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Passionate pedagogy and emotional labor: Students' responses to learning diversity from diverse instructors

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Abstract
This qualitative study examines emotion themes reflected in student evaluations from required diversity courses at a predominantly white, US public university. We analyze two years of student evaluations for 29 instructors. Situated by the work of Acker, Jaggar, and Hochschild, we find contradictory themes of perceived instructional bias and the value of diversity lessons. Student evaluations result in systematic disadvantage for minority instructors that may be heightened for female instructors of color. Non-minority instructors (both male and female) gain privileges by avoiding dealing with diversity directly which is reflected in student evaluations through the process of "ducking diversity". The organizational structure of required diversity courses marginalizes the scholarship and emotion work of minority instructors and inherently reproduces the very inequalities they are designed to combat.

Keywords: emotional labor, diversity, teaching and learning, higher education

The greater racial and ethnic diversity of US college student populations is not yet reflected in faculty demographics, even as college policies and curricula emphasize diversity and globalization. Faculty instructors of color face numerous barriers and challenges within the academy, including social and professional isolation, a lack of mentoring, limited opportunity structure, and unique job stressors (American Sociological Association 2001; Laden and Hagedorn 2000; Montecinos 2004; Turner, Myers, and Creswell 1999). Minority faculty and instructors are further disproportionately engaged in multicultural or "diversity" course requirements for college undergraduates, a growing trend in US colleges and universities (Alex-Assensoh 2003; American Association of Colleges and Universities 2000). Intended to improve understanding and knowledge of diverse minority groups, diversity courses can create highly political and emotionally charged environments. Diversity courses often include scholarship that critically examines US society

and minority group relations, investigates the causes of oppression and inequality, and foregrounds cultural pluralism. These courses mark a distinctive academic endeavor that generates substantial emotional responses from students, linking the topics, the student's positionality, and the race/ethnicity and gender of the instructor (Harlow 2003).

This qualitative study examines themes reflected in student evaluations responding to required diversity courses at a predominantly white, US public university. We thematically analyze two years of required diversity-course evaluations by students for 29 minority and non-minority participant–instructors using an open-coding process (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Analyzing the language of student evaluations in their extended written commentary allows us to demonstrate the emotional framework of student feedback for their instructors and the differentially charged burden of teaching diversity courses. Specifically, we inquire into the character of student responses, taking into account who is teaching these required courses. This expands our understanding of how diversity work affects minority and non-minority instructors, their students, and the emotion work involved in maintaining these academic endeavors.

Review of the literature and theoretical frames

Teaching and learning in required diversity courses at US predominantly white institutions (PWIs) occurs at a time when the academic labor market is undergoing significant structural changes. University and college administrators have shifted a large proportion of teaching duties away from regular (grant securing) faculty to part-time and adjunct faculty (Pratt 1997) and to graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) (Lafer 2001). Diversity instruction is challenging for all instructors, majorities of whom report in national studies that they receive minimal training, supervision, and feedback for teaching generally (Anderson et al. 1993; Gay 2004; Montecinos 2004; Turner, Myers, and Creswell 1999). Yet, minority instructors, including women, experience the burden of having their credibility and authority challenged in the classroom (Aguirre 2000; Gititi 2002; Perry et al. 2009; Stanley 2006) and the emotional challenges of teaching courses that serve as lightning rods for diversity politics in the larger society (Moore et al. 2010).

Inequality regimes and diversity education

Student evaluations are place-bound and generated through non-inclusive practices that rely on standardized assumptions about teaching and learning, where white men have historically dominated definitions of excellence (Turner 2002, 2003). These evaluations are part of the, "loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations" (Acker 2006, 443). This process, denoted by Acker as an "inequality regime," creates an organizational blind spot that is difficult to unpack precisely because the programs themselves are explicitly expected to be multicultural/ global and inclusive. Yet international, ethnic and women's studies programs struggle to maintain resources and enrollments when students are responding to "differences" that are gendered, racialized, and global in their application (Feagin, Vera, and Imani 1996).

The cross pressures of job stress and emotional strain for minority scholars are intensified at PWIs due to a scarcity of minority faculty (Padilla 1994; Scisney-Matlock and Matlock 2001). Expecting these few to mentor all students of color reduces time for

scholarly pursuits and expands their responsibilities to "multicultural student groups and to represent the school's multicultural interests" (Urciuoli 1999, 296). Simultaneously, PWIs cement "harsh racial climates" by organizing diversity events, debates about affirmative action within admissions and hiring policies, and other topics that become racialized (Foster 2005, 497). Thus, minority faculty become burdened by mediation, representation, and expected expertise (even outside their scholarship) with internal and external communities as part of the "diverse facade of the institution" (Bryant et al. 2005, 316). Students within their diversity courses become one more constituent of organizational inequality regimes (Acker 2006).

