

“RECOGNIZING CHANGE, PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE: DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS”

**Presidential Symposium 2011
April 28, 2011**

**BREAKOUT SESSION: “COLLABORATING FOR LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM:
RESIDENTIAL LIFE, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND ATHLETICS”**

Facilitators:

- Carrie Murphey, Coordinator of Housing and Residential Life Assistant
- Ellen Alcorn, Assistant Director, Community Based Learning and Director, Bonner Leader Program, Harvard Center for Community Partnerships
- Wynn Hohlt, Associate Professor of Physical Education / Athletics

Scribe: Soni Reese, '93, Project Specialist in Diversity and Inclusion

Location: Chase Hall Lounge

Participants: 9 people participated in this breakout session, including the three facilitators, Nancy Jennings (Associate Professor of Education, Bowdoin College and one of the NECASL presenters), one student, one faculty member, and three staff members (including a member of the DiVINE team who also served as the scribe).

The questions that guided the discussion included the following:

1. How do we support students who demonstrate their interest in and/or experience with engaging diversity in the co-curriculum and in interpersonal relationships?
2. How do out of class experiences encourage students to explore their identities as scholars, leaders and citizens?
3. How can we strengthen intercultural competencies and the ability to work in diverse groups?
4. How can we encourage students to recognize that individuals experience environments differently based on position in the campus community, background experiences, and identity, and then support their engagement of differences as a tool for learning?
5. What short, mid-range and long term steps can Residential Life, HCCP and Athletics take to make excellence inclusive? What kinds of partnerships will foster this work?

DEFINING DIVERSITY

Participants observed that there is a “backlash” - particularly among students - against the word “DIVERSITY”. We need to re-examine our definitions – take the negative connotation out and re-empower the word differently and more inclusively.

For example, there is a perception that if you’re the majority, you’re not “culture – bound”. European heritage is seen as not visually representing diversity. The student participant gave an example of how she tried to get her roommate to attend the international dinner, but her roommate said that because she wasn’t “international”, she was not culturally diverse. But everyone brings something to the table. A student from rural California has as much to offer as an international student in terms of diversity. There needs to be willingness to engage in the conversation. “I want to be someone who wants to engage with difference even if I’m not ‘the other’.”

We need to have a wide notion of diversity – beyond race, sexual orientation etc, to include things like differences in personality, perspective etc.

NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCE IN RESIDENTIAL LIFE

How do roommates work to live together? How do students experience diversity in the dorm particularly in their first year? How do roommate matches work when diverse students are “thrown together” during orientation and experience five days of residential life before classes start?

The student participant in the group confessed that it was difficult. Although she and her roommate became friends eventually, “there were certain topics that we couldn’t talk about”. She was from a big city, and her roommate was from a small farming town. Simple differences in their lifestyles stemming from geographic / regional differences - like running to an appointment (in big-city style) vs. walking (more easygoing life) - became evident in their interactions very early on. As time went by, more complex issues – like race – came into play, and even though her roommate “was more open than others”, she felt that “some things shouldn’t be talked about”. The other participants agreed that **it could be challenging to find a safe space for difficult dialogues in a living space like a dorm room, as one couldn’t really walk away from a roommate if it became uncomfortable.** “So it’s not worth pushing boundaries” with some issues in a dorm room, as it could be in other places.

A faculty member, who taught a first-year seminar, got the impression that **some students of color in her class did not live in their own dorm room because “they couldn’t deal with the ignorance of their roommate(s)”** – about complex as well as simple issues. For example, one student took offence because his/her roommate, who was from Newark, was not a New York Yankees Fan (even though he/she was originally from Ghana).

One participant wondered whether there was a way to make it mandatory for all students to “make it work”, when it came to dealing with difficult dialogues. Non-majority students often feel a different pressure to make it work. **“There needs to be more work for both sides – to negotiate difficult conversations, develop mutual respect even if they don’t become friends. More needs to be done with first years in terms of developing interpersonal skills related to diversity.”**

A lot of sophomores end up living with their first-year roommates. Students who decide not to do so, room with someone else whom they consider more a “friend” but often find that it’s even more difficult to room with a “friend”. One first year student was worried at the beginning that she wouldn’t be able to live with her assigned roommate, after she saw her face book profile, but later in the year admitted that while it was challenging, they had learned how to work things out. To what extent are students willing to engage with / try to understand their roommates? Policy-wise, there is an expectation that they work things out – you cannot move out of your room until you have taken certain steps like talking to the roommate, talking with the JA etc.

