

Article

Intercultural Pedagogy: A Faculty Learning Cohort

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to describe and reflect on a pilot faculty learning cohort that was designed to improve the frequency and the quality of cross-national and cross-cultural student interactions in the participants' undergraduate courses. The cohort offered a space where faculty could gain insight on the experience of international students (IS) and non-native English speakers (NNES), develop knowledge about best practices and relevant research, and explore and test tools to promote inclusion and interactions. The cohort focused on cross-national interactions because strong and consistent data indicate that international and domestic students seek more purposeful and substantive interactions, both in and out of the classroom, but lack the confidence and structure to engage in them.

Keywords: intercultural pedagogy; faculty development; international students; diversity; undergraduate teaching

“The question is not whether or not we want diversity or whether we should accommodate diversity because diversity is clearly our present and our future. The real question is how do we build diversity into the center of higher education where it can serve as a powerful facilitator of institutional mission and societal purpose.” [1] (p. 3)

1. Introduction/Overview

In this article, we describe and reflect on a pilot faculty learning cohort that was designed to improve the frequency and the quality of cross-national and cross-cultural student interactions in the participants' undergraduate courses. The cohort offered a space where faculty could gain insight on the experience of international students (IS) and non-native English speakers (NNES), develop knowledge about best practices and relevant research, and explore and test tools to promote inclusion and interactions. The cohort focused on cross-national interactions because strong and consistent data indicate that international and domestic students seek more purposeful and substantive interactions, both in and out of the classroom, but lack the confidence and structure to engage in them.

With this context in mind, we will describe the factors that enabled our pilot cohort to emerge, as well as the salient design features and core principles, rooting them in the research on multicultural pedagogy and intercultural development. We ran multiple pilots, but we will focus on one in particular which brought together faculty from General Chemistry, History, and Social Sciences, all of whom

teach first year courses that meet liberal education requirements, and each of whom was at a different level of experience/development in the continuum of intercultural development (from novice to intermediate to advanced).

Finally, we share the key takeaways from the pilot, including inviting perspectives and dialogue among the participants. The purpose of the roundtable format of dialoguing is to enact two of the principles and practices of our cohort program: the value of engaging multiple perspectives and, the importance of realizing and operationalizing the maxim that ‘no one size fits all’. Engaging diversity—among our colleagues or within our classrooms—requires us to begin by honoring the different entry points and by valuing the multiple takeaways participants will experience. An effective intercultural learning community will reflect that reality and leverage it to collective ends.

2. Background/Context/Need:

“You are teaching in intercultural classrooms regardless of whether you want to, or are aware of it, whether you think it is your responsibility or relevant to your discipline. It isn’t a choice, because human diversity is present in and impacts every classroom, regardless of whether it is visible and whether it is solicited.” [2] (p. 15)

Various stakeholders have strongly advocated the need for U.S. undergraduate education to explicitly and systematically develop the skills and knowledge graduates need to successfully navigate a complex, diverse, and increasingly interconnected world [3–5]. The American Association of Colleges and Universities’ 2007 report, “College Learning for a New Global Century”, calls intercultural learning, “one of the new basics in a contemporary liberal education. essential for work, civil society, and social life” [3] (p. 15).

In support of globalization, many institutions have sought to enroll more globally diverse undergraduate students. Our institution is consistent with the broader trend in U.S. higher education to proactively recruit and enroll higher numbers of international students. In the past decade, according to the Institute on International Education Open Doors Report [6], international student (IS) enrollment rose from 623,805 in 2007–2008 to 1,078,822 in 2016–2017. In percentage of total undergraduate enrollments, IS increased from 3.45% in 2007–2008 to 5.3% in 2016–2017. At the University of Minnesota, IS enrollments went from 2% of total undergraduate enrollment in 2006 to just over 12% in 2017 [7]. In addition to actively recruiting international students, the university has also placed greater emphasis on globalization as an institutional priority in research, demographics, and educational goals. Material decisions—in the areas of resource allocation, admissions, and strategic planning—reflect the institutional priority of internationalization. However, when it comes to operationalizing this priority, in the arena of undergraduate education outcomes and experiences for example, the change has been more complex and slower to achieve.

