

Leadership in Turbulent Times

This book updates critical perspectives on leadership, including the roles of evolving technology and of the pandemic in shaping new demands for postsecondary education. In challenging the entrenched view that access and excellence are incompatible, it offers essential guidance on how leaders can address current and future challenges in the field.

Anne-Marie Núñez, PhD
Executive Director, Diana Natalicio Institute for Hispanic
Student Success
Distinguished Centennial Professor, Educational Leadership and
Foundations
The University of Texas at EL Paso

Leadership in turbulent times uses empirical research, conceptual scholarship, and personal narratives to tell the complex stories of the ways individuals and institutions are cultivating diversity and inclusion in the higher education workplace. The authors examine the individual strategies and institutional actions that address the systemic challenges to integrating diversity and inclusion in higher education. The volume is a must-read for students, faculty, institutional leaders, and higher education policymakers to understand how we can intentionally transform higher education.

Tamara Bertrand Jones, PhD
Associate Professor of Higher Education
Associate Director, Center for Postsecondary Success
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Florida State University

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Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the Higher Education Workplace

EDITED BY

GAËTANE JEAN-MARIE

Rowan University, USA

AND

HENRY TRAN

University of South Carolina, USA



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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About the Editors

Gaëtane Jean-Marie, PhD, is Dean of the College of Education and Professor of Educational Leadership at Rowan University. Prior to that, she was Dean of the College of Education and Richard O. Jacobson Endowed Chair of Leadership in Education at the University of Northern Iowa. Jean-Marie's research focuses on educational equity and social justice in P-12 schools, women and leadership in the P-20 system, and leadership development and preparation in a global context. She has over 90 publications and procured over \$4 million in grants and contracts. She is the editor of *Studies in Educational Administration Series* (Emerald Publishing), and serves on numerous boards such as chair-elect of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate board, member on the Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions (CADREI) and Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities (TECSCU), and former at-large member of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE).

Henry Tran is an Associate Professor at the University of South Carolina's Department of Educational Leadership and Policies who studies issues related to education human resources (HR). He has published extensively on the topic, and holds two national HR certifications. He is also the colead editor of the book *How did we get here?: The decay of the teaching profession*, editor of the *Journal of Education Human Resources*, and the Director of the Talent Centered Education Leadership Initiative.

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About the Contributors

D. Crystal Coles, PhD, LCSW, is a Senior Associate Researcher at James Bell and Associates. Prior to working in corporate arenas, Dr Coles was a Professor for almost a decade. Her scholarship interest and practice experiences lie in the public child welfare arena, with a specific emphasis in anti-racist and racial justice approaches to research implementation science. More specifically, she focuses on child welfare and the intersection of the African-American/Black diaspora through the lens of health disparities in rural and urban communities; focusing on the child and maternal well-being as a preventative method of children transitioning into the foster care system. Dr Coles is committed to addressing the needs of society through her work and its emphasis on social justice, critical thought, systematic inequalities, policy development, and assisting social change within the area of health and child welfare for children and families.

Chamika L. Ellis (she/her) is a fourth-year doctoral student in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. Chamika has over 14 years of experience in Higher Education in the areas of Resident Life, service learning, and training and development. As a first-generation student and alumna of foster care, her research interests include exploring the transitional experiences of black women in foster care, supporting first-generation students, and supporting new professionals entering higher education. Chamika completed her Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside and her Master's of Education in Higher Education from the University of Arkansas.

Simone A. F. Gause is currently a research associate in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policies and Associate Director of the Center for Innovation and Inclusion in Higher Education at the University of South Carolina. She earned her PhD in Educational Administration in 2016 from the University of South Carolina. Her scholarly interest primarily focuses on issues of privilege and power and how they impact gender equity, racial equity, and leadership diversity in educational settings. Specifically, her research examines the continued disproportionality and intersectionality of race and gender in educational leadership through historical and contemporary contexts, the experiences of marginalized students and faculty in higher education, faculty diversity, and mentorship.