MANAGING CONFLICT

In high school, many of these kids didn’t have to establish relationships with people who were different. So when they come to Bates, “they need a lot of handholding on how to do it”. When difficulties arise, some students move out; others figure it out on their own. Currently, this type of ‘learning’ in the residential system happens on an “independent basis”. Because of lack of time, resources and other constraints, residence life staff (junior advisors etc) do not have sufficient training to be effective resources for diversity-related issues. They are in a better position to deal with ‘tangible’ things – like security issues, but they are not really trained to deal with roommate mediations related to more difficult issues like diversity. The question then becomes how to address this gap: **how do you institute this type of intentional learning / skill building?** The orientation program is already packed...

Participants also talked about how little we know about the conflicts that students have (particularly in terms of roommate situations). Is it just differences in personality (which might be a simpler thing to address). On the one hand, we want students to be “agents of their own lives”, but at the same time, some issues are difficult to address and there should be shared dialogues, programs etc to help students deal with them. For instance, issues related to sexual orientation are among the hardest conflicts to deal with.

We could keep better track of student responses to conflict. For instance, is it only students of color who move out of their rooms because of such issues? Is it true that people in their last year move in with people who are more like them demographically? Residential life staff get the impression that students “gravitate to people who are more like them”. **Who are students [choosing to live with] and why? What are conflicts about? Is it measurable?**

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

How does a campus meaningfully and appropriately adjust for / engage students beyond the first year? **Participants observed that students have so many responsibilities that fewer things become mandatory.** It was pointed out that there was not one white male in this break-out session. **Beyond the first year, it is a big challenge to get students to become involved in experiences outside the classroom.**

Even on a day like Martin Luther King Day, on which classes are cancelled, only about 10% of the community participates. One faculty member makes her students attend an MLK event by giving an assignment that requires them to attend the event, but there is "hostility" about the assignment. One white student, who "didn't want to talk about race", said that if it hadn't been a requirement, he would have gone skiing that day. "Some people come from privilege, who don't want to engage in conversation, because of different social positions, histories".

What are some ways to help students understand the concept of privilege? Could we have sophomore seminars (similar to first-year seminars)? Could we make campus engagement / conversations mandatory?

ADVISING

In terms of developing partnerships to support students, the Athletics department is talking to Dean of Students and Dean of Faculty about issues, but more conversation is needed to bring all the overlapping areas together to provide the best education and produce the best students. Coaches work a lot on building teams, connecting with players etc, but they also connect with players outside the strict realm of athletics. **Staff in Athletics have more involvement with advising, so student athletes have a "safety net – someone else [to talk to] about various "non-athletic" issues – roommates, first year seminars, home sickness etc.** However, spring coaches are at a disadvantage because they don't meet their students at the beginning of the semester. There also needs to be more advisors for non athletes.

A challenge identified by a faculty member, is the "expectation / difficulty built into the advising system". There needs to be "some kind of credit for doing the work of advising". The responsibility falls only on faculty who teach first year seminars, who have 15 students, but who do not get extra credit for advising. "Sometimes it's impossible to teach. I'm not their mother. Also, students should have privacy. It's work that you're invited to do on top of regular teaching. It's ill-distributed. How could we have a support / reward structure in the advising system? It is important to address the distribution of / compensation for faculty "student supporters".

