

Maximizing Equity on Campus: A Transformational Model©

The transformational tapestry model, which takes into account five main aspects of campus culture (access and retention, research and scholarship, inter-group and intra-group relations, curriculum and pedagogy, and university service), is designed to assist the campus community in maximizing equity through the use of specific assessment and intervention strategies.

Conceptual Framework

The foundations of the transformational tapestry model of campus climate were informed by Smith et al's (1999) meta-analysis of research on diversity in higher education. In their review of the literature on the impact of campus diversity initiatives on college students, Smith and her colleagues provide a context for examining campus diversity. The authors identified four dimensions of campus diversity, each of which overlaps and intersects with the others.

The transformational tapestry model of campus climate differs from Smith's four dimensions of campus diversity in that it not only provides a framework for viewing campus culture, but also presents systematic guidelines for *assessing* campus culture and for *implementing interventions* designed to transform a campus culture into one that maximizes equity. The model's assessment and transformational intervention components were developed based on previous research (Beckhard, 1989; Drucker, 1993; Hurtado, 1999; Rankin, 1994, 1998) and recent investigations examining the climate for diversity on 22 college campuses (Rankin, 2002, in process) where transformational strategies have been or are in the process of being implemented.

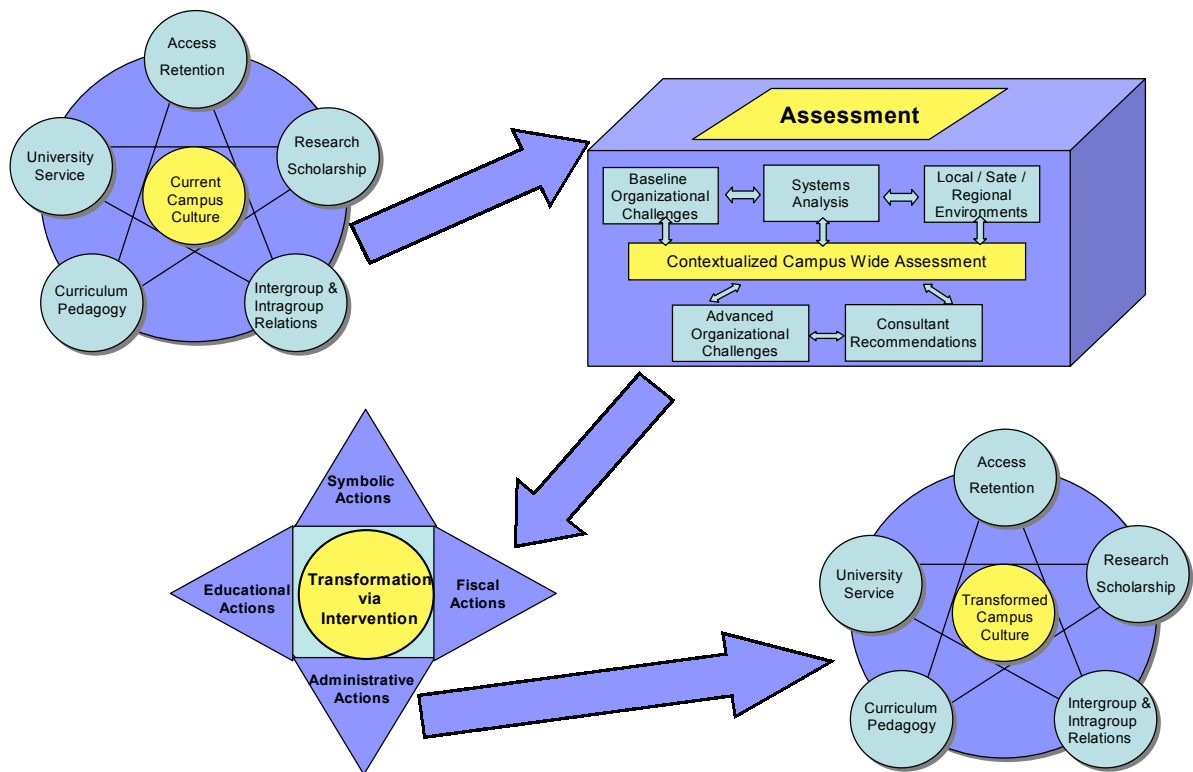
The Transformational Tapestry Model

The first phase of the transformational tapestry model of campus culture (see Figure 1) for maximizing equity on a particular university campus proposes that an institution conduct an internal assessment of the campus culture for under-represented/under-served populations¹. The first component of the internal assessment utilizes focus groups and individual interviews to examine baseline institutional challenges. These along with a systems analysis (e.g. mission, structure, current policies, etc.), and review of the local, regional, and state environments inform the second component of the internal assessment, the construction of a campus-wide survey of the climate for diversity. A quantitative analysis of the survey data and a qualitative analysis of

¹ The researcher works collaboratively with a social equity advisory team consisting of representation from the various constituent groups on campus throughout the process.

respondent's comments are reviewed and shared with the campus community and the social equity team.

Figure 1
Transformational Tapestry
Model for Maximizing Equity on Campus



The third component of the internal assessment calls for the reconvening of the focus groups to identify advanced organizational challenges. These along with researcher recommendations provide the foundation for developing transformational interventions.

Following the comprehensive internal assessment, phase two of the model is initiated. The social equity team with feedback from the campus creates a strategic plan for maximizing equity with immediate, short-term (two-year), and long-term (5-year) actions. The model's transformational intervention strategies include symbolic actions, educational actions, administrative actions, and fiscal actions. The overarching strategic plan identifies well-defined

goals, specific intervention actions, person(s) responsible for carrying out the actions, participants involved in the action, time-frames, costs, outcomes, and assessment/accountability.

For additional information on the Transformational Tapestry and more detailed reviews of focus group selection and protocols, the survey instrument, the processes involved in coordinating the institutional assessments, a summary of the results of data gathered at the institutions, and recommendations provided to and feedback from participating institutions please contact:

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