The research is clear that effective or meaningful interactions do not just happen and do not directly accrue as a result of diversification in enrollments [2,8–10]. Intercultural habits of mind and the necessary skills to engage diversity do not occur by ‘osmosis’ alone; (students) must be exposed in practices and understandings of the ‘other’ and actively involved in an intercultural experience. Students develop intercultural effectiveness over time and with practice and reflection. In other words, students need faculty and instructors who are designing and facilitating “purposeful tasks through which they can develop the capacity to observe, to explore, to listen and to ask questions” [11] (p. 247). As Harper and Antonio [8] argue, we know that “students and society could ultimately benefit from new approaches to cross-cultural learning”, and therefore “failing to take the necessary steps to intentionally create enabling conditions [in and] outside the classroom is downright irresponsible” (p. 12). Faculty and instructors need intentional and focused professional development in order to understand and to be skilled at creating the necessary conditions and promoting cross-cultural learning. Many disciplinary associations have explicitly recognized and called for specific intercultural pedagogical training for faculty in order to promote interculturally competent graduates [12–16].

At our own institution, as in U.S. higher education more broadly, the increased enrollment of globally diverse students has prompted examination of what it means to meaningfully include and integrate students, and what is required in order to engage diversity and not only to 'have' it [2,17–19]. While increasing demographic diversity is important towards various education equity goals, this enrollment strategy does not—in and of itself—ensure that either faculty or students will become more effective or confident at engaging diversity or participating intercultural interactions [20–22]. Recent institutional research [23], including quantitative and qualitative studies with faculty and students, domestic and international, highlighted questions and current challenges about the degree to which our campus climate is inclusive, and for whom? To what extent do students feel confident and encouraged to interact in and outside of classes? To what degree are faculty skilled at promoting inclusivity and meaningful integration of diverse students? In particular, four salient themes form the context for our faculty learning cohort, themes that are identified in contemporary research in the field of internationalizing education and diversity and equity in higher education, as well as in our local institutional research:

1. Students report discomfort and lack of confidence about entering cross cultural interactions;
2. International students and non-native English speakers report higher levels of isolation and lower levels of a sense of belonging;
3. Faculty acknowledge there are opportunities for intercultural interaction in their courses, but express discomfort and a lack of explicit knowledge about how to facilitate them;
4. Students are looking to faculty to be models, coaches, and facilitators who support students' skill and confidence development in intercultural interaction.

The impetus for the cohort came from institutional research conducted at the University of Minnesota. The cohort design and its intended outcomes are rooted in the fields of intercultural development and multicultural education. While intercultural education, multicultural education, and Universal Design for Learning are diverse fields of scholarship with their own professional associations and journals, they share a fundamental premise: access and accommodation are important components of equity but they are not the same as nor do they replace meaningful inclusion which is necessary to full participation. In order to pursue and promote meaningful inclusion, it is essential to reframe the 'problem' so that we understand the limits and deficiency is not with or in the student but is rather in and with the curriculum and this requires skill and knowledge development on the part of instructors/faculty, the designers and deliverers of the curriculum [2,24].

At the University of Minnesota, a fee is charged to international undergraduate students with the expressed purpose of supporting their 'success and satisfaction'. The money is distributed as grants to faculty and staff who propose projects that meet criteria relevant to the fee's purpose. In the case of this pilot, directors from two campus entities (Center for Educational Innovation and Global Programs and Strategy Alliance.) were awarded the grant funding. The award provided modest professional development funds for the participants, the purchase of a book for participants, and allocation of time/workscope for Lee and Smith who were appointed to design, develop, and administer the faculty development cohort and coaching programs.

3. Assembling the Cohort

In the semester before the cohort was run, Lee and Smith reached out to undergraduate faculty and programs with high levels of international student enrollment and in areas where the recent institutional research indicated a need for more effective interaction between students. They had conducted many course observations, reviewed curriculum, and had conversations with potential participants from diverse disciplines and levels of experience with intercultural pedagogy. Their goal in this phase was to assess and utilize the broader institutional data about international students, non-native English speakers, and domestic students within the context of direct observations and

discussions, so as to design the cohort program to be responsive to current, pressing priorities and day to day realities of teaching.

Ultimately, Lee and Smith developed two pilot programs: one pilot took the form of an interdisciplinary cohort wherein up to six participants would convene biweekly, work from a shared and explicit set of expectations but identify specific topics and goals that reflected their priorities and needs. The second pilot program took the form of intensive, long-term 1-1 coaching that Lee and/or Author 3 provided to individual faculty around specific assignments, issues, and needs that emerged from the course observations and curriculum review.

