Remaking the Climate for Graduate Education: DECADE

Frances Leslie, Susan Coutin, Kelly Ward & Marina Corrales

UC Irvine
Purpose **to transform climate for graduate education by 2020** at UC Irvine.

**Funded** by U.S. Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) to Graduate Division, Fall 2010

**Objectives** include improving recruitment, retention and completion of under-represented minorities in doctoral programs; reach equivalent diversity of grad and undergrad programs by 2020
Loss if Diversity in the Doctoral Pipeline at UC Irvine

Minorities - Fall 2009

Women - Fall 2009
Structure of DECADE

- Modeled on AGEP and ADVANCE Programs: institutional change based on changing attitudes of faculty and graduate students.

- Peer-to-peer engagement to promote a more inclusive culture from graduate admissions through program milestones to degree completion.

- Equity Advisor coordinates DECADE faculty mentors.
DECADE Faculty Mentors: Roles and Duties

School-based and organized in relation to individual doctoral programs:

- Present data to and share best practices with graduate program admissions committee
- Collaborate with school Equity Advisor and Associate Dean in improving school-wide climate
- Share professional development programming at the Graduate Resource Center and the DECADE seminar series and workshops
- Meet quarterly with school DECADE student council
## 2010 Campuswide Climate Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>722</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URM</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate students</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4875</td>
<td>1058</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URM</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant sex differences in experiences relating to gender

- Inappropriate references to personal life
- Inappropriate references to appearance
- Disparaging remarks about qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Students*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URM-f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URM-m*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant differences in experiences relating to *race/ethnicity*

- Inappropriate behavior related to ethnicity
- Disparaging remarks about qualifications
- Discouragement about advancement
Further quantitative data analysis

**Hypotheses**

Racial climate may affect graduate students’ attitudes toward diversity and this effect may differ by underrepresented minority (URM) status.

H1: Peer attitudes about diversity have a positive effect on individual attitudes.

H2: Peer attitudes about institutional diversification efforts have a positive effect on individual attitudes.

H3: The greater the proportion of URM students in a school, the more positive the individual attitudes.
Hierarchical Linear Model

**Dependent Variable**
Factor scale for student’s agreement with the positive attributes of diversity

**Variables of interest**
School concentration of URM students and faculty
Peer attitudes about the positive attributes of diversity
Peer attitudes about institutional diversification efforts

**Controls**
gender, years at university, and individual beliefs about URM qualifications
School-wide perceptions of diversity matter more for URMs than non-URMs.

Being surrounded by peers who affirm diversity matters for Non-URMs and even more for URM graduate students.
School-wide focus on diversification efforts has a negative association with individual attitudes. Students are less inclined to have positive attitudes toward diversity when surrounded by peers who strongly believe that institutions should be responsible for creating diverse student bodies.
The number of URMs in a school is not associated with individual attitudes on diversity. School climate seems to be more critical for individual student’s beliefs than is the proportion of URM peers.
In addition to creating supportive educational experiences for all students, positive and affirming campus climates are important in fostering healthy attitudes about diversity within the student body.

While administrators continue to encourage diversity at all levels of graduate education, attention should also be given to school-level attitudes and the effect these attitudes have on the experiences of individual students.

How diversity is talked about within academic units, especially with regard to creating and maintaining diverse environments, may shape individual attitudes more than previously thought.
Further qualitative data analysis

**Research Questions**

- What are faculty’s perceptions regarding diversity and diversification efforts on campus?
- Are there differences across sex, URM status, or faculty status?
Methods

- Conducted qualitative data analysis with Dedoose.
- Dominant themes were selected based on frequency counts.
- Patterns were identified by comparing emerging themes and combining similar themes.

Note: Chi Square tests were conducted for each variable. Variables are significant at *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001
URM and Non-URM Respondents’ Views Diverge on Barriers to Institutional Diversity

- Discrimination Against Women in Hiring Process*
- Environments of Exclusion Detract from Diversity Efforts
- Lack of Clarity in Establishing & Implementing Diversification Efforts
- Campus Cohesion is Non-Existential to Achieve Collective Goals
- Power Dynamics Among Faculty Prevent Diversification
- University Doesn’t Hold Faculty Accountable for Diversity Efforts*
Senior Faculty Focus on Survey Design; Junior Faculty Make Recommendations for Institutional Support

- Respondent Takes Issue with Survey Language***
- Primary Concern is Survey Design, Not Racial Diversity***
- Institutional Support Must be Put in Place
- Investigate Bias in Hiring Processes

Graph showing the distribution of responses among Full, Associate, and Assistant professors.
Men Contrast “Merit” with Diversity and Women Argue for Institutional Change

- Men: "Diversity is Important" 0.2, "Merit is More Important than Diversity" 0.35, "Quality More Important than Diversity" 0.15, "Campus is Not Diverse" 0.3, Support Needed for Faculty Diversification Efforts* 0.2, Imbalance in Hiring Process Based on Sex** 0.3
- Women: "Merit is More Important than Diversity*** 0.4, "Quality More Important than Diversity" 0.15, "Campus is Not Diverse" 0.3, Support Needed for Faculty Diversification Efforts* 0.2, Imbalance in Hiring Process Based on Sex** 0.3

