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The Equity Scorecard: A process for building institutional capacity to educate young men of color

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CHANGING PLACES

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HOW COMMUNITIES WILL IMPROVE
THE HEALTH OF BOYS OF COLOR

Edited by Christopher Edley Jr. and Jorge Ruiz de Velasco

With a foreword by Robert Phillips

Cover: The cover image was designed by Oakland, California–based printmaker and digital artist Favianna Rodriguez. Using high-contrast colors and vivid figures, her composites reflect literal and imaginative migration, global community, and interdependence. She has lectured widely on the use of art in civic engagement and the work of bridging community and museum, local and international. Rodriguez is coeditor of *Reproduce and Revolt!* with stencil artist and art critic Josh MacPhee (Soft Skull Press, 2008). An unprecedented contribution to the Creative Commons, this two-hundred-page book contains more than six hundred bold, high-quality black and white illustrations for royalty-free creative use. Rodriguez's artwork also appears in *The Design of Dissent* (Rockport Publishers, 2006), *Peace Signs: The Anti-War Movement Illustrated* (Edition Olms, 2004), and *The Triumph of Our Communities: Four Decades of Mexican Art* (Bilingual Review Press, 2005).

THE EQUITY SCORECARD

A Process for Building Institutional Capacity to Educate Young Men of Color

Frank Harris III, Estela Mara Bensimon, and Robin Bishop

ABSTRACT

This chapter frames postsecondary educational outcomes for men of color from the perspective of institutional accountability. It begins with a national statistical snapshot of the status of Black and Latino men in higher education. Following is a synthesis of the published research documenting the experiential realities of Black and Latino men in higher education, as well as programs and interventions that have been enacted nationally in response to the challenges that impede their participation and success. Highlighted are the ways that institutions target *students* as the point of intervention and overlook the ways that *educators* produce and reinforce outcome gaps for Black and Latino men. In response, the Center for Urban Education's Equity Scorecard is presented as a tool to foster a more evidence-based approach to improving the success of men of color in higher education. Using the Equity Scorecard as a guiding framework, the chapter provides institutions of higher education with the data tools and data practices to assess the status of male students of color on indicators of access, academic progress, academic attainment, and excellence. These tools enable college administrators and others to set specific benchmark goals to remove roadblocks and reduce equity gaps for male students of color in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Since 2005, a number of national reports have documented the "crisis of men of color" in higher education.[1] Professor Shaun R. Harper's (2006a) report on Black male students at public flagship universities was among the first to chronicle the status of Black men on key indicators of participation, success, and outcomes in higher education compared to the same measures for white men and Black women. He showed that Black men represented the same proportion of total college enrollment in 2002 as they did in 1976 (4.3 percent); that across all racial groups the gender gap in enrollment is greatest between Black men and women; that only 147 more doctorates were earned by Black men in 2003 than in 1977; that more than two-thirds (67.6 percent) of Black men do not graduate from college within six years; and that Black men have the lowest college completion rate among both sexes and all racial groups. "Higher education," Harper concluded, "is a public good that benefits far too few Black men in America" (ibid.: viii).

Similarly, in their article "The Vanishing Latino Male in Higher Education" professors Victor B. Saenz and Luis Ponjuan (2009) have documented the sociocultural factors that lead Latino males away from higher education and serve as barriers to their college participation and success. They point to financial pressures that result in low-wage and low-skilled jobs, military enlistment, and an overrepresentation in U.S. prisons to explain the declining participation of Latinos in higher education. A 2010 report from the College Board, *The Educational Crisis Facing Young Men of Color*, has warned that if current downward trends in educational attainment persist, the educational level of the American workforce will continue to decline and will be most noticeable by 2020—the year that President Barack Obama has set as the deadline for the United States to be first in the world in its college-educated proportion of the population.[2] Focusing on these and other reports about the crisis of men of color in higher education, our analysis addresses not simply the problem. Rather, it seeks to reframe the issue from the standpoint of educational equity to serve males of color more effectively.

The first section provides a statistical snapshot of the educational status of Black and Latino males. We highlight national data that document higher education patterns by race and ethnicity, gender, and finally by gender within race and ethnicity. Data within the latter category are scarce and more difficult to obtain, a finding that reinforces the need to address how or who is involved in the determination of which indicators are included in national and state-level data systems. As long as race and

gender are included merely as demographic descriptors of the population, assessing the state of equity for men of color on fine-grained indicators of success will be impossible. In the second section of the chapter we review how scholars of higher education interpret the "crisis of minority males" and point out that the chief response by institutions of higher education has been through student affairs programs that target students of color as the point of intervention.[3] Although these programs are necessary and go a long way in providing important academic and emotional support, it is doubtful that programs alone can dismantle the academic and cultural practices instituted over decades that make it possible for racial inequities to endure on college campuses.

In the third section we address the need to go beyond programs in seeking equity for minority males. We introduce the Equity Scorecard, an organizational learning tool that engages instructors, staff, and institutional leaders in a collaborative process of assessing gaps in educational outcomes and setting improvement targets to reach equity goals for racial and gender groups (Bensimon 2004; Bensimon et al. 2004; Bensimon, Rueda, Dowd, and Harris III 2007). The Equity Scorecard is different from typical campus interventions because it focuses on developing practitioners' contextualized awareness of inequities in educational outcomes, rather than on support programs for students, because it places practitioners in the role of researchers who collect, analyze, and interpret student-outcome data.[4] When practitioners have a heightened awareness of inequities and the reasons why they persist, they are more likely to take the actions necessary to eliminate them (Bensimon 2004). The data analysis practices that are part of the Equity Scorecard process enable practitioners to place their own institutional structures, policies, and practices under the microscope to determine how and why they might be failing to produce successful outcomes for students from specific racial/ethnic groups. Accordingly, in this section we describe the key principles of institutional change that have shaped the processes of implementing the Equity Scorecard, and we provide a prototype for an Equity Scorecard focusing on males of color.

Based on our research on the implementation of the Equity Scorecard at colleges and universities across the United States, our premise is that institutional and systemic change are more likely to happen when college leaders and instructors look for the causes of inequities in the domains of policy and practice that they control and can influence directly.[5] Most important, the Equity Scorecard process is designed to shift practitioners' attention away from what is wrong with students to what they, and their own institutions or departments, might be doing wrong or might be failing

to do at all. This shift in focus offers greater possibility for change than when the problem is framed as a consequence of factors that are beyond the influence of practitioners. Faculty will often attribute unequal outcomes to students' underpreparation. Although this may be an accurate perception, it is futile to dwell on students' past experiences. It is also harmful if inequities are rationalized as beyond the control of practitioners. We focus on what *is* within the control of educators in terms of changing their own practices to meet the needs and circumstances of men of color. The Equity Scorecard process empowers practitioners to locate themselves as agents in the process of creating positive academic outcomes for men and boys of color, to stop playing the blame game, and to become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

The following key points are made in this chapter:

· It is impossible to provide a comprehensive picture of college-going patterns for Black and Latino males on a national scale because of the lack of data on key indicators of student success (for example, year to year persistence, graduation, grade point average) that are disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender within race/ethnicity.