Gloria L. Howell currently serves as Director of the Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center and Faculty Coordinator for an introductory research course at Indiana University Bloomington (IUB). She earned her PhD in Higher Education and Student Affairs from IUB where her research focused on amplifying culture-infused pedagogy through the arts and its connection to Black student identity affirmation in postsecondary spaces. As a student affairs educator, Dr Howell connects research to practice through the initiatives she coordinates for students, particularly those that center leadership development, social justice, and activism.

Kymia Love Jackson is the Assistant Dean of Finance and Business in the Taneja College of Pharmacy at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Florida. During her time at the University of South Florida, she has provided operational support and expertise in the areas of business, finance, and research administration. She received a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Notre Dame, a dual Master's degree in Marketing and Management from the University of South Florida, and Doctor of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Higher Education Administration from the University of South Florida.

Jessica Jennrich (she/her/hers) is the Interim Assistant Vice President of the Social Justice Centers, as well as the Director of the Center for Women and Gender Equity and a Social Justice Specialist at Grand Valley State University. She is currently involved in a number of higher education and social justice organizations and is a current and former grant partner with the American Association for University Women, the Office of Civil Rights, and the Department of Health and Human Services. Jessica's writing has been published in the *Journal Progressive Policy and Practice*, *The National Women's Studies Journal*, *Paradigm Magazine*, *Demeter*, and Springer Press. Jessica earned her bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University in English, master's degree from Eastern Michigan University in Women's and Gender Studies, and doctorate from the University of Missouri in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis. Jessica lives in Saugatuck, Michigan with her partner and three children.

Martha Kakooza is a PhD student in Higher Education Administration at Morgan State University. She is learning to become a scholar-practitioner whose work (both in scholarship and practice) is focused on the intersection of genders, sexualities, immigration, and race. Her training and research are rooted in Black Feminist Thought and Africana womanism, documenting lived and felt experiences through narrative inquiry. She holds a BSc and MSc in Women and Gender Studies from Towson University.

Spencer Platt is an Associate Professor of Higher Education Administration and Interim Director of the Center for Innovation and Inclusion in Higher Education at the University of South Carolina. He earned his PhD from the University of Texas at Austin. His MS degree is from the University of Dayton and he holds a baccalaureate degree from the University of South Carolina. Dr Platt has over 20 years of experience in student affairs, community engagement, diversity/equity,

and academic affairs. His research interests center on issues of diversity, equity, access, and excellence in education. Platt's research has been published in the *Journal of College Student Development*, the *Journal of Advanced Academics*, and the *Journal of Negro Education* and he has coedited three books. He has presented his work at numerous national and international academic conferences and institutes including the American Educational Research Association, the Association for the Study of Higher Education, the International Conference on Doctoral Education, and the International Colloquium on Black Males in Education.

Dr Sean Robinson is the Graduate Director and Professor in the Higher Education and Students Affairs program in the School of Education & Urban Studies at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. His primary teaching and research areas include leadership and teaching for social justice, student identity development, human resource management, and organizational behavior. Dr Robinson has authored over two dozen publications and conducted over 50 presentations both nationally and internationally, many of them centered on LGBTQ issues in education, media literacy, mentoring, and the impact of media/pop culture on LGBTQ youth.

Kernysha L. Rowe, PhD is the Assistant Dean of Students and Adjunct Professor at American University in Washington, DC. She teaches undergraduate courses about social identity formation, race and ethnicity, and intersectionality in the School of Education and is responsible for adjudicating student discipline and using restorative justice principles to heal and repair the campus community. She received her PhD from Morgan State University in Higher Education Administration and was awarded outstanding dissertation of the year. Her dissertation centers Black women medical and law students, with natural Black hair and hair texture, and their professional identity construction within their respective fields. Her research agenda examines race and identity within higher education, with research interests spanning interdisciplinary topics including JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion), organizational leadership, feminism, Black esthetics, and texturism. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Relations from Florida International University, an MBA from the University of Phoenix, and an MA Ed in Higher Education Administration from The George Washington University.

