

Faculty Development as a Tool for Promoting DEI at an Institution

Shannon Usher

Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies

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Abstract

A case study of Northeastern University is conducted regarding the success and optimization of faculty development programs. Several offices and programs were examined and a conceptual framework of faculty development was drafted. Initial analysis of these programs trends positive; however, they do not sufficiently assist the institution in its DEI goals. Reliance on faculty as agents of change shifts the focus of DEI from the institution to the faculty, and is misplaced. Opportunities for growth in the faculty hiring process by further utilizing these programs are promising. Further research is needed to understand how faculty culture in various areas will respond to further utilization of faculty development programs in a DEI context.

Keywords: faculty development; diversity, equity, and inclusion; professional development; strategic planning; hiring practices; scholarship of teaching and learning; faculty culture

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are key areas of focus at institutions around the nation, both by their own volition and by the urging of the Department of Education and the federal government. A variety of approaches emerge, from hiring practices to course creation to staff and faculty training. This case study analysis focuses on Northeastern University and its current faculty development programs, how those programs play a role in the university community and culture, and what their impact on DEI initiatives is.

Research for this paper encompasses information from multiple different sources. Northeastern University has a robust internet presence, so much information on programs and offerings for faculty, staff, and students are readily accessible. Additionally, information is also gathered from some major players at the university, including a member of the General Counsel's office, the dean of the College of Social Science and Humanities (CSSH), the chair of the Department of Political Science. Information from external sources encompasses data gathered and reported by the federal government, reports and research published in academic journals, leading higher education magazines and electronic publications.

This analysis is broken down into several sections. First, more details on the institution demographics, mission and purpose, and culture are explored. Within that section, faculty development programs are explored and described, as well as details on changes and challenges to the institution. Second, a thorough description of the conceptual framework for faculty development at Northeastern is given. Finally, an analysis of the effectiveness, optimization, and utilization of these programs within this framework is explored as it pertains to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Findings conclude that Northeastern engages in a thorough and complete framework of faculty development that encompasses necessary skills across four vital areas of professional development. This happens across levels of influence and power, and contributes to an overall institution wide scholarship

of teaching and learning. There are a wide variety of programs employed at Northeastern to accomplish this, and it is clear that faculty development is a priority for the institution; however, this framework of faculty development relies heavily on faculty and their spheres of influence in order to make changes to DEI initiatives that need to be coming from an institutional level. Furthermore, the institutional level actions taken to address DEI issues on campus are not recommended by scholars and actually further divide the demographics of faculty in the United States.

Institutional Profile

Founded in 1898 as an Evening Institute of the Boston Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Northeastern University is a large, private, not-for-profit, R1 institution that offers undergraduate and research intensive doctoral programs across 35 specialized research and education centers. In particular, degree programs focus on profession related degrees and the arts and sciences and accomplish this by utilizing a unique experiential education model and incorporating interdisciplinary research to respond to global and societal needs in an ever-changing academic and social landscape (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, 2020; Northeastern University Snell Library, n.d.).

The university is further broken down into nine different colleges: the College of Arts, Media and Design; the D'Amore-McKim School of Business; the Khoury College of Computer Sciences; the College of Engineering; the Bouvé College of Health Sciences; the School of Law; the College of Professional Studies; College of Science; and the College of Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH). CSSH is leader in experiential liberal arts and is an interdisciplinary collaborative of scholars with global perspectives and thirteen different interdisciplinary research centers (Northeastern University [NU], 2022g, 2022o).

Like many institutions in 2020, Northeastern University reevaluated its goals and strategic plan due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "Northeastern 2025", launched in 2016, represented the institution's focus on how humans interact with machines in order to enable students' success as the world began to

experience unprecedented technological, social, and economic transformation; “Beyond 2025”—also referred to as “Experience Unleashed”—instead focuses on establishing connections across the physical, biological, human, and digital worlds (Ramjug, 2021). Northeastern University seeks to become a positive influence in immediate communities and across the globe (NU, 2022j). In furtherance of this goal, CSSH has several strategic areas of focus that fall under the umbrellas of cultural resilience and transformation, network science, digital humanities and communications, and information ethics (NU, 2021a).

