

Transcript - Curating Inclusive Course Content that Centers Students and Equity

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PRESENTER: Evidence-based instructional practices, digital tools that they've implemented to support student learning, and then strategies that they've developed to support their faculty as they engage in this journey of developing culturally responsive curriculum and materials that specifically engage students of color in ways that are meaningful to those students, that honors those students funds and knowledge and are currently relevant and responsive.

And so again, excited to have you joining us here. We have currently 168 folks on the call. If you could put your names in the chat, what institution you're with, and then what we'll be doing is there'll be opportunities for Q&A at the end of the session. If you do have comments or questions, you can also put those in the chat, and we'll be trying to manage that as well. And then we'll talk about next our session outcomes and objectives.

And so with this webinar series or this session, attendees will increase their knowledge and understanding and abilities to initiate a process of creating and implementing culturally responsive content and curriculum, recognize and draw upon evidence-based and equity-focused approaches related to digital teaching and learning.

Put into action instructional practices that lead to equitable outcomes in teaching and learning, understand the importance of implementing innovative digital learning that supports student experiences and authentically measures learning in ways that are meaningful to students, and then be empowered to address inequities in the classroom and at the institutional levels. So again, thank you for being here. I'd like to introduce our--

Sorry, I think I heard someone. All right. Make sure that your mic is on mute. And so I'd like to introduce Dr. Jennifer Townes. Dr. Townes is the assistant vice president of Professional Development and Employment Engagement at Southwest Tennessee Community College. Before becoming the assistant vice president, she served as a full-time faculty member, teaching reading support courses and language and literature in the Language and Literature department.

Dr. Townes also provides institutional professional development, including the college's annual Summer Institute, where nearly 300 faculty and staff members convened for four days of enhanced learning through shared ideas and practices, and then their Winter Recharge, a day-long PD where colleagues engage in best practices for technology and teaching and learning.

And then we have Dr. LeeAnne McNulty. She has been leading, collaborating, and building partnerships to institute educational reform and pursue educational justice for over 20 years. She currently serves at Allan Hancock College and her community as the director of Institutional Grants pursuing innovation for equity, access, and inclusion.

She's also co-authored the culturally responsive Higher Education Curriculum Assessment Tool, her pursuit of supporting all students and educators to break the patterns of historical oppression, reflect multiple perspectives and cultures in their curriculum, and empower educators and students to learn and grow and succeed.

And Rick Rantz currently serves as the dean of Academic Affairs at Allan Hancock College. He previously held administrative positions at Sierra College and Feather River College. Prior to entering higher education, Rick taught in the K-12 levels in California. A large part of his focus is on diversity, equity, and inclusion within higher education, and is the co-author of the Culturally Responsive Higher Education Curriculum Assessment. Thank you again for joining us. We're so excited about what you're going to share with us as panelists and the great work that you're doing at your institutions. And so we'll get started with our first question. We're going to have a panel discussion, and then we're going to have our panelists share out some specific practices and processes that they've implemented at their institutions to close equity gaps and to culturally affirm their students at their institutions.

And so why inclusive course content? Why is that imperative? And share with us your aha moment when you realized that we really needed to be mindful of the students that we're serving, mindful of being culturally responsive, and being equity minded. And so panelists, just jump in.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Well, this is LeeAnne. Good morning or good afternoon, depending on where you are located I think one of the most important why it's imperative is that we're constantly trying to get students motivated and engaged, and I believe it's the best way to lead students to educational achievement, make sure that they can connect to their educational environment and content and respond to it.

It helps them build goals and achievements that are tied to a world that they understand and perceive and build knowledge. So really, it's a motivation piece for our students to engage and connect to the content.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah, just to-- the way we actually got started in this effort was we actually did an assessment of our existing curriculum and really just discovered that it wasn't very culturally responsive or the content really didn't represent the student population that we were serving.

