

Inclusive Excellence: Systematically Challenging Institutions to Promote Access and Success

James Mabry, Middlesex Community College
Megan Núñez, Wellesley College

NECHE Annual Meeting
December 13, 2019

MCC: Just the Facts

- Campuses in Bedford & Lowell
- Open access
- Total annual enrollment ~12,000 or 4,500 FTE
- Online 2,350 & Dual Enrollment 1,000
- 50% First Generation; 70% Financial Aid
- 57% white; 17.5% Hispanic; 12% Asian; 7.3% Black; 2% multiracial
- Average age 26
- 65% PT

Wellesley College: Just the Facts

- Liberal arts college for women since 1883
- ~2300 students
- Selective, residential, traditional-aged
- 38% white, 22% Asian-American,
13% Hispanic, 6.5% African-American,
13% International, 6.4% multiracial
- ~60% receive some financial aid
- 21% Pell Eligible



So many kinds of diversity in our classrooms...

Race, ethnicity, and class

Educational background

Cultural background

Gender identity

Sexual Orientation

Personality

Learning styles

Neurological development



What is Inclusive Excellence?

Community
Relationships
Belonging
Acceptance
Inspiration
Growth
Achievement



What is Inclusive Excellence?

Creating a learning community in
which every student **thrives**,
all students believe that they **matter**,
and all students recognize that they
are Wellesley.





Discover **YOUR** Path

in SOCIAL SCIENCE

“At Middlesex, I learned and experienced diversity. People here appreciate differences, and I was different.”

**Bensu
Baştopcu
Class: 2020**

Creating equity-focused environments

Inclusive Excellence at MCC

MCC is where all feel welcome, all feel connected, all feel supported, and all are empowered to achieve their educational goals

MCC is where excellence is connected across the college to give everyone the best chance to succeed

Intentional and Strategic

- BHE Equity Agenda
- BOT has an active *Student Success & Diversity Committee*
- Institutional commitment to student success
- Hiring policy and onboarding practices
- Professional development
- Faculty development

Student Success

- Guided Pathways
- Dedicated personnel to support diverse student recruitment & retention
- Multicultural Centers & AANAPISI Center
- Faculty led *100% Completion Project*
- Student Learning Outcomes
 - Global Perspectives
 - Social Responsibility

Searching for the Best

- Hiring policies promote equity
- Job descriptions reflect commitment to inclusive excellence, diversity and equity
- Required search committee training
- Engaged Affirmative Action Officer

5 Year Workforce Trend

	2014-2015	2018-2019	Growth
FT Faculty of Color	20% (n = 27)	28% (n = 33)	+ 8%
PT Faculty of Color	8% (n = 32)	10% (n = 38)	+ 2%
FT Non-instructional Staff of Color	27% (n = 75)	34% (n = 68)	+ 7%
PT Non-instructional Staff of Color	36% (n = 63)	51% (n = 55)	+ 15%

Based on MCC IPEDS data.

Campus-wide equity work

- 2013 – Joined *Leading for Change*(L4C) Consortium
- 2014 – college-wide professional day – *Our Inner Resources: Closing the Achievement Gap*
- Fall 2019 Opening Convocation Speaker
- Developed an online inclusive pedagogy toolkit

Persistent Equity Work

- 2015 – 17 L4C team reviewed research and shared best practices, and examined our data
- 2018 – joined the L4C *Racial Equity & Justice Institute*
- 2019 – L4C team drafted a diversity & equity plan for MCC

Continuing Alignment

- Building an equity-minded culture takes time
- Rely on disaggregated data for equity-based decisions
- Align resources to support equity
- Assess efforts to ensure equitable outcomes for underserved students

Elements of an Inclusive Community

Student Success and Support Programs

- College-wide
 - Wellesley First, Wellesley Plus, QR and Writing Program
- STEM
 - Posse, McNair, Biochem Bootcamp, Summer Research, WESI, Sophomore Early Research
- Teaching and Learning Center
- Cultural houses and organizations

Robust faculty/staff involvement in DEI **committees**

Faculty and staff **professional development**



How do we help students succeed?

Past and current programs...