· As has often been the case with issues of racial equity in higher education, efforts to improve the college participation and success of minority males usually consist of compensatory or support programs carried out by student affairs personnel. Thus the issue is treated as a question of individual deficits rather than symptoms of structured inequality in the educational system.

· To improve outcomes for men of color in higher education, leaders and policymakers need to be more conscious of racial and gender disparities in student success and insist on equity in educational outcomes being treated as a matter of institutional accountability and responsibility.

THE STATUS OF MEN OF COLOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Data can be interpreted in different ways and sometimes convey contrasting messages. Some might look at college enrollment and degree attainment data and infer that U.S. higher education has made great strides with regard to equity. Perhaps is much to celebrate: After all, the number of people of color earning bachelor's degrees has increased more than 60 percent in just one decade, from 227,002 in 1996 to 369,730 in 2006 (Mikyung 2009). The numbers of master's, doctoral, and professional degrees

granted nationally has grown substantially from 1996 to 2006, and this growth is attributable largely to minorities (ibid.). Many minority groups are participating in higher education in record numbers. However, when these numbers are examined in context, two important themes emerge: (1) Black, Latino, and other students of color are not experiencing successful outcomes, as measured by enrollment and degree completion, in higher education comparable to those of their white counterparts; and (2) males are achieving at lower levels than females. Together, these themes underscore the need to examine ways to address the educational success of students of color generally—and males of color specifically—and to search for ways that institutions and systems can hold themselves accountable for these outcomes.

Although nearly all racial and ethnic groups have experienced growth in higher education achievement rates, the gap between groups in relation to the population is actually widening (Kelly 2005). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2009), while 14 percent of all white adults in the United States have not completed high school, this percentage jumps to 18 percent and 40 percent for Black and Latino adults, respectively. Conversely, 19 percent of white adults have completed a bachelor's degree, compared with 13 percent of Black adults and 10 percent of Latinos (figure 10.1).

Although it is not possible to track individual student progress at the national level, the best approximation involves combining measures of achievement at various levels to obtain a snapshot of how specific populations are progressing from high school graduation to college enrollment and ultimately to college graduation. At each milestone Black and Latino students tend to drop out in greater percentages than their white counterparts (Kelly 2005; Mikyung 2009), highlighting the importance of targeted college access and retention strategies as well as efforts to increase high school completion (figure 10.2).

Although racial inequities clearly exist within various measures of enrollment or performance in higher education, why focus specifically on *males* of color? Hasn't higher education—and education in general— long been concerned about equal treatment and performance of girls and women? The history of education in the United States contains many examples of the unequal treatment of females (AAUW 1991), and elements of traditional sexism surely continue to exist in various forms in education and within the larger society. Nonetheless, a marked trend has arisen since the early 1980s: women are consistently outpacing men in college enrollment and completion. In his 2008 study, *Educational Attainment and Economic Welfare*, postsecondary education policy researcher Thomas G.
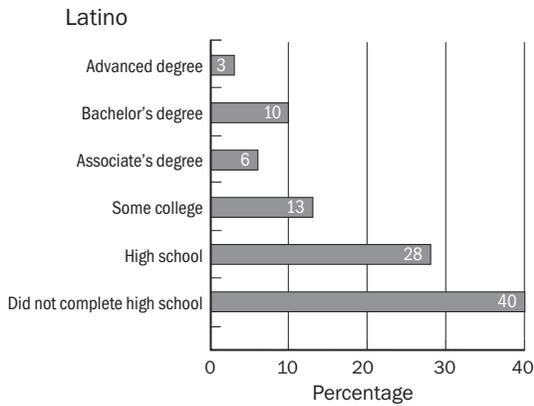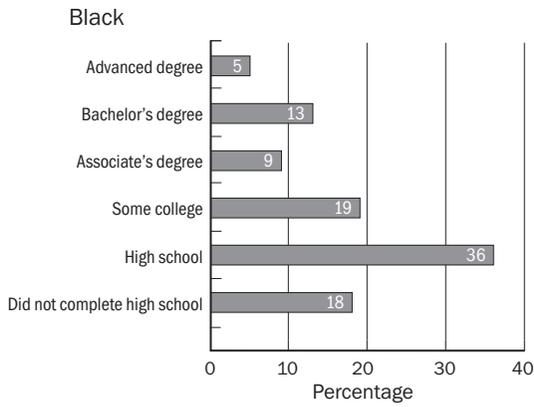
White

Education Level	Percentage
Advanced degree	10
Bachelor's degree	19
Associate's degree	9
Some college	17
High school	31
Did not complete high school	14

Percentage (0, 10, 20, 30, 40)

Black

Education Level	Percentage
Advanced degree	5
Bachelor's degree	13
Associate's degree	9
Some college	19
High school	36
Did not complete high school	18

Percentage (0, 10, 20, 30, 40)

Latino

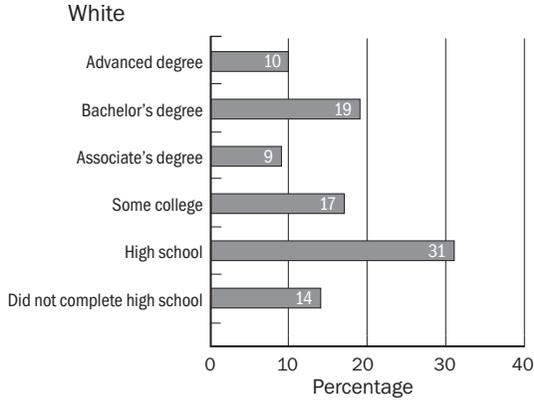| Education Level	Percentage
Advanced degree	3
Bachelor's degree	10
Associate's degree	6
Some college	13
High school	28
Did not complete high school	40

Percentage (0, 10, 20, 30, 40)

Figure 10.1. Highest educational attainment by race. *Source*: U.S. Census Bureau 2009.
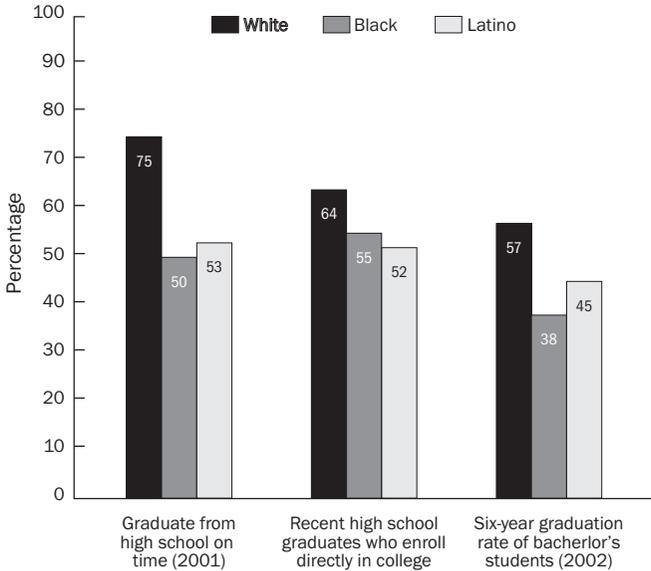
Figure 10.2. Educational milestones by race. *Note*: Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number. *Source*: Kelly 2005.

