

DIVERSITY

Civility and
the

Liberal Arts

REFLECTIONS ON A CIC INITIATIVE

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with Philip M. Katz

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A REPORT FROM



The Council of
Independent Colleges

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About the Council of Independent Colleges

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) is an association of 762 nonprofit independent colleges and universities, state-based councils of independent colleges, and other higher education affiliates, that works to support college and university leadership, advance institutional excellence, and enhance public understanding of independent higher education's contributions to society. CIC is the major national organization that focuses on services to leaders of independent colleges and universities and state-based councils. CIC offers conferences, seminars, publications, and other programs and services that help institutions improve educational quality, administrative and financial performance, student outcomes, and institutional visibility. CIC conducts the largest annual conferences of college and university presidents and of chief academic officers in the United States. Founded in 1956, CIC is headquartered at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC. For more information, visit www.cic.edu.

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Foreword

In a 2022 survey of CIC member colleges and universities, presidents and chief academic officers affirmed that addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) were among their top strategic priorities. This held true across many kinds of independent colleges—smaller and larger, rural and urban, located in red and blue states, and affiliated with different faith traditions (or none at all). The tragic murder of George Floyd in May 2020 and the subsequent demands for racial justice, police reform, and the affirmation that Black lives do indeed matter, brought increased urgency to creating new campus initiatives and assessing those of the recent past.

In 2017, CIC received a significant grant from the Mellon Foundation to support two summer Institutes on the theme of “diversity, civility, and the liberal arts.” The program was initiated in response to student unrest. The goal was to disrupt the pattern of protest/response/return to status quo that many institutions found themselves repeating by leaning into the teaching and learning mission of our institutions. Using the core skills and practices honed in the liberal arts classroom—thoughtful teaching and learning, informed by solid research and sustained by dialogue across difference—the project looked to create conditions for lasting institutional change. Fifty institutional teams participated in two Institutes in 2018 and 2019, with the powerful results described in this report. Each team launched a specific campus project to implement some of the lessons of the Institute, as the report also describes.

Then the world changed, due to a global pandemic, a wave of civil unrest, and a contentious presidential campaign. The possibilities for social change, the scope of racial injustice, and the terms of public debate—even on college campuses—suddenly seemed very different. Yet the commitment of independent colleges and universities to DEI work did not waver and in many places found new resolve and commitment. We know, because we went back to the project participants a few months ago and asked them, “In this tumultuous time, how durable were the insights fostered by the Institute?” Their responses show that the conversation about diversity, equity, and institutional transformation has deepened over time.

There is much work ahead if we are to create truly equitable and inclusive campuses and communities. We look to campus leaders—students, faculty, staff, administrators, presidents, and trustees—to continue this effort and hope that they find inspiration in this report. The content of the original Institutes, which drew deeply from scholarship in history, philosophy, psychology, and other humanities and social sciences disciplines, remains relevant. The specific examples of curricular, co-curricular, and organizational change undertaken by participating colleges are models of hope and pragmatism. And the group interview with participants is a reminder that positive change “[can’t] be episodic, or a one-off ‘activity’—it [has] to be structural, a transformation of the work itself that would constitute a permanent improvement.”

The Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts initiative would not have been possible without the generous support of the Mellon Foundation or the wise leadership of Beverly Daniel Tatum, president emerita of Spelman College, and Philip M. Katz, CIC's director of projects. The authors of this report, Jo M. Beld and Bruce King, not only served as evaluators but as valued collaborators at every stage of the project.

Marjorie Hass

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie Hass". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Marjorie" and "Hass" being capitalized and prominent.

President
Council of Independent Colleges

INTRODUCTION

Diversity and civility are important on every campus. But college students don't always know how to talk about issues that are painful or may make them angry—and sometimes both students and instructors need to know more about the context and history of potentially controversial and emotional topics. This Institute will focus on applying recent scholarship and enduring concepts to current student concerns, empowering participants to design effective knowledge-based campus interventions.

— **Beverly Daniel Tatum**

Director, CIC Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute
President Emerita, Spelman College

In mid-2017, the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) invited its member institutions to apply to participate in a four-day professional development event focused on institutional responses to student activism concerning racial injustice. The Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute (“the Institute”) was premised on the belief that teaching and learning in the liberal arts—a signature element of the education offered by CIC institutions—is key to advancing equity, inclusion, and civil engagement in higher education communities. Funded by a grant from the Mellon Foundation, the Institute supported two cohorts of 25 institutions each in a team-based experience of intensive study, interaction with leading scholars of diversity and higher education, and institutional project planning, all intended to help institutions “transform protests into teachable moments.”

The Institutes in June 2018 and June 2019 engaged colleges and universities with different missions, histories, identities, and community contexts, but with a shared commitment to the liberal arts as a potential driver of informed and effective institutional change. Participants gave high marks to the quality of the Institute experience. Six months out, they reported work on a wide variety of curricular, co-curricular, and professional development projects aimed at improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and engagement across difference, directly and indirectly supported by the fruits of their Institute labors. The authors of this report served as participant-observers and evaluators of the two Institutes.

Then came the pandemic lock-downs, followed by world-wide activism in response to the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer. Both began less than a year after the second Institute, and both had (and continue to have) significant implications for equity and inclusion work in higher education. How well did the insights and projects fostered by the Institute hold up in this intensified post-Institute environment? And to what extent did the Institute experience equip participating institutions to respond effectively to what the global pandemic and world-wide protests laid bare?

This report begins by describing the Institutes that convened in Atlanta, Georgia, during an earlier phase of Black Lives Matter, mid-way through a contentious presidency, and before anyone had heard of COVID-19. Next the report highlights some of the specific activities undertaken by the participating teams to implement the lessons of the Institute on their own campuses, as well as the



LEFT: Beverly Daniel Tatum, Institute director and president emerita of **Spelman College** (GA), converses with participant James Peterman, professor of philosophy and director of civic engagement at **Sewanee: The University of the South** (TN).



RIGHT: Chief diversity officer Ame Lambert and provost Andrew Workman (now interim president) discuss key topics with their **Roger Williams University** (RI) teammates.



LEFT: Political philosopher Danielle Allen, James Bryant Conant University Professor at Harvard University, addressed the role of philosophy in promoting conversations about diversity on campus.



RIGHT: During the Institute, Eileen Wilson-Oyalaran (right), president emerita of **Kalamazoo College** (MI), described episodes of student unrest and her institution's response.

success factors and stumbling blocks they encountered along the way. Finally, we turn to a panel of Institute participants, representing a variety of roles and institutions, to help explore the impact of the intervening years and discuss the implications for future diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism work on college campuses. Although the context for this work has changed since 2017, independent colleges and universities have remained deeply committed to it. We hope that the examples and insights contained in this report will inform and inspire the leaders, faculty members, and staff members at many other institutions.

Context and Content

The context for CIC's original proposal to the Mellon Foundation was "an increase in student protests, confrontations, and demands on college and university campuses." The students were calling for an end to systemic racism in their institutions; just as important, they were demanding that the institutions live out their missions more fully, not just by serving a more diverse student population but doing so in an authentically equitable and inclusive way. Institutions had responded to these calls with a variety of reforms and initiatives, including policy and procedural changes, enhanced resources for student support services, redoubled efforts to increase faculty and staff diversity, curricular enhancements, and equity and inclusion training for both students and employees.

The CIC proposal argued that these institutional efforts, while necessary and appropriate, were incomplete: They were "legal, attitudinal, and administrative" rather than educational. Colleges and universities needed to draw on "higher education's most precious resource—teaching and learning in the liberal arts" to help students deepen their understanding of diversity and their capacity for strategic action. Consequently, the Institutes were designed to engage institutional teams of faculty leaders and senior administrators in a research-based, multi-disciplinary examination of "race, class, gender, ethnicity; historical meaning; social justice; ethical behavior; social change; and political strategy" as well as "the importance of language in and out of the classroom, how students learn, and how this generation of students may learn differently from previous generations." Teams would then return to campus to implement research-informed institutional projects that would help students reap the full benefits of diversity, inclusion, and civil discourse in the liberal arts educational experience.

