

Appendix D

A Model for Maximizing Equity: The Transformational Tapestry©

To assist institutions in maximizing equity the Transformational Tapestry© was developed. The transformational tapestry model, which takes into account five main aspects of campus culture (access and retention, research and scholarship, inter-group and intra-group relations, curriculum and pedagogy, and institutional commitment), is designed to assist the campus community in maximizing equity through the use of specific assessment and intervention strategies.

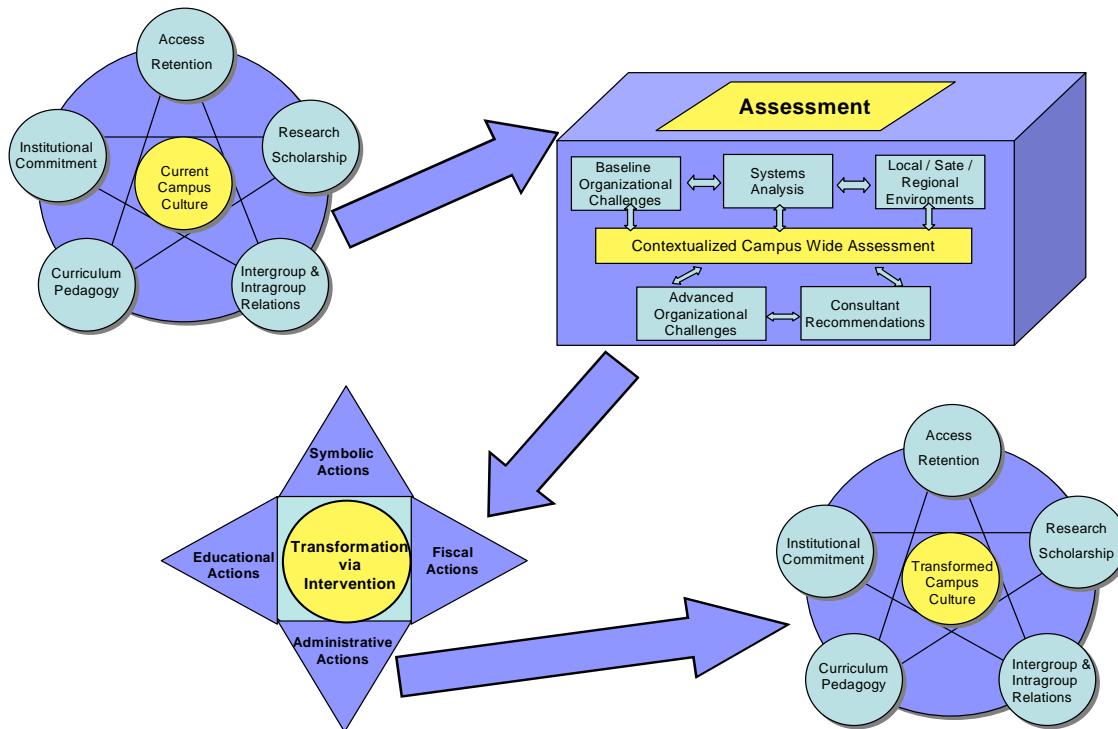
The foundations of the transformational tapestry model of campus climate were informed by Smith et al.'s (1999) meta-analysis of research on diversity in higher education. In their review of the literature on the impact of campus diversity initiatives on college students, Smith and her colleagues provide a context for examining campus diversity. The authors identified four dimensions of campus diversity, each of which overlaps and intersects with the others. The first dimension, *Access and Success*, is concerned principally with the inclusion and academic achievement of underrepresented groups. The second dimension, *Campus Climate and Intergroup Relations*, focuses on the environment for historically marginalized groups on campus. The third dimension, *Education and Scholarship*, addresses diversity as it relates to the educational and scholarly role of the institution, including curricular content, scholarly methodology, and research mission. The last dimension concerns the role of diversity in ensuring *Institutional Viability and Vitality*. This dimension focuses attention on faculty and staff, relationships with important constituencies (e.g., alumni and trustees), and on relationships to communities outside of the institution.

The transformational tapestry model of campus climate differs from Smith et al.'s four dimensions of campus diversity in that it not only provides a framework for viewing campus culture, but also presents systematic guidelines for *assessing* campus culture and for *implementing interventions* designed to transform a campus culture into one that maximizes equity. The model's assessment and transformational intervention components were developed based on previous research (Beckhard, 1989; Drucker, 1993; Hurtado, 1999; and Rankin, 1994, 1998) and recent investigations examining the climate for diversity on 22 college campuses (Rankin, forthcoming) where transformational strategies have been or are in the process of being implemented.

The Transformational Tapestry Model

The first phase of the transformational tapestry model of campus culture for maximizing equity on a particular university campus proposes that an institution conduct an internal assessment of the campus culture for under-represented/under-served populations¹ (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Transformational Tapestry
Model for Maximizing Equity on Campus



The first component of the internal assessment utilizes focus groups and individual interviews to examine baseline institutional challenges. These along with a systems analysis (e.g., mission, structure, current policies, etc.), and review of the local, regional, and state environments inform the second component of the internal assessment, the construction of a campus-wide survey of the

¹ The researcher works collaboratively with a social equity advisory team consisting of representation from the various constituent groups on campus throughout the process.

climate for diversity. A quantitative analysis of the survey data and a qualitative analysis of respondent's comments are reviewed and shared with the campus community and the social equity team. The third component of the internal assessment calls for the reconvening of the focus groups to identify advanced organizational challenges. These along with researcher recommendations provide the foundation for developing transformational interventions.

Following the comprehensive internal assessment, phase two of the model is initiated. The social equity team with feedback from the campus creates a strategic plan for maximizing equity with immediate, short-term (two-year), and long-term (5-year) actions. The model's transformational intervention strategies include symbolic actions, educational actions, administrative actions, and fiscal actions. The overarching strategic plan identifies well-defined goals, specific intervention actions, person(s) responsible for carrying out the actions, participants involved in the action, time-frames, costs, outcomes, and assessment/accountability measures.

Using the Transformational Tapestry Model – The Current Study

Developing a conceptual model is a formidable task, but putting the model to use is perhaps the more important undertaking. The transformational tapestry model has been used in assessing the diversity climate on over 20 university campuses nation-wide. Over 17,000 respondents including students, faculty, staff, and administrators completed multiple choice scantron or on-line questionnaires addressing issues including – but not limited to – harassment, discrimination, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, and pedagogy. Under-represented and/or under-served populations on campus were purposefully over-sampled to provide these groups with a voice that may have been missed if a random sampling procedure was used. Respondents were also encouraged to provide written comments on their experiences regarding diversity on campus and recommendations for improving the campus climate for diversity.

Survey data and written comments were analyzed and provided to the each of the campus social equity teams (through written reports and follow-up presentations) to address their specific institutional challenges. These results, along with other recommendations from the researcher, informed the intervention strategies that ultimately assist universities to maximize equity and transform their campuses.