Like the faculty member mentioned above, Athletics Department staff "do not want to be mom/or dad" to students. Students need to resolve their own conflicts with team mates or roommates, but it's increasingly difficult. **Students need to be taught how to deal with conflict.**

COMPARTMENTALIZING: A BARRIER TO COLLABORATION

One challenge to collaboration on the campus is that “faculty are suspicious / dismissive of anyone who is staff. Colleagues are defined only as faculty, and not staff”. This type of hierarchical attitude is a barrier to collaboration. “Coaches care about students’ GPAs”. There is a huge division. **We need to address our own non-inclusivity before we talk about students engaging with diversity. We also need to recognize professional diversity.**

The student participant observed that focus groups that are offered to first year students of color are helpful in terms of talking about social, academic, and residential life and is a great resource, “but in a way it [is also] very exclusive” because it is only for students of color. “Deans should have a connection with all students. The exclusion of other students [in the focus groups], while creating a “safe space” for students of color, contributes to the **“boxing in and boxing out” that keeps students disconnected.** This type of **‘compartmentalization’ is a barrier to engaging with difference.**

Another example of ‘exclusion’ was cited about a senior who was on the track team but she was doing it for fun, so she often felt excluded because the other athletes had different expectations about being an athlete. She was a senior, so she wanted to sit with her senior [non-athlete] friends [at dinner]. For athletes, however, it was a “prebuilt social group” – their support group. So there is a tension among students who come in with different experiences and expectations. “She didn’t fit in so she wanted to quit”. “It takes effort to challenge expectations”.

In a way, athletics is an area where diversity is least experienced, in that for athletes, their identity as “athletes” supersedes other identities. “My athletes feel very safe in this space. There is not much visible diversity but a lot of socio-economic diversity and other non-visible forms of diversity”. But the structure of athletics help – everyone is “put in a uniform” – nobody can see the differences on the field. Specific efforts at inclusivity also help. For instance, in an advanced conditioning class, athletes of a particular sport tend to stick to their own group. But mixing up the groups helps to “break down the membrane that exists between different teams”.

The faculty and staff members in the group also identified a need to understand residential life, as **there is a “level of disconnect” between students and faculty / staff.** Although they know students in the classroom or in the context of administrative offices, faculty and staff don’t really know much about the day to day life of students. **There is a real need to understand “what the rest of their lives is about”.**

Session participants agreed that Dr. Pederson’s conceptualization of the overlapping sources of learning and knowledge development (facilities, facilitators and resources) was very helpful, as it underscored the importance of being involved with departments / offices with which one wouldn’t necessarily recognize an obvious link. Creating such

overlapping relationships would result in students having more than one person who understands them – which would be important for student development overall.

BUILDING BRIDGES

Staff at the Harvard Center for Community Partnerships observed that civic engagement contributes a great deal towards breaking down barriers in terms of diversity. **“When you go into the community, you encounter difference and you encounter yourself in those differences – you explore who you are, who ‘the others’ are, you confront privilege.**

Currently, there is a Bonner Leadership program through which Somali children come to campus to talk about their language, culture, religion etc. It’s the best type of training [on diversity]. The program revealed that sometimes, Bates students have “certain prejudices they [can’t] let go of. For example, they express amazement that Somali kids could “grow up so well when their [immigrant] parents are so overwhelmed”. “Our students kept focusing on the differences between themselves and the Somali community – in terms of family life etc. But the Somali kids kept talking about similarities, underscoring that we are a lot more similar than different.

Staff from the Student Activities Office pointed out that their leadership program for students was an effort to help students find commonality and build similar [leadership] skills together. **It is important to understand the need for “color-consciousness”, but at the same time, find similarities among people, and to talk and learn about differences.** We need to provide more opportunities for students to connect commonalities.

The first-year orientation week is one time when the whole class is together. There should be other ways to organize orientation to be more interactive – maybe a dialogue – meet other people who are different. Make intentional groupings to break up “cliques”, so that students don’t end up just sitting with their friends. Some events should also be made mandatory, and there should be consequences for missing them.

