different backgrounds into the same class together. "college diversity experiences predicted changes in CBRI over time, such that students who completed a greater number of diversity courses and activities and those who had a greater number of close Black friends showed a significantly greater decrease in CBRI over their 4 years in college," (Helen A. Neville). For the case of this study, the CBRI; was the measure of beliefs that serve to deny, minimize, and/or distort the existence of racism. The lower the numbers scored, the more tolerant a person was considered to be. Over the four years, kids who made the effort became more tolerant people, and those who didn't stayed the same (Helen A. Neville). There is proof that just meeting someone different can go a long way to breaking stereotypes and social norms.

A Critique of Affirmative Action

Before we address the ways to improve the University's policy towards Affirmative Action, we need to talk about some of the negativity surrounding the policy. Whether it be weighing the scales of a lottery system, artificially increasing the value of some applicants, or just reserving seats to ensure minority representation the policy will be condemned. According to Faye Crosby, the majority of these criticism come from "Americans [who] have simplistic and idealistic views of equality and justice" (Lynch). Crosby argues that Americans take for granted the small advantages afforded to them, so all these policies look less like balancing the game, and more like rigging it. Affirmative action gets to the root of the racial division in America and tries to set it right in the workplace. Berte van Wyk points out how much of the affirmative action debate is flooded with misinformation and a general lack of understanding. He concludes that "Universities do have an undeniably social role, and … that universities contribute as much to social reproduction as they do to social transformation" (Wyk).

Solutions to the Problem

Here are two proposals on how to solve the issue. The first is based on the policies at the University of Texas. The second one was tried in various universities in Africa. As you will observe, all of these proposals revolve around leveling the playing field in some way.

Let's first look at the policy the University of Texas. Simply, it is a way to ensure that more minority students have a chance to access the resources and opportunities of a large university. It goes about this by granting "the top students in each Texas high school … admission to the flagship campus in Austin." (Barnes). Since there are many different school situations, with some predominantly white, and others predominantly not, this serves to level the playing field. As the article goes on to state, "Because many high schools are made up overwhelmingly of Hispanic or African-American students, that assures a certain amount of diversity in the freshman class." (Barnes). According to the President Obama at the time of the opinion, this policy was open access to as many as possible, saying "We are not a country that guarantees equal outcomes, but we do strive to provide an equal shot to everybody". The University of Delaware could do something similar. The policy change would only need to be enacted at the Office of Admissions level. This would give inner-city, or poorer communities the chance to access the main campus in Newark, where the resources are concentrated. No one could claim the education or experience offered at one of the satellite campuses is anything close to that of the main campus.

To quickly elaborate on that last point the University offers as Associate in Arts Program. Unfortunately, the university does not really set those students up for successes. The Wilmington "Campus" consists of a single building in downtown. It does not offer them dorms, or the ability to collaborate in the same way as all other students on the Newark Campus.

Despite the students having the same access in theory to the Morris Library, it is impractical for them to journey here. Despite the dedication of the teachers, and the drive of the students, they are severely disadvantaged.

The next policy comes from Africa, but to make it more specific, from the University of Dar es Salaam. The University had, like many of its neighbors in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, were suffering from extreme levels of underrepresentation of women on campus. The rates of women on campus were slightly better than the University's current minority rates. From 2001 to 2002 the rate of women on campus increased from 15% to 27% (Onsongo). Similar Makerere University was able to close their gender gap from 29% to 45 % over five years. What policy made these results possible? It was simple, the Universities used a point system for admission. All that changed was the women applicants got a 1.5-point bonus applied to their overall score. That, mixed with an increase in government funding for grants and scholarships targeted towards women. They also implemented a pre-entry program for girls "who had not attained the cut-off points … If they passed this course they gained admission." (Onsongo). It was the cumulative effect of all of these policies that made it possible for women to break into the academic world in a major way.

So why look to Texas or Africa? Simply because of the remarkable results they have achieved. The policy at the University of Texas has drastically altered the student breakdown. As of 2017 the campus was an incredibly homogenous racial group, especially considering the state's racial breakdown. Looking at the comparison between the "top 10 percenters" its drastic in particular. It clearly shows exactly why we have Affirmative Action, to give those who couldn't make it in a chance. When you put this besides The University of Delaware and the fact that 35% of students are from the state of Delaware, it illustrates how ineffective our policy is.