So that's when we set forth to do an initial assessment of our curriculum. And then we felt it was important to develop a tool that was more useful than doing that. And so we'll talk about that later. But as LeeAnne was pointing out, when students aren't seeing themselves in their curriculum when they don't have an opportunity to reflect back to the representations within their own culture, well then they have no solid foundation on which to draw from.

And that's when students start becoming disconnected, bored. They might even choose to tune out or drop out. And so really connecting the content of your courses into your curriculum, it becomes very important because once students see themselves within the curriculum, they become more motivated and engaged in the curriculum, and they're more willing to accept challenges associated with whatever is presented by the instructor.

JENNIFER TOWNES: And like both my colleagues have just said earlier that inclusive course content is important because we want our students to see themselves and we want it to be meaningful. I'd gone to a conference I'd say probably 2018, and I got to hear Dr. Tia Brown McNair talk about a study in which college students reported not seeing the relevance of college or why it's important.

And I think culturally responsive or inclusive content gets it grounds our students, and it helps them to see the why because it's connected to them. It has more meaning. And really, I think when you think about how people learn like connecting prior knowledge and engaging in meaningful work and making it make sense to the things that they're going to go out and do in the world, it makes sense for it to be inclusive.

But I think for so long we know in idea, but in practice, I think that part was missing. And then also it's important because the work of actually helping them to see themselves, because right now our curriculum as it is really developed and the approach has been traditionally one type of group. And so when you're intentional about including them in a

meaningful way and not just surface, I think that it helps our students grow, become motivated, and become more engaged, and then they will be successful.

I'm excited about our time together, because we're going to talk a little bit more about how we did that. But I think for me, it is imperative because it helps our students connect. And it's also important because as educators and as people who are working with a growing body of diverse learners, it's just really important for us to get to know who those learners are. And I think inclusive course content allows us to do that as well as we engage in that work.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: And if you don't mind, if I could add, I think that's exactly spot on. And when you draw upon the cultural strengths of all students in your classrooms, you're creating an inquisitive curiosity, a thirst for meaning and understanding, and you're placing a value to your course content, value to their culture, their beliefs, their experiences, and then they can build on that.

You're also providing a sense of belonging. And that sense of belonging we're finding is an incredible driver for learning. It elicits an emotional connection to the course content. And when you have that, that's this motivating piece that I think that too often it's a one-sided perspective, and you're not presenting multiple experiences, multiple perspectives, multiple cultures.

You're creating a disconnect where this content doesn't apply to me or apply to people I know in the world I know. So I think it's an incredible to highlight the strengths that every student brings into that class and into the world.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah. And just as a summary here, instruction for English learners, economically challenged students, and those of colors often directed at the lower end of the Bloom's Taxonomy. So it's more directed toward remembering, understanding, and the application, whereas instruction that is directed more toward the cultural aspects of the student's background allows them to develop more higher order and critical thinking skills.

And those are the skills that students really need to succeed in college. And when there's an absence of this, well, then instruction actually becomes destructive instead of enlightening.

PRESENTER: Thank you for your responses. And I appreciate bringing in the historical perspective of higher education and what that means when we think about equitable

outcomes, and who's being served at those institutions. And then thinking again, Rick, as you said, how are we engaging students so our curriculum is engaging them in a way that they are experiencing higher order thinking. So I appreciate that, and specifically our students of color.

Let's move to the next slide. And so as you all have engaged in this work, I would like for you to share with our participants the benefits that students gain from having culturally responsive content. What that means in the classroom as far as their growth and development, and in thinking about cross-cultural experiences for students that might not identify as students of color.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Well, I think we've already mentioned a lot of those benefits, because when students are engaged, then they're more likely to persist and be retained and graduate, which is our goal, for our students to come in, matriculate and to successfully reach whatever milestone or goal that they set.

So I think that culturally responsive content builds a platform for them to be able to move forward with that. But I think it benefits students because they are allowed to grow and stretch their thinking, because when you're thinking about all students, they're going to be opportunities for everyone to think, to engage. And it decenters one particular group, and you focus on all the students.

So I think it's around decentering and moving away from the historical perspective of education and how content is delivered. And also, culturally responsive content allows us to be more responsive to our community needs. We work in a community college, and so we get to serve our communities.