This chapter focuses on the interdisciplinary cohort model. We will highlight the salient design features and present reflections on the cohort experience and its impact as presented by participants. The cohort members were invited to individually reflect on the experience and to write about critical moments and key takeaways. The venue for this reflection took place in two forms, and on two occasions. First, Lee and Author 3 scheduled individual meetings with each participant and asked them to come ready to discuss: (1) what was a high point? (2) what was a low point or dissatisfaction? (3) what are key takeaways? (4) what should we change for next cohort? These hour-long meetings were used to synthesize notes and to generate an agenda for our end of pilot retreat meeting in May. Following that end of year retreat, participants were invited to reflect in writing on similar prompts for the writing of this chapter.

Lee and Smith sought to assemble a cohort that was intentionally diverse in terms of participants' discipline, teaching experience, position description, and level of skill with intercultural pedagogy. We sought diversity because we hoped that the cohort itself would be a laboratory space where participants could practice and experience the power and potential of engaging diversity. This is an important challenge for faculty learning communities given the deeply internalized tendency to rank one another by job title, level of experience, etc. In assembling and convening the group, it was made explicit that everyone brought forms of expertise that would be valuable and everyone had areas needing development and skill building in relation to intercultural pedagogy. So, rather than positioning Leopold, the least experienced teacher in our cohort by more than a decade, as 'the novice', the member we would all 'help', we consciously and explicitly positioned her as another expert and drew out the unique insights and perspectives that she had and which contributed to everyone's development. As Leopold herself reflects, "not having much background in diversity or the needs of international students the first few months of the cohort consisted of reading literature, having discussions centered around international students' needs and experiences, and attending related workshops. This start was critical for me to establish common understanding within our group and to make sure that we all had a foundation to build from. I quickly realized that it didn't matter that we were all from different disciplines because we had the common goal of improving international students' experiences in our classrooms and this goal transcended our individual content knowledge."

Our cohort included professionals from Chemistry, English, History, Social Sciences, International Education and from a variety of faculty and administrative positions, including two professors who also serve as directors, one senior fellow, two teaching specialists, and one education specialist. We sought to include members who hold leadership roles in their undergraduate programs (directors of large enrollment first year general education courses; program leads responsible for training 30–50 graduate teaching assistants each year, and so on) and on convening participants with a range of experience with intercultural pedagogy, different disciplines and levels of undergraduate teaching. Five of the participants took on co-authoring responsibilities on this chapter.

4. Key Design Elements of the Interdisciplinary Faculty Cohort

4.1. Establishing a Shared and Explicit Focus

We started the intercultural pedagogy cohort with the goal of reflecting on how international students navigate our classrooms and what we can do to improve their learning experiences and meet

their needs. The primary objective of the interdisciplinary faculty cohort was to help participants become better facilitators of intercultural interactions in their classes. The 2017 report issued by the Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education [25] urges attention to how we define, train for, and assess undergraduate teaching effectiveness:

A growing body of research also indicates that significant student growth occurs when colleges provide structured opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds to learn and practice the skills and capacities needed to create real connection. This only happens when institutions leverage curricular and cocurricular activities that promote meaningful and sustained student dialogue and interaction. To do this most effectively, faculty must be prepared to become facilitators as well as instructors. (p. 14)

The importance of well-designed, relevant, and facilitated interactions cannot be underestimated in serving all students in cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal development. As faculty, we must design our learning environments so that they intentionally structure and value “active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with differences in people, in the curriculum, in ways that increase one’s awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions” [26]. The selected bibliography we provided and reading we assigned, the structuring of the retreats and meetings, and the course observations were geared towards modeling facilitation, focusing participants’ attention on how effective facilitation is designed and delivered, the experience of an effectively and intentionally facilitated group, and the reality that groups do not magically or naturally facilitate themselves.

We intentionally left space for participants to determine their own priorities and pressing needs related to their work with the cohort, but we sought to build a solid structure within which to explore and develop. As one participant reflected, “One thing that made a big difference was our mentors’ understanding of practical, realistic changes that could be made within our course and lab parameters. They didn’t ask us to do a complete overhaul of our course but rather guided us into thinking about small incremental changes that could have a large impact on our students’ experiences and learning.”

Lee and Smith understood that making course revisions for the purpose of engaging diversity can seem daunting and amorphous to overcommitted faculty who are already doing innovative and amazing work with students. Our focus was on developing the mindset to value diversity as an asset, not a deficit or challenge, and to share concrete strategies from universal instructional design that are adaptable and feasible to implement without radically overhauling one’s course content.

