# Slide 1

Communicating Our Diversity

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# Slide 2

“You cannot not communicate.” Paul Watzlawik

# Slide 3

Goals

1. Explore the idea of a **“diversity brand”** and understand the challenges of creating one

2. Recognize **best practices** and **identify strategies** for communicating about equity and diversity

3. Consider **next steps** for you and for your unit/dept. around communicating diversity

# Slide 4

Brand equals Communication Shorthand

Series of pictures of famous brands: the Nike swoosh, the Red Cross for the American Red Cross, the Macintosh Apple, the Starbucks Mermaid

# Slide 5

Hashtag Race Together

Picture of Starbucks coffee cup with the hashtag race together written on it

Screenshots of two tweets

1. Jamil Smith

@JamilSmith

The only folks happy about Starbucks baristas discussing race with customers are the suits who run it. Feel-good liberalism at its worst.

1. Jess Misener

@jessmisener

If only Selma had just put in a starbucks

# Slide 6

Why Diversity Branding Matters

* + Enhances the connection/engagement with your constituents
	+ Promotes your DNA--mission and vision
	+ Showcases recognition/points of pride
	+ Helps create clarity and focus for your work
	+ Sets you apart from the competition
	+ Provides your “business” value *(Antonelli, 2013)*

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Challenges

* Higher education professionals wear many hats
* Often focused on day-to-day management/initiatives
	+ Need for more infrastructure/greater capacity
* Little time for effective communication
	+ Lack of clarity around key messages and goals
	+ Focused on event marketing (as opposed to strategy)

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General Best Practices

* Be mindful of your audience(s) and methods
* Carefully consider responses to biased/offensive communication
* Pay attention to language

Picture of a woman. Caption reads “Gray-ace pansexual Afro-Latina. *Photo courtesy of S. Deragon, identityprojectsf.com*”

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Strategy Number 1: Congruence

* Align your communications tactics with your organizational values
	+ Congruency informs authenticity
	+ Remember: your audience is savvy
	+ There is value in communicating about areas in need of improvement (as long as you follow through with action)

Screenshot of a headline

In hiring, officials seek to rid unintentional bias

The University is continuing a plan that aims to improve the school’s hiring processes.

# Slide 10

Strategy Number 2: Creativity

* Think beyond brochures and flyers.
	+ Don’t rely only on visual representation.
	+ Profile stories/press releases about points of pride/accolades/signature initiatives
	+ The ways in which you organize your space, collaborative relationships you have in place, etc.

Screenshot

Guidelines for Accessible Meetings and Events

Attitudinal Access

Always ask what accommodations are desired—Individuals who use wheelchairs may be more or less mobile than you suspect, not all individuals who are blind read Braille, and not all individuals who are deaf use ASL. When interacting with or asking questions of an individual with a disability, speak directly to that individual. It is okay to use words such as walk, hear, and see.

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Strategy Number 3: Collaboration

* Build communications partnerships
	+ Develop relationships with key stakeholders/media personnel
	+ Leverage in-house expertise
	+ Work collaboratively to address issues/crises

Picture titled Greek Revival. Picture is of two black/African-American girls, one of whom is wearing a jacket with Greek letters. Caption reads “Fraternity and sorority involvement can help students thrive, particularly students of color. A new initiative is aimed at boosting Greek organizations on campus.”

 Other caption: “Fata Acquoi and Colleen Enwesi, members of Zeta Phi Beta sorority.”

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Strategy Number 4: Check in

* Assess your strategies
	+ Number of: stories placed, social media followers, program attendees, etc.
	+ Opinion shifts within target audiences
	+ Strategic collaborations
	+ Policy/program changes

 *(Quiroz, 2013)*

The purpose of assessment is to increase quality. Picture of man watering flower.

The purpose of evaluation is to judge quality. Picture of man looking at flower saying, “Too shot and not enough leaves. C minus.”

# Slide 13

In Review

* **Be congruent** with your organizational values and mission.
* Explore **creative** ways to tell your diversity story.
* Relationships w/**collaborators** enhance communications.
* **Check in** regularly to see if your communication strategies are meeting your goals.

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Next Steps

Consider a context where you might be involved in communicating about equity and diversity (e.g., your own unit or department; an initiative in which you are involved; or your own personal commitment)

* What are – and should be – the next steps around communicating a commitment to equity and diversity?
* What role can – and should – you play in the communication of this commitment?

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Thank You!

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