

**Needs Assessment:**  
Undergraduate Multicultural  
Competence (UMC) in Higher Education

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Lehigh University  
11/2/2012

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Quick Outline of Presentation

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graph LR; A[Need for the Study] --> B[Result of Our National Needs Assessment]; B --> C[Next Step];
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**Need for the Study**

- Why undergraduate multicultural competence (UMC) matters
- Literature contentions on issues in current UMC practices

C1: Inflexible scheduling, location, and delivery;  
C2: Reduced candor and learner discomfort in face-to-face interaction;  
C3: Varying session instructor competence;  
C4: Inconsistent quality of the materials employed;  
C5: Slow implementation backed by resources despite claimed institutional commitment.

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**Purpose of the Study**

- To conduct a needs assessment with undergraduate multicultural competence (UMC) key stakeholders:
  - P1: To investigate institutional UMC goals and state of progress in accomplishing them
  - P2: To identify current UMC practices
  - P3: To identify discrepancies among goals, practices, and outcomes...and throughout the study...
  - P4: To test contentions in the literature about UMC in higher education institutions

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**Research Questions**

RQ1: What do institutions reportedly hope to accomplish in regard to their **institutional UMC goals**?

RQ2: What **practices** do they report they are using to attain their goals?

RQ3: How **successful** do they rate their practices in achieving their goals and what would they do differently to enhance UMC outcomes?

RQ4: What are the reported credentials and qualifications of **UMC instructors**?

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**Methodology** /1

- **Research design**
  - Cross-sectional survey
- **Sample**
  - National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education (NADOHE)'s 161 institutional members
- **Instrumentation:**
  - Four versions of survey customized for separate roles
    - Strategic, Implementation, Instructional and All-in-One
    - Sharing some common items
  - Delivered online using surveymonkey.com

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### Methodology /2

- **Data analysis**
  - Quantitative and qualitative
  - **By institution:** Collapse data for items targeting at institutional characteristics to create single response value
  - **By individual:** Maintain individual responses about their characteristics and perceptions
- **Institutional response rate = 28% (45/161)**
  - 84 respondents, representing 45 institutions
  - 4 responses with unidentified IP addresses

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### Characteristics of Respondents: Institutions

- **Institution type**
  - 81.8% reported four-year colleges and universities
  - 72.7% reported public institutions
- **Reported student body composition**

#### Institutional Makeup

Category	Percentage
More traditional majority	86.4%
More minority	13.2%
Equal balance	4%

#### Average Student Body Composition

Category	Percentage
Traditionally defined majority	75.2%
Traditionally defined minority	24.8%

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### Characteristics of Respondents: Individuals

- **Self-identified reported roles**
  - Reported primary role and job title
  - Reported years of working in the job

Role	Percentage
Strategic	40.9%
All-in-One	35.7%
Instructional	17.9%
Implementation	3.6%

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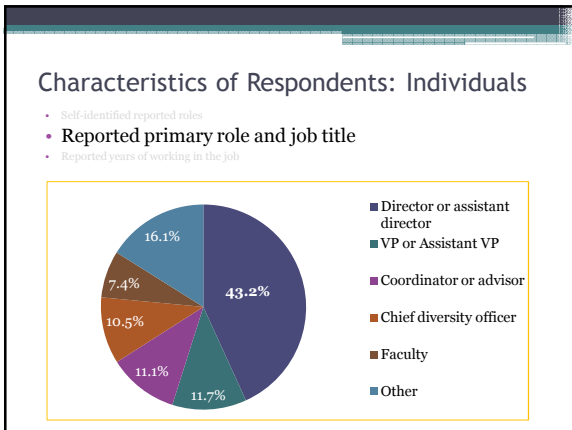
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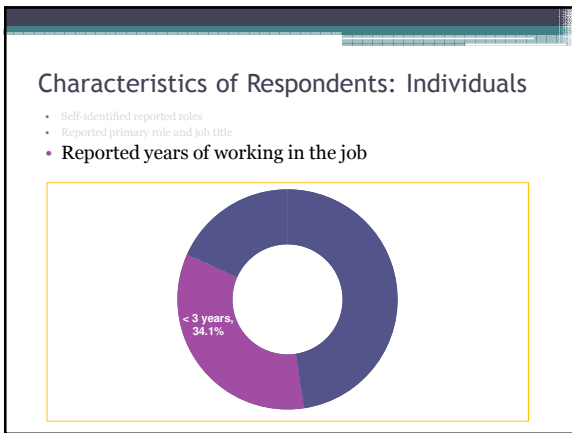
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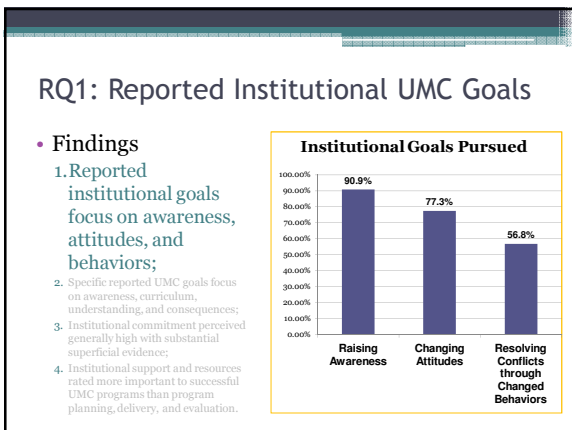
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### RQ1: Reported Institutional UMC Goals