So what made these programs so successful? It was a few things. First there was a committed administrative staff. With both examples, the administrators would no doubt be under pressure to revoke these policies. They can be costly, and a wealthy family turned down because a spot had been promised to a poor family can be a hard to justify both economically and socially. To reiterate, the commitment of the staff is key, without them there can be no meaningful change. Another vital aspect of these programs was some kind of thumb on the scale, so to speak. They all instituted some way to open their doors to those who would not likely have had the chance to attend otherwise. With the University of Texas, it was a guarantee for the top 10% of each high school, no matter their AP, IB, SAT, or ACT scores. This puts them directly in the level of those who applied through the more normal means. The mix of strategies from Universities in Africa did the same thing. By offering increased access to specialty scholarships and giving the women applicants a small step up they were able to make it in.

The Take Home

The University of Delaware could avail itself of the ideas examined previously in this proposal. If the admission staff wanted to they could implement a wide range of these policies to help correct the lack of diversity. At the very least they should provide more targeted scholarships to those communities that need the aid to attend. The value of affirmative action should not be overlooked. Here's one final example.

We all have role models. They are inspirational people we look up too because they are proof of what they could do if they worked hard. There was this time back in 2012 when a five year old Jacob Philadelphia visited the White House. He got a chance to meet with the then President Obama, and he asked in almost a whisper, "I want to know if my hair is like yours". Obama bent down so he could pat his hair. What that kid was asking, in the way only a 5 year old could, was "Gee, you're just like me", and it's not a large jump from that to "Maybe I could be here someday".

While Obama might not have been the product of affirmative action, there will be people out there who will grow up to be role models for others because of the opportunity afforded to them. For some, they might only need to see that someone like them was able to make it in the world, and give them the encouragement to go out and do it himself.

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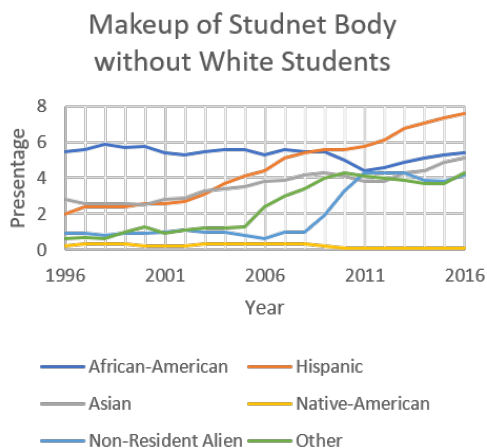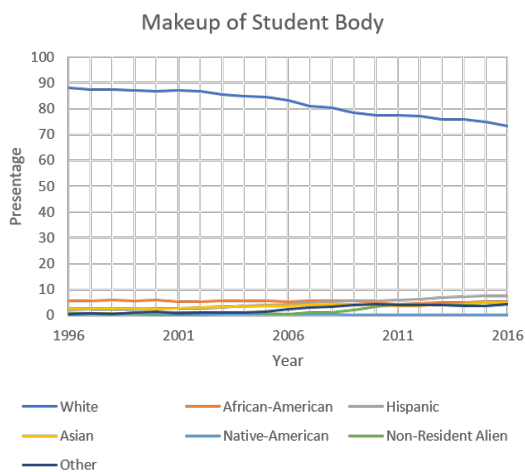
Figures

