

Equity Audit of Rowan University

Final Report Prepared for the Division of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

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Purpose

Through Rowan Rise, the University has set out goals and outcomes which they hope to achieve by 2023. These goals, centered around increasing Rowan University's footprint in the South Jersey area, target key strategic centers of university life including but not limited to: enrollment, private-public partnerships, philanthropy, and accessibility. Through Rowan Rise, Rowan hopes to become a more accessible, innovative, and supportive institution for those in the South Jersey area.

In order to create a more diverse and inclusive campus, Rowan established the Division of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. The Division's mission statement serves as a framework for launching a campus wide effort to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) on Rowan University's campus. Rowan University is "committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, or veteran status." (Rowan, nd.). In order to achieve the beliefs in this statement, and to assess the foundation Rowan currently stands on, an equity audit was implemented through the combined forces of the former Center for Access, Success, and Equity (CASE), the PhD in Education Program, and the Division of DEI.

The purpose of the equity audit is to:

1. create common definitions which Rowan University can utilize to determine diversity, equity, and inclusion,
2. analyze existing data on diversity, equity, and inclusion at the institution,

3. work to develop measurement tools that will assess the level of access to diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus,
4. develop clear and concise recommendations for the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to ensure a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus.

We conducted our equity audit in three phases. The first phase was a review of existing data relating to DEI and the creation of our conceptual frameworks for understanding DEI. The second phase was the development and distribution of surveys to key stakeholders (i.e. students, faculty/staff, the Glassboro community). The third phase was the analysis of five focus areas connected to DEI done through individual projects. After completing all three phases we made recommendations for next steps to improve diversity, equity and inclusion at Rowan University.

This equity audit allows for the institution and its stakeholders to understand successful practices related to DEI, along with areas in need of improvement. This improvement will allow for the shared success of all and will benefit everyone at the university. Furthermore, by working to identify the areas in which the institution can be more diverse, equitable, and inclusive we can open avenues for continued dialogue and engagement within our campus community.

Conceptual & Theoretical Frameworks

The conceptual frameworks are the spine of this paper and speak to our imperative (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). We believe that addressing access, success, and equity is the responsibility of an educational institution and its leadership. This study was our way of checking the pulse of our institution to determine if there are ways to increase diversity, equity and inclusion and speak truth to power.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion¹

To begin our audit, we first worked to define diversity, equity, and inclusion. We viewed diversity as the practice and implementation of conscious acts that honor, enable, and celebrate diverse ways of being and knowing. In addition, diversity is the acknowledgement, awareness, and acceptance of differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, dis/ability, religion, socioeconomic status, age, political beliefs). Such practices include building alliances across diverse groups, acknowledgment of systemic discrimination, and acceptance of human interdependence. Ideally these practices should lead to being able to support needs in an equitable fashion.

Similarly, we viewed equity as the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups within the community. Improving equity on the Rowan campus will involve increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of the institution, and in the distribution of resources. Generally, tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within different groups in our society. For this study, equity at Rowan University will be examined in terms of the ability by all individuals to access services and supports on Rowan's campus without obstructions. The breaking down of barriers should create a foundation for inclusion.

Finally, we understood inclusion as the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase each

¹ Our definitions were inspired by and adapted from definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion from the University of California San Diego and the Association of American Colleges & Universities.

individual's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions. Diversity, equity and inclusion are initiatives that are the direct responsibility of the governance and leadership of the university. The governance and leadership also maintains the structure of the university, the overall climate and culture of the university, issues of access, resources and capacity, and programs and curricula. Each of these were areas we felt needed further exploration in this audit as they relate to our stakeholders.

Questioning Equity for Who

In looking at the stakeholders of this project, we saw a large range of individuals including faculty, staff, administrators, students (i.e. graduate, undergraduate, online, on-campus), community members, and local businesses. These members are all part of our larger community and in order to be more successful in this audit, we needed to define what we meant by *community*. As we work to ensure that we are supporting our students, faculty, staff, and administrators on campus, and provide more resources and physical infrastructure, we must also ask ourselves, "what about the community *outside* of Rowan?" As a public institution, we have a responsibility to the local community, but what does that look like?

Anti-colonial frameworks led us to look at the question, "Equity for who?" Fanon's (1963) argues colonialism is two forces that are opposed to each other by their very nature and decolonized research can only be understood through a historic context. One of the key aspects that anti-colonial frameworks look at is the idea of *land* (Patel, 2016). Examining how colonizers took land from indigenous cultures and utilized it for their own needs is a root pillar in anti-colonialism (Patel, 2016). To bring this to a microscale and into this study, anti-colonial

frameworks and the idea of land was utilized to look at Rowan University's purchasing of physical land in both the Borough of Glassboro and Harrison Township. This land, either purchased from the local governments or private citizens, is crucial to the communities and those who reside in them. Foucault (1983) and Moore (1997) make the argument that one must also understand the very nature of the pursuit of agency, resistance, and subjective politics in order to understand how colonization occurs and what the colonized force does in the aftermath. Along with physical land we considered demographics, culture, history, and traditions of our wider community (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Foucault 1983; Moore, 1997).

When thinking about the local community, we sought to understand what Rowan believes to be the local community that it serves. Is it the Borough of Glassboro, or the region of South Jersey? How are we interacting with members of these communities and how are we being equitable to them, while also providing resources, infrastructure, and support for our Rowan community? This equity audit incorporated outside community members to understand how Rowan's actions impacted and were perceived by the local/surrounding community. Are our actions gentrifying the community that we live in, are we systematically pushing out small businesses, and are we utilizing private-public partnerships to forever change the landscape of the community? We explored these questions while looking at the ideas of supporting a community vs. colonizing a community.

Transforming Governance And Leadership

When we considered Rowan's community we began with defining and understanding its leadership. In the twentieth century leadership was studied in different contexts and theoretical foundations. Some of the studies discuss leadership as a process, but most theories on leadership

explain that leadership is characterized by attributes, attitudes, and qualities (Horner, 1997; Bennett, Crawford, & Cartwright, 2003; Avolio, 2007; Northouse, 2018). Contemporary leadership theories discuss leaders' motivation (Avolio, 2007; Dopson, Ferlie, McGivern, Behrens, & Fischer, 2016; Northouse, 2018). Leadership theories target how leaders' characteristics balance the effects of leadership on an organization's outcomes (Dvir & Shamir, 2003; Ehrhart & Klein, 2001; Avilio, 2007). Leadership in higher education settings is valuable, but as the educational policy has expanded over the past years, so too leadership theories have emerged to leadership development (Davies, Hides, & Casey, 2001; Braun, Nazlic, Weisweiler, Pawlowska, Peus, & Frey, 2009; Morris, 2012; Nica, 2013). The latest leadership theories examine what it means to be a leader and how to do leadership well (Northouse, 2018). These theories suggest that leaders must create an environment to motivate individuals to help move individuals in a particular direction. Transformational leadership theory discusses the connection between a leader and their followers to raise motivation and morality (Horner, 1997; Northouse, 2018). We utilized this lens to analyze Rowan University's governance and leadership in this audit.

Governance and leadership are critical components to the success of any university and institution of higher learning (Gronn, 2002). In higher education institutions, governance and leadership account for the positive direction that an institution seeks and for proper growth and success to occur. The governance and leadership structure of any institution of higher learning must invest in selecting and empowering the right individuals to pilot its growth. In today's very competitive academic environment, institutions of higher learning need to consider the governance and leadership of the institution as a shared function between departments and

groups within the institution (Senge, 1990; Wheatley, 1999). In higher education leadership today where hope is no longer a strategy, the governance and leadership quality of every institution has become its only life line for long term sustainability (Chistentsen, 2013). By analyzing Rowan's leadership through transformational leadership theory, we aimed to better understand their impact on motivation and the sustainability of practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Making Meaning Out of Climate and Culture

In conjunction with leadership theory and anti-colonial frameworks this equity audit is viewed through the lens of meaning making theory. Meaning making theory speaks to how people make sense of their world and how they fill the gaps to relieve tension caused by events that push against the current boundaries of how they see their world (Krauss, 2005; Park & Ai, 2006). The process of meaning making commences when an event conflicts with the already internalized global beliefs and values that currently govern a person's life. Without the process of meaning making the person will experience discomfort in the form of cognitive dissonance (Park, 2010). Persons engaging in meaning making are engaging in a cognitive process and in many ways they are reappraising the event in order for it to fit a schema or way of seeing the world that makes sense (Park, 2010). Meaning-making theory offers a way to understand how people perceive and are affected by the values, beliefs, and policies of the university.

Rankin and Reason (2008) offer a definition of "campus climate" as comprising of "current attitudes, behaviors, and standards held by faculty, staff, and students concerning the access for, inclusion of, and level of respect for individual and group needs, abilities, and potential" (p. 264). In addition to climate there is, what Kuh and Whitt (1988) refer to as an

“invisible tapestry,” which is the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution’s campus culture. Depending on the field and discipline, the definition of campus climate and culture will differ (Kuh & Whitt, 1988).

Campus culture is an invisible force that can both affect the students and be affected by the students. The climate and culture of most university campuses reflects the wider society and mirrors its biases and discriminatory practices (Nelson & Krieger, 1997; Starobin & Blumenfeld, 2013). Consequently, Harper & Hurtado (2007) stated that most students of color report their campus climates to be racist and that most women consider their university campuses to be chilly. Similarly, Rankin and Reason (2008) said that most LGBT students consider the climate at most universities to be hostile. Given these perceptions, it is critical to create more inclusive and viable campus cultures and climates to ensure sustainability (Adams & Boom, 2018). Such sustainability can be established through creating more diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices.

Assessing Resources and Capacity

Closely tied to the creation of campus climate and culture are a university’s resources and capacity. These components are part of the foundation of the systems and structures that the university maintains and upholds. Resources are an embodiment of systems, processes, policies and structures that are available to enhance learning on an academic campus (Banjong, 2015). Libraries, information technology resources, health services, and financial services are integral resources to the greater university environment and must be easy to access (Whitney, Keselman & Humphreys, 2017). According to Banjong (2015) the quality of an institution's academic programs most often has a direct correlation to the quality of available resources that are made

available to the learning environment.

This availability speaks to capacity, which refers to the totality of abilities, processes, skills and resources that academic institutions and organizations need in order to thrive in the fast-changing academic environment (Adelaja & Muraina, 2018). In order for institutions to provide adequate capacity for academic success, they need to provide resources to support systemic approaches to improve professional academic practice, research, enhance the quality and outcomes of professional learning, and deliberately institute policies that improve student academic performance (Banjong, 2015). By examining Rowan University's resources and capacity through Black feminist thought, we sought to understand ways in which marginalization may be occurring within the institution as it relates to adequate and equitable resources and capacity for our stakeholders.

Black feminist thought examines the intersectionality of oppressive structures within race, class, and gender. To frame intersectionality, hooks' (1994) explanation of her pedagogical practices as the "interplay of anticolonial, critical, and feminist pedagogies," (p. 10), was useful in our examination of issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion that touch upon each of these theories within the university structure. We cannot examine any one aspect (e.g. race, class, gender) as a stand alone phenomenon, but rather we explored how each aspect interacts and influences another to create structures of marginalization. We used hooks' (1994) theory of education as a practice of freedom as a means to understand this intersectionality and examine ways educational structures can either uphold or dismantle them through resources and capacity.

Accessing Programs and Curricula

Many of a university's resources and capacity directly support the academic programs at

the heart of its mission. An academic program is any combination of courses or requirements designed to lead to a degree, a certificate, or a concentration of study and is composed of the core, required and elective courses that lead to a degree or certificate in (Lattuca & Stark, 2011). According to Fonteyne, Duyck & De Fruyt (2017) access to a properly designed academic program is a predictor of academic achievement.

