



Case Study: University of Connecticut

AACTE Network Improvement Community Black and Hispanic/Latino Male Initiative

“Leadership within the Neag School of Education is firmly committed to the goal of diversifying the teacher preparation program.”

REASON FOR JOINING THE NIC

- Prior to joining the NIC in 2014, students of color made up 12% or less of the students accepted into the program each year.
- In Connecticut, 40% of students, but only 8% of teachers identify as a person of color (EdSight 2016).
- Currently, there are 369 students enrolled in the Integrated Bachelor’s/Master’s Teacher Preparation Program (IB/M) and 20% are students of color.

NEW INITIATIVES RESULTING FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE NIC

- Funded graduate assistantships to support Neag’s participation in the NIC
- Redesigned the program that foregrounded multicultural education
- Hired two academic advisors dedicated to recruiting and retaining students of color
- Supported new student groups and faculty conversations about diversity and equity in the program
- Created culturally responsive brochures that target university, community college, and high school students
- Developed and facilitate Praxis Core Study Groups
 - Established a scholarship for students who have financial need
- Hosted the annual Celebration of Diversity in Education Dinner
- Academic Advisors managed the student organization Leadership in Diversity. Founded by students of color within the teacher preparation program, their mission is to help

support, encourage confidence, and success in pre-teaching and current students of color enrolled in Neag's teacher preparation program.

- Academic Advisors manage Leadership in Diversity, a student organization founded by students of color within the teacher preparation program. Annual L.I.D. programs include
 - Providing culturally responsive workshops for faculty, staff, and teacher preparation students
 - Presenting at National Association of Multicultural Education conference
 - Hosting annual culturally responsive conference for college students, teachers, administrators, university faculty and staff, and other educators
- Created Diverse Educators Making Outstanding Change (D.E.M.O.) Mentoring Program
 - Established mentoring program for pre-teaching and current enrolled students of color in the Neag teacher preparation program
 - Mentors consist of K-12 Connecticut teachers and administrators, as well as university faculty and staff members of color

DISCOVERIES

- Teacher preparation students are experiencing a large amount of microaggressions from faculty, staff, and students in class and from teachers in their clinical placements.
- Not all students that identify as a person of color want to be supported through a specific mentoring program or affinity group for people of color.
- Teachers and administrators that serve as mentors for the D.E.M.O. program need culturally responsive mentor training as well as an outlet for what they experience as being one of the “only” in their school buildings.
- More needs to be done to eliminate barriers for students of color entering the University of Connecticut at the institution level and within local school districts.
- Most PWI's struggle to increase the number of students of color within their teacher preparation program.
- Students of color need consistent financial aid from the institution and the state of Connecticut in order to complete a 5-year teacher preparation program and obtain teacher certification.

OUTCOMES

- Efforts increased the number of students of color entering their program from approximately 12% in 2014 to 25% in 2017.
- Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, students in the state of Connecticut no longer had to pass the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators test to gain entry into a teacher preparation program.