In contrast, some minority faculty members embrace these campus roles, but may then be told by senior faculty members to focus on mainstream writing and publishing, essentially told to "represent diversity, not practice it" (Turner 2003, 122). Scholarship within ethnic and international studies can be personally rewarding for researchers, but senior non-minority faculty may devalue these cognate fields during tenure processes, even when verbalizing commitments to diverse scholarship during hiring processes (Kolodny 2000; Turner 2003). Padilla (1994) refers to these institutional expectations as a "cultural taxation" that is time consuming and emotionally draining. This taxation creates, "the feeling of being used by the system while also recognizing that in the end one will be punished because the institutional reward system is oriented around research and publishing in professionally correct journals" (26). These forms of taxation signify the sites and processes for inequality regimes within higher education.

Emotional labor of instructors in college diversity courses

College and university instructors are among those on Arlie Hochschild's (1983) list of 44 census occupations that involve significant amounts of emotional management. Emotion management is the process of managing one's emotions to conform to "feeling rules" or social conventions governing how individuals in a particular society should feel in a given situation (Hochschild 1979). Emotions may be managed superficially by changing expressions and body language to *appear* to feel as one should. Hochschild (1979) calls this "surface acting". "Deep acting", on the other hand, involves working on one's emotions to produce the appropriate feeling.

While emotion management in private interactions can be a social good, difficulties arise when emotion management is commoditized, or bargained and sold as an aspect of labor power. Hochschild (1979, 1983) terms this type of emotion management "emotion labor". Jobs requiring significant emotional labor have three defining characteristics: (1) "they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public", (2) they "require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person", and (3) they allow the employer to monitor the worker's emotional labor (except in the professions) (Hochschild 1983, 147, 156). According to Hochschild's (1983) criteria, employers do not monitor professional emotional labor. Nor do they reward (or sanction) this labor unless the emotions spill over into job performance.

In contrast, Harlow (2003) focused on black and white professors' strategies for managing their emotions at a PWI. She finds that the emotion management required of black professors is more extensive than that required of white professors because the former experience challenges to their credibility and authority in the classroom, that the latter do not. The black professors in her study experienced these challenges, and the "weight of representing the entire race", as "emotionally draining" (Harlow 2003, 363). They re-

sponded by recognizing racial barriers at the macro-level, but minimizing the effects at the individual level. In other words, they attempted to reduce the emotional tension they experienced by acknowledging that many students will challenge the authority and credibility of minority professors, while at the same time asserting that they personally could develop ways of minimizing these challenges.

Stough and Emmer (1998) highlight the interactive nature of college instructors' understanding of classroom dynamics. As teachers monitor student classroom responses, they engage in coping strategies with special attention to the emotion work of instructors of color (Perry et al. 2009). Lynch points out the emotion work involved in this mutually reinforcing process: "When externally controlled performance indicators are the constant point of reference for one's work, regardless of how meaningless they might be, this leads to feelings of personal inauthenticity" (Lynch 2010, 55). Excessive reliance on student evaluations becomes particularly hazardous for the careers of minority instructors, who often do the bulk of diversity work and subsequently the bulk of emotional labor. Yet, there is an expectation that scholarly work, including teaching, is disconnected from emotions and is rational rather than relational. "Care is only valued in the academy when it is professionalized" (Lynch, 2010, 63). Instructors doing emotional labor tend to do more work with less professional reward.

Students and emotion work in diversity classrooms

Jaggar (1989) inquires into the social dimensions of emotion and learning, arguing that emotions are socially constructed; that we are taught by our respective cultures what are appropriate responses to certain situations. Thus, emotions are historically and culturally specific responses and over time become habitual responses "not quickly unlearned" (170). These emotions are inextricably linked to values and "provide the experiential basis for values" (Jaggar 1989, 159). Feelings such as pride or shame, for example, involve value judgments about the act or situation that evokes these emotions for both students and instructors.

In a hierarchical society, the normative values tend to "serve the interests of the dominant groups" (Jaggar 1989, 165). Thus, individuals, to some extent, develop emotional constitutions that reflect the values and beliefs of more privileged classes. For students, the range of emotional responses are imbedded in their individual biographies, and this "hegemony that our society exercises over people's emotional constitution is not total" (1989, 166). Subordinate groups may develop subcultural norms and values constituting what Jaggar (1989) calls "outlaw emotions". These emotions are inconsistent with the beliefs and values of dominant groups. As social constructs, emotional responses and habit patterns can be broken and new ones established. However, although our "emotional responses to the world change as we conceptualize it differently", the "ease and speed with which we can re-educate our emotions is not great" (1989, 170).