- Student-centered activities to support academics
- Many students learn valuable professional skills
- Skills include how to navigate a majority male, Western academic culture
- Some success when focused on mentoring, cohort-building, and inclusion
- Sometimes focus on achievement *gaps*
- (“deficit mindset”)

Student support programs



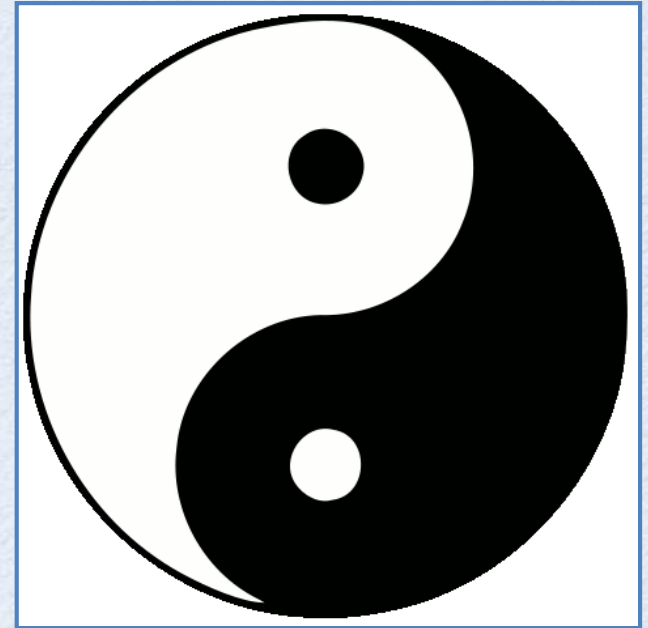
And yet....

Student-centered programs alone are not sufficient....

- Must re-invent the wheel with every group of students
- Remediation is not necessary for all
- Deficit model and meritocracy makes every “bump” their fault
- Students often feel like they don’t fit in
- Underachievement and pipeline problems

Student success also depends on their **environment**

- Teaching and Learning
- Mentors and mentees
- Inside vs. outside classroom



Dualities? Or Complementary Pairs?

Goals for our academic experience

What are the outcomes we are trying to achieve?

- Classrooms are **welcoming** spaces for all students
- Classes and majors are seen as **engaging** and **relevant**
- Students develop **respectful relationships** with classmates across racial, ethnic, and economic lines
- Pathways through the major are **accessible** to students regardless of their background
- Each student is challenged positively to **learn and grow**
- All students **achieve our learning goals**
- Students are **prepared to excel** in our disciplines later



What do we need to do?

- investigate “inclusive” pedagogies in our disciplines
- develop cultural competency
- improve student performance by reducing stereotype threat, unconscious bias, & other barriers
- understand identity development, esp. in late adolescents
- recognize how we privilege certain points of view and life experiences, such that systems of oppression are embedded in everything



Employee Development: Learning How To Change

- PLTC seminars and workshops
- Annual Inclusive Excellence Retreats
 - May 2018 and June 2019
 - 180 and 140 participants, respectively
- “Grassroots” Mellon-funded IE activities
- Staff Programs
 - Project SEED
 - Community Conversations
- Change Agent Training
 - 3 cohorts x 24 participants x 7 days



Change Agent Training

Status and “Academic Protocol”

Resilience and **growth**

Systems of **oppression**:
racism, classism, patriarchy

Systems and 2nd order **change**

Designing, executing, and supervising
work in **teams**

Art of focused **conversation**:
How can we assure that all voices are heard?
What stories emerge when all voices are heard?

WELLESLEY



Assessment

Quantitative measures of persistence, major choice, grades in major, access to fellowships

- robust support of the 3-member Office of Institutional Research
- enrollment data available directly via WANDA dashboard

But these only tell us *what* is happening, not *why*.

Qualitative measures and ethnographic approaches

- Town hall meetings
- Focus groups



Data and Analysis

- Building Institutional Research capacity
- Data Warehouse
- Dashboards and data visualization tools
- Data analytics training and support
- Predictive analytics and intervention teams

Questions or Comments

Dr. James C. Mabry

President

Middlesex Community College

@PrezMabry

mabryj@middlesex.mass.edu

Dr. Megan Núñez

Dean of Faculty Affairs

Professor of Chemistry

Wellesley College

mnunez@wellesley.edu