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Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical approaches for Diverse Populations. (2nd edition)

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Abstract

As enrollment in postsecondary education increases, so does the diversity of students. Because merely attracting students to college is not enough if we want them to flourish and graduate, institutional leaders and college and university constituents aim to create welcoming teaching and learning environments to retain students while preparing them for the diverse workforce they will enter upon graduation.

Disciplines

Educational Leadership | Higher Education Administration | Other Education | Secondary Education and Teaching
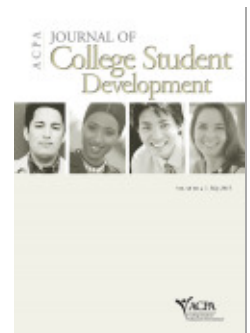
Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations (2nd Edition) ed. by Stephen John Quaye and Shaun R. Harper

Brian A. Burt

excluded AAPI, Latinos, and Native Americans from discussions related to improving the educational experiences of men of color (Pérez II, 2014; Teranishi, 2010; Torres & Bitsói, 2011). This book offers a persuasive critique of deficit-oriented paradigms that often guide interventions intended to increase the success of students of color in higher education.

Men of Color in Higher Education is a must-read for researchers and educators committed to fostering the success of AAPI, Black, Latino, and Native American men. Although some readers may contend that this book essentializes the experiences of men of color, I disagree. The contributors make a compelling case for understanding and addressing the detrimental effects of patriarchal masculinity on communities of color. The feminist perspectives infused throughout this text, provide readers with the knowledge needed to recognize and deconstruct patriarchy. Additionally, readers have much to gain from integrating anti-deficit perspectives into research, policies, and practices to increase the success of men of color. A concluding chapter that outlines implications for policy and practice would broaden the scope of this publication. Learning to recognize and capitalize on the assets men of color bring with them to higher education advances the agenda of this book. Future editions of this scholarly text could focus exclusively on women of color as well as AAPI, Latino, and Native American men in higher education.

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Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations (2nd Edition)

Stephen John Quaye and Shaun R. Harper (Editors)

New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, 373 pages, $51.95 (softcover)

Reviewed by Brian A. Burt, Iowa State University

As enrollment in postsecondary education increases, so does the diversity of students. Because merely attracting students to college is not enough if we want them to flourish and graduate, institutional leaders and college and university constituents aim to create welcoming teaching and learning environments to retain students while preparing them for the diverse workforce they will enter upon graduation.

Guided by the premise that student engagement matters, *Student Engagement in Higher Education: Theoretical Perspectives and Practical Approaches for Diverse Populations* (2nd Edition) provides student affairs professionals, faculty, and students with tools to support diverse students (e.g., non-Christians, LGBT, transgender, students of color, veterans, students with disabilities) while critically engaging majority populations. As expressed by the editors, Stephen John Quaye and Shaun Harper, and echoed in the forward by

George Kuh, the onus of student engagement rests on the institution. Thus, each chapter unpacks the significance of—and presents suggestions for—engaging students with various backgrounds.

In the opening chapter, Harper and Quaye charge faculty and student affairs educators with creating engaging environments, emphasizing the use of theory to inform practice. Taking up that gauntlet, the authors of subsequent chapters draw upon the theories that best support their student populations. In chapter 2, Quaye, Griffin, and Museus provide an overview of barriers faced by students of color, offering suggestions for improving the campus racial climate and increasing the likelihood that students of color will feel more connected to their institutions.

In chapter 3, Patton, Harris, Ranero-Ramirez, Villacampa, and Lui address the discrimination women of color face based on intersections of race and gender. Harper, Berhanu, Davis III, and McGuire, in chapter 4, emphasize the need for an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to improving the experiences of men of color. In chapter 5, Reason provides a valuable discussion of White students' identities, particularly as their Whiteness relates to privilege and oppression. Ozaki and Renn review challenges faced by multiracial students in chapter 6, suggesting ways to support their multiple racial identities. In chapter 7, Lee highlights challenges faced by international students, such as learning when English is one's second language.

Stewart and Howard-Hamilton argue in chapter 8 that to engage lesbian, gay, and bisexual college students, institutions must reform heteronormative policies and practices. In chapter 9, Marine and Catalano acknowledge that the needs of transgender students are not identical to those of lesbian, gay, and bisexual students and suggest that campuses play a more active role in providing transgender

education. In chapter 10, Lester and Harris III offer suggestions for establishing supportive environments that allow students (men and women) to develop healthy gender identities.

Ahmadi and Cole remind readers of the Christian-centric policies and practices that guide US higher education institutions in chapter 11, and recommend creating environments that do not contribute to the oppression of non-Christian students. In chapter 12, Brown and Broido offer strategies to make campus communities more inclusive for students with disabilities. Gaston Gayles, in chapter 13, encourages educators to increase opportunities for student athletes to be full members of the campus community and not solely athletes.

In chapter 14, Gupton discusses approaches to engaging homeless students, such as building their resiliency to help them see their unique strengths, and developing institutional structures and policies with homeless students in mind (e.g., extended housing options during holidays and campus closures). In chapter 15, Kezar, Walpole, and Perna utilize an anti-deficit approach when discussing low-income college students. Starvredes and Herder, the authors of chapter 16, assert that the biggest barrier to engaging online students is the lack of presence. They recommend increasing interaction between peers and faculty via technological means. In chapter 17, Wood and Moore call for increased awareness of barriers community college students face when transferring to 4-year institutions. In chapter 18, Jacoby provides strategies for engaging commuter and part-time students.

Hagedorn, in chapter 19, recommends policies that are more adult-accommodating to better engage adult learners in community colleges. In chapter 20, Rumann and Bondi note the ongoing influx of veterans and recommend strategies to validate veterans both inside and outside of the classroom. In

the concluding chapter, Gardner and Barker remind readers that engagement is not limited to undergraduate students and outline factors that help socialize graduate students to the norms and values of graduate education

Student Engagement in Higher Education provides a unique assortment of chapters on various student populations. Written by experts, all of the chapters offer research-based and theory-informed strategies to engage students. The breadth of contributing authors' backgrounds (e.g., faculty, student affairs practitioners, administrators, students) adds to the insightfulness of these strategies. In addition, several chapters model collaborative efforts between faculty and students, demonstrating how to engage students in meaningful out-of-classroom experiences.

While this volume adds considerably to the higher education knowledge base, one limitation stands out: each chapter was designed to address one particular student population, making it less apparent that to best understand today's college students, one must take into consideration students' multiple identities and the sociocultural factors influencing their experiences (i.e. readers must read chapters in this volume in conjunction with one another). Acknowledging the inherent complexity of students' diversity, several authors utilize intersectionality as a theoretical framework. These chapters offer the most holistic representations of today's students, and their engagement strategies tend to be the most robust because they address students' multiple selves. Overall, there is some redundancy with respect to the recommendations offered, further underscoring why a more intersectional approach might have been warranted.

This book highlights the kinds of conversations needed on our campuses. A common theme is the suggestion that more educational and professional development opportunities are needed to learn about various student populations and the experiences that shape their engagement. The fact that so many authors—from different institutions—offer similar recommendations suggests either that such conversations are not taking place on college campuses, or that they are only marginally supported. This text provides an excellent starting point for faculty, administrators, students, and others genuinely concerned about improving the collegiate experiences of students in institutions of higher education.

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Engaging Students Through Social Media: Evidence-Based Practices for Use in Student Affairs

Reynol Junco

San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2014, $19.99 (Kindle edition)

Reviewed by Paul William Eaton, Louisiana State University

In the book, *Engaging Students Through Social Media: Evidence-Based Practices for Use in Student Affairs*, Reynol Junco builds on previous research and scholarship (Junco & Mastrodicasa, 2007; Junco & Timm, 2008), highlighting the need for informed, balanced approaches toward integrating social media into educational practices across student affairs. Junco's central theses are: (a) there is little evidence-based research being conducted on the educational impacts of social media in higher education and student affairs; (b) hyperbolic misrepresentation and misunderstanding of research leads educators, practitioners, and institutions to adopt reticent attitudes toward incorporating social media in educationally and pedagogically relevant ways; and (c) adult normative perspectives often fuel such misrepresentations and misunderstandings, overpowering important lessons practitioners and researchers might learn from youth, where social media is