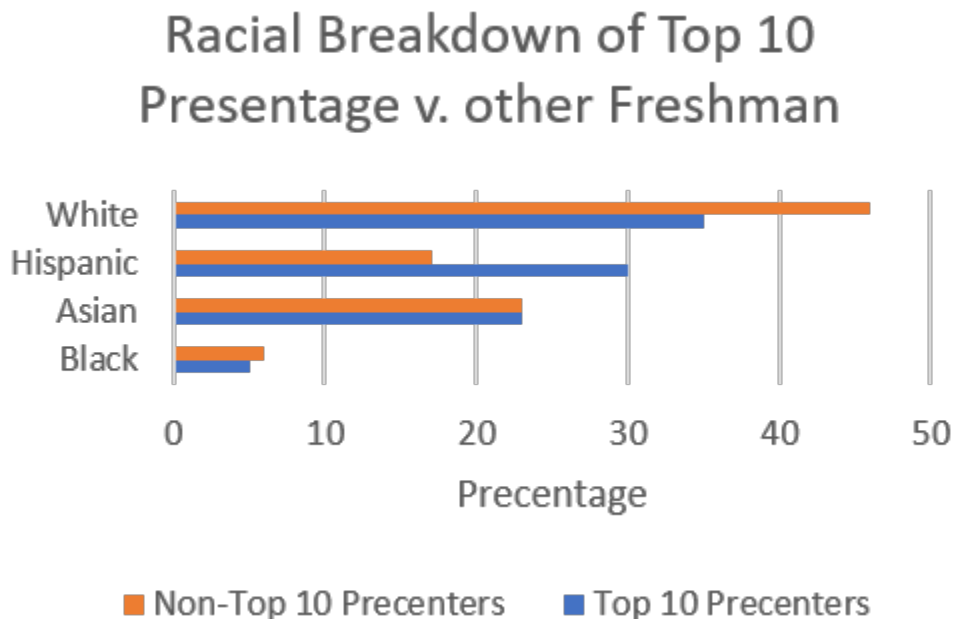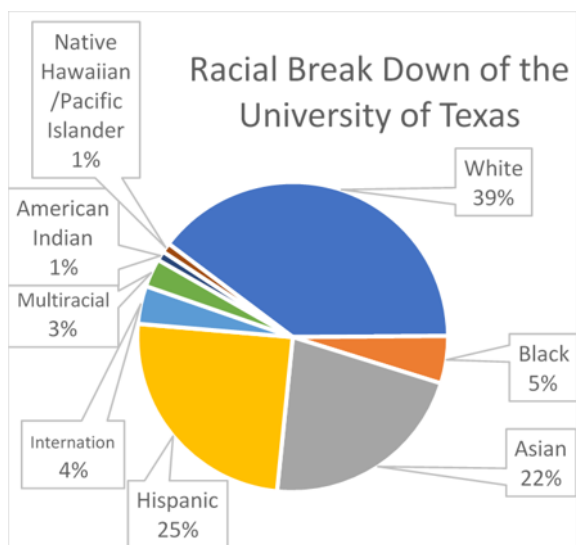Figure 1 (University of Delaware)   Figure 2 (University of Delaware)

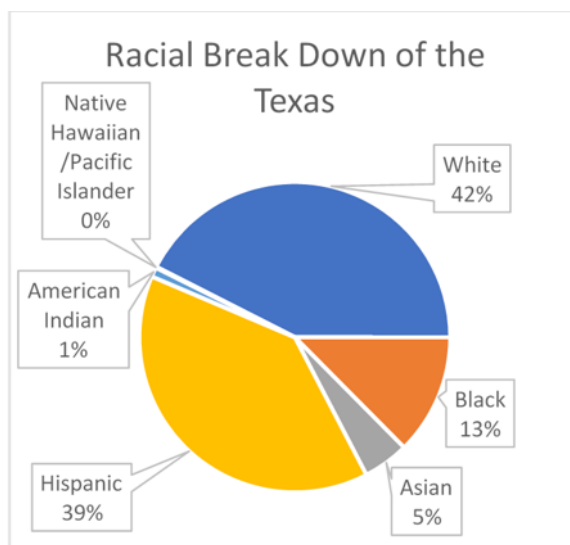Figure 3-6 (University of Texas)

Figure 3
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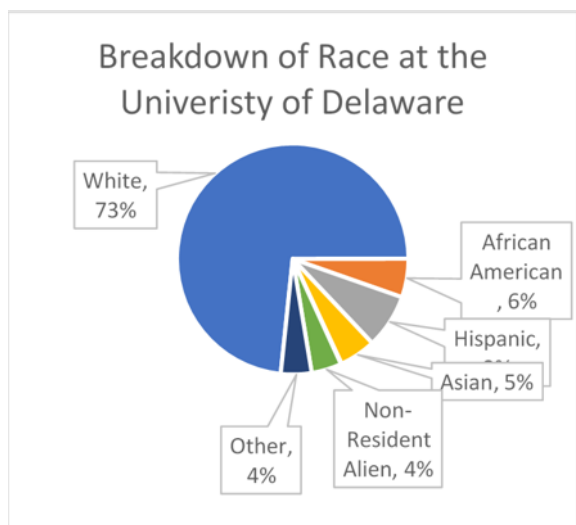
Figure 5
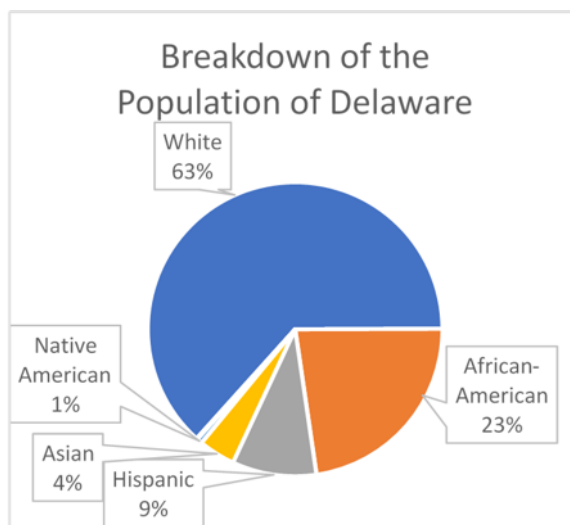(University of Delaware, Office of
Admissions)