Participants

CIC selected institutional participants through a competitive application process that required them to describe the diversity and civility challenges they hoped to address and their prior efforts to enhance diversity and civil discourse. Applicants also were asked to provide a preliminary plan for *applying* what they learned at the Institute and to describe the roles and relevant experiences of the proposed team members. The four-person teams included two faculty members in the humanities or social sciences who were well-positioned to lead post-Institute curricular or co-curricular efforts; the chief academic officer or other senior academic administrator; and another administrator who could lead efforts to link the curricular and co-curricular changes engendered by the institution's project, such as a chief student affairs officer, a chief diversity officer, or an athletics director.

The 50 colleges and universities selected to participate in the Institute initiative represented a wide variety of institutions (see the list on p. 6). At the time, their undergraduate enrollments varied from barely 600 to more than 6,000; they are located in 26 different states, surrounded by a mix of rural,

small-town, suburban, and urban communities; and they represent a range of denominational affiliations from none to Catholic to mainline and evangelical Protestant.

Institutions that Participated in the 2018 and 2019 Institutes

Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI)
Augsburg University (Minneapolis, MN)
Berea College (Berea, KY)
Bridgewater College (Bridgewater, VA)
Buena Vista University (Storm Lake, IA)
Butler University (Indianapolis, IN)
California Lutheran University
(Thousand Oaks, CA)
Campbell University (Buies Creek, NC)
College of Saint Benedict (St. Joseph, MN)*
College of Saint Mary (Omaha, NE)
Curry College (Milton, MA)
Dominican University (River Forest, IL)
Eckerd College (St. Petersburg, FL)
Elmhurst University (Elmhurst, IL)
Emerson College (Boston, MA)
Gettysburg College (Gettysburg, PA)
Goucher College (Baltimore, MD)
Graceland University (Lamoni, IA)
Illinois College (Jacksonville, IL)
Ithaca College (Ithaca, NY)
John Brown University (Siloam Springs, AR)
Kenyon College (Gambier, OH)
Lewis University (Romeoville, IL)
Linfield University (McMinnville, OR)
Luther College (Decorah, IA)
Mars Hill University (Mars Hill, NC)

McDaniel College (Westminster, MD)
Muskingum University (New Concord, OH)
North Park University (Chicago, IL)
Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
Ripon College (Ripon, WI)
Roger Williams University (Bristol, RI)
Saint John's University (Collegeville, MN)*
Sewanee: The University of the South
(Sewanee, TN)
Simmons University (Boston, MA)
Springfield College (Springfield, MA)
St. John Fisher College (Rochester, NY)
St. Lawrence University (Canton, NY)
Talladega College (Talladega, AL)
Texas Lutheran University (Seguin, TX)
Thiel College (Greenville, PA)
Trinity University (San Antonio, TX)
University of Evansville (Evansville, IN)
University of Lynchburg (Lynchburg, VA)
University of Richmond (Richmond, VA)
Ursinus College (Collegeville, PA)
Viterbo University (La Crosse, WI)
Wesleyan College (Macon, GA)
Wheaton College (Norton, MA)
Whitworth University (Spokane, WA)
Wilkes University (Wilkes-Barre, PA)

* *joint team*

The Institute Experience

The Institute experience was intensive—before, during, and after the four-day gatherings in Atlanta. Approximately four months prior to the convenings, participants were provided with the preliminary schedule of presenters, topics, and team working sessions, as well as an extensive reading list structured around salient works by the Institute speakers and supplemented by other relevant works. A representative sampling of the presenters, topics, and associated readings is included in the Appendix (see p. 28). The complete syllabi and schedules for the two workshops are archived on the CIC website at www.cic.edu/DiversityInstitute.

In addition to the speaker-led sessions, the Institute experience included roundtable discussions and breakout sessions with other Institute participants and focused working sessions for the institutional teams. The “assignments” for the various working sessions were designed to help teams refine the goals and intended outcomes of their proposed institutional projects and outline specific implementation steps to initiate, continue, assess, and institutionalize a plan of action. The intent was to enable teams to hit the ground running upon their return to campus, capitalizing not only on new knowledge and insights but also on the energy and esprit that the Institute fostered.

Initial Impact

Evidence concerning the quality, immediate effects, and continuing impact of the Diversity, Civility, and Liberal Arts Institute was gathered in a variety of ways. The project evaluators participated fully in both Institutes, gathering first-hand observations of every session and noting patterns in participant engagement. Individual participants were invited to complete an evaluation questionnaire within a few weeks of their return to campus, assessing the value of the Institute for their institutions, their own professional development, and their capacity for successful project leadership. Each institution also submitted a post-Institute six-month report that described their initial dissemination and implementation activities, assessed initial challenges and successes, and offered suggestions for future CIC contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work.

This combination of participant observation, survey findings, and written narrative yielded a number of insights, not only about the effectiveness of the Institute, but also about what supports—and what hinders—institutional progress on DEI.

Six Months after the Institute

In their survey responses, Institute participants gave high marks to the quality and value of the face-to-face experience. Across the two cohorts, nearly 90 percent of the respondents rated the Institute as “very” or “extremely” valuable for their institutions, and 84 percent rated it as “very” or “extremely” valuable for their own professional development. The latter finding is particularly noteworthy in that most teams included staff or faculty members who were already knowledgeable about diversity and

equity within and beyond higher education, such as chief diversity officers and faculty members who offer courses on diversity, inclusion, and social change. In the words of one respondent,

Overall, this was an outstanding experience. The Institute was exceptionally well-planned and executed, and I expect to use what I learned for many years to come on my campus. It was, simply put, one of the most important professional development events that I've participated in during my two decades in higher education.

Participants also were asked to describe the issues or tasks that they felt better prepared to address as a result of their Institute experience. Many indicated an overall improvement in their understanding of DEI in higher education. Some participants enhanced their understanding of key issues in identity and belonging; some discussed the benefits of learning what other institutions were doing to address common challenges; and many focused on one or more aspects of teaching and learning. They saw value in the learning, not only because of its significance for the continued refinement of their institutional projects, but equally important, because of the enhanced sense of agency it cultivated. In the words of one participant, “I feel more empowered to advocate for how issues of diversity and inclusion inform general education and why we, as faculty, can lead in this direction.”

The six-month reports re-affirmed the participants’ perception that the Institute experience was institutionally valuable. The plans that the teams had proposed in advance were ambitious and complex—and frankly, we did not expect that many of the anticipated action steps would be “completed” a mere six months later. Nevertheless, the scope and volume of the participants’ activities were impressive. At least half of the institutions had undertaken the following kinds of DEI-related programs or activities in the immediate wake of the Institutes:

DEI-Related Activities Undertaken within Six Months of Each Institute

PROGRAM/ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS	PERCENTAGE OF INSTITUTIONS
Faculty training/professional development	43	86
Enhanced co-curricular opportunities to engage diversity and inclusion	39	78
New or revised required course(s)	36	72
Staff training/professional programming	28	56
New, expanded, or revised optional academic programs or courses	25	50
Evaluation/assessment plans developed and/or data collected	25	50

The common thread across this broad array of institutional activities was *learning*, whether in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, or in faculty and staff professional development programming. This validated the fundamental premises of the CIC approach. Nearly every college and university in the 2018 cohort reported work on revising or developing new general education courses focused

on DEI, either as part of the required first-year curriculum or as a distribution requirement for graduation. For the 2019 cohort, the emphasis was less on course content and more on inclusive pedagogy—partly because many institutions in the group had recently completed a general education curriculum revision and partly because the 2019 Institute included more sessions focused on pedagogy. More than three-quarters of participating institutions across both cohorts had also worked to integrate DEI-related content into co-curricular programming that was likely to affect larger groups of students, most often through first-year orientation and student training programs. Given the scope and substance of change efforts in curriculum, pedagogy, and co-curricular programming, it was no surprise to see a high percentage of institutions that reported advances in faculty and staff training and professional development to support the development and delivery of the new programs.

