



Managing Difficult Conversations in HSIs:  
*Understanding and Responding to Resistance  
to Faculty Change*

**AHSIE Annual Conference:  
March 9, 2020**

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**ESCALA Educational Services: The “Home Office” team in Northern New Mexico, + 55 more HSI faculty across the U.S.**

## ESCALA's Vision:

*Provide a non-evaluative setting  
for HSI Faculty and Staff to :*

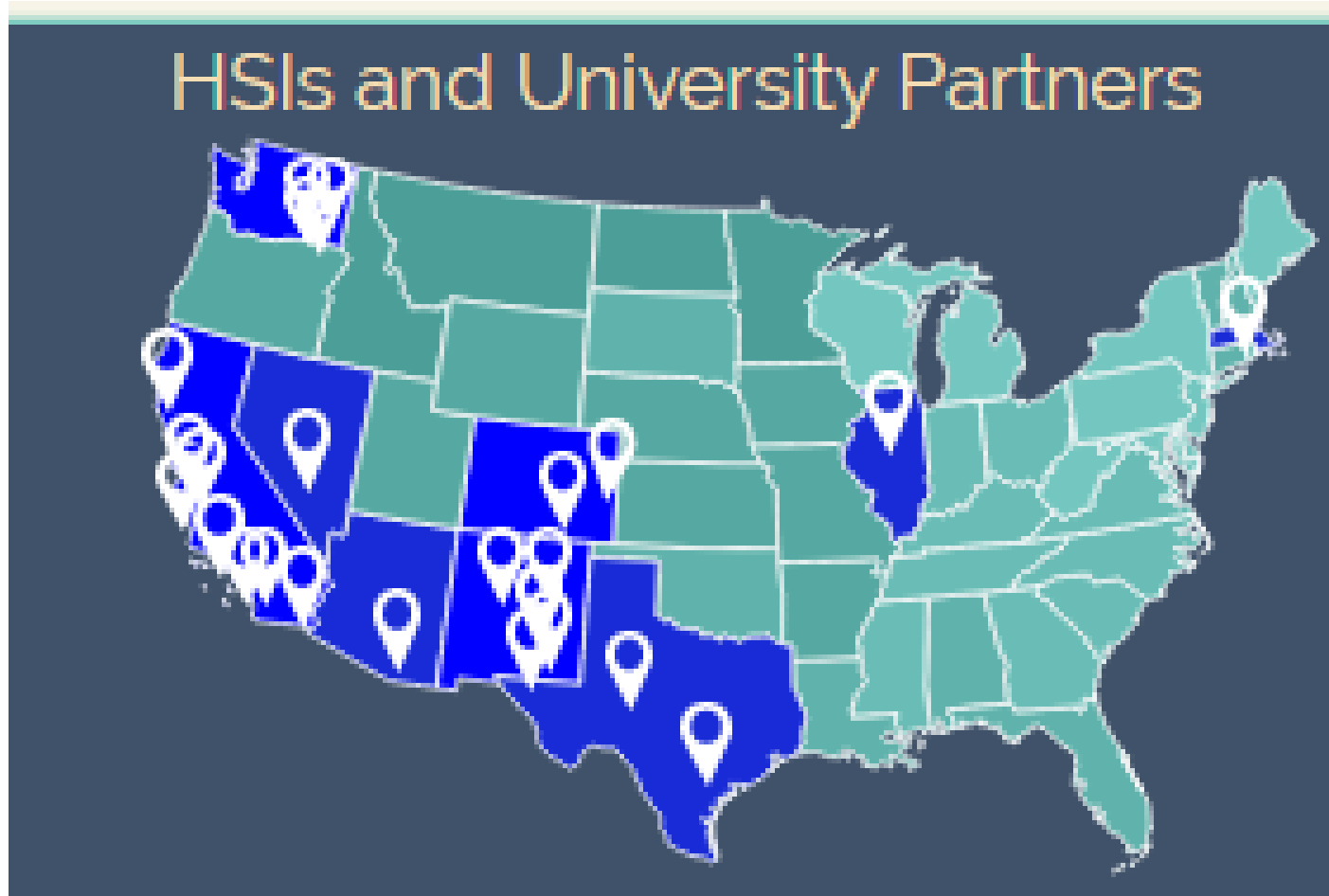
*reflect on our cultural  
assumptions about instructional  
practices and attitudes*