Diversity courses as contested sites and students as evaluators

What is taught, how it is taught, and who teaches always affect classroom dynamics (Turner 2003, 116). Predominately white classrooms in general hold special challenges for students enrolled in classes with diverse instructors (Stanley 2006). Students who are uncomfortable or inexperienced in working with faculty of color or persons from diverse

cultural backgrounds may demonstrate hostility toward their class and their instructor (Laden and Hagedorn 2000; Ludwig and Meacham 1997). Feagin, Vera, and Imani (1996) highlight interviews with black students and parents who conclude that the situation is "very rough" for black faculty members in general: "they provide, as some of them [black students] actually say, a kind of 'fire insurance' for the white administration … yet their token positions usually offer them little power to effect significant changes in the campus operations or racial climate" (1996, 110).

Token statuses may alone exacerbate job dissatisfaction and when coupled with student reactions and evaluations in required diversity courses, may be a threat to minority instructor retention. In diversity courses, "… debates are unavoidably inscribed upon black people's bodies" (Foster 2005, 497) and for faculty and students of color to participate in the intellectual life of these courses, they become the speaker and the subject of debate, "offering their own dignity as a sacrifice to the pursuit of an invigorating intellectual atmosphere" (Foster 2005, 497). The consequences can be humiliating as well as infuriating.

White male professors embody the familiar status of college professor, and women and people of color are perceived as a surprising exception (Messner 2000). Subsequently, minority and women faculty describe the academic workplace as chilly and alienating (Aguirre 2000, 6; hooks 1989). Anderson and Smith argue that student privileging of gender and ethnicity can "interact with each other and with course content" (2005, 187). Student preconceptions may operate in two significant ways for their emotional responses to a course and instructor:

> First, ethnically marked faculty might be prejudged by students in accordance with prevailing stereotypes about the group … and supersede students' evaluation of individual faculty performance. Second, minority faculty who teach courses with charged social or political content might be perceived by students as having political agendas, as being biased, or as having a personal stake in the course. (Smith and Anderson 2005, 119)

Emotional labor is critically linked to positionality and/or status dimensions (Hochschild 1983; Jaggar 1989). Students with little experience of diverse cultures or interactions may find this additional element of their education generates a threat to their sense of being a "good" student or of being impartially evaluated. Faculty members with higher academic status might find it easier to resist emotion work in these courses that both lower status (i.e. devalued care work) and carry additional time and emotional burdens. Women and racial/ethnic minorities may have greater interests in teaching courses focusing on diversity, globalization, and inequality, but with greater unexamined costs.

Overview

We suggest that insights about values and emotions are particularly relevant to student evaluations of diversity teaching. These courses necessarily involve critical interrogation of the dominant paradigms and narratives of American culture, investigation into the causes of oppression and inequality, and the foregrounding of cultural pluralism – and are intimately linked to student and instructor values. As values are connected to emotions, a course that critically examines dominant value systems and introduces alterna-

tive worldviews and beliefs may provoke a wide range of emotional responses in the students. Jaggar (1989, 171) asserts that to critically reflect on emotions, and by extension, the cultural values from which they spring, is a political act that is "indispensable" for "social transformation". Understanding the emotional component of teaching and learning about diversity as it is reflected in student evaluations, then, is crucial to the goals of diversity education and diversity instructor retention in the academy. We interrogate the potential rewards, inequality regimes, and dominant-group monitoring generated organizationally through student evaluations of their diversity courses and their instructors.

These frameworks help us to examine how diversity courses in a university organization socially construct emotion work for students challenged by conflicting values, and the resulting disadvantage for subordinated instructors. At the institutional level, inequality regimes help us untangle the process in which a university has an explicit goal of diversity, multiculturalism, and global inclusion, but then reproduces those same inequalities through unexamined organizational procedures, such as the overreliance on student evaluations for tenure and promotion decisions.

Current research questions: student evaluations and emotional labor

This study focuses on understanding the qualitative content of formal student feedback to their instructors in these diversity courses over a two-year period. By analyzing themes in students' open-ended evaluations of instructors, we assess dimensions of the emotion work involved in these classrooms from the perspective of students. Here, we specify the distinctive contexts of the burden of emotional labor (Hochschild 1979, 1983) in diversity courses and the organizational production of inequality regimes through standardized student evaluations. We are especially interested in Jaggar's focus on emotion work in learning in the following areas: (1) student emotional responses to the social construction of "required" diversity courses/instructors (Jaggar 1989); (2) how student feelings are constructed as value judgments and as evaluative judgments of pedagogy (Jaggar 1989); and (3) how does emotion work in the diversity classroom frame evaluations of instructors by students and construct professional dimensions of academic diversity work (Hochschild 1979, 1983)?