According to Alsubaie (2016) for an institution to achieve its educational goals, it needs a properly designed curriculum that is functional and relevant to its learning needs. A curriculum is an embodiment of the lessons and academic content taught in a school or in a specific course or program that articulates and supports quality learning (Barab & Dodge, 2008).

In order to sustain quality learning and support rich academic experiences we must consider the diverse range of needs and experiences learners bring to the classroom. To address these needs we relied upon Disability Studies in Education (DSE), which is a growing academic field grounded in social justice work. DSE seeks “to promote the understanding of disability from a social model perspective drawing on social, cultural, historical, discursive, philosophical, literary, aesthetic, artistic, and other traditions to challenge medical, scientific, and psychological models of disability as they relate to education,” (AERA DSE SIG, 2019). DSE works to generate new debates around difference in order to establish it as a positive (Allan, 2016). It challenges the ways educational systems maintain social hierarchies that uphold oppressive practices by contending that disability is socially constructed rather than an innate trait (Gallagher, 2016). According to Gallagher (2016) such natural hierarchies support eugenic beliefs in that they maintain intelligence as a measure of genetic superiority or inferiority, with disability serving to distinguish ideas of normal versus deviant. This allows for individuals to be

excluded from school environments and social spaces. DSE therefore serves as a space from which to challenge traditional forms of education that continue to uphold oppressive structures (Gallagher, 2016). Disability intersects with race, ethnicity, gender, and class, and therefore it is positioned to support these perspectives in analyzing diversity.

Disability studies is founded on key tenants that directly support the work of DEI. Such pillars include engaging in meaningful and diverse learning experiences, valuing diverse ways of knowing, embracing differences, engaging in intellectual pursuits, and seeing education as a means of agency (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2017). These foundations directly support the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in that they enable all individuals, regardless of background or status, to be meaningfully included in various academic programs and environments.

Critiquing Access

For all individuals to be included we must consider their ability to access all environments, resources, and academics within the university. Access to a university is the ability to be accepted as a member of an established prestigious institution of higher learning, along with the totality of the structures, processes and instructional frameworks that allow members an opportunity to explore all the resources available to them without limitations. Museus & Saelua (2017) describe access on a university campus as the ability by the university to create a campus climate and culture that enables each member to gain both social and academic capital and a sense of belonging. According to Iverson (2007) a university can ensure access to its resources for all its members by designing policies and frameworks that seek to minimize other forms of privileges that discriminate against others.

In order to better explore systems of privilege and oppression, we turned to Critical Race Theory (CRT), which is a theoretical and interpretive model that examines the manifestation of race and racism across dominant cultural modes of expression (Bell, 1995). In adopting this approach, CRT scholars attempt to understand how those who experience systemic racism are affected by cultural perceptions of race and how they are able to represent themselves to counter prejudice (Bell, 1995). Critical Race Theory (CRT), since its inception in the early 1970's, has provided the foundation by which issues of race, color and social class are examined from both their theoretical existence and also from the perspective of how dominant races subjugate minority groups in society.

According to Bell (1995) the suppression of minority groups continues to exist because the structures and systems that were designed to uphold White superiority are still in existence in our society. Bell (1995) states that society will need to radically accept that issues of race and color are still a major factor, in order to find ways to establish radical solutions to mend the ever growing divide. According to Delgado & Stefancic (2017) the rise of the Black Lives Matter Movement, the resurgence of White Supremacy groups and their sympathizers on America's college campuses and the rise of hate speech against immigrants and other minorities is an indication that our race relations still have a long way to go. These issues can impact an individual's ability to feel accepted as a member of their university, along with their ability to access resources on a university's campus without limitations.

Aligning Our Frameworks

We saw these theories as intersecting in various ways to support our exploration of diversity, equity, and inclusion within our conceptual frameworks. Anti-colonial, Black Feminist

Thought, CRT, and DSE are each critical of systems and structures in place that lead to oppression and marginalization, while meaning-making theory explores how people come to identify themselves based on and within such structures. Through CRT and anticolonial theory we analyzed systematic suppression of underrepresented groups in past and present contexts as it relates to the populations of both Rowan and Glassboro. DSE and black feminist thought allowed us to explore the intersectionality of race, gender, class, and ability in order to promote the acceptance of diversity, while meaning-making theory provided us with the perspectives of understanding individual and group relationships within and among wider structures. Each of these lenses offered a way to critique and analyze aspects of DEI at various macro and micro levels.

Positionality Statement

Our team was made up of five doctoral students, led by Dr. Shelley Zion, and engaged in this project from September 2019 through June 2020. In this section, we address how our positionality as individuals impacted our decisions on what questions to ask, what methodologies to employ, and what analytical frames we used.

Donn is a graduate student enrolled at the university who also lives and works on campus. His identity as an out-of-state student frames his work on sense of belonging and connectedness for graduate students.

Mbuh is a self-described black male whose research interests include examining patterns of social, cultural, racial and ethnic groups that exist on the Rowan university campus in Glassboro. He emphasizes his deep experiences as an immigrant student and he personally juxtaposes his lived experiences with those of marginalized populations.

Kerry identifies as a white, able bodied, cis-woman. Her experience as an urban special education teacher frames her work on exploring the lived experiences of students with disabilities living in oppressive, marginalizing systems.

Sanaz identifies as an able-bodied, cis-woman, international student. As an immigrant who came to the United States from Iran, she believes studying and working in diverse environments are more efficient and innovative. Also, she finds one of the fundamental goals of modern societies is providing equal opportunities for all groups of people.

Sa-Rawla identifies as a black, gay, Caribbean woman who's work focuses on mental health, LGBT issues in the Caribbean and how members of this community work to negotiate their identity. Sa-Rawla hopes her work will shed light on the process of wrestling with identity and developing curiosity and empathy for the journeys of other individuals.

Dr. Zion identifies as a biracial, queer cis-gendered woman, first generation college student, and activist academic. Disrupting binaries, developing critical consciousness, and the critical co-construction of knowledge frame her lived experiences and her work.

Phase 1: Review of Existing Data

After determining our conceptual frameworks we examined data from several surveys that were conducted in recent years. The Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion provided results from six surveys: DEI Listening Tour, Employee Engagement, Freshmen Orientation, Transfer Orientation, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and Public Safety. Our purpose in reviewing this data was to gain a sense of strengths and challenges related to DEI. This analysis allowed us to better focus our own survey and projects in phases 2 and 3. An overview of each survey and key findings are provided below.

DEI Listening Tour

The purpose of the DEI Listening tour was to provide an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to voice their satisfaction at Rowan University and their desire for having a diverse, equitable, and inclusion campus. From April through June 2019, the Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion launched the survey for students, faculty, and staff members at Rowan University. 15 face-to-face sessions were held on the Glassboro, Camden Bank/ Camden CMSRU, and SOM campuses. In total 98 students and 59 faculty and staff members participated in face to face sessions. The online survey launched from May to June 2019 with the same questions as the listening tour, and 34 students and 34 faculty and staff responses to the online survey.

The results show: administration needs to be more involved in students activities; leaders must model a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; DEI training and events are needed; promote DEI at Rowan University; and promote collaboration among staff, faculty, and students.

Employee-Engagement (2017)

The purpose of the survey was to measure employee engagement, which is the commitment the employee has to the University and its goals. Subjects in this study were employees at Rowan University's main campus in 2015 and 2017. The 2017 Employee Engagement Survey repeated the survey of two years prior, with a few additional questions to delve deeper into communication and wellness issues. In total, 1,282 employees (33.7%) completed the survey. 928 employees that responded were full time (76.88%), and 279 were

part-time (23.12%). 692 of the employees that responded were female, (60.92%); 426 were male (37.50%); and one was transgender (0.09%).

A comparison of responses between 2015 and 2017 show positive changes, with the largest gains in: commitment to the University's Four Pillars (32.50% strongly agree, and 45.40% agree); understanding Rowan University's mission (41.20% strongly agree and 38.40% agree); students think highly at Rowan, and senior leadership regularly communicates Rowan's culture and values. The Rowan faculty are proud to work at Rowan University, they view their roles as important to Rowan's success (45.8% strongly agree, and 38.4% agree).

Areas that showed the most spread out responses were:

- discussions of personal progress at the University (20.1% strongly agree, 29.1% agree, 22.0% neither agree/disagree, 17.6% disagree, 11.2% strongly disagree),
- receiving recognition for good work in the past 30 days (17.5% strongly agree, 28.3% agree, 19.7% neither agree/disagree, 20.6% disagree, 13.8% strongly disagree),
- having someone who encourages career development (25.4% strongly agree, 31.0% agree, 20.1% neither agree/disagree, 13.8% disagree, 9.7% strongly disagree),
- and having opportunities for career advancement (12.2% strongly agree, 26.0% agree, 26.8% neither agree/disagree, 20.5% disagree, 14.5% strongly disagree).

Freshmen Orientation & Transfer Orientation Surveys

The purpose of this survey was to evaluate freshmen orientation. Subjects in the survey were all incoming freshmen students over the summer of 2019, following their attendance at orientation. In total, 746 freshmen students responded to the survey. 301 (40.35%) were very satisfied, and 349 (46.78%) were moderately satisfied with their freshman orientation. 25

(3.35%) were moderately dissatisfied, and 3 (0.40%) were very dissatisfied with their freshman orientation.

When asked if they know more about the role of higher education after the orientation: 40.92% (302) strongly agree, 46.48% (343) agree, 2.17% (16) disagree, and 0.14% (1) strongly disagree.

As a result of participating in freshman orientation, 536 students (73.32%) strongly agreed, 169 students (23.12%) agreed, 16 students (2.17%) disagreed, and 1 (.014%) student strongly disagreed that they know that students are expected to be a responsible member of both Rowan and Glassboro communities. The subjects of the survey believed that the orientation staff were amazing, welcoming, nice, and helpful.

The Transfer Survey was sent out to all transfer students following their participation at orientation during the summer of 2019. In total, 204 students responded to the survey. 44.62% of the subjects (91) were very likely, and 37.75 (77) were somewhat likely to recommend the transfer orientation to transfer students. 100% (94) students asked for additional information that would be beneficial to include in future orientation sessions.

Almost 50% of the subjects of this study believed that the orientation was pointless, and the orientation was about freshmen and students who live on Rowan campus, and students under 21 years old. The subjects thought that the orientation was not beneficial for them.

National Survey of Student Engagement 2019

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was sent to all freshman and senior students during the spring 2019 semester. The purpose of the study was to assess students' engagement and educational practices associated with high levels of learning and development

compared to comparable public and private universities. During this administration of NSSE, Rowan included two topical modules: Inclusiveness and Engagement with Cultural Diversity and First Year Experiences and Senior Transitions.

The survey sample was 2,835 first year students and 3,748 senior class students. In the NSSE survey 449 first year students responded and 599 senior students responded. The response rate was 16%, 42% of freshmen were female and 48% of senior class students were female.

The survey results show that compared to similar institutions, Rowan freshmen scored higher in regards to feeling their institution was supportive of their well-being, being socially involved, receiving feedback, and managing non-academic responsibilities. Seniors scored the university higher than similar institutions when considering interactions with administrative staff, combining ideas from multiple courses, explaining course ideas to other students, and reaching their own conclusions based on analysis.

However, Rowan freshmen scored the university lower than similar schools when considering community-based projects in courses, feeling their learning connected to societal issues or problems, and feeling their coursework included diverse perspectives. Seniors scored Rowan lower than similar institutions when considering internship opportunities, the university's emphasis on attending social events that address important social, economic, or political issues, including diverse perspectives in coursework, and study abroad programs.

