

NIH Scientific Workforce Diversity Seminar Series

#SWDSS

Successes & Challenges of Cohort Recruitment as Part of the Larger DEIA Mission

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LESSONS LEARNED WITH FACULTY COHORTS

SHERILYNN BLACK, PH. D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF THE PRACTICE, MEDICAL EDUCATION

ASSOCIATE VICE PROVOST FOR FACULTY ADVANCEMENT

DUKE UNIVERSITY

COHORTS IMPROVE RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

- ❑ A large body of work exists showing that cohorts improve the *student experience*, particularly for underrepresented groups

Cohorts are shown to improve:

Belonging

Retention

Productivity

Science
Identity

Lessons are now being applied to *faculty groups* and have been used in a number of faculty hiring initiatives (especially post 2020 for UR groups)

LESSON #1: INSTITUTION/DEPARTMENTAL CLIMATE MUST BE CONDUCIVE FOR COHORT SUCCESS

- For faculty to be primed for success, they must be brought into systems and structures that are designed for their advancement

DUKE UNIV EXAMPLE: EDUCATION AND STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Selected highlights:

- ❑ Faculty Education (Office for Faculty Advancement – led by Vice Provost Abbas Benmamoun, PhD)
 - Deep-Dive Workshop (3 content hours) — *Equitable Hiring Practices* — in collaboration with the Office for Institutional Equity
 - Faculty short course (12 content hours) — *Improving Departmental Climate* — Course Director: Sherilynn Black, PhD

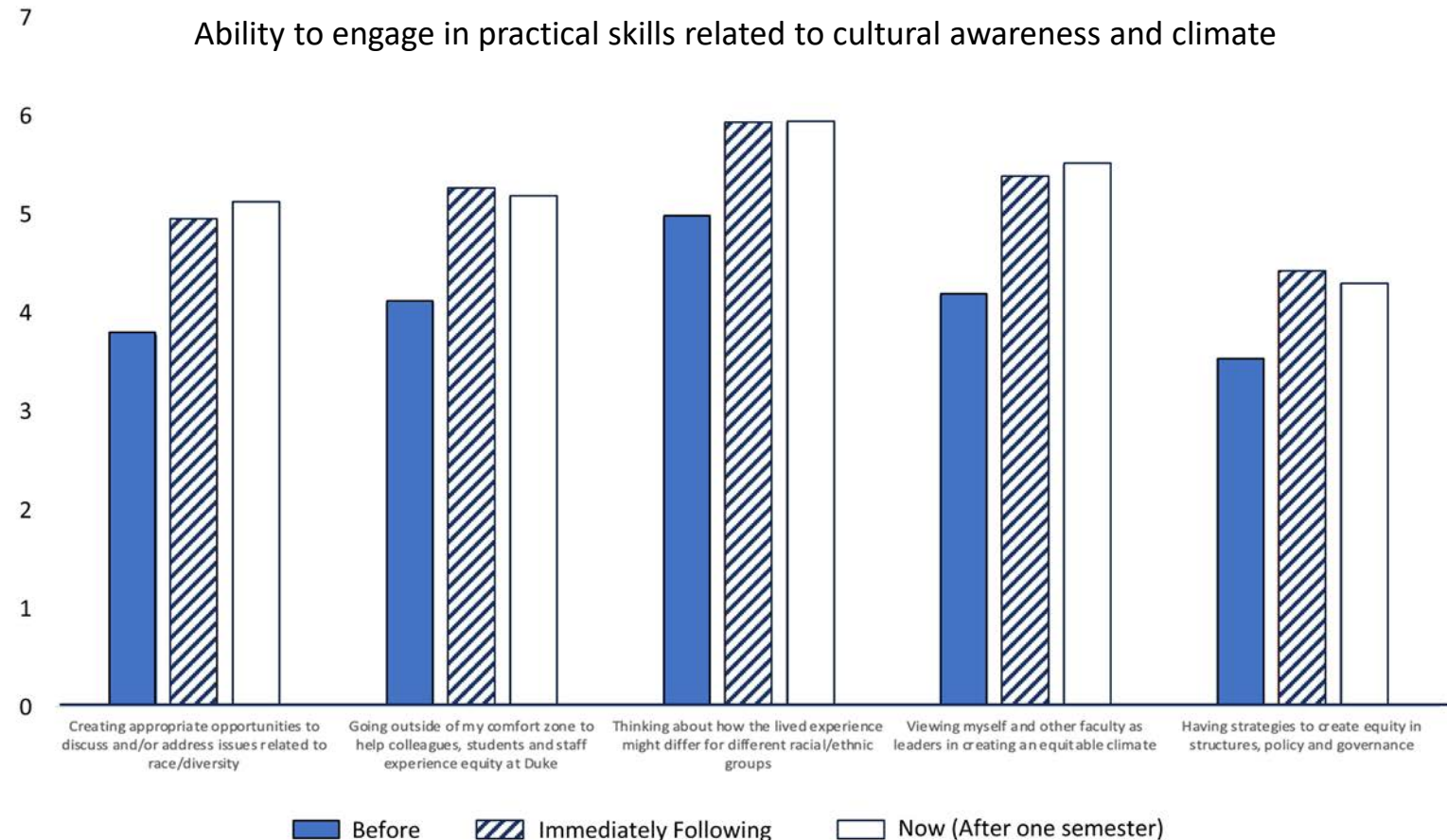
- ❑ School/Departmental and Institution-wide Efforts
 - Institution level — Campus-wide **Climate Survey** for all faculty, staff and students at Duke; analysis, rubrics, resources, hiring initiatives, affinity groups and broad overall support
 - School level — **Diversity Strategic Plans** (with support from the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost)
 - Department level — **Multi-faceted approaches**, including Diversity Committees, task forces, local trainings, surveys, and resources