Participating in a global community is both defined as a goal of the institution across all levels and an integral part of the institution’s structure—Northeastern has campuses in 5 other locations across the country as well as Vancouver, Toronto, and London (NU, 2021d), and incorporates international programs for study abroad, co-ops, and Dialogues of Civilization summer programs (NU, 2021c). Co-ops in particular are one of the university’s most unique features. Though there are other institutions with co-op programs in the nation, approximately 60, Northeastern is perhaps the most well-known co-op educational institution. Though co-ops first began at the University of Cincinnati in 1906, Northeastern is one of the oldest co-op institutions; Northeastern’s program was created in 1909, and encompasses programs in all 7 continents in over 140 countries, and across all majors (NU, 2022h; Suneby, 2021).

Northeastern University is also tied quite strongly to the surrounding Boston community. Boston is an educational hub, home to 29 colleges and universities and 2 community colleges. Enrollment across these institutions totals more than 140,000, though Northeastern is the largest by population (Boston Planning & Development Agency, Research Division, 2020). As a result of this dense academic community, cross collaborative projects are commonplace. Kelsey Montgomery, Assistant General Counsel, also explained that Northeastern often looks to its partner institutions when making policy decisions and large scale changes to university programming, both to remain in alignment but also to remain ahead of the curve (personal communication, October 25, 2022).

Ties to Boston outside of education are also considered and incorporated into institutional planning. To effectively do so, the Office of City and Community Engagement (CCE) has organized the Community Advisory Board (CAB). Members of the CAB come from Fenway, Mission Hill, Roxbury, and the South End; members of the board are from local non-profit organizations, local residents, and members of the Institutional Master Plan advisory group and Task Force. CCE staff lead members of the CAB in four working groups to discuss community engagement as well as the impact Northeastern makes on local neighborhoods—and how to use those forces to improve Boston rather than harm it (NU, 2022b).

Institutional Challenges and Changes

Northeastern University faces two major shifts in population that affect day to day operations. In the past few years, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, Northeastern has admitted its largest first year classes ever. In 2022, the university decided to slow down this trend and admitted less students in a completely intentional manner, as reported by the CSSH Chair's Council to their respective departments (C. Panagopoulos, personal communication, September 8, 2022). Additionally, changes in faculty and staff makeup across the university have created administrative challenges across all levels of the institution.

Enrollment growth. The following analysis utilizes Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Data Feedback Reports for Northeastern University across the years 2016 through 2021. A strong increase of graduate student enrollment is evident, growing by a shocking 28.57% since 2017. Undergraduate enrollment trends are significantly less, coming in at 6.01% over the same period. Year over year full-time equivalent (FTE) student populations had major gains in 2019 over 2018 at 5.74%, though numbers have dipped to just .6% in 2021.

This is in direct contrast to the national trend of enrollment decline of 4.7% over the past five semesters (Moody, 2022). Overall graduation rates have increased from 86% to 90%. Retention rates for full-time Northeastern students ranks as one of the largest in the nation hovering at 97%; furthermore,

in 2020, full-time retention rates increase by 2 percentage points to 99% despite the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, where the national retention rate fell by the same amount (Lederman, 2021).

Faculty culture. Northeastern faculty are generally broken down into three categories: full-time tenure track faculty (TT), full-time teaching non-tenure track faculty (NTT), and part-time faculty.

Full-time faculty, regardless of tenure track or status, have secured appointments and benefits within the university. The main difference between these two groups on a day to day basis is that teaching faculty, perhaps rather self-explanatory, teach more than their TT colleagues. Generally speaking, a TT faculty member teaches two courses each semester, with their remaining time taken up by research. Teaching faculty on the other hand do not have the same research expectations and instead teach up to four courses each semester. More broadly, however, the difference can be found in compensation packages; NTT full-time faculty are paid less than their TT colleagues, prompting an open letter from TT faculty to the institution regarding potential union models (Concerned Faculty of Northeastern, n.d.).

