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IN THIS ISSUE

Edited by Matthew J. Mayhew

with assistance from Eric McChesney

The **Council of Independent Colleges (CIC)** is an association of 765 nonprofit independent colleges and universities, state-based councils of independent colleges, and other higher education affiliates, that works to support college and university leadership, advance institutional excellence, and enhance public understanding of independent higher education's contributions to society. CIC is the major national organization that focuses on services to leaders of independent colleges and universities and state-based councils. CIC offers conferences, seminars, publications, and other programs and services that help institutions improve educational quality, administrative and financial performance, student outcomes, and institutional visibility. It conducts the largest annual conferences of college and university presidents and of chief academic officers in the United States. Founded in 1956, CIC is headquartered at One Dupont Circle in Washington, DC. For more information, visit *www.cic.edu*.

About the Digest

CIC's *Digest of Recent Research* is a compendium of summaries of research that independent college and university presidents are likely to find helpful. The *Digest* highlights timely research from scholarly journals and other publications with a focus on findings useful to presidents and to other leaders of independent colleges and universities. Edited by Matthew J. Mayhew, William Ray and Marie Adamson Flesher Professor of Educational Administration at Ohio State University, each *Digest* offers a brief summary of selected articles that includes a discussion of the findings and implications for action by the leadership of independent colleges and universities. CIC is grateful to the Spencer Foundation for its support of this series.

Article reviews in the *Digest of Recent Research* can be downloaded as a single document (PDF). For questions or comments about the *Digest*, please contact Harold V. Hartley III, CIC senior vice president, at *hhartley@cic.nche.edu*.

About the Editors

Matthew J. Mayhew is William Ray and Marie Adamson Flesher Professor of Educational Administration with a focus on higher education and student affairs at Ohio State University (OSU). Before coming to OSU, he served as an associate professor at New York University and an administrator at Fisher College and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Mayhew's research examines college and its effects on students. To support this line of inquiry, he has been awarded over $17 million in funding from sources including the U.S. Department of Education, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Fetzer Institute, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and the Merrifield Family Foundation. He is lead author of *How College Affects Students: 21st Century Evidence That Higher Education Works* and has published over 70 peer-reviewed articles in top-tier journals in the field. Mayhew has served on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Higher Education*, *Research in Higher Education*, and the *Journal of College Student Development*. He earned his BA from Wheaton College (IL); his MA from Brandeis University; and his PhD from the University of Michigan.

Eric McChesney is a PhD student of higher education and student affairs at Ohio State University and a research associate with the College Impact Laboratory. His research interests include the cultivation of interdisciplinary skillsets, STEM graduate training, and innovation.

Effects of Early College on Degree Completion

Edmunds, J., F. Unlu, E. Glennie, and N. Arshavsky. 2020. "What Happens When You Combine High School and College? The Impact of the Early College Model on Postsecondary Performance and Completion." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 42 (2): 257–278.

SUMMARY

What is the impact of the early college model on students' attainment of postsecondary credentials (specifically, bachelor's degree, associate degree, and technical credential) and performance at four-year institutions? How does the relationship between early college and these outcomes differ for students who are low income, first in their family to go to college, members of underrepresented minority groups, or who enter high school below grade level? These questions drive this multi-site, quasi-experimental study of early college high schools and their effects on postsecondary outcomes, especially for underserved communities. Early college high schools are those that "integrate[s] practices designed to promote postsecondary success while combining the high school and college experience" and "target students who are underrepresented in college, such as low-income students, students who are the first in their family to go to college, and students who are members of underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups" (p. 258). To provide a collegiate experience, these programs are located on college campuses. Students often have the opportunity to enroll in college-level courses as early as ninth grade and are expected to graduate with a high school diploma and an associate degree or the equivalent of two years of college credit after four years.

