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Cultivating Collaborative Synergy to Promote Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice in the Psychology Curriculum

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Abstract

Transforming the psychology curriculum to incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) will necessitate department-wide and coordinated efforts; however, most EDI transformations emphasize changes to individual instructors and courses. Cultivating collaborative synergy to advance EDI transformations will foster and protect the relevance and trustworthiness of psychology and respond to the numerous calls for equity and justice. Collaborative synergy involves forming a community with a common goal, learning from one another, and sharing teaching-related resources. In this paper, we present the EDI Collaborative Curricular Transformation in Psychology (EDI-CCTP) model and discuss the benefits of collaboration amongst psychology departments and programs on EDI transformations. We offer strategies for transitioning from individual to collaborative efforts, including: (1) individual preparation for collaboration, (2) establishing a community of practice, (3) EDI curriculum mapping, (4) course design and redesign, and (5) systematizing EDI through departmental values and practices. Through a department-wide coordinated approach using the EDI-CCTP model, departments and programs can expose students to EDI concepts and practices in psychology in a cohesive and scaffolded curriculum and strengthen equity and justice in our field.

Keywords: psychology, diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, collaborative synergy

Cultivating Collaborative Synergy to Promote Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Justice in the Psychology Curriculum

The burgeoning literature on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the teaching and learning of psychology has added invaluable pedagogical strategies and tools that center EDI in psychology. Yet, much of that scholarship is directed toward individual educators who are invested in growing their teaching repertoire, refreshing their courses, and addressing EDI at the individual course level. While this type of teaching development is crucial and stands to improve the quality of instruction and student learning experiences for a select few students, an integrated and synergistic approach to promoting EDI in psychology is needed if we are to transform the psychology curriculum at the level of the field. Herein, we propose an approach to integrating and reinforcing EDI in the psychology curriculum by cultivating synergistic collaborations.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Efforts Across Psychology and Teaching

Over the past decade, and building on past calls, topics promoting justice in psychology and teaching (e..g., equity, diversity, inclusion, and belongingness) have received considerable attention. For example, in 2020 the American Psychological Association engaged in a series of initiatives that examined its role as well as the discipline's role in perpetuating oppression. Specifically, APA (2021a) commissioned the Cummings Center for the History of Psychology (CCHP) at the University of Akron to explore psychology's history and its role in promoting a racial hierarchy as well as disenfranchising People of Color. In collaboration with a group of APA members, the Center chronicled events across American psychological history that promoted racism, including eugenics, using White individuals as the comparative standard norm, disregarding intersectionality, and embracing a deficit-based model when characterizing communities of color.

Additional endeavors within APA included four compelling resolutions that (1) provided a uniform definition of racism (APA, 2021b), (2) offered an apology to people of color for the oppression initiated and perpetuated by psychology (APA, 2021c), (3) explored how psychology can assist in dismantling systemic racism (APA, 2021d) as well as (4) ensuring health equity (APA, 2021e). To continue its decolonizing efforts, the American Psychologist, the discipline's flagship journal, recently released a special issue centering the voices of prominent Black scholars who have studied race-related topics, promoted African-centered psychologies, developed models for understanding Black children, youth, and families, adopted an intersectional lens, and created spaces within organizations to conceptualize and conduct research on people of African descent (Tyrell et al., 2023).

On the teaching front, the APA's Multicultural Guidelines adopted an ecological framework that addresses trauma and promotes resiliency, and includes teaching in its scope of psychological practices (APA, 2017). These guidelines offer faculty guidance on how to understand the role of identity, intersectionality, and context in their teaching efforts. At the undergraduate level, APA's *Principles for Quality Undergraduate Education in Psychology* call on faculty to integrate EDI in their teaching practices and in their programmatic efforts (APA, 2023a). Specifically, the guidelines urge instructors to acknowledge the history of oppression in higher education, secure professional development training to facilitate culturally-responsive teaching, and actively address academic inequities in their programs. Additionally, the APA *Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major* (Version 3.0) integrated EDI throughout the learning goals and outcomes and highlighted EDI as an integrative theme for the field (e.g., "Psychological science values diversity, promotes equity, and fosters inclusion in pursuit of a more just society" (APA, 2023a, p. 6).

At the graduate level, the APA Commision on Accreditation (2018), which accredits health service psychology programs in clinical, counseling and school psychology, released new standards ensuring that diversity is addressed across all five standards within institutions. These standards ask programs to make an explicit commitment to diversity, infuse EDI across coursework, engage in proactive recruitment and retention diversity efforts with faculty and students, and have students demonstrate culturally-responsive knowledge, skills and dispositions. Relatedly, APA's Council of Representative recently approved guidelines that enable equitable and respectful treatment of graduate students in psychology programs (APA, 2023c).