4.2. Create Clear Roles and Expectations

Well-functioning teams need clarity of purpose and clear expressions of responsibilities to enable members to contribute effectively. This can be deceptively challenging—perhaps especially so with faculty who value personal autonomy—given that clarity and responsibility must also permit some flexibility and capacity for modification as needed. The team achieved this balance during the semester by having responsibilities clarified at the beginning of the process within a “letter of understanding” (LOU) provided to the faculty mentors. The LOU constituted a signed formal agreement. The LOU was preceded by in-person meetings between the faculty mentors and the two principle facilitators/coaches who verbally expressed the main components of the LOU and what the faculty mentors could bring individually and collectively to the team. These initial processes enabled the necessary member responsibilities and flexibility to emerge in a well-balanced manner.

Specifically, the LOU outlined the following essential objectives and responsibilities:

1. Develop an awareness of the international student (IS) experience in their classrooms, including the contributions they make to learning and the challenges they face;
2. Examine their own approach to and assumptions about diversity in their classrooms through the lens of intercultural pedagogy and universal design;

3. Expand and implement inclusive teaching practices and strategies in their course(s) that promote integration and engagement of all students and meet course, department, and institutional learning objectives (Letter of Understanding).

Embedded within the LOU is the acknowledgement of the value that international students bring to postsecondary classrooms; the expertise that faculty mentors bring regarding intercultural pedagogy for all students; the contextual realities of specific courses, departments, and student groupings which necessitate certain levels of customization; the important expectations of time commitments and two-way observations (to observe and be observed as teachers thus implying the interconnectedness and transference of much that we do or can do); and, the reality that faculty mentoring can be a longer term proposition with evaluative and consultative work possibly extending to three semesters (2018–19). Also, and of great importance, the LOU expressed a strong, meaningful collaborative tone that included co-planning and the co-delivery of intercultural pedagogy cohort meetings. Furthermore, the LOU included intellectually engaging elements such as intercultural pedagogy and universal design each of which are rooted in rigorous scholarship.

In addition to establishing clear objectives, the Letter of Understanding outlined explicit expectations and deliverables. Each participant agreed to:

1. Commit 5 hours per month as a core contributor to the cohort;
2. This includes preparing for and participating in meetings with faculty/instructor participants; observing and being observed; writing in the shared reflection journal, and attending an end-of-year retreat with other cohort participants;
3. Participate in follow-up evaluations and consultations in 2018–19 (Letter of Understanding).

With the parameters of intercultural pedagogy cohort mentoring articulated within the Letter of Understanding, it was possible to move forward in establishing intercultural pedagogy cohort group retreats and regular biweekly meetings. The first retreat in January 2018 provided time (2.5 hours) for all cohort group members to be introduced to each other, to model and discuss ideas for establishing student-to-student interaction on the first day of a course, to review/discuss team member roles and goals, and to discuss particular contexts of the chemistry class and labs. The retreat commenced with an ice-breaker exercise that invited each team member to share: “1. something you’re good at; 2. direction you’re headed in; 3. something that bugs you; 4. something you’re committed to; and, 5. one of your quirks.”

These items proved effective in having newly acquainted team members find multiple points of commonality (such as common quirks and commitments) as well as laughter. Establishing team member rapport through this first agenda item enabled us to see the value of such an activity for cross-national students within our classrooms. It also had the effect of making the retreat—and the team as a whole—become a shared enterprise among all team members. With the development of team rapport came the ability to discuss classroom contexts, teaching and learning challenges, and pedagogical techniques more substantively. Members became increasingly free to suggest and challenge ideas with an underlying trust that was helpful when digging into specific classroom-focused questions and observations that otherwise could have produced defensive reactions. As Author 5 writes, “At the beginning of intercultural pedagogy cohort there was a clear emphasis on getting to know each other as people and having discussions about our experiences as educators and learners. Mutual respect, humor, and honesty came quickly and easily for our group. I believe this foundational relationship with each other was critical in the progress and success that intercultural pedagogy cohort had in our chemistry courses. These relationships allowed us to speak freely and candidly about our observations and experiences as well as giving and taking constructive criticism surrounding our courses. Furthermore, I’m confident that at any point in my career I could contact someone from this group and they’d be there to help. This type of long-lasting relationship is priceless.”

5. Unlearning Leading: Facilitation as a Shared Endeavor:

Given the importance of facilitation and interaction to intercultural pedagogy, Lee and Smith wanted the group to model and be a laboratory to experiment with facilitation skills, and experience purposeful interactions and multiple roles in our group. Rather than read and talk about facilitation and groups, we wanted participants to experience them and to reflect on the experiences. This took some unlearning.