The authors examined 4,052 students who applied to 19 early college programs in North Carolina over a series of six years, spanning 2005 to 2011. Through a lottery system, interested, eligible students were randomly selected either to participate in an early college program or to remain in their standard comprehensive high school program where they acted as a control group.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Students in early college programs were more likely to earn a postsecondary degree than students in the traditional high school control group. By the end of their fourth year after completing high school, 37.8 percent of students in early college programs earned a postsecondary degree, compared with 22.0 percent in the control condition. This finding holds for students six years after the end of 12th grade as well, with 44.3 percent of students who attended the early college program achieving postsecondary credentialing compared with 33.0 percent of those who did not. In addition, students in early college earned an associate degree two years earlier than those in the control condition and a bachelor's degree about half a year earlier than those in the control condition.

The subgroup analyses revealed several important trends. Students in the early college group were more likely to attain an associate degree if they were economically advantaged, non-first-generation, and better prepared academically. Importantly, however, participating in early college programs significantly increased the probability that economically-disadvantaged and minority students would earn a four-year degree than it did for early college students from majority and economically advantaged backgrounds.

Postsecondary performance was assessed by grade point averages several times over the course of the students'

academic trajectory. In short, "early college students performed the same as control students" with regard to academic performance (p. 271).

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

How do institutions work with high schools to create innovative pathways toward college degree completion? Offering high school students, especially those from economically-disadvantaged and minority backgrounds, the opportunity to earn college credit in high school appears to motivate them toward pursuing and ultimately attaining a four-year degree. Leaders of CIC institutions may want to prioritize partnering with high schools to employ this model as a strategy to increase enrollment and completion.

The types of courses offered to high school students should be examined as part of this process. As COVID-19 forces colleges to reflect on their distinctive contributions to society, colleges and universities may need to reconsider their general education requirements and the courses they allow early college students to take. It may be that families will be more likely to encourage their children to enroll in classes that teach them life skills as well as academic skills that they see as timely, relevant, and important.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Julie Edmunds is a program director at the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Fatih Unlu is a senior economist at the RAND Corporation.

Jane Furey is a PhD student at the University of Michigan.

Elizabeth Glennie is a senior education research analyst at RTI International.

Nina Arshavsky is a senior research specialist at the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

LITERATURE READERS MAY WISH TO CONSULT

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Increasing Diversity in Faculty Hiring

O'Meara, K., D. Culpepper, and L. Templeton. 2020. "Nudging Toward Diversity: Applying Behavioral Design to Faculty Hiring." *Review of Educational Research* 90 (3): 31–348.

SUMMARY

How can universities live up to their commitment to diversity in hiring diverse faculty members? The authors of this study provide a literature review that synthesizes information concerning sources of unconscious bias in the faculty hiring process. The critical assumption underscoring the review is that unconscious bias, or the "social norms and social role expectations" that are active when our "intuitive, automatic system" of processing information goes unchecked may contribute to hiring practices that disadvantage women and people of color as potential candidates for faculty positions (p. 313). Drawing upon 154 studies published between 1985 and 2018, the authors identify prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory behaviors associated with cognitive biases and make concrete recommendations for introducing small behavioral changes in faculty hiring practices, what the authors call "nudges," that are likely to disrupt these biases.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The authors argue that the achievement of faculty diversity goals over the last 30 years has often been hampered by implicit cognitive biases that occur during several key points of the faculty hiring process. Adopting the National Science Foundation's (2017) definition of underrepresented minorities and women, the authors examine a wide range of empirical work that draws upon studies in higher education as well as behavioral economics and social psychology to identify specific, actionable interventions intended to disrupt these biases.

The authors employed a narrative and integrative literature review method that drew upon articles specific to the distinctive racialized and gendered context of the United States. In doing so, they sought to "use theory to frame the extant data toward new meanings or hypotheses," thus generating holistic and meaningful perspectives that were supported by the empirical literature (p. 314).

The initial phase of the hiring process consists of forming the hiring committee and defining the role of the unfilled position. The authors conclude that the literature is unclear whether increased diversity in the hiring committee ultimately results in more diverse hires, primarily because of the length and complexity of the process between forming a committee and actually hiring a candidate. However, the literature clearly and conclusively indicates that the phrasing used in advertisements for the open position positively influences the number of applications from diverse candidates. Statements that place value on diversity, community-engaged research, interdisciplinary scholarship, and mentoring and teaching expertise result in more applications from women and underrepresented minority candidates.