Sequetta F. Sweet, EdD, is an Assistant Professor of Organizational Leadership at Stockton University in Atlantic City, New Jersey. She teaches topics such as leadership, influence, and change at both the doctoral and undergraduate levels helping students understand leadership theory and practice in organizations and, most importantly, helping them develop their leadership identity, who they are as a leader. She also supervises doctoral students who are developing their dissertations, chairing students in various disciplines and using various research methods. She is most interested in how students learn and how to engage students in learning; individual and personal change; transformational change to improve the performance of organizations and productivity of individuals; and issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and focuses her research in these areas. Dr

Sweet is the catalyst for much of the change that Stockton University's EdD in Organizational Leadership program has undergone and continues to experience in recent years. She has a vision of a program that actively partners with all its stakeholders to produce the highest levels of leadership development and change in its students, preparing them to meet volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous challenges and be agile, ready for the changing landscape and nature of our world. Dr Sweet demonstrates leadership, strategic planning, and change management, and considers her very presence to be a gadfly or change agent in nature. She is not daunted by the notion of drastic, deep, and continual change in herself, in others, and in organizations.

Wendy Maragh Taylor is the Associate Dean of the College for Student Growth and Engagement at Vassar College. She is a student affairs professional, an educator and a licensed clinical social worker who has been working with individuals, families and groups through community based organizations, public schools and in higher education institutions. Wendy has also been an instructor at several colleges in the departments of Anthropology, Education, Psychology, and Social Work. She earned her undergraduate degree from Brown University, her graduate degree from New York University and is currently working on her PhD at SUNY Albany.

Dr Valerie J. Thompson is an Assistant Professor within Intervention Services & Leadership in Education (ISLE) Department at Wichita State University. Specifically, she coordinates and teaches within the Higher Education Leadership Graduate Certificate program and the Higher Education/Student Affairs program track. Additionally, Dr Thompson has 15 years of student affairs experience and is one of the cocreators/cohosts of BLK Womyn Podcast (Higher Education-Student Affairs Podcast), which centers on the lived experiences of Black Women within Higher Education. Dr Thompson's research interests center Black women student affairs professionals and burnout, compassion fatigue, intersectionality, (race and gendered) stress, and (race and gendered) fatigue.

Christina Wright Fields is an Assistant Professor of Education at Marist College. She earned her PhD in Higher Education Administration with a concentration in the academic success of historically marginalized populations from Bowling Green State University. As a diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) activist, educator and researcher, Dr Fields broadly explores the issues of race, gender, and equity in education and administrative practices. Additionally, through use of critical qualitative methodologies, she centers the experiences of Black educators, administrators, and students in both K-12 and postsecondary education. Dr Fields teaches coursework in foundations of education and social and cultural foundations of education.

Prologue

The macro-societal movements and events that have been orchestrated against social injustice in recent years have brought increasing attention to the problems of inequality in our society. Specifically, social movements and events such as *the Black Lives Matter* and *Stop Asian Hate*, the Supreme Court's ruling against the legality of employment discrimination against the LGBTQ population, the exposing of how deeply entrenched in inequity we are as a society from the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ever growing diversity of the workforce, serve as impetuses for more diverse and engaging work contexts. Within the field of education, racial diversity issues such as the paucity of educators of color in the field, workload disparity across demographics of the education workforce, the handling of student discipline and employment discrimination have been frequently noted as warranting attention (Brown, 2014; D'amico et al., 2017; Krull & Robicheau, 2020; Metze, 2012) if the goal is to truly create more diverse and inclusive work spaces. We addressed these issues in the K-12 context for volume one of this book series, entitled *Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the P-12 Education Workplaces*. However, many of the challenges also permeate the higher education environment, which prompted the development of the present book entitled *Leadership in Turbulent Times: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion in the Higher Education Workplaces*.