Figure 6
(University of Delaware, Office of
Admissions)

Mark's Reflection

I remember back when I was a young freshman, only… must have been 14, 15 weeks ago… and I remember sitting down in my first college English class feeling mighty nervous. Syllabus week or not, this was college; I needed to be prepared for anything. When I actually got my syllabus, I was happy to see that the course looked manageable. Then I scrolled down to December and my heart skipped a beat. My greatest enemy, public speaking. By the end of that day I had promptly pushed the assignment to a dark corner of my mind where I could go about my days untroubled. Of course, time marches on, and here we are now in December. This symposium project was challenging. There was lots of work involved. Many weekends and weeknights were spent researching, typing and thinking. In the moment it was less than pleasant, but now that I have made it though, I am glad to have done the project. This was a great experience, and I am looking forward to seeing the next symposium.
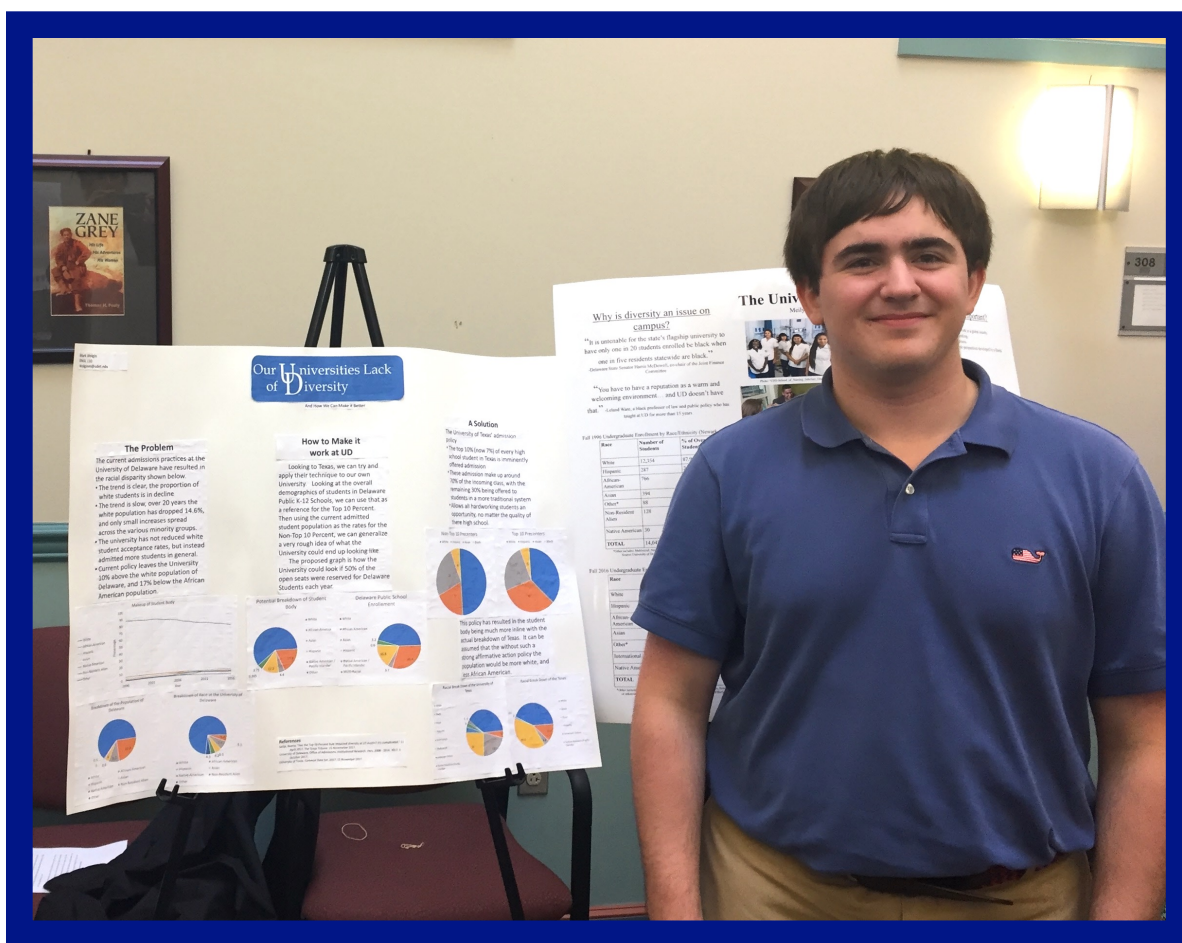
Mark at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017

