Responding to Michigan: Measuring Racial Diversity and Critical Mass

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Diversity Produces Educational Benefits

Consistent with its mission, recent history, and strategic plan, the University is an inclusive educational community that attracts a diverse population of academically talented students.

This diversity enhances the educational experience and is an integral component of educational excellence.
Benefits Must Be Demonstrated

- Diversity is not a result, but a means of achieving a concrete set of educational objectives.
- Diversity must be defined.
- Objectives must be identified.
- The relevance of numbers must be determined.
- Structured policies and programs must be reviewed and assessed.
Discussion Involves a New Paradigm

- Diversity shifts the objective from remediation and equal opportunity.
- The new model for inclusive excellence is the academy that systematically leverages diversity for student learning and institutional excellence.
How Did We Get Here?

Prior to June 23, 2003, remediation of the present effects of past discrimination was the only constitutionally permissible basis for the use of race in governmental programs.

The U.S. Supreme Court decisions in Grutter and Gratz recognized the educational benefits of diversity as a compelling state interest to justify race-conscious programs.
What Does This Mean?

Diversity does not have to include or be limited to race or ethnicity.

Where diversity involves considerations of race or ethnicity, diversity-related programs will be subjected to “strict scrutiny” review.
What Does This Mean?

- Courts will accord deference to academic judgment in matters regarding the educational relevance of diversity.
- The use of race and/or ethnicity must be narrowly tailored to accomplish a specific educational purpose.
- Educational judgment must be supported by empirical evidence of the educational benefits achieved by the diversity-related policies/programs.
What Does “Narrowly Tailored” Mean?

- Eligibility criteria are applied universally.
- Race is not a defining factor.
- Serious, good faith consideration is given to the existence/feasibility of race-neutral alternative ways to achieve institutional objectives.
- Non-minorities are not “unduly burdened” by the policy/program; substantial weight is given to factors other than race.
- The policy/program is periodically reviewed.
What Does “Periodic Review” Mean?

- The institution must develop empirical evidence of the educational effects/value of diversity.
- The institution must periodically evaluate the extent to which diversity impacts learning outcomes, and otherwise advances the institution’s educational goals.
- The institution must adjust its policies/programs as indicated by these periodic assessments.
UM’s Policy Incorporates Assessment

- Provost’s Diversity Advisory Committee
- Provost’s Research Collaborative (longitudinal study)
- OIRP oversight of “narrowly tailored” procedures and reports
- OIRP administration of other studies, including the Diversity Index and Critical Mass
Scope of Assessment

- Multi-faceted approach
- Combination of faculty-driven research and IR assessment
- At our disposal:
  UM databases
  Past survey data
- In process and planned:
  Survey items exploring diversity issues
  Integrate diversity index and learning outcomes
Examples of Assessment

Investigating:

- Activity in student involvement
- Relationships with others
- Diverse interactions
- Interaction between above and outcomes, such as satisfaction, learning
- How these predict increased self-report learning outcomes
- Program outcomes
Learning Outcomes

- Clarifying values
- Solving problems
- Thinking creatively
- Thinking critically
- Teamwork
- Professional ethics
- Leading others effectively
- Understanding diverse cultural, political, and intellectual views
Literature Base

- Heterogeneous stimuli and Outcomes
  - The workplace (management literature)
  - Higher Education (higher education literature)
- Racial Diversity as heterogeneity (sociology)
- Critical Mass (sociology)
- Indices
Heterogeneous Stimuli & Outcomes (group outcomes)

- Workplace research
  - Instrumental outcomes
  - Affective outcomes
  - Findings: diversity => more ideas

- Explanation
  - No Groupthink / Mindlessness
Heterogeneous Stimuli & Outcomes (individual outcomes)

Diversity fosters **Pluralistic orientation**
(Engberg 2003)

- Can view the world from other’s perspective
- Tolerance of differing beliefs
- Willingness to have views challenged
- Willingness to address controversial issues
Contributions of Race to Heterogeneity

- Race NOT Socio-economic status

  - Value of lived experiences
    - Commonalities of race across classes
    - Experiences in public places
    - Intergenerational transmission
  - Failures of random selection of low SES

  (Bowen: Equity in Excellence)
Critical Mass

‘More (diversity) is Better’

Opportunities for interracial interaction

Number of interracial friendships

Increasing minority proportions have nonlinear effects

Racial Awareness

Self actualization

Interracial conversations
Critical Mass – Kanter

- Looked at sex ratios of small groups within business environments.
- Groups with small numbers of females were characterized by a number of undesirable group dynamics.
Critical Mass – Kanter
(Undesirable Group Outcomes)

- Boundary Heightening
  - Differences between tokens and dominants are exaggerated
  - Tokens' attributes are distorted to fit preexisting generalizations about their social type

- Assimilation
  - Token’s visibility generates performance pressures
Critical Mass – Kanter
(Types of Groups)

- **Uniform** - Homogeneous

- **Skewed** - around 85:15. "tokens" are often treated as representatives of their category, as symbols rather than individuals.

- **Tilted** - ratio of 65:35, dominants are just a majority and tokens a minority. Minority members are potentially allies, can form coalitions, and can affect the culture of the group.

- **Balanced** - 60:40 down to 50:50
Critical Mass (Limits of Theory)

- Tokenism and political marginalization
  - Is any race like gender?
- Can all minorities be aggregated to act like gender?
- Importance of visibility of tokens
- Paucity of research (dissertation anyone?)
Indices

- Need critical mass AND an index
- U.S. News Diversity Index
- Political acceptance UM
- Intuitive appeal: Likelihood 2 people WON’T have same race/ethnicity
- Measurement issues
Index Derivation

The formula: (based on flipping a coin)

- P (heads) = .5
- P (two heads) =
  \[ P(\text{heads}) \times p(\text{heads}) = .5 \times .5 = .25 \]

Odds of 2 people having similar race =
\[ P(\text{Black})^2 + p(\text{Asian})^2 + p(\text{Hisp})^2 + p(\text{White})^2 + p(\text{Nat Am})^2 \]

Odds of 2 people being different =
1 - (above calculation)
Index Sensitivity

- Maximum value of the index = f (n of groups)
- More subgroups = higher maximum value
- Four balanced subgroups = .75 =
  \[1 - (0.25^2 + 0.25^2 + 0.25^2 + 0.25^2)\]
- Five balanced subgroups = .8 =
  \[1 - (0.20^2 + 0.20^2 + 0.20^2 + 0.20^2 + 0.20^2)\]
- When groups not evenly distributed, upward movement of index is most sensitive to growth of smallest subgroup
# UM Findings

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<th>UM Undergraduate pop index</th>
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<td>Pre UM experience:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frosh zip all freshmen</td>
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<td>Frosh zip Asian freshmen</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frosh zip White freshmen</td>
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## UM and Peers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<td>UCLA</td>
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<td>Berkeley</td>
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Future

- Classroom analysis
- Tracking students over time
- Outcome measure
- Income diversity
Questions, comments, and discussion welcome!