In the beginning, Lee and Smith created the agenda, selected content, assigned preparation and led the biweekly sessions. After 2–3 meetings, they realized they were focused on implementing the detailed plan for the session, and moving things along at the right pace, versus being truly open to or engaging what was happening and emerging live in the moment. This dynamic is very familiar in traditional models of teacher-learner: such a premium is placed on having expertise, on being prepared and knowing your stuff, on ensuring that no one's time is wasted, on transmitting your expertise to others. Lee's research has consistently challenged this default and often implicit notion of the professor as expert and teaching as transmission. Nonetheless, it was easy to mindlessly fall back on it as a deeply ingrained and comfortable way to make sense and order out of a novel situation and a new group of people who brought different disciplines and levels of experience and expertise regarding our primary topics.

As Smith writes, "It was a reminder that application of these skills is not always easy. I learned that being explicit and intentional (those words again) about modeling intercultural skills and approaches whenever possible is as valuable as the act of modeling itself. Being mindful of when, how and to what end these skills are being used increases their effectiveness and heightens awareness of their value and function."

After the first two sessions, Lee and Smith changed course and invited each of the other members to take a turn facilitating, and offered each facilitator pre-session support in selecting a focus, crafting the agenda, and finding relevant scholarship or resources. The result of this shift from a facilitator-led to a co-facilitation model was an increase in agency and a more substantial and shared ownership. As Smith writes, this decision also allowed her, as a facilitator/learner, "to participate in a different kind of way—coming prepared to support/discuss the topic more deeply and with a different perspective as during these weeks I was not in charge of time-keeping, making decisions about sticking with the plan or veering into other territory (tangents), etc. I believe this turn-taking of leadership made the work more meaningful, more engaging, and more practical."

6. Biweekly Meetings

Regular, biweekly meetings were essential to our cohort's outcomes. The consistency of meeting every other week, in addition to course observations and some scattered 1-1 meetings in between those team meetings, enabled us time to build rapport, allow group agenda and dynamics to emerge and settle.

Leopold noted: "Smith and Lee were very open to making the cohort amenable to general chemistry. They were aware and responsive to the fact that every course and instructor has different needs and aspirations. They did a great job at providing ideas, resources, and weighing in with their expertise to establish structure and guidance. I felt very supported throughout the cohort." In the early meetings of the cohort, there was a clear emphasis on getting to know each other through discussions about our experiences as educators and learners. We did ice breakers at our opening retreat, asking one another about basic, core values related to teaching and learning and our disciplines. At our biweekly meeting, we often began with a lightning round, 'what is on your mind?' or, 'what's a high/low this week?' Sometimes, responses focused on our undergraduate courses, but not always. One of our meetings was soon after the mass shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School and several of us used the opening round to process that event. This time, which we invested in building a foundational relationship with each other, was critical in the progress and success that our cohort had and its impact

on our respective teaching. The group became a place where we could speak freely and candidly, and challenge and coach one another about our observations and experiences.

Delehanty Kelly, “Often when teaching experts advise a professor to do something in a particular way (e.g., have the students do self-reflection assessing why they scored what they scored on exam 1; another example is to spend time on the “get to know each other” stuff which is often perceived as fluff), it is rejected without consideration because there isn’t time in the syllabus to cover the content as it is. Our ability to meet as a group and discuss different pedagogical moves meant that we could suggest but then also push back, negotiate and accommodate.”

7. Developing Rapport—In Class and in Our Cohort

Given the importance of positive relationships in creating and sustaining productive learning for all students, it is not surprising that establishing rapport emerged as a dominant theme within our team and for our classrooms. Rapport is complex and dynamic, involving different groupings and combinations of collaborative relationships (student-to-student, faculty-to-student, student-to-faculty, and faculty-to-faculty). We also experienced different ways in which rapport could be established; sustained; disrupted; and, used pragmatically to improve teaching, learning, accountability, and reflective practice as teachers.

Leopold observed how establishing student-to-student rapport was an important prerequisite to engaging complex academic tasks and maintaining group accountability: “One change . . . was establishing rapport between students. The general chemistry labs rely heavily on group work so it was especially important to us that groups were functioning well. Based on our intercultural pedagogy cohort conversations surrounding group work we identified that students need to spend time getting to know each other before they are asked to complete a demanding experiment or task together. Additionally, group members need something to hold each other accountable for the shared group work. Based on these ideas, we developed a group policy activity for groups to complete together on their first day. This activity focuses on students sharing positive and negative group experiences with each other and then establishing group norms or expectations such as, how will your group deal with inevitable conflict, how important is it that everyone fully participates, etc. This activity [also] encourages students to share experiences and synthesize something together so they feel safe, supported, and have a foundation as they move forward together. However, groups are dynamic so we asked students to periodically reflect on how their group is functioning together throughout the semester.”