Methods

In the spring of 2006, we analyzed the student evaluations of minority and nonminority instructors teaching required diversity courses (American Association of Colleges and Universities 2000) offered at one large US Midwestern university (PWI). Instructors were contacted by mail, electronic mail, or in person. We asked participant-instructors to provide their teaching evaluations for all diversity classes taught during a consecutive two-year time period. Similar to Perry et al. (2009), participants included the following disciplines and program areas: English, History, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, Anthropology, Modern Languages, Nutrition, and Ethnic and Women's Studies.

Student evaluation forms vary from department to department, but all have similar goals. Most departmental student evaluations include questions on the best and worst aspects of a course and/or its instruction, as well as any discrimination that may have occurred between the instructor and the students (these latter questions are encouraged by

the Academic Senate of the campus to be included on all evaluation forms). For example, students are often asked questions such as, "What were the strongest aspects of the instruction in this course?", "What aspects of the course would you like to see changed or improved?" and "Please comment on whether you feel the instructor unfairly discriminated against any student or group of students in this class." We investigate whether these standardized evaluations represent processes and meanings in this particular organization that potentially reinforce the inequality regimes of race, ethnicity, gender, and nationality. Students generally rank the dimensions of the course numerically and have the opportunity to provide open-ended responses. For the purpose of the current study, we focus on qualitative written responses collected by individual instructors using a wide variety of evaluation forms.

Thirty-one instructors consented to participate in the current study and 29 of these instructors provided their raw teaching evaluations. Respondents are 68.9% female and 72.4% white non-Hispanic. Table 1 provides the demographics of the sample by gender. Almost half of all female instructors are either assistant or full professors, while the other half comprises teaching assistants, lecturers, or other adjunct faculty. The majority of males are full professors ($n = 4$) and assistant professors ($n = 2$), while only three males are teaching assistants, lecturers, or adjunct faculty. Almost all the males in the sample are white, with the exception of one African-American male. One-third of the women self-identified as racial and ethnic minorities ($n = 6$). The men in our sample had taught longer than the women (15.8 vs. 11.5 years) and were older (46.6 vs. 42.6 years). Men's ages ranged between 30 and 60 years while women's ages ranged from 27 to 62 years.

We thematically analyzed transcribed open-ended responses by students from their formal course evaluations for their required diversity course instructors, both minority and non-minority. Similar to Perry et al. (2009), we used an open coding process that fo-

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of instructor evaluated.

	Female ($n = 20$)	Male ($n=9$)
Rank		
GTA	5	1
Lecturer/senior lecturer	2	1
Assistant professor	4	2
Associate professor	0	0
Full professor	4	4
Other	4	1
Unknown/missing	1	0
Race		
White, Hispanic, Puerto Rican	1	0
Black/African-American	3	1
Chicana	1	0
White non-Hispanic/Caucasian	13	7
White Jewish	0	1
European/Latin American	1	0
Unknown/missing	1	0
Average years taught	11.53	15.78
Average age	42.63	46.56

cused on building larger themes and description emerging from the raw data (Strauss and Corbin 1990). The coding process initially took place individually to establish our original list of categories. We read the transcribed student evaluations, line-by-line, on at least three different occasions. The first time we reviewed the student responses, we were concerned about gaining "a sense of the whole" (Hatch 2002). The second read-through included memoing as well as the beginning phases of coding key words and phrases. During the third examination, we began to develop a list of codes. During group research meetings, we reduced overlapping and redundant codes consistently found among student evaluations and researchers' analysis. From the collapsed codes, larger themes centered on students' emotional responses emerged.

Findings

The following section describes the four emotion themes reflected in student evaluations from required diversity courses at a PWI: diversity lessons, perceived blind spots, perceived fairness, and ducking diversity. We find contradictory themes of perceived instructional bias and the value of diversity lessons. Students willingly acknowledged both the substance of the diversity lessons learned, and the higher-order thinking skills demanded in this process. Yet a core of students used these evaluations to symbolically mark their resistance against diversity scholarship and/ or the presence of diverse instructors. Our findings suggest that non-minority instructors may gain privileges in the evaluation process by avoiding dealing directly with diversity, even in courses specified as meeting "diversity requirements", a pedagogical omission that is reflected in their student evaluations under the theme "ducking diversity".

Diversity lessons: Like a jolt to the brain

We begin by assessing student exposure to new, diverse scholarship on the histories, cultures, and social patterns that have been distorted or excluded from student analysis and scholarship in the past. Students demonstrated a number of positive responses to learning about minority perspectives, including intellectual openness and social empathy. These productive reactions highlight the potential benefits of diversity education, "that can result in leadership with greater social awareness and the complex thinking skills to alleviate social problems related to the complexities of inequality" (Hurtado 2007, 193).