Mortenson has pointed out that young men are obtaining less education on average than their fathers, while young women are achieving higher education levels than their mothers. In 1977 women from all racial and ethnic backgrounds earned 46 percent of bachelor's degrees, *half* of all bachelor's degrees in 1981, and 57 percent by 2000—a rate that has held constant since (King 2010; Snyder, Dillow, and Hoffman 2007). Women made up 60.3 percent of graduate enrollment in 2007, the most recent year of national data collection (King 2010).

Although this gender gap exists across racial groups, it is most pronounced among groups that are the least represented in higher education. Consider these trends in U.S. higher education:

· Among Asian and Pacific Islander undergraduate students, eighty-seven males attend college for every hundred females.

· Among white students, eighty males attend college for every hundred females.

· Among Latino students, seventy-two males attend for every hundred females.

· Among Black students, only fifty-six males attend for every hundred females (Snyder, Dillow, and Hoffman 2007).
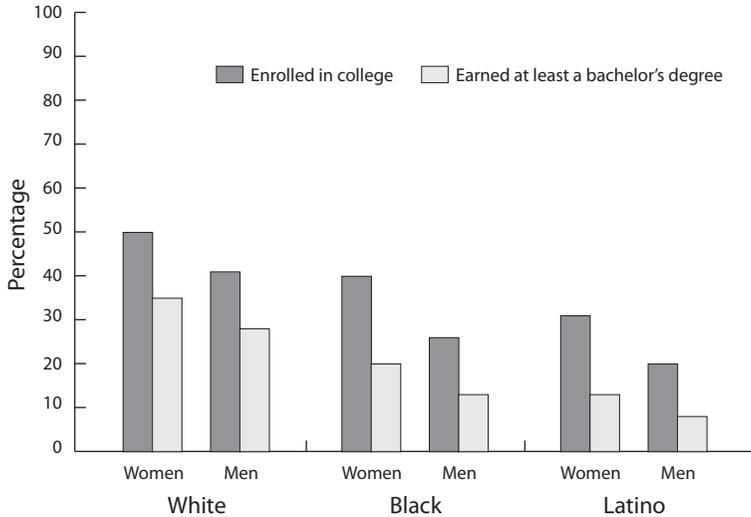
Figure 10.3. College enrollment and bachelor's graduation rates by race and gender, 2007. *Source*: Mikyung 2009.

It may be argued that these numbers exaggerate the disparity because they include students of all ages, and women are more likely than men to return to college as adults (King 2010). Therefore, other useful measures are the percentage of college-aged students, defined by the policy analyst Ryu Mikyung (2009) as persons ages eighteen to twenty-four who are enrolled in college and the number of younger adults ages twenty-five to twenty-nine who have completed a degree. Racial disparities—as well as the proportional gender gaps within these racial differences—become wider in the progression from college enrollment to completion (ibid.). Also noteworthy are the drastic differences across race. For example, although the difference in college enrollment and completion between Black males and females is conspicuous, the difference between Black males and white males is even more pronounced (figure 10.3).

It is also useful to examine college enrollment among the college-age population within racial/ethnic groups (figure 10.4). In 1987 nineteen of one hundred college-age Latino males were enrolled in college; in 2007 that number had increased to twenty-two of one hundred (a net increase of just three percentage points). Meanwhile, Latina women experienced a much larger increase, from seventeen of one hundred in 1987 to thirty-three of one hundred in 2007 (a net increase of sixteen percentage points). Over the same period Black male college-age attendance rose from twenty-
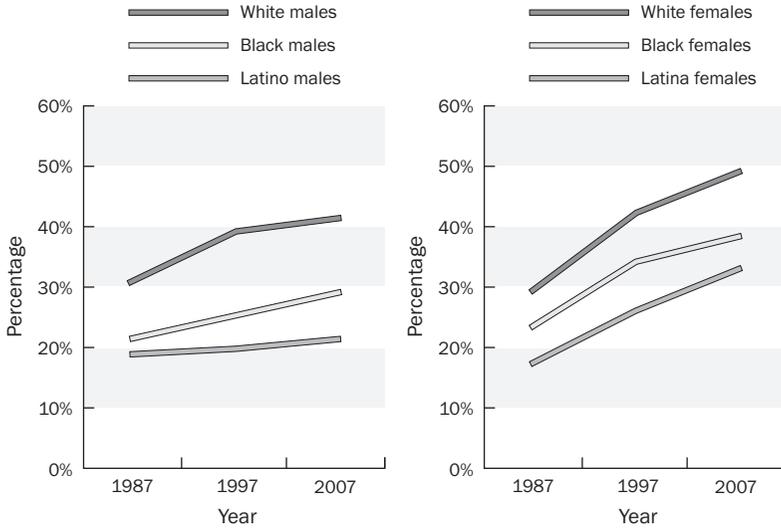
Figure 10.4. College enrollment of eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds by race and gender, 1987–2007. *Source*: Mikyung 2009.

three of one hundred to twenty-eight of one hundred (a net increase of five percentage points), while the college-enrollment rates for Black females jumped from twenty-three of one hundred to thirty-nine of one hundred (a net increase of sixteen percentage points). Black and Latino males *and* females are still grossly underrepresented in comparison to their white male and female counterparts, whose rates of college-age enrollment grew by ten and twenty percentage points, respectively (Mikyung 2009).

A 2010 report by Jacqueline King of the American Council on Education emphasized that these gender gaps have held steady over the past several years. Nonetheless, King points to one significant exception to this trend: Latinas are outpacing Latinos each year in attainment of bachelor's degrees, a pattern that may be due to overrepresentation of males among foreign-born Latinos. King notes that the gender gap is largest among the lowest economic quartile and that as income rises, the gender gap within each race shrinks (King 2010).