Reducing Ethnic Homophily

By Zihan (Anna) Wu

Abstract

Homophily is the is the tendency for similar individuals to remain together. The following paper takes a look at ethnic homophily and its effects on the University of Delaware campus. This paper takes into account the opinions of UD students on diversity - through surveys and official UD climate reports - and delves into how homophily has already created divides between students. Then, it proposes ways to reduce homophily. The University, the Office of International Students and Scholars, and UD students should all work together to increase interethnic communication and to create a more welcoming environment for all students. Presented methods of improving existing events and programs aim to increase empathy among different groups on campus - particularly between international and domestic students. The creation of a Multicultural Center plus additional research is also recommended for the University to continue to investigate issues of diversity.

Introduction

Ethnic homophily is the tendency for individuals of similar *ethnicities* to group together. This is a prevalent phenomenon on college campuses. In a study conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute on 8,877 first-time, full-time students from 115 different four-year educational institutes, about 81.5 % of students reported that "all" or "most" of their close friends were of their same race or ethnicity (Antonio). Greek life, ethnic student organizations, student religious groups, and social media networks on U.S. campuses all tend to be racially homogeneous (Park ; Sidanius) . The University of Delaware is no different. One Pakistani student at UD said the following about her psychology class of about 300 students: "There are a lot of Asians in our class… all of the white kids sit together and all of the asian kids sit together. My friend (who is african american) and I are basically left to work together " (Wu).

Homophily, if left unchecked, can cause significant problems because it can be extremely dividing, can lead to the exclusion of international students, and can create a general lack of understanding between students. Already at UD, homophily has lead to a divergence in perceptions among ethnic groups. For instance, underrepresented minority groups view UD as being less committed to diversity than white students and also report experiencing more discrimination, bias, and feelings of exclusion than white students (Jones and Hussain). Homophily has contributed to feelings of exclusion as well. A 2016 diversity report conducted on UD found that "compared to White students, feelings of exclusion (isolated, discouraged, or excluded) were 30% more likely for underrepresented minority students and 41% more likely for Asian American Students " (Jones and Hussain).

It is clear that there is a lack of communication between homophilic parties and many negative effects that come with it. Separated groups do not know enough about each other, thus fear of the unknown draws them apart. The more they stay apart though, the more the unknown grows. It is a cycle that right now, continually separates students at the University of Delaware, creating exclusion, missed experiences, and slower integration of international students. It is a cycle that the University, the Office of International Students, and students themselves should work to address through workshops and social events that facilitate interethnic communication.

Communication

To break through the barrier of homophily, it is essential to facilitate communication across ethnicities and across domestic and international spheres in the student body. One of the biggest factors that prevents international and domestic students from interacting as much is the language barrier present. International students are already struggling to adjust to a foreign environment and the inability to converse confidently in the host language makes becoming involved in the host society even more difficult and uncomfortable (Dao). Difficulty in English can cause international students to feel embarrassed and less assured in social situations involving domestic students, causing more to remain with other international students with the same first language. Working around a language barrier is also more exhausting and time consuming for both sides. If the University can lessen this language barrier through what it does best, education, the cross-cultural boundary could be bridged more easily. This would be best implemented through continuous and accessible english workshops.

Workshops

The University already has an English Language Institute that can help get past the language barrier, however most of their programs span a short time - a period of 7 to 9 weeks - and cost money. They may not be a good fit or even accessible for everyone that requires assistance. Some may not have the money if they are spending higher tuition as an international student whereas others may not have the time to participate in an intensive because of other studies. A way around this would be to have the Office of International Students and Scholars (OISS) and the English Language Institute (ELI) work together to host workshops covering a wide variety of topics in conversational english. The OISS already advertises workshops such as "Communication Skills for International Students" and "Learning the Lingo: Tips for learning and using colloquial English and Idioms" on their website (OISS Programming). However, upon perusing through their calendar of events, no such workshops can be found regularly. If the OISS can scatter even a few English workshops throughout each month, they could provide continuous english language help and practice - and more importantly practice - to those who are interested.