Diversity lessons were observed across race, ethnicity, and gender of the instructors (instructor race/ethnicity/gender/rank in parenthesis below) and reflected the undeniable value of the information taught. The anonymous student evaluations were drenched with commentaries on their substantive knowledge gained. For example, one student reported, "I learned a lot about race and culture" (0402, Black/African American male GTA). Similarly, another student wrote, "I've learned way more than could be put on this paper" (0103, white female tenured faculty). A different student said, "Brought a lot of new ideas to my attention" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty).

Specifically, some students identified particular areas of ignorance that were filled in by the diversity course content. Students acknowledged developing a greater awareness of the dynamics of social inequality including prejudice, cultural and gender bias, and racism. To illustrate, students made comments such as, "He really helped me to understand fully the huge problems of ethnocentrism and racism today" (0402, Black/Afri-

can American male GTA); "I knew basically nothing about Judaism or culture before this class" (0102, white Jewish male tenured faculty); "I learned a lot about our history of prejudice that I never heard in history" (0409, white male tenured faculty); "We talked about every possible issue with immigrants even some taboo ones" (0901, European/Latin American female tenured faculty); and "Dangerous – would bring to light a subject not incorporated in other classes and makes you face history and women's issues – covert/overt operation by US" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty). In some cases, access to the diversity classroom inspired a sense of social activism. For example, "Taught me more about the plight of the African American community and what we can do to further the cause" (1202, Black/African American female pre-tenured faculty).

Other students emphasized vital diversity lessons that assisted them in understanding the increasing racial and ethnic diversity around them. The acquisition of minority perspectives is particularly important for students who have spent the majority of their lives in predominantly white spaces. For example, "Important to counter growing up around few minorities and I felt I learned a lot about human beings; Informs students on broad and specific levels of racism" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty); and "Helps educate the majority about the minority experience" (0901, European/Latin American female tenured faculty).

Taking it a step further, students' responses to diversity lessons generated a sense of critical reflection on their own position and forms of diversity around them. We take these comments to mean that students valued the cognitive challenges of working with diversity as a topic and of developing the skills described above. For example, "[Instructor] tried very hard for all of us to understand a multi-cultural perspective in our learning process" (0401, white Puerto Rican female pre-tenured faculty) and "Like a jolt to the brain" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty). Subsequently, a few students recognized the importance in making diversity courses accessible to their peers. For instance, "Make this course mandatory for ALL [Midwestern University] students" (0402, Black/African American male GTA).

In sharp contrast, other students used their formal student evaluations to vent extensive negative emotional reactions to the required nature of the courses, to diversity as a topic, and to particular groups. The unfavorable evaluations also tended to be much lengthier as compared to the more favorable commentaries. Instead of recommending that diversity education be made mandatory, some students argued for eliminating the curriculum altogether. For instance, one student wrote that his or her diversity course actually led to disinterest in diversity and used the course evaluation as an opportunity to personally blame African-Americans for their disadvantaged status:

> Get rid of it – diversity class's make people care less. After this class, I could care less about the plight of black people. I think if they want equality, work hard and quit complaining about the system. (1202, African American female pre-tenured faculty)

Another student argued that his or her course was a bad investment, both academically and financially: "My intellectual abilities were not given any outlet. This course was insultingly easy and furthermore paying for it was a waste of $" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty). Similarly, a self-identified white student expressed irritation at being exposed to what he or she concluded was blatant misinformation:

I was offended as a white person by the [title] video. The idea that whites have merely conceded to alter their opinions & actions concerning minorities simply b/c they feel some pressure to do so – w/o any real conviction – doesn't allow that some people actually put stock into living out the moral choices they make. The movie is the most overt piece of propaganda I've seen for a while. (0405, white female other instructor)

Students also exhibited strong sentiments in their perceptions of disproportionate representations. One student stated disparagingly, "But next time tell the gay guy in the front to shut up" (0411, Black/African-American female GTA). Equally demeaning, another student expressed:

… it was very pro-black. Overall a complete waste of time. I would not recommend anyone take this course. It made me sick …First-like this class to teach about women in politics – as it turned out it was mostly about black women in politics. (1202, Black/African American female pre-tenured faculty)

These comments in anonymous student evaluations include challenges to the very foundations of diversity courses. When these evaluations are enmeshed with the multiple identities of instructors, whether as new graduate assistants or seasoned full professors, we are provided with insights into the challenges presented explicitly and implicitly to instructors. Student reaction to these diversity lessons reflects a dimension of contemporary backlash of political attitudes toward race and other diversity topics. Given these impassioned reactions, students often commented emotionally on their appraisal of diversity instructors and courses as biased.