And being culturally responsive means that we think about who we serve. And so the community I serve right now in Memphis is a very urban community, and we are majority minority versus the community of my colleagues across the state, which are not.

So I think when you're culturally responsive in that way, it benefits our students because we start advocating for who they are and not allow them to get lost when we move toward district levels, and we move across the state. So we get to advocate for them because we are knowing who they are. So I think when we think about being culturally responsive, we force ourselves to see who our students are and not a statistic of a representation across one big group.

PRESENTER: Eric mentioned that we had a question in the chat.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

SPEAKER: Go ahead and speak. Yeah.

PRESENTER: Eric, you might have to give her permission to speak.

SPEAKER: Oh, I did.

PRESENTER: OK. Right, we'll keep moving. Eric, I think we-- thank you. So again, as you all are talking about the benefits of this, here's some things that you all shared. And I just wanted to make sure that we shared this with the participants, and that they had a visual of that. And so maybe you can speak to a couple of these items here on the slide.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah. So as you can see here, some of the outcomes that we've identified within the research is that inclusive curriculum does lead to increased academic achievement. It influences the way that students relate and respond to their environment. It influences the kind of goals and achievements that students establish for themselves. And it really helps them to shape a worldview and how they think about the world around them.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: And there was a question in the chat regarding how this is addressed at the college level. Which is I know that Rick and I were going to be sharing an assessment tool today that we are presenting with a professional development series for our college faculty to modify their curriculum based on looking for certain culturally responsive traits and being able to identify or them or the lack thereof. So that is coming up in today's session.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah, I saw the question in the chat. And I think when we get to that point, it will help answer that question.

PRESENTER: Great All right. Let's move to the next slide. So this is going to be the crux of our conversation. It's really about again curating culturally responsive affirming and validating content. So when we think about historically what our content and our curriculum has looked like and who's been centered in that work.

We're going to have our panelists share out how they've gone about this process of curating culturally responsive content and curriculum, what that looks like in practice, and the tools that they use to do that. And hopefully you will gain some strategies that you can begin to implement at your own institution.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: So the Culturally Responsive Higher Education Curriculum Assessment Tool. Rick Rantz and I worked with NYU. They had a K-12 version. And it worked specifically Leah Peoples to start crafting one for higher education.

And one of the things that we found is some of the adjustments we needed to make was to take the-- well, first of all, just teach faculty to look for some specific cultural responsive traits that would show up in your curriculum. This one is a little difficult to read. I don't know if you would like me to share the instrument at this point, but I can share my screen, if you'd like.

PRESENTER: Yes, that'd be great, LeeAnne.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: OK. And Rick, please feel free. Can everybody see my screen? We're still working on it. We're actually not probably going to stick with some of the images. It's still in the drafting phase with the graphic designers right now.

So it basically begins with the theoretical framework. We wanted faculty to know why this was so important and that it's very well researched to make sure that faculty knew that this wasn't it's not just us saying that this is important. It's an entire body of evidence that is showing that students are disconnecting and disengaging with our curriculum because we are not being culturally responsive. We are not representing them in our curriculum.

And so when we do, that we have pieces about the paradigm that we're shaping and how we're transforming teaching and learning to move away from a eurocentric, one-sided story. And moving into multiple stories, multiple perspectives, and ways to represent our students.

And it talks about the motivational piece that we've already discussed balancing integrated and individualized frameworks, authentic engagement and rigor, and how to elicit that within your students. And talking about why it matters. And the way that we've illustrated to assess these categories is through representation.

So if diverse individuals, diverse authors, diverse portrayals, and the accuracy of portrayals are represented in the curriculum and how to identify that, as well as a social justice lens that deals with power and privilege, multiple perspectives, systemic oppression, and an action.

So creating an action orientation that connects students to what they're seeing in their lives, what's happened historically, and breaking the cycle of oppression by taking action and realizing that these barriers exist because of the systems that are in place. And so making those ties. And this is the actual assessment tool. And, Rick, if you want to cut in at any time?