LESSON #2: THOSE WORKING WITH FACULTY COHORTS SHOULD BE TRAINED IN CULTURAL SENSITIVITY AND AWARENESS

- All faculty should consistently be in spaces that support their authenticity and identity so they can best contribute to the intellectual culture of their institution and broader discipline
 - Education and ongoing capacity-building is key for all faculty to contribute to longitudinal sustainability of equity

DUKE UNIV EXAMPLE: *DISMANTLING RACISM AT DUKE* -FACULTY SHORT COURSE

- Combination of historical context, academic skills and tangible actions for faculty to build personal capacity to promote equitable academic environments
 - 12 hours of content
 - Cohorts of ~150/course
 - 86% of faculty participants reported making changes in their professional practices following the course
- Course directors: Sherilynn Black, PhD and Charmaine Royal, PhD



LESSON #3: COHORTS CAN BENEFIT FROM LARGER NUMBERS AND FLEXIBLE STRUCTURES

- Can benefit from composition across schools, disciplinary and identity lines, as well as from being derived both intentionally and organically
 - Members of the cohort should have agency in decisions related to group structures and needs

DUKE UNIV EXAMPLE: WRAP GROUP AND BLACK THINK TANK

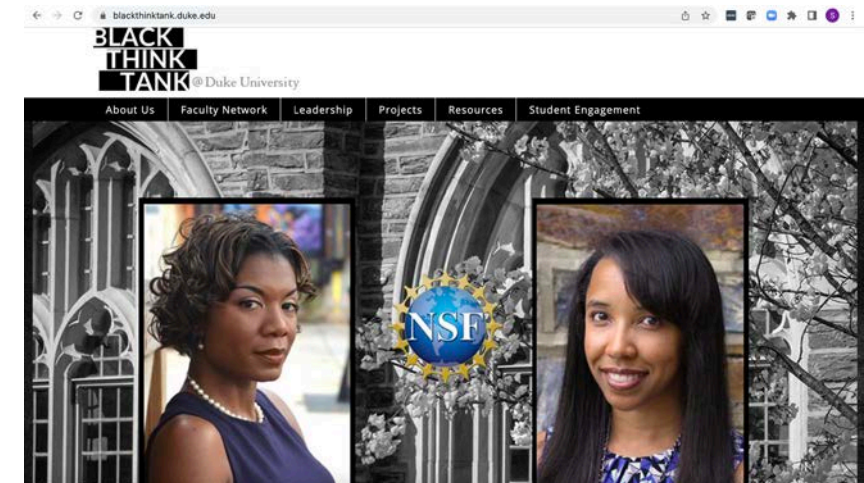
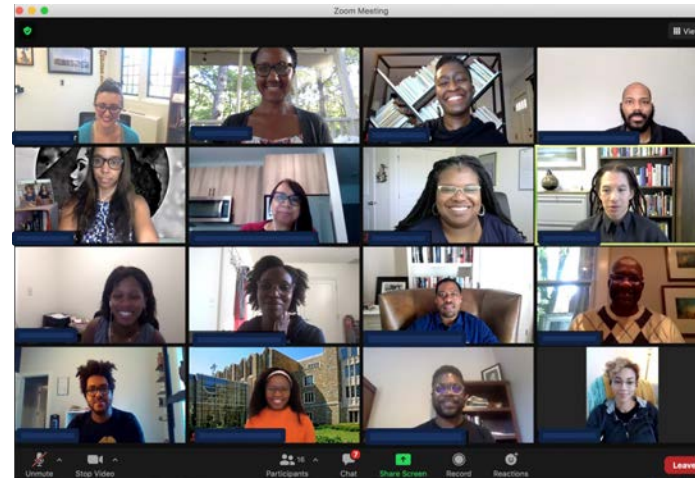
■ Writing Research and Productivity Group

- Intervention goal: To build community among Black faculty on campus, increase publication and grant submission rates and enhance a sense of belonging.
- Hosts weekly writing sessions, weekend writing retreats and other cohort-formation programming.
- Led by Tyson Brown, PhD and Sarah Gaither, PhD



■ Duke Black Think Tank

- Intervention goal: Support hiring, retention, promotion, and advancement of Black faculty through a platform that provides resources, enhances scholarly prominence, fosters connection with Black students and staff, and offers opportunities for multidisciplinary collaboration.
- Includes professional development and social programming.
- Led by Gustavo Silva, PhD and Jarvis McInnis, PhD



LESSON #4: PROVIDE SUPPORT THAT IS SPECIFIC FOR YOUR COHORT RATHER THAN A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL SOLUTION