Analyzing student responses on the Inclusiveness & Engagement with Diversity portion of the NSSE survey shows that Rowan seniors scored Rowan higher than similar schools in relation to developing skills for working with diverse populations, sharing their perspectives, exploring their own background, being provided with resources for success in a multicultural

world, creating a sense of community, ensuring they are not stigmatized based on their identity, taking allegations of discrimination seriously, developing skills to combat discrimination, feeling comfortable being themselves, and feeling valued by the institution. Seniors ranked Rowan lower than comparable schools when considering their attendance of events that appreciate diversity, participation in diverse groups, and reflecting on their cultural identity.

Reviewing comments from Rowan seniors in the NSSE survey shows that of 221 total comments: 43 commented on professors, 30 commented on coursework, 25 commented on parking, 12 commented on advisors, and 11 commented on discussions of politics and diversity in classrooms. Other topics included a focus on mental health services, economic considerations, post-graduate services, class sizes, and extracurricular activities for students. However, the majority of the comments were in relation to professors, their attitudes and beliefs, and their delivery of the course. Of the 43 comments on professors, 33 were considered negative or critical, which indicates a need to focus on faculty professional development. Comments on coursework centered on many topics with the most responses calling for more hands-on, experiential learning.

Public Safety

This survey was administered through the Department of Public Safety in April 2019. There were 1,471 respondents who completed the survey, 26.99% (397) residential students, 33.11% (487) off campus student/commuter, and 39.90% (587) faculty/ staff. The majority of the subjects, 1,424, felt safe on campus during the day (97.47%), and 37 people (2.53%) felt the campus was not safe during the day. Also the majority of the subjects, 1,103 (76.39%), believed the campus was safe during the night, and 341 (23.61%) responded that they did not feel safe

during the night. The subjects believed the most important service activities performed by the department was providing night time escorts (37.70%), and providing crime prevention programs on campus (22.72%). The data is not broken down by demographics, which may be helpful to know going forward to gain a better sense of who feels unsafe on campus, when they feel unsafe, and why. This is an area of possible further exploration as it may connect to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Data Impact

Overall the existing data painted a fairly positive picture of Rowan University. Areas of strength demonstrate that: faculty were proud to work at Rowan, and are committed to the university's mission and four pillars; freshmen felt welcomed to campus through orientation; freshmen felt supported in their overall well-being while seniors felt they are provided resources for working with diverse populations; and once on campus, the majority of people felt safe.

The data does show that we need to improve: orientation for transfer students; more community-based projects within courses; incorporating diverse perspectives into coursework; attendance at events that address DEI; internship and experiential learning opportunities; and identifying which members of our community felt unsafe on campus and why.

Phase 2: Stakeholders Survey Data Collection

After reviewing the existing data we entered into the second phase of our audit and conducted a survey to gather information on outstanding questions from each key group of stakeholders (i.e. employees, students, community). Our goal was to fill in the gaps in our knowledge to help us answer the question "Is Rowan diverse, equitable, and inclusive?" One

such survey developed by the University of Michigan², helped us to create questions that aligned with diversity, equity, and inclusion. Separate surveys were developed for students and faculty/staff to understand their perceptions of DEI at Rowan, with a third survey being created for community stakeholders to understand the impact of Rowan's expansion on the community as it relates to DEI.

Survey Findings

Faculty & Staff Survey

The purpose of the faculty and staff survey was to gain a better understanding of faculty and staff experiences related to the key topics within our conceptual framework: governance and leadership; climate and culture; access; resources and capacity; and programs and curricula. Questions were designed to address these areas using the University of Michigan's (n.d) survey. Within the faculty and staff survey we also added questions that aligned with several of our individual project goals in Phase 3 of the audit. The survey consisted of 63 total questions within six sections: demographics; professional practices regarding DEI among faculty; professional practices regarding DEI among staff (i.e. directors, administrative assistants); campus resources; campus climate and culture; and campus leadership.

² University of Michigan's Climate Survey on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
<https://diversity.umich.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/STUDENT-SAMPLING-SURVEY.pdf>

Table 1

Faculty/Staff Demographic Information (N=504)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-------------------|----------|----------|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 292 | 43 |
| Male | 152 | 34 |
| Transgender | 4 | 0.89 |
| Age | | |
| 23-25 | 11 | 2.5 |
| 26-30 | 25 | 5.7 |
| 31-35 | 61 | 14 |
| 36-40 | 84 | 19.1 |
| 41-45 | 58 | 13.2 |
| 46-50 | 57 | 13 |
| 51-55 | 38 | 9 |
| 56-60 | 41 | 9.5 |
| 61-65 | 37 | 8.5 |
| +65 | 27 | 6.5 |
| Job Status | | |
| Faculty | 266 | 59.5 |
| Staff | 181 | 40.5 |
| Full time | 367 | 74 |
| Part Time | 63 | 13 |

Table 1 (Continued)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|---|----------|----------|
| Graduate Assistant | 2 | 0.4 |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ Time | 34 | 7 |
| On campus | 34 | 7 |
| Off campus | 13 | 3 |
| Division | | |
| College of Communications and Creative Arts | 87 | 20.5 |
| College of Sciences and Mathematics | 54 | 13 |
| College of Education | 50 | 12 |
| Office of the President | 0 | 0 |
| Government and External Relations | 0 | 0 |
| Office of General Council | 0 | 0 |
| Board of Trustees | 1 | 0.2 |
| Global Learning and Partnership | 4 | 1 |
| University Research | 4 | 1 |
| Sexual orientation | | |
| Heterosexual | 385 | 85 |
| Bisexual | 17 | 3.75 |
| Gay/Lesbian | 19 | 4.1 |
| Queer | 19 | 4.1 |
| Questioning | 9 | 1.99 |

Table 1 (Continued)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|----------|----------|
| Asexual | 1 | 0.22 |
| Prefer not to say | 19 | 4.1 |
| Racial and Ethnic groups | | |
| White | 360 | 47.4 |
| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Asian/ Asian American | 21 | 0.5 |
| Disability/identity (neurodivergent) | | |
| Yes | 48 | 10.7 |
| No | 399 | 89.26 |
| Disabilities (neurological condition) | | |
| Mental health/psychological | 18 | 25.7 |
| Chronic illness/medical condition | 14 | 20 |
| Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. | 12 | 17 |
| Political ideology | | |
| Liberal | 30 | 43.5 |
| Progressive | 19 | 27.5 |
| Moderate | 14 | 20.0 |

* We only included the top 3 disabilities reported here.

Findings from Faculty & Staff Survey

In analyzing the data from the faculty/staff survey, we reviewed questions within five sections of the survey. Analysis of leadership questions is included within one of the individual projects focused on university leadership. To analyze the survey data, we first looked at the overall survey report produced by Qualtrics to get a sense of participant responses. Based on the findings in the report, we looked closer at several questions that had a range of responses rather than a general consensus among answers. These questions were broken down by demographic data to see where there was disparity in the responses among participants.

One of the limitations in analyzing the data was that we did not have a sufficient number of participants to support our findings. In several demographic categories (i.e. race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, job position) we had less than 3 participants, so while we were unable to make generalizations we shared our data so that the Division of DEI can investigate further. To protect the identity of respondents from any risk of disclosure no statistics are reported when the specific category contains fewer than 3 cases. Throughout the survey report, an empty table cell with fewer than 3 respondents was not presented in this report.

Findings Regarding Professional Practices & DEI Among Faculty

Among the 266 participants who identified as faculty, 241 responded to the question about their current rank:

- 69 (28.63%) adjunct; 13 (5.39%) instructor; 40 (16.60%) lecturer; 50 (20.75%) assistant professor; and 40 (16.6%) associate professor, and 29 (12.03%) full professor.

When asked if they felt competent discussing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in meetings, 90% of faculty members agreed, and 93.2% of faculty agreed that they felt competent

discussing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion with colleagues. However, while 89.3% of faculty participants felt competent to discuss issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in class, 18% of assistant professors disagreed, 13% of associate professors disagreed, and 18.5% of full professors disagreed.

When asked if they felt comfortable sharing their views on issues that may be regarded as political or controversial:

- 26.9% of participants felt extremely comfortable, 36.8% felt somewhat comfortable, 28.2% somewhat uncomfortable, and 8.1% felt extremely uncomfortable.
- 22.1% of adjuncts felt somewhat uncomfortable while 13.2% felt extremely uncomfortable, 35% of lecturers felt somewhat uncomfortable, 37.5% of assistant professors felt somewhat uncomfortable while 6.3% felt extremely uncomfortable, 30.3% of associate professors felt somewhat uncomfortable while 5.9% felt extremely uncomfortable, 22.2% of full professors felt somewhat uncomfortable while 18.5% felt extremely uncomfortable
- 40.7% of women felt uncomfortable, 30.8% of men felt uncomfortable,
- 50% of Asian/Asian American participants felt uncomfortable, 33.3% of Middle Eastern/North African participants felt uncomfortable, and 38.3% of White participants felt uncomfortable.

When asked if they could articulate why DEI are important to the University and its mission 97% of participants agreed (57.4% strongly agreed, 39.6% agreed).

When asked if they felt skilled at identifying and interrupting unconscious bias in their work environments, 83.6% of faculty agreed (25.6% strongly agreed, 58% agreed). 25% of associate professors and 22.2% of full professors somewhat disagreed.

Faculty participants expressed that they feel valued in their departments for their productivity, research, scholarship, and creativity with less than 10% disagreeing with these statements. However, 20% of adjuncts felt that their input, opinions, and ideas were not valued.

When asked to consider if they had a voice in the decision-making that affects the direction of their department,

- 57% of adjuncts disagreed or strongly disagreed,
- 30.8% of women disagreed or strongly disagreed, 20% of men disagreed or strongly disagreed,
- 26.1% of White participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 31.8% of African American participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 42.9% of Hispanic/Latinx participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 50% of Middle Eastern/North African participants disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked to consider if there were fair and equitable expectations regarding research in departments:

- 31.5% of lecturers disagreed or strongly disagreed, 40% of associate professors disagreed or strongly disagreed,
- 30.2% of women disagreed or strongly disagreed,
- 32% of African Americans participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 38.5% of Asian/Asian American participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 71.5% of

Hispanic/Latinx participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 50% of Middle Eastern/North African participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 22.5% of White participants disagreed or strongly disagreed.

When asked to consider if there were fair and equitable expectations regarding service in departments:

- 45% of lecturers disagreed or strongly disagreed, 46.2% of instructors disagreed or strongly disagreed, 32.7% of assistant professors disagreed or strongly disagreed, 42.5% of associate professors disagreed or strongly disagreed;
- 38% of women disagreed or strongly disagreed while 26.8% of men disagreed or strongly disagreed;
- 45.4% of African American participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 23.1% of Asian/Asian American participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 57.2% of Hispanic/Latinx participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, 75% of Middle Eastern/North African participants disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 31% of White participants disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Findings Regarding Professional Practices & DEI Among Staff

Of the 181 participants who identified as staff, 176 responded to the question about their current rank: 26 (14.77%) administrative assistant; 28 (15.91%) assistant director; 7 (3.98%) associate director; 2 (1.14%) associate vice president; 1 (0.57%) clerk; 8 (4.55%) counselor; 21 (11.93%) director; 1 (0.57) gourmet dining; 3 (1.70%) typist; and 2 (1.14%) vice president.

When asked if they felt competent discussing issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in meetings:

- 32% of administrative assistants somewhat disagreed, 19% of directors somewhat disagreed, and 14.03% of associate directors and program managers somewhat disagreed.

When asked if they felt comfortable defining the terms, “diversity, equity, and inclusion”:

- 16.7% of administrative assistants somewhat disagreed, and 12.5% of administrative assistants strongly disagreed.

When asked if they felt skilled at identifying and interrupting unconscious bias in their work environments:

- 1 out of 2 of the vice presidents somewhat disagreed, and 1 out of 3 typists somewhat disagreed.

