Guidelines for Diversity & Inclusion in Crisis
by
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I am writing these guidelines in response to the recent events that have impacted the Black community, specifically, the Black computing community. As the Department Chair of the Computer & Information Science & Engineering (CISE) Department at the University of Florida, I lead, one of, if not, the nation's most diverse computing sciences (CS) department. We have the nation's most Black CS faculty and PhD students. We are one of the top CS departments for the number of female faculty. As a researcher, I have had the honor of producing the nation's most Black/African-American CS PhDs. I have also had the honor of hiring and promoting the most Black faculty in CS. My experiences span more than 20 years and those experiences are the foundation for these guidelines.

Guidelines for Diversity & Inclusion in Crisis
1. Conduct a self-assessment
   a. Ask yourself how you are doing?
   b. What are your thoughts on the crisis?

2. Talk to your students and listen
   a. Talk to your students and listen to them about the recent events. If you have Black students reach out to them immediately, but a conversation is the beginning. In this conversation, ask the students
      i. How are you doing?
      ii. Are there things you need?
      iii. How can I help?
      iv. Do you feel safe?
      v. What are your fears and concerns?
      vi. Are there others you would like to hear from in the department, college or university?
   b. You may not be able to relate to everything they are saying, but acknowledge where you don't understand and offer to find help where you cannot help. For example, you may need to provide them with wellness and counseling services at the university.
   c. Talk to your non-Black students about these issues as well. This is their problem too, so make this clear this isn't just a Black student problem.

3. Talk to your faculty
   a. Ask the faculty how they are doing and if they have talked to their students
      i. Give them talking points as needed for speaking with their students
      ii. Ask the faculty what they need to deal with the crisis
   b. At the beginning of every faculty meeting, offer a diversity and inclusion tip, scenario or question. For example,
      i. Your PhD student is late to the lab meeting. You discover he has a second job. What do you do?
      ii. Your PhD student calls a meeting with you. She tells you that she is pregnant. How do you respond?
      iii. The teaching assistant for your class tells the Black students their questions are stupid. What do you do?

4. Research and Development
   a. Acknowledge diversity and inclusion or broadening participation in computing (BPC) as a core area of research and development. Faculty and students conducting research in this area should be given proper credit as anyone doing AI, machine learning, networks or cybersecurity.
   b. Review student research accomplishments and if the Black students are not on par, why? Take action to ensure all students are receiving the same advising independent of their race/ethnicity, gender, etc.

5. Teaching and Learning
   a. Ethics as an area of emphasis has made its way into the curriculum, now it's time for diversity and inclusion to do the same. Incorporate lessons of bias and racism as they relate to computing. For example, in AI and machine learning, demonstrate how bias can impact people's lives. Students should know how to identify bias, racism, prejudice, etc. in computing systems and technologies just as they are trained to identify efficiency.
   b. Support student engagement in professional development activities that emphasize diversity and inclusion. For example, National Society of Blacks in Engineering (NSBE) Conference, Tapia Conference, etc.'
   c. Support student affinity groups and organizations such as NSBE.
   d. Provide students with opportunities to learn about science policy so they can understand how to make change a reality.
   e. Provide faculty with opportunities to get training on bias, culturally-responsive teaching, etc.

6. Diversity & Inclusion Leadership
   a. Request that the Provost form a committee composed of student leaders from the various multicultural and minority student organizations. This committee will meet with the Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), Associate Provost, or someone at this level on a monthly basis, preferably during lunch, which will be provided by the Provost Office. This will enable the administration to keep their finger on the pulse of the campus with respect to diversity and inclusion.
   b. Create a diversity and inclusion representative for the department. Each department will hopefully have one at the university and they will meet regularly. The diversity and inclusion representative should be given adequate credit for serving in this position, if the person is a faculty member. However, the person holding this position should have the proper training to handle these issues. Ideally, a course release or additional salary.
   c. Ensure that all search committees put forth a diverse slate of candidates. The Dean should deny any slate that is not diverse.
   d. Create diversity and inclusion awards at the university, college, and department levels. Acknowledge excellence!
   e. When recruiting Black, or any other minority students, never recruit just one. Recruit students in groups or cohorts so that they know each other. Connect new students with existing students.
   f. Establish relationships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)s or other Minority Serving Institutions (MSI)s to recruit students and to collaborate with faculty on research.
   g. Provide research opportunities for your Black students in areas of interest to the students.
   h. Provide appropriate funding for Black students. Black students' pay should not be less than other students.
   i. Department leadership should be diverse.

7. Engage the local community
    a. Seek opportunities to engage the local Black community in research and development. Offer technology learning classes, provide broadband access, etc. Work with them as partners not subjects.

8. You are not alone
    a. Seek additional help. I am willing to help and there is a community of researchers and practitioners that can help.

9. Prepare for the next crisis
    a. There will be another crisis. Are you prepared? If not, begin preparation.

Sincerely,

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