Additionally, numerous scholars have offered guidance on developing and implementing culturally responsive teaching approaches (Addy et al., 2023; Sathy & Hogan, 2022), including Authors (2021a) who identified eight considerations for centering equity, diversity, and inclusion in course syllabi. With respect to course assessment, Authors (2022a) explored the role of equity in labor-based grading. Finally, APA's Society for the Teaching of Psychology (STP) charged a taskforce with curating resources for decolonizing introductory psychology courses by promoting optimal teaching and assessment strategies, prioritizing historically excluded voices, minimizing hierarchical power structures, and acknowledging several ways of knowing (STP, 2022).

Sense of belonging is also an important and influential construct related to EDI which predicts student wellbeing and retention. In the context of education, sense of belonging refers to students' perception that they are supported, connected to, and valued by the members of their community (Strayhorn, 2018). Students who report stronger sense of belonging also engage more deeply with their studies and ultimately are more likely to persevere and succeed academically (Zumbrunn et al., 2014). Furthermore, when students experience trials and tribulations in their

schools and campuses, sense of belonging serves as a protective factor against stress and illbeing (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Hurtado-de-Mendoza et al., 2014). In contrast, when historically marginalized students perceive the curriculum as culturally responsive, they report greater engagement and achievement which compels an examination of EDI in the psychology curriculum (Thomas & Quinlan, 2023).

To help coordinate all the aforementioned efforts, APA (2021f) released the *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion framework*, which addresses EDI across three levels - the association, the discipline of psychology, and society. The framework provides a coherent structure, recognizing "More than a disparate set of activities and events is required. Instead, structural and cultural shifts are important to create substantive, transformative, and sustainable change" (p. 5). To actualize this framework, APA (2022) developed the *Racial Equity Action Plan*, identifying key priority areas in knowledge production, health, the workforce, the training of psychologists, and education. The plan underscores the importance of creating inclusive and equitable learning environments that ensure the success of students in higher education, especially those with marginalized identities.

In short, APA and EDI scholars have made important recommendations for promoting and centering EDI in the discipline; yet, comprehensive, substantive, and strategic changes are needed to respond to their calls for change. Namely, all the resolutions, frameworks and endeavors discussed, while laudable, lack specificity, coherence, and guidance to center EDI at the level of programs and departments. To this end, we propose the EDI Collaborative Curricular Transformation in Psychology (EDI-CCTP) model (See Figure 1). This model departs from the predominant approach to EDI which involves instructor critical consciousness development and single course transformations (Authors, 2016; Authors, 2019). Through a

department-wide coordinated approach, students can be exposed to EDI concepts and practices in a cohesive and scaffolded psychology curriculum. Specifically, EDI-CCTP consists of creating synergistic collaboration through individual preparation, establishing a community of practice, engaging in EDI curriculum mapping, conducting course (re)design, and systematizing EDI in departmental policies and practices.

Collaborative Synergy

The importance of collaboration is often mentioned as an essential component to the success of complex projects including international organizations, team science, health promotion, and primary healthcare (Butterfoss & Kegler, 2012; Drath et al., 2010; Fox et al., 2021; Hall et al., 2018; WHO, 2010). As such, collaboration warrants further examination as a vehicle toward the integration of EDI concepts and practices in the psychology curriculum (e.g., multicultural competence; (Authors, 2022b). At a basic level, collaboration involves communication, consultation, coordination and cooperation (Head, 2003). For example, individual members of healthcare teams offer their knowledge and skills within distinct subspecialties to care for patients' healthcare needs. The expectation is that if each member delivers care with expertise (independently or in parallel care) the patient should experience improvement in their symptoms/conditions. This approach to collaboration is limited in its helpfulness because it overwhelmingly focuses on the individual providers and their narrower focus or understanding of the larger goal; each doing one's individual job well is most important.

In contrast, collaborative synergy involves (1) being part of a community with a collective purpose or common goal, (2) developing collective knowledge and sense-making, (3) developing collective competence, and (4) engaging members and sharing resources. Developing a common goal requires working through differences in acquired knowledge and understanding

of the problem(s) (Head, 2003). Working toward collective sense-making requires democratic,

reciprocal and respectful dialogue, risk-taking and trust (Authors, 2022b; Drath et al., 2008).

