



The Arts & Letters Faculty
Development and Diversity Task
Force

and the Office of Institutional
Equity and Diversity PRESENT:

How Hiring Committees Can (Actually) Practice Diversity

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Dr. Alison Reed

Dr. Allison Page

A Presentation for the Batten College of
Arts & Letters





AGENDA

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Purpose
- Dr. Reed
- Dr. Page
- Dr. Underwood
- Discussion (Q&A)





State the Problem - Faculty Diversity?

- 84% White (58% male & 26% female)
- 4% Black
- 3% Hispanic/Latinx
- 9% Asian/Pacific Islander
- Less than 1% American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous American

NCES, 2015

Race used as “Entry Point.” –

“...while we centralize the example of race in our discussion, we do so using an intersectional race analysis...at times we use race interchangeably with the common institutional language of diversity, but do not intend to minimize the importance of gender, sexuality, class, ability, etc.



We are all a WORK in PROGRESS...

The Importance of Faculty and Staff Diversity





KEY POINTS FROM ARTICLE: Institutional Context

- Neoliberal educational management and *disciplining* of diversity
 - Summoning both punitive and putative modalities of study
- Whiteness as property and POV
- “We argue that through a range of discursive moves, hiring committees protect rather than unsettle whiteness. In so doing, they actively close the gates against racial diversity” (558).
- Moves include:
 - “So-called objective scrutiny of applicant CVs”
 - “Discourse of ‘fit’”
 - “Token committee member”
 - “Additive nature of diversity-related interview questions”
 - “Acceptability of candidate ignorance on issues of race/gender”



THE PROBLEM WITH THE WHITENESS OF INSTITUTIONS (see p. 560):

- 1) DIVERSITY CONCEPTUALIZED AS ADDITIVE, NOT TRANSFORMATIVE
- 2) ONUS OF DIVERSITY LABOR PLACED ON FACULTY OF COLOR
- 3) NOT ADDRESSING WHITENESS AS RACIAL GRAMMAR
 - ASSERTION OF UNIVERSALITY (VS. Racialized Burden of Representation)
 - CENTERING OF EUROCENTRIC THOUGHT
 - DIVERSITY IN SERVICE OF WHITE STUDENT-CONSUMERS



HOW AFFECTS COMMITTEES:

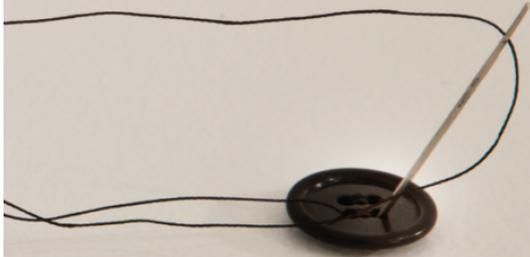
- PRESUMPTIONS AROUND WHAT GETS COUNTED AS GENERALIST/SPECIALIST KNOWLEDGE
- Example of English Departments: who is an “Americanist”?
- Article’s example of Bob vs. Ali (see p. 562)
- Constructive Alternatives on p. 563

“Whenever diversity is an add-on, we normalize Whiteness rather than diversity” (563).

ANTIRACISM INC.

- racial representation / tokenization divorced from commitment to ending institutional racism (see p. 569)
- Social justice rhetoric divorced from committed praxis
- Defanging of radical movements that sought transformation of conditions of knowledge-production and what counts as knowledge as such
- White backlash to racial justice gains – e.g. performatively claiming “injury” in diversity statements (see p. 570)
- Co-optation of diversity and free speech rhetoric (e.g. “diversity of thought”)

Anti Racism
Inc.