*work with peers to create cultural  
shifts within the institution*

*study and solve learning  
problems with coaching support*



# ESCALA's National Network of HSI Faculty and Staff: 2013-2019



**45 HSIs**

- **55** Faculty Peer Coaches and Lead Coaches
- **6** Campus Site Liaisons
- **15** Guest Facilitators
- **4** ESCALA employees (Santa Fe/Española, New Mexico)

# Over 450 HSI faculty have earned the 27- hour ESCALA Faculty Cert.

## ***California***

- Notre Dame de Namur University, Belmont
- Imperial Valley College, El Centro
- Mt. San Jacinto College, Menifee
- California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks
- Santa Barbara City College, Santa Barbara
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- Humboldt State University, Arcata
- California State University, Monterey Bay
- Hartnell College, Salinas
- Vanguard University, Costa Mesa
- Butte College, Oroville
- Southwestern College, Chula Vista
- Mesa College, San Diego

## ***Washington State***

- Central Washington University, Ellensburg
- Yakima Valley College, Yakima
- Heritage University, Toppenish
- Big Bend Community College, Moses Lake

## ***New Mexico***

- New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas
- University of New Mexico, Taos
- Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe
- Northern New Mexico College, Española
- Eastern New Mexico University, Roswell
- New Mexico State University, Carlsbad

## ***Colorado***

- Otero Junior College, La Junta
- Adams State University, Alamosa
- Trinidad State Junior College, Trinidad

## ***Massachusetts***

- Springfield Tech Community College, Springfield

## ***Illinois***

- St. Xavier's University, Chicago

## ***Texas***

- Alamo Colleges, San Antonio
- Angelo State University, San Angelo

# ESCALA's Research Questions

1. What do Latinx/Hispanic students experience in the college learning environment?
2. Why and how does culture matter in the teaching and learning transaction?
3. What do we need to know about ourselves, as HSI instructors, in order to be more successful with Latinx/Hispanic and other underserved students?

# 7 Years of Data

**Coaching interviews with more than 100 faculty** (mostly STEM): why do you do what you do?

**Classroom Observations:** at colleges in New Mexico and California

**Longitudinal study of northern NM Latinx students:** studied their critical transition from high school to college

**Interviews with Latinx completers of college:** professionals reflecting on their experiences as college students





# The ESCALA Certificate in College Teaching and Learning in Hispanic Serving Institutions (CTL-HSI)

27-hour blended course for faculty on culturally responsive instruction

Faculty design an inquiry project investigating impact on student grades and motivation to learn

Coaching from a peer from another institution





Visit our Shindig room and our website to hear more about our faculty institutes in 2020:

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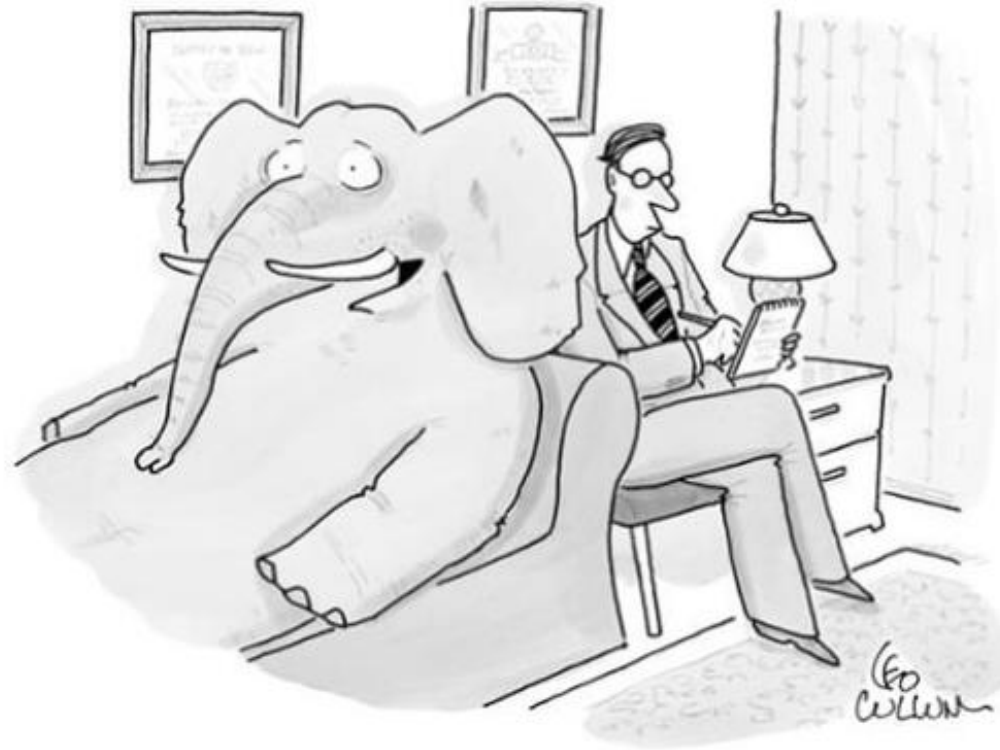
What does it mean to teach in a