RICK RANTZ: Yeah. So it's interesting. When we started this work, we discovered that the Achieving the Dream organization had also begun work on a similar scorecard actually working with New York University also. And then we discovered that Chamberlain University had also begun working with New York University Metro Center to come up with a version of the scorecard.

So at this point, there are some organizations and institutions who've been really thinking about this simultaneously, which was really great. We've had a lot of conversations with the people who develop those other instruments. At one point, we may decide to integrate all of those. I'm not so sure at this point.

One thing about our instrument, we did have a chance to validate it with our faculty, and they made a lot of suggestions on how to improve it. We spent almost two years working with New York University to develop the instrument. But after we took it to our faculty, they pointed out a lot of things that really were useful in helping us to make it even a stronger instrument.

And really, we're hoping that this really does lead to improved student outcomes, student achievement, and retention persistence, and that whole spectrum of outcomes that we would like to see in institutions. And when we're talking about student achievement, a lot of times we rely on our student services side of our institutions to offer the kind of support that students need to succeed in college.

But it's really rare when institutions take a holistic view of the curriculum and actually say, OK, perhaps we should focus on the curriculum because that may be part of the issue or the problem that's preventing students from succeeding. And we're hoping this instrument and the other instruments that are out there will go a long way in really improving student success.

PRESENTER: And LeeAnne and Rick, Trudy had a question. What suggestions did your faculty recommend to improve the scorecard or the tool?

RICK RANTZ: Yeah, a host of them.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Yes. But I think the biggest contribution that they made was their response to the word scorecard and being scored. It was something that took them back and said, I'm offering my time to learn about how to be culturally responsive. And I don't want to be told how bad I am and score low.

And at first my response was, well, if you're not being culturally responsive, you're being culturally destructive. That was my initial response. But then when I started working

with the faculty and really hearing their voice, I found that they were spot on. We don't want our faculty to feel like we're judging them. They're the ones that are reaching out and offering to modify their curriculum with this assessment tool and figure out where am I missing it.

And so we took out the aspect of being assessed and judged and instead, went with the perspective of these are faculty who want to do their jobs even better. They're already doing an amazing job. They want to serve their students better. And if we take out the score element and instead just provide a tool for to help them, then it becomes a team effort.

And it's actually it rids them of judgment and just says good job you're pursuing this incredible endeavor to reach our students and to empower our students and value of the communities we serve. And value the history of oppression, and recognize the fact that every culture has a value and has contributed to education and every profession that education leads to. And I think that acknowledgment is really important.

So we designed a professional development series to introduce the tool, and we will be paying faculty to not only attend that introduction but to pay them to take the time to research and respond and modify their curriculum. It's going to take a lot of effort and time, and we value the work that they're doing. So we did have to find some funding sources and stuff. So definitely. Yeah, would you like me to pull up the actual tool?

PRESENTER: I think we're going to keep moving because we're at half an hour. And I had a question in the chat. No, no, no this was great information. Thanks so much for sharing that. We did have some folks asking to share the link. And we'll share that once you all have that published.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Yes, it should be published soon.

PRESENTER: OK. Dr. Townes, I'm going to ask you to respond to this question. Julie Ashlock asked, I would love to hear how you've overcome-- sorry. Moved on to a different question. My apologies. There was a question about engaging folks that are on the technical side of the institution, folks in aviation, folks in dental tech, those type of CTE programs, how do we get those folks involved and understand the value of this work as it relates to their fields?

JENNIFER TOWNES: Well, one, I get that question a lot, especially from my science major people, because, I think, when you frame it or you think about the student and you

think about the outcomes, what do you want your students to be able to do at the end of this class, at the end of this course, at the end of-- insert. And when you think about then centering, some of the things that I talked to people about is we know that in our institution, majority of our students stay in the city of Memphis. So how does the work that they do impact them now within that field? Dental tech, how can you do problem-based learning based on the city?

