CHAPTER ONE

An Introduction to Managing Diversity: A Mandate or an Oxymoron?

T. Elon Dancy II

My teaching experience in higher education and student affairs leadership is situated within two large doctoral-granting universities in the southeast and southwest regions of the United States of America. Many students enrolled in my graduate courses make clear that they are hungry to learn from conversations that are willing to “go there.” My students perceive these kinds of conversations to be honest and courageous in disrupting silences around student differences, campus diversity, social provocation and controversy. Some of these students confess an ignorance about perspectives other than their own and suggest that this ignorance is easily maintained in areas like the “bible belt”—an informal term referring to a concentration of socially conservative Evangelical Protestants across the southern United States. Many of my students are natives of the southeast and southwest regions of America. Notwithstanding, they insist that class participation may be their first and perhaps only time to engage in conversations about the realities of diversity on campus. These students must become more conscious about the world in which they inhabit given that all of their professional goals involve serving college students. By the time they reach the end of the course, students argue that colleges and universities have more work to do in aligning missions they espouse and missions they practice as these missions involve diversity and evolving student realities.

The mission of an institution of higher education conveys that institution’s assumptions, values, and purposes to its personnel, students, and the broader society. Educational policies, programs, and day-to-day practices emerge from the mission of the institution (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 1991). Yet, institutional mission statements reflect social trends and social transformations. As the country
becomes increasingly diverse, colleges and universities must continue to reconsider what it means to graduate individuals who are competent, active, and productive in society. Increasingly, across America colleges and universities affirm the role that diversity plays in enhancing teaching and learning in higher education (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimon, Brown, & Bartee, 2005). Many students enrolled in my graduate courses assert they are ambitious for expanded conversations about diversity. In addition, they attempt to make meaning of what collegiate personnel can do and should do given the challenges and considerations campus diversity presents to collegiate leadership, management and practice. This book brings together scholars whose chapters inform these conversations.

Managing Diversity: (Re)Visioning Equity on College Campuses is a much-needed contribution to the literature. The book offers empirical, scholarly, and personal space to interrogate the seemingly elusive but undeniable challenges postsecondary institutions face in managing diversity. Book chapters are offered in a variety of voices—those which detail theoretical, conceptual, sociohistorical, and globalized meanings of diversity, those which highlight college personnel narratives around social justice and equity, and those which illustrate identity politics and provocative topics among students, faculty, and staff that continue to present formidable challenges to collegiate equity agendas. The book is multidisciplinary in its analysis of literature, drawing from education, feminist studies, health policy, critical race studies and theory, psychology, sociology, anthropology, organizational behavior, and law. The intent is to add to what we know in diversifying and making more inclusive collegiate contexts; to present new frameworks for thinking about diversity, equity, and inclusion; and to identify and detail policy and practice implications. Tangentially, the book title reflects commitment to accountability-based action as higher education is compelled by courts and legal opinion to maintain a diverse and inclusive campus.

Writer and management consultant Peter Drucker offered the familiar adage—“Leadership is doing the right thing, and management is doing things right.” “Doing things right” evokes skill development. This book is titled Managing Diversity to intentionally encourage college and student affairs leaders to think about engaging the work of
diversity as a skill that must be performed well to benefit all students academically and socially. The book acknowledges that while we may lead for diversity, we must also develop skills for competent management of diversity. Competent management is a necessity to meet accountability demands. In this vein, the book argues that managing diversity rests squarely on existing norms for management including organizational conflict, program planning, campus crisis, media management, budgeting and fiscal management and other forms of management. As the adage suggests, leadership and management are connected and one should not be forsaken for the other. While leadership may be more or less innate, this book also recognizes that good leaders may also be good managers. I believe that effectively managing diversity brings colleges and universities closer to shaping better outcomes among students in a world full of global and social unrest.