**HSI**  
**HISPANIC**  
**SERVING**  
**INSTITUTION** ?

Teaching in a Hispanic Serving Institution means you must be comfortable with studying your instructional practices, figure out whether or not they are working, and for whom

**The Problem:** differences in faculty and student cultural backgrounds are particularly profound in Hispanic Serving Institutions.

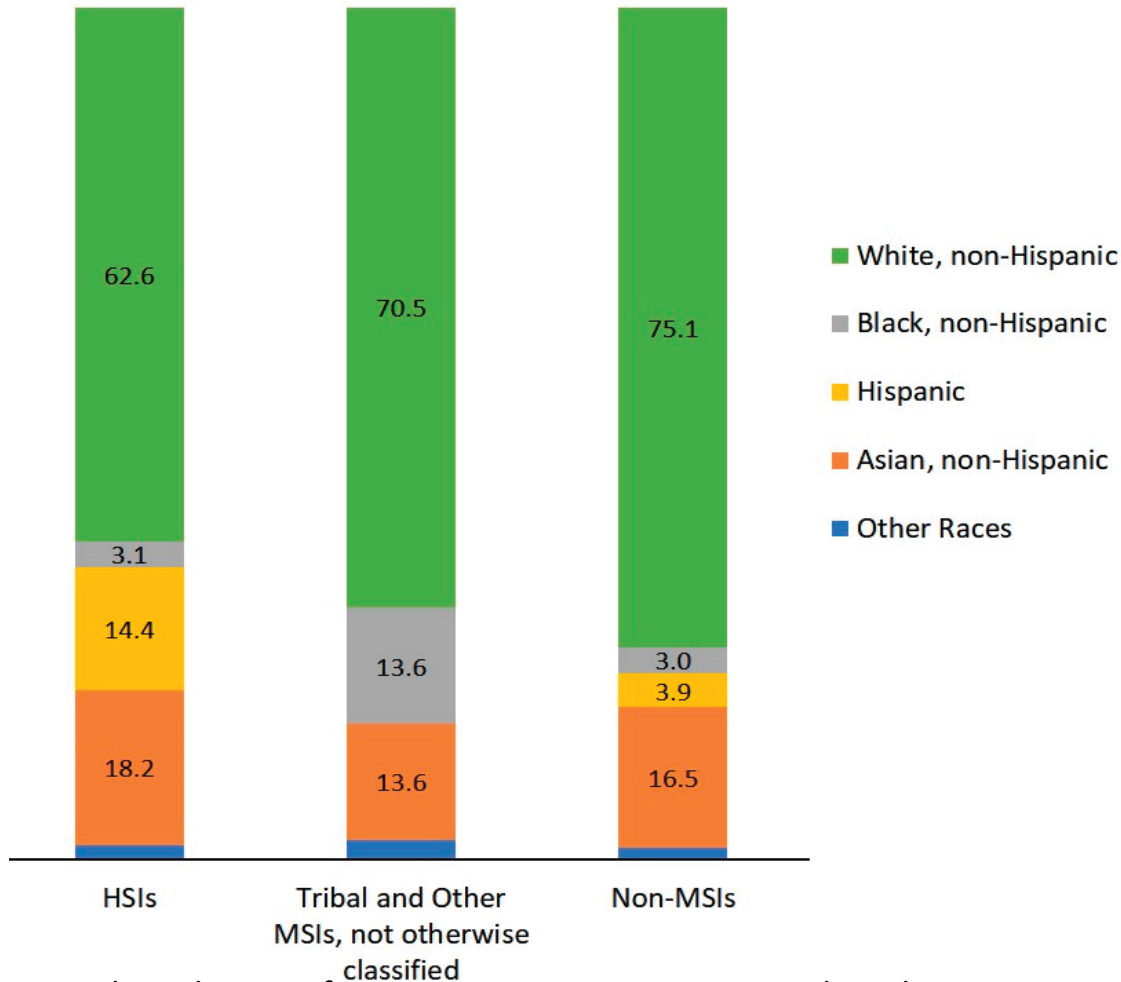




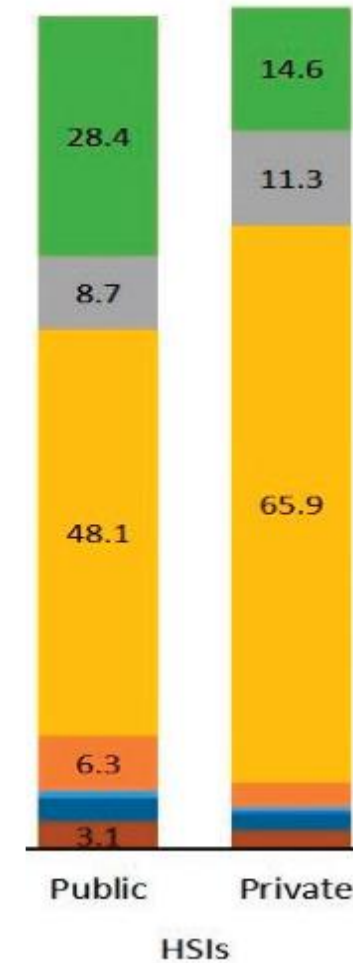
*“I’m right there in the room,  
and no one even acknowledges me.”*