So we have a lot of community outreach for free dental programs because we know that that's an issue here. So how can you bring those concerns or economic issues or whatever to that are centered within your city? All of those apply because people, your community, all of those people benefit from the things that your students are going to learn.

So part of that is grounding it in creating problem-based assignments, bringing in-- and I'm going to talk a little bit about some of that when I talk about curating, because the act of curation, it doesn't matter what you teach. I always told my students the outcomes really are driving that instruction.

So when you think about that, plus you think about who your students are, you'll be able to identify some ways in which you can do that. But it's totally I always go to problem-based, outcome-based, performance-based. And look at those ways in which you can teach them and connect it back to their community.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah, I think it's really interesting because when we connected with Chamberlain University, we developed a very similar tool. They actually used it-- they have an online nursing program and a face-to-face nursing program.

They used their instrument to modify their curriculum in their online program, and then they compared the outcomes of the students from both groups. And the students that were exposed to the modified curriculum outperformed the face-to-face group, which was really amazing because as you probably know, usually, students aren't as successful in online instruction as they are face-to-face instruction.

So I thought that was pointed to some evidence that this can really change outcomes. And I was actually surprised that they were using it in a STEM areas such as nursing, and they're planning to do it in dental assisting and so forth.

PRESENTER: Thanks for sharing that. Eric, if you could go back, and let's start on slide 14. Dr. Townes, if you can share the process you went into curating culturally responsive content?

JENNIFER TOWNES: I would like to start by saying part of my role when I started here was working with developmental studies in reading. And so I think for me, coming to the realization that I had a deficit-minded approach to them, that was really steeped in they can't read. We're coming in thinking they can't read at the end of the day.

Whether I wanted to admit that at the beginning of this work or not, that's really the mindset I had about them. So I think for me when I was thinking about how do I assess them, and then also thinking about backwards design, my goal wasn't to see if they can answer multiple choice questions.

My goal was for them to demonstrate their ability to identify the point, the supporting details, be able to apply those critical reading strategies that we talked about. So how does that look? So one of the things that I started to do was to one, I mean, I always looked for stories about diverse individuals, but what I started to do differently was just start asking them more about who they're interested in?

Do they have something that they would like to share? Asking them to bring in passages that relate to them and connect with them. And one day I just decided out of the blue, rather than do my typical assessments at the end of the semester, I wanted them to show me, to demonstrate to me that they can identify the point, the main idea. How can you demonstrate to me that you can master these skills?

And so one of them, one of my students found this article because it was around the time that they were celebrating our community, Orange Mound. It's one of the oldest Black communities in the nation. I think it's second only to Harlem. But there was this documentary about Orange Mound.

And so the student pulled this PDF from MTSU's historical collection. And they were able to demonstrate their mastery on all of those assignments. And so I think for me, it was a huge shift because I started to really center my students. And it just seems so simple to just start asking them and find ways to find ways to see what interests them, what material they would like to read or to know about.

And so somebody else did drive-through funeral homes, which was very interesting. It was just like they had all of these different types of readings and texts, and they were all able to demonstrate it because one, I just told them what I wanted them to be able to do, and I gave them a checklist.

And they were able to do it as compared to just me giving them these random passages and asking them to identify the main idea. They were able to still do the thing that I wanted them to do. So for me, I think one of my big takeaways was what am I asking them to do when I assess them? How am I engaging in this historical way of assessing? And then assigning whether or not that they've met this by this one particular way.

And so what I've started to do to curate is not only pick stories about people of color but they're written by people of color, all of the different perspective. And then I allow my students to select content. And then I try to find images that are not just stereotypical, and then find stories that are relatable.

And they don't always have to be a boy or girl coming out of the hood. Like that is not our only story so that we're a monolith. And so I wanted all of our stories to show that we have a diverse experience, and it's very rich. And so all the stories about Black people don't have to be about Harriet Tubman and slave movements and all of that because we're not just that. So I just wanted to share that piece.

PRESENTER: Yeah. And what I hear you saying, Jennifer, is one, you're validating and affirming their prior knowledge, but then also creating space where they're co-constructing knowledge with you as the professor.

