The Evolution of Diversity: Revising Student Learning Outcomes

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Abstract Submission: Institute for Student Learning Assessment, 2015

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This submission proposes a presentation and audience conversation about student learning outcomes for diversity. The presentation takes as its case study the Kansas State University English Department's revision of its diversity SLO. The shift from a pluralistic sense of diversity with a comfortable narrative of inclusion (e.g. “include texts by people of color”) to the structural understanding of diversity evident in the revised SLO revision (e.g. “engage structural issues of power and equity”) was the cause of much departmental debate. The presentation, then, uses the lens of these debates to examine larger shifts in understandings of diversity, asking how and why we might craft SLOs to address the more complicated understandings of power relations that have developed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

Once the case study is presented, the audience will be asked to pair and share on their own diversity SLOs. Questions will include:

1. Does their department/program/college have diversity-specific SLOs?
2. If so, what do they look like? If not, what might they look like?
3. Where do those current/future SLOs fall on the spectrum set up by the presentation and why?
4. What types of knowledge development do the SLOs include and encourage?

Small group sharing will be followed by a large group discussion.