# Faculty and Students in HSIs are not ethnically/racially matched

HSI Faculty



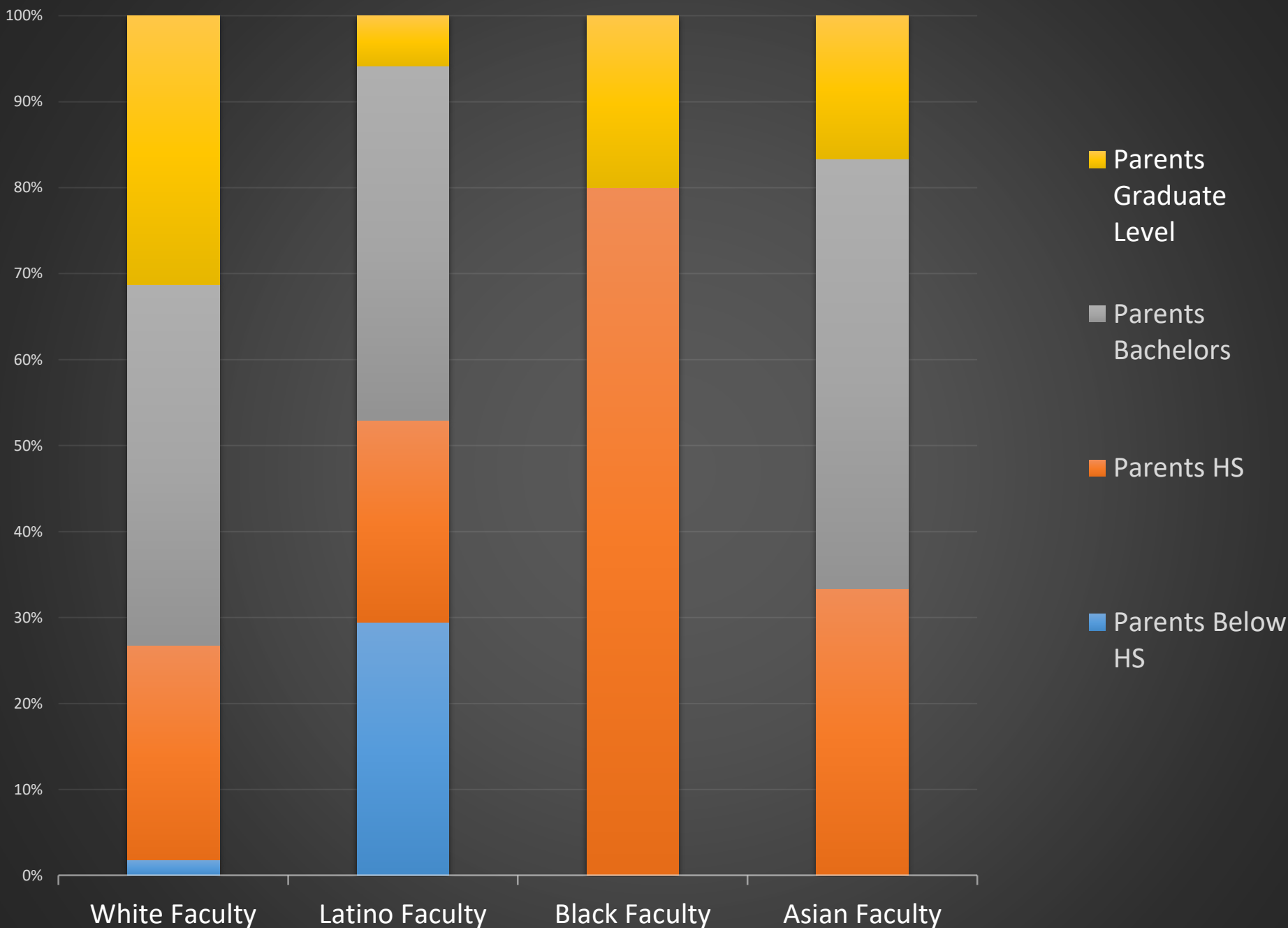
HSI Students



Source: National Academies of Sciences Press: Engineering, and Medicine 2019. *Minority