Northeastern operates under what they refer to as a “One Faculty model of shared governance” in which “the Faculty Senate, together with the Administration of the University, has the responsibility of maintaining and improving the academic standards of the University and making the functioning of the University more effective and harmonious” (Franko, 2019; Northeastern University Faculty Senate, 2018). This means that both groups of full-time faculty are accounted for in by-laws and have specific procedures for discipline and dismissal. Part-time faculty on the other hand are members of SEIU 509, a local Boston union that currently has membership from part-time faculty at Tufts, Bentley, Brandeis, and Lesley. Some full-time teaching staff at Tufts and Lesley are also members. In total, there are around 3,500 greater Boston educators in SEIU 509 (Barlow, 2016). Northeastern is staunchly against NTT faculty unionizing, citing only procedural issues with the One Faculty shared governance model as an obstacle (Franko, 2019).

Administrative and faculty relations vary greatly based on positionality and levels of power. The university is structured in such a way that most administrative leadership in colleges come from faculty members who have been promoted to leadership positions, like associate deans, etc., or long-time academic leaders, like deans. Most staff in colleges are managed by these administrative faculty rather than administrative professionals.

In CSSH in particular, several staff pointed out at a college town hall meeting that communications regarding pandemic safety and plans to reopen were announced to faculty and students well before staff—and that staff often hear about those details when students and faculty ask questions (personal communication, 2020). This creates resentment in staff, and perpetuates the perception that staff are not as valued as faculty. This is clearly seen and felt in staff turnover rates. From 2020 to 2021, faculty numbers improved significantly, going from 3,049 faculty members to 3,359. On the other hand, staff dropped at almost the same rate, going from 3,258 to 3,036 (NU, 2020, NU, 2021b).

These challenges disproportionately and adversely affect CSSH. Changing student and faculty demographics have forced the institution, and more specifically CSSH, to reevaluate plans. Starting with the 2021-2022 academic year, the college began a large-scale diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiative, as announced by Dean Uta Poiger. First, committees were gathered in each department to review all course syllabi; this review allowed the college to examine if and how diversity is discussed in courses, and if and how a faculty member diversifies their course materials for these classes. In conjunction with this, cluster hiring searches began specifically to increase faculty diversity within the college, both in demographic and in subject matter. In order to fully embrace the teaching of DEI subjects in the classroom, the college must also commit to making changes and doing the work (personal communication, September 7, 2021). Furthermore, the Campus Climate Survey conducted in the same time frame showed that CSSH performed lower in all categories related to matters of diversity for both student and faculty populations (U. Poiger, personal communication, October 20, 2022). In order to

accomplish this immense and deeply important work, faculty development must be evaluated and incorporated into this plan.

Faculty Development Programs

Northeastern University supports faculty development through a variety of offices depending on the roles, responsibilities, and interests of faculty members. Key offices include the ADVANCE Office of Faculty Development (ADVANCE); the Office of Research Development (ORD); Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research (CATLR); Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI); and Learning and Organizational Development (L&OD) through Information Technology Services (ITS). These programs are advertised through social media and through email distribution lists. Data collection and analysis on the effectiveness of these programs, if any exists, is housed in the office of University Decision Support and is accessible by request only (NU, 2022i).

Unless indicated by managers and reporting structures within the university, college, or units, faculty are not required to attend or utilize any of these resources unless their specific manager has defined it as a goal for them; however, this will be changing for the CSSH next year. Costas Panagopoulos, Chair of the Department of Political Science, announced at a recent department meeting that DEI will become a consideration in the merit review process. This year, faculty have been asked to submit reflections of how their work has intersected with DEI topics, and how they chose to incorporate DEI into their research and teaching. Next year, there will be a measurable criteria on the merit forms themselves. No further detail is available on what that will look like, how data will be collected and evaluated, and how it will be weighted (personal communication, December 8, 2022). It is also unclear if this is limited to CSSH or if this is an university wide initiative.

Individual departments and units also administer faculty development funds. In addition to the programs detailed below available to all faculty at no additional cost, faculty can seek external programs and utilize these funds to cover any incurred costs. The budget lines for individual faculty vary across

college and department, as well as depending on title and tenure or non-tenure track positions. Using the Department of Political Science as an example once more, not all faculty completely utilize these funds. At the end of each fiscal year, Administrative Officer Janet-Louise Joseph has to routinely remind faculty that these funds do not carry over; some of those funds end up being used for purchasing of additional technological equipment not budgeted for by the college or department rather than additional training or learning experiences (personal communication, June 15, 2022).