JENNIFER TOWNES: Yes.

PRESENTER: Yeah, that's great. All right. We can move to the next slide, Eric. So we want to talk about implementing evidence-based practices, instructional practices, and then thinking about how are we incorporating digital tools and digital and technology to enhance student learning. And then we're going to wrap up with strategies that support our faculty in developing inclusive course content.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Did you want us to speak on other topic first or go right into the strategies to support--

PRESENTER: Let's talk about the other topic first. So what are some of the practices that you've implemented, and What are the outcomes, and what digital tools have you been using to support students in their learning?

RICK RANTZ: Jennifer mentioned something really interesting because a lot of times, I think, when instructors are dealing with certain populations, they fall into this deficit thinking kind of mode.

And so one thing that for those institutions who are online from California you already know this, but if you're outside of California, our State Chancellor's Office actually through legislation they don't allow us to place students in remedial courses any longer.

We kept a few of our courses, but we had to prove evidence that they had the same throughput as those students entering into transfer-level courses. So we just did a study to analyze all those students in remedial courses that we still have to see what their throughput rate is and if they can do that in one year. Only 5.3% of those students were able to achieve that throughput in one year. Those students who were placed in transfer-level courses, the rate was 68.3%

And so I think it's really important to get away from that deficit of thinking and really realize that all students can achieve really lofty goals as long as they have the support mechanisms that allow them to do that and the belief that they can do it. I think when you set high goals for your students, they're going to achieve those high goals. When you're setting low goals for your students, of course, that's all they're going to achieve.

PRESENTER: Rick, I would say to that point also thinking about the level of support we're providing folks too when we think about high expectations but also high support.

RICK RANTZ: Because they go hand in hand.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Yeah. And I think again, getting to know who you're serving, who is your community, who are you empowering. How is this helping students pursue the lives of their dreams.

And I think Jennifer had a great point about making sure that the reflections of our students once we do add those into our curriculum and course content, are authentic and diverse in their portrayals and staying away from stereotypes, not only racial stereotypes but gender stereotypes and beyond. So I think that's important.

And when it comes to digital tools, for us, we're a Hispanic serving institution, and we are also a low-income-serving institution. And so one of the digital- we have to make sure that our students from the get-go, from before school starts really have the digital tools to compete and succeed in our classes.

So right now we have huge laptop lending, hotspot lending, computer labs, and especially with COVID and the pandemic that's been an essential piece is just to make sure that they have digital access first and foremost, and that all the faculty understand what student services and supports they have to support students.

RICK RANTZ: I saw an interesting question come up on the chat.

The question was, how do you engage your faculty, especially white faculty to engage in this work? And so I think that we're actually paying faculty to engage in this work initially, because we feel if other faculty can see successes from those initial faculty who embrace this, then they're going to be more willing to jump on board and do it also. And then, of course, one thing we're doing is we have a strong evaluation component built into the instrument. And once we roll that out in doing our faculty development, there's a strong evaluation component. So we'll be able to show hopefully positive outcomes that we can share with faculty to show the importance of joining into this effort. Yeah, I see on the chat money talks. It does.

[CHUCKLES]

PRESENTER: So--

JENNIFER TOWNES: Um--

PRESENTER: --I think we could-- oh, go ahead, Jennifer. And then we can move to the slides to talk about the strategies and supporting folks.

JENNIFER TOWNES: Oh, that's what I was going to talk about strategies to support faculty.

PRESENTER: Go ahead, Jennifer.

JENNIFER TOWNES: Oh, I think in a couple of slides, I talk about the community of practice that we're going to engage in. But as far as a structure of engaging faculty, we have a very robust programming around culturally responsive teaching. And we actually have levels.

So majority of our training that's around culturally responsive teaching is voluntary. We hardly don't require. Now, we start moving into leadership training and development, and those are required. Because if our teachers, our faculty are going to engage at this level, it's really important that our leadership understands because they're going to be some addressing of policies and practices that come with this.