While civic engagement has helped build bridges, there is also a feeling that “we have picked the low hanging fruit”. Sometimes you have a saturation point – so many organizations want so many students / so much research. “Somali people have seen so much of our ‘engaging’!” How do we go beyond the low-hanging fruit?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP

Session participants identified several ways in which the theme of the day could be extended beyond the symposium, to enhance “Collaborating for Learning outside the Classroom”:

1. Create intentional learning opportunities for first years to develop interpersonal skills related to diversity

2. Explore the possibility of developing “sophomore seminars” to increase intentional, mandatory learning opportunities related to diversity
3. Collect more data (ex: why are conflicts happening?)
4. Make it mandatory for all students to “make it work”, when it came to dealing with difficult dialogues
5. Create safe spaces (outside dorm rooms) for discussions on difficult topics related to diversity
6. Explore additional forms of civic engagement and on-campus programs to create opportunities for engagement
7. Address non-inclusivity / hierarchies among and between faculty and staff, and encourage communication between faculty and staff
8. Revise the advising system; ensure better distribution of ‘advisor’ roles; create a reward structure for those who take on advising in addition to teaching
9. Re-define “diversity” beyond just race /ethnicity to include various forms of diversity
10. Use Dr. Pederson’s conceptualization of the overlapping sources of learning and knowledge development (facilities, facilitators and resources) to create inter-departmental teams to support student development

2011 Presidential Symposium
Break-Out Session: *Preparing Graduates for Diversity beyond Bates*
Facilitators: Pam Baker, Dean of Faculty Office, Department of Biology
Anecia O'Carroll, Alumni and Parent Engagement

Question prompts for this Breakout Session:

1. What opportunities in the curriculum encourage students to recognize that individuals experience environments differently based on position in the campus community, background experiences, and identity, and then support their *engagement of differences* as a tool for learning? What successes and challenges have you had engaging students?
2. How do we positively influence the classroom climate for all students and communicate high expectations for learning to all students? What types of professional development would help you to build the leadership skills to help all students and faculty excel in a diverse environment?
3. What are our learning goals for students regarding intercultural competencies and the ability to work in diverse groups? How do we utilize pedagogical practices to foster gains in such learning? Where would you like this work to go next?
4. How do we support students who demonstrate their interest in and/or experience with engaging diversity in the co-curriculum and in interpersonal relationships?
5. What short, mid-range and long term steps can faculty and academic support staff members take to create opportunities for us all to incorporate diversity and inclusion into your work? What kinds of partnerships would foster your efforts? (How) does Bates prepare students for a diverse world?

Discussion

(NECASL) Data that students' views of diversity broaden over time is heartening.
Can we learn from the data about changes to foster?
But with small numbers of respondents, how should we respond to data?
Classroom experiences are important to this process.

What happens in our classrooms to prepare students for the wider world?

Students' self-segregation is problematic, default mode of interaction.
Is it all bad? It is really a choice?
It's problematic when not a choice.
Problem is the lack of a student center.
Common bonds exist within groups; how do we (learn to) interact with other people?
Tone and sensitivity are important.

A campus that is making itself diverse will not simply leave students always to self-select who they interact with.

Interactional diversity – where students are encouraged and supported to interact with peers unlike themselves – can foster intellectual and social development and prepare students for citizenship in a diverse world.

Are partnerships (among various offices) working on inclusive excellence supported? At what institutional level(s)?

Is there assessment in the structure?

Classrooms and labs are spaces underutilizing diversity as a resource.

Students' course selection creates opportunities for interaction and community-building.

Instructors could take advantage of the “bond” among students who love a course/ topic and use the common ground of that topic to engage students with each other.

Faculty can make interactions easier. Use ACP “*Making Excellence Inclusive*” to identify characteristics or practices which are markers of inclusive excellence.

The weight is on all of us to recognize diversity.

Representation (of multicultural and international) scholars is important for students to see.

Responsibilities for diversity and inclusion are “bracketed”; personnel get very nervous about “diversity.”

Responsibility for recognizing differences within our community and within groups in the community belongs to all.

Representation on the faculty is important for students to see.

Do traditional markers of student success (in *Making Excellence Inclusive*) help us prepare students for a complexly diverse world? (How) Does changing “excellence” do so?

How do we find out where students are, their learning styles?

Success is a satisfying life; measured differently in different cultures; defined by external standards; students' ideas about it changes while in college.

How to develop awareness of students' preparedness? What are optional methods, which might also value experiences of underrepresented students (see *MEI*).

Faculty frankness often leads to students abandoning majors, when faculty (and students) would find more success acknowledging where students are and working with them. Students avoid instructors because of negative experiences with them regarding diversity.