In the following theme, we address the students' evaluations as they focus on the very substance of the diversity courses.

Perceived blind spots: bias in diversity curricula and instructors

The intensity of student evaluations links implicitly to the personal and professional emotion work of diversity instructors. Students frequently commented on whether they perceived their instructor as fair and objective or personally biased regarding the subject matter as well as in their interactions with students. Most striking are the bias themes targeted at women, and in particular minority women. These responses tended to be of a more personal nature and noticeably directed at who these individuals were assumed to be. Students wrote comments such as, "Teach a course where she doesn't have previous bias" (1202, Black/African-American female pre-tenured faculty); "You don't have to talk so loud and passionately all the time" (1202, African-American female pre-tenured faculty); "Tone down language and offensive comments" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty); and "I would like to see the teacher removed for both being racist and breaking school policies" (0401, white Puerto Rican female pre-tenured faculty).

Another student directly challenged a female instructor's integrity and authority in the classroom:

The instructor seemed at times to be trying to assert her position of authority – trying to prove to us that she's a professor and is so wise, impressing us with her vast knowledge, superiority, and qualifications. (0405, white female other instructor)

Alternatively, fewer bias comments were made toward male instructors and responses tended to be less personal and directed more outwardly. For instance, one student commented, "Keep personal politics out of the classroom" (1701, white male lecturer).

Not surprisingly, several students found the course material in required diversity classes itself to be biased and offered their own view on how the course material should be taught. For example, "When presenting information that is controversial, it should be presented as unbiased toward other views as possible" (1001, Chicana female pre-tenured faculty). A student who self-identified as a "white male" also offered feedback on how to improve course instruction and suggested that perhaps he experienced reverse discrimination:

> The course material is biased, rather than analytically examining affirmative action, we hear about how great it is, etc. As a white male, I felt like a criminal more than half a dozen times which is absurd. (0404, white male other instructor)

Clearly, for some students from privileged backgrounds, challenging the dominant ideology through diversity courses' content provoked an extreme, emotional retort. The following quote from an in-text self-identified middle-class white male student further illustrates this point:

> I am a middle class white male and this course made me feel like the absolute scum of the earth. Just remember that we got this country where it is so don't be so hard on us. (0405, white female other instructor)

Similarly, a black/African-American female instructor (1202) received pointed comments such as, "The class made me vomit." When asked about what students liked in this same course, another student flagrantly stated, "Absolutely nothing, I thought it was 2 minutes a day of information and another 70 minutes of total B.S.!!" Harsh and disrespectful comments such as these were rare or non-existent in diversity courses instructed by men. Again, the strongest emotions tended to be incited in courses with female instructors, especially minority females. Thus, instructors of color often assess their students' evaluations with a heightened sense of the racial context of the diversity classroom (Perry et al. 2009). Despite a number of sharp evaluations targeting minority females, our next theme draws attention to the contradictions present in diversity work.

Perceived fairness

Although some students were highly critical, assuming instructor and course bias, other students applauded instructors' ability to deliver courses that in their view were fair or unbiased. These instructors were more likely to receive favorable comments such as, "Excellent energy and unbiased at all times"; "The fact that he is a minority helps give the inside track on issues" (0402, African American male GTA); "He was very fair" (0102, white Jewish male tenured faculty); "She helps make multiracial students feel they have a voice" (0901, European/Latin American female tenured faculty); and "The teacher was clear and to the point without being biased" (0409, white male tenured faculty).

Interestingly, many instructors who were charged with being unfair or promoting subjective course material also received favorable responses from other students in the same courses (see Diversity lessons and perceived blind spots above). The following student re-

sponses demonstrate this discrepancy: "Yes, never biased toward anyone" and "She was extremely enthusiastic and welcomed free thinking" (1202, black/African-American female pre-tenured faculty), and "[Instructor] had a very unbiased approach to the material which made it easier to absorb" and "She was very open to all and I didn't see any discrimination" (0405, white female GTA).

In other positive comments, students focused on the sense of considerate classroom community:

> Our class was so great – everyone was respectful with their opinions and really made it easy for anyone to express their feelings freely and [Instructor] was sensitive to all ethnic backgrounds and provided a diverse approach to this class. (0401, White Puerto Rican female pre-tenured faculty)

Again, student emotional responses tended to center on the perception of the instructor and course objectivity; this was especially true of evaluations of minority female instructors. Minority female instructors pay a larger price in their teaching evaluations for student assumptions about subjectivity and emotions that students may see as violating socially constructed notions of appropriate classroom demeanor and professorial status. They are also more likely to receive inconsistent course evaluations, even in the same courses.