Educational organizations and scholars across the field have embraced the challenge to interrogate these critical issues more broadly. For example, in the recent 2021 AERA Presidential session on workplace inclusion titled, *Creating More Inclusive Education Work Spaces through Talent-Centered Education Leadership*, the second coeditor of this book, Henry Tran, convened a panel of scholars and practitioners that included: Michelle Young, Vincent, Gregory, Wardell Hunter, Bridget T. Kelly, Michele Dow, Mario Suarez, Tiffany Wright, and Douglas Smith, as well as presenters that included Kathleen Cunningham, Simone Gause, Suzie Hardie, and Spencer Platt, as they dialog about how education employers across the P-20 continuum can create more inclusive work spaces, particularly salient given the theme of "Educational Responsibility" for the 2021 AERA conference that year. Please scan the following QR-code for the recording of the session.

In addition, both coeditors of the current book collaborated to provide a space and outlet for promotion of education diversity and inclusion scholarship,



specifically on the intersection of gender and race in the education workplace in two special issues of *the Journal of Education Human Resources* entitled: *Gender and Race in the P-12 and Higher Education Workplace* Volume 40(1) and Volume 40(3). The culmination of the AERA presidential conference and special issues have led to deeper explorations of education workplace diversity and inclusion across a spectrum of related topics ranging from exploring the history of education workplace discrimination experienced by marginalized groups (e.g., people of color, with disabilities, who identify as LGBTQ, gender and intersectionalities of the aforementioned identities), the present challenges they face, to recommendations for P-20 employers concerning how to cultivate an environment of workplace inclusion.

During a time of increasing political polarization and propaganda incited battles waged on social media platforms fueling racial unrest, progress toward social justice can be displaced and concerted efforts in higher education workplace committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion can be hindered. The pursuit of social justice in the education workplace setting invites others to engage and consider diverse perspectives. Yet, the complex intersection of people often depicts social norms that are contradictory to moving toward a just world. In a post-pandemic environment, educational leaders are called upon to respond to the contested terrain of ever-increasing chaotic systems in colleges and universities.

In response to turbulent times in society and education institutions (i.e., social unrest, inequitable access to healthcare, police brutality), employers are challenged to meet the evolving and growing needs of an increasingly diverse society. This edited book provides an in-depth exploration of education workplace diversity and inclusion in response to those needs. The chapters in this edited book draw upon cutting edge theories, evidence-based strategies, and integrate autoethnography and autobiographical of lived experiences. Particular emphasis will be placed on how education leaders can employ inclusive approaches to make positive changes to their work environments that foster a sense of belonging for people of all backgrounds in the higher education setting. The range of chapters examines how leaders in higher education systems developed their own and

others' capacity to accomplish this in turbulent times. The authors invite readers to consider the nuances of personal and professional experiences of leaders in search of meaning while simultaneously leading in organizations that are unpredictable, unstable, and unavoidable chasms of people, systems, processes, etc.

In the introductory semi-autobiographical research chapter entitled *The Algorithmic Arm Race: How Justice Became a Business in Post-Covid Higher Education*, Jennrich chronicles the how one mid-sized regional public university experienced a systematic co-opting of its social justice efforts in a commodified manner and provides discussion on its impact for higher education inclusion. Sweet follows with the second chapter *Leading Transformational Change in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education*, with an in-depth discussion on how to promote sustainable leadership to develop and maintain DEI educational environments. She draws on institutional and leadership transformation theories to provide focus on changing organizations that currently promote exclusive and even outright discriminatory contexts. In the end, this work is necessary to shift the culture and DNA of the workplace in response to the external and internal trends in the environment.

In chapter three *Work-Life Balance for Women in Higher Education*, Jackson reports on a study of six women in executive leadership positions in higher education. They speak on work-life balance in their positions, and how they navigated the leadership roles and responsibilities to their families. They reflect on their decision-making processes and career choices as a result of the balance and perception of women vs. men in the workforce. Relatedly, in chapter four *Women of Color as Outsiders Within the Borders of Academic Leadership*, Gause provides further nuance to the conversation by specifically examining the experiences of Black women in leadership roles.