American Indian populations show similar trends, but data are often not collected at the same rate because of low representation in many geographic areas. Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander communities are grouped into the broader category of Asian Americans, who perform at the highest rates on many indicators, masking challenges facing these subgroups (College Board 2010). So although we make mention of Black and

Latino males explicitly, the Equity Scorecard (discussed in detail below) can be used to examine and address inequities for all males of color. We now turn to the scholarly literature on men of color in higher education and examine institutional responses to improve access and success for men of color.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND SUCCESS OF MEN OF COLOR

Men of color face many challenges as they seek to enroll and succeed in higher education. Few research studies focus exclusively on the experiences of Latino men. Thus much of what we present here is based on published studies and discussions of the experiences of Black male students. We also discuss initiatives designed to assist males of color. Despite the voluminous collection of empirical and anecdotal evidence documenting racial/ethnic and gender disparities that affect the educational and life success of boys of color, efforts to document the status of their enrollment and success in higher education have been slow to emerge (see, for example, Ferri and Connor 2005, Harper 2008, Mendez and Knoff 2003, Noguera 2003, Saenz and Ponjuan 2009, Schott Foundation for Public Education 2008, and Thomas and Stevenson 2009). This perspective is echoed by Harper, who declared: "Despite the consistent provision of empirical evidence regarding the status of black male students in K–12 education . . . similar effort[s] to document trends, issues, and inequities in postsecondary education . . . [have] not been undertaken" (Harper 2006a: 1).

Much of the published empirical research on the experiences of men of color attributes their lack of success to a host of institutional factors—namely, hostile campus climates, disengagement in educationally purposeful and enriching campus programs and activities (for example, leadership programs, study abroad, student organizations, and community service), and poor social support from faculty and peers. For example, based on data collected from nearly seven thousand Black students who completed the College Student Experiences Questionnaire (CSEQ), the professor Michael Cuyjet (1997) found that men reported lower levels than women on a range of campus engagement indicators, including reading the campus newspaper; attending a meeting, program, or event sponsored by a campus group; and serving on campus committees.

Predominantly white campus environments are consistently noted in the published literature as being especially hostile and not conducive to facilitating college success for Black and Latino males. There is an exten-

sive body of published empirical research that considers the racial climates of predominantly white institutions (for example, Allen 1992, Carter 1999, Chang 1999, Hurtado 1992, Hurtado et al. 1998). Among the conclusions drawn from these studies were that students of color perceived predominantly white campus environments as more racially hostile then their white peers, and racial tensions were likely on campuses where concern for individual students was not an institutional priority (Harper and Hurtado 2007). Although these studies did not focus exclusively on the experiences of men of color, men are just as likely as if not more likely than women to be negatively impacted by racially hostile campus climates.

A qualitative study by professors William A. Smith, Walter R. Allen, and Lynnette Danley (2007) has offered empirical evidence of the negative effects of hostile campus climates and racial microaggressions directed at Black men. Racial microaggressions are best understood as racialized "mini-assaults" ranging from "racial slights, irritations, and stigmatization to contentious classrooms, personal threats, or attacks on one's well-being" (ibid.: 554). Focus-group interviews conducted with thirty-six Black male students who were enrolled at five predominately white institutions and reportedly experienced racial microaggressions revealed a host of psychological and physiological consequences that threatened their achievement and success in college. These consequences included frustration, anger, anxiety, difficulty transitioning to college and integrating socially and academically, and a diminished sense of belonging.

The professor Kenneth Gonzalez (2002) studied racial disparities in a predominantly white institution and focused specifically on the experiences of Chicano men. The study revealed that, much like their Black male counterparts, these students also experienced marginalization and alienation that impeded their success in higher education. Gonzalez identified several factors situated in the predominantly white campus context that produced feelings of marginalization among the men in his study, such as the "lack of Chicano representation among the students, staff, and faculty on campus, the lack of political power these [Chicano] groups possessed, and the lack of Spanish spoken on campus" (ibid.: 202). Consequently, Gonzalez's participants reported feeling "out of place," "ignored," and "like foreigners" at their institution despite its close proximity to their predominantly Latino neighborhood and the high school they attended. These findings are largely consistent with those from other studies confirming the role of social support and campus racial climate in the college success of students of color.

A qualitative study by researchers Jana L. Schwartz, Jody Donovan, and

Florence Guido-DiBrito (2009) explored the intersection of race, ethnicity, and social class among Mexican American men enrolled at a predominantly white institution. Participants in this study linked their motivation to pursue higher education to their desires for upward social mobility, increased economic status, and hopes of greater financial security. The participants shared stories of personal and family sacrifices that had been made to support their pursuit of higher education; they also spoke of the challenges they faced while in college. One notable barrier the participants reported was the burden of having to work part time to support themselves and their families; this commitment limited their opportunities for meaningful campus involvement. Though not specific to men, the 2005 critical race study by researchers Daniel G. Solórzano, Octavio Villapando, and Leticia Oseguera of the educational progress of Latino/a students cited many challenges that negatively affect the attainment of bachelor's degrees by this group. These included their overrepresentation in two-year colleges that fail to facilitate transfer to four-year institutions, lack of adequate financial aid, and hostile campus racial climates.

Much of the published literature on men of color in higher education focuses exclusively on their underachievement and institutional factors that limit their success in college. In contrast, a rich body of empirical research by Harper (2004, 2006b, 2009) challenges these "deficit approaches" to studying Black male achievement in higher education. This literature calls for more studies that focus on the experiences of Black men who achieve academic success *despite* the aforementioned challenges that are often experienced by men of color on college campuses. Harper has offered two concerns regarding the continued exploration of the experiences of Black male collegians from a deficit perspective. First, a singular focus on Black male underachievement in higher education will reinforce racist and stereotypical perceptions, suggesting that these students are simply not capable of achieving success.

Second, he contends that important lessons and implications can be derived from exploring the experiences of Black men who have achieved academic success. Harper purposefully seeks to study participants whose undergraduate profiles and experiences are largely inconsistent with prevailing patterns of underachievement that are consistently reported in published research on Black male collegians. For example, he studies those whose grade point averages exceed 3.0; those who are elected by peers to prestigious leadership positions in both minority and mainstream student organizations; those who establish mentoring relationships with high-ranking campus officials; those who are awarded scholarships and other

recognitions for their academic achievement; and those who participate in educationally enriching activities like study-abroad programs, internships, and summer research opportunities.

Harper's (2008) study explored the acquisition of social capital and the role it played in the undergraduate experiences of thirty-two Black men enrolled across six predominantly white institutions who achieved successful outcomes. Social capital was defined as "relationships with institutional agents and the networks that afford access to resources and information for social progression and the accomplishment of goals" (ibid.: 1,033). Harper's participants attributed their acquisition of social capital to their campus leadership and out-of-class involvement. Moreover, the participants confirmed that the relationships they established with institutional agents were important and contributed to their having an enriching educational experience and their achievement of successful outcomes. Although these findings are promising, Harper questioned why so few Black men enrolled at predominately white institutions are afforded similar relationships and opportunities for college success.