A number of learning-focused projects discussed in the six-month reports have been sustained at least through the 2021–2022 academic year:

Whitworth University (which participated in the Institute in 2018) reported at the six-month mark that “a revised general education curriculum [had been] developed and passed by the faculty in December for full implementation in 2020–2021. One of the ‘Four Inquiries’ in the new curriculum is Cultural Inquiry, which adds clarity of student learning outcomes and a third course to our general education diversity requirements.” These plans are now embedded in Whitworth’s general education program.¹ Cultural Inquiry courses focus on “the formation, expression, documentation, and analysis of identities, communities, histories, beliefs, stories, and ideas,” and students must complete at least two courses in this area that engage them in “thinking critically about power, privilege, hierarchy, identity, or interdependence.”

Emerson College (2018 Institute) reported substantial progress in launching a First-Year Experience program that would 1) amplify learning about race, identity, and civil dialogue as part of an existing three-course Foundations curriculum, and 2) connect that curricular learning to co-curricular learning through a new first-year orientation program piloted by the student affairs office. The first-year curriculum had already been revised “to include a more intentional and intensive diversity focus” and a new “Emersion” orientation program had been piloted as an elective option for entering students. The initial report also indicated that the available institutional resources were insufficient to expand the Emersion program to an entire first-year class. Despite this early setback, however, the Emersion orientation program is now a component of the first-year experience for every Emerson student, with intercultural development as one of the key goals.² In addition,

1 Whitworth University, “Undergraduate Programs, Shared Curriculum Requirements”: <http://catalog.whitworth.edu/undergraduate>.

2 Emerson College, “Emersion: Foundation of Success”: <https://www.emerson.edu/departments/student-success/emersion-foundations-success>.

the revisions to the Foundations curriculum that drew from the team’s work at the CIC Institute are now fully incorporated into three required courses in written and oral communication.³

The 2019 Institute team from **Pacific Lutheran University** (PLU) fostered broad faculty and staff engagement with the content of the Institute through a variety of on-campus dissemination strategies, starting with a briefing to the PLU President’s Council. As a result, the President’s Council decided to focus the subsequent University and Faculty Fall Conference—an annual event to launch the academic year, typically attended by 400 faculty and staff members—on the themes of the CIC Institute.⁴ Engaging the President’s Council also had a direct impact on the university’s strategic plan, when “President Allan Belton ... referenced the work of the CIC team as influencing his decision to include ‘Environment and Well-Being’ as a theme in the university’s strategic plan, with particular reference to the university’s ongoing commitments to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion.”⁵ In the semester following the Institute, PLU’s dean of inclusive excellence launched an inclusive pedagogy seminar for faculty members, with an inaugural seminar syllabus that included articles by Institute speakers.⁶ Later, the Wang Center for Global and Community Engagement collaborated with PLU’s Institute team to develop a symposium in spring 2020 around the theme “Disarming Polarization: Navigating Conflict and Difference.” The symposium featured a keynote address by Institute presenter Kwame Anthony Appiah.⁷

Many of the six-month reports also described new or expanded DEI initiatives in areas that had *not* been addressed directly by Institute speakers and sessions, but that were nevertheless inspired or indirectly supported by the team’s Institute experience. Several institutions, such as **Lewis University** (2019 Institute), introduced significant changes to faculty recruitment and hiring practices:

An additional project that the Lewis CIC participants have implemented, titled Hiring for Inclusive Excellence, was offered as a faculty search committee professional development workshop, supported by the Office of the Provost and co-sponsored by Lewis’s Offices of Diversity and Inclusion and Human Resources. The purpose of the workshop was to emphasize the value of diversity and call special attention to the (pre)search phase of faculty searches, [which] encourages routine analysis of departmental diversity through annual review and

3 Emerson College, “Foundations”: <https://www.emerson.edu/academics/schools-labs-and-centers/marlboro-institute/curriculum-requirements/foundations>.

4 Pacific Lutheran University, “2019 University and Faculty Fall Conference”: <https://www.plu.edu/faculty-resources/important-dates/university-faculty-conference/2019-university-and-faculty-fall-conference>.

5 Pacific Lutheran University, “Strategic Planning”: <https://www.plu.edu/strategic-planning>.

6 Pacific Lutheran University, “Inclusive Pedagogy Seminars”: <https://www.plu.edu/faculty-resources/teaching/inclusive-teaching/inclusive-pedagogy-seminars>.

7 Pacific Lutheran University, “Ninth Biennial Wang Center Symposium”: <https://www.plu.edu/disarming-polarization>.

program review. [The workshop also addressed] upstream recruitment—tracking and networking with prospective faculty at conferences and other fora and building referral networks with local and targeted universities.

Other institutions engaged in various forms of visioning related to equity, inclusion, and civility, whether through campus-wide statements of commitment, strategic planning, or the development of DEI action plans. At **St. Lawrence University** (2019 Institute), for example:

The University Diversity Committee ... [began to build] a Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan that will ultimately engage the whole community in raising cultural awareness and building skills to foster a community of inclusion for everyone. Our goal is to launch the plan by the beginning of the 2020–2021 academic year. This work is fueled by the CIC program and all CIC participants are on the Diversity Committee.

St. Lawrence’s institutional action plan was successfully launched,⁸ as anticipated in the team’s report, and is now accompanied by detailed DEI action plans for each of the university’s six divisions.⁹

Other examples of the Institute’s indirect but clear influence included: new staff positions or institutional structures (such as councils or committees) devoted to DEI; new programs or new areas of emphasis in campus teaching and learning centers or other faculty development programs; enhanced advising and mentoring for students of color; and an institutional communications audit designed to enhance inclusive language and update the descriptors for identity groups.

Success Factors and Stumbling Blocks

In their follow-up reporting to the Institute, the teams from the 50 colleges and universities were also asked to identify factors or circumstances that supported successes—and those that created challenges—as they implemented their proposed action plans on campus. The success factors they identified were not necessarily unique to DEI initiatives but characterize most stories of successful institutional change:

- **A linkage** to core institutional goals and values through intentional connection of a plan or project to the institution’s mission, history, vision, and/or strategic plan;
- **Visible public support** from the president and/or other senior administrative leaders;
- **Clear next steps** with specific individuals or offices—new or existing—charged with specific tasks;

8 St. Lawrence University, “Strategic Action Plan for Diversity and Inclusion”: <https://www.stlawu.edu/offices/diversity-and-inclusion/strategic-action-plan-diversity-inclusion>.

9 St. Lawrence University, “Divisional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plans”: <https://www.stlawu.edu/offices/diversity-and-inclusion/strategic-action-plan-diversity-inclusion/divisional-diversity-equity-inclusion-action-plans>.

- **Collaboration** across multiple units of the institution, sometimes through the creation of a new “hub” for project activities—an office, a faculty committee, a council—and sometimes by building new alliances;
- **Infusion** of DEI project content into existing programs or events, such as all-faculty or all-staff retreats, orientation programs, professional development programming, general education requirements; and
- **Showcasing** the immediate results of specific activities, such as new or revised syllabi completed, new courses offered, learning goals articulated, pilot programs launched or institutionalized, new positions filled, etc.