ADVANCE Office of Faculty Development. This office did not exist prior to the awarding of a NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation grant funded from 2008 through 2015; the grant focused on increasing advancement and representation of women in STEM careers starting with structures in the work environment. Now, “the office oversees, creates, and assesses faculty development programs...[and] assists [all] faculty and administrators in accomplishing departmental, college, and university goals with respect to faculty recruitment, retention, mentoring, and advancement” (NU, 2019).

ADVANCE hosts a series of events each semester. The fall overview breaks these events and workshops into several categories: (1) faculty development workshops, designed to “encourage and support faculty resilience as they regroup from recent societal challenges and support student resilience;” (2) networks of inclusion events, where colleagues can connect “across campus to promote a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community that fosters belonging at Northeastern;” (3) mentoring opportunities, focused on developing “mentoring relationships among faculty across campus who engage in collaboration and mutual support;” (4) tenure and promotion support, assisting and encouraging “faculty as they prepare for tenure and/or promotion;” and (5) Northeastern institutional memberships, which connects the Northeastern community to “national professional development resources” external to the university (NU, 2022k).

Office of Research Development. “Research Development supports and promotes Northeastern’s research enterprise, attracting and securing external research funding, bringing interdisciplinary teams together, and developing and implementing strategies that increase institutional competitiveness” (NU, 2022d). ORD runs events regarding the availability and application process of finding funding opportunities and submitting proposals for various affiliated organizations and grant programs. Additionally, there is an entire Sharepoint site devoted to collecting and hosting related materials for faculty to access at the touch of a button.

Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research. “CATLR provides a broad range of opportunities for all Northeastern educators, including faculty, co-curricular educators/staff, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows to deepen their practice in ways that enhance student learning—through workshops, consultations, research, customized programming, assessment, and the development of new, innovative models for learning and education” (NU, 2022a). In support of this, CATLR offers two workshop options in the form of live synchronous workshops (in multiple modalities) and through self-paced modules covering topics like course and assignment design, diversity and inclusion resources, and hybrid learning. Additionally, CATLR offers the Future Faculty Program (FFP).

The FFP creates resources and opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who expect to apply for faculty positions—within and outside Northeastern—upon program completion. Program benefits include the creation of a teaching portfolio of materials that can be used in the application process, including syllabi and a statement of teaching philosophy, as well as hands-on experience with faculty-level teaching responsibilities like course design. Though this program is meant as preparation for use outside of their time at Northeastern, these resources are also beneficial to current teaching assistants, lab supervisors, or instructors of record for more immediate use (NU, 2022I).

Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. “[OEDI] works with students, faculty, and staff to identify and address sources of conflict, bias, and possible differential treatment...[and] advises and

assists the president, senior administrators, and the campus community with implementing leadership strategies that advance diversity and contribute to the university's aspirations" (NU, 2022c). OEDI accomplishes this work by developing and implementing programs and utilizing external organizations and resources in order to provide a full and complete service to the campus community. Trainings are available on topics such as affirmative action, diversity and equity, inclusion strategies, and prevention of discrimination to name a few. Events sponsored by OEDI also include those outside of the university and within the Boston community.

OEDI also organizes several "affinity" groups, which are employee-led groups dedicated to providing professional development and networking opportunities and advocating for their members. The following affinity groups currently exist and support the campus community: (1) LGBTQA+, for faculty and staff, (2) NU Future Leaders, for young professional faculty and staff, (3) Native & Indigenous, for faculty, staff, and students, (4) NU Parents, for working parents faculty and staff, (5) Asian Faculty & Staff, (6) NU BFSA, for faculty and staff of color, and (7) Disability Alliance, for faculty and staff with disabilities (NU, 2022e).