Ducking diversity: avoidance techniques

We conclude these themes by identifying a major pattern of omission in student evaluations. Many of the non-minority male and female instructors received few or no comments that reflected the rich tones (or stinging critiques) of the diversity lessons described earlier, even when prompted by direct diversity questions worded by the faculty Senate. These instructors taught courses that ranged from large lectures for first-year undergraduates to graduate seminars. For example, surveying a large lecture required diversity course for first-year students: No diversity comments coded (0405, white other female instructor) and a graduate seminar: No diversity comments coded (0101, white female tenured faculty).

Some student evaluations explicitly prompt students to reflect on the classroom climate in relation to diversity and discrimination, and generated the following as the only comments about diversity in their course evaluations: "No – she did not discriminate, but she could have incorporated diversity in her course materials" (0410, white female GTA); and "Please learn how to say DuBois and apartheid, so I feel like I am being educated by an educated adult": Only diversity comment (0410, white female GTA).

In one course that emphasizes field methods and cultural analysis, students could muster only the following diversity lessons from a white female instructor: "She also has a lot interesting stories concerning her field work to tell" (1002, white female pre-tenured faculty); and "Experience working with Indian people firsthand – experience with most of info presented" (1002, white female pre-tenured faculty).

This omission of explicit student discussions about the diversity components of the course was a hallmark for the student evaluations of non-minority instructors. In fact, there were eight instructors (five female, three male) where no student mention was made of any diversity lessons in their course evaluations. Only one of these instructors was non-white (a GTA).

The ducking of diversity reflected in comments by students may be omissions of student origin: many students are too rushed to fill out evaluation forms at the end of a busy semester. But this seven to one ratio of instructors who garnered no commentary on diversity from their students (seven non-minority instructors overall, both male and female, and one minority GTA) highlights the disproportionate weight of comments on diversity that target minority instructors. Those who "teach what they are" may be in a more vulnerable emotion-work teaching context for receiving and debriefing from student evaluations. The burden of student evaluations marked by intensive commentary about the political and cultural nature of diversity lessons falls disproportionately on the faculty and graduate instructors of color, even within required diversity courses.

Discussion and conclusion

The goal of this paper is to explore how the academic construction of diversity courses (who teaches, what is taught, and how it is evaluated) socially constructs the emotion work of instructors and students and uniquely impacts the personal and professional experiences of minority and non-minority instructors (Hochschild 1979; Jaggar 1989). This qualitative study thematically examines the responses of students catalogued across two years of course evaluations within required diversity courses at a predominantly white, US public university. Our research analyzes the emotional content in course evaluations given by students and finds contradictory themes of perceived instructional bias and the value of diversity lessons. We argue that the current university structure of required diversity courses marginalizes the evaluation and emotion work of minority instructors and may inherently reproduce the very inequalities they are designed to combat (Acker 2006).

One of the telling patterns of privilege and disadvantage in our study comes from student evaluations of diversity lessons in the theme "ducking diversity". This was a common theme for white female and male instructors of these courses. Their student evaluations disproportionately lacked any direct commentary by students with reference to specific or general diversity lessons, and some students included comments citing directly the lack of such lessons in diversity courses taught by these instructors. Privileged instructors may avoid sharp discussions on diversity completely, or their discussions of diversity go unchallenged by students, due to their dominant racial/ethnic/gender status. These findings are consistent with Perry et al. (2009), in which male and majority racial/ethnic instructors' responses were especially likely to describe their efforts to avoid difficult discussions surrounding diversity. Non-minority instructors are also disproportionately underrepresented in the teaching of these courses overall, avoiding burdens of emotion work altogether.

Similar to past research (Anderson and Smith 2005; Laden and Hagedorn 2000), our findings suggest that minority and female instructors are evaluated by students as more biased than their white, male counterparts teaching a similar curriculum. Female instructors of color are particularly targeted for politicized commentary and reacting to the impact of "deep acting" in the differential demands of emotion work in the academy (Harlow 2003; Turner 2002). On the other hand, some students positively described their "diversity lessons" by emphasizing valuable knowledge gained and their emergent understanding of minority perspectives. However, other student responses were emotionally framed by their reactions to both the required nature of the courses and their

perceptions of disproportionate representation and "bias" (e.g. describing courses as "pro-black", "too gay", "too loud and passionate").

Student evaluations of teaching are very personal for many instructors, and several participants in our original study (Perry et al. 2009) stated they were uncomfortable having others analyze their teaching evaluations. In addition, many faculty and instructors responsible for diversity courses changed positions during our study period, or were difficult to contact as they completed their doctorate or moved from adjunct and temporary positions. Thus, this research is limited to the 29 instructors who were willing and available to provide their teaching evaluations. It should also be noted that not all students fill out their teaching evaluations, and of those that fill them out, not all respond to open-ended questions. Qualitative evaluations emphasize, in large part, the students who fall on the extreme ends of the spectrum, strongly liking or disliking the course or instructor. In addition, our current data do not identify particular student demographics (with the exception of cases where students provided this information) of the student evaluators at this predominately white campus. Other study limitations involve the segmented nature of the required diversity courses (a distinct pedagogic activity) and the inability to generalize these findings to other courses or other campuses that are addressing diversity and retention issues.