Two major sources of bias tend to arise during the marketing, recruitment, and outreach phase of a search—reliance on passive advertising and overemphasis on the prestige of the institutions with which the candidate has been associated. On the other hand, posting job openings in publications, listservs, and networks specific to various minority communities increases the number of applications from diverse candidates compared to posting in major professional outlets or relying on the personal networks of the search committee members.

A major source of bias during the candidate evaluation phase of a search stems from commonly used meritocratic measures of productivity, such as the number of scholarly papers published and grant monies awarded. When these metrics are used without consideration of the historical and structural inequalities that impede opportunities afforded to women and underrepresented minorities, they often lead to unjustified conclusions.

Unsurprisingly, evidence suggests that a process that requires a diverse short list of candidates results in more diverse hires. Also, having highly structured interview protocols and interactions can reduce the discomfort and anxiety that minority applicants often experience in majority-dominated situations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

The oppressions and indignities chronically suffered by women and underrepresented minorities have hardly been more clear or brought to more stark relief than in recent months. In this troubled climate many institutions of higher education have sought to reaffirm their commitment to equity and inclusion. This paper, therefore, is both timely and appropriate, as it highlights ways in which highly qualified underrepresented scholars might be disadvantaged in the hiring process and provides preventive actions that leaders can take to disrupt these hegemonic hiring practices.

Hiring committees should be required to formalize their decision-making process through the use of rubrics or criteria that are determined prior to examining candidates. In addition, the committee should use disaggregated data on the demographics of the field to place their applicant pool in context and to guide their search and selection efforts.

It is worth considering that these interventions are designed to promote the behavioral changes that are often precursors of changes in attitudes and values. Institutions will need to transform both if they are to become diverse and equitable workplaces.

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Microaggression Experiences among Black Undergraduates

Mills, K. 2020. "It's Systemic: Environmental Racial Microaggression Experienced by Black Undergraduates at a Predominantly White Institution." *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education* 13 (1): 44–55.

SUMMARY

Black undergraduate students experience college distinctively, especially when they are enrolled at predominantly white institutions (PWIs). Navigating these environments requires resiliency, including the ability of Black collegians to face the risks associated with racial microaggressions. It also requires the students to protect themselves from microaggressions and adapt strategies to offset the microaggressions that often lead to such negative outcomes as dropping out of college (see Bowman 2013). Identifying the risk factors that these students face is critical for institutions that want to support the Black student population.

This article focuses on the risk factors faced by Black collegians enrolled at a PWI. These factors range from offensive jokes and remarks to low expectations for their academic performance. The author convened 17 Black collegians in a focus group designed to discuss microaggressions and derived a typology for categorizing them. Findings suggest that Black college students experienced six types of microaggressions: "(a) segregation; (b) lack of representation; (c) campus responses to criminality; (d) cultural bias in courses; (e) tokenism; and (f) pressure to conform" (p. 44). Understanding these forms of microaggression may help administrators at PWIs frame strategies to improve the campus climate for Black college students.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

How do Black collegians attending a predominantly white institution experience racial microaggressions? According to the students who participated in this study, racial microaggressions are experienced through segregation: "the university policies and practices that communicate purposeful segregation between White and nonwhite students" (p. 49). For example, one student said that Black students tend to live in residence halls "very strategically put in the Northwest corner to where it's not the center of campus" and "on the outskirts" where prospective student tours do not go (p. 49). Importantly, the student comments that he believes that such residence hall assignments are made "[on] purpose" by the institution "to fill a quota and not really, you know project us to the next level" (p. 49).

Students offered examples of the various forms taken by racial microaggression in the university. They reported experiencing a lack of representation due to the "limited numbers of persons of color, particularly Black or African American persons, throughout the university" (p. 49). Simply put by one student: "In my years at [university] I've had two Black professors" (p. 49). Lack of representation also was noted in leadership positions throughout the university.