Serving Institutions: America's Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce*, <http://nap.edu/25257>

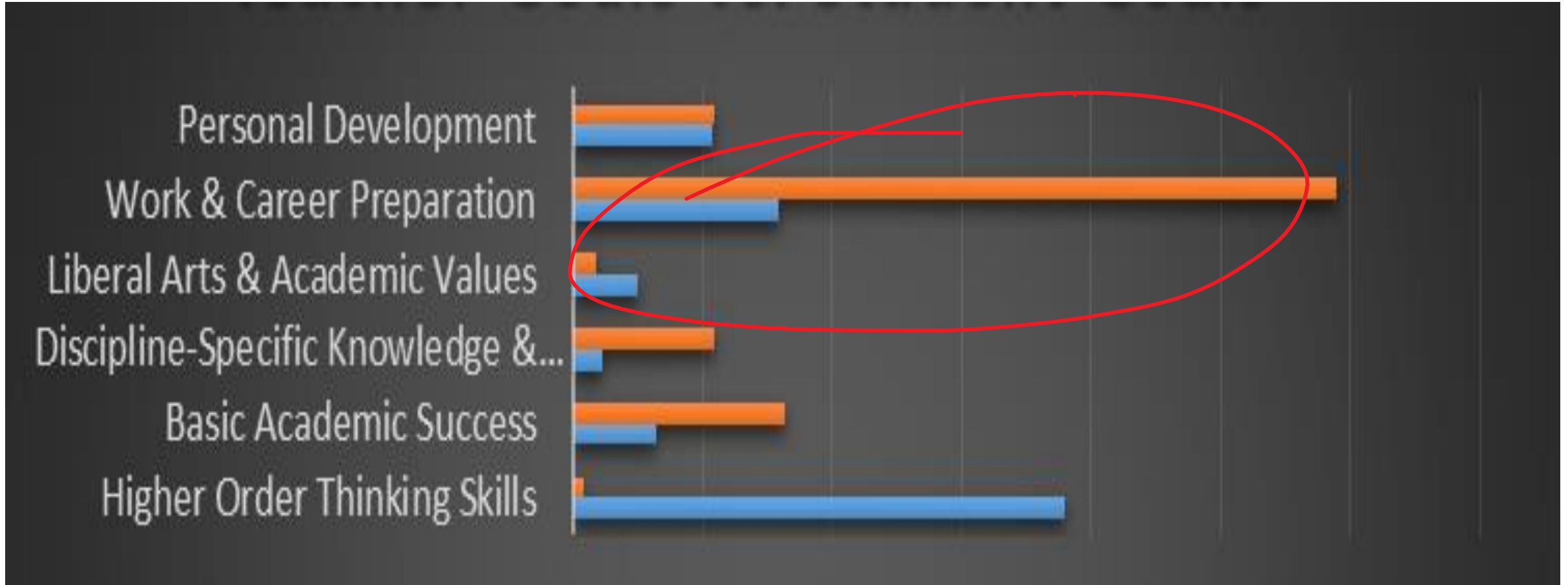
White and Asian Faculty in HSIs are more likely to have college educated parents