The professor Bryan Warde (2008) has also looked at the experiences of men who achieve success in college and persist through baccalaureate degree attainment. Based on a qualitative study of eleven Black male graduate students, Warde reported that the participants attributed their educational success to several key factors. These include the belief that higher education was their only path toward upward social mobility, having adequate financial support to cover the costs of attendance, and having access to mentors to help navigate the challenges and rigors of college. Regarding mentors, the participants recalled times when teachers and administrators shared important information, guided them through difficult processes, made them aware of campus resources, and offered encouragement during critical junctures in their pathways toward the attainment of bachelor's degrees. The participants reported that mentors were especially important for overcoming academic challenges and financial pressures that threatened their persistence.

Most of the published research on the status of men of color in higher education prioritizes the experiences and outcomes of those who enroll at four-year institutions. Questions remain about how the experiences of these men differ from their counterparts enrolled at community colleges. This knowledge gap is somewhat problematic given that most students of color who participate in higher education begin their undergraduate studies at a community college. The experiences of men of color in community colleges were the focus of a 2010 policy study by Alissa Gardenhire-Crooks and

colleagues. The stated purpose was to explore and understand the influence of high schools, communities, student backgrounds, and identity-related factors in men of color's participation and engagement in community college. Drawing from qualitative data that were collected from eighty-seven African American, Hispanic, and Native American men at four community colleges, the study's authors reported several insightful themes.[6] For example, few of the participants pursued higher education immediately after high school, instead opting to pursue employment. Most reported being drawn to college to gain access to higher-paying jobs that would allow them to take better care of their families and improve their quality of life.

In addition, like men of color at predominantly white four-year institutions, participants in the MDRC study regularly encountered racial prejudice and stereotypes from college faculty and personnel, which they attributed to their race/ethnicity and gender. For instance, they reported routinely feeling unwelcomed because of their physical appearances (for example, baggy clothing, tattoos, and braided hair). The men also believed faculty made negative judgments about their academic abilities based on these factors. One of the most insightful findings from this study related to the connection between the participants' identities as men and their experiences in higher education. The participants believed it was important for them, as men, to work to earn money and take care of their families, yet they recognized that doing so had a negative impact on their academic success. The participants still prioritized work over school because they saw the former as "an essential element of their identities as men" (Gardenhire-Crooks et al. 2010: ES-5).

The men also reported reluctance to seeking academic, personal, or financial assistance while in college because doing so violated the masculine norms they had been socialized to embrace, such as strength, independence, and self-reliance. Based on these findings, a range of strategies and recommendations are proposed by Gardenhire-Crooks and her colleagues. These include focusing on the transition-to-college process for men of color; creating opportunities to build social connections between men of color, faculty, and other students; being more intrusive and proactive in counseling and advising men of color; and providing more financial resources to support their pursuit of higher education.

Although the published literature and research discussed in this chapter offers important insights into the ways college men of color experience higher education, several knowledge gaps are worth noting. First, these studies are narrowly focused on a few factors—namely, student engagement, social support, cultural capital, and campus climate. These factors

are undeniably important. However, focusing exclusively on these issues is not likely to close outcome gaps between men of color and their white counterparts. Second (and perhaps most consequential), students rather than institutions are consistently prioritized as the units of analyses in these studies. Strategies to build institutional capacity—beyond programmatic interventions—to better serve men of color in higher education are therefore largely absent. Last, discussions about the use of student-outcomes data to guide decision-making and improve the status of men of color in higher education are also absent in the published literature.

Again, efforts to improve the participation and success of men of color are not likely to have impact if they remain loosely coupled with accountability systems in higher education. Central to this effort is having reliable data to track and monitor institutional progress toward improving the status of men of color. We now turn to a discussion of programs and interventions that have been enacted nationally in response to the challenges that impede the participation and success of men of color.

IMPROVING COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND SUCCESS FOR MEN OF COLOR

Given the documented challenges for college men of color, it seems reasonable to wonder: What have educators done to address these issues? What have been the outcomes of these efforts? Most of the interventions described in the limited body of literature on men of color have been small-scale, compensatory, ad hoc programs that are housed in college and university student affairs units and disconnected from the academic core of institutions. The policy researcher Loren Harris (2009) has identified six nationally recognized programs that were created to improve the enrollment and success of men of color in higher education:

1. *Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models).* This is a teacher-education partnership among Clemson University, Benedict College, Clafin University, and Morris College that seeks to increase the number of Black male teachers in South Carolina.

2. *Maricopa Community College Achieving a College Education (ACE).* This program focuses on high school retention and persistence to higher education for Latino students.

3. *University System of Georgia's African American Male Initiative (AAMI).* This regents-supported initiative is designed to fund

campus-based programs at public institutions throughout the state that target Black male outreach, retention, and graduation.

4. *City University of New York (CUNY) Black Male Initiative (BMI).* This initiative funds a series of "demonstration projects" to increase inclusion of and success for underrepresented populations, including Black males, individuals who do not complete high school, and formerly incarcerated individuals.

5. *Student African American Brotherhood.* This is a national network of more than a hundred high school and college-based chapters of Black men and other underrepresented male minorities who support each other in pursuing academic excellence and engaging in community service.

6. *The Puente Project.* This is a thirty-year-old college-access partnership among the University of California system, thirty-three high schools, and fifty-nine community colleges that serve low-income Latino students.

Although most of these programs are relatively new—meaning that their impact has not yet been assessed—experts believe that such programs are necessary to increase and sustain the success of men of color in higher education (Harvey 2008). However, because of enduring funding challenges in higher education, programmatic approaches for males of color, like other programs for "special populations," are likely to face resource and status constraints that severely limit their capacity to benefit large numbers of students or to influence comprehensive institutional change. Recognizing these limitations—as well as the propensity of institutions of higher education to circumvent the question of how race shapes and is shaped by institutional values, practices, and structures—researchers at the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California created a change model that helps institutions of higher education use data and inquiry methods to learn why they are failing students of color and to determine what they need to do differently. This change model (described below) supports organizational learning about the causes of inequity among males of color.

BUILDING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Framing inequality as a problem arising from lack of practitioner knowledge, ineffective pedagogical approaches, or "culturally held" ideas about

students of color (Nasir and Hand 2006) is rare among higher education leaders, policymakers, or practitioners. The absence of structural analysis of racial inequity within institutions of higher education is due in part to normative models of student success that attribute successful outcomes to individual effort and engagement in behaviors and activities that facilitate academic and social integration (Braxton and Lien 2000; Kuh 2003; Tinto 1987). Viewed through the normative lens of student success, unequal outcomes among students of color are commonly attributed to characteristics that classify members of this population as "disadvantaged," "at risk," "unprepared" beings who lack the "social capital" to know how to be college students (Bensimon 2007).