When asked if they felt competent to discuss issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in informal interactions with colleagues:

- 100% of associate vice presidents strongly agreed, and 38.1% of directors strongly agreed, 87.5% of counselors strongly agreed, and 52.4% of directors strongly agreed. However, 71.4% associate directors somewhat agreed, and 65.4% of administrative assistants somewhat agreed.

When asked if they could articulate why diversity, equity and inclusion are important to the University and its mission:

- 64.3% associate directors strongly agreed, 100% assistant vice presidents strongly agreed, and 76.2% of directors strongly agreed. 53.8% administrative

assistants somewhat agreed, 100% of clerks somewhat agreed, and 71.4% of program managers somewhat agreed.

Findings Regarding Resources on Campus

Our survey also sought to understand perceptions regarding resources on campus. When asked if they felt they had the resources on campus needed for their professional success:

- 67.5% of participants felt they had enough (46.9% just enough, 20.6% more than enough).
- However, 81.3% of participants from the College of Performing Arts felt they had barely enough (50%) or not enough (31.3%), 40% of participants from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences felt they had barely enough (23.3%) or not enough (16.7%), 38.7% of participants from the College of Sciences and Mathematics felt they had barely enough (16.3%) or not enough (22.4%), 31.2% of participants from the College of Education felt they had barely enough (15.6%) or not enough (15.6%), 23.5% of participants from the College of Communications and Creative Arts felt they had barely enough (13.6%) or not enough (9.9%);
- 44% of assistant professors felt they had barely enough (14%) or not enough (30%), 41% of associate professors felt they had barely enough (20.5%) or not enough (20.5%), and 38.4% of full professors felt they had barely enough (11.5%) or not enough (26.9%).
- Of staff members, 30.7% of administrative assistants felt they had barely enough (19.2%) or not enough (11.5%).

When asked if they felt they had the resources on campus needed for their overall wellbeing:

- 73.6% of participants felt they had enough (48.5% just enough, 25.1% more than enough),
- However, 29.1% of women felt they had barely or not enough (10.2% not enough, 18.9% barely enough).
- 12 out of 16 participants who identified as bisexual and 7 out of 17 of participants who identified as gay/lesbian felt they had barely or not enough resources to support their overall wellbeing.
- 12 out of 40 African American, 4 out of 16 Asian/Asian American participants, 6 out of 16 Hispanic/Latinx participants, and 79 out of 317 White participants felt they had barely or not enough resources for their overall wellbeing.

When asked if they felt they had enough resources to support their identities on campus:

- 24.6% of women and 22.4% of men felt they had barely or not enough resources.
- 69 out of 335 participants who identified as heterosexual, 8 out 16 participants who identified as bisexual, and 9 out 17 participants who identified as gay/lesbian felt they had not enough or barely enough resources to support their identities.
- 17 out of 40 African American participants, 5 out of 17 Asian/Asian American participants, 8 out 16 Hispanic/Latinx participants, and 64 out of 314 White participants felt they had barely or not enough resources to support their identities.

When asked if they had enough resources on campus for their social success:

- 51.5% of participants felt they had just enough, while 22.8% felt they had more than enough;
- 23.7% of women and 26.3% of men felt they had barely or not enough resources.

- 78 out of 335 participants who identified as heterosexual, 5 out 16 participants who identified as bisexual, and 7 out 17 participants who identified as gay/lesbian felt they had not enough or barely enough resources to support their social success.
- 14 out of 40 African American participants, 4 out of 17 Asian/Asian American participants, 7 out 16 Hispanic/Latinx participants, and 73 out of 314 White participants felt they had barely or not enough resources to support their identities.

Within this section of the survey there was an opportunity to provide comments related to resources. Among the answers:

- 16 comments addressed the need for better food options; 10 comments addressed more issues with funding; 9 comments addressed faculty wellness, time demands, and mental health; 7 comments addressed the desire for more collegiality among faculty; 6 comments addressed working from home and COVID-19; 6 comments addressed parking issues; and 5 comments addressed childcare issues.
- Two comments also addressed the need for faculty mentors of color and the proposal of a Council of Black Faculty and Staff. One comment suggested faculty and staff be given the option of a preferred name in the same way students are afforded this.

Findings Regarding Climate & Culture on Campus

Our survey also sought to understand perceptions regarding the climate and culture of campus. When asked about faculty/instructors' respect for students in general:

- 34.1% of women rated it as excellent, 54.2% of women rated it as good, 43.8% men rated it as excellent, and 55.6% men rated it as good.

When asked about faculty/instructors' respect for female students:

- 31.6% of women rated it as excellent, 41.1% men rated it as excellent, 49.4% women rated it as good, and 48.8% men rated it as good.
- 16.2% African American/Black participants rated it as excellent, and 59.5% African American/Black participants rated it as good. 43.8% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as excellent, and 50% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as good.

When asked if student respect for female faculty/instructors:

- 50.4% women rated it as good, 54.4% men rated it as good, 26.5% women rated it as fair, and 16% men rated it as fair. 44.4%
- African American/Black participants rated it as good, and 27.8 African American/Black participants rated it as fair. 60% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as good, and 13.3% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as fair.

When asked if faculty/instructor respect for students from a minority racial/ethnic group:

- 45.9% women rated as good, 49.2% men rated as good, 22.9% women rated as fair, and 12.3% men rated as fair.
- 34% African American/Black participants rated it as good, and 31.4 African American/Black participants rated it as fair. 66.7% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as good, and 20% Asian American/Asian participants rated it as fair. 33.3% Middle Eastern/North African participants rated it as good, and 66.7% Middle Eastern/North African participants rated it as fair.

When asked if students have respect for students with a sexual orientation different than their own:

- 54.9% women participants rated it as good, and 54.8% men participants rated it as good. 21.9% women participants rated it as fair, and 17.7% men participants rated it as fair.
- 55.3% heterosexual participants rated it as good, and 19.4% fair. 46.7% bisexual participants rated it as good, and 26.7% respond fair. 53.3 gay/lesbian participants rated it as good, and 33.3 respond fair. 11.1% queer participants rated it as good, and 77.8% respond fair.

When asked if faculty and staff have respect for one another:

- 22.9% women rated it as excellent, and 27% men rated it as excellent. 39% women rated it as good, and 48% men rated it as good.
- 43.6% heterosexual participants rated it as good, and 11.9% fair. 41.2% bisexual participants rated it as good, and 11.8% respond fair. 47.4% gay/lesbian participants rated it as good, and 15.8% respond fair. 66.7% queer participants rated it as good, and 22.2% fair.

Student Survey

The purpose of the student survey was to conduct an audit of the current systems, processes, and policies at Rowan University and to assess their impact on students currently enrolled. The main focus of this survey was to assess the campus climate at Rowan University with a focus on the following topics within our conceptual framework: resources; programming and curricula; climate and culture; and access. Questions were designed using a sample from the

University of Michigan's (n.d) survey. The survey consisted of 70 total questions that included questions on: demographics, campus climate, discrimination, campus safety, and access to resources.

Overview of Student Findings

We used the crosstabs feature in Qualtrics to generate tables and other significant data needed for analysis. We examined the number of respondents and by the quality of the percentages (very low, moderate, or very high) that were recorded on each question and we made a decision to report on specific questions regarding campus climate, campus safety, and perceptions of discrimination, which all had a significant number of respondents.

Throughout the report we provide the population estimates of Rowan University students based upon responses to the survey itself. To protect the identity of respondents from any risk of disclosure no statistics are reported when the specific category contained fewer than 2 cases. Throughout the survey report, an empty table cell with fewer than 2 respondents was not presented.

This survey found that while students' overall perceptions of diversity, equity and inclusion at Rowan University is somewhat encouraging, diverse social identity group members (including Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer) very consistently reported more negative experiences than their fellow students, irrespective of background. When data were examined through the lens of race and ethnicity, African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian/Asian American students had lower positive responses than their White peers across every dimension reported here.

Demographics

Table 2

Demographic Information: Student Gender Identity (N=731)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Female | 494 | 67.58 |
| Male | 216 | 29.55 |
| Transgender/Gender non-conforming | 21 | 2.87 |
| Total | 731 | 100 |

We examined the total number of participants who responded to the Survey and found that (n=731) and found the following distribution according to degree earned. See table below:

Table 3

Student Degree Earned (N=735)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|
| High School Diploma/GED | 379 | 51.56 |
| Associate | 148 | 20.14 |
| Bachelor | 162 | 22.04 |
| Masters | 42 | 5.71 |
| Ph.D./Doctoral/Terminal | 4 | 0.54 |
| Total | 735 | 100 |

Our survey also looked at the racial and ethnic composition of all students who participated.

Table 4

Student Racial/Ethnic Composition (N=807)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|------------|------------|
| African American/Black | 105 | 13.01 |
| Asian American/Asian | 73 | 9.05 |
| Hispanic/Latina/a | 101 | 12.52 |
| Middle Eastern/North African | 15 | 1.86 |
| Native American/Alaska Native | 11 | 1.36 |
| Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander | 7 | 0.87 |
| White | 485 | 60.10 |
| Other (please specify) | 10 | 1.24 |
| Total | 807 | 100 |

Student Findings Regarding Campus Climate

Our survey asked respondents the question “How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall campus climate/environment that you have experienced at Rowan University within the past 12 months?”:

- 21.2% of female students said they were very satisfied, 64.6% said they were satisfied and only 12.4% of female students said they were dissatisfied.
- 23.6% of male students said they were very satisfied with the overall campus climate within the last 12 months. 64.2% said they were satisfied and only 6.1% stated that they were very dissatisfied.

- 17.6% of students who self identified as Transgender/Gender non-conforming said they were very satisfied and 70.6% said they were satisfied and 11.8% said they were not satisfied with the campus climate at Rowan within the last 12 months

When the results are examined among racial/ethnic groups:

- 23.4% of those who self identified as Black/African American stated that they were very satisfied, 59.4% said they were satisfied and 14.1% said they were dissatisfied.
- Of those students who identified as White, 23.5% said they were very satisfied with the overall campus climate, which was almost identical to the response provided by Black/African American students.
- 66.1% of White students said they were satisfied with the campus climate, and when compared 59.4% of Black/African American students who said they were satisfied with campus climate.
- 20% of students who reported to be of Middle Eastern/North African origin stated that they were very satisfied with the campus climate, and 70% said they were satisfied.
- 19% of students who identified as Hispanics said they were very satisfied with the overall campus climate and 58.7% said they were satisfied.
- For students who reported having disabilities, 66.7% of students with Asperger's/Autism spectrum said they were very satisfied, and 22.2% said they were dissatisfied with the overall campus climate at Rowan within the last 12 months.
- For students who reported having a physical/mobility condition that affects walking, 50% said they were very satisfied with the overall campus climate and another 50% said they were satisfied.

When we examine the survey in terms of sexual orientation:

- we found that among those who reported to be heterosexual, 22% said they were very satisfied, 64.6% said they were satisfied and only 3.0% said they were very dissatisfied.
- For students who stated that they were bisexual, 15.9% said they very were satisfied, 68.1% said they were satisfied, and 8.7% said they were dissatisfied.
- 15% of students who identified as gay/lesbian said they were very satisfied, 55% said they were satisfied and 25% said they were dissatisfied.
- Among students who self identified as Queer, 27.3% said they were very satisfied with the overall climate at Rowan, 54.5% said they were satisfied and over 18.2% said they were dissatisfied.

Perceptions of Discrimination

Our student survey also looked at perceptions of discrimination on Rowan University's campus. Specifically, we asked the question: "In general, over the past 12 months, have you felt discriminated against at Rowan University?":

- 10.6% of female students said they have been discriminated against, 18% of Transgender/Gender non-conforming students indicated that they have been discriminated against, and 18% of male students who said they have been discriminated against within the last 12 months.