- Findings**
  - Reported institutional goals focus on awareness, attitudes, and behaviors;
  - Specific reported UMC goals focus on knowledge & awareness (curriculum), understanding, & consequences;**
  - Institutional commitment perceived generally high with substantial superficial evidence;
  - Institutional support and resources rated more important to successful UMC programs than program planning, delivery, and evaluation.

**What do undergraduates need?**

- To gain knowledge about the history and facts and develop awareness;
  - Both might be well delivered through a systematically designed curriculum.
- To understand the world is made of unique individuals from different cultures with multiple identities, and learn to deal with these differences;
- To recognize the level of multicultural competence may affect one's success.
  - Greater multicultural competence may lead to greater success;
  - Failure to understand and consider multicultural diversity may have serious negative effects.

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Possible evidence of institutional UMC commitment	Self-reported data (n=45)
UMC as part of strategic plan	82.1% yes
Institutional standing committee dedicated to UMC	73.7% yes
Yearly amendment of institutional UMC goals	53.7% yes
Institutional governing board's subcommittee dedicated to UMC	28.2% yes
Title of the highest ranking officer focusing on UMC	23.1% President or higher; 56.4% at institutional level (Provost, VP)

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**Successful UMC program components**

**Very important:**

- Having the support of upper leadership
- Allocating sufficient budget
- Employing experienced and qualified instructor

**Important:**

- Conducting baseline needs assessment
- Enforcing face-to-face communication
- Establishing built-in evaluation mechanism