The Equity Scorecard is a structured process of examining data and conducting inquiry to help college educators and leaders develop awareness of patterns of racial inequity, unlearn entrenched normative views of student success, and become equity-minded agents of change (ibid. 2007; Tharp and Gallimore 1988). The primary means of implementing these principles is to convene practitioners who are involved in an institution's formal learning systems and who are viewed as key actors in informal institutional networks. These practitioners form communities of practice, which are "groups of people informally bound together by a shared expertise and passion" (Wenger and Snyder 2000: 139). The community of practice in the Equity Scorecard process is referred to as an "evidence team" or "inquiry team." The theory of change that governs the processes of the Equity Scorecard is based on the principle that the engagement of practitioners in the social construction of "data meaning" can bring about new awareness of a problem not previously recognized. It can lead them to question why their individual or institutional practices are not producing equitable results, motivate them to learn more about the contours of the problem, and experiment with new approaches (Bensimon 2007).

Modeled after "the Balanced Scorecard" for business (Kaplan and Norton 1992) and "the Academic Scorecard" (O'Neil et al. 1999), the Equity Scorecard was initially developed when it became evident that equity, although valued, is generally not measured in relation to educational outcomes for students of color. When campus leaders notice decline in enrollment, persistence, or graduation rates among of males of color within their institutions, they are not likely to recognize it as a situation in which their current practices are no longer effective that calls for data-driven inquiry (Bensimon 2007; Dewey 1938; Polkinghorne 2004).

Institutions typically become involved in the Equity Scorecard process in one of two ways. When the process was initially developed, we invited

institutions that had already achieved structural diversity and enrolled a critical mass of students of color, yet were not experiencing equitable outcomes in student persistence, graduation, and academic achievement. The institutions were compelled to adopt the Equity Scorecard because they were concerned with the success of students of color at the institution and because student equity was somehow connected to the institutional mission (which often made reference to "diversity" or "social justice") or other campus initiatives.

Once the Equity Scorecard process became established and nationally recognized, institutions began to adopt it on their own and incorporate it into strategic planning, student-learning assessment, accreditation, and other campuswide planning processes. Regardless of how institutions become involved in the Equity Scorecard process, accountability and support at the senior levels of leadership are critical to its overall effectiveness and impact. The Equity Scorecard has had the most meaningful and measurable impact at institutions where senior leaders are willing to invest the financial and personnel resources necessary to fully implement the process, where open discussions about race and ethnicity are modeled and encouraged by senior leaders, and where there is a willingness to embrace vulnerability and shortcomings in institutional practices that produce inequitable outcomes (Bauman et al. 2005).

Equity Scorecard evidence teams typically comprise five to seven practitioners who are appointed by the campus or system chief executive officer (the president, chancellor, or district superintendent). Chief executive officers are asked to be purposeful in their selection of evidence team members and to consider such criteria as faculty teaching gateway courses in English and mathematics, administrators in key campus units, instructional leaders, and faculty and staff serving on important campus committees. One of these members is appointed the team leader, who is responsible for organizing the team's work, keeping the team on track to meet benchmarks, and alerting the president of the team's discoveries.

A staff person from the office of institutional research participates to provide the team access to the disaggregated student-outcomes data necessary to identify inequities. In advance of the first team meeting, the institutional researcher completes a spreadsheet comprised of data that are routinely collected on most campuses, disaggregated by race/ethnicity and sometimes gender. These data are called "vital signs" because they signify the health of the system or institution with respect to equity in student outcomes. The purposes of the vital signs are to make it fairly easy for team members, especially those who are not quantitatively oriented, to

identify outcome inequities and to provide a starting point for the team's discussion and analysis.

Evidence teams typically meet monthly at their campus or system office over the course of twelve to eighteen months. Each team is assigned a facilitator who has been formally trained in methods of inquiry and in how to facilitate critical conversations about race and inequity. The role of the facilitator is to model equity mindedness, the practice of viewing inequities as a problem of institutional performance rather than as student deficits, and to challenge team members to rely on data and evidence rather than on deficit perspectives and taken-for-granted assumptions about students. In doing so, the facilitator uses a set of teaching strategies, including modeling, reinforcing, providing feedback, instructing, questioning, and reframing (Tharp and Gallimore 1988).

When team members attribute inequities to students' "lack of motivation," the facilitator's role is to ask questions such as, "What data or evidence can you share to support your assertion?" Or he or she might offer other, more equity-minded attributions, such as, "Perhaps students are not participating in campus leadership programs because they do not feel welcomed or that their perspectives are valued." The work of the facilitator is critical in this process, given the hidden-but-pervasive nature of negative stereotypes about students of color and the reasons practitioners often attribute to their underachievement (for example, lack of motivation, poor K–12 preparation, and work and family commitments that conflict with school). The facilitator's role becomes less critical as team members begin to adopt equity-minded perspectives and challenge each other when they blame students for inequities or when they attribute inequities to factors that are external to the institution.

In addition to examining assumptions about data, team members probe for possible reasons for and solutions to the inequities they find. As members examine data tables and make note of patterns that jump out at them, the team leader and facilitator ask them to share reactions and pose questions. For example, the low numbers of Black and Latino males enrolling in a college may be identified as a problem at a given institution. In this case one of the vital signs will become "completed applications from high school students in the local or service area." This vital sign allows team members to see how many male high school students of color submitted a completed admission application to the institution. It also allows them to make comparisons to the number of completed applications received from other groups, including white students and women of color.

Perhaps there is a significant gap between the number of male students

of color who applied to the university and the number who actually completed applications. Several questions can emerge from this data, such as: What items do most students seem to be missing (letters of recommendation, test scores, transcripts)? Are the students who have incomplete applications concentrated in a particular area or school district? What type of notifications do students receive from the admissions office when their applications are not complete? How many of these students would likely have been admitted to the institution had their applications been complete? These types of questions are effective because they lead the team to focus on issues that are within the institution's locus of control instead of such issues as the students' K–12 preparation or similar factors. They are also framed from an equity perspective.

By the conclusion of a typical team meeting, team members have raised a number of equity-oriented questions. Based on these questions, they request additional data that will be presented at the next meeting. In between team meetings the institutional researcher, team leader, and facilitator work together to gather the data and come up with the most effective ways to present the data to the team. If through their examination the team learns that more Black and Latino male students might have been admitted had they completed applications, then "the number of students who submit completed admissions applications" may well become an indicator of the Equity Scorecard. The team would establish a baseline, representing the current status of the indicator, as well as yearly improvement targets that would likely lead to equity in a reasonable time frame. The process could also result in changes in practice at the institution. For instance, the evidence team may learn that incomplete admission applications are one reason why Black and Latino males are not enrolling at the institution. Thus, requiring admissions staff to take a more proactive role in following up with students with incomplete applications and assisting them during the application process is one concrete change that could help close equity gaps. This process continues until data have been reviewed and sets of indicators have been established by the evidence team.

