



UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND



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## Responding to Michigan: Measuring Racial Diversity and Critical Mass

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# Diversity Produces Educational Benefits

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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

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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

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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?

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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?

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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?

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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?

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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?

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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

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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

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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

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## 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

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Clarifying values



Solving problems



Thinking creatively



Thinking critically



Teamwork



Professional ethics



Leading others effectively



Understanding diverse cultural, political, and intellectual views



# Literature Base

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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)

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## Workplace research



Instrumental outcomes



Affective outcomes



Findings: diversity => more ideas



## Explanation



No Groupthink / Mindlessness

# Heterogeneous Stimuli & Outcomes (individual outcomes)

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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

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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

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‘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

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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)

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### 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)

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*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)

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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

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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

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The formula: (based on flipping a coin)



$P(\text{heads}) = .5$



$P(\text{two heads}) =$

$$P(\text{heads}) \times p(\text{heads}) = .5 \times .5 = .25$$



Odds of 2 people having similar race =

$$P(\text{Black})^2 + p(\text{Asian})^2 + p(\text{Hispanic})^2 + p(\text{White})^2 + p(\text{Nat Am})^2$$



Odds of 2 people being different =

1 - (above calculation)



# Index Sensitivity

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Maximum value of the index =  $f$  (n of groups)



More subgroups = higher maximum value



Four balanced subgroups =  $.75 =$

$$[1 - (.25^2 + .25^2 + .25^2 + .25^2)]$$



Five balanced subgroups =  $.8 =$

$$[1 - (.20^2 + .20^2 + .20^2 + .20^2 + .20^2)]$$



When groups not evenly distributed, upward movement of index is most sensitive to growth of smallest subgroup



# UM Findings

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UM Undergraduate pop index	.51
Pre UM experience:	
Frosh zip all freshmen	.36
Frosh zip Asian freshmen	.43
Frosh zip Black freshmen	.41
Frosh zip Hispanic freshmen	.40
Frosh zip White freshmen	.28



# UM and Peers

UCLA	.64
Berkeley	.62
UM	.51
Univ. of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	.44
University of Michigan	.43
University of North Carolina	.33



# Future

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Classroom analysis



Tracking students over time



Outcome measure



Income diversity

Questions, comments,  
and discussion welcome!

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