Taylor parallels the challenges and strategies of recruiting and retaining students from marginalized backgrounds to those same issues for faculty and student affairs administrators in the fifth chapter of this text, *Education Workplace Inclusion Initiatives and Strategies to Cultivate Human Capacity Today*. She argues that the disparate challenges to the lived experiences of students, faculty, and administrators from marginalized backgrounds are currently not addressed, and that higher education institutions replicate inequities they commit to dismantle and blunt the social justice work they publicly commit to. Taylor relies on an autoethnographic approach to examine these issues and make recommendations for improvement.

In chapter six, entitled *The Table at Berkeley: An Ethnodrama Recounting the Experiences of Bisexual Faculty and Staff Navigating the Workplace*, Kakooza and her colleagues show how mononormativity is (re)produced in the workplace based on narratives of six bisexual faculty and staff. The findings are presented through an ethnodrama. In chapter seven, entitled *#BlackWomenAtWork: Lessons Learned From Black Women Educators at Historically White Institutions*, Fields and Howell leverage Black Feminist autoethnography to showcase the hegemonic experiences of Black women at HWIs by sharing their own lived

experiences. They do this to show how the continued disparities endure, and offer insight on how to navigate these treacherous paths as Black women in academia.

Adding another dimension to the discussion, in chapter 8, *What Do I Do Now? Transitions of a Foster Kid: A Personal Narrative*, Ellis examines the topic of foster alumni through her own personal lived experiences as a black woman from foster care currently in the student affairs profession. She examines the nuance and complexity of how identity can manifest in one's professional life, especially as a student affairs professional tasked with supporting individuals who may share the same background.

In chapter 9, *Black Hair and Hair Texture: Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion for Black Women in Higher Education*, Rowe argues that higher education perpetuates and reproduces discriminatory experiences that target Black women and Black Hair, and that the latter is often ignored or treated as insignificant when, speaking from her own experience, it carries significant influence for workplace exclusion. Thompson and Coles follow with chapter 10.

Strange Fruit: The Collective Crushing of Black Women in Academe, which draws on Black Feminist Thought and Critical Race Theory to examine the influence of intersectional identities of Black women academics in higher education. The authors provide suggestions on how to address the experiences of multiple marginality promoted by their work context that reflect the same racism and sexism as the broader society in which they operate within. Finally, Tran and Platt conclude the book with chapter 11, *Equity Versus Excellence? How Institutional Definitions of "Talent" Can be Antithetical to Workplace Inclusion in Academia and What Can Be Done*. This chapter specifically interrogates the juxtaposition that is often presumed of equity and excellence, and provides counterarguments to this perspective. The authors not only draw on the literature but also original research to show how performance contributions of those from underrepresented backgrounds can be marginalized, and provide recommendations for a new direction in higher education talent management to cultivate an inclusive work environment.

In sum, this edited book is particularly relevant given the turbulent times in society and institutions of higher education (i.e. social unrest, inequitable access to healthcare, police brutality), where education employers are challenged to meet the evolving and growing needs of an increasingly diverse society. The chapters in the edited book draw upon cutting edge theories and evidence-based strategies by integrating conceptual and empirical work; with particular emphasis placed on how education leaders can employ inclusive approaches to make positive changes to their work environments.

Given the evidence-based benefits of having a more diverse workforce (Lindsay & Hart, 2017), as well as societal expectations from workers to have more diverse colleagues, creating diverse and inclusive work environments have become salient for many education employers and leaders. Readers interested in this topic will find this book to be a valuable resource to explore this topic in-depth. They will also have the opportunity to read about the experiences of different marginalized groups in the education workplace and how to best develop and foster a work environment that engages and includes its workforce. We hope the book sparks

the inspiration that will allow readers to apply what they learn from the book in practice to make real change toward more supportive work contexts for all.

Gaëtane Jean-Marie, PhD
Henry Tran, MPA, SHRM-CP, PHR, PhD

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