- ❑ Science and personal identity do not need to be treated as separate entities

DUKE UNIV EXAMPLE: NOVEL CULTURALLY-AWARE COACHING PROGRAM

- Intervention goal: Individual coaching framework for UR faculty to create and implement Individual Development Plans that incorporate cultural identity to increase faculty agency and fulfillment
- Currently piloting intervention with 9 assistant professors in the Duke SoM
- Led by Joanna Downer, PhD



LESSON #5: COHORT SUCCESS SHOULD BE MEASURED BEYOND PUBLICATIONS AND GRANTS

- The benefits of cohorts extend beyond scientific productivity
 - Traditional measures will likely not capture the full benefit of cohort programs

DUKE UNIV EXAMPLE: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO METRICS

- ❑ Look at benefits of the cohort through 1) impact on the participants and 2) through impact on the institution while considering metrics that capture systemic change, culture, identity, and human impact
 - Collaboration with the Duke Social Science Research Institute, led by Don Taylor, PhD and Jessica Sperling, PhD

The screenshot shows the website for the Duke Social Science Research Institute (ssri.duke.edu). The header includes the Duke logo and the text 'SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH INSTITUTE'. A navigation menu contains 'About', 'Research', 'Education', 'Data', 'Projects', and 'Outreach & Engagement'. The main content area features a large candlestick chart with various numerical values. Below the chart are two callout boxes:

- APPLIED RESEARCH, EVALUATION & ENGAGEMENT**
We help develop campus and community programs and foster connections between Duke and the broader community.
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MIDS is home for creative problem-solvers who want to use data strategically to advance society.
[About MIDS](#)

“SSRI brings together researchers with interests in problems that cross the various social and behavioral sciences, including problems that connect with the humanities and natural sciences.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Duke Faculty Advancement: facultyadvancement.duke.edu

Twitter: @SherilynnBlack