**Moderately important:**

- Incorporating interactive web-based learning

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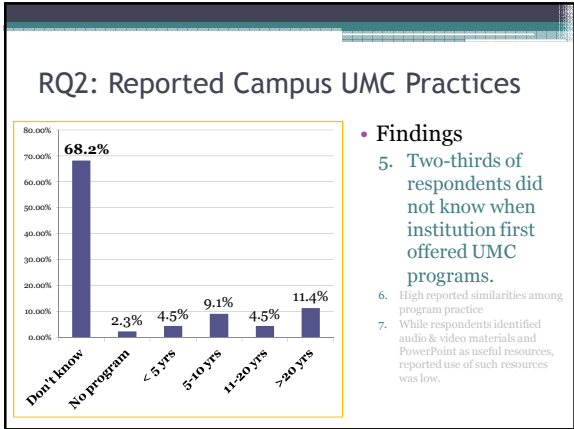
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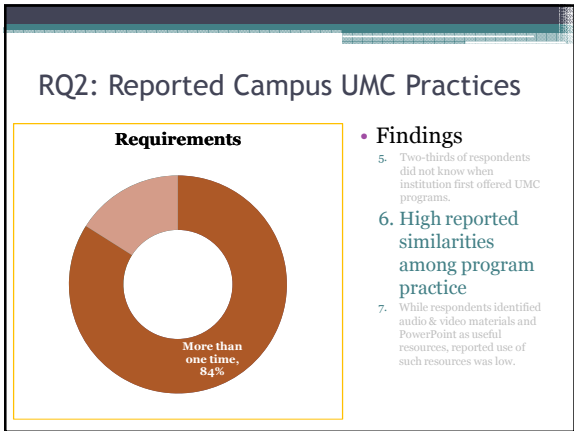
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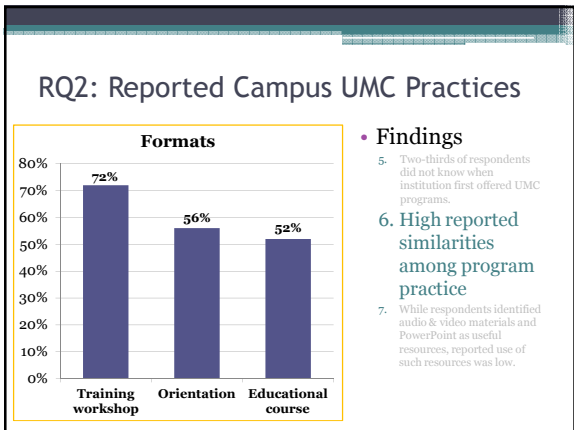
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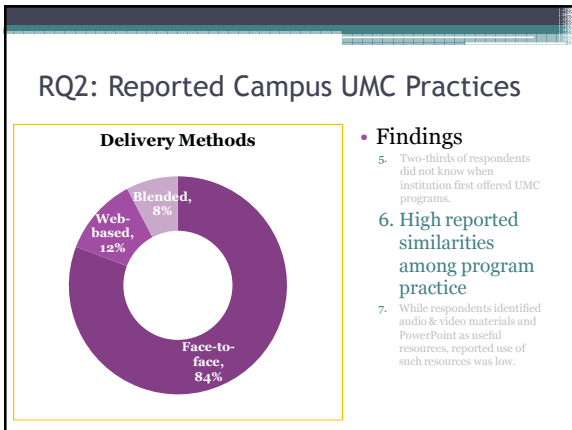
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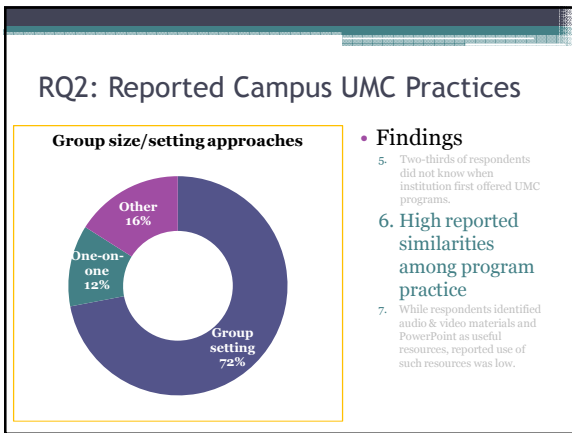
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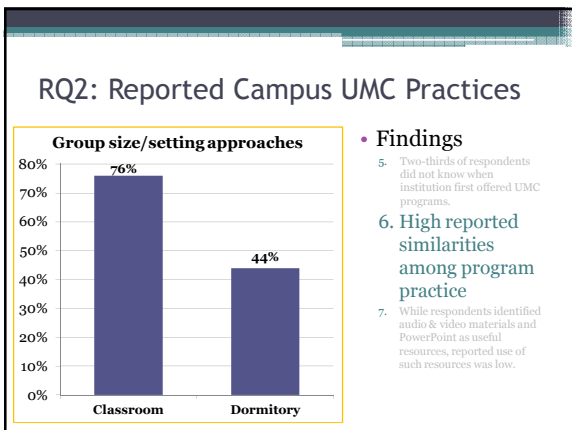
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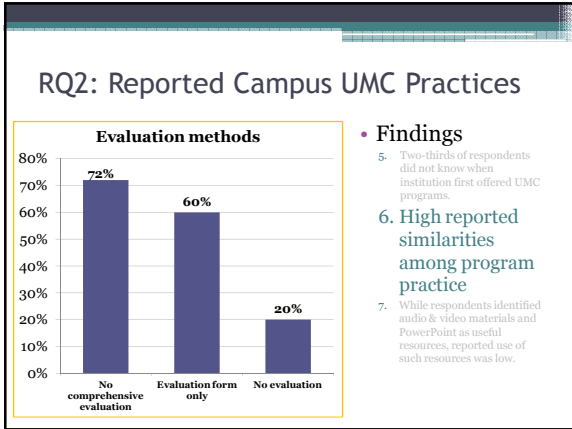
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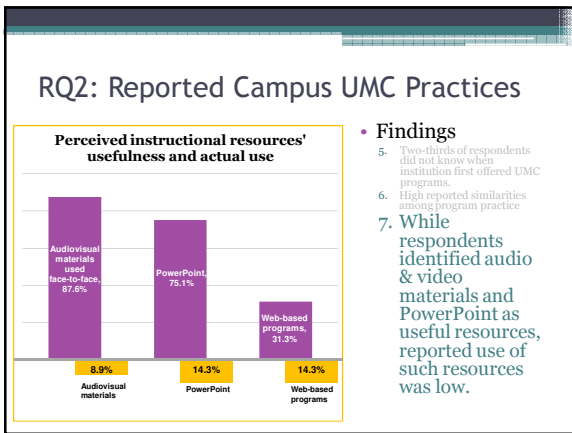
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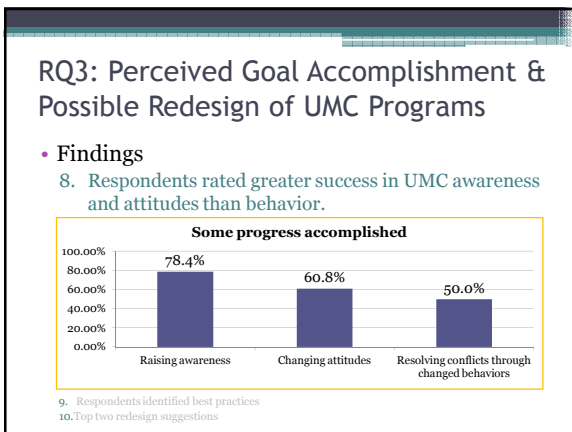
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### RQ3: Perceived Goal Accomplishment & Possible Redesign of UMC Programs