Collective competence refers to what a group can achieve together and which individuals cannot

achieve individually (Boreham et al., 2000; Miller et al., 2017). Collective competencies include

formal and informal communication, mutual awareness of roles and responsibilities, and

cooperative teamwork. Butterfoss and Kegler (2012) proposed that, when applied to coalitions

(defined as a collection of organizations), member engagement and pooling of resources

promotes collaborative synergy, which we argue can be applied to creating collaborative synergy

in departments and programs. These components are enhanced by a spirit of generosity, within

departments and programs and the respective administrative body. Specifically, the

administration may help to create a culture of cooperation or delimit collaboration depending on

whether they prioritize individual over collective goals (APA, 2021f; Goldman et al., 2018).

Administrators can support collaborative synergy by developing policies that encourage

teamwork and shared responsibility as procedural norms (WHO, 2010). Furthermore,

collaboration is more likely to produce favorable outcomes if the administration or leadership

provides supportive resources (e.g., funding, staffing; Goldman et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2018;

WHO, 2010). Thus, to return to the healthcare example introduced above, collaborative synergy

involves a common understanding of the patient's needs and goals; shared decision-making,

knowledge, and resources; a commitment to the collaboration, and coordinated actions related to

the common objective (i.e., patient well-being). Indeed, integrated behavioral health teams have

been diligently working to transform healthcare in light of this awareness (Fox et al., 2021).

When applied to higher education it is easy to see why it may be difficult, but not

impossible, to foster collaborative synergy amongst educators (and relevant administrators). In

most higher education settings, each colleague in a department offers knowledge and expertise, usually in bounded subareas, that translates into their contribution to the psychology curriculum. Furthermore, reluctance to engage in collaborative endeavors is not surprising considering that the field of psychology (and academia in general) has historically been highly individualistic and more often devoted to preparing students to produce scholarship in a narrow area of focus (Sugarman, 2014). Similarly with respect to teaching, more often than not, higher education educators independently select the topics, readings, and activities in their courses. Although there are clear advantages to this approach, such as academic freedom, it has disadvantages as well. Disadvantages may include isolation and alienation of the educator and students receiving a fragmented education, both of which limit innovation and meaningful growth.

The concept and practice of collaborative synergy is aligned with the quest to integrate EDI into the psychology curriculum within departments. We have learned from the teaching and learning scholarship that cultivating cooperation and community is beneficial to student learning and experiences. Namely, developing meaningful and respectful connections with peers increases student wellbeing, engagement in academics, and collective self-efficacy (Capone et al., 2018; Strayhorn, 2018; Wilson et al., 2015). Furthermore, students who develop positive relationships with peers report a greater sense of belonging (Zumbrunn et al., 2014). We expect the same or similar outcomes are possible for faculty colleagues engaged in collaborative synergy.

<div align="center">**EDI Collaborative Curricular Transformation**</div>

Individual Transformation: Preparing for Collaborative Synergy

The fact remains that collaborative synergy builds on individual transformations, necessitating that individual instructors develop their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in EDI as

previous scholars have recommended (Abbot et al., 2019; Authors, 2021a). First, scholars should build their critical consciousness by identifying their positionality on the matrix of privilege and marginalization (Kliman, 2010). Using Kliman's multiaxial approach illuminates one's privileged and marginalized positions and their intersections which can prepare faculty to teach with greater awareness. Second, instructors could engage with INCLUSIVE ADDIE a guided framework for creating inclusive educational experiences that engage instructors in nine steps including introspection, needs, context, lessons, understanding, supporting, structures, interactions, values, evolution (Gamrat et al., 2022). Third, we recommend that instructors increase their own awareness of systemic and structural issues related to the topics they teach, which is crucial because awareness is necessary, but not sufficient to change power imbalances (Cole, 2009). For example, faculty can examine how the topics of their courses developed relative to oppressive social hierarchies. Instructors should explore how their course topics can be used toward promoting equity and justice and dismantling oppressive structures. Fourth, instructors need to practice humility and adopt a growth mindset, given the benefits that these approaches have been shown to confer to student outcomes (Abbott et al., 2019; Yeager & Dweck, 2020). This includes approaching feedback about teaching and course design with curiosity and with the perspective that when one feels challenged and uncomfortable, one may actually be receiving a valuable gift that could foster growth. This approach may also be useful to cope with situations when one tries something and it fails (i.e., learn from it and try again, rather than shutting down). Finally, aligned with cultural humility, faculty are advised to embrace a life-long learning stance, recognizing that all these efforts do not have a determined ending point and require ongoing attention, reflection and praxis (Abbott et al., 2019; Authors, 2021a).