The obstacles they identified will also look familiar to anyone who has sought to lead a significant institutional change effort:

- **Resource constraints.** These are especially problematic for change that requires significant volunteer effort, such as revising elective courses or implementing new pedagogies. Resource constraints also contribute to institutional uncertainty, which acts as a disincentive to innovation.
- **Workload constraints.** Many of those responsible for leading the implementation of projects had insufficient “bandwidth” to commit to the work, or had other institutional issues or crises added to their workload at the same time.
- **Leadership transitions or vacancies.** Several institutions were challenged by a recent or impending change in the presidency or by the unexpected departure of colleagues in key leadership positions.
- **The challenge of project management.** Large-scale change, which all the participants were seeking to foster, requires both time and project-management skills—both of which can be in short supply, even when there is an administrative office or cross-functional task force serving as a hub for the work.
- **The conundrum of change leadership.** Participants left the Institute experience with heightened energy, commitment, and focus, but the projects they sought to advance were not theirs alone. Project success ultimately depends on the investment of other colleagues who may or may not share their sense of urgency, and who (especially if they are faculty members) exercise considerable autonomy in their own day-to-day decision making.

In short, the evaluation results yielded ample evidence that the Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute was carefully planned and thoughtfully delivered, providing participants with high-quality, deeply engaging, and institutionally useful learning experiences. Participants provided numerous examples of individual and institutional impact supported by the Institute experience and expressed gratitude for the opportunities it afforded. At the same time, they recognized that institutional transformation—particularly in relation to justice, equity, and inclusion—is slow, demanding, and unpredictable work, and that no matter what they had accomplished in the first six months following their Institute experience, it would be at best a starting point.

That Was Then, This Is Now: 2020 and Beyond

The CIC Institute was designed, in part, to help participating institutions understand and respond effectively to a rapidly changing cultural landscape, both within and beyond higher education. What no one could have anticipated was just *how* rapidly, and how dramatically, the landscape would change in the ensuing months. Less than a year after the June 2019 Institute, colleges and universities across the United States were closing their campuses in response to a global pandemic, forcing the vast majority of students to return home or find alternative living arrangements. In a matter of weeks, colleges transitioned to remote learning, redefining the meaning of learning and living in community. Then, in May 2020—with existing disparities in wealth, race, class, and national origin visibly exacerbated by the pandemic—the world witnessed in real time the brutal murder of George Floyd, a Black man, on the streets of Minneapolis at the hands of four police officers. This racially motivated act of violence ignited rioting around the globe and put anti-Black racism and the devaluing of Black lives front and center on both the national and international stages.

Together, these watershed moments intensified the very challenges that the Institute was designed to help institutions address. COVID-19 did not create inequities by race and class, but it laid them bare in a new way. Students who had previously shared the same on-campus living environments, and who had relied on the same academic technologies and student support services, went home to vastly divergent living and learning environments; campuses had to find new ways to identify and respond to student needs. Similarly, the killing of George Floyd did not signal a new dynamic in policing or the sudden emergence of racial profiling, but it did make the realities of systemic and institutional racism much more visible and visceral for a broader cross-section of the predominately white higher education community. What many referred to as the “twin pandemics” of the coronavirus and institutional racism prompted a surge of study groups, teach-ins, trainings, forums, and dialogues for faculty, staff, and students alike. Books such as Ibram X. Kendi’s *How to Be an Antiracist* (One World, 2019), published just two months after the second iteration of the Institute, offered many in higher education a more expansive vision of justice in the academy, one that embraced antiracism as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In this tumultuous time, how durable were the insights fostered by the Institute? To what extent did the Institute equip participants and their institutions to navigate the rapids of 2020 and beyond, and adapt both their projects and their purposes to elevated demands and new uncertainties? To find out, in summer 2021 we invited Institute participants to share their perceptions of the continuing effects of their Institute experience in relation to the goals and plans they had articulated and in light of the significant changes that all of American higher education was experiencing. We then invited a subset of respondents to join us for a conversation about the ongoing significance of their Institute experience in a world wracked by a global pandemic and wrestling with the continuing challenges of racial injustice. Our panelists varied by institution, by role, by cohort, and by project focus, but they shared a common commitment to realizing the goals of the Institute in the lived realities of their students and colleagues. Here is what they had to say. (Some comments have been edited and condensed for length and clarity.)

JO BELD: Thank you all for joining us for this conversation. I'll begin by inviting each of you to reintroduce yourself to the group, indicating which institution you're with, what your role is, and the year of the Institute you attended.



My name is **JO BELD**, and I'm vice president for mission at St. Olaf College. In my role I serve as secretary to the St. Olaf board of regents and oversee the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, the College Ministry office, and the Lutheran Center for Faith, Values, and Community. Together with Bruce [King], I was privileged to be able to participate in both of the Institutes as a consultant and project evaluator. This panel discussion is a continuation of that work.



VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: My name is Vange Ocasio and I am an associate professor of economics in the School of Business at Whitworth University. I partner with our chief diversity officer on many campus-wide trainings, I am an equity advocate on search committees, and I am currently a member of the Tenure and Promotion Committee. I participated in the Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute in 2018. It's a pleasure to be here.



JEFF CARLSON: I'm Jeff Carlson, provost at Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois. We participated in the Institute in June 2018. At the time I was serving as interim provost, and prior to that had served as dean of arts and sciences.



SANDRA SCHROER: I'm Sandra Schroer, professor and chair of sociology at Muskingum University. Since we attended the Institute in 2019, I've been appointed chair of the Business, Library, Education and Social Sciences Division. In that role, I do a lot of work with our campus-wide diversity and equity programming, policy, and procedures.



SHAYA GREGORY POKU: My name is Shaya Gregory Poku, and I'm associate vice president for institutional equity and belonging at Wheaton College in Massachusetts. At the time of our application for the 2019 Institute, I was serving as the director of our Center for Social Justice and Community Impact.



LISA PETROV: I'm Lisa Petrov, assistant [now associate] professor of Spanish at Dominican University. Since 2017, I've also been serving as director of a Title V project centered on equity initiatives and on building culturally responsive faculty and offices. I attended the Institute with Jeff Carlson and two other colleagues in the summer of 2018.



BRIAN LENZMEIER: My name is Brian Lenzmeier, and I am president of Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, Iowa. That is a relatively new role for me; at the time that we participated in the Institute in June 2019, I was serving as provost.



BRUCE KING: Hello, everyone, I'm Bruce King, and I worked with Jo as a consultant and evaluator for the Institutes in both 2018 and 2019 when I was assistant to the president and chief diversity officer at St. Olaf. I became vice president for equity and inclusion at St. Olaf before moving to Chicago in February 2021. [At the time of this

panel discussion, King was associate vice chancellor for racial equity for City Colleges of Chicago; he now serves as vice president for equity and inclusion at Elmhurst University.]

JO BELD: Thank you for describing your roles at your institutions and your engagement with the CIC Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts initiative. Looking back on your time at the Institute, what would you describe as your greatest takeaway?

JEFF CARLSON: Our team came away with the idea that whatever we did following our return to campus couldn't be episodic, or a one-off "activity"—it had to be structural, a transformation of the work itself that would constitute a permanent improvement no matter who's working at Dominican at any given time.

For example, the faculty committee that oversees promotion and tenure has been rethinking the entirety of what "teaching effectiveness" entails, and recently added "ability to create inclusive classrooms" to the list of criteria for evaluating teaching. This is a structural change with embedded accountability. Every time a faculty member approaches a review—second-year, fourth-year, tenure, or promotion—they have to address this criterion in their personal statement, and deans and faculty review committee members have to write about it [for the candidates' dossiers] as well. This change has also required us to support faculty in creating inclusive classrooms by providing professional development materials and opportunities.

Another example involves revising our procedures for hiring. Faculty, staff, and senior administrators have been reworking that process, and as a result, of the 21 full-time faculty that we've hired in the last three years, 57 percent of them identify as Black, Latinx, or Asian. It's something we prioritize in every single search.