Their current workshops are also do not seem to incorporate domestic students in any way which may further homophily more than reduce it. In order to drive connection between the two student

spheres, the University must devise ways to bring domestic students into the picture. Instead of just having one teacher, it would be more beneficial to integrate native english speakers to help facilitate connection with the host society. Even better, the OISS could call upon their student volunteers and interpreters to act as something similar to teacher assistants. This way, international students can cooperate and practice with domestic students closer to their age - peers. This would be more comfortable and closer in experience to the everyday social conversations the workshops are aiming to help with. Additionally, the workshops would be able to service more people if there were a greater number of mentors on hand.

Furthermore, the informality of such workshops may be more appealing to the students who do not have time for intensive english classes. International students there could connect and form a real sense of community with the OISS staff and also with domestic student volunteers. "Informal group meetings can also provide an opportunity for international students to share their concerns with fellow international students as well as American students "(Yeh and Inose). Diverse experiences and stories would be shared more often, leading to an increase in empathy and a lessening of homophily. With more fluency and confidence in the English language, international students can more easily and more frequently interact with domestic students as well.

Social Spaces
This brings to attention the importance of community building. Far too often, colleges try to diversify their student population before addressing real underlying issues of disconnects between ethnic groups. "Higher education institutions have taken the laissez-faire approach that people should work things out interactively and that it is wrong to intervene too closely in student interactions" (Hurtado). They focus on increasing the number of minority students enrolled, while falsely believing that this alone will be enough and that students will work out social homophily, discrimination, and bias by themselves. UD should not follow this example, and should instead aim to promote true interconnectedness between differing homophilic groups.

Creating social events and get togethers is an ideal way to start. Social events provide spaces that invite conversation and personal connection, trumping any apprehensions held by either group to interact. Personal communication is key to bridging gaps between students. With personalized communication comes less anxiety and discomfort in interaction, which can lead to an "opportunity to disconfirm negative stereotypes of disliked outgroups, and thereby break down the monolithic perception of the outgroup as a homogeneous unit " (Dovidio). Face-to-face communication and conversation allows for empathy to be shared both ways and leads to viewing people as individuals whom one can connect as opposed to members of a group far different for one's own group. Thus, the OISS and other multicultural student organizations

should help create social events on campus where students can collectively share their experiences, bond over differences, and connect with each other across boundaries.

Improving OISS Events

Right now, the most frequent event the OISS hosts is International Coffee Hour where students - domestic and international - are invited to chat and snack. Very few domestic students attend this event however. In a survey taken on UD campus, only 2 out of 48 domestic students had attended Coffee Hour (Wu).

Without domestic students attending, connection between the international and domestic sphere dwindles and the purpose of connecting with a wide variety of people becomes lost.

To make this International Coffee Hour more successful, the OISS needs to make sure that the advertising of their social events is clear. They must emphasize that all students are welcome and *encouraged* to come get to know a variety of new people to clear up any misconceptions that events are for international students only. Information about the event must be advertised on a wider scope. Instead of just emailing to the international students, they can acquire the email list of the rest of the student body or even just email out to multicultural student organizations for them to advertise the event. Posters could even be put in residence halls and student filled centers, like Trabant, to inform a wider range of students.

In addition to this, the OISS should also set up more multicultural socials. Coffee Hour is the only recurring event they hold. However, with a greater number of social events they could provide more opportunities for students to meet, connect, and form friendships. These social events would have to be advertised more widely than Coffee hour to attract more domestic students. There are many different formats that could be implemented, for example Adelphi University has a event series called "Dinner and Dialogue," where students can converse with faculty, staff, and administrators of all different ethnic backgrounds about "their life experiences, careers, successes and challenges in an intimate setting" ("Dinner and Dialogue"). The OISS could do something similar, but invite members from their staff, the international community, or even alumnus from their program instead. Domestic students would be able to learn about

different cultures and places and international students could more easily approach and connect with domestic students at these events. These events would not only bring together domestic and international students in a physical space, but will also provide all students with the opportunity to hear success stories and experiences from those who may be in the same career field or area of interest.

