INTERCULTURAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Strengths, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Professors That Contribute to the Learning of African American and Latino/a College Students

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Abstract

For students of color, succeeding at predominantly White campuses may be more challenging than at minority-serving institutions. Educational leaders must strive to enhance the learning of this growing group of college learners as campuses increase in ethnic diversity. Culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000) and exemplary teaching (Bain, 2004) frameworks were used to examine characteristics of professors whom students of color identified as helping them to learn the most. Professors exhibited relational strengths, cultural awareness, and passion for connecting subjects to students’ lives. They valued students’ voices in classroom learning and exercised discernment when inviting students to contribute cultural perspectives. These strengths and attitudes were catalysts for creating a respectful classroom climate that was supportive of African American and Latino/a students.