Claiming Space in White Academia

Chey Navarrete and Kalyn Garcia from Promotorx Transformative Educators de HSU

Transcripts of audio are available on Speaker Notes! ***
Why do students of color need a space?

What is a space?
- An area where you hold one another either by accountability, listening, or talking.
- We've become so accustomed to eurocentric standards we need a space here we can question it and realize the systematic oppression began since the first day we enrolled in school as children.
- Place to dismantle modern ideas that we have had through colonialism taking back what culture means to us.

- Students need a place where they can express themselves without any rejection; these centers foster a community with resources for issues such as homesickness, international travel and immigration plans, and even discrimination on and off campus.
Diversity Fun Facts:

- The California State University is one of the most ethnically and racially diverse university systems in the U.S.
- More than 51 percent of CSU employees are women. More than 38 percent of CSU employees and 60 percent of CSU students are people of color.
- One-third of undergraduates at the CSU are the first in their families to attend college.

Courtesy of the CSU Diversity Page
The Reality:

- The challenge in retaining students of color is to refrain from "fixing' the student" and to focus on institutional change reflecting a commitment to examine and, when appropriate, revise policies, power relationships, curriculum, support services, campus climate, and environment. (McNairy, 1996)
- There is a lack of representation in classroom setting, staff, and administration throughout the board in most situations whether in school, employment and even our public office
- Students are not being asked their needs and met with consequences .
- Left and right, students of color are getting discouraged.
The Yale Child Study Center did a study showing how preschool teachers and staff show signs of implicit bias in administering discipline but the race of the teacher plays a big role in the outcome.

**Findings:**

- Black students to be suspended at much higher rates than white students.
- When the preschool teacher and child were the same race knowing about family stressors led to increased teacher empathy for the preschooler → decreased how severe the behaviors appeared to the teacher.
- The teacher and child were of different race the same information seemed overwhelming to teacher and behaviors were perceived as being more severe.

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**First Day of School**

**Track the eyes: Which students are teachers watching?**

- Black girls: 10%
- Black boys: 42%
- White girls: 13%
- White boys: 34%

Preschool teachers tend to more closely observe blacks than whites, especially black boys, when challenging behaviors are expected.

Provided by Yale School of Medicine
The Doll Test by psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark

- The study was an analysis of the genesis and development of racial identification as a function of ego development and self-awareness in African-American children.
- Four identical dolls except in skin color and hair color
- Two dolls were brown with black hair and two were white with yellow hair
- ALL children preferred the white doll than the brown doll
- Study indicated that these children had knowledge of racial difference
Quick Activity!

- Write your name in the middle of the circle
- Write an adjective/ or something you love about yourself and connect them to your name
- Each time you relate to one of the microaggressions slash your name with a highlighter
Slash your name if you have ever been told ..... 

Slash your name if you have ever been told if ..... 

- You do not look like you are blank
- I have never met anyone _, I did not know they were still around
- Is that really your natural hair? Can I touch it
- No where are you really from!
- Why do you sound so ghetto?
- SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH THIS IS AMERICA
- Can you bring more of you people to the meeting so it looks more diverse in here
- I heard of that, I heard it's really dangerous to walk because of all the gangsters and homeless
- You should not wear that, it does not look good for you body shape or skin tone
- That food is disgusting why doesn’t it smell normal?
- Why are you so LOUD

Some of my personal favorites 

- I can’t be racist, I do not see color
- Can you please stop speaking Spanish (or your native language) it makes people uncomfortable
- If you worked hard enough you’d be able to succeed
- Pull yourselves up from the bootstraps

Disclaimer  Audio of Activity  Last Notes of Activity
Humboldt State Facts:

**Student Profile**
- Male: 43%
- Female: 57%
- Average Age: 22

**Ethnicity**
- African American: 4%
- American Indian: 1%
- Asian American: 3%
- Hispanic/Latino: 34%
- Pacific Islander: 0%
- Multi-racial: 6%
- White: 43%
- Other: 8%

- Classes Smaller than 30: 62%
- Faculty: 534

**Average Entering GPA:** 3.23 Freshmen and 3.1 Transfers

**Colleges**
- Arts, Humanities & Social Science
- Natural Resources & Sciences
- Professional Studies

**Provided by our library survey**

**Fall 2019 Faculty Ethnicity**

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Broken Promises

Racist Vandalism Found in Residence Hall

Dear HSU Community,

Late Tuesday evening, members of our Residence Life team discovered vandalism that included a racial slur carved into a plastic toilet paper dispenser located in a Redwood Hall restroom. This was immediately reported to University Police. Our facilities team removed and replaced the dispenser right away. UPD and Residence Life staff report that there have been no other similar recent incidents that appear to be related. University Police are investigating the matter.

In order to support any students who may feel triggered or need support, we have notified our counseling center, Care Teams, cultural centers, and our behavioral intervention team to be on alert. Please contact University Police with any additional information about this incident.

HSU President, Dr. Tom Jackson, Jr., states, “There is absolutely no place on this campus for this type of racist behavior. We have to be better than this and this must stop. As a campus, we will not tolerate any act of hate and racism in our community. It is our collective responsibility to create an environment where all students, faculty, and staff feel safe and free from bigoted threats.

We are able to identify those responsible for the act and will aggressively respond to the fullest extent possible. If you are aware of anyone who may be responsible for or connected to this incident, please contact University Police immediately.

As this is an ongoing investigation, we ask that you avoid sharing details about this incident, as this may compromise the investigation. We will continue to provide updates as they occur.

November 15, 2017

Community Support:

Community members are encouraged to show support for those affected by this act. The University Police Department has increased its presence on campus and is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students.

Before you leave HSU, please consider participating in an event designed to promote understanding and unity. For more information, please contact the Office of Student Life at 707-826-5555.

Thank you for your support in creating a safe and welcoming environment at HSU.
Claiming Identity and Space:

- Being a rural college campus, multicultural centers are also crucial for exposure and education of a predominantly white student body and staff.
- Creating a list of demands was to highlight how activism by students of color has changed the institution.
- Students of color demanding space is not the same as segregation; they are meant to be inclusive place for individuals from all backgrounds.
- The safety of students should not come as an afterthought, it should be a priority. The active stance that the University has taken to ensure others’ their right to Freedom of Speech ... should be comparable to the active measures the university is taking to protect its students of color.
Wise words from Attica Scott

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLTXpisVEf8

- Start at 3:35
Reminders

- These institutions were not made for people of color or people who come from impoverished communities.
- Code Switching is completely okay: talking our slang within our community/friends/family versus in a “professional” setting is completely OKAY and a necessity to survive.
- We are here to educate ourselves not to be measured by a systematic grading system.
What can you do?

- Never stop pushing for your demands and stand in solidarity with one another!
- Understanding the importance of taking a few days off and having self care.
- Building communities away from home that include individuals who identify different from you or come from different backgrounds but ultimately have the same goal or drive
- Engage all students, including those from more privileged identity groups, in conversations about power and privilege.
- CELEBRATE YOUR LITTLE VICTORIES YOU ARE MAKING IT EVERY SINGLE DAY
- As cliche as it sounds take it one step at a time
Citation/ References


6. California State University: https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/diversity

7. https://ie.humboldt.edu/fast_facts