When broken down by sexual orientation:

- 12.4% of heterosexual students indicated that they have been discriminated against, 15.9% of bisexual students stated they have been discriminated against, 15% of gay/lesbian students stated they have been discriminated against, and 16.7% of students

who self identified as Queer, said they have been dicriminated against in the last 12 months.

When we examine the same perception along racial/ethnic lines, we found that:

- 16.9% of African American/Black students, 9 % of White students,13% of Asian American/Asian students, 23.8% of Hispanic/Latinx students, 20% of Middle Eastern/North African students, 20% of Native American/Alaska Native students, and 20% of Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students reported that they have been discriminated against.

Perceptions of discrimination were significant among students with disabilities:

- 33.3 % of students with acquired/traumatic brain injury reported that they have been discriminated against and 13.3% of students with Blind/low vision said they have been discriminated against.
- 23.5% of students with Cognitive or learning disability, 14.3% of students with Chronic illness/medical conditions, 20% of students with mental health/psychological conditions said they were discriminated against.
- 20% of students with a physical/mobility condition that does not affect walking, and 50% of students with a physical/mobility condition that affects walking reported that they have been discriminated against within the last 12 months at Rowan University.

Community Survey

The purpose of the community survey was to understand Glassboro residents' experiences with Rowan University and its expansion. The main focus of this survey was to assess the equity between Rowan University and the Glassboro community by measuring the

extent to which Rowan University’s expansion impacts the Glassboro community. Respondents gave holistic responses to the survey, discussing the benefits of Rowan’s expansion while also sharing some challenges.

Demographics

The community survey produced 117 respondents to the survey, with 70 completing it in its entirety. A breakdown of the locations and length of residency among participants is in the table below.

Table 5

Glassboro Demographic (N=93)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Residency Breakdown | | |
| 25 Years or More | 34 | 37 |
| 15-20 Years | 15 | 16 |
| 10-15 Years | 14 | 15 |
| 20-25 Years | 10 | 11 |
| 6-10 Years | 9 | 9.7 |
| 2-4 Years | 6 | 6.5 |
| 4-6 Years | 4 | 4.3 |
| Less than 1 Year | 1 | 1.1 |

Table 6

Glassboro Residency (N=92)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>f</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Neighborhood Breakdown | | |
| Chestnut Ridge | 37 | 40 |
| Other | 24 | 26 |
| Not Sure | 10 | 11 |
| Whethersfield Woods | 7 | 7.6 |
| Lakeside | 3 | 3.3 |
| South Glassboro | 3 | 3.3 |
| Fairview | 2 | 2.2 |
| Double Tree | 2 | 2.2 |
| Delsea | 2 | 2.2 |
| Crafton/Highland Terrace | 1 | 1.1 |
| Hetton | 1 | 1.1 |

Overall Findings

With regards to respondents’ feelings of safety: 70% of respondents (82) believed that their neighborhood is safe or extremely safe and mentioned that “unsafe” areas include: The Crossings, Hollybush, South Main Street, and Ellis Street.

With respect to the relationship between Rowan and the surrounding neighborhoods:

- 35% (41) said Rowan is working with Glassboro to form meaningful relationships.
- Similarly, 59% of respondents (69) said it was extremely important that Rowan includes residents in conversations that impact the entire community.

- Out of 10, the median average is a 4.20 when residents were asked to rate the level of communication between Rowan and Glassboro residents.
- 27% (32) said Rowan does not value the cultural or historical aspects of Glassboro.
- 50% (58) said they have never interacted with administrators or leaders on campus.
- 54% (63) said Rowan has changed the demographics of Glassboro.

When considering the economic impact of Rowan:

- 37% (43) say it is extremely important for Rowan to impact the local economy with the economic benefits included: small businesses, Rowan Boulevard, and creation of jobs.
- Some of the economic challenges included: Rowan being self-serving, low-wage jobs, creation of rentals and increase of property taxes. 57% (67) said traffic issues are extremely important and 63 said public safety issues are extremely important.
- 28% (33) said Rowan should stay the same size and not grow.
- The top resources utilized are: Theater, Parking, Dining.

Overall, the community benefited from Rowan in areas such as: More businesses, aid to the Glassboro schools, Rowan Boulevard. Respondents felt Rowan caused harm in areas such as: traffic, rentals, and parking.

A few key quotes from the data were:

- “I believe the basic family foundation and sense of town pride has been damaged by the infusion of student rental housing in long established neighborhoods.”
- “The partnership that Rowan has with the high school is very beneficial to the local students.”

- “More information must be given to the public in regards to Rowan’severything. There is no easy place to find out information about what is going on. “
- “Overall, I think things are going well. But as a married 30-something without children, my demographic feels left out of the equation. I would like a non-RoBo dining option that isn't focused on students or families/older generations.”
- “Rowan doesn't care.”
- “I am ashamed to admit I'm an alumni. The representatives sent to the Town and Gown meetings...and discuss the problems with the same solutions year after year after year with little evident change. You should be ashamed of yourselves.”
- “Rowan university should concentrate efforts on quality not quantity.”
- “If you can help the town being businesses that would keep our families here for fun that would be nice. “
- “I don’t want this survey to project a total negative picture about community and college relations. We have three homes on our block where we wish that the students living there would never have to leave, they are that nice.”

Phase 3: Individual Projects

Along with the broader scope of this audit, in our third phase we conducted smaller, more focused projects that relate to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within Rowan University. Each of the Ph.D. students selected an area within DEI that aligned with their research interests to explore deeper. An overview of each individual project is provided below, while a full paper of each project will be developed and shared at a later time.

Graduate Students Finding Roots at an Undergraduate Institution

Donn Garby

Purpose

This research centers around the idea of graduate students' sense of belonging at Rowan University. Working under the idea that graduate students have different levels of “roots” or connectedness to the institution and surrounding community, this research dove into the levels of support that these graduate students need. Working within the context of the interview, this research also explored as to why and how sense of belonging exists in graduate students and where does that carry after graduation, and how we can work to build a more equitable support system and policies.

This mixed-methods research study examined the sense of belonging that enrolled graduate students of Rowan University’s Glassboro campus have towards the institution. The reason for the selection of enrolled graduate students at Rowan University’s Glassboro campus is because of the specific exclusion of graduate students in programming and representation (Student Government Association documents, flyers for events, organizational constitutions). For this research project, I examined the “roots” that graduate students have dug. Roots are defined as the level of which a graduate student is connected to the area. For example, if they are from the South Jersey area, then they have stronger roots, while if they are from out-of-state and have no friends or family here, they have weaker roots and thus need more of a connection on campus. These “roots,” and the sense of belonging that is built at the institution, can impact professional development and career aspirations of these graduate students (Langin, 2019).

This research is vital for the success of enrolled graduate students at Rowan University as it examined ways in which they feel and do not feel connected to the Glassboro campus while they are enrolled. Furthermore, recent research has shown that sense of belonging ranks third in one's hierarchy of needs, coming in right after physiology and safety (O'Meara, Griffin, Kuvaeva, Nyunt, & Robinson, 2017). The data from this research can also help Rowan University determine ways in which they can better support their enrolled graduate students on the Glassboro campus and work to build their social identity outside of the classroom. Rowan University should care about the social identity outside of the classroom as it builds a more well-rounded and educated student and future professional. This social identity is also crucial for the formation of their future identities in the academy (Ostrove, Stewart, & Curtin, 2011). Furthermore, this research may allow for input from graduate students enrolled at Rowan University when establishing these support systems.

The research questions driving this study are as follows:

1. What are the different levels of roots that graduate students have on Rowan's campus?
2. How do these different levels of roots impact the sense of belonging that a graduate student has or does not have?
3. How can the University support Graduate Students at the different roots?

These research questions were driven from the root issue of the problem being addressed: sense of belonging for graduate students enrolled at Rowan University's Glassboro campus and their view on support. These questions were designed in a way so that the data collected can be directed towards a target goal and can help lay groundwork for future programs or initiatives.

Furthermore, the data collected will allow the graduate students to feel like they have an input on the decision making at the University and may allow them to feel *included*.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that this research is rooted in two epistemologies and ways of seeing: constructivism and subjectivism. The unique blend of these two ways of seeing allows for the research to value the stories and experiences of those being researched, while also underlying the idea that knowledge, sense of belonging, and connectedness are built from within and that an institution can work to create those environments so that the foundation and experiences can be built.

Constructivism

Using constructivism allowed me to understand the truths and realities of graduate students at Rowan University and at what level they feel a sense of belonging, if any at all. This is vital to answer the first two questions that I was trying to answer with the data. I was able to understand through interview questions how they interpret their experiences. Constructivism allowed me to construct a story from the data collected and gave an insight into the sense of belonging that graduate students at Rowan University feel, or lack thereof. Constructivism allowed for the unique opportunity to work to understand how individuals, or graduate students, interpret Rowan announcements, flyers, and policies and construct their own sense of belonging. One of the key foundations of constructivism is that written text is there for the interpretation of individuals, based on their own experiences (Steffe & Gale 1995).

Constructivism also allowed me to tie in the social aspect of a sense of belonging. Constructivism is rooted in social experiences and how we make meaning from each interaction

(Perkins, 1999). How does the interactions that Rowan creates build the experiences of enrolled graduate students on Glassboro's campus? By utilizing this theoretical framework, I had the opportunity to deep dive into these experiences and truly build upon previous work done.

Subjectivism

By using subjectivism, this allowed for the truths and realities to be individualized with each graduate student, knowing that each student will create their own definition of sense of belonging. This data collected helped to answer all three questions that I am asking. Subjectivism also allowed me to see the personal side of the student being researched and helped understand the individual level when it comes to a sense of belonging. Furthermore, since subjectivism adds the *feeling* and *emotional* aspect to the cognitive (Bastick, 1999), research rooted in this theoretical framework puts emphasis on the qualitative aspect of their experiences. Far too often, institutions of higher education build support based on quantitative data sets, while not fully acknowledging the power and meaning behind the qualitative aspects. This gave a voice to their feelings and emotions.

Subjectivism also allowed for the institution to realize that graduate students need more than just blanket policies to support and build their sense of belonging. Subjectivism allowed for us to look past "right" and "wrong" policies, and rather delve deeper into impactful, ethical, and equitable policies and practices (Blanshard, 1949). When we think of equity, we need to ensure that policies are designed to support specific groups on campus, in this case graduate students, and the personal experiences of these students can help to build them.

The theoretical frameworks are grounded in two different sociological theories, emotional work, and shared governance. These two theories helped solidify the data and the

purpose of the research as it will help draw upon the qualitative feelings and experiences of the ones who are involved.

Emotional Work

Emotional work draws from the field of sociology. Arlie Russell Hochschild (1979) discussed what emotional work was in her work, *Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure*. The basic concept of emotional work is that individuals navigate ideas, structures, and challenges in work and academic settings, and we must learn how to manage those emotions (Hochschild, 1979). By using this theoretical framework, I positioned the paper in a way that allows for the emotions that graduate students feel, when it comes to a sense of belonging, to be the main data source utilized. This was useful when it came to laying a foundation for which a proposal stood on and will showcase to the University that the emotions need to be valued and heard.

Shared Governance

The second theoretical framework that was utilized is shared governance. Although rooted in nursing, the theory discusses the way in which shared governance can lead to a better sense of belonging and more connectedness to an institution (Joseph & Bogue, 2016). Shared governance, in conjunction with emotional work, will showcase a desire, or perceived desire, for graduate students to become part of the shared governance of the institution. Additionally, the groundwork for which the proposals will stand on, will move the conversation in a way towards a productive end. Finally, it will be able to tie together the emotions that graduate students feel about shared governance, and how those can come to fruition.