Another microaggression was campus response to criminality, "[the] assumption of criminal status by the university police/practices, campus police, peers, and the greater university community" (p. 49). Not only did Black students perceive themselves to be "targets" (p. 50) for campus police, but they also noted instances when hate speech was condoned as "freedom of speech" in official communications from university leadership.

Cultural bias in courses also was noted as a microaggression, mostly by the Black women in this study. They described courses as "Europeanized" and shared that "discussions of race and submission of assignments highlighting race (e.g., cultural appropriation) were not well received by classmates or faculty" (p. 4). Black students also described "polarizing" classroom conversations about race, and they indicated that white peers often had a "nonexistent, generic" understanding of Black history that contributed to their "misunderstanding of sociopolitical movements such as Black Lives Matter" (p. 51).

Black students also identified tokenism as a microaggression. They "felt undervalued by the university and asserted that the university exploited Black students for the appearance of a more racially diverse campus" (p. 51). As one student noted, "If you do not run. If you do not catch balls. If you do not do these things for [university], then you as a Black student, you mean nothing to them" (p. 51).

Study participants also experienced pressure to conform as a microaggression. As one student noted, "I feel like we do have to change ourselves or try to fit into like what a White, typical White man is in order to get the same things that they get" (p. 52).

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

Although the author rightfully discusses the limitations of this single-institution study, many of the study's findings are applicable to CIC member institutions. Administrators should use the six microaggressions expressed by students in this study as a rubric for designing campus-based policies and interventions. How do our policies and practices potentially harm Black students on campus? How are Black student organizations valued and resourced? Are faculty members adequately trained in facilitating productive dialogue without tokenizing the Black students in class and in confronting both hate speech and the coded language white students present in class? Questions like these need to be routinely visited for real, anti-racist change to occur.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kristen Mills is a postdoctoral researcher of equity and diversity at Ohio State University.

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Helping Students Learn to Be Innovative

Selznick, B. and M. J. Mayhew. 2019. "Developing First-Year Students' Innovation Capacities." *Review of Higher Education* 42 (4): 1607–1634.

SUMMARY

Innovation has become more than a buzzword in higher education. One needs to look no further for evidence than the many ways higher education stakeholders have expressed their commitment to innovation. Coalitions across colleges (such as the University Innovation Alliance) have been created, innovation centers have been funded, majors in innovation have been established, and the theme for the Council of Independent Colleges' (CIC) 2018 Presidents Institute centered on innovation. Given this emerging, sustained, and "well-resourced" interest, it is surprising that more empirical work has not been done to ensure that the primary target of these interests—students—are benefitting from stakeholders' commitment to innovation.

The purpose of this study was to examine the institutional conditions and educational practices that help students develop their innovation capacities. The authors define innovation capacities as "a set of self-perceptions, skills, and abilities that individuals can acquire in order to better engage in innovation" (p. 1609). Results indicated that developing innovation capacities among first-year students was associated with "taking innovation-related coursework, having positive interactions with faculty, exposing students to assessments that encourage argumentation, and supporting students' career trajectories" (pp. 1,607–1,608).

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Can innovation be taught? Or is it an artifact of personality? Or of having a family history with entrepreneurial ventures? Central to this study's premise is the assertion that innovation can be taught and that educators can engineer environments to maximize its development. Drawing from psychology and business, the authors provide a thorough review of the empirical work informing this study's design, which not only accounted for potential confounding variables such as personality and family entrepreneurial history, but also included the elements needed to substantiate claims with confidence.

The authors designed a longitudinal, multi-institutional study that examined the innovation capacity development of 528 students enrolled at 14 institutions in fall 2015. Students were administered a theoretically-developed and empirically-validated measure of innovation capacity, which included items and scales designed to measure different innovation dimensions, including motivation, proactivity, self-confidence, persuasive communication, teamwork across difference, networking, creative cognition, risk-taking, and intention to innovate. These scales were then brought together to create an innovation score for each student at each point of administration (i.e., pretest and posttest innovation score). In addition to these scales, the authors collected a host of other information, either through institutional records (for example, gender, race, and grade point average records) or additional survey items (for instance, regarding personality or family history with entrepreneurship).