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: The Institute provided a great opportunity for conversation in a safe space where we could share our challenges with colleagues at other institutions. Sometimes campus conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion happen among self-selected groups, so it was really nice to have a broader audience. It was also great to hear speakers from other universities describe their experiences in confronting difficulties around DEI and how they have promoted justice and inclusion, because we have dealt with similar challenges.

The big takeaway for us was to focus on creating initiatives that are ongoing, that aren't "one-and-done." One of the Institute activities that had a lasting impact on my group was reading case studies on how other universities have embraced reconciliation—how they have gone back to their history to look at racial relationships and events on campus, how they learned from those events, and how they moved forward. It was very important for us to look at our own history at Whitworth through that lens. One of our recently-retired professors is now working on a project that examines how racial relationships on our campus have evolved through time. We are hoping to embrace our history, both the good and the bad, and to be honest about who we are and who we want to

become. So we need to create long-lasting initiatives with long-term impact, and we need to see them through.

SHAYA GREGORY POKU: Our participation in the Institute was an opportunity for us to think about what kind of literature is going to help us engage our faculty in this work. CIC introduced us to a lot of scholarship that can help us make the case for DEI to our faculty and administrative colleagues, so we can point to peer-reviewed academic articles to help support our work.

For example, following the Institute we integrated intergroup dialogue into one of our multicultural psychology courses (through my colleague Dr. Srijana Shrestha, who also attended the Institute), in part because the presenter on this topic spoke so extensively about the evidence supporting its impact. Wheaton has had intergroup dialogue for almost 15 years as a program of our Marshall Center for Intercultural Learning, but it's always been for students who self-select into that opportunity. With the literature to support it, we've been able to pilot pedagogical innovations like these that hold potential for longer-term structural impact.

SANDRA SCHROER: When we came to the Institute, we had no regular programming in place and no DEI office. But we came prepared, having done a lot of homework and some strategic planning. The Institute helped us connect our goals to specific implementation plans. It was an eye-opener; we realized we had a lot more work still to do, and that we couldn't create lasting change by ourselves. So our first priority upon our return was to develop an Office of Diversity, Access, and Inclusion and to hire a director from outside our institution. We needed to increase visible diversity and expertise about DEI within our leadership teams and across our senior administration. This was critical to furthering our goals in areas like retention and student success, particularly for students of color, and DEI education for faculty, staff, and stakeholders.

JO BELD: Thank you for those reflections. Since the time the Institute was held, all of us have experienced dramatic changes in our world. For many institutions, the murder of George Floyd was a zenith in a long progression of campus activism and unrest. How has your campus responded to such events, and are there ways in which your Institute experience contributed to those responses?

LISA PETROV: Because we are located in the Chicago area, the murder of George Floyd really wasn't so much a zenith as just another focal point, because the awareness of police violence and of Black Lives Matter was already pretty well developed, especially among our students. Moreover, though we are a predominantly white institution with regard to our faculty and staff, we are a minority-serving institution when it comes to our students. The Institute had already helped us to have different conversations about race than we had been having. Even so, student activism definitely intensified following George Floyd's killing. An idea arose for a new center that would unite Black and brown students on our campus in a way that is not typical in Chicago, or even in the United States. That idea became our Center for Cultural Liberation, an innovation that is light years ahead

of our faculty and staff. I think the Institute helped some of our leadership be more open to hearing the students and what they needed.

SHAYA GREGORY POKU: At Wheaton, the murder of George Floyd catalyzed our 10 Action Steps toward Racial Justice and was an important moment to talk about dominant- versus counter-narratives. For many of our staff, faculty, and students of color, the framing of “since George Floyd” was frustrating, because it reinforced a dominant narrative that put the consciousness of white Americans, rather than the experiences of Black and other minoritized people, at the center. As Lisa was just saying, Black Lives Matter as a movement has been around since 2013, and the killing of George Floyd happened in the context of lots of other murders, including Breonna Taylor. For us, it was important to ask, “How are we making sure that we’re talking about this whole history, not just ‘since George Floyd?’”

So we took some steps to help give people the contextual knowledge they needed to understand this dynamic. For example, as a part of our new curriculum we set aside a day in our academic calendar for our Mentored Academic Pathway (MAP) program, giving us space to do academic advising in a context of community-building and antiracism education. We did a teach-in on our 2021 MAP day specifically about Black Lives Matter, taking people back to Emmett Till, to the Black Codes, and to other forces that continue to shape what we’re seeing today in the 21st century.

Another important moment in our community has been our increased examination of anti-Asian hate. Far too often, Asians, Asian Americans, and Native/Pacific Islander Americans are left out of discussions of persistent racialized violence. So we drew on a United Nations report published late last year [2020] detailing alarming levels of racially-motivated violence, and brought together Asian students, staff, and faculty to have conversation about their experiences in a safe space, while at the same time doing more educational programming for the campus community.

BRUCE KING: That has been an especially important conversation to have just now because of the apparent association between increased anti-Asian violence and the larger context of the global pandemic. This brings me to our next question: What intersections did you see between your institution’s efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion and your institution’s efforts to sustain student learning and student well-being during the pandemic?

LISA PETROV: Many students with limited means don’t just need emotional support or academic support—they may also need internet access, health care, food, and sometimes housing. During COVID-19, the four things that prompted the majority of requests for assistance from our students were food insecurity, housing insecurity, emergency cash, and access to health care. At that time, we had recently moved to a new case management system that better coordinated communication across all the different individuals who might be working with a given student, whether they were professors, advisors, or staff in our Student Access and Engagement Division. As a result, we had fewer students falling through the cracks, because we had a centralized way to know who had

spoken to each student, and what the content was. We were all more informed and could keep track of the students who needed more support. We helped hundreds and hundreds of students get access to food, for example.

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: Immediately after the first lockdown in 2020, we gathered many constituents—faculty, staff, the chief diversity officer—to design an instructional model that infused inclusive teaching practices into each course, so we didn't have differences in the learning experiences of the students who were online and the students who were in the classroom. Every professor was engaged in attempting to establish digital equity within their classes. For example, there were students who did not have broadband, so we made sure that we allowed them to call in to class sessions through their phones. The Institute helped us have that lens, to recognize that students of color and underrepresented students have different experiences. We had students who were virtual from their lake cabins, and we had students who were virtual from the parking lot of a supermarket. We were aware of these differential impacts of the pandemic, and we tried to figure out how we could keep a close eye on those students.

We also surveyed students to make sure we were meeting the needs of students who lived with extended family, because we know underrepresented students, particularly students of color, are the ones who tend to live in extended family situations. We made sure we accommodated students who needed housing. I am proud of the work that we did, and I am glad I could bring the lens that I got from the Institute into that process.

SANDRA SCHROER: We were also very attentive to the inequality in the resources that students had, so we made sure that everyone had a computer when they had to go home. Even so, we had students that were driving to a McDonald's to connect to Wi-Fi, sitting out in their cars so that they could stay online and participate in classes. When we were able to return to face-to-face instruction, we realized that we had learned a lot about how to equalize education by using Blackboard [our learning management system] more systematically. We had some faculty who were excellent at using it, we had some who dabbled in only a few of the features, and we had some people who had never used it. When we returned to a full year of face-to-face classes in 2020–2021, we created a standard expectation for the use of Blackboard, and we trained all of our faculty so that they could use all of the same features. That allowed us to be face-to-face in the classroom while streaming in real-time for students who had to be in quarantine.

This really pointed out to us how technology can be an educational equalizer. For example, we learned a lot about preparing more accessible documents for students who have learning or hearing disabilities, again using the tools that Blackboard offered. We also realized that not everyone had the same starting point. We needed to meet students where they were when they arrived at our university and to help them access resources and equipment before we could expect them to be successful in the classroom. As a result, the education that we offer now is much more equitable than it was before. We have learned so much.