Methodology

This mixed-methods phenomenology is grounded in an interview studies method as well as document analysis. It includes qualitative and quantitative data that I collected from five (30) thirty minute, in-person interviews. The qualitative data collected draws from lived experiences and human emotions-which are vital to the success of when I measure the sense of belonging of graduate students at Rowan University.

I utilized the following flow to understand the data:

1. Document analysis
2. In-person interviews

The methodology helps to give strength to the quality of the research proposal and will allow the readers to take it more seriously and be willing to fund change based on hard data. Furthermore, the mixed-methods phenomenology approach will allow me to work to identify the quality of experiences of graduate students (Dunning, Williams, Abonyi, & Crooks, 2007).

Interviews.

Interviews allow for participants to have more relative freedom in the ways in which data is shared and collected (Drever, 1995). For example, during in-person interviews, participants have the freedom to answer the question however they deem necessary and can share what they believe is the appropriate data for the answer (Drever, 1995). This allows me to collect more rich data, and observe their levels of truth and knowledge.

Sample Size

The email requesting interviews went out to 2,400 graduate students on Rowan University's Glassboro campus. The original intent was to interview 10 students, who just needed to be enrolled in a graduate program on the Glassboro campus (any level).

Findings

There were a total of five individuals who participated in the research. Key themes were:

Disconnected: Those who were interviewed discussed the ways in which they feel disconnected to Rowan. They talked about how outside of their program, they feel like they do not go to Rowan. They cannot attend school events and they feel like a stranger on campus.

Own Efforts: Those who were interviewed discussed how they feel like they are growing professionally because they put in their own effort; that no one at Rowan is supportive of their growth.

No Support: Those who were interviewed discussed how they feel like they have no support at the institution. They do not know who to talk to if they need guidance and they feel like if they did try to get help, they would be turned away.

A few key takeaways or quotes from this research are:

- Everyone was in the Masters of Higher Education program
- ⅔ of students were out-of-state students
- “I would recommend Rowan to those who live in-state, not out-of-state.”
- “I only feel valued because of the effort I have put in. No one has put effort into my growth here.”
- “I feel more disconnected from Rowan than I have ever felt about any place in my life.”

Limitations

The research had three major limitations that I would like to highlight below:

1. Due to COVID-19, the research design had to be changed from in-person interviews to Zoom interviews. COVID-19 may have also had a role in priorities for graduate students, so I did not get to interview as many individuals as I would have hoped to.
2. Every individual interviewed was enrolled in the College of Education's Masters in Higher Education program. This makes it so that the data cannot apply to graduate students as a whole at Rowan University, but rather only that program.
3. There were only five individuals who reached out to participate; a lower number than the targeted ten.

**Perceptions of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion by Black Students, Staff and Faculty at
Rowan University.**

Mbuh Payne

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceptions of Black students, staff and faculty at Rowan University on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. More specifically, this research project was designed to investigate how these individuals (who self identify as Black) have personally experienced the campus environment and how this experience has affected (or not affected) their perception of diversity, equity, and inclusion at Rowan University. The overarching goal was to examine the extent to which their perceptions of these concepts have affected their overall perception of the campus climate at Rowan University.

Theoretical Framework

Cultural identity development theory (Miller, & Collette, 2019) is discussed as a possible explanation for the divergence in that it is linked to awareness and inherently incorporates relevant sociopolitical issues such as race, color, prejudice, and discrimination. To further strengthen the findings of this project, Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used to explain the soundness and reasoning of the experiences expressed by the staff, students and faculty interviewed for this project. Critical Race Theory (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings (2009) seeks to verify how underrepresented people view issues of Diversity, Access, Equity and inclusion. CRT is a framework that offers researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers a race-conscious approach to understanding educational inequality and structural racism to find solutions that lead to greater justice.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do Black students, staff and faculty understand and experience the issue of diversity, equity and inclusion at Rowan University?
2. How do Black students, staff and faculty perceive the campus climate at Rowan? Do they perceive the current diversity plans in place as supportive of an inclusive environment for Black students and other minorities?
3. How do Black students, staff and faculty at Rowan perceive their overall treatment by others on campus?

Methods

The interviewing process for this project utilized open-ended questions aimed at soliciting longer and weightier responses from the participants. For instance, participants were

asked questions like: “what is your perception of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion?” The researcher also asked participants to describe their perceptions of Equity, Access and Success and to explain if they felt that Rowan University is an inclusive learning environment “do you have the perception that Rowan is a very inclusive university for all people regardless of race and ethnicity?”

13 participants were recruited for the study: 8 students from the College of Education, College of Business, College of Science & Mathematics, and the College of Performing Arts; 4 staff from the College of Education, Office of Admissions, and Office of Student Affairs; and 1 faculty member whose identity was protected, based on low response from faculty. Revealing their department may lead to easy identification of the respondent. All interviews were conducted through Zoom.

The researcher collected written notes from the interviews and recorded verbal audio and video interviews (Rowley, 2012). The researcher audio-recorded responses and complemented them with written notes (i.e., field notes) based on the interviews conducted (Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick, 2008). The written notes also included the immediate personal reflections of the researcher about the interview. All recorded and written interview questions were transcribed and organized in a format that produced a single script (Saldana, 2016). Qualitative Data (comments, written responses) were transcribed, coded and analyzed for themes and key insights using a traditional open-coding method (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, Saldana, 2016). Responses were transcribed and coded in Dedoose (Salmona, Lieber, & Kaczynski, 2019) from which several themes were derived.

Findings

In this study, 13 Black students, staff and faculty were interviewed in order to ascertain the nature of their experience as Black people on the campus of Rowan University, a predominantly white university. The data revealed awareness as the overarching theme in the phenomenon, in that a majority of those interviewed (n=11) indicated that they are aware that being a Black person in a majority white institution was a difficult job- as many of them stated.

The data also revealed a divergence in the phenomenon in that more than half of the participants (n=7) with over three successful years at Rowan felt a part of the University very much. Meanwhile, half of the students interviewed (n=6) who had spent less than three years at Rowan felt completely alienated by the processes at the University and did not express the belief that Rowan was welcoming and accommodating to Black people.

All the staff interviewed (n=4) felt overburdened by the unwelcoming atmosphere at Rowan and felt that their jobs were on the line if they did not constantly go beyond their best performance. They expressed that they believe the system at Rowan does not put the same pressure on their colleagues who are majority white. All the students (n=8), faculty (n=1) and staff (n=4) who participated in this project (n=13) reported similar perspectives in their views when asked questions about the general campus climate at Rowan, or when asked questions on how they feel about the role that the Division of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has played in shaping a more inclusive climate at Rowan.

Emerging Themes

The central ideas that were heard consistently:

- The need for a multi-dimensional diversity, equity and inclusion plan that elevates the current framework.

- Culture of microaggression and indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against black students and staff at Rowan University. Microaggressions reported by respondents included: everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or quiet insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their race as Black people.
- Resistance to the presence of diverse groups, with many individuals (not the university as a whole).
- The importance of confronting and overcoming the inertia of a legacy culture and a reputation of homogeneity at Rowan, often historically a “white” majority institution.
- Silent discrimination: many respondents stated that they feel silently discriminated upon because their peers who are not Black, do not engage them, nor do they like to foster friendships with them beyond the few hours spent in class.
- Loneliness and fear of association: several of the respondents expressed a sense of loneliness. Both the students and staff interviewed expressed disappointment at not being able to foster real friendships with their peers who are “white”. They expressed that most contact they have is often viewed by their peers with reserved optimism.

Positives Findings

- While participants were generally critical of the university’s DEI track record, there was a noticeable feeling that leadership was moving in the right direction and gaining momentum in what felt like a series of slow starts (the office of DEI was one of those).

- Participants lauded a growing community of DEI champions, including many student groups on campus, the office of DEI at Rowan, president Ali Housmand and the Office of Social Justice, Inclusio, and Conflict Resolution (SJICR).
- Several respondents applauded the steps taken by the university to promote diversity on the Rowan campus, but many wanted to see additional measures, policies and protections established for Black/ minorities at Rowan.
- Resources: Several of the respondents (about 50%) indicated that DEI should provide sensitivity and cultural diversity training to all staff, students and faculty at Rowan to enable them understand how to relate to Black or other minorities.

Limitations

- Access to participants was constrained by time and availability, owing to the pandemic that shut down the entire campus. Given that the university was shut down, several IRB modifications had to be sought, in order to be able to conduct interviews via Zoom. The absence of on campus activity had a severe impact on the ability to access respondents who were not reachable off campus.
- Participants from major colleges on campus were hard to find and did not respond to emails and all other forms of contact. The fact that school was not actively on, made it harder to elicit and recruit participants for this study.
- There was a severe scarcity of staff and faculty to interview for this project. Some colleges and departments either had fewer staff who were Black or did not have any at

all. This made it harder to obtain an equitable representation of respondents for this project from all colleges on campus.

**Theory to Praxis: Analyzing Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Teaching Practices at
Rowan University**

Kerry Cormier

Purpose

The aim of this study is to explore faculty andragogy and practice. Faculty members enter the classroom with diverse teaching experiences and backgrounds, and the aim is to capture a sense of where Rowan's faculty are in terms of teaching beliefs, knowledge, and understanding. Despite expressing acceptance of diversity, classroom practices may inadvertently create barriers for some students. This study will seek to answer:

1. What are faculty andragogies and experiences regarding students with diverse learning needs, and how do these philosophies impact classrooms and learning?
2. To what extent do faculty value diverse perspectives and learning preferences, and how committed are they to incorporating them into their curriculum and classrooms?

Theoretical Framework

In considering the role of the university in society, hooks (1994) states that, "If we examine critically the traditional role of the university in the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge and information, it is painfully clear that biases that uphold and maintain white supremacy, imperialism, sexism, and racism have distorted education so that is no longer about the practice of freedom," (p. 29). While hooks identifies some key "isms," she leaves out what I believe is a critical one - ableism. In this regard, critical disability studies, or DisCrit, is key to

examining the “structural power of ableism and racism by recognizing the historical, social, political, and economic interests of limiting access to educational equity to students of color with dis/abilities on both macro and microlevels,” (Connor, Ferri, & Annamma, 2016, p. 15). Like hooks (1994), DisCrit is interested in the intersectionality of identity, the interdependency of ableism and racism in promoting ideas of normalcy, privileges the voices of marginalized people, and recognizes Whiteness and Ability as property (Connor, Ferri, & Annamma, 2016). It explores oppressive educational structures and calls for activism to deconstruct marginalizing practices.

By critiquing ways ableism impacts education as a practice of freedom, I ground my work in both the tenets of DisCrit and disability studies in education (DSE). The field of DSE “presses for educational innovation and pedagogical creativity that exceeds current notions of progressive teaching practice, calling for a thorough reexamination of our assumptions about humanity, community, and self,” (Danforth & Gabel, 2016, p. 1). From this perspective I feel that I can further explore hooks’ (1994) call to examine ways in which university structures uphold dominant beliefs and biases that limit education as the practice of freedom.

Methods

To conduct this inquiry, I implemented a mixed methods approach through the use of faculty interviews and survey responses over the course of one semester. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, faculty participants were given the choice to conduct an hour-long virtual in-person interview or to complete a questionnaire. Eleven faculty members elected to participate, with nine sitting for an interview and two completing questionnaires. Six of the university’s seven colleges were represented by these participants, and ten faculty members were full-time

employees with at least two years experience at Rowan. One participant self-identified as having a disability, one self-identified as a woman of color, and one self-identified as gay.

Along with interviews, faculty and student survey responses were also utilized. The comparison between student and faculty responses allowed for an analysis of the ways in which faculty see their teaching and the ways students perceive their classrooms.