- Findings
  - 8. Respondents rated greater success in UMC awareness and attitudes than behavior.
  - 9. Respondents identified best practices
    - 1) Require not only of students but also of administrators, faculty, and staff to complete multicultural training (51.8%);
    - 2) Make institutional commitment to diversity and multicultural education visible to all members of the community in statements and infrastructure (25.9%);
    - 3) No best practice (18.5%).
  - 10. Top two redesign suggestions

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### RQ3: Perceived Goal Accomplishment & Possible Redesign of UMC Programs

- Findings
  - 8. Respondents rated greater success in UMC awareness and attitudes than behavior.
  - 9. Respondents identified best practices
  - 10. Top two redesign suggestions
    - 1) Curriculum and delivery
    - 2) Institutional statements of commitment and visible implementation

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### RQ4: Reported Credentials & Qualifications of UMC Instructors

- Findings
  - 11. UMC instructors appear to be predominantly female, non-white, and generally young;
  - 12. Their experience and previous non-formal training appear more important than other credentials.

#### Gender

Gender	Percentage
Female	80%
Male	20%

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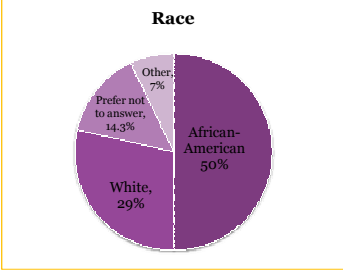
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### RQ4: Reported Credentials & Qualifications of UMC Instructors

- Findings
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Race	Percentage
African-American	50%
White	29%
Prefer not to answer	14.3%
Other	7%

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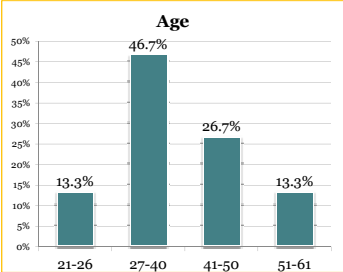
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### RQ4: Reported Credentials & Qualifications of UMC Instructors

- Findings
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Age Group	Percentage
21-26	13.3%
27-40	46.7%
41-50	26.7%
51-61	13.3%

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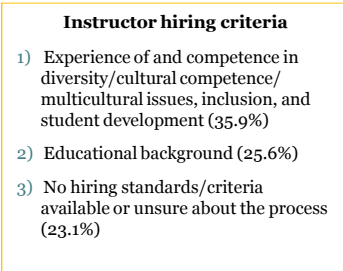
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- Findings
  - 11. UMC instructors appear to be predominantly female, non-white, and generally young;
  - 12. Their experience and previous non-formal training appear more important than other credentials.



Criteria	Percentage
1) Experience of and competence in diversity/cultural competence/multicultural issues, inclusion, and student development	35.9%
2) Educational background	25.6%
3) No hiring standards/criteria available or unsure about the process	23.1%

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**Conclusions** /1

1. **Institutional UMC goals:** Less success changing student behavior than awareness and attitudes
2. **Institutional commitment:** Visibility may not be sufficient by itself, especially if resources do not follow.
3. **Institutional culture:** Respondents appear to know less about their institutions' cultures, reducing their ability to take advantage of such knowledge.

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**Conclusions** /2

4. **Credentials and qualifications of UMC instructors:** Institutions appear to hire UMC instructors on other bases.
5. **Curriculum and evaluation:** Respondents do not appear to recognize importance of curriculum, focusing instead on institutional support/resources.
6. **Technologies' emotive affordances:** High reported rating of usefulness but low actual use suggests possible issues.

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**Conclusions** /3

- Literature contentions about UMC issues

Literature Contentions: Quality of UMC reduced by....	Supported? Yes/No
C1: Inflexible scheduling, location, and delivery;	MAYBE
C2: Reduced candor and learner discomfort in face-to-face interaction;	YES
C3: Varying session instructor competence;	YES
C4: Inconsistent quality of the materials employed;	YES
C5: Slow implementation backed by resources despite claimed institutional commitment.	YES

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**Study Limitations**

- Low response rate: 28%
- Self-reported data
- Self-identified role

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**Next Step**

- To collaborate with volunteered UMC key constituencies to design and develop instructor-facilitated online UMC modules.

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**Thank You & Questions?**

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