

*ACCOUNTING OUR ROLE AS INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS OFFICERS IN
DISMANTLING RACISM, ENSURING DIVERSITY & INCLUSION*

[\(Audio Recording\)](#)

SESSION DESCRIPTION

All higher-ed institutions are faced with the critical responsibility of creating and ensuring more diverse and inclusive environments where people with profound differences are empowered to perform their best. What role do business officers play in these timely discussions and actions to dismantle racism and facilitate diversity and inclusion initiatives? Join this dynamic and interactive discussion to identify challenges in our field, help us account for our roles, and initiate change.

FACILITATORS

- Kenneth Munroe
Manager of Finance and Accounting, Education Abroad and Overseas Campuses
Temple University
- Sandee Huang
Director of Finance and Operations, International Center
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BREAKOUT ROOMS

Goals

1. Identify as many challenges as possible that occur in your area related to student and faculty/staff diversity, inclusion and/or racism issues (**challenges are listed in red text in the breakout notes**)
2. Brainstorm ways to meet address the challenges -- through HEIBO? Your home institution? Community organizations? Personal responsibility? Other possibilities? (**action items are listed in green text in the breakout notes**)

Rooms

- **Human Resources Room**

Example topics: hiring policies, supporting search committee decisions, staff support, inclusive culture

Moderator: Tami Jauert, HR Director

Global Programs and Strategy Alliance, University of Minnesota

- **Inclusive Culture Room**

Example topics: organizational and office culture, structure change, mentoring

Co-moderators:

Missy Peterson, Director of Finance and Operations,

Global Programs and Strategy Alliance, University of Minnesota

Wil Biddle, Associate Director, Administrative Services

Office of International Affairs, University of Maryland

- **Student Support Room**

Example topics: supporting minority students, educating students at home campus, scholarships and other support to help underrepresented students go abroad

Moderator: Ben Fan, Director, Budgets and Personnel

Rutgers Global, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

- **Program Development Room**

Example topics: diversifying site selections and program goals, on-site support

Moderator: Miko McFarland, Executive Director, Education Abroad & Exchanges

International Center, University of Kentucky

BREAKOUT ROOM NOTES

Human Resources Room

What are some of your own personnel experiences related to racism and/or inequity within HR Practices?

- We realized - after it was pointed out to us - that we were not posting positions to be inclusive. Really weren't posting everywhere we should have been.
- Assistance is needed with HR in our offices and in other countries - some experiences when Directors are Women - we get complaints with their leadership styles - sexist - need to identify way to support staff and training on how to not making assumptions

What is one thing, from your perspective and/or experience, if changed, would make a significant impact to move forward?

- Would like to get to a point where people don't even think about race or ethnicity when looking at candidates
- Prepping search committees on implicit bias and making sure everyone is on the same page around what skills are needed for the job
- Actively recruit, put money into, move the staff and faculty population toward a vision of looking like the student body
- Once we recruit diverse staff, we need to retain them
- Provide the correct level of support; move from disadvantaged to advantaged
- Share - be willing to learn, listen and change; we all need to change
- Make them diverse staff feel safe and valued
- Search candidates; training or conversation on what the process will be when there is a tight tie between a minority and non-minority, rubric scoring should include points for diversity

What are key action items from this discussion that we as business officers could do either at work or in our personal lives to make a positive move forward?

- Opening up the conversation; (Being) right up front - we don't understand, we are not going to get this right, help us learn
- Training for search committees
- Identifying what the candidate can bring to the institution (diversity, etc.) and weight the criteria using a rating scale, but clearly identify the criteria
- Having a goal of more than one minority person in the application pool and interview pool, identify what the pool should look like
- Diversity language in job descriptions
- Inclusive questions during the interview process- the wording can mean a lot
- Providing the correct support for minorities; be willing to ask what they need
- Sharing resources: posting places, questions for inclusivity
- Addressing the pipeline (time to give opportunity despite past mistakes)
- Developing mentorship programs - start with student workers
- Improving retention

- Creating resource lists; restaurants, activities around campus
 - Creating communities - help support each other, networking events (mix staff & students - help with the mentorship and build relationships)
 - Creating mentorships - pairing with a mid-level manager; help/coach, tips and tricks, create a trusted relationship
 - Ask, what they need to help acclimate
 - Sample: at UMBC Human Resources has a link to [New Employee Resources](#) both on and off campus, i.e. there is a link to Extending beyond campus which includes Things to Do, etc. There is also a Welcome to UMBC event each year for new faculty and staff to acquaint them with groups on campus and allow for questions to the President and Provost
- Providing education to current staff; inclusive practices
 - Improving outreach for ISSS - partner with the community to offer events for variety of students, staff and faculty
 - Supporting and encouraging a unified group - happy hour; come together, share culture, value stories

Inclusive Culture Room

Identify challenges that occur in achieving inclusive culture with faculty/staff/ students around international education:

- Thinking of students personal needs (hair, exercise, etc.) for incoming study abroad and international students
- Lack of support for diverse students who study abroad; their experience may be different
 - Will I be welcomed in that country?
 - Some have better experiences abroad?
 - What is the comfort level and how can we address the reality of how welcoming countries will be for them?
- Feeling unsafe – if they are unsafe can they quickly get out of that situation? Make sure you take precautions - international buddy for minority students
- Meeting students' needs - analyze students going abroad compared to our student body
 - What type of programming are we offering?
 - What are the costs, since many of our students have financial need. Can we add more scholarships?