Examining disaggregated student-outcomes data and choosing indicators for the Equity Scorecard are not the only work the evidence teams do on behalf of their institutions. Another important role is to share their learning and communicate findings throughout the campus. As noted in Bensimon et al. 2004: "The opportunity for institutional change lies in the possibility that individual participants will transfer their learning to other contexts within the institution, and in doing so, enable others to learn and to change" (ibid.: 113). Dissemination occurs both formally, through such

publications as comprehensive reports to the chief executive officer, town-hall meetings, and presentations to campus governance bodies (academic senate, strategic planning, academic departments), as well as informally in department meetings and other campus units. This is why the selection of evidence team members is important. The inclusion of "boundary spanners" who hold leadership roles at the institution and are members of important campus committees is necessary to ensure that the learning that takes place among evidence-team members will have an impact on campus decision-making.

The Equity Scorecard develops evidence-based awareness of race-based inequities among practitioners and instills a sense of urgency and responsibility for addressing them. The Equity Scorecard is designed to encourage campus presidents, faculty members, counselors, deans, and directors to become local experts on the educational outcomes of minority students within their own campus and to come to view these outcomes as a matter of institutional responsibility (Harris III and Bensimon 2007). In the next section we present a set of Equity Scorecard indicators for assessing and monitoring the success of male students of color in higher education.

CREATING AN EQUITY SCORECARD TO ASSESS INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Four issues are worth noting before we present the Equity Scorecard indicators for male students of color. First, the proposed indicators emerged from several sources, including our examination of the few sets of available student-outcomes data that are disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender within race/ethnicity, most of which are discussed in the first section of this chapter; trends and issues identified in the published literature on the participation and success of men of color in higher education; and our previous work in implementing the Equity Scorecard at more than fifty institutions. Second, we did not allow the lack of data to limit our selection of indicators. Instead, we chose indicators that warrant ongoing monitoring given what we know about the status of males of color in higher education nationally.

Third, the indicators selected will vary for two- and four-year colleges and depending on the system or institution's priorities. For example, community colleges are likely to care about improving Black and Latino success in precollege credit courses in mathematics and English and about increasing the number of students of color who transfer to a four-year college. Four-year public comprehensive colleges need to improve six-year gradu-

ation rates for males of color; they also need to reach out more directly to minority males in community colleges and facilitate their transfer and completion of the baccalaureate. Hispanic-serving institutions may be particularly concerned with how to improve the participation and success of Latinos in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics majors. Last, what is most important about the Equity Scorecard is the collaborative process of creating the scorecard and how the evidence team members work with one another to make sense of the data. If the Equity Scorecard is treated like another annual accountability report delegated to institutional researchers, then its potential as a catalyst for institutional learning and reflection will be undermined.

The Equity Scorecard provides four concurrent perspectives on institutional effectiveness in terms of equity in educational outcomes: access, retention, excellence and completion, and campus effort. Each perspective is populated with data that provide information about the status of each racial/ethnic population on key indicators of student success, such as enrollment at the institution, retention and persistence, and academic achievement. To the extent possible, these data are also disaggregated by gender. Some indicators are provided in the form of rates and others in the form of shares. *Rates* make it possible to compare interracial differences in outcomes (for example, retention rates for Black males compared to white males). *Shares* make it possible to determine whether Black males are underrepresented, overrepresented, or at equity compared with their share of the cohort on the outcome of interest (retention after the first year, for example). Shares are necessary to determine equity. If Black males' share of the first-year student population is 7 percent, then the expectation is that they will account for at least 7 percent of students returning in the following semester or year.

Access Perspective

The *access perspective* allows institutional leaders and policymakers to become informed about the extent to which male students of color have access to institutions, programs, and resources that can lead to increased enrollment and success in higher education. Access perspective indicators are as follows:

· Applications, admissions, and matriculation
· Total headcount enrollment, full- and part-time
· Headcount first-time college enrollment

- Enrollment among high school graduates from local or service-area schools
- Placement into basic skills, developmental, remedial, and college-ready courses.

Retention Perspective

Indicators in the *retention perspective* monitor students' continued enrollment, accumulation of academic units, and academic progress and performance. Retention perspective indicators are as follows:

- Retention term-to-term or year-to-year
- Persistence in a critical sequence of courses leading to completion or benchmark milestones (for example, ascending courses in remedial sequence; courses leading to a degree in a field identified as high demand and with low males of color participation; cohort migration of males of color through basic skills, developmental, and remediation to transfer courses)
- Credit accumulation for designated markers (for example, half the units in GE curriculum, half the units for transfer curriculum, half the units for degree attainment, and so on)
- Academic probation after the first semester and after the first year
- Number of students who delay taking math, English, and science courses
- Students who graduated in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) major they started out in, and students who were initially STEM majors but graduated with a non-STEM degree
- Drops, withdrawals, incompletes, fails (in STEM and GE courses).

Campus Effort Perspective

The *campus effort* perspective is concerned primarily with factors of institutional support that create affirming and welcoming campus environments for underrepresented and historically underserved students. Campus effort indicators answer the following question: What is the participation of males of color in key extracurricular programs? These might include study abroad, residential education, undergraduate research, service-learning, mentorship/internship programs, and other programs that enrich

undergraduates' out-of-class experiences. Campus effort perspective indicators are as follows:

·   Participation in key extracurricular programs (for example, study abroad, residential education, undergraduate research, service learning, mentorship/internship programs, and other highly visible programs with significant benefits attached)

·   Males of color receiving merit-based scholarships

·   Support services for males of color

·   Use of academic supplemental services (for example, tutoring)

·   Professional development programs to increase instructors' understanding of and responsiveness to males of color.

Excellence and Completion Perspectives

Excellence indicators measure the opportunities males of color have to participate in selective programs that provide access to important academic and social networks and leadership development. *Completion indicators* assess the progression of males of color through milestones leading to degree or program completion. Excellence indicators are as follows:

·   Graduating with a GPA of 3.0 or higher

·   Transferring to a selective four-year institution (for two-year institutions only)

·   Enrollment in graduate programs

·   Degree attainment in STEM or high-demand fields

·   Representation on dean's and provost's lists and Latin honors.

Completion indicators are as follows:

·   Degree completion within 150 percent time

·   Completion of general-education or lower-division curriculum

·   Transfer-out to four-year institutions within three years of starting at a community college.

EVIDENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

The collaborative process of creating an Equity Scorecard and examining indicators develops leaders' and practitioners' knowledge of how struc-

tures, practices, policies, and cultural beliefs increase or reduce barriers for students of color. For example, at Long Beach City College in Long Beach, California, the Equity Scorecard revealed inequities in transfer rates among students of color as well as a noticeably small number of students of color transferring to the University of California even when they met transfer requirements. Instead of assuming that low transfer rates had to do with students' preferences (such as getting a job or earning an occupational certificate), the Long Beach City College team conducted a comprehensive qualitative audit of the transfer process at their own institution.