Community of Practice

Communities of practice can help departments, or any group of educators, to grow their knowledge, skills, and abilities as instructors, especially if they define a focus area for their collaboration (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018; Xia & Ya, 2012). Communities of practice involve two or more people sharing knowledge, experiences, and ideas with each other toward a common goal (Head, 2003). Faculty learning communities serve as an example of communities of practice which may be implemented to prepare experienced and new instructors to increase EDI content and knowledge in their courses. In faculty learning communities, instructors can learn new strategies and share what has worked for them, thereby reinvigorating their teaching and improving effectiveness. At a minimum, needed resources include a peer facilitator, weekly or biweekly meetings with 8-10 colleagues, a physical or virtual meeting space, and reading resources selected by the facilitator and/or group. Additional resources may include shared meals or snacks, to create social moments and build community, and software to organize materials and new resources created by the group. The combination of professional and social elements have been linked to satisfaction with the experience (Hoke et al., 2021). See Miami University's Center for Teaching Excellence (2023) for an overview and recommendations.

Faculty learning communities require minimal resources and time, yet have the potential to create measurable and favorable outcomes. Elliott and colleagues (2016) reported on their experience with faculty learning communities designed to increase the effective use of active-learning strategies in Principles of Biology II. This large enrollment course was delivered by seven instructor teams, served 1,600 students annually across 80 majors, and was offered in-person and online. Faculty met biweekly to discuss literature about pedagogies and their experiences implementing active learning strategies. Faculty reported benefitting from the

resources, suggestions, and encouragement they received which ultimately increased their capacity to and confidence in implementing active-learning strategies. Student learning outcomes showed modest improvement and were correlated with the percentage of active-learning in the course. Importantly, communities of practice may be initiated at any point in the life of a program. Departments that already have a strong sense of community and others that may be seeking to strengthen their connections, stand to benefit from establishing communities of practice (Jacobsen et al., 2018; Uchiyama & Radin, 2009).

Prior research with college students indicates that positive interactions with faculty and staff mitigated the effects of bias and discrimination on student sense of belonging on college campuses (Hurtado-de-Mendoza et al., 2014). We contend that communities of practice focused on EDI may similarly foster inclusion and belonging for underrepresented faculty and may even support faculty retention goals if underrepresented faculty feel that their contributions are welcomed and valued by members of their learning community (APA, 2023d). Communities of practice can focus on promoting EDI into the psychology curriculum by engaging in various activities, such as gathering to discuss literature about the experiences of historically marginalized students, staff, and faculty. They may also read about inclusive pedagogy and consider the translation of the recommendations to their specific context. One valuable activity involves sharing resources and strategies for integrating EDI content into specific courses. Another activity may include sharing experiences and recommendations when implementing EDI content into courses. We also recommend that communities of practice devote time to engaging in curriculum mapping to gather insight about EDI in the curriculum.

EDI Curriculum Mapping

Curriculum mapping is a process for organizing and visualizing links between the learning goals of a program and the courses (and other training experiences) where students are exposed to the relevant knowledge and skills (Stanny, 2015). Curriculum mapping helps to elucidate the nuances within a curriculum including identifying opportunities for colleagues to coordinate instruction. For instance, most psychology departments have a set of courses that students are expected to take in order to satisfy the requirements of a degree in psychology. Most departments also outline broad learning goals and outcomes to guide the major. Although informative, knowing the broad structure and learning goals of the major says little about the content and skills students develop in any given course. This high-level perspective of the major also makes it impossible to discern if EDI issues are integrated into the curriculum in a cohesive and scaffolded manner. Making the links explicit is necessary because the intended curriculum may not be what is actually taught nor what students learn. Thus, curriculum mapping can be a useful process for identifying and disentangling misalignments in the curriculum especially if assessment is integrated into the process.

Although embarking on a curriculum mapping journey may seem daunting at first, the rewards are numerous. Curriculum mapping results in transparency and improved communication about the program amongst existing and new faculty, as well as students (Jacobsen et al., 2018). Curriculum mapping also supports informative and effective assessment (Heinly et al., 2018), improved quality of teaching, student satisfaction and learning (Oliver at al., 2010); and collegiality and collaboration (Heinly et al., 2018; Jacobsen, et al., 2018; Uchiyama & Radin, 2009). The discovery that curriculum mapping activities open the door for

creating communities of practice by increasing collegiality and collaboration is both exciting and promising for job satisfaction and mentoring.