Despite these limitations, our study provides several strengths. The student-generated themes of diversity lessons, perceived blind spots, perceived fairness, and ducking diversity all triangulated with past research (Anderson and Smith 2005; Harlow 2003). Our findings further support the assessments of Perry et al. (2009) and Moore et al. (2010) on the experiences minority instructors reported, in the context of inequality regimes. This study addresses the gap in the current literature (Smith and Anderson 2005) by analyzing student feedback to diversity instructors across disciplines, contrasting evaluations of their minority and non-minority instructors.

Although the focus of this research is on higher education diversity courses in the USA, the dynamics highlighted here could be a legitimate concern for other international settings. Many European countries are experiencing increased growth in ethnic, religious, and language diversity. Subsequently, the Council of Europe, which includes 47 European nations and promotes diversity and human rights, has taken on intercultural education and understanding as a key initiative (Council of Europe 2011). To this point, research beyond the USA examining the experiences of minority instructors charged with teaching diversity and/or intercultural coursework is limited at best. Thus, this paper has the potential to provide a framework beyond the USA.

The lessons we gathered from student evaluations in required diversity courses represent a cognitive map of student messages to faculty members and the higher probability of minority instructors receiving emotional messages about diversity course content and minority instructor statuses. Negative student reactions not only affect instructors' self-evaluation but also affect the ways in which university administrators evaluate their pedagogy. When student evaluations are used in hiring, promotion and tenure decisions, or in assessments of academic programs, the "color blind" process that ignores a racialized and gendered framework creates additional barriers to the professional development and retention of diversity instructors at predominately white institutions.

The disparate burden of emotion work in diversity courses undermines minority instructors' professionalism and may have serious career consequences. In the academy,

the dominant science model of "objective" scholarship colors the academic evaluations of careers linked to the "commoditized" diversity course (Hochschild 1979, 1983). When qualitative student statements about bias are used in an ad hoc manner in evaluation of instructors who are pre-tenure, adjunct, or graduate student instructors, the potential disruption is materially real. As one participant, Teresita (Latina GTA) in Perry et al. (2009) expressed:

> When you go out on the job market, they ask for your evaluations. When they see [low teaching evaluation scores], they might make a judgment based on your ability, when it's really based more on a racist judgment of the student. … It's bad enough being a person of color without having low scores.

We recommend college administrators acknowledge that teaching required diversity courses often necessitates more time and energy than teaching non-diversity courses, including a greater burden of emotion work (Stanley 2006, 726). Thus, personnel decisions should reflect the important distinctions between diversity and non-diversity course evaluations. For example, universities could provide a different set of weights attached to diversity courses as compared to non-diversity courses or compile the outcomes from student evaluations separately. Instructors, especially minority instructors, should also be surveyed about their teaching diversity experiences. Subsequently, these data should be shared across disciplines in order to increase institutional awareness of the unique emotional challenges in diversity instruction.

Because of the hidden "emotional tax" of diversity instruction, course assignments should include non-minority instructors and senior-level faculty (Moore et al. 2010, 198). Non-minority and minority instructors can also team-teach diversity courses. "Teaching across racial identities as well as other social and cultural identities can only serve to deepen the discourse on diversity and social justice" (Stanley 2006, 726). Sharing the burden of diversity instruction signals a solid commitment of the essential value of diversity curriculum to the university and its students.

Quality cross-disciplinary professional development opportunities must be made available to diversity instructors, especially minority instructors. For instance, institutions could offer workshops, both formal and informal, to help instructors critically examine what they can realistically affect. This may be a way to help reduce the emotional burden on the individual level by gaining support from other similarly situated instructors. However, it is important to note that this should be implemented cautiously as minority instructor workloads tend to be overburdened. Interdisciplinary workshops should not be used to create a "diverse façade [for] the institution" (Bryant et al. 2005, 316).

This study draws attention to the manner in which organizational practices of required diversity courses disproportionately disadvantage the scholarship and emotion work of minority instructors. Universities that truly value diversity must alter their underlying unequal structures, especially if they are committed to refocusing historical legacies of exclusion that pervade educational organizations (Acker 2006; Brayboy 2003). The findings of this research are a call to action for any educator or administrator concerned about guarding against reproducing the very inequalities that diversity courses were designed to eradicate.

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