Results from this study were encouraging for educators interested in helping students develop as innovators. Although personality, demographic information, and the pretest innovation score explained 47 percent of the variance in innovation capacity at the end of the first year, certain curricular and co-curricular practices explained an additional and significant 7 percent.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

Can innovation capacities be taught? The answer, in short, is yes—by encouraging students to double-major, take courses in innovation and entrepreneurship, and develop strong relationships with faculty members. For faculty, there also is a clear directive: have students design cases or make arguments that they then defend. Subsequently, assess them on their ability to provide a reasonable and thoughtful defense.

For career service specialists and faculty members who advise students, this study provides an empirical roadmap for developing students as innovators. Educators should: provide students with opportunities to discuss career paths with

peers in *and* outside of the student's major, make sure students have a point-person with whom they feel comfortable discussing career aspirations, and curate experiences that encourage students to consider starting their own organization (such as a business or nonprofit organization) as part of their career path.

Administrators should stop allocating resources toward innovation expressions without having a plan for ensuring that those expressions have a positive effect on students. Although it may be popular and easy to get behind innovation as something campuses embrace, doing so without a plan makes the innovation expression more of a fad—and sometimes a very expensive one—at best. Administrative staff and faculty members should consider including innovation capacity development as a learning objective that is articulated in a strategic plan or other managing document and assessed accordingly.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ben Selznick is assistant professor of leadership studies and advisor to the postsecondary analysis and leadership concentration at James Madison University.

Matthew J. Mayhew is Flesher Professor of Educational Administration and program director of the Higher Education and Student Affairs Program at Ohio State University.

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Implications of Different Student Approaches to College Completion

Monaghan, D. B. 2020. "College-Going Trajectories across Early Adulthood: An Inquiry Using Sequential Analysis." *The Journal of Higher Education* 91 (3): 402–432.

SUMMARY

How does the college-going experience differ among students in early and middle adulthood? Using a nationally-representative data set, the author explores the pathways students take toward degree attainment. To do so, the author developed a typology of adult students based on a cluster analysis of such variables as employment, marital status, and parental transitions.

The author analyzed the responses of 1,951 adult students who participated in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1979 cohort. This sample represents students who were 18 to 39 years old between 1978 and 2004. From this analysis, the author identifies four different pathways toward degree completion: rapid completers, marginal students, lifelong students, and delayed completers.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Most rapid completers, who represented 38 percent of college-goers in this sample, completed college by their mid-20s. They were the most likely group to make "the heaviest use of part-time employment" while taking classes and to transition to full-time employment after their early 20s (p. 424). They also delayed marriage and starting a family far longer than those in other groups. For example, by age 25, fewer than 40 percent of these students were married and only 15 percent had children. The author summarizes that "the students whose attendance was completed quickly and successfully were those able to focus exclusively on college-going in their early adulthood" (p. 424).

Marginal college-goers comprised the largest group of the sample at 43 percent. These are students who attended "for only a few semesters at a time and few ever earned a bachelor's degree" (p. 423). By age 25, 58 percent of these students were married and 50 percent had children.

The remaining 19 percent of the sample was made up of lifelong students and delayed completers. Lifelong students enrolled at high rates in their 20s and 30s but rarely completed their degrees. These students were "unique in experiencing a downturn in employment between ages 18–24" (p. 424). By age 25, 53 percent of these students were married and 44 percent had children.

Delayed completers also enrolled at higher rates in their 20s and 30s but completed their degrees by age 39. These students had higher rates of full-time and overall employment than others, particularly beyond the age of 30. By age 25, 53 percent of these students were married and 39 percent had children.

The author also compared each group to non-college-going adults. Overall, the author concluded that the adult characteristics (namely, work, marriage, and children) of the marginal, life-long learner and delayed completer more closely resembled non-college going adults than did the rapid completers.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

Most institutional policies and practices favor rapid completers. The same cannot be said for students who follow less traditional pathways toward degree completion. Especially during these times of uncertain enrollment, colleges might rethink how they can serve non-traditional students and subsequently market themselves as learning communities for all types of learners, including those who work full-time and have children.