Curriculum mapping usually entails a comprehensive review of a curriculum (e.g., undergraduate psychology curriculum; Heinly et al., 2018). However, it may entail mapping of a specified subsection of a curriculum such as EDI concepts, values and practices (e.g., research sequence; Clark et al., 2023; Jacobsen, et al., 2018). Research findings in support of this effort indicate that students of color who perceived the curriculum as culturally insensitive had fewer interactions with their instructors. Moreover, students of color had less interest in their academic program compared to white students, which was partially explained by perceived cultural insensitivity of the curriculum with respect to addressing power structures and inequality. Redesigning curricula to increase cultural sensitivity, specifically the relevance of the curriculum to dismantling oppressive structures is essential to increasing the interest, engagement, and academic achievement of all students and students of color in particular (Thomas & Quinlan, 2023). As such, we propose that most programs would benefit from mapping the EDI related content in all courses that comprise the psychology curriculum in a department.

Although ideally all faculty members in a department would participate, if that is not possible, a subgroup of a department may choose to map decolonization learning goals to confront the long history of colonization which has contributed to dominant values, practices and ideas in psychology (Malherbe & Dlamini, 2020). Addressing decolonization in the curriculum responds to the many calls scholars have made for an account of the harms that are perpetuated by curricula including assumptions about superiority of the ideas, values, and practices of the hegemonic classes (Goodman & Gorski, 2014; Pillay, 2017).

Curriculum mapping may free some instructors from addressing some EDI topics and allow them to offer more advanced ones instead because they know what has already been addressed in earlier courses. For example, if students in introductory courses learn that psychological theories and principles have contributed to marginalization and oppression, advanced courses can move to ethical considerations in research methods that promote empowerment among research participants and communities. Not knowing if and when students have been exposed to certain content or practiced specific skills may compel some faculty to teach the same introductory content without being aware of the unnecessary repetition.

In order to facilitate mapping EDI and decolonization in the psychology curriculum, we recommend a tool which includes (1) suggested learning goals, (2) a rating scale that each instructor can use to operationalize the learning goals in each course, (3) a spreadsheet to visualize the extent to which each learning goals is addressed, and (4) reflection questions which may be used to consider changes to course offerings, content, and the overall curriculum. This supplemental material is available at

https://osf.io/rfv2x/?view_only=f9093d5fabee4176b3426a1c3f40113c. After curriculum mapping faculty may identify opportunities for collaboration on course design and redesign.

Collaboration on Course (Re)design

Collaboration on course design or redesign may build community amongst faculty members and increase opportunities for resource sharing, mentoring, and making progress on curriculum mapping discoveries (Uchiyama & Radin, 2009). Scholars are accustomed to sharing resources with other experts in their subfields through research collaborations, conference presentations, publications, yet it is unclear how often instructors in the same department, usually trained in different subareas, collaborate on course design. In the context of one's department,

collaboration on course design may be challenging because of the individualistic model in academia (Okun, 2023; Sugarman, 2014). Also, faculty members have been socialized to expect that when they open themselves up they will expose themselves to rejection and negative criticism (Jaremka et al., 2020). However, with careful planning, collaboration on course design can achieve the exact opposite; approbation. In other words, collaboration will help colleagues to appreciate each other's capacities and talents and provide peer mentoring opportunities. Approaches to collaboration on course (re)design include coordinating course connections and creating a common syllabus.

There are many ways that collaboration on course design could be accomplished. The first author used collaborative course design with three colleagues, each of whom was teaching an introduction to psychology course. We were scheduled to teach the course in the same semester and, after agreeing on the schedule of topics and assignments, we divided the semester into four parts (one per instructor). The instructor responsible for their part (4 weeks) prepared all of the teaching materials for their weeks including assigned open source readings, recorded lectures for homework, homework assignments, slides and materials for in-class activities, group discussion questions, and quiz questions which were shared with the other colleagues. The instructor of record opted to implement variations, if desired. The instructors often discussed and shared ideas with one another especially around incorporating EDI- congruent content and processes (peer-consultation). The group had a common goal: to teach introduction to psychology in an inclusive and engaging manner and shared their recommendations openly with one another. Some students commented that they now understood the connection between psychology, culture and context better than in the past. One student wrote,

> I found it very interesting to learn about the role that culture plays in psychology. This is not something I had considered prior to this course; however, I have come to believe that this is one of the most important things to pay attention to in psychology and it has greatly impacted my way of understanding previous knowledge acquired during this course.

This approach resulted in a stronger sense of community amongst the instructors, peer mentorship, and teaching evaluations indicated that students reported positive and rigorous learning experiences.