Poch elaborates on the importance of our group’s rapport in his willingness to unpack and rethink the concept of rapport in his classes. “I am confident that I will continue to use some of the techniques that help to develop student-to-student rapport (not just rapport between me and students) and relationship building early in the course experience and methods that work to sustain positive group dynamics and outcomes. In my teaching practice, I tend to place emphasis on my teaching and advising relationship with students (learning their names, course-related interests, etc.) rather than also facilitating student-to-student relationship building. As I observed one of my colleagues teach a first-day class session with a much larger course enrollment than my own, I was impressed by her ability to have students engage one another in dialogue around where they are from, what they believe they are good at, and something that is unique or quirky about themselves (these questions were modeled and used in our first intercultural pedagogy cohort meeting as an icebreaker). While this was a relatively simple task to engage, it was impressive to observe how many of her cross-national students engaged it meaningfully and used it to develop initial conversations about how to organize their table teams and communicate effectively with each other.”

8. Peer Classroom Observations

One of the unfortunate realities of faculty life is that we easily become teaching loners who rarely if ever see our peers teach or invite them to observe us for purposes other than required

evaluation. Teaching isolation tends to produce sameness over time even among very good teachers. Classroom observations, followed by a meaningful sequence of engagement activities, were pointed to by all cohort members as a critical element of the peer mentoring. As spelled out in the Letter of Understanding, each participant was required to observe and to be observed. These observations were preceded by an opportunity to focus guests' attention on particular issues or instructional elements, and were followed by debriefing discussions and reflective journal notes from each member. It is important to emphasize that observations serve both parties, and are not one-directional or for the observer. Stepping out of your own classroom and observing another enables you to occupy a detached stance while thinking about how teaching and learning unfold in a live moment. Using the "classroom as text" Lee [27] and Stenberg and Lee [28] allowed each of us to better understand—through direct experience—the particular facets and conditions of our respective classroom environments and dynamics. The observations enabled us to grapple with issues and challenges that surfaced in our discussions at a more nuanced and informed level. Other benefits of peer observations were observing how some of the practices we talked/read about were applied in different ways across courses and the transfer of new ideas into one another's teaching practices.

Seeing a colleague teach and navigate the multiple dynamics of a classroom is very valuable. Also, having one's own teaching observed by members of the group and receiving candid feedback from them proved valuable on a range of questions. Our observation notes and discussions led each of us to refine our understanding of and approach to sustaining cross-national student interactions over time, facilitating functional teams and groups in our classes, and assessing the impact of students' interactions effectively. Observing these issues and discussing these questions in relation to a peer's classroom enabled participants to think critically about their own current practices. In some instances, the observations and subsequent discussions led participants to substantively modify their teaching and learning environments, and in other instances they caused more modest adjustments or reinforced the value of some current teaching approaches.

As Delehanty Kelly writes, "Getting into each other's classrooms is key for me. We resist it so much (I was a part of another learning community and they'd removed that component of the community from it because they'd gotten so much push back from past cohorts) and sometimes it is poorly done BUT it is so important. It gives us something to discuss which is real and not just the magical thinking of what we hope goes on in our classroom. It also allows for us to see the very subtle moves that an instructor can make that change an environment or a moment."

Poch underscored these benefits and the use of classroom observations as a way of productively challenging the status quo. "Personally, I need to have my teaching practices and assumptions about learning challenged productively by peers who can motivate me to further innovate or adjust what I do to facilitate learning among all students. The intercultural teaching cohort became a place of active observation and dialogue across disciplinary/subject contexts where teaching-related strategies, successes, and shortfalls were shared collegially by members invested in student success."

Leopold described her increased skill and confidence at distinguishing what is and is not working well by using course observations and not only relying on student performance on exams, quizzes, and lab reports. Leopold also identified the observations as a high impact element of the cohort. She describes the internal shift that occurred as she began observing "as a teacher" rather than "as a student". "I have obviously participated as a student in numerous classrooms but observing a classroom based on teaching practice and students' interactions was something new to me. At first, I often found myself naturally reverting to 'student mode' and focusing on the content versus focusing on how the students were interacting with the content and their peers. By observing multiple classrooms throughout the semester in all different disciplines, I was able to become a reflective teacher. A skill that will benefit me and my colleagues long after the cohort."