Learning and Organizational Development. Unfortunately, much information on Learning and Organizational Development (L&OD) is locked behind various permissions, with access to articles through this resource linked to roles at the institution (NU, 2022n). Access to information on "learning" from the L&OD website is restricted to those with managerial codes attached to their account (NU, 2022m). This is quite surprising, given that the L&OD website explicitly states: "Here for everyone. Learning & Organizational Development helps every Northeastern employee learn, grow and achieve their goals. Whatever your role at the University, we offer development opportunities to meet you where you are in your career."

Information Technology Services and additional resources. Additional training resources exist through a variety of partnerships with ITS. While most are related to technology—including information

security, software specific training for MATLAB, Mathematica, and SAS & JMP, and an external online technology resources library– ITS also facilitates a relationship with LinkedIn Learning (NU, 2022p). This relationship allows faculty, staff, and students access to over 16,000 expert-led courses using their computers or phones that can be visible as certificates on their personal LinkedIn profiles. Though connecting personal LinkedIn accounts to Northeastern credentials is optional, it allows for more tailored suggestions and course recommendations to be made based on job title, skills, and industry (LinkedIn, 2022; NU, 2022f). Furthermore, the variety of class options available through LinkedIn Learning is huge and creates opportunities for faculty, staff, and students alike to explore areas of interest outside of their expertise.

Conceptual Framework for Faculty Development

Central to the development programs utilized by Northeastern University is change: change is as inevitable as it is inspiring, as far as Northeastern is concerned anyway. The core mission and culture of the university is centered on interdisciplinary, experiential, and innovative research and scholarship. It is therefore no large surprise to find change as a central part of faculty development. From the institution's faculty development programs, several throughlines exist to create a conceptual framework for faculty development. Four theories of faculty development appear relevant to programs at Northeastern University.

Eight skills of the changing professoriate. Ann Austin's eight skills of the changing professoriate are grounding principles in Northeastern's faculty development program. These skills broadly encompass understanding how to reach students, educators, and institutional leaders of all backgrounds using technology in education programs across interdisciplinary research areas, and institutional citizenship and engagement and service in their immediate university community and beyond; these skills are firmly rooted in the understanding of the core purposes and values of higher education (Pawlyshyn, 2013).

Professional growth. Four core areas of professional growth—learning, agency, professional relationships, and commitments—are critical to consider when evaluating faculty development. These principles, outlined in O’Meara and Trosky’s work, are also found in the Northeastern framework of faculty development. Learning acknowledges that the work of the professoriate is to create change; moreover, the work itself is changing, and faculty need to continue their own personal learning in order to stay competitive. Faculty agency is integral to this process, and encompasses how individual faculty influence their own path of learning. In order to facilitate these, faculty engage in growing and establishing professional relationships with colleagues and creating commitments to invest in social concerns that further the goals of higher education (O’Meara & Trosky, 2010).

Tiers of institutional influence. The similarities and consistencies of these two sets of aligning principles can also be evaluated across three subgroups of institutional influence. Individual needs around career skills and resources vary widely across any institution; Northeastern is no exception. Early career faculty focus on transition and managing multiple roles perpetuates a higher retention rate of faculty. Faculty nearing or just past tenure have different needs, leaning more towards foundational leadership skills whereas experienced and senior faculty might look for other options for career growth. Moving away from the individual, organizational needs instead consider collegiality and community. This tier of institutional influence focuses on the life of faculty as a group, and emphasizes the importance of relationships, difficult conversations, and intellectual connections. The largest tier of influence covers systemic needs. In order to evaluate change and how to create change, levels of power and agency must be considered. Not every problem or project can be solved at an individual or unit level and requires changes to institutional policies and procedures. In this way, faculty development more immediately addresses first and second tier needs (Laursen & Rocque, 2009).

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. At the root of these concepts is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL) movement, marked by Ernest Boyer’s 1990 publication of the book

Scholarship Reconsidered which modeled a new and integrated definition of scholarship across four areas: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Discovery reorients the concept of knowledge away from outcomes, what research typically relies on, and towards the process. By incorporating information from researchers across disciplines, faculty engage in integrative scholarship. Moving out of a realm of hypothetical and into the practical, application scholarship engages faculty in actively applying their knowledge to a variety of problems. Teaching scholarship relies on the principle that teaching is not simply transmitting knowledge to students, but transforming and extending it as well; furthermore, good teaching also relies on faculty engaging as learners themselves (Boyer, 1990).