Course Connections

One approach to collaboration in teaching involves coordinating the sequence of courses such that each faculty member has a clear understanding of the course goals and can make connections across the courses. A clear visualization as a result of curriculum mapping activities can help departmental colleagues to refine the intended sequence of learning experiences in a selection of courses and make changes as needed. This was the result of curriculum mapping of the educational research 4-course sequence in a MEd program (Jacobsen et al., 2018). The mapping process, visualization, and discussion of the learning goals allowed the instructors to better understand the links between the courses and the distinction between each course and made modifications to instruction in accordance with their new understanding. For example, they discovered that augmenting ethics conversations in the first course prepared students to design research in the subsequent course. In a desirable turn of events, they saw a substantial increase in the number of students electing to conduct independent research which was a stated goal of the program (Jacobsen et al., 2018).

Coordinating course connections is recommended for EDI teaching and learning in psychology. An examination of psychology course titles, descriptions, and requirements across a national sample of undergraduate courses indicated that while many programs offered courses related to multiculturalism and diversity (68 percent) a scant number (6 percent) required such a course for the major (Authors, 2016). At present, the coherence of EDI-related learning in psychology is inconsistent although calls supported by research evidence indicate that students benefit from a culturally sensitive curriculum (Authors, 2021b; Thomas & Quinlan, 2023). Elucidating course connections between psychology content and EDI concepts is an important step to identifying where in the curriculum students are encountering EDI content and discerning where it could be introduced or augmented. For example, if an instructor introduces the importance of EDI in research in an early course, students may be more enthusiastic about the required multicultural course the subsequent year, and the culturally-informed research design in the year thereafter. Colleagues can use the selected EDI topics across psychology subfields provided by Authors (2022b) as a starting point for building EDI connections in their department. These connections send the clear message that the department values diversity and that instructors are working together to ensure consistency and coherence. Considering that for many instructors, incorporating EDI into their course is a relatively new experience, and one which they did not have in graduate school, many faculty may welcome having the opportunity to share resources. That is, faculty with expertise in EDI-related teaching and learning may support colleagues who are interested, but feel unprepared to incorporate EDI content knowledge or pedagogies into their courses. In fact, it is expected that instituting EDI requirements are met with increases in instructors being willing to teach such courses (Simoni et al., 1999).

Common Syllabus

Departmental colleagues who teach multiple sections of the same course can collaborate on a common syllabus that contains course information including description, learning goals, topics, learning materials, and policies. In addition to the syllabus, collaborating on pedagogy including assignments and assessments can prevent course drift and increase consistency (Hudson et al., 2014). This may be a useful and valuable resource to support new instructors and may create cohesion across learning experiences in the major. For example, the results of redesigning and using a common syllabus for Introductory Biology serving approximately 1,400 students each year were encouraging. Specifically, grades of D, F, W declined and grades of A and B increased. In addition, students reported greater satisfaction and faculty reported greater consistency across the various sections of this course (Ueckert et al., 2011). A similar observation was reported by Hudson and colleagues (2015) subsequent to a redesign of Introductory Psychology and use of a common syllabus; however, they emphasized the importance of assessing student progress on learning as well as allowing sufficient time for students and faculty to adjust to the redesign before expecting favorable outcomes. Importantly, a common syllabus does not need to be enforced rigidly. In fact, scholars who recommend the use of a common syllabus also value having the flexibility for instructors to modify content based on their preferences and needs (Heinly et al., 2018).

Assessment of Student Learning

Assessment, a crucial element usually linked to departmental self- and external evaluations, can help to answer important questions about the curriculum including: *Is the curriculum being taught reflective of what students are actually learning?* And, more specifically: *Are students retaining the EDI knowledge, awareness, and skills they learn in their*

courses? A community of practice is a great place to design, implement, analyze, and interpret assessment strategies in order to determine if changes to the EDI components of the curriculum, connections between EDI learning in courses, pedagogies, and policies are needed. Furthermore, assessment facilitates an iterative process whereby faculty can gather data and make adjustments to instructional content and processes (Heinly et al., 2018; Hudson et al., 2015). Ideally, the curriculum mapping process integrates assessment measures to determine if students are, in fact, benefitting from the learning goals, course content, and pedagogical strategies, as intended. Integrating assessment strategies into the normal procedures of each course streamlines the process and ensures that the data collected is both of value to the instructor and to the assessment of the EDI content in the curriculum.

Retrospective reassessment may be a valuable methodological approach to assessing concepts related EDI (including awareness of diversity, knowledge of one's own and others' cultures) considering that in pre-post instruction assessments students of diverse ethnoracial backgrounds have shown a tendency to overestimate their baseline knowledge. After students received in depth exposure to multicultural content, they more accurately assessed their multicultural knowledge (Authors, 2023).