One participant reflected: "being observed occurred on the first day of the semester when a member of the group sat in on my class was a critical moment for me. It was a classic example of the Hawthorne effect—the person being observed changes his/her behavior because of the observation.

I handed out the syllabi and hadn't really thought through what I'd do with it, but because I was being observed and didn't want to do something really boring (read it on your own) or not do something (you are responsible for knowing the content, I'll quiz you next class period), I, on a whim, had the students pair up, read a section and then report out one or two items from their section that stood out as important. It ended up being an effective and engaging way to approach the syllabus on the first day."

Poch explains: "I believe that the feedback from observations of two of my class sessions by my intercultural pedagogy cohort peers taught me to be far more mindful of how much and how long I speak in relationship to students being actively engaged in the course. I am grateful that one of my colleagues in particular was honest and generous enough to call me out on speaking too long during one of my class sessions. While students were engaging with the course content at the beginning of one of the class sessions, the longer I spoke the more they disconnected and rapport was lost. From this I am far more conscious of breaking up the class time with timely group engagements around a question or 'problem' that historians can engage to better understand the multicultural past of the United States. This is better pedagogical practice in general, but it also provides far more time for students to engage in cross-national interactions rather than losing those opportunities to prolonged instructor lecturing. This underscored the value of a team of trusted colleagues who were not afraid to share candidly with one another after classroom observations and to support the improvement of teaching and learning."

Delehanty Kelly explains: "observing the TAs in Chem Lab allowed me to witness the TA who encouraged a group of students who were taking questions following a presentation to 'huddle' so as to work together (quasi privately) to come up with an answer to her question. This one move changed the dynamic of this group's interaction and set the tone for the rest of the groups during the Q & A period. I noticed it because I was in observation mode, trying to figure out 'what creates positive interaction in groups?' I recorded it in the shared reflection journal. I was able to talk more about it with the team later. Because of all of this attention, I later used it in my own teaching."

Furthermore, all participants emphasized the importance and integral nature of the post observations activities: observers were responsible for writing in our shared reflection journal; we discussed observations and reflections from multiple perspectives at subsequent meetings. Leopold writes, "Reading and discussing the other faculty members' observations of the same classroom was a huge learning experience for me. It was so helpful to read their observation and reflect on what they were paying attention to and why. I remember one discussion during our meetings we focused on what does inclusivity and exclusivity look like in our classrooms and labs. These conversations made me think about what learning looks like and feels like and how students are engaging with each other and how they establish rapport? These details matter especially for international students and allowed me to hone my observational skills."

Delehanty Kelly adds, "Having observations followed by a shared write up was also key. It held the observer as writer accountable for framing it in a productive way and also provided an ongoing story line for the readers who were not in the classroom or who were there but had their own vantage point. Finally, coming together post observation allowed us to explain why we did certain things and/or to ask to hear the instructor's perspective on something. This felt especially important for the chemistry professor who had the space to explain the obstacles she felt."

9. The Value of Exploring Campus Resources

One of the expectations specified in the LOU was that participants would explore relevant resources on campus, whether those were workshops, programming, or people who had particular expertise. We provided a list of possibilities, and invited the whole group to highlight and add resources, and the LOU required people to explore a few and to assess their impact or value in our collective reflective journal. This expectation reflects two values of our program. First, our core purpose and objective was to facilitate interactions. Interactions are at the core of effectively engaging diversity in our classes. Second, we wanted not only to build instructors' knowledge and promote new or refined skills but also to have them experience and reflect on various interactions. Therefore,

we focused on both supporting/facilitating and reflecting on a range of interactions, just as one should do in a classroom seeking to promote intercultural skills. We required interactions with faculty colleagues, between faculty and research on engaging diversity in classrooms, between faculty and relevant campus resources, and between faculty and student voices.

The international student panel that three of our participants attended and that Delehanty Kelly helped to organize was a critical moment for all. The students' stories and reflections offered a voice, a face, and a window into their world, their experiences in our classes and enhanced the motivation to create inclusive environments at a new level. As Leopold writes, "It's one thing to learn from publications and books but another to learn through conversations. I value learning directly from people and hearing their narrative and experiences. This is one reason why I like panels so much."

10. Key Takeaways: What Stuck? What Did You Learn? What Are You Better at or More Confident about Now?

At the conclusion of the semester, Lee and Smith invited participants to share reflections about their most significant takeaways and the key outcomes of their participation in the cohort. Embedded in many of the comments was recognition of the reality that every classroom is comprised of unique combinations of students which necessitate certain levels of customization and also possibilities for the nuanced use of some common teaching and learning strategies. There were also expressions of confidence that we each have valuable areas of personal expertise that are manifested in our observations of teaching and learning and the productive sharing of those observations within our cohort group. With the sharing of our respective areas of expertise came deep learning from one another—meaningful reciprocal learning that enabled each of us to carry forward new perspectives and techniques for teaching and learning among highly diverse students. The comments below are reflective of these themes and many others that were shared.