Student-held Events

Besides the OISS, other areas of the University can help coordinate cross-cultural events to lessen ethnic homophily as well. Multicultural student organizations can take it upon themselves to host festivals in which a culture can be explored and celebrated by everyone. The Chinese Student and Scholar Association has already been hosting an annual Chinese New Year Gala and HOLA has their annual Fiesta Latina. These types of events however, are few in number and have only really been held by these two organizations. They have not occurred for many other ethnic groups, such as greeks, germans, or japanese. If more clubs - with the support of the university - can create and publicize larger events like these, students will be able to create a stronger sense of inter-cultural connectivity.

Residence halls can hold activities for special cultural months or dates as well. For International Education Week, the Redding and Gilbert complexes are holding a night of activities and crafts from all different nations. It would not be hard to hold small events like these and have the residence hall assistants organize them. Small events in the residence halls would be beneficial because they are easily accessible and would make living spaces feel even more open and inclusive towards minorities. However, these events would have to work in cooperation with minority groups and international students to make sure that the cultural information being presented is accurate and genuine.

With different areas of the UD community hosting a wide variety of events, the University can garner the attention of students from all around campus. Cultural exchange and learning could take place on all corners of campus and the University would eventually open the door to open conversation about ethnicity. Once students can talk openly about differences and their own backgrounds, understanding will be generated and the fissure between homophilic groups will start to close.

Multicultural Center

One downside to the OISS, student-run organizations, and residence halls all working separately though is that larger events are difficult to coordinate. In this case, university should set up a multicultural center, so that bigger multicultural events can be organized in one place and greater cooperation between departments can take place.

The University has already shown interest in building a multicultural center through a forum they held on October 16th, 2017. Not only will following through on its creation provide a visible show of the University's commitment to diversity, but it will also create a physical place where events can be organized and where students can come with inquiries and concerns. Modelling of of other successfully diverse universities, such as Duke University, which ranked 389 in comparison to UD's 1585 in ethnic diversity nationwide, UD's center should have a fund which it can delegate to student-run organizations for any larger multicultural projects that they may wish to pursue ("Cultural Engagement Fund" ; "How Diverse is Duke University?"). Additionally the center can bring together and be a communication point for cultural student organizations. The center could even invite separate student clubs - such as the Chinese Student Association, the French Club, Nihongo Table, etc. - to participate in a truly "multicultural" event. An event like what the residence halls where doing for International Education Week, but on a much larger scale. Like Duke University's annual Unity through Diversity Forum, this multicultural center should also keep hosting forums and could even be in charge of researching further into the campus climate in regards to diversity and ethnicity.

All-in-all, the creation of a multicultural center will provide much more organization to the multicultural affairs on campus. With an actual staff working behind the scenes at this center, the University can more actively promote diversity and interconnection on campus. Students can be assured of the University's devotion to true diversity and inclusion. More importantly, multicultural clubs will become connected and grand events can be hosted to facilitate personal connection among students. With more personal connection being formed, students may finally be able to look past the divide in homophilic groups.

Consistent Research
While improving english language and creating a greater number of social events can help bridge the gap in understanding between students, it is extremely important for the University to keep tabs on how students feel about the level of inclusion and diversity on campus. "Without evaluation, it is difficult to mark progress and intensify efforts to ensure that the students we retain are also satisfied and intellectually engaged" (Smith and Schonfield). The University must keep conducting research in order to continue identifying and overcoming new challenges about diversity.

The University, the Office of Equity and Inclusion, and the Multicultural Center - if UD chooses to have one - should continue to conduct climate reports and forums on diversity and pay close attention to their findings. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness at UD conducts a fair amount of research on diversity, however they are primarily focused on enrollment numbers and retention rates. While these are good data, the University needs to collect information on student interaction in addition, otherwise they would just be addressing a surface

issue without digging deep into group divides between students. A good example to turn to would be the 2016 Experiencing Diversity at UD: Race/Ethnicity report by the Center for the Study of Diversity. This report clearly surveys a wide range of over 17,000 students on how they perceive cross-racial interaction, discrimination, academic validation, and sense of belonging on campus (Jones and Hussain). Future research should cover topics similar to this, but should instead be continuous and at least annual. There should also be a set format to control for outside variables - like a set bank of questions for surveys - to make changes easier to spot. To really bring change and improvement to campus, the University must continue to identify future problems and evaluate how effective their current attempts at solving said problems are. Research will provide UD with this ability, but the community at UD must take it upon themselves to adapt and find new solutions.