Systematizing EDI

Establishing Departmental EDI Values

Collective progress on building a more EDI-minded psychology curriculum will require accompanying changes and efforts at increasingly higher institutional levels. Ensuring that faculty incorporate EDI perspectives in their respective courses calls upon academic units (i.e., departments) to, at minimum, create structures that support, promote, and/or incentivize the advancement of EDI in classroom instruction (Goldman et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2018; WHO,

2010). Although seemingly straightforward, this is a delicate and multilayered endeavor given

the earlier-stated tendency for faculty members to co-exist in siloed, parallel spaces. As a result,

individual faculty are likely to have different opinions as to the importance of incorporating EDI

into specific courses, which was one of the barriers Authors (2013) reported upon initiating

change in their respective institutions. Thus, moving faculty toward this goal may involve

explicit efforts to incorporate EDI into the department or program's mission, vision, or strategic

plan. Similarly, a carefully constructed diversity statement that considers best practices including

that it is aspirational, autonomous (and not coercive), defines diversity broadly, and linked to

meaningful action is likely to garner broad support from departmental members (Carnes et al.,

2019). In essence, incorporating EDI into the overall values, policies, and practices of a

department will facilitate changes to learning goals, course (re)design and the curriculum.

Enacting EDI Values: Agenda and Faculty Reviews

Taking a multilevel approach to integrating EDI values and practices into the curriculum

(i.e. individual, department, administration) can help solidify the importance of EDI being

reflected in the curriculum. If this collective goal can be established, then moving toward an

EDI-transformed curriculum can be made a standing item on the departmental agenda. This can

then be supported and advanced by reserving as little as 15 minutes at faculty meetings (or other

recurring meetings) for faculty colleagues and/or guests to present on any of the following:

teaching demonstrations; sharing resources and connecting to teaching, research, and/or

mentoring; and discussing new research findings and how they can inform departmental

practices. By building in regular discussion and activities to promote EDI practices related to the

psychology curriculum, a department can reinforce the value of EDI within the department,

which can then further commitment to promoting and engaging these practices.

EDI efforts can be further reified within departments by explicitly including EDI-focused curricular change efforts as a part of regular faculty reviews. Most academic departments offer regular review of faculty progress on various aspects of scholarship (research, teaching, service). This review offers an opportunity to send a clear message to faculty about what is valued, precisely because it is being assessed, and to provide an opportunity for departmental leadership to provide feedback and/or encouragement to faculty for their EDI work in the psychology curriculum. The ultimate goal of including EDI curricular efforts in faculty reviews would be to help shape departmental culture and values such that engaging in these exercises is a regular part of pedagogical endeavors rather than setting these efforts apart as extra or additional work taken on only by some individual faculty members (Ledgerwood et al., 2022). Of course, departments can also engage in practices that actively incentivize faculty for taking actions to engage in pedagogical transformations in the service of EDI. These efforts are time-consuming, may require faculty to engage in significant self-learning or seek external consultation, and may necessitate other downstream changes that could stall change or introduce further complications (e.g., changing course texts, assignments, prerequisites, etc.). Explicitly recognizing the resources needed to engage in these efforts by providing extra compensation or removing other responsibilities is another demonstration of support for actualizing EDI values (Vaccaro, 2019). The Department Diagnostic Toolkit developed by The Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP) includes a useful list of recommended anti-racist departmental practices that could help support these efforts (SPSP, 2023).

Advocacy Beyond the Department

Importantly, appreciation of the systemic factors that can facilitate or impede transformational efforts to the psychology curriculum must also consider levels of academic

administration that go beyond the academic unit such as the schools/colleges and the university in which a departmental unit is embedded. For instance, a department head cannot provide financial incentives to faculty members for redesigning a course, if the dean of the larger academic unit (school/college) is not supportive of these kinds of expenditures (for units that do not have control of discretionary funds for these purposes). Therefore, departments often need buy-in and support from higher administrative levels and may need to make the case that EDI-transformation is an important overall goal for the education of the student body within a given school/college (Ledgerwood et al., 2022). The same is true for university-level commitments and espoused values with respect to EDI and curriculum. When university values align with EDI practices in the curricular domain, then deans and smaller units can feel empowered to support efforts toward those goals which can then better support departmental efforts in that vein. In short, instructor collaboration and the systematic embedding of EDI values and practices, as suggested by the EDI-CCTP model is essential to actualizing APA's charge to center EDI and ensures that psychology will be relevant and useful for combating oppression in the classroom and society.

