

What is Effective Multicultural Education in Teacher Preparation?

Understanding Our Responsibility as
Scholars and Leaders

Levels of Multicultural Curriculum

- We aspire to levels 3 and 4: transformative/
social justice approaches – see COE CF
- Being afraid of difference -- > equity advocates

Content + Multiculturalism = Effective Teaching Practice

Content without Multiculturalism --- >

- 'Achievement gap' (#1 concern of districts)
 - Evidence that teachers effective with some groups, but not all groups
 - Evident in current efforts to recruit more from under-served groups **particularly in the STEM fields**
- --- > Perpetuation (not interruption) of societal racism
 - Eugenics in education
 - Schools as sites of cultural genocide, mis-education, colonization, assimilation, stratification, White privilege

Current Teaching Context

- Increasing diversity of student population
- Continued homogeneity of teachers
- Recognition of detriments of policies: over-testing and standardization
- Increasing social anxieties about xenophobia, racism, wealth/poverty gap, sexism and homophobia
- Teachers need to be intellectually and culturally adept; ready to address complex issues in an informed and thoughtful way
- Building trust and community in classrooms and with families becomes crucial

Our Students Enter With...

- Deficit orientations towards difference
- Fear of difference/ “controversial” topics
- Assume diversity = multiculturalism
- Charity orientations (not justice orientations)
- Assumptions such as: Discrimination is because of “bad” individuals; Poverty is due to laziness
- Unaware of institutional practices that perpetuate inequity
- How do you engage in equitable education if you are unaware that inequity exists?

Our Students Leave ...

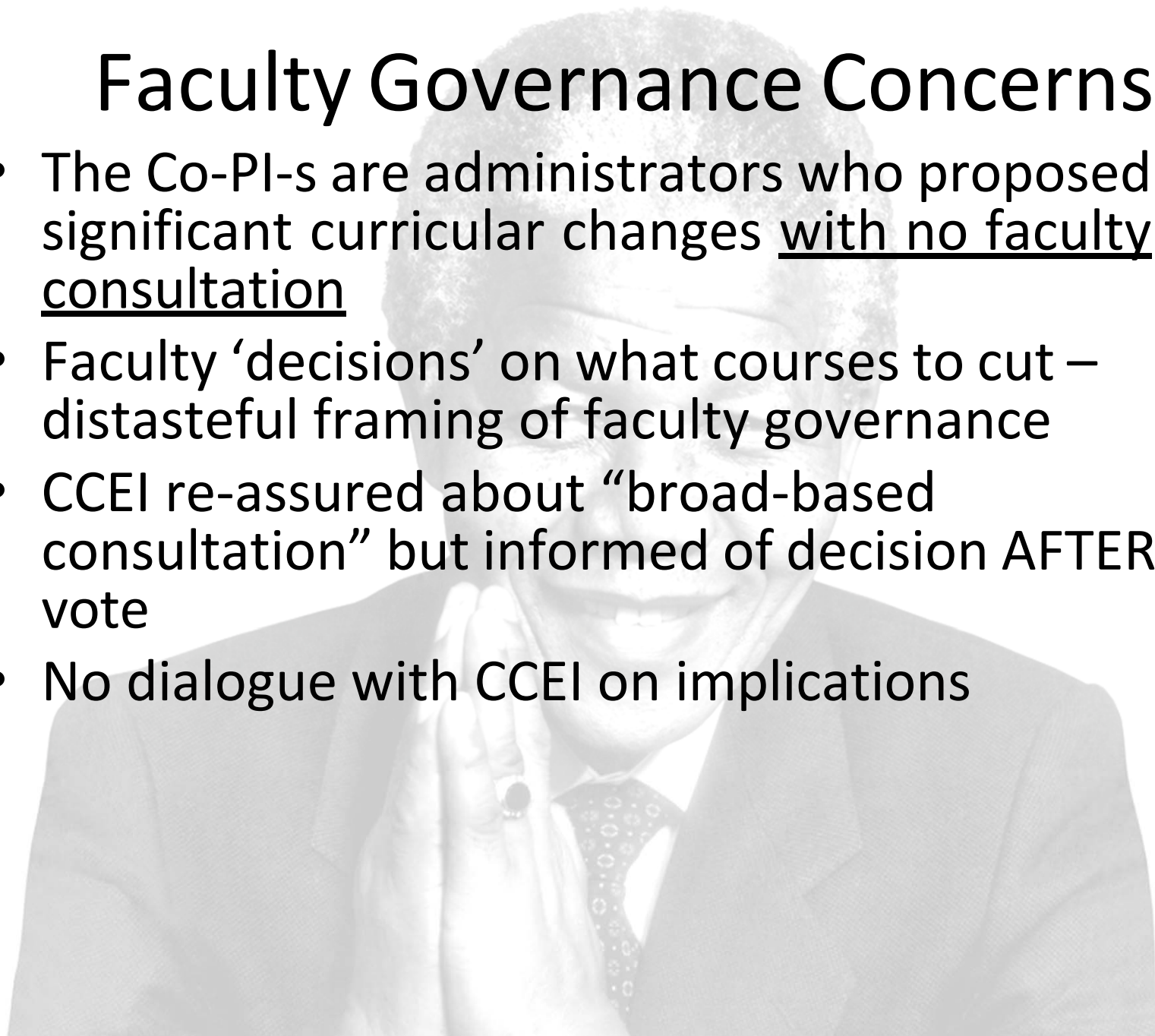
- Confident about working across differences
- Intellectually, socially, culturally “awake”
- Aware of different perspectives on issues
- Sense of agency: can make a difference
- More conscious of historic, economic, sociopolitical and moral underpinnings/ implications of current school practice
- Ready for “teachable moments”
- Angry about their own biased education

Not Requiring Means

- A step backwards in COE's professed commitment to diversity
- Teachers less prepared for teaching in diverse settings ("Every teacher should learn this.")
 - E.g. S-P-P (Racism in classroom management)
 - Xenophobia and language policies
- Added burden on school districts
 - PD less effective without foundational knowledge
- Less opportunity to learn about our communities
- Less foundational support for TSL courses; ETP courses

Faculty Governance Concerns

- The Co-PI-s are administrators who proposed significant curricular changes with no faculty consultation
- Faculty ‘decisions’ on what courses to cut – distasteful framing of faculty governance
- CCEI re-assured about “broad-based consultation” but informed of decision AFTER the vote
- No dialogue with CCEI on implications



Our Institutional Responsibility

- What is our responsibility to our constituents? The EXCEED grant made reference to the demographics of our counties. How does this proposal honor the needs of this population?
- How do we claim “diversity” as a value during accreditation and then make the only course all students take “optional” after the accreditors have left?
- How do we respond to the national resurgence of racism and xenophobia?
- How do we make program decisions that are consistent with current scholarship?
- How do we move beyond compliance with state standards to engaging in educational equity that is standards-conscious but not limited by the state’s ideology?

Education: Our Hope Against Hatred?

- Dear Teachers:

I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no person should witness. Gas chambers built by *learned* engineers. Children poisoned by *educated* physicians. Infants killed by *trained* nurses. Women and babies shot and burned by *high school and college graduates*. So I am suspicious of education. My request is: help your students become more human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, or educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human. (Haim Ginott)

- What is our ethical obligation as a College of Education?
- Teacher Education: Our hope against hatred, xenophobia, racism, classism, sexism, homophobia ...?