And so we got to be able to have people who are able to make those changes, understand what they are and what they need to be. But I can totally brag on our faculty. At this point, we have had close to 97% of our faculty engage in one type of CRT training. And that's because we offer it as an institution around our large convenings. So we have Summer Institute, we have Winter Recharge, and we have Faculty Development Day.

And we always have an opening plenary session, and those topics are around that. How do you do it? And then we offer opportunities to break out. I'll talk about our community of practices in a couple of slides, but I wanted to speak to that. Money talks.

But also, I think that if faculty know that they're supported and they have a place where they can learn and be vulnerable, that's also really important because we're asking them to do some things that are quite uncomfortable.

And so we got to make sure that they have the space and know that starting where you are, it doesn't mean that you're going to be penalized, doesn't mean that you're a bad person. It means that I want to learn and understand how I can move forward to support my students. And I think having that space is really important, and that's what I had to say about that.

PRESENTER: Great. And LeeAnne and Rick, if you could just share two key points from the next two slides as we begin to wrap up and allow time for question and answers.

RICK RANTZ: LeeAnne, I'll go first, and then I'll give you the second one. But I think having support from executive leadership is really, really important. We have a president who really embraced this, and he really believes it can be transformational. And so having that support is really essential.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: And having this our tool is really straightforward. I think that that's also essential. I think even just looking at the tool. Even if you choose not to get paid to modify your curriculum, it plants the seed. These are things to look for to see if they're showing up, to see if your curriculum is culturally responsive.

So I think the exposure. But we do know it's going to take a lot of time. Our faculty are extremely stretched thin, especially they have very large caseloads. And we want to make sure that they understand this is valuable and we understand the contribution they're making, because we hope to share the curriculum, all the modifications. So we want to pay those that are paving the road for others to utilize for free.

PRESENTER: Great.

JENNIFER TOWNES: And so that's the slide. So our faculty engage in community of practice every semester. The Creating the Path to Success in the Classroom it was one of our first books that we read. We invited the author to come and kick off, and then we engaged in the community of practice.

And that book is actually still in rotation. I use it for new faculty orientation. So every new faculty coming into the college goes through this year-long study together to orient around teaching and learning in the classrooms. So that's part of how we're trying to scale up. So we're working with faculty and staff that are already here, but also getting faculty as they come through the door and going through this training.

And the other three books, Equity Talk and Equity Walk and Start Where You Are our community of practices that we're running this semester. Start Where You Are is a new book. And then Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Brain was one we ran for three semesters.

And we're putting it back in rotation, but we are stretched thin, and so we actually have started allowing some of the faculty who have gone through this training to become facilitators of our community of practice. So we have scaled up that way. And those groups are groups where we are trying to get faculty to learn, also give space to develop and implement and come back and reflect.

So that's what we're doing to support faculty, creating that space where you can read and learn, go out and implement and come back and reflect on it. And then share out your successes, some lesson learned in one of our large convenings.

PRESENTER: Any final thoughts as we think about how we can support faculty, and how we can support our colleagues who are on the call as they begin to curate culturally responsive and equity minded curriculum in their courses?

RICK RANTZ: I just think it's really important to recognize and celebrate successes because as Jennifer mentioned, faculty are really stretched in a lot of different directions. And when they engage in this work and they have success, well, I think it's really important for them to be recognized and to celebrate that the work that they've done.

And that's the way that other faculty become encouraged to jump in and participate in this kind of work and go through the professional development that's required. I love the Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Brain. That's an excellent, excellent book. It really does focus on the creation of higher order thinking skills of associated with more inclusive content.

PRESENTER: All right. So we're going to open this up for Q&A. This is an opportunity to directly ask the panelists questions. And so if you would raise your hand. And I would

ask Eric and some of my ETD colleagues to ask folks once they raise their hands to come off mute and ask you a question. And you can also use the chat for questions as well.

JENNIFER TOWNES: Someone asked, do you ever conduct division or department-specific training or do you suggest wide scale trainings? We actually do it all just because we want to be able to capture as many people with diverse types of training. So we have large-scale we call institution-wide training development.