Perhaps degree completion should not be the ultimate goal of all course offerings. This may be especially true of courses offered online. Given that many students take courses at several different institutions, institutions should examine the ease or difficulty of accepting credits

from other institutions. In addition, institutions may want to create certification sequences as part of their curricula. Rather than focusing primarily on degree completion, colleges might consider offering short-term, year-long certifications in specialty areas that might attract interested students who are unable to invest in a traditional four-year experience.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David B. Monaghan is an assistant professor of sociology at the Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania.

LITERATURE READERS MAY WISH TO CONSULT

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Impact of Adjunct Faculty Working Conditions on Instructional Quality

Rhoades, G. 2020. "Taking College Teachers' Working Conditions Seriously: Adjunct Faculty and Negotiating a Labor-based Conception of Quality." *Journal of Higher Education* 91 (3): 327–352.

SUMMARY

Contemporary higher education has increasingly relied upon non-tenure-track adjunct faculty to provide instruction, advisement, and mentorship to undergraduate students. As the empirical literature has repeatedly demonstrated, high-quality teaching and student-faculty interaction is a key component of critical outcomes such as student persistence and engagement.

This study is premised on the consideration that the working conditions of instructors are the learning conditions of the students, and that these working conditions are therefore central to understanding instructional quality. The author performs a wide-ranging content analysis of the collective bargaining agreements and contracts of adjunct faculty over the last 20 years in order to examine the extent to which institutions support the quality of adjunct instructors' working conditions by providing them access to professional development (such as pedagogical workshops and research seminars) and instructional resources (for instance, course management systems and syllabi). The study indicates that while many institutions have improved the working conditions of the adjunct faculty they employ, access to these resources frequently remains discretionary and stratified rather than mandatory and universal.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Many full-time tenure-track faculty members enjoy the benefits of ample instructional support (access to syllabi, course management software, and IT support), professional development, input into shared governance (curricular and professional development decisions), and institutional infrastructure (space to meet privately with students, photocopiers, library and scholarly database access). These same conditions are not always available to the rising number of adjunct faculty members who increasingly share a greater burden for providing instruction. Arguing that "teachers' working conditions are central to quality," and that high quality is an imperative for running an efficient institution, the author performed a critical discourse content analysis of 254 adjunct faculty collective bargaining agreements dating from 2001 to 2021 (p. 327). This nationally-representative sample was examined to shed light on "the balance between [adjuncts'] professorial rights of access versus managerial discretion to not provide that access… stratification between full- and part-time faculty in working conditions associated with quality…[and] in what ways, if at all, do contract provisions about adjunct faculty's access to instructional resources and PD [professional development] explicitly refer to educational quality and/or public benefits/beneficiaries beyond faculty" (p. 332).

This analysis revealed that, while substantial gains had been made over the last two decades in adjunct working conditions, "over half the contracts afforded managers discretion to not provide access to fundamental instructional resources and one-quarter to not provide PD" (p. 335). Furthermore, where access was provided, it was frequently stratified with more absolute and widespread access being granted to full-time faculty, and lesser or no access being made available to part-time faculty. The study also concluded that the language acknowledging the linkages between working conditions and educational quality were infrequent, as was discourse recognizing the impact of quality education upon the greater institutional and public good.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION BY CAMPUS LEADERS

This study has implications for adjunct faculty hired to teach courses at CIC member institutions. The working conditions of these instructors materially influence how well they can discharge their duties. Strengthening provisions for instructors to have ample access to instructional materials and the training they need to do their jobs well is a worthwhile investment.

The urgency of this realization is compounded by the instructional changes brought about by the recent pandemic. What does high-quality professional development and instructional resourcing look like after the shift to hybrid and online teaching? How can institutions meet the needs of *all* their instructors so that they can meet the needs of students? When curriculum is redesigned, what opportunities exist to include adjunct faculty in this process?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gary Rhoades is a professor of educational policy studies and practice at the University of Arizona.

LITERATURE READERS MAY WISH TO CONSULT

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