Conclusion

Psychology is actively embracing its ethical imperative to ensure justice in psychology by addressing equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging in teaching and training practices. To help coordinate these efforts, we propose the EDI Collaborative Curricular Transformation in Psychology (EDI-CCTP) model. Through this model, faculty can move away from singular and siloed approaches to engaging in deep and strategic practices to aptly address EDI throughout the entire curriculum. While we focused primarily on the undergraduate psychology curriculum, the proposed model can be easily adapted for graduate curricula as well.

Given the growing and ever-changing EDI landscape, instructors are encouraged to secure ongoing training to promote beneficence, establish optimal dynamics in their courses, and prevent pernicious outcomes (e.g., microaggressions, identity threat) despite well-intentioned efforts. Possible training options include the campus's teaching and learning center as well as programming and resources offered by the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (Authors, 2021a). Additionally, since the suggested model activities may trigger questions about academic freedom as well as the reappointment, tenure, and promotion (RTP) processes, academic units will need to grapple with questions that may emerge such as, "could collaboration be used as part of the RTP evaluation without consent?" or "could adopting this model lead to actual or perceived violations of academic freedom?" For example, one possible outcome of these important conversations is realizing that academic freedom is a professional right to discuss matters pertinent to the subject matter in the classroom. However, individual academic freedom is subject to the expectation that instruction will be carried out in an ethical and competent manner (American Association of University Professors, n.d.). In light of the abundant evidence for integrating EDI in the process and content of teaching in psychology, instruction that does not address EDI is, in essence, incomplete.

Next, given psychology's commitment to structurally-based strategies (APA, 2021b), it behooves programs to ensure that their efforts are strategically aligned. Specifically, departments are encouraged to examine their mission statements, ensuring that EDI is either properly referenced or added (Adames et al., 2013). We contend that a multilevel approach is needed to infuse EDI into organizational structures, as connecting action to values and goals promises to more effectively advance EDI because it serves as a guide post for administrators, faculty, and students (Adames et al., 2013).

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Individual Preparation
- Critical Consciousness
- Awareness of Systems & Structures
- Cultural Humility

Systematizing EDI
- Mission & Values
- Incentives & Reviews
- Institutional Advocacy

Collaborative Synergy

Community of Practice
- Knowledge & Resource Sharing
- Mentorship & Belonging

Course (Re)Design
- Common Syllabi
- Course Connections
- Assessment
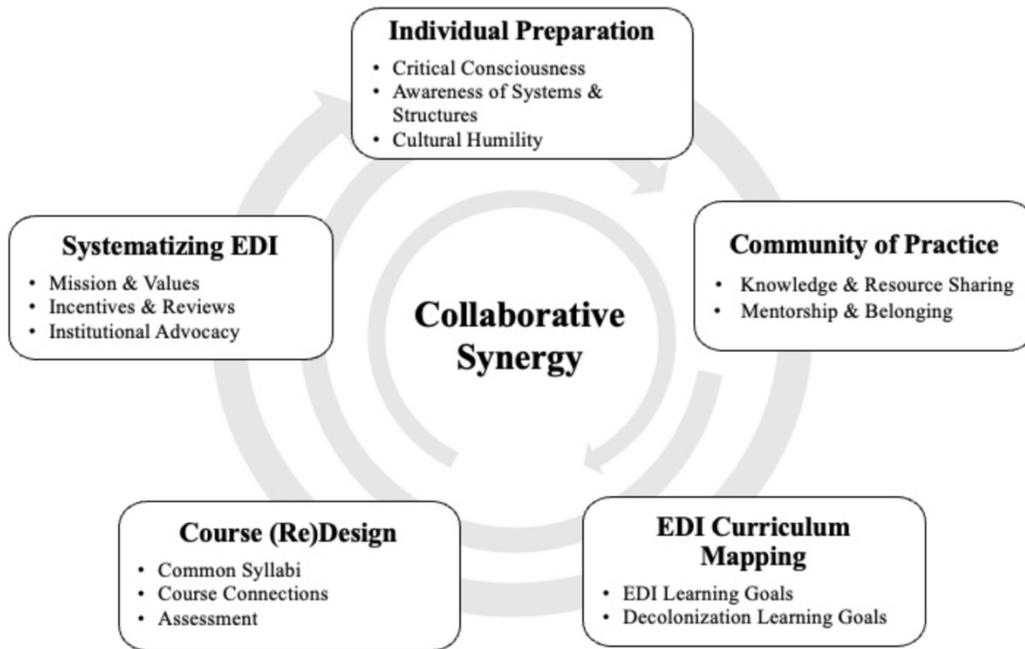
EDI Curriculum Mapping
- EDI Learning Goals
- Decolonization Learning Goals

Figure 1. Promoting EDI Through Collaborative Synergy