JO BELD: The Institute was designed to support just this kind of collective learning, with the institutional teams at the core. The team approach afforded an opportunity for people in different roles at their institutions to share a common learning experience in a retreat-like setting. In their follow-up evaluations, several participants said that part of the value of the Institute experience was the chance to forge new partnerships or connections with their colleagues, some of whom they may not have known very well prior to their work together on the team. Brian, I'll invite you to talk about what that was like for you.

BRIAN LENZMEIER: When I participated in the Institute, I was an academic administrator, and following CIC guidelines for the composition of the teams, we had two additional faculty members in attendance as well. Our fourth participant was the director of our Center for Diversity and Inclusion. In working together, we realized that our faculty had never really interacted with that director. Rather than seeing equity and inclusion as everyone's job, the feeling on campus was that the Center for Diversity and Inclusion "handles the diversity things." So one of the great things that came out of our Institute experience was the opportunity for interaction between faculty and our director for diversity and inclusion. We built that relationship by reading the same things, discussing the same topics before we went to Atlanta, and then having this wonderful experience led by the authors of many of the works that we read.

For example, one of our team faculty members was the lead instructor in our university's first-year seminar, and that individual [worked with] the director for diversity and inclusion [to incorporate] a common set of topical dialogues into every section of that course. Since then, both [the faculty member and the director] have left the institution ... but that partnership remains embedded in our curriculum, with our new director for diversity and inclusion still featured in our first-year seminar. We've also added the topic of equity into our upper-level capstone course as one of the things that we ask students to reflect on as they consider how to solve problems in the 21st century.

The other area where we built some relationships when we came back was with our human resources department. Through the Institute experience, our faculty members recognized the importance of examining our hiring process. Our campus hiring teams now undergo implicit bias training that didn't exist before, and there's a coordinated effort to recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds.... More generally, the Institute helped us build a network of people on campus that are committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion—that's what has helped us succeed.

JO BELD: Thank you, Brian. Shaya, you had some comments about this question as well.

SHAYA GREGORY POKU: We know that equity work can't be just the work of the chief diversity officer or other diversity leader. We also know that faculty development is a cornerstone of this work, because the classroom climate is so essential to the kind of outcomes that we're seeking. So Wheaton College's team included myself and Dr. Peony Fhagen, in our capacities as co-chairs of the college's Diversity, Equity, and Access Leadership (DEAL) initiative; a faculty member leading

our new Center for Collaborative Teaching and Learning, Dr. Gabriela Torres; and Dr. Shrestha, whom I already mentioned. Our Institute experience not only deepened relationships but also increased our sense of respect for one another. I think this is always an added benefit of these kinds of encounters, where staff and faculty can really see how we're all contributing to the educational mission of the institution.

A particularly important outcome for us was the development of a new campus resource to support department-level academic and administrative action plans and capacity building for racial justice. Because our Institute team had people from both our Center for Collaborative Teaching and Learning and our DEAL group, we were able to continue our work together and create a new online toolkit for the center about becoming anti-racist educators. CIC's charge to the Institute teams to work collaboratively helped us to solidify and sustain a culture of collaborative engagement after we were back on campus.

BRUCE KING: That's a great transition to our next question. After you returned from the Institute, how did you engage people in the work that the Institute aimed to support?

JEFF CARLSON: We began with a presentation at our annual all-faculty workshop, sharing what we had gained from the Institute and what we wanted faculty to start thinking about, focusing mainly on embedding inclusive teaching practices. Then we followed up with conversations and workshops hosted by the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. We also launched a series of book discussions, based in part on some of the materials that we got at the Institute. We had groups reading *White Fragility* [by Robin DiAngelo], *How to Be an Antiracist* [by Ibram X. Kendi], *The Sin of White Supremacy* by Fordham theologian Jeannine Hill, and *Bandwidth Recovery* [by Cia Verschelden]. The president's cabinet and the deans team read Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste*, and more recently the deans team and our chief diversity officer have been reading *Higher Education Administration for Social Justice* [edited by Adrianna Kezar and Julie Posselt], and we discussed how these texts should impact our professional work, our power, and our policies and practices.

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: Over the past ten years, we have become a very diverse campus in terms of the student body, but we have struggled with recruitment and retention of faculty of color, and with faculty in general being more open to growth in DEI. When we got back from the Institute, we began to implement some of the strategies that we had outlined in our proposal to address these issues. The first one was to implement training for faculty to become Intercultural Development Inventory administrators. Many faculty members volunteered to undergo the training, and we continue to expand on it. We've also had many faculty members and administrators trained on inter-group dialogue, which was one of the equity and inclusion strategies discussed at the Institute, and we now provide an ongoing summer workshop.

We've also provided training for equity advocates in search committees. We had about 30 searches last year, and there was an equity advocate in every search committee. As a result, this year we have

the most diverse pool of tenure-track faculty we've ever had coming into the university. That is a huge accomplishment for us.

Some of these initiatives were already in motion by the time we participated in the Institute in 2018, but the Institute solidified our vision for where we wanted to go and helped us make sure that we walked the walk. It was great to come back energized and have a path forward for implementing some of the initiatives we were already planning to work on.

BRIAN LENZMEIER: As we were finishing the Institute, our team said we didn't want to be the group that went back to campus, did one presentation at a faculty workshop, got three people excited, and that was it. So we created a Diversity Ambassadors Program and selected six staff and six faculty members to go through a modified version of the Institute reading list. We brought the faculty and staff participants together regularly to have conversations that were structured like one of the CIC sessions. We tried to create a group that represented a variety of roles on campus—faculty from different disciplines, staff from different units. That ended up being really helpful, especially after the unexpected departure of the director of our Center for Diversity and Inclusion, because by then we had 12 people on campus who'd been engaging the Institute readings together. So when the George Floyd incident happened, we had a group that we could bring together to determine what our strategy was going to be: What do students need? How are we going to reach out to them and support them?

The year after that, the Diversity Ambassadors group was broadened to include 16 more people. So now we've got almost 30 people who've gone through a year's worth of conversations anchored by the CIC Institute readings. This upcoming year, my office is sponsoring monthly lunches with the Diversity Ambassadors, each one hosting a different table. We've created a culture now where people want to be a part of these conversations. This has been really helpful in working through new challenges. For example, this year one of our athletics teams had disagreements between students who wanted to kneel during the national anthem and students who did not. We were glad to be able to bring in an assistant athletic director who'd been a part of these Institute conversations to help us resolve the situation, instead of having to rely only on our diversity and inclusion director.

JO BELD: We also learned from our evaluation surveys that a couple of you are in new roles at your institutions and have benefited in unexpected ways from your Institute experience. Can you talk briefly about how the Institute prepared you for your new roles and responsibilities?

SANDRA SCHROER: I was in a relatively new role at the time of our Institute participation; I had been appointed by our new university president to research initiatives on inclusive excellence for our campus and to develop a plan for implementation. What we learned at the Institute allowed us to work toward achieving goals we had developed in our strategic planning process and how those goals related to everything we learned in our research about our campus facilities, population, and, of course, the surrounding region in which we are located.

Since then I've moved into another new position, serving as a division chair, and I was able to do that because more colleagues became involved in our inclusive excellence initiatives [thanks in part to the Institute]. This was a great thing, not only for my personal growth, but because it indicated growth at the university. Ultimately, my goal is not to be needed anymore [in this area]—like a nonprofit organization that works to solve social problems, the goal should be to go out of business. Permanent change can only happen if we are successful not only in implementing the policies and programs that we've been working on, but in having them function throughout the entire structure of the university.