- Some students don't believe they are worthy of a scholarship. How do we empower students to tell their stories and be proud of who they are?
- Identifying programs for specific students, example: an all-women's program for a female Muslim student that provides a place for prayer, then working with parents
- Talking to parents or educating students on determining their fit for a study abroad program; (have students take more ownership with submitting their FAFSA, learn the independence needed for study abroad)

What are you doing at your offices to start these conversations?

- Intentionally started looking for more diverse staff so students can identify themselves. When joined office, the office was 90% white female, this didn't seem right as we are trying to get more diverse students abroad
 - Identified different people to support different groups
 - Offered different scholarships for different groups
 - Need better job to reach out to those students
 - Trying to get students that don't even walk into the office.
 - Have difficulty getting students to apply for scholarships
 - Partnered with FEA (Fund for Education Abroad) recently to help attract students interested in our programs. More students apply through them than the program directly.

Suggested solutions/actions:

- Solving to reach parents or educate students on how to talk to them on studying abroad
- Investing --put our money where your mouth is with scholarships, programming etc.
- Assisting students to apply for scholarships supporting them
 - Partner in FEA (DIS)
 - Include scholarship info with their application material so they don't have to apply again? Reuse the essay. (HECUA)
- Providing international buddies for study abroad students who want to feel more comfortable throughout entire time abroad, not just pre-departure, but as an on-going resource.
- Addressing the students who are entitled to study abroad anywhere to help include students who are struggling with feeling included
 - Need "Real Talk" conversations
 - Utilize grad students and faculty
 - Sometimes you need to adapt to a new culture to stay safe (i.e. sexual

orientation)

- Hosting “Real Talk” roundtables about traveling abroad
 - Best people to talk about this are students who have been abroad, grad assistants
 - Safe space for those conversations
 - Study Abroad Peer group
- Identifying emergency funds for international students
 - Provide other resources for students that don't have support
 - Financing help is great, but other resources would be helpful
- Meeting students where they are - where and when are we engaging with people?
- Approaching university leadership to identify funds to help faculty and scholars

Student Support Room

Underrepresented Populations

- In-bound: International students/scholar
- Out-bound: Domestic Student Study Abroad

What are some of the barriers for underrepresented students to study abroad?

- Culture
- Career
- Cost; we assume everyone can pay for their airfare, passport etc. - we need to come up with ways to help these students
- Unfamiliarity with Study Abroad. More inclined to try a short term program
- First- gen students
- Family - can be a big influence for SA - why would you want to go to a 3rd world country? You're in the greatest country so why would you want to leave?
- Faculty
- Fear - legal status (DAKA)
- Some specific scenarios:
 - When a student goes 'home' they are now recognized as an American (heritage study abroad students).
 - The home culture assumes you are no longer part of them
 - Culture shock after living in the U.S and then going to the home country

Action Items for HEIBO Steering and Standing Committees

- Preparing 'Best Practices' for minority groups - scholarship fund?
- Creating a sub-workgroup on Financial Aid Modelling focusing on how to effectively maximize financial aid/scholarship funding to boost participation by underrepresented students for study abroad

Action Items for your Institution/Office

- Acting as a super connector on campus to advocate and support students, example: As a study abroad professional, building a relationship with the folks in the Business Office/Financial Aid can make a huge difference in how students are supported and can eliminate some questions and issues that have come up. If you don't have a relationship with those folks, I'd encourage you to make one during this weird, more "down time" period!
- Creating innovate new programs, example: the Bridging Loan Program that the University of Minnesota is using that allows students to delay payments until their financial aid comes through or the program at Georgetown that uses a university credit card to buy student tickets (only for students with high financial need and will be receiving a refund from the university due to financial need)

Program Development Room

As program development administrators, we tend to only think about numbers and logistics, so how can we be more intentional about development programs with diversity, equity and inclusion in mind?

- Being intentional about our marketing and materials to promote programs, to be more inclusive with our imagery, content, etc.
- Designing and considering the structure of the programs.

It's important to create a feeling of community while on site, so let's unpack that with faculty-directed programs. How can we - as program development administrators - help faculty foster group dynamics that are more inclusive?

- Structuring programs in a way that forces students to sit with others, getting out and meeting new people
- Creating a set of common rules (or community standards) and program expectations that they all agree upon, perhaps even sign
- Offering independent activities - challenges for students with high financial needs, asked faculty to come up with lists of free activities in host cities

- Introducing a buddy system - create a responsibility system
- Hosting social events ahead of the program to help the new cohort meet each other and get acquainted before they travel on the program
- Providing cultural events fund to help all students participate and attend the event

It's interesting that we bring up the issue of program cost. At my own institutions, I sometimes struggle with challenging the assumption that - when we think about students who are traditionally underrepresented in education abroad participation - studying abroad is expensive and presents a barrier for students with high financial need. However, the solution is often to offer programs in parts of the world where cost of living is less expensive, but this isn't always where students are interested in going. Has anyone else had to navigate this and, if so, how did you overcome it?

- Why do we tend to lean toward service-learning in developing countries and other experiential learning opportunities in developed areas? Why do we focus on economics in London and why NOT offer a business program in Nigeria?
- There was an example of connecting Hispanic students to a Spanish-speaking program where they can explore their cultural heritage and make meaningful connections about their identity.