All qualitative data were analyzed through two rounds of coding. The first round of coding employed structural coding to evaluate interview transcripts, researcher journals, and analytic memos. A tag cloud was created from the preliminary codes to determine the frequency of codes in the code landscape (Saldana, 2016). A second round of coding used pattern coding to determine major categories and themes (Saldana, 2016).

Findings

1. Faculty viewing students through deficit lenses are upholding oppressive structures and the banking model of education (Freire, 1970). Viewing students as trying to get out of work or as lazy for cheating does not recognize or grapple with the reasons behind this behavior. It places blame on students rather than promoting reflection on instructional practices. Two participants shared that students' demeanor, their dress, or behavior all impact the assumptions made about how engaged students are in class, and often it is viewed through a deficit lens. Both recognized this practice as wrong and were aware of how their biases impacted their instruction.
2. Despite knowing systems and policies are inequitable in the workforce, we still prepare students for them and uphold these biases in the university. Three participants shared struggles over enforcing attendance policies and expectations for productivity (i.e.

completing assigned readings) despite recognizing outside factors in students' lives (i.e. commuting, jobs, family responsibilities). One participant shared they did not feel comfortable assessing students' dispositions as they relate to career-readiness, but was also concerned about how well-suited students with anxiety are for particular careers. There was a sense among participants to uphold what one participant called the "non-negotiables of teaching" even though these non-negotiables are not equitable.

3. The burden is on students to get help rather than requiring faculty to design proactive instructional approaches that account for diversity. One participant shared that they felt getting to know their students, both as people and learners, was critical, especially given the recent suicides on campus. Yet three other participants felt that this was not as important at the university level. One participant shared that the system is "not designed to let us get to know our students," while another shared that "students roll with whatever [teaching] method I'm using," and waiting until evaluations to see if it was effective or not. Students have to claim a disability identity in order to receive help or accommodations. Only four out of eleven interview participants heard of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and culturally responsive teaching as proactive instructional approaches, but only two of the four were beginning to implement these practices.
4. Faculty do not always see or understand how to naturally embed DEI practices into their courses. Participants shared struggles with "content tyranny" and feelings that they would be sacrificing rigor by incorporating strategies like UDL. One participant shared that they simply did not see how they could address diversity in their content, while after an

hour-long interview on andragogical practices another participant said, “well, we never really talked about diversity.”

5. Limited assessment styles may prevent students from meaningfully showing what they know. Two participants with large class sizes felt the need to have exams as assessments, but recognized that exam attendance policies are oppressive to students with different needs (i.e. commuters missing an exam due to road trouble). They worried that not having exams or quizzes might sacrifice rigor, while others felt that their use of diverse forms of assessment (i.e. group work on exams) was skeptically viewed by peers. In the survey only 54% of total faculty participants felt offering diverse assessments was very important, yet 78% of participants felt it was very important to hold students accountable for learning. If it is important to hold students accountable, then we must do so in ways that are meaningful to students’ learning preferences and their future career goals. Only 29% of faculty participated in professional development about assessment in last year, showing there might be limited knowledge about diverse assessment options.
6. There is a perception that older faculty are less willing to adjust practices that are not student-centered or aligned with DEI. A participant shared their perception that older faculty don’t feel responsible for providing resources (i.e. lecture notes) to students, and another shared that they felt younger faculty were more open to trying new things. In our survey, 28 participants identified as full professors, with only 53% viewing classroom community as very important, 58.6% felt it was very important to accommodate diverse learning styles, and 52% felt extremely comfortable accommodating students with diverse learning needs.

7. Faculty who center teaching as their main responsibility express a greater willingness to try “newer” or more creative instructional practices that align with their students’ needs. One participant shared that it was important to teach the materials but also to teach the skills necessary for students’ career choices, and focused their course on developing more collaborative skills in students. Participants who utilized project-based learning, designed multiple entry points into the content, incorporated real life scenarios, and relied on experiential learning felt that students were more engaged in their learning. One participant suggested that having centralized resources for faculty to learn how to help students will be beneficial. 81.6% of faculty participants felt it was very important to develop their teaching skills, yet only 53% of faculty participated in professional development on instructional practices while only 44% participated in professional development about supporting students.
8. In order to sustain more diverse representation among the faculty, student and peer bias must be addressed. Two participants felt representation mattered and disclosed their disability status or sexual orientation to their classes to promote more positive perceptions. One participant who identified as a woman of color expressed that she experienced student complaints over how they spoke to their students. As a result, the participant only felt comfortable teaching courses online, and shared that they knew of two other women of color at Rowan who had similar experiences. In the faculty/staff survey,
 - a. When rating faculty’s respect for students 37.6% faculty/staff participants rated it as excellent, 54% rated it as good, 7.6% as fair, and 0.82% as poor.

- b. When rating students' respect for faculty in general, 21% of faculty/staff participants rated it as excellent, 60.7% rated it as good, 15.6% rated it as fair, and 2.4% rated it as poor.
- c. When rating students' respect for faculty from a minority racial/ethnic group, 18% of faculty/staff participants rated it as excellent, 48.17% rated it as good, 28.45% rated it as fair, and 5.35% rated it as poor.
- d. In the student survey, 37.4% of students said students' respect for faculty in general was excellent, 49.7% good, 11.5% fair, and 1.4% said it was poor.
- e. Students rating students' respect for faculty from a minority racial/ethnic group 41.1% of students said it was excellent, 45.1% said it was good, 10.9% said it was fair, and 3.0% said it was poor.

Both participants' experiences and the survey data show that respect and classroom culture is in need of improvement.

Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and shutdown, it was difficult to recruit participants as many faculty members were focused on the rapid transition to remote learning. I was unable to recruit participants from each college within the university, limiting the views shared here. In the original design of the study, students and support staff from the Faculty Center, Academic Success Center and Writing Center were going to be interviewed. However, the upheaval from the pandemic limited recruitment, as students were adjusting to a new learning environment and the centers were focused on providing support to both faculty and students. Also due to the pandemic, I was unable to sit in on classes to

observe instructional practices as was originally planned. I was only able to complete walking tours of two academic buildings to generally observe classroom structures prior to the shutdown. The data from these tours provides a limited picture, therefore I chose not to include it here.

Leadership's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education at

Rowan University

Sanaz Shahi

Purpose

The growing service economy, globalization, and the changing nature of organizations led many organizations to increased diversity. Diversity has become a fact of their life and they arrange their work more around teams (Jackson, & Alvarez, 1992; Kotter, 2010). The workplaces are to demonstrate teamwork in their organizations, like implementing total quality management programs to maintain teamwork (Kotter, 2010). A mission of many higher education institutions is improving their institution's quality in order to remain viable and thrive in this competitive environment. So many U.S. universities use total quality management to improve their quality (Aly & Akpovi, 2001). Leadership is the core of teamwork in workplaces and leaders manage teams. One of the most critical components for having a successful teamwork is leadership (Pastor, 1996). To do more work and develop diverse teams, organizations need more leaders with competencies to manage demographically diverse groups (Klimoski, & Amos, 2014).

In reviewing data from the DEI listening tour, faculty and staff members had some requests for leadership to grow diversity, equity, and inclusion at the Rowan Campus. Faculty

and staff need DEI education, and they have asked for the DEI training course for both staff and faculty. Also, they have requested more diverse events on the Rowan campus. Participants have believed in having a more diverse staff and more consideration of faculty and staff needs.

Faculty and staff have demanded the leaderships to be proactive rather than reactive. Participants have desired administrations to be more involved in student activities. We need space and time to discuss diversity in a safe way and our academic success center needs more support.

Rowan University established the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to create a more diverse and inclusive campus. Rowan University knows meaningful engagement with diversity benefits to the campus. Based on the Division of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion mission statement, Rowan University will try to create a comprehensive framework for excellence that integrates diversity at its core. One of the areas of focus is leadership to help and develop some recommendations for the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to achieve their objectives and goals. The role of leadership to issue statements of support, purpose, and action is one of the first steps in indicating leadership commitment to diversity.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of the leadership in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion?
2. What support have you received to develop your skills in leading for diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Theoretical Framework

Effectiveness of campus initiative and program at a successfully engaging campus with diversity, equity, and inclusion depends on university frameworks. The university frameworks are represented by the role that diversity plays in university missions and goals. The conception

of practical leadership commitment to the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion will support diversity programs and initiatives on the campus. The understanding of effective leadership and leadership development will expand a combining framework for providing a useful set of guidelines for our leaders to have a successful diverse campus. Northouse (2018) claims recent leadership theories examine how to do leadership well (Northouse, 2018). Lappas (1997) state that “identification and definition of attributes and behaviors associated with leadership in the public and private sectors are essential to the success of this nation.” (Lappas, 1997, p. 15). This study recognizes the role of leadership in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion and effective leadership at the university by using transformational leadership theory.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Bass (1985) cited that transformational leadership helps leaders fully engage individuals by satisfying high-order needs in the work process. Transformational leadership theory provides a better understanding of creating a motivating environment to initiate and cope with change. Leaders can build a strong relationship with others to support each individual’s development (Horner, 1997). The development of the role of leadership in an organization is interconnected with organizational transformation with the teams. Leaders by using transformational leadership theory can take new and different responsibilities to develop their leadership roles (Fisher, 2000). In this way, Leaders can make a strong relationship with their team while supporting each individual’s development. Due to having a strong relationship with individuals, leaders can motivate their team and represent transformational leadership theory in their organization. By using transformational leadership theory, leaders can achieve the idea of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Method

This study sought to examine the role of leadership in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and the components of leadership development at Rowan University. To conduct the study, I planned on implementing a mixed-method study through interviews with leaders and responses to the faculty and staff survey. This study asked the leaders to share their personal experience as academic and administrative leaders when taking up these roles. Also, the survey sought to understand the perception of the university leadership's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The target population for this study was 9 leaders at Rowan University, with 4 leaders choosing to participate.

This study captured a range of leadership development to identify common and challenging experiences within and between the Division of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, the Division of Student Affairs, the Division of Academic Affairs, the Faculty Center, and the president of Rowan University. Careful monitoring of the perspectives on leadership and leadership development via interviews can generate valuable data on the leadership's development and generate some recommendations. All the interviews were open-ended to capture the leaders' perspectives on leadership effectiveness and leadership development. I analyzed the qualitative data through two rounds of coding (Saldana, 2016). The first round of coding used in vivo coding as a teaching code to help develop the study. For the second round of coding I used pattern coding to capture important arguments (Saldana, 2016).

Findings

Interviews Finding:

During the interviews, participants were provided with descriptions regarding their experience of leadership roles to answer the first question. The following are some shortened findings from the data collection. One of the significant ideas that participants address as a leadership role was to “provide equal resources, opportunities, and support.”

Three participants believed that leaders have responsibility for students' outcomes, training staff and faculty about diversity, equity, and inclusion, and ensuring that staff has goals as a part of their performance. One of the participants believed that leaders must make sure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the mission. Two participants emphasized that leaders must use their voice at the University, having both strategic plans with action steps, and set up structures. All participants believed that leaders must make a positive impact on campus, be able to motivate and inspire individuals, developing their team, growing and training the next generation of leaders.

For the second question, the participants acknowledged following supports from the university: support with diverse groups of leaders, support to attend meetings with different perspectives, the importance of inspiring and good mentors, support with positive influence, and support from the president’s office to have the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Rowan University.

Survey Finding

When the survey asked, “the leadership exercises democratic practices”:

- 369 staff and faculty responded, 181 (49.05%) participants agreed, and 108 (29.27%) participants disagreed.

When the survey asked, “Leadership engagement in social action is important”:

- 371 participants responded, which 185 (49.87%) agreed, 150 (40.43%) strongly agreed, and 8 (2.16%) strongly disagreed.