Delehanty Kelly: "I learned that the more one tries different things with different groups of students (and if you are a reflective practitioner) the more you learn. I know this because in this group I discovered expertise that I have that I hadn't ever articulated before. I also learned it because I continued to learn from my peers when I observed their teaching and engaged with them about their approaches to different issues in the classroom. Just like we know that we need to let individuals self-identify about their culture and identity, we need to assess every group of students as unique and needing a customized approach. This means that we need to be continuously engaging in the multiple levels of thought so that we can create an environment that works for the students in front of us. This comes from awareness and reflection, both of which occur when you observe, are observed, write about it and later gather to discuss."

Leopold: "Establishing relationships with such great mentors and educators was especially meaningful to me during the cohort being that I am at the very start of my career. I learned so much from our course observations, discussions, and workshops and often found myself trying to absorb as much information as possible. Even as a teacher, the learning never stops. Because of the cohort, I have a newfound awareness of international students' needs and experiences in and outside our classrooms. Throughout our time together I was able to develop the confidence to address these needs and honor IS experiences to create a learning environment that focuses on positive intercultural interactions along with chemistry."

Smith: "Being part of a learning community with such committed educators was a critical moment for me. Period. Every interaction was an opportunity to gain new insight, deepen my understanding and expand my perspectives of how teaching and learning works in different contexts. Being part of conversations where we grappled with all manner of issues related to the classroom and supporting intercultural learning: participation, what makes a group effective/ineffective; interventions when groups are not functioning well (and feelings about intervening); behaviors that are explicitly and intentionally inclusive, strategies for effectively communicating with non-native

English speakers, gender inequities in higher education, and so much more, influenced my work in this space moving forward.”

Poch elaborates on this point that a learning community of teachers works to bring insight, nuance, and confidence to the way in which one approaches teaching. “Several aspects of my teaching changed for the better following the intercultural pedagogy cohort experience. The changes were not direct replications of what my colleagues do, but instead are modifications or ‘riffs’ on what they do to fit my particular course design, students, and my personality as a teacher. In particular, given what I learned and observed from my colleagues, I will continue to use student teams with greater effectiveness as well as articulating with greater clarity why such teams are valuable within and outside of the context of the course.”

11. Conclusions

The faculty learning cohort described throughout this article was successfully guided by a shared and explicit focus; clear roles and expectations for participants; shared facilitation of cohort meetings; development of positive rapport between cohort members and between students; classroom observations that served all cohort members—not just the observer; and the effective use of relevant campus resources. As our group proceeded over a semester, we discovered that humility and generosity were also key ingredients for successful outcomes. That is, all cohort members—regardless of title or academic rank—developed deep respect for what each member contributed in terms of experience, perspective, and commitment to serving all students. Furthermore, each member shared their perspectives regularly and generously through written observations and verbally within scheduled bi-weekly meetings. The combination of clear roles, common commitment to inclusive teaching and learning, and sincere collegial respect enabled deep learning to occur about teaching and learning and the effective use of teaching strategies customized to our unique classroom contexts. As participant comments indicate throughout this article, we became better facilitators of intercultural interactions within our classes as a result of our time together.

These successes were not automatic or always immediate. Sometimes we made some substantive adjustments as our cohort proceeded during the semester. For example, Lee and Smith adjusted the ways in which they planned and facilitated meetings by sharing those roles with cohort members. This change increased ownership in a shared agenda and accountability to one another in what teaching and learning-related topics were discussed and how they were discussed. These shared roles and responsibilities were transferrable to classrooms as faculty participants experienced the value of shared learning and facilitation practices that could then be replicated with students.

Some other changes that we experienced were not necessarily adjustments but instead were associated with the relational development of the cohort members. During a single semester, members became increasingly comfortable with productively questioning teaching practices and assumptions, approaches to assessing learning and course effectiveness, and the ways in which we purposefully form or modify the composition of intercultural student groups within our classrooms. Rapport-building among persons of different disciplinary backgrounds takes time, trust, and the provision of sufficient facilitative guidance to enable members to find important points of common commitment and affinity. This became one of the strongest and most important parts of our cohort experience by intention and design.

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