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: Since our participation in the 2018 Institute, I've been appointed to the Faculty Executive Committee. I also chair the Faculty Economic Welfare Committee, which helps the university figure out faculty salaries and benefits, and I've become an equity advocate in search committees. Being part of the Institute has helped me navigate difficult conversations in a civil way that does not alienate people, but rather brings them in to the table. I had to dig some of those skills out of my memory bank, particularly in my role as an equity advocate, because I sometimes have to explain to a search committee why we needed to do this work right and build a more inclusive environment. The Institute helped me know how to put into words why this type of work matters.

JO BELD: Thanks so much. And Brian, do you have some thoughts on this as well?

BRIAN LENZMEIER: Yes! In May 2020, I went to work one morning as the provost and went home that night as the interim president. A lot was going on in the world in the month after that. I don't know how I would have managed without having been to this Institute, in all honesty. The readings provided an essential knowledge base and an understanding of the issues that helped me know how to talk to people. As we heard throughout every single session, the work is never done, and I was able to bring that same acknowledgment to the campus and say, "Yes, we've made some progress—and we can be better."

Another thing that was helpful was that I was suddenly in charge of the budget, which enabled me to stop paying lip service to diversity, equity, and inclusion and actually invest in it. The first thing I did was to make some calls to our benefactors, and then double the budget for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. I also reinstated a position that had been cut to support our Latinx students. I felt empowered to do what we needed to get done on our campus to make progress. For me, the confidence and the recognition that came from my participation in the Institute was important; the fact that I'd been to the Institute and had been leading these conversations on campus for the whole year before moving into my new role gave me some credibility. Honestly, I don't know what I would have done if I hadn't been to the Institute, so I'm extremely grateful.

BRUCE KING: That's another great segue to our next question. From a campus leadership perspective, what tools, skills, or resources should our college presidents be strengthening? And what kind of support do you think they need?

SHAYA GREGORY POKU: Educational leaders, and college presidents in particular, have to think past matriculation to outcomes, such as career placement. This means they need to have systems-level understanding about how racism manifests itself. A study by the Pew Research Center found that the median post-graduation income for first-generation, low-income students who had only one parent is lower [than it is for other students]—and that affects the wealth gap. When presidents are really clear about what’s shaping higher education sociologically and how this translates into equity gaps like this, and also have clear data about that at their own institutions, it makes a big difference.

College presidents and other leaders also ought to gather more tools to be able to make the case for DEI to their alumni associations and to their boards, not just to their students, staff, and faculty. They have to understand how antiracism is actually core to the educational mission of the institution. That is so integral for all CIC institutions.

SANDRA SCHROER: We need to help presidents understand that the design and structure of higher education is inherently unequal, and that white privilege is at the core of that inequality. Without educating presidents to understand and to accept that, I don’t believe we can move our institutions forward through change. We also need to foster higher education professionals to move into presidencies earlier in their lives. It’s not about their youthfulness, but about the value of their different perspectives. If CIC could find ways to tie into those goals, I think it would be incredibly useful.

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: I think about university boards of directors. I have seen presidents who are ready for change, but whose hands may be tied by their constituents. I think it starts at the top with the board of directors, supporting the president in carrying out these important initiatives.

JEFF CARLSON: Some of the finest schools in our country, at least by reputation, are labeled by the Education Trust as “engines of inequality,” because of the paltry percentage of Pell [Grant] students that they enroll. I think presidents need to fundraise in a targeted way to either increase the percentage of Pell students that they enroll, support, and graduate, or if they already have a high percentage of Pell students, to do even more to support them.

BRIAN LENZMEIER: As someone who is currently a sitting president, I’ll echo what Vange mentioned with the board of trustees. It’s a challenge. On any given day, I might visit with politicians, benefactors, trustees, and parents, and there are times I’ll say to myself, “I can’t believe you just said that!” So one of the things that I would love support on is how to talk with a wide range of people at various points on this journey and with various levels of understanding.

JO BELD: What advice would you have if another Institute like this were to be offered now? What do you think it should achieve?

LISA PETROV: I'd like to see an emphasis on how to move from learning and understanding to action. The CIC experience, for me personally, was permission to be more bold and less hesitant. Now what I want to see is accountability. I want to see individual people held accountable, and I want to see systems of accountability that move past pretty words on paper and into what we are doing.

SANDRA SCHROER: One of the things we'll have to address in future programs is equipping universities and their leaders to work with the challenges we're seeing around critical race theory. I think those challenges are going to continue. Some places will flounder a bit as they think about their position on this and how they want to respond to their communities and constituents.

BRIAN LENZMEIER: I'd recommend something about politics. I often feel like my hands are being tied by politicians on a variety of issues, and so for me, it would be helpful to think about how campuses can engage with their legislators and with their local communities to really move forward.

JEFF CARLSON: One topic I might suggest that seems more relevant now than it was when we were there in 2018 is helping students to navigate their way through disinformation in a responsible and critical way. We just had our annual faculty workshop yesterday, and that was its theme. Our mission talks about helping students pursue truth, give compassionate service, and participate in making a more just world. How do you pursue truth in an age of disinformation?

VANGE OCASIO HOCHHEIMER: I would love to explore how to incorporate student voices in this process. Sometimes it seems like we are drafting initiatives entirely from the top, thinking we know what the students need—but they often know better! Hearing grass root-level voices, I think, would help bring some of these issues alive.

SHAYA GREGORY POKU: I think it's really important to create models. One of the readings that we found most helpful was Jeffrey Cohen's work around targeted psychological interventions.¹ We need more resources and models from other institutions that help us to think about how we operationalize equity.

I'd also love to see more information about how you actually address antiracism in light of the larger communities in which our institutions are situated, often as anchor institutions. We need to talk more specifically about some of the really problematic interactions students and faculty members have had with their local environments—contexts over which institutions don't have direct control.

And then, obviously, there's the importance of the board of trustees. I'd love to have more conversations about trustees, particularly since the Association of Governing Boards has recently

1 Geoffrey L. Cohen, Julio Garcia, and J. Parker Goyer, "Turning Point: Targeted, Tailored, and Timely Psychological Intervention," in *Handbook of Competence and Motivation: Theory and Application*, second edition, eds. Andrew J. Elliott et al. (New York: Guilford, 2017): 657–686.

come out with more robust resources around DEI.² At the same time, we need tools and tactics around navigating power dynamics in the very hierarchical environments that characterize institutions of higher education.

JO BELD: Thank you! When we invited you all to this discussion, we saw great benefit not only in the range of institutions you each represent, but also in the different roles and experiences each of you would bring. We're so grateful for this time together.

BRUCE KING: It's rare to have a chance both to look back and to look forward following an experience like the Institute. Your voices have made this assessment of its impact so much stronger, and we thank you for your contributions.

2 Association of Governing Boards, "Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolkit": <https://agb.org/agb-consulting/justice-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/toolkit>.

Some Lessons for Advancing Institutional Change

In our evaluation reports to the Council of Independent Colleges, we described the Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute as a “moving walkway” for institutions that were already investing in equity, inclusion, and dialogue across difference—that the Institute was adding depth, data, focus, and momentum to their work. Our panelists confirmed this assessment, providing numerous examples of the ways in which the Institute experience has continued to support their efforts to advance institutional change despite both new and persistent challenges. Here we offer some concluding reflections on how the Institute helped participating institutions move forward—and what other institutions can learn from the experience to support their own diversity and equity initiatives.

Inclusion

Across a wide variety of institutions and institutional priorities, the participants reiterated how helpful it was to have institutional teams that were inclusive in multiple ways, beginning with the inclusion of both faculty and staff. Linkage between the curriculum and the co-curriculum is, after all, one of the ways that liberal arts institutions say they add value to the undergraduate experience—and unless both domains advance inclusion, the institution as a whole will not feel more inclusive. No student’s education is limited to the classroom; staff are vital partners, not just in the co-curriculum but in the curriculum itself.