Kim Case outlines how faculty development relies heavily on SOTL in three key areas. First, faculty development creates a shared scholarship of teaching; collaboration needs to be paramount in a teaching and learning institution. Progress in these spaces is not limited to publication, rather it includes the academic space created in order to publish in the first place. Second, faculty development supports and encourages faculty to explore research related to teaching and learning, even if it is out of their discipline; moreover, it is the inclusion of faculty from a wide range of disciplines that makes scholarship related to teaching and learning useful. Finally, scholarship related to teaching and learning is by its nature an agent of change. No matter the focus of an institution or organizations and units within an institution, they each have a common purpose that aligns with the scholarship of teaching and learning (Case, 2013).

A complete framework. To get a complete understanding of the framework Elements of Austin's eight skills can be found in the structure of the institution's research centers, across all previously mentioned development programs, and in the ways in which faculty communities discuss these issues in town halls and at other campus events. These programs and structures address and engage in the four core areas of professional growth by creating systems of learning and empowering faculty to use their full agency on campus within their classrooms and their units and colleges. Relationships are an integral

part of all faculty development programs at Northeastern University, and now more than ever the university is looking for faculty to make and follow through on their own personal commitments of learning and community engagement. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is a driving force of the institution in the Future Faculty Program, and across the tiers of influence. This is not simply a conceptual framework of faculty development; these skills are an integral part of the Northeastern culture, steeped deeply into every facet of the institution.

Analysis of Faculty Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In many cases, institutions focus on student diversity in areas such as campus climate, student support, and recruitment of prospective students. Social mobility, the higher education pipeline, and how degree attainment affects the labor market are also considerations of institutional diversity (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Diversity is not only an area of focus for student populations, but also within faculty populations. Demographic parity, the alignment of faculty demographics with population demographics, has been consistently studied and documented to have normative importance and empirical benefits; however, the rate at which the tenure track faculty population is growing in the United States will never achieve demographic parity (Matias et al., 2022).

Student and faculty diversity go hand in hand—one cannot completely succeed without the other for a number of reasons: (1) retention, faculty diversity affects students perceptions of the institution and their sense of belonging, which in turn affects retention rates and persistence; (2) modeling the academy, students seek faculty who like them to be mentors; and (3) pedagogy, seeing and experiencing an academic space filled with diversity is on its own a form of education, building empathy and respect for others, and improving creativity and problem solving skills (Bitar, 2022).

The significance of this is not lost on the university. In the new academic plan, Beyond 2025, the term diversity is mentioned over 20 times in a variety of ways and across areas of focus. In the first section of this document, under the header “Our Goal: Maximizing Our Positive Impact in the World,” it

is made abundantly clear that diversity is part of the institution's strategic plan, and will accomplish this by "[developing] an academic community that reflects the diversity of our surrounding society and completely embraces and leverages that diversity in all its forms for an equitable and inclusive university" (NU, 2022j). Northeastern is one of many institutions who has spoken publicly about diversity and a lack of diversity at their institution only to turn around and declare a commitment to faculty diversity (Matias et al., 2022). The success of this commitment is unfortunately not as clear.

To discuss how Northeastern's faculty development framework applies and affects diversity, equity, and inclusion, the tiers of influence must be acknowledged. Tier one and two, which cover the individual and the organizational needs of faculty and faculty development, are the most fleshed out portions of the institution's plan for DEI change. The third tier, systemic needs, remains largely ambiguous and a cause for concern.

Tier three: institutional influence and systemic needs. Many institutions make broad claims about diversity goals that do not translate to action. It is not uncommon for institutions to launch new initiatives without "deeper thought about the broader systems in which those initiatives are expected to operate, and what those systems mean for the effectiveness of the new initiatives" (Flaherty, 2022). The ineffectiveness of these initiatives is readily apparent: "the composition of tenure-track or tenured underrepresented minority faculty in the USA increased by only 1% (from 11% to 12%) between 2013 and 2019" (Lewis, 2022). These numbers indicate the performative nature of some of these diversity claims, a perception that permeates the community of Northeastern in multiple spheres.