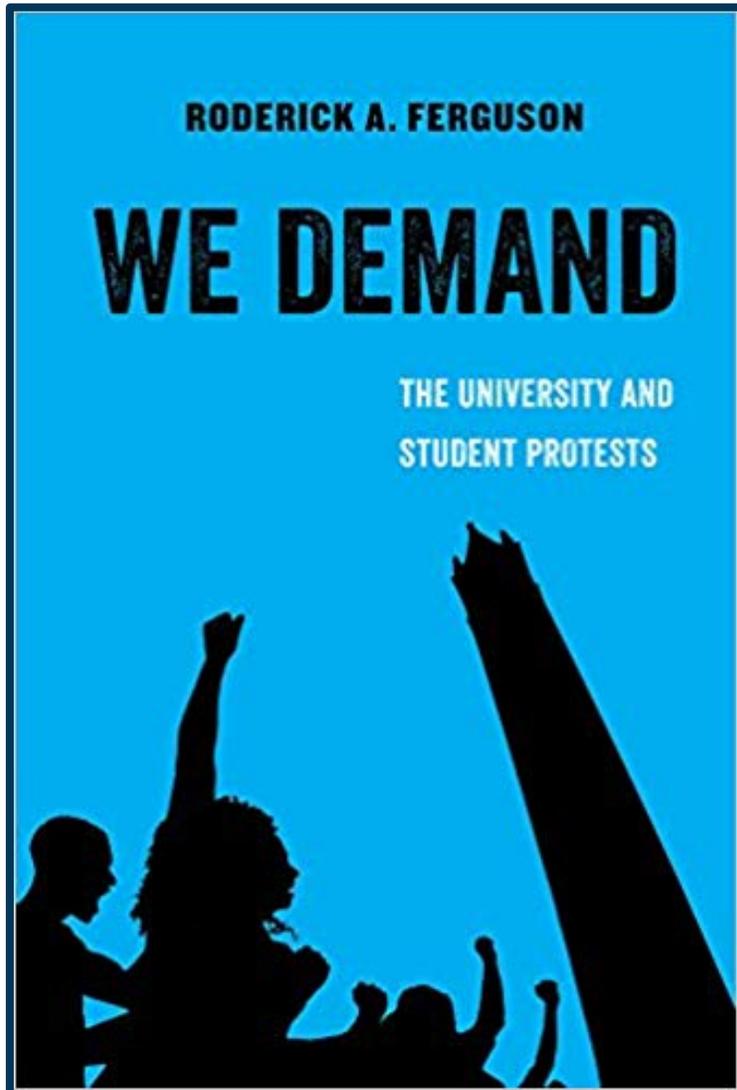
Why the Way
We Talk about
Racial Justice Matters

Edited by Felice Blake, Paula Ioanide,
and Alison Reed





Broader context



- In *We Demand*, Ferguson traces the history of activism to decolonize the U.S. academy and introduce new knowledge formations (ethnic studies, gender studies, queer studies)
- “Interviews with student protestors repeatedly show that a key demand is increased racial diversity among the faculty and racial literacy among the White faculty” (558)
- Incorporation of anti-racist discourse without seeing shifts in faculty make-up
 - “diversity”
 - “excellence”
- About bodies *and* epistemologies; transform the institution



WHAT KNOWLEDGES ARE PRIORITIZED:

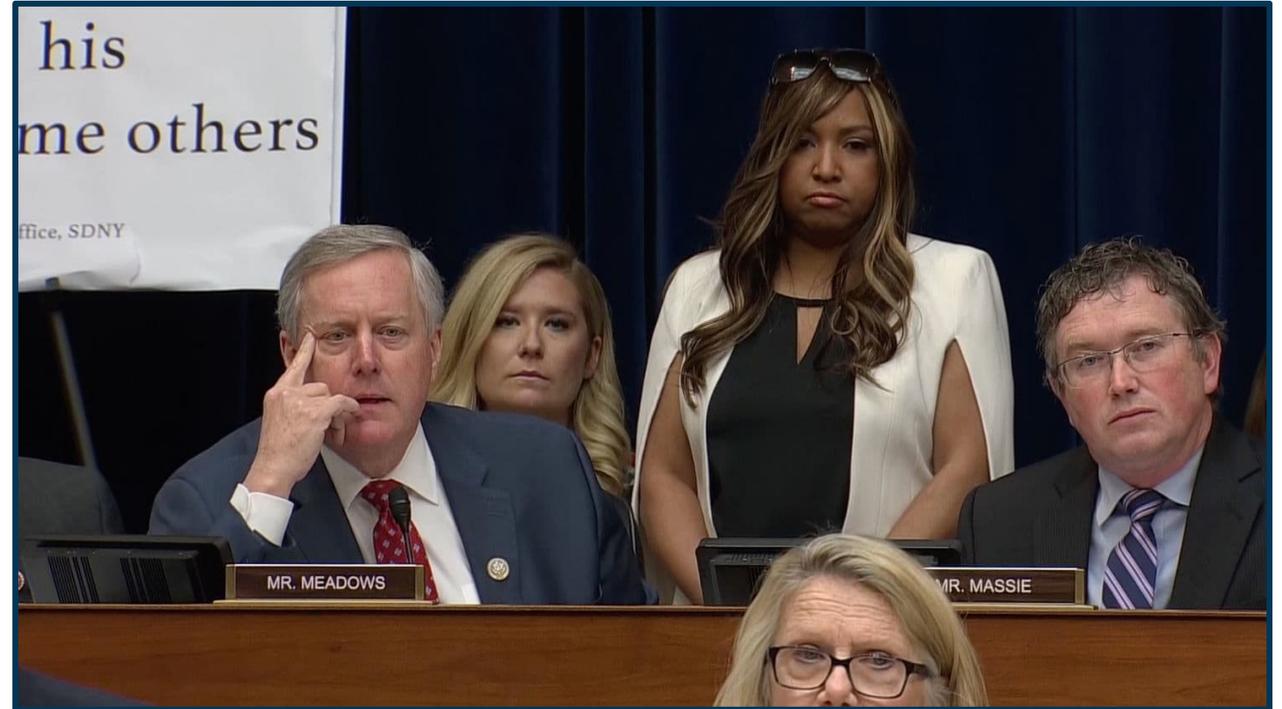
- This question takes us beyond diversity as a buzzword
- We have often seen the uptake of knowledges (e.g., incorporation of black feminist thought) without the people who produced it
- What would it mean to “operationalize diversity”? (563)

“The decolonization of the academy requires, at minimum, an interrogation of not only the disciplinary fields and their borders but also the everyday commonsense practices of the institution itself” (561).



KEY POINTS FROM ARTICLE: White Fragility

- **Unearthing common racial patterns and assumptions; making visible what is invisibilized**
- **Multi-pronged approach (not tacked on, not one aspect)**
- **Understanding “white fragility” (DiAngelo’s theorization of how white people struggle to tolerate challenges to whiteness)**



The Washington Post, 2019



Diversity beyond hiring

- “When a predetermined formulae generated by the institution is used, the default is the reproduction of power; such formulas were not originally constructed to address diversity and thus cannot be relied on to achieve diversity” (564-565).
- Attention to syllabi (whose voices are we centering)
- Teaching format
- Mentorship and support
- Valuing the often unacknowledged labor of “diversity work” (561)



Best Practices

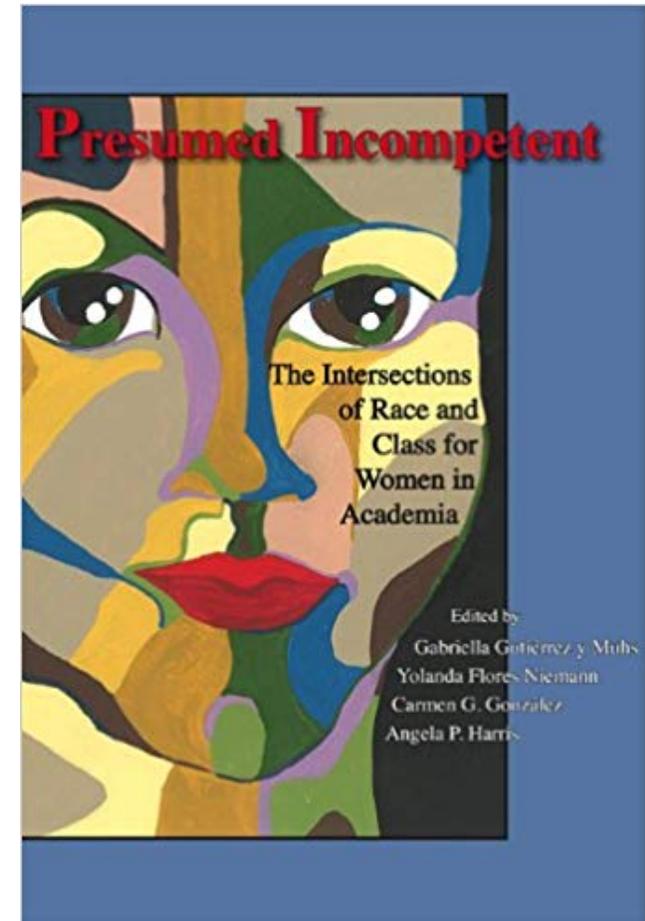
- Online search committee training once a year
- Begin with the end in mind
- Recruitment and retention are two different things
- Use intentional language for the creation of the job ad → matrix
- Diversity statements?
- Diversity advocate role; checklist
- Campus visit
- Resources at ODU