Then sometimes we have division-level trainings. In fact, the department chair Equity Academy Training has a component where the department chair goes with the support of a coach and start leading the division and department-level training around CRT. So it's awesome. So we try to do it all. It's difficult, but we do.

RICK RANTZ: Yeah at our college, we have a diversity of inclusion and EDI.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Diversity, equity, and inclusion.

RICK RANTZ: And that was a really implemented with the assistance of our president. And so that committee drives a lot of our professional development across the district. So in that sense, it's more of an institutional effort instead of that more of a departmental level.

And then we have our State Chancellor's Office through our student services side has a lot of equity funding that comes down from our state to support that also. And so there's a lot of professional development. We hold an annual Equity Summit, and we invite all of our high school folks to join in with that also.

It's heavily attended and really positive feedback from those equity summits. And that gives us a chance to not only educate folks within our own college, but the community also. And that's been very effective.

PRESENTER: We had a question from one of our colleagues. How does a rural PWI begin to engage in this work that's interested in engaging in this work? What are some recommendations you might have for them?

LEEANNE MCNULTY: What was the acronym?

PRESENTER: Predominantly white institutions that are in rural communities.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: OK.

PRESENTER: And how do they begin to engage in this work?

RICK RANTZ: Yeah. First, I would want to point out that this isn't only for economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and so forth. It's really for all students. It's

really honoring all of the students in your class. And when you get a new group of students, I would suggest that instructors really take the time to assess, who are my students, and how do I then connect with them?

And one of the best ways that we pointed out is through content that reflects their cultural background, because then they can connect their expected learning back to their cultural foundations. And that may be a white foundation.

But in that, I think that if you have a mixed group of students, well, your white students are going to be learning as much as the students of color, and through that whole process, they're going to be developing a worldview that they may not have developed otherwise.

LEEANNE MCNULTY: Yeah. And not to toot our horn or the other horns of people that have created culturally responsive literature and books, journal entries, as well, and academic journals as well as instruments such as ours, but I think it's especially important to introduce predominantly white institutions as well, because the transformation doesn't take place in small pockets. It has to take place across the nation.

And everybody's got to realize that this is not a country that has the history and population of only white people and white men, we all this country and our world. And it's important to have representation no matter. Although I had said we should reflect your students, I mean, that is paramount.

If you have students of color, they should be reflected, honored, and valued and represented in your curriculum. However, let's say you have hardly any students of color in your institution. That still means that everybody in that institution is going to be engaging in work and in the world and should understand that there is a value and a contribution from everybody.

And so understanding multiple perspectives is a key of being an educated person and a compassionate person. And understanding that everyone holds value. So I think having a theoretical framework and a very straightforward instrument like these culturally responsive instruments are really important just to be able to go down the line and say, am I representing this group? Am I representing this group?

Am I having a social justice orientation, my time, my curriculum to historical systems of oppression and how each group has been affected by that and how it's created barriers. And what can we do? How can each of us contribute to change and development?

PRESENTER: Thanks, Dr. McNulty. That's a great way to wrap up. I want to thank our panelist, Rick Rantz, LeeAnne McNulty, and Jennifer Townes for being with us today and sharing the work that you've been doing and engaging with our colleagues here who have participated during this session.

We will have our next, Operationalizing Equity, Social Justice, and Inclusion to Transform Teaching and Learning session on Wednesday, March 9, 1:00 o'clock to 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. And again, that topic will focus on operationalizing equity and teaching learning practices in the classroom.

And so I hope you will join us again. And thank you so much for this great conversation and the contributions you've made over this time we've been together this afternoon.

RICK RANTZ: Thanks, everyone.

JENNIFER TOWNES: Thank you.

RICK RANTZ: Ray, are you ready for us to sign off or--

PRESENTER: I think so. Eric, can we-- Yeah, I think I'll find a meeting for you all, a time for us to connect. Thank you again so much. Really appreciate your--