

A LOSING BATTLE?

UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES IN ACADEMIA

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe the current status of underrepresented minorities (URMs) in academia
- Identify the specific barriers URMs face to enter the academic workforce
- Understand past strategies and potential opportunities to increase URMs in academia

UNDERREPRESENTED MINORITIES

Underrepresented minority faculty are typically defined as those who self-reported themselves to be African-American, Hispanic, Native American, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander.

GENERAL TRENDS OF URMS IN ACADEMIA

- The number of newly hired faculty who self-reported as an underrepresented minority increased from 9.4 percent in 2000 to 12.1 percent in 2010. During that time, the number of Hispanic faculty members also increased from 3.6 percent to 4.3 percent, while the number of African-American faculty members increased from 3.2 percent to 3.4 percent.

Table 3. Race and Ethnicity Characteristics of Faculty in 2000 and 2010^a

Race/Ethnicity	Year	
	2000	2010
	No. (%) [95% CI]	No. (%) [95% CI]
White	77 413 (80.4) [80.1-80.6]	83 634 (74.6) [74.3-74.9]
Hispanic	3415 (3.6) [3.4-3.7]	4798 (4.3) [4.2-4.4]
Black	3045 (3.2) [3.1-3.3]	3846 (3.4) [3.3-3.5]
Asian	10 825 (11.2) [11.0-11.4]	16 821 (15.0) [14.8-15.2]
Native American/ Alaskan or Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	105 (0.1) [0.1-0.1]	365 (0.3) [0.3-0.4]
Multiple race	1498 (1.6) [1.5-1.6]	2646 (2.4) [2.3-2.5]

^a Missing race/ethnicity data 8.8%.

GENERAL TRENDS OF URMS IN ACADEMIA

- Between 2000 and 2010, the overall number of underrepresented minority faculty at medical schools across the country increased, but those faculty were still less likely to be promoted, less likely to hold senior faculty and administrative positions, and less likely to receive research awards from the National Institutes of Health.
- Growth of these underrepresented minority groups in the general population, the authors write, increased by 30 percent by 2010, far outpacing the growth in medical school faculty members.

CHALLENGES

- Although minority faculty face similar issues in academic medicine (lower pay, more demands on time, preparedness) as other faculty, they also face:

Lack of mentoring

Isolation,

Racism, and

Diversity pressures.

BARRIERS

- Specific challenges in the recruitment and retention of minority faculty include poor mentorship, unclear criteria for tenure and promotion, and lack of understanding of institutional culture.
- An institution's diversity climate plays a significant role in minority faculty members' perception of the institution, and there is evidence that gathering faculty input on how to improve institutional climate may be beneficial. The perception that an institutional climate is not supportive of minority faculty advancement increases the likelihood that such faculty will leave academia prematurely.
- There was a correlation between minority dental hygiene administrators and the number of minority dental hygiene students enrolled and minority faculty employed.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased faculty development programs for minority faculty though institutional seed money for pilot projects all seem to have a positive effect on minority faculty retention
- Effective and frequent mentoring including having on-site as well as off-site (networking opportunities) mentoring can also increase retention
- Focused instruction on clinical, teaching, and research skills;
- Giving promotional weight to community service and reducing clinical/ administrative expectations to facilitate scholarly activities that lead to promotion
- Improved Institutional Diversity Climate

A close-up photograph of a diamond-shaped hole cut into a brown cardboard box. The hole reveals a dark, almost black interior surface. On this dark surface, the words "THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX" are printed in a clean, white, sans-serif font, arranged in three lines. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the cardboard and the sharp edges of the hole.

THINK
OUTSIDE
THE BOX