The legal notion of diversity as a compelling interest of an institution of higher education was defined by Justice Lewis Powell’s decision in the 1978 Supreme Court case, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*. We are also called to act in the wake of substantial research highlighting the benefits of diversity to students’ education outcomes (antonio, 2001; Bowen & Bok, 1998; Chang, 1996, 2001; Gurin, Dey, Gurin, & Hurtado, 2003; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999). I am convinced that a variety of court decisions, widespread perplexity regarding affirmative action, and a rapidly changing American societal mosaic mandate colleges and universities to pay close attention to issues of diversity on their campuses. We must all become more proactive in assessing campus climate as the changing social landscape only promises to make issues of diversity and equity more nuanced and complex. In various ways, both student affairs professionals and faculty have responsibilities to shape campus environments that work to insure equity of access as well as social and academic success. To that end, chapters in this volume consider, highlight, and describe those responsibilities.

This collection of chapters is organized into three parts. Part One presents new perspectives on the diversity concept, expanding ways of thinking about campus diversity. The second part of the book considers identity politics on college campuses. Chapters include voices, testimonials, and narratives describing the ways in which various
participants in higher education navigate identity politics in the field. Part Three considers contexts within higher education that demand attention to issues of identity and equity as well as the interplay between the two.

Two chapters in Part One explore the relationship between diversity and equity in academe. One chapter, by Rebecca Ropers-Huilman and Kathryn A. E. Enke, describes the inherent ways in which the concepts of diversity and interdisciplinarity (i.e., work across academic disciplines) are related and shape how interdisciplinary academic programs focused on oppressed groups (i.e., ethnic studies, women and gender studies, sexuality studies) are valued on college campuses. After describing complexities associated with interdisciplinary scholarship, Ropers-Huilman and Enke offer important questions and ideas about interdisciplinarity aimed toward enhancing collegiate diversity agendas. Subsequently, they provide policy and practice recommendations for academic institutions and programs seeking to foster equity through diversity and inclusion.

In another chapter, Roland Mitchell and Kirsten Edwards engage the intersections of white privilege and teacher privilege to construct a compelling argument about how scholars of color in majority-white institutions are granted “honorary whiteness”, a term that describes the cognitive dissonance faculty of color experience in predominantly white collegiate contexts. More specifically, the authors draw upon the narratives of Black and White professors to illustrate the ways in which faculty race impacts the teaching and learning process in collegiate classrooms. Samuel D. Museus and Frank Harris describe elements of institutional culture as these shape minority college students’ experiences. The authors engage the concept of institutional culture vis-à-vis the concept of institutional climate—important distinctions as they delineate campus responsibilities for ensuring success among students of color.

Part One ends with T. Elon Dancy’s chapter which argues the case for effective management of diversity on college campuses. He situates this argument in a review of historical literature around collegiate diversity movements and legal opinion that creates compelling interest in successful diversity management on campus. In addition, he reviews extant empirical research that considers the benefits of di-
An Introduction to Managing Diversity

versity for organization and college student outcomes. The chapter ends with practical strategies for colleges interested in effectively managing diversity.

In Part Two, *Identity Politics on College Campuses*, Penny Pasque analyzes the diaries of eleven diverse women who held elected positions in national higher education associations and worked in various capacities within higher education. The diaries, written over a nine-year period, offer valuable insight to the field about how the work of colleges and universities might develop in ways that are inclusive of women. Fred A. Bonner II, Dave Louis, and Chance W. Lewis engage identity intersections in their chapter, exploring the experiences of African American men in college who are both poor and high-achieving. The authors describe both challenges and supports for this group of students, highlighting the ways in which intersectionality is linked to student perceptions as oppressed in collegiate contexts. They offer transferable ideas to colleges, focusing largely on the importance of mentoring in ensuring successful futures among this group.

In the following chapter, Terrell L. Strayhorn argues for racial and sexual identity considerations in diversity work in colleges. His arguments rest on data analysis of African American and LGBT student narratives. The chapter describes the ways in which student groups coalesce among each other to attain equitable treatment on campus. Part Two ends with T. Elon Dancy’s chapter which considers the identity politics of gender among men in colleges. He offers men’s gender constructions, manhood, and masculinities as additional dimensions that push the diversity concept in colleges and universities. He highlights men’s issues in higher education among college students, faculty, and administrators as sites to explore disparate trends in higher education. Dancy calls for more empirical study in this area, conceptualizing this research as partner to feminist work. He also offers the term, effemophobia, as a novel way to envision men’s intolerance of vulnerability in men.