Perhaps most telling is the lack of transparency on faculty diversity in real time. Northeastern is completely transparent on student demographics, down to the headcount of Hispanic women enrolled compared to Asian men at both undergraduate and graduate levels (NU 2020, 2021b). In detailing faculty and staff? It is limited to the total number overall. And while student trends in demographics are moving closer to demographic parity, there is no clear understanding of faculty demographics besides the faces

that faculty see in their meetings, at least publicly. This makes actually measuring the success of these initiatives incredibly difficult. Furthermore, interconnected policies and strategies must be communicated uniformly across a campus to provide opportunities, resources, and the environments for diverse populations to succeed (Larsen & Rocque, 2009), something that is not effectively done within the siloed programs for faculty development at Northeastern.

The institution ultimately relies heavily on faculty and faculty development to design, implement, and change these institutional structures. This might not be the appropriate approach—it is certainly not the complete one, anyway—to this issue as faculty development, as previously mentioned, is very strongly limited to the first two tiers of influence, “by providing individuals with opportunities to build their capacities, reflect on their careers, and explore options for longer-term professional growth, while also helping chairs succeed and departments improve communication and the quality of life...but to address third-tier needs, changes in policy and structures are needed. Faculty development can help in identifying these changes and making them effective” (Laursen & Rocque, 2009).

Tier one and two: faculty development at a granular level. Though faculty development can help in identifying needs for change, Northeastern currently relies heavily on faculty as agents of change to influence faculty diversity and perceptions of diversity. Within these tiers of influence, faculty engage with students, with each other, and within the collegiate structure. Northeastern has embraced the paradigm shift that institutions no longer exist solely to provide instruction, but produce learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995) and many young faculty express that they consider their work as transformational, “[focusing] more on quality teaching, pedagogical changes, access, and student success” (Hamilton, 2021). This aligns with the SOTL movement, focusing on how information is taught rather than strictly what the information is (Boyer, 1990; Case, 2013).

As it pertains to matters of DEI, faculty must have an understanding of how their teaching reflects (or does not reflect) the needs of all students (Pawlyshyn, 2013); faculty are also equipped to use

their own social influence to improve these systems and structures, particularly to privileged faculty members who might struggle to understand as a result of their lack of personal experience (Marchiondo et al., 2021). The skills required to do so can be learned as a part of the programs offered through the various offices at Northeastern. Utilizing these offices to reflect on teaching, like CATLR, builds the eight skills of the changing professoriate and to grow and develop in the four areas of professional growth.

Faculty can use these accrued skills to influence both students and their colleagues' perceptions of DEI in all subject matter areas; however, the fact of the matter is that it is incredibly difficult to measure the success of these programs and this faculty development framework for multiple reasons. Unique to this case, data on participation and outcomes at Northeastern is either unavailable or locked behind several offices. In conjunction with this, many questions around how to evaluate training related to DEI have emerged, including what kind of training to utilize, is training worth it and a good idea, will training have a negative effect. These are all questions Northeastern faculty have asked in various town halls and meetings discussed previously in this paper. Unfortunately, even research shows that there is no easy answer for every institution in how research can be done regarding prejudice reduction (Paluck, 2022; Paluck et al., 2022).

At the most granular level, coursework around DEI topics are often created for the purpose to address this in a student space rather than a faculty space; however, this still affects faculty development because different departments and faculty bear the weight of these course and program changes disproportionately. NTT faculty and part-time faculty around the country are hired to fill in gaps, and as more courses are created to support these initiatives, more gaps are created. Unfortunately, with limited resources, non-tenure track faculty more frequently describe feeling unsupported and burnt out compared to their full-time colleagues (Miller & Struve, 2020). Moreover, even if faculty are hired as part of DEI initiatives, they face adverse challenges that their other colleagues do not.