When the survey asked, “The roles and functions of academic leadership and managerial leadership must be equally valued by the university”:

- 369 participants responded, which 166 (44.99%) agreed, and 174 (47.15%) strongly agreed.

When the survey asked, “Academic leaders and managerial leaders must collaborate and work effectively as a team”:

- 370 participants responded, which 241 (65.14%) strongly agreed, and 8 (2.16%) strongly disagreed.

When the survey asked, “All leadership positions must be actively engaged in teaching and/or research”:

- 371 participants responded, which 152 (40.97%) agreed, and 112 (30.19%) disagreed.

When the survey asked, “Managerial leadership positions should be filled by those with relevant experience, qualifications and expertise”:

- 373 participants responded, which 246 (65.95%) strongly agreed, and 7 (1.88%) strongly disagreed.

When the survey asked “Academic leaders must be committed to the currency of knowledge and expertise relevant to their positions”:

- 372 participants responded, which 240 (64.52%) strongly agreed, and 7 (1.88%) strongly disagreed.

When the survey asked “Academic leaders regularly articulate the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion” :

- 370 participants responded, which 121 (37.20%) strongly agreed, 183 (49.46%) agreed, 12 (3.24%) strongly disagreed, and 54 (14.59%) disagreed.

When the survey asked, “This University has a long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues”

- 366 participants responded, which 171 (46.22%) agreed, and 102 (27.87%) disagreed.

Limitations

At the first stage, getting IRB approval took a long time. Then due to the pandemic (COVID 19), it wasn't easy to schedule the interviews because of participants' availability. I was forced to implement on-line interviews instead of a face-to-face interview.

Say Cheese: The Use of Photovoice to Understand Privilege on Campus Culture at

Rowan University

Sa-Rawla Stoute

Theoretical Framework

Meaning Making Theory

Trying to understand culture seems to be tied to how people make meaning of their lives (Krauss, 2005; Eriksen, 2006). The theory of meaning making is the lens through which we will look at the narratives expressed by participants in this project. Meaning making theory speaks to how people make sense of their world and how they fill the gaps to relieve tension caused by events that push against the current boundaries of how they see their world (Park & Ai, 2006).

The process is engaged when an event conflicts with the internalized global beliefs that currently govern a person's life (Balaev, 2008). Without the process of meaning making the person will experience discomfort in the form of cognitive dissonance (Park, C. L. (2005). Persons engaging in meaning making are engaging in a cognitive process and in many ways they are reappraising the event in order for it to fit a schema (Park, C. L. (2005). Park & Ai (2006) references make meaning as being correlated with a person's growth, this shows the importance of being intentional about campus culture.

Methods

I reached out to professional staff and graduate coordinators within the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion both to identify students to participate in the project, and an email was sent to students asking for their participation. I was able to confirm 4 students as participants in this project. I chose students actively involved in DEI because these offices serve students that are marginalized and have intersecting identities.

Photovoice is an art based method of collecting data that is participatory in nature (Delgado, 2015). According to Wang and Bures (1997), the reason for choosing this method is due to its social justice nature. Photovoice provides participants with the opportunity to view the perspective of the most vulnerable populations (Wang & Bures, 1997). There is a move for Rowan University to develop a more diverse, equitable and inclusive campus and this method allowed those in the community to share their perspectives about whether this campus is moving in the direction to fulfill its mission.

First I met with students individually and shared information about the project and worked to help them understand what the project required. Prompts were created by both myself

and participants. A Google Drive was created and shared among participants. Within the drive, participants were assigned named folders further divided into 8 folders dedicated to each prompt.

Participants were given guidelines that ask them to take pictures that reflect their response to prompts within a given space, in this case Rowan University's Glassboro campus. I followed the protocol stated by Wang and Burris (1997) which encourages participants to be involved in data collection and analysis. The data was analyzed via individual and/or small group discussions. Wang and Burris (1997) best describes the photovoice analysis process along-side the participants as a "three-stage process that provides the foundation for analysis: selecting (choosing those photographs that most accurately reflect the community's needs and assets); contextualizing (telling stories about what the photographs mean); and codifying (identifying those issues, themes, or theories that emerge)," (Wang & Burris, 1997, pg 380).

Findings

Reviewing the transcripts showed participants' reactions to photographs and the dialogue that occurred as we went through them together led to students creating meanings within three themes: (a) breached trust, (b) belief they are unheard and unseen, (c) belief in their being excluded.

Breached Trust

Breached trust is the meaning attached to the perception given to responses and policies that Rowan committed to after a crisis on campus. Participants held the belief that there wasn't enough action taken and that any action that was taken didn't meet the threshold to rebuild trust. Participants spoke to the responses to campus suicides, the recreation center arrest of a black Rowan student, and the response to the social climate surrounding Black Lives Matter. Regarding the university's responses to campus suicides, a student stated:

“And seeing some of Rowan's response to, like the mental health issues is like, like this year we had like so many suicides. And like, they put up cages. They put up cages on the parking lot. That's absurd. You want to spend the money on those cages, but they don't want to spend money on actually supporting students.”

The students having guns pulled out on them in front of the recreation center pushed them to create meanings that made them feel unsafe because they believed as though Rowan could have done more. With regards to the recreation center incident students stated:

“...like they addressed it. But they didn't really, like, do anything”.

“But for black people, it's, it's like a reminder. It's like we're still on campus. Like we came here. We give them our money and like where we expect to have a certain etiquette, a certain way of being treated like we are all adults here. And it's like a reminder that this is still happening even here in Glassboro”

Students further discussed the social climate surrounding Black Lives Matter.

Participants proceeded to discuss the firing of Peter Amico, the head of Rowan's security, whose contract was not renewed following the BLM protests after his previous poor conduct as a police officer was made known to the wider community. Students stated:

“But that should have been done even without us, without people having to sign a petition like you should have did that in the beginning. You need to do more. You need to.”

“They don't care about us”

“There is Black Rowan and then White Rowan, which is really just Rowan”

When discussing the university's response to multiple crises on campus, one participant said, “We don't believe the emails.” All of these moments demonstrate a sense of breached trust felt by these students regarding the relationship between the university and students.

Belief They are Unseen and Unheard

Another theme that emerged after reviewing the transcripts was the belief that students felt they were unseen and unheard. Students mentioned events such as Rowan's expansion in the form engineering building and Discovery Hall:

"I feel like growing up like because we're not about their beliefs and values. I think they want to keep on growing. But they're not worried about how that impacts quality of like the campus and how the students feel like living here or go or driving here or like and just taking classes here."

Belief in Their Being Excluded

Students provided photography and shared in the discussion leading to the theme of a belief in their being excluded and remaining in the margins. Students provided pictures of Holly Pointe student residence hall and Nexus student housing and spoke about the cost of housing causing a perceived separation based on socioeconomic status that left participants feeling marginalized.

Students provided photographs of the engineering building as the answer to many questions. Rowan's growth seems to have created a meaning in the minds of these students that they are still in the margins. Two of the students were former engineering students and expressed the experience as creating the perception of no flexibility, supporting socioeconomic status privilege, and gendered.

One of the participants is a person of color and a former engineering student spoke to what I describe as a perpetuation of systemic inequities in the College of Engineering. The student stated that:

"Half of what they want you to do they think you already know how to do and the other half you need to know what they thought you knew how to do to figure it out...We had no engineering anything in high school. We didn't have calculus. I had to jump through hoops to get it."

Students are creating meanings from university policies and behavior that affect campus culture. The meanings created are perpetuating general society norms of exclusion.

Limitations

Due to the social climate, mainly the pandemic, the process for the collecting data was modified. Participants were asked to reflect using pictures that they were already in possession of as opposed to reflecting on the prompts and seeking to take pictures to suit the prompt. Groups were held online and ideally it would be great to participate in a gallery walk and have a group discussion in person.

Overall Recommendations

After considering the existing data, our findings from each of our surveys, and our individual projects, we are able to offer several recommendations to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion at Rowan University. In order for marginalized populations to feel safe and authentically seen and/or heard, and to build sustainable trust among the campus community, we offer the following recommendations for our stakeholders based on our exploration of diversity, equity, and inclusion at Rowan University:

Faculty

1. Faculty must view their students through a strengths-based rather than deficit-based perspective.
2. Given that two of Rowan's strategic pillars are focused on quality teaching and learning, faculty training in Universal Design for Learning and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy, which are more equitable andragogical/pedagogical approaches, would greatly benefit both faculty and students by requiring instructors to proactively plan with diverse learning styles in mind.
3. A reframing of instructional and assessment practices is necessary to ensure classroom practices are aligned with the career fields students are preparing for. Implementing practices like project-based learning and more experiential learning opportunities will do more to prepare students for their chosen careers than more traditional assessment formats.

4. Mandatory seminars on how to address and embed DEI into content should be implemented so that faculty feel comfortable addressing issues of DEI within their classrooms.
5. The burden should not be on students to claim a disability identity in order to get more services in their courses. Faculty must be encouraged and given time to get to know their students as learners in order to best help them in class.
6. More informal faculty gatherings should be implemented to create a stronger faculty community and sense of belonging. Faculty expressed feeling isolated in their work on issues related to DEI, and such gatherings will offer a chance to network in this work.

Staff

1. Hold more trainings with staff members so that every member of the university feels comfortable defining diversity, equity and inclusion.
2. Hold more trainings on how to disrupt instances of unconscious bias in the workplace.

Leadership

1. A majority of staff interviewed for this project recommended that Rowan's leadership must implement hiring policies (i.e. diverse search committee members) that guarantee the ability for people of color and other minorities to be hired.
2. Leadership must be more visible on campus and engage with both students and faculty more on a consistent basis. Eating in dining halls, working in the library, or working out in the rec center are all ways to be more visible.
3. Leadership needs to meaningfully participate in student events.

4. Regular town halls need to be held with students and faculty around campus decisions so that all voices are heard and information is shared before moving forward with plans.

Town halls should be proactive rather than reactive after a major event occurs.

Students

1. More cultural awareness and competency training seminars for students so that they are more tolerant, welcoming, and accepting of people from diverse backgrounds. Students' backgrounds often limit their ability to appreciate different perspectives, and their experiences at Rowan are often their first time encountering people of more diverse backgrounds.
2. Given that students are not treating their peers with respect, more intentional direct programming needs to be implemented both by DEI and individual colleges that promotes dialogue about privilege and oppression.
3. A space for experiential learning that guides students through conversations across diverse student groups (i.e. events that include organizations like PRISM, QPOC, and NAACP) is needed to promote diversity, equity and inclusion.
4. The needs of commuter students must be considered, as they make up a large portion of our student body. The lack of parking creates inequitable campus experiences, and more creative solutions that include the voices of commuters is needed.
5. More equitable housing options are needed, so that students do not feel the impacts of their socioeconomic status on campus. Implementing a lottery system and a standard housing fee will create more inclusive housing.

6. By not investing in outdated housing, campus housing mirrors housing segregation in the wider community and limited accessibility.
7. Investigate barriers in STEM that are prohibiting BIPOC from entering and remaining in the field.

Community

1. Develop a more accessible way for the Glassboro community members to stay updated on information regarding Rowan University events, expansion, and town-and-gown relations.
2. Evaluate job creations for local community members, starting salaries compared to peer institutions and cost of living, and accessibility of mobility in the positions.
3. Redevelop the town-and-gown committee so that there is more representation from Glassboro residents (not just elected officials), students, faculty, and staff to ensure shared governance and belonging in the community.
4. Involve the Glassboro community in all discussions regarding planned Rowan University expansion and provide a way for their input to be influential in the decision to move forward with the expansion or not.
5. Work with Rowan Boulevard partners to provide more spaces for local, community-based shopping.
6. Develop initiatives that strive to strengthen the ties between Rowan University students and Glassboro residents.
7. Be authentic with care when it comes to the Glassboro community.

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