Conclusion

Homophily can lead to numerous issues of feelings of exclusion, slower international student integration, and gaping divides between groups of students. It is not impossible to address though and should not be entirely difficult if different offices and student organizations all help along the way. The OISS can work on making their existing events more public. ELI and OISS can cooperate to create english workshops. The University can cement their plans on building a Multicultural Center. Student organizations and students can help by creating more multicultural events and by generally being aware and spreading information about the problem. Homophily can most definitely be reduced one step at a time, once the UD community bands together and takes action.
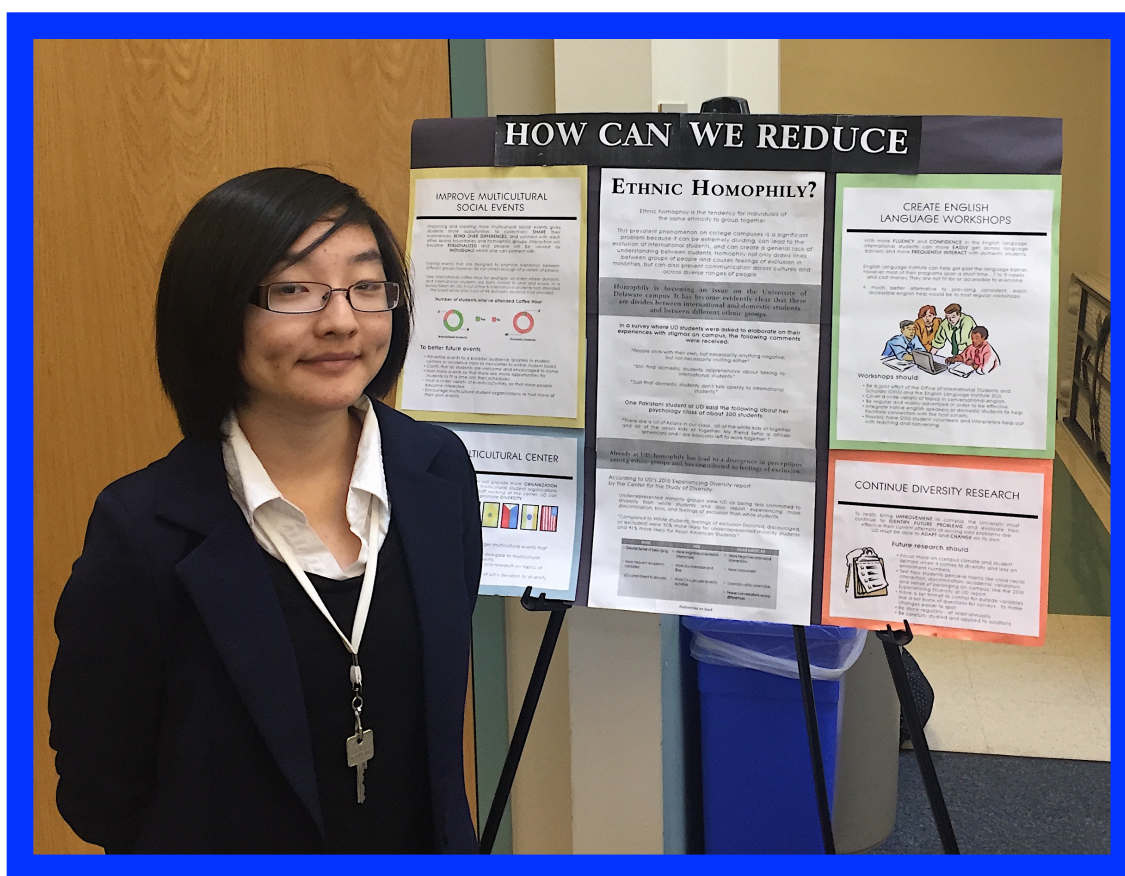
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Anna's Reflection

I've learned a great deal in this class—from writing, to research, to actually coming up with practical solutions to problems. Starting off as a freshman, I had no idea what college life was like, let alone the problems on campus. This class helped me see and experience some of the many issues here. Through the interviews and anonymous surveys I conducted, I was able to attain eye-opening, honest feedback from students about the diversity on campus. In reading and hearing about the wide variety of issues my classmates wrote about, I realized that UD has much to improve. Many problems have been identified, but a plethora of solutions have been offered as well. Hopefully our work will serve as a catalyst for further discussion, and as inspiration for our community to come together to better the University.

Anna at the Symposium
Photo: Emily R. Johnston © 2017