In Part Three, *(In)Equities in Collegiate Contexts*, a chapter written by Sharon Fries-Britt, Toyia Younger, and Wendell Hall explores the experiences of minority students who are majoring in physics in college. The authors investigate students’ academic experiences, paying
attention to student/faculty interactions. Fries-Britt, Younger, and Hall report analytical findings from a larger, five-year study of academic, social, and racial experiences of minority students who were succeeding in physics. Recommendations for campuses include establishing meaningful connections beyond the classroom for minorities in physics. This study also encourages faculty to become expansive in their pedagogy by creatively structuring activities that account for the various ways that all college students learn.

In Chapter 11, Robert T. Palmer considers the sociocultural contexts of Asian, African American, and Latino students. He highlights critical issues, considerations, and caveats for collegiate personnel who provide counseling services or otherwise advise these student groups. In Chapter 12, Lorenzo DuBois Baber investigates the issues involved for predominantly White collegiate contexts in developing diverse “spaces” into culturally inclusive “places.” He argues that creating opportunities for inclusion in these contexts involves challenging traditional notions of exclusion. Baber’s study investigated the experiences of fifteen African American students in their efforts to identify a supportive place within the predominantly white institution they attended. His findings add clarity for the field in understanding the factors African American students may consider in identifying places of belonging.

Part Three closes with Marybeth Gasman’s chapter in which she describes how faculty members’ roles enable them to fight for equity in higher education. She draws upon a personal account, paying attention to how she made meaning of her identities and how her background shapes her research agenda in higher education. She illustrates compelling examples of the ways in which faculty may manage issues of difference across their teaching, research, and service.

This volume offers practical nourishment to student and academic affairs administrators and faculty who are called to engage ever-evolving work connected to growing pluralism on college campuses. Faculty might use this volume in developing curricula related to topics of diversity and social justice in higher education. Perhaps most importantly, this volume might serve as a resource for college or graduate students hungry for conversations about campus diversity,
An Introduction to Managing Diversity

inclusion, and equity. While experiences of many groups in colleges and universities are discussed, some student groups (e.g., American Indians) and collegiate contexts (e.g., community colleges) are hardly discussed. Largely, this reflects the submissions from authors when a call was issued. There is ample space and place in the literature for many to engage in dialogue about the critical topic of diversity in higher education. While recognizing the limitations of this project, I yet consider it productive to highlight extensions of the diversity concept and to join the impassioned debate around diversity and equity in higher education.

References

Managing diversity is an on-going process that unleashes the various talents and capabilities which a diverse population bring to an organization, community or society, so as to create a wholesome, inclusive environment, that is ‘safe for differences’, ‘enables people to reject rejection’, ‘celebrates diversity’, and maximizes the full potential of all, in a cultural context where everyone benefits. Multiculturalism, as the art of managing diversity, is an inclusive process where no one is left out. Diversity, in its essence, then is a ‘safeguard against idolatry’ — the making of one group a... In the business world the process of multiculturalism is best maintained through managing diversity — an intrinsic approach to Managing diversity means acknowledging people’s differences and recognizing these differences as valuable; it enhances good management practices by preventing discrimination and promoting inclusiveness. Good management alone will not necessarily help you work effectively with a diverse workforce. It is often difficult to see what part diversity plays in a specific area of management. The Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity is experienced in providing help with training and advice on the variety of situations that occur, tailored to your specific environment. Their keywords: mandatory mediation, oxymoron, court-annexed mediation. Suggested Citation: Suggested Citation. Quek Anderson, Dorcas, Mandatory Mediation: An Oxymoron? Examining the Feasibility of Implementing a Court-Mandated Mediation Program (January 1, 2010). Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution Vol 11.2 (Spring 2010), Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2843509. Dorcas Quek Anderson (Contact Author). Introduction to Organizational Diversity. We often hear the term ‘diversity’ bandied about in our everyday usage. Usually, when we come across the term, it is in the context of having a mix of gender, race, ethnic, sexual orientation etc in a setting wherein there is no discrimination based on these traits. In the United States, the government encourages and mandates organizational diversity as a matter of law and even to the extent of ensuring that, corporates not only follow the letter of the law but also the spirit of the law. This is reflected in the equal opportunity employer law, which states that organizations cannot discriminate against potential job applicants on race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and sexual orientation.