They studied the Web site information on transferring, observed what went on in the transfer center, interviewed students who had transferred, observed what went on at transfer fairs, and examined the quality of transfer information materials. Based on the study of their transfer practices, the team concluded that the college had a "weak transfer culture." The audit resulted in concrete changes informed by the findings of the team members. These included a reformatted Web site, the creation of a transfer academy to provide a peer community for first-time students with transfer aspirations, increased information on scholarships, and greater involvement of faculty members in the dissemination of transfer information in their classrooms (Bensimon and Dowd 2009; Bensimon, Dowd, Alford, and Trapp 2007).

The leadership of the University of Wisconsin system, dissatisfied with their progress after twenty years of diversity planning, decided to implement the Equity Scorecard throughout the system's campuses. Through the system's involvement in the Equity Scorecard process, university accountability metrics are now reported disaggregated by race and ethnicity. Individual campus Equity Scorecards have been made part of the data points used by the president of the system to conduct the annual performance evaluation of chancellors.[7] At the individual campus level there have been changes in recruitment practices to target predominantly minority high schools that had been previously overlooked.

At Los Angeles Southwest College findings from the Equity Scorecard showed that African American men and women had shockingly low rates of success in math courses. This finding prompted a serious examination of instructional practices as well as the availability and use of academic support services. The culmination of the college's inquiry was to restructure the basic-skills curriculum and place it under a newly created deanship that was filled by one of the leaders of the college's Equity Scorecard evidence team. Another change in practice is that math instructors now hold their office hours in the tutoring center. Holding office hours in the tutoring center allows math instructors to be more available to talk with students,

foster more informal faculty-student interaction, and make help-seeking more natural (Bensimon et al. 2009; Los Angeles Southwest College and Center for Urban Education 2008).

In the cases of Long Beach City College, the University of Wisconsin system, and Los Angeles Southwest College, institutional changes that can lead to more equitable outcomes for students of color were made possible because faculty and administrators were willing to examine their own practices rather than simply attributing the problem to student deficits. Because the institutions, rather than the students, were the focus of intervention, these changes will likely be more enduring and effective in building institutional capacity to educate these students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the explosion of diversity programs on campuses nationwide during the 1990s, measures to assess how well these institutions were educating the students who made diversity possible were conspicuously absent. Recognizing that the equity aims intended by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 were not being realized in higher education, we created the Equity Scorecard to raise awareness that racial stratification in outcomes was a reality, even in institutions that had highly diverse student bodies. We have found that the Equity Scorecard has been an effective means of engaging campus leaders and practitioners in reframing inequity as evidence of an institutional failure or malfunction that needs to be understood before action can be taken. In addition, we have learned that higher education institutions lack the tools, structures, practices, and experience to view low rates of academic success, retention, or graduation as problems of practice. Instead, institutions of higher education often view these patterns as problems of student preparation, motivation, and self-efficacy, leading to the design of programs to compensate for the deficiencies attributed to students.

The ways in which problems are constructed shape the solutions that are created and implemented. Building institutional capacity to create successful outcomes for males of color is made possible by leaders and practitioners who are able to ask, In what ways are our practices failing Black and Latino males? The processes that comprise the Equity Scorecard are intended to make these questions the first ones that come to mind in response to inequity. The questions, which are framed from a perspective of institutional accountability and responsibility, are consistent with the Equity Scorecard's goal of bringing about concrete changes and equitable outcomes. In closing we offer the following recommendations for institu-

tional leaders and policymakers who are concerned about the status of men of color and seek concrete actions to reverse the trends outlined throughout this chapter. Each recommendation is aimed toward building institutional capacity to serve male students of color equitably.

· Policymakers must hold institutions accountable for serving men of color equitably. Just as institutions are evaluated based on enrollment targets, retention rates, and graduation rates, student equity should also be considered. Rewards and consequences must be clearly articulated and enacted as incentives for institutions to meet this expectation. Moreover, this equity in student outcomes should be factored into annual performance reviews and other periodic evaluations for senior administrators.

· Estela M. Bensimon, Lan Hao, and Leticia T. Bustillos (2006) and others have noted that what gets measured gets noticed in higher education. Student-outcomes data that are routinely collected at the system and institutional levels must therefore be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, gender, and gender within race and ethnicity to effectively track and monitor the extent to which men of color are achieving successful outcomes. Disaggregating student-outcomes data is necessary to hold institutions accountable for serving male students of color equitably.

· Too often, institutions implement programs and interventions to address problems of underachievement among men of color without fully examining why these problems persist in the local institutional context. The factors that contribute to a problem at one institution are not always the same contributing factors at another institution. Investing time and resources toward deeply understanding the problem *before* implementing solutions and interventions is thus both necessary and wise. Forming a campus committee or task force, much like the Equity Scorecard evidence team, to assume leadership in identifying outcome gaps, inequities, and institutional factors that have a disproportionately negative impact on men of color will likely lead to important insights that may remain hidden otherwise. The initial charge of this group must rest exclusively on understanding the problem rather than prematurely identifying and implementing solutions.

· Beyond collecting and disaggregating student-outcomes data, creating institutional structures and practices to turn these data into actionable knowledge is equally important. Higher education leaders who are serious about ensuring equity in student outcomes will build

communities of practice where faculty, administrators, and other institutional agents can convene regularly to examine and discuss student-outcomes data from an equity perspective and consider the extent to which their units are facilitating equitable outcomes for men of color. Student equity should be a central goal in institutional strategic-planning processes and in staff development activities.

The Center for Urban Education offers a range of consulting and partnership opportunities for organizations that are interested in adopting or fully implementing the Equity Scorecard. Please visit the center's Web site for details at http://cue.usc.edu/.

NOTES

1. We use the terms "higher education" and "postsecondary education" interchangeably throughout this essay. Both terms refer to education beyond the high school level.

2. According to researchers David C. Miller, Anindita Sen, and Lydia B. Malley (2007), the United States currently ranks third among G-8 countries in the percentage of twenty-five- to sixty-four-year-olds who have completed higher education (39 percent), behind the Russian Federation (55 percent) and Canada (45 percent). Rankings for the remaining G-8 countries are: Japan (38 percent), United Kingdom (29 percent), Germany (25 percent), and Italy (11 percent).

3. The terms "males" and "females" are used interchangeably with "men" and "women" in this essay.

4. In the context of the Equity Scorecard, "practitioners" are individuals in educational institutions who play a role in the delivery of instruction and services to students, or the formation of policies that impact students' experiences and success at the institution. They include faculty members, academic advisers, counselors, deans, program directors, vice presidents, and other institutional leaders.

5. For a list of institutional partners, see "Partners: Adopters of the CUE Equity Model," Center for Urban Education, online at http://cue.usc.edu/about/partners.html.

6. The terms "Black" and "African American" are used interchangeably in this essay.

7. Personal communication from Rebecca R. Martin, senior vice president for academic affairs, University of Wisconsin system, indicating that quantitative measure 3.1 in the "Chancellor Annual Performance Evaluation Guidelines 2008–09" includes Equity Scorecard goals and initiatives as a performance criterion.

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