The gray area of hiring processes. Faculty hiring represents an intersection of the tiers of influence in that faculty play a role in search committees and in the review of tenure and promotion. At an institutional level, the initiation of these hiring processes needs to be reconsidered. Northeastern has attempted to do this, ensuring that equity-minded hiring efforts are not inhibited and diverse faculty are often excluded from consideration (Maffis, 2021). Cluster hires, in which universities simultaneously hire several faculty across rank and expertise and as utilized in this case, do not effectively cultivate an increase of faculty diversity across the country. They might serve the role of increasing the diversity of Northeastern; however, this is done at the detriment of other institutions “by ‘poaching’ faculty from other institutions. When underrepresented faculty move from institution to institution, an individual institution’s pipelines become less leaky but the broader pool of underrepresented faculty does not increase” (Matias et al., 2022).

At the faculty level, implicit bias on the faculty level affects the hiring of diverse faculty. Faculty on search committees play a role in the decision making process for new hires, and their personal bias can affect discussions on potential candidates. Furthermore, if the chair of the search committee is a junior faculty member, their opinions are often superseded by those with higher professional standing, often leading to a continued culture of Whiteness (Hakkola & Dyer, 2022). When an interested candidate visits an institution and evaluates an offer, they also consider the makeup of the department they will be joining. Faculty members from diverse and/or underrepresented backgrounds (non-white, non-male, first-generation etc.), engage in activities related to DEI more often than their other colleagues. Similarly, those faculty with tenure and associate or full professor positions are more likely to participate in those activities, as their untenured and assistant level colleagues did not see these activities as increasing their ability to obtain tenure (Jimenez et al., 2019). This further disincentivizes faculty of diverse backgrounds from accepting positions at predominantly white institutions and perpetuates institutions’ lack of diversity across all levels of the institution.

Summary of Analysis and Conclusions

Northeastern University has a robust series of education for faculty, staff, and students. Faculty development is a clear priority for the institution, as is its commitment to diversity. Multiple theories of faculty development align quite nicely with these programs and values; however, there is misalignment with the priorities of the institution and the execution of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Do the programs at Northeastern currently support faculty development? Yes. Can these same systems hold the weight of the goals of diversity, and inclusion at an institutional level? No, at least not without institutional initiatives and support.

Even so, there is merit to the structure that the framework for faculty development has created. By aligning skills in specific areas of development in this way, Northeastern can successfully meet demands at the individual and organizational levels. By continuing to offer programs on diversity and around topics related to scholarship of teaching and learning, faculty are able to expand their areas of interest both personally and professionally. In order to further this notion, particularly in the context of DEI, engagement with these programs is crucial, as it both furthers faculty development and shows the institution itself what faculty value and where to continue issuing funding. As a result of this, requiring attendance and participation in these programs should be included in evaluation of faculty annually. Professional development is a marker for staff, but the same can not be said for faculty evaluations.

This is currently trending in this direction. As mentioned previously, diversity, equity, and inclusion will be incorporated into the merit process of CSSH beginning this year. This is a vital step towards incorporating faculty development for DEI across all tiers of influence. As a result, the way in which CSSH leadership in conjunction with unit heads and other faculty develops the language and requirements for merit consideration is crucial. This first year of merit review is strictly reflection for faculty members. Going forward, a clear and consistent model needs to be established for this push to be both useful and successful.

Other areas as outlined in the framework analysis are other opportunities for growth. Utilizing faculty development to positively impact faculty hiring is currently untapped potential and presents the most potential growth opportunities with the current framework of faculty development in this case. Since Northeastern is looking to make systemic changes by predominantly engaging faculty at their level of influence through these programs, faculty hiring committees should be required to attend these programs and further develop their understanding of DEI and institutional/systemic bias at Northeastern. If the university is expecting faculty to make change, this is where that change will happen at a more systemic scale.

This case study is not exhaustive. In fact, much of the information is related to a specific subsection of the institution with the College of Social Science and Humanities. This presents potential implications for further research and replications of this case study. Northeastern University is such a large institution that smaller pockets of culture can be observed. Norms in one college are not necessarily norms in the others. This could add a potentially useful layer to the framework by seeking to understand the ways in which different faculty groups within an institution behave. Utilizing more specific data on trends within fields and specific areas of an institution can allow for more specific strategic planning and evaluation of the success of specific faculty development programs.

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