Moreover, the staff members appreciated the research-based, discussion-driven, symposium-like experience that the Institute provided, an experience that is often more characteristic of *faculty* development than *staff* development. It was powerful for professionals in very different roles to engage with a set of common readings in the service of common goals (which is why several institutions replicated that approach when the teams brought their learning back to campus).

Most Institute teams also reflected diversity in the identities of the individual team members, which meant that the Institute became a laboratory for engagement across difference. The inclusive design of the Institute reinforced the inclusive design of the institutional projects that followed.

Infusion

A second characteristic shared by many of the post-Institute campus initiatives was an infusion approach to institutional change. A significant challenge for any change initiative on a college campus is the paucity of time that characterizes life in higher education—not just for faculty and staff, but for students as well. It is all too common for institutional change to be experienced

as additive: adding requirements, adding courses, adding events, adding committees, adding programs. Many Institute participants tried to avoid this pitfall by *doing differently* rather than *doing more*. Existing curricular and co-curricular programs were revamped, so that students could encounter DEI-rich experiences in the context of courses they already needed to take or programs in which they were already enrolled. Faculty who shifted their pedagogical strategies to more inclusive practices weren't asked to spend more time in class; instead, they were encouraged to use their time differently.

Of course, making these changes required an initial investment of individual time and energy (especially for course, program, and pedagogical redesign), as well as collaborative efforts to plan and implement. But even here, many institutions followed an "infusion" approach by incorporating Institute readings or activities into already-scheduled faculty or staff professional development events and programs, or by leveraging existing committees and councils to design and oversee new efforts.

Intentionality

The CIC Institute was designed to nurture multiple dimensions of intentionality in the conceptualization and implementation of campus action plans. From the start, applicants were required to include a letter of support from the college or university's president, signaling an administrative commitment to the institutional effort that a change initiative would require. Institute teams were not only inclusive but comprised of individuals widely regarded as leaders within their institutions, colleagues who were poised to cultivate broad support, to sponsor specific events and activities, to foster collaboration across institutional units, and to develop or revise programming. And the Institute was premised on a "backward design" approach to institutional change, which begins with the intended outcomes of the change and then identifies the specific change strategies to be pursued. Consistent with this approach, the Institute schedule included focused time for teams to articulate shared goals, map out implementation steps and timelines, anticipate obstacles, identify necessary partners and resources, and begin to think about meaningful indicators of progress.

For the institutions represented in our panel discussion, intentionality was a key to project sustainability: Their projects continued despite a post-Institute global pandemic and heightened levels of social unrest sparked by the persistence of institutional racism. Intentionality also helped institutions withstand the inevitable changes in personnel and leadership that are common in higher education today. Successful institutional change often begins by bringing the right people together—but it will only endure if the initiatives they design do not depend solely on those "right people."

Of course, inclusion, infusion, and intentionality by themselves do not guarantee success, especially in institutional change efforts as dynamic and complex as those designed to make our institutions more diverse, more equitable, and more inclusive. But they are vital premises for vital work—work on which the future of higher education as an engine of equity depends.

Appendix:

Institute Topics, Readings, and Presenters

Representative Topics and Readings

For complete lists of topics and readings, visit www.cic.edu/DiversityInstitute.

Information and Authority: How Can We Redesign the Liberal Arts for Students Coming of Age in a Divisive, Globally Connected World?

Presenter: Cathy Davidson, Distinguished Professor and Founding Director of the Futures Initiative, CUNY Graduate Center

Reading: Cathy N. Davidson, *The New Education: How to Revolutionize the University to Prepare Students for a World in Flux* (New York: Basic Books, 2017). The Institute syllabus identified selected portions of the book as essential reading and the remainder of the book as recommended reading.

The Social Construction of Identities and the ABCs of Inclusive Pedagogy

Presenter: Beverly Daniel Tatum, Diversity, Civility, and the Liberal Arts Institute Director, CIC, and President Emerita, Spelman College

Readings: Excerpts from Beverly Daniel Tatum, *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? and Other Conversations About Race* (New York: Basic Books, 2017); *Can We Talk about Race? And Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007); and "Talking about Race, Learning about Racism: An Application of Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom," *Harvard Educational Review* 62, no. 1 (1992): 1–24.

Powerful but Invisible: Psychological Factors Shaping Student Success

Presenter: Geoffrey Cohen, James G. March Professor of Organization Studies in Education and Business, and Professor of Psychology, Stanford University

Readings: Geoffrey L. Cohen and Julio Garcia, "Educational Theory, Practice, and Policy and the Wisdom of Social Psychology," *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2014): 13–20; and excerpts from Geoffrey L. Cohen, Julio Garcia, and J. Parker Goyer, "Turning Point: Targeted, Tailored, and Timely Psychological Intervention," in *Handbook of Competence and Motivation: Theory and Application*, second edition, eds. Andrew J. Elliott et al. (New York, NY: Guilford, 2017).

The Ethics of Identity

Presenter: Danielle Allen, James Bryant Conant University Professor, Harvard University

Readings: Danielle Allen, "Toward a Connected Society," in *Our Compelling Interests: The Value of Diversity for Democracy and a Prosperous Society*, eds. Earl Lewis and Nancy Cantor (Princeton, NJ:

Princeton University Press, 2016); Susan Moller Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" *Boston Review* 22:4 (October/November 1997); Homi Bhabha, "Liberalism's Sacred Cow" [response to Okin], *Boston Review* 22:4 (October/November 1997).

Diversity and Equity in Higher Education: Setting the Context and Challenging Myths

Presenter: Julie J. Park, Associate Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park

Readings: Julie J. Park, "Student Demographics and Equity," in *The Challenge of Independent Colleges: Moving Research into Practice*, eds. Christopher C. Mophew and John M. Braxton (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017): 140–161; and excerpts from Park, *Race on Campus: Debunking Myths with Data* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2018).

Complete List of Institute Presenters and Panelists

with affiliations at the time

- * **DANIELLE ALLEN**, James Bryant Conant University Professor, Harvard University
- † **KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH**, Professor of Philosophy and Law, New York University
- † **DAVID BLIGHT**, Class of 1954 Professor of American History, Yale University
- † **MOON CHARANIA**, Assistant Professor of International Studies, Spelman College
- † **GEOFFREY COHEN**, James G. March Professor of Organization Studies in Education and Business and Professor of Psychology, Stanford University
- * **CATHY DAVIDSON**, Distinguished Professor and Founding Director of The Futures Initiative, CUNY Graduate Center
- † **KRISTIE A. FORD**, Professor of Sociology, Skidmore College
- † **VIVIA LAWTON FOWLER**, President, Wesleyan College
- * **NATHAN D. GRAWE**, Ada M. Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor in the Social Sciences, Carleton College
- † **BEVERLY GUY-SHEFTALL**, Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women's Studies, Spelman College
- † **JULIAN M. HAYTER**, Associate Professor of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond
- † **FREDERICK M. LAWRENCE**, Secretary and Chief Executive Officer, The Phi Beta Kappa Society
- † **JEFFREY MAKALA**, Special Collections Librarian and University Archivist, Furman University
- * **ALLAN METCALF**, Executive Secretary, American Dialect Society, and Professor of English, MacMurray College
- † **ROOSEVELT MONTÁS**, Senior Lecturer, Center for American Studies, Columbia University
- † **JULIE J. PARK**, Associate Professor of Education, University of Maryland, College Park
- † **EBOO PATEL**, Founder, Interfaith Youth Core
- † **BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM**, Institute Director and President Emerita, Spelman College
- * **CRAIG STEVEN WILDER**, Barton L. Weller Professor of History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- † **EILEEN B. WILSON-OYELARAN**, President Emerita, Kalamazoo College
- * **JONATHAN ZIMMERMAN**, Professor of the History of Education, University of Pennsylvania

* only 2018 † only 2019



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