There is a gap between where students are and where resources are. Good model in designated tutor who helps students find resources they need.

The goal is to enhance individuals' achievements and success.

Should emphasize learning rather than teaching.

Put in place structure that supports holistically.

Suggestions for Follow-Up Action

A reference source for this conversation is *Making Excellence Inclusive: A Framework for Embedding Diversity and Inclusion into Colleges and Universities' Academic Excellence Mission* by Alma Clayton-Pedersen, Nancy O'Neill, and Caryn McTighe Musil.

Explore data about student perceptions of diversity to identify changes to foster for advancing learning about diversity.

Assist faculty who encourage and support students' interactions with each other. Faculty can use the common ground of student interest in a course topic to engage students. These engagements foster critical thinking and prepare students for citizenship in a diverse world.

Support learning skills that help people interact with people unlike themselves. Intergroup interactions and structured dialogues can help.

Establish a student center.

Encourage partnerships among various offices to work on inclusive excellence. Find out at what institutional level(s) the work is being done; support and assess it.

Use "*Making Excellence Inclusive*" to identify characteristics or practices which are markers of inclusive excellence.

Value experiences of underrepresented students. Include related skills and knowledge in understandings of excellence.

Increase representation of multicultural and international scholars and staff in the faculty and administration.

Find out where students are, their learning styles and develop awareness of students' preparedness? Acknowledge where students are and work with them. Use "wise mentoring" to avoid discouraging students and help to reduce stereotype threat.

Expand use of a good model that works well: designated course tutors who help students find resources they need.

PRESIDENT'S SYMPOSIUM

April 28, 2011

Notes from the Breakout Session in Muskie Archives

Students Research Diversity at Bates

Facilitators: Holly Lasagna and Kerry O'Brien

There were 12 people present including the facilitators. Holly and Kerry made brief opening remarks. It was noted that 90% of our seniors do a senior project. The facilitators then turned the session over to Ben Hughes '12 to tell us about the project taken on by the Mays Men and the Women of Color – name of the project was “Let’s Talk about It” –Diversity on Campus. He talked about the Napkin Board and its successes and challenges. The Napkin Board was selected as a way of providing a space to ask a question anonymously. Students were asked to post questions on the board that they had dealing with, or experiences with, someone who was different from them. The purpose of those receiving the questions was to help students find the most qualified person(s) to answer the questions.

Examples of the questions might be:

- If “nigger” is offensive – why do black people say it?
- How is queer different from “faggot”?

The purpose is to have a conversation and build an atmosphere that will get people talking and thinking about diversity. Asking a question does not make you a racist. Some people had expressed concern that the board could be used as an opportunity to display racism.... There were certainly up and down sides to the program but it was a beginning and now we have to figure out other ways and avenues to get conversations going.

Talk about –

- Difference with respect for each other’s differences
- How should I treat you because you are different
- People don’t understand the diversity on campus
- Describe and accommodate differences

The questions that were put on the board that could be answered were put back on the board for people to see.

Question from the audience: Should it be the burden of the students to talk on their difference?

- stress value of sharing experiences – you can’t critique experience – you can’t know one persons experience but you can learn and understand from it.

Let’s create the kinds of open forums that allow people to share their stories

The program will be looking for ways to build trust so that students will begin to ask questions and engage in conversations. It is important to keep the program going. It must be student driven. This program needs to be proactive more than reactive.

Nancy Munoz '11 – Senior Thesis Research – An Integration Program for Bates College

Two programs: Breaking Bread (Colgate) and CCOR – Campus Conversations on Race (Colby)
Both programs or studies had a minimal amount of student participation but the most popular seemed to be the Breaking Bread – bringing together Bates Republicans & Robinson Players to cook a meal together and get to know each other.

CCOR was a little harder because it is a six-week program of bringing people together over a longer period of time but certainly more in-depth types of conversations take place. Many people have seen Nancy's presentation and results of her study.

Nancy has a presentation prepared which outlines all of her study, the parts that worked and those that were less definitive.

