

*DTS Workshop Series: Strategies
That Increase the Retention and
Academic Performance of
Underrepresented Students on
Campus: A Step-by-Step Approach
Towards Achieving Success*

**Gretchen Adams
Distinguished Teacher-Scholar
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DTS Project Goals

- Lead the campus in transferring the Campus Strategic Plan goals into undergraduate instruction.¹
- Utilize campus resources in an innovative manner to achieve excellence in teaching and learning.
- Adapt programs and instructional methods that have proven success in retaining underrepresented groups and improving academic performance.
- Assist instructors and administrators with:
 - Identifying issues
 - Developing a research-based plan of action
 - Exploring programs and funding
 - Creating evaluation plans for assessment



¹<http://strategicplan.illinois.edu/index.html>

Workshop Schedule

- Meets once a month
- Step-by-step process
- Today's focus:
 - National and campus issues surrounding underrepresented groups
 - How to identify issues in your courses/department



Underrepresented Groups

- What constitutes an underrepresented group at a university?
 - African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders
 - Gender?
 - Rural?
 - First Generation?
 - Socioeconomic Status?
 - International?
 - Students with Disabilities?
 - At risk?

Why Advocate for Underrepresented Groups?

- Social justice
- Critical to the quality of our United States workforce²
 - “Scientists, as individuals with their own points of view on what is important, make critical decisions for society on what should be studied and supported.”

²Poodry, Clifton A. Minorities in the Chemical Workforce: Diversity Models that Work. Diversity: Why Is It Important and How Can It Be Achieved?; The National Academies Press: Washington, DC, 2003, p 7.

Broad Participation Matters³

- Our sources for the future workforce are uncertain.
- The demographics of our domestic population are shifting dramatically.
- Diversity is an asset.



³National Academy of Sciences (US), National Academy of Engineering (US), and Institute of Medicine (US). Committee on Underrepresented Groups and the Expansion of the Science and Engineering Workforce Pipeline. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US): 2011.

Our Campus

- Campus Strategic Plan
 - Goal II: Provide transformative learning experiences
 - Enhance accessibility to undergraduate programs and increase diversity within these programs.



¹<http://strategicplan.illinois.edu/index.html>

Our Campus

- Where we stand campuswide⁴
 - Underrepresented students (African American, Latino/a, and Native American) constitute about 15% of the undergraduate student population (~4000 students/year)
 - 4-year graduation rates among underrepresented students are consistently below the average, approximately 52% versus 68%.
 - A gap still exists at 5 and 6-year graduation rates as well (approximately 10%).
 - Women have a higher graduation rate than men
 - 4 yr: 74% versus 63%; 5-6 yr: +6% gap
 - International student growth
 - From 4% (AY2004) to 16% (AY2013)

⁴<http://www.dmi.illinois.edu/cp/>

Can Vary from College to College and Department to Department!

- Example: College of Engineering
 - Underrepresented students (African American, Latino/a, and Native American) constitute about 7.5% of the undergraduate student population in the COE.
 - 4-year graduation rates among underrepresented students are consistently below the average, approximately 43% versus 59%.
 - International student growth
 - From 8% (AY2004) to 25% (AY2013)

How to Determine the Issues in Your Department and/or Courses?

- Analyze data?
 - Identify who can run data in your department or college.
 - Division of Management Information (DMI)
 - <http://www.dmi.illinois.edu>
 - LAS → Atlas Data Group
 - <http://www.atlas.illinois.edu>
- Survey information?
- Interviews?
- Check to see if you need IRB approval (internal use has faster IRB approval time)

Some Ways to Look at Your Data

- Retention rate
- Recruitment into your major
- Grade performance in departmental courses
- GPA of your majors
- Climate
 - Courses
 - Faculty and staff interactions
 - Peer interactions
 - Perceived support and opportunities

Assignment



- Identify ways to gather quantitative and qualitative data about underrepresented students in your courses and/or department.

Group Activity

- What are you most excited about moving forward?
- What are you most worried about moving forward?



See you on October 17th!

- What Does the Literature Tell Us?
- What Successful Instructional Strategies and Programs Already Exist on Campus?