The STEPS of the Hire

“When people in power receive a mandate to search out excellence, the first place they look is to people like themselves, and too often that is also where the search ends.”

- Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs et al., *Presumed Incompetent*





Start with Online Search Committee Training



Home > Faculty & Staff > Employee Services > Information for Managers > Recruiting New Employees > Search Committees > Search Committee Training

ON-LINE SEARCH COMMITTEE TRAINING

The Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity is proud to announce that in an attempt to make Search Committee Training more convenient, an online module has been developed and is now up and running on the **ODU Blackboard Learning System**. The training will replace the search committee classroom workshop and once taken the certification will be effective for one year (12 months). Should you have specific questions relating to your search, please feel free to contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity at 757-683-3141 or via email officeofinstitutionalequitydiversity@odu.edu

All search committee members seeking to complete the training can access the module in the ODU Blackboard Learning System by following the steps listed below.

- Log in to Blackboard using your MIDAS ID and password: [Blackboard Learn](#)
- Once logged in, click on "**My Professional Learning**" at the top of the screen.
- Under "Organization Search," type the search words "**search committee**" and click "Go."
- Hover over the organization ID title, click on the drop down menu arrow (v) and select **Enroll**.
- Once you have enrolled, go back to My Professional Learning. You will see the training listed under My Organizations Plus.
- Click on the organization title and follow the prompts to complete the training.



Contact

Human Resources
Spong Hall
5255 Hampton Blvd.
Norfolk, VA 23529
757-683-3042 (office)
757-683-3047 (fax)

Policies & Procedures

The University's Policies and Procedures are the governing ordinances of ODU.

[Policies & Procedures](#) ▶

ReSource

A publication of the Department of Human Resources.

[ReSource](#) ▶

Careers at ODU



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Step 1: The Job Description

Operationalize diversity

Incorporate language to signal a critical paradigm

–
“Candidates must demonstrate an ability to situate knowledge in their field in a social, cultural, and historical context

Avoid coded language (urban, inner city, disadvantaged

“Candidates are expected to be able to explain the role of mathematical thinking in the lived race and class experiences of elementary students and staff in the region.”



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Step 2: Committee Composition

- **Avoid common committee formulas that appear “unbiased and balanced.”**
- **Committee balance - Consider bodies and perspectives- don’t underestimate the committee chair**
- **Diversity Advocate Role; checklist**
- **Account for the extra service load – recognize diversity service by increasing release time**



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Step 3: “Objective” Scrutiny of the CV

- Social belief that people of color are inherently less qualified (Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, & Gray, 2013; Jost et al., 2009)
- No CV is race neutral
- Count input and not just output
- Multilingualism is a strength and not a barrier
- Not all publications appear in Western indexes
- Expect evidence of diversity literacy from every applicant regardless of the field



Step 4: The Interview

- Restructure the typical campus visit to consider the “political and sociocultural contexts, no matter how benign it may appear.”
- Racialized vs. Race Neutral Candidate?
- Avoid add on diversity questions – Integrate at every turn
- Resist permitting ignorance
- Invite the candidate to meet with diverse students, staff, and the diversity committee of the college



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Step 5: The Decision



“Every step of the hiring process is an opportunity to interrupt racial inequity” (574)

Candidate Fit & Merit Rating– the ability of candidate to keep the status quo comfortable and unchallenged

Recruitment vs retention

Interrogate implicit bias
Revisit ODU’s mission and vision

Acknowledge/Address power dynamics and common narratives of resistance



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Conclusion & Discussion

- Change is difficult; what areas do you need help with?
- What questions do you have?