Notes by:

Carmen Purdy, Assistant Director
Equity & Diversity Resources

STAFF AS CATALYSTS: LINKING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TO THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE COLLEGE

Facilitators:

Andrew White, Director of User Services

Krista Aronson, Associate Professor of Psychology

Scribe:*

Heather Lindkvist, Visiting Instructor in Anthropology

OVERVIEW

In the break-out session **Staff as Catalysts**, participants discussed how to recognize that “making excellence inclusive” is the responsibility of everyone at Bates College. Ten people attended the session: four current staff members, one former staff member and alumna, two facilitators, one administrator, one scribe, and Dr. Alma Clayton-Pedersen, the keynote speaker.

Participants considered the following questions:

1. What does inclusive excellence mean for you and your work?
2. What short, mid-range and long term things can staff do to make excellence inclusive?
3. Where would you like this work to go next? What policies, practices, or structures do we need to establish to support efforts to engage diversity? How can you make this happen?
4. What types of professional development would help you to build the leadership skills to help all students, staff, and faculty excel in a diverse environment?

“Diversity is talked about a lot at Bates. Today is another good effort. But we have seen little follow-up. We lose interest in diversity, especially in the small interconnections.... I would be surprised if anything practical came out of today.”

Bates Staff member

Participants agreed that the 2011 Presidential Symposium is just one of many opportunities to *discuss* diversity and inclusion at Bates. A follow-up question to “What does inclusive excellence mean?” as “Who has charged us with reimagining diversity at Bates?” The latter led to a discussion about whether the charge is from the day, the institution, or a particular person at the College.

Most participants expressed their frustration that there has been **little follow-through or action** after meetings or sessions like the Presidential Symposium. As one participant remarked, “We need to make learning from difference an inescapable feeling on campus. One cannot come to work without understanding how [diversity] will affect your job.”

BATES CAMPUS CLIMATE AND “CULTURE”

Participants commented that Bates has a particular campus culture that values autonomy and independence. “People don’t trust one another to do their job,” one person commented. Another stated, “At Bates there is an intense, unspoken individualism of students and faculty. A collective? Is there anything *we* do collaboratively?” Another participant pointed to the hesitancy at institutionalizing policies or programs to the point they are mandatory: “We have institutionalized the First Year Seminar. And, yes, probably 99% of students take it but it is not *mandatory*.” Participants identified other policies and programs that may be institutionalized (formal) but not required or regulated: the common

*Members of the DiVINE Leadership Team and the Session Facilitators have reviewed these notes.

hour on Tuesdays, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and the Presidential Symposium to name just a few. Another participant noted how people tend to be pessimistic about the reach of diversity initiatives or programs. “For instance, if 80 people show up to an event [like the Presidential Symposium], rather than say, ‘look at how many people are interested in this issue.’ We say, ‘only 80 people showed up, that is not enough.’”

“Making excellence inclusive is about a responsibility, not just to self, but beyond self.” As participants grappled with how to build community and make excellence inclusive at Bates, a participant commented that “a lot of people don’t know how to make the next move. We all want to learn. We need the knowledge. What do we *need* to make this happen?”

In response, another participant said, “Faculty and staff may not be equipped to deal with diversity. Students say I shouldn’t feel [unsafe, marginalized] here. The student population is changing all the time.” Another remarked, “Racial diversity is not the only diversity. We need to change this emphasis.” Participants agreed that the emphasis – and investment – should be on faculty and staff, especially in the short-term. Faculty and staff need the training, the tools, and the language to successfully learn from and through difference. Then they can provide students with the support and resources necessary to make excellence inclusive.

An important point raised again and again is how staff need to be acknowledged for the work they do with students and how they do learn from and through difference. One participant asked, “How many staff members were personally asked to attend the Presidential Symposium? How many are asked to participate in diversity initiatives on campus?” Another remarked, “We need to welcome people to the group. We need to make staff, faculty, and students feel included.”

CHANGING THE BATES PHILOSOPHY

Building on Dr. Clayton-Pedersen’s keynote address, participants discussed the need to make diversity “inescapable.” Several participants referred to the example of technology, how it is imposed from the outside and yet everyone has accepted it, accommodated it. As one participant noted, “If we didn’t have a wired campus, students wouldn’t come here. We need to approach diversity in the same way. If we don’t pay attention to diversity, students will go elsewhere. But it seems to be a much harder step to take.”

Bates College, both the institution and its community members, must recognize that in order to survive in the 21st century, **we must learn from and through our differences.**

CHALLENGES

Participants identified several challenges to making excellence inclusive at Bates College.

1. Communication across groups
 - How do faculty and staff interact with one another? Do they talk about difference or diversity with one another?
 - One participant noted feeling intimidated by faculty and hesitant to approach them because “they have a PhD and speak so eloquently.”
 - Another participant brought difference to the level of job skills and tasks: how can we learn from people in other departments who have roles distinct from ours?
2. Individual knowledge of and comfort with difference and diversity

- Participants discussed the challenge of moving beyond one’s comfort zone to be open to revealing what it means to
3. Identifying diversity and inclusion as a community good
 - Currently, the campus community does not recognize the value and benefit of diversity and inclusion. Participants felt that staff and faculty believe “It is someone else’s job to address these issues.”

SUCSESSES

Participants acknowledged the ways that Bates has successfully recognized diversity and how difference does affect social interactions on-campus.

1. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

- MLK is a formal, institutionalized day to recognize different aspects of diversity. ““The symbolism is inescapable. We have enough investment to set aside one day and to develop topics that engage the community.”

“I am so proud of Bates for MLK, Jr. Day. We all live lives outside of Bates. When I hear about MLK events on the news, I am proud that I work at Bates and that Bates does so much around diversity.”

Bates Staff member

2. Forums on Discrimination

- The recent student forums about diversity and discrimination are a “marker of our success. Students are able to talk about difference, to let us know how they feel. Students recognize that something is going on and want us to do something about it.”

3. Academic Programs like African American Studies, American Cultural Studies, and Women and Gender Studies

- Participants discussed that academic programs provide a space for students to discuss difference.

4. Committees like Diversity Matters, DiVINE, and the Focus Groups

- However, the campus community may not know about these committees and events. As one participant asked, “Does the campus even know these committees exist? How do you get to participate? Can anyone be a part of them? And how much is out there that we don’t know about?”

5. Social interactions with students of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds

- Participants commented that because staff often work closely with students, they can learn a lot from the student experience. And students can learn from them. As one participant acknowledged, “I have learned a lot from the students who I trained and who worked with me. We realized just how much we care about each other even though we might come from different backgrounds.”

OPPORTUNITIES

Participants provided a number of suggestions to encourage the “small interconnections” between different groups on campus. Several pointed to programs and events that occur at other institutions to promote a campuswide dialogue about diversity (e.g., student sponsored lunches with table topics, monthly seminars about community engagement that occur over lunch on the third Friday of every month, faculty presentations about research or pedagogy).

1. Sponsor small group discussions or roundtables over lunch. These lunches should be held *throughout* the year. To foster more conversations about difference members of the campus community should come together frequently, not just a one-time affair each year.
2. Build on existing institutionalized structures. Participants pointed to the success of MLK, Jr. Day. What other events and programs can we formalize?
3. Provide ongoing opportunities for professional development for faculty, staff, and administrators. Such professional development is needed, especially as the student population changes yearly. We need to sustain an inclusive and welcoming campus climate for our students.
4. Increase space and opportunities for faculty-student interactions outside of the classroom.
 - Faculty and students should mingle in ways that encourage informal discussions about difference.
 - Faculty must model behavior for civil discourse about difference, diversity, and inclusion.
5. Increase space and opportunities for faculty-staff interactions in an informal atmosphere
6. Develop an Intergroup Dialogue Project that trains faculty, staff, and students to serve as facilitators for dialogue groups.
7. Include staff in conversations about difference, diversity, and inclusion.
 - Staff interact with students on a day-to-day basis so they need opportunities to develop their leadership skills in this area.
 - Include staff on committees about diversity
 - Invite staff to events about diversity
8. Promote committees, programs, and events that make excellence inclusive. *Everyone* should be aware of what is going on at Bates.