* Male: 0.1, Female: 0.3

** Male: 0.1, Female: 0.3

*** Male: 0.1, Female: 0.3
Quantitative Analysis: Implications

- Non-URM respondents more likely to describe barriers in diversification efforts than action steps.
- URMs more likely to argue for greater institutional accountability in implementing diversification efforts.
- Men more likely to argue that diversity is important, but that diversity should not come at the expense of the university’s quality.
- Women more likely to point out a need for campus administration to support and hold faculty accountable.
- Senior faculty tend to avoid the topic of racial diversity and instead take issue with survey format.
- Junior faculty recommend specific changes for institutional reform.
DECADE Programming
2011-12 Speaker Series

- **Erwin Chemerinsky (Dean, UCI School of Law)**
  Talk & panel discussion: *The Law Concerning Diversity in Higher Education: The Myths and Realities*

- **Carlos Grijalva (Associate Dean, UCLA Graduate Division)**
  Presentation & panel discussion: *Diversifying Graduate Programs: Best Practices for Graduate Recruitment and Admissions*

- **Frances Leslie, Susan Coutin, Doug Haynes, Carrie Carmody**
  Presentation & panel discussion: *Perceptions of Diversity at UCI: 2010 DECADE Climate Survey Free Response Analysis*

- **Marta Tienda (Demographic Studies, Princeton)**
  Talk: *Diversity, Equity and the Courts: Measuring Success with Moving Metrics*
  Panel discussion: *Promoting Equal Opportunity and Success in Graduate Diversity*
# Overall Ratings of Speaker Series

**How would you rate the event/workshop on the following areas:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The quality of the information received</td>
<td>3.70 (.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement and interest level</td>
<td>3.74 (.62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well your expectations were met</td>
<td>3.55 (.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usefulness of the session</td>
<td>3.50 (.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality</td>
<td>3.61 (.56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1= Poor; 2=Fair; 3= Good; 4=Excellent*

**Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The benefits gained from attending the session made it worth my time</td>
<td>3.81 (.56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information I learned in the session could be easily implemented in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the school and/or community</td>
<td>3.32 (.67)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1= Disagree; 2= Somewhat disagree; 3= Somewhat agree; 4= Agree*
Graduate Admission and Recruitment Tips

- Recruitment tips distributed to the campus (i.e. Associate Dean’s and DECADE Mentors)

- Best Practices for Admissions Review
  - Beware the GRE
  - Undergraduate Institution
  - Prior research

- Best Practices for Recruitment
  - Faculty contact
  - Funding
  - Competitive Edge Summer Preentry Opportunity
The Graduate Division sent out a call in Winter 2012 seeking proposals to provide appropriate support to graduate students from groups that have been historically underrepresented in graduate education. The goal is for these and all students to feel welcome and thrive in their studies at UC Irvine.

Only DECADE Mentors were eligible to submit proposals.

- Total number of submitted proposals: 12
- Total number of awardees: 6
- Total funds requested: $285,514.22
- Total amount funded: $107,300.00
## Sample Funded Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Project #1</th>
<th>Sample Project #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proposer:</strong> Derek Dunn-Rankin</td>
<td><strong>Proposer:</strong> Scott Rychnovksy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Unit:</strong> Department of</td>
<td><strong>Academic Unit:</strong> Department of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Award Amount:</strong> $30,000.00</td>
<td><strong>Award Amount:</strong> $25,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description:</strong> Empowering Women for</td>
<td><strong>Description:</strong> The “Prime and Propel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Research with Fabrication</td>
<td>Program” for increasing chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>graduate student diversity using a model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>from the POSSE program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Central and School-based Councils
- Address climate and diversity issues through programming that promotes an inclusive campus culture for graduate students.

DECADE Press
- Quarterly publication written by graduate students as a resource for fellowships, events, student accomplishments, and networking.

Logo Contest
- In spring 2012, graduate student submitted logo entries to brand DECADE.

DECADE Student Travel Awards
- Provides funding to support travel to conferences offering professional development opportunities.
UCI faculty attitudes and beliefs about diversity

1= Much less Accepting; 2= Slightly Less Accepting; 3= No Change; 4= Slightly More Accepting; 5= Much More Accepting
UCI student attitudes and beliefs about diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Faculty Mentors</th>
<th>Student Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes about efforts to improve student diversity</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes about efforts to improve faculty diversity</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs towards the importance of ethnicity/racial diversity</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs towards the importance of gender diversity</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General attitudes towards ethnicity/racial diversity</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General attitudes towards gender diversity</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = Much less Accepting; 2 = Slightly Less Accepting; 3 = No Change; 4 = Slightly More Accepting; 5 = Much More Accepting
### New Student Enrollment: Fall 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% Female 2007 - 2010</th>
<th>% Female 2011</th>
<th>% Female Change</th>
<th>% Underrepresented Minorities 2007 - 2010</th>
<th>% Underrepresented Minorities 2011</th>
<th>% Underrepresented Minorities Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-STEM</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>11.7%↑</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>19.5%↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>9.5%↓</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>34.7%↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>1.5%↑</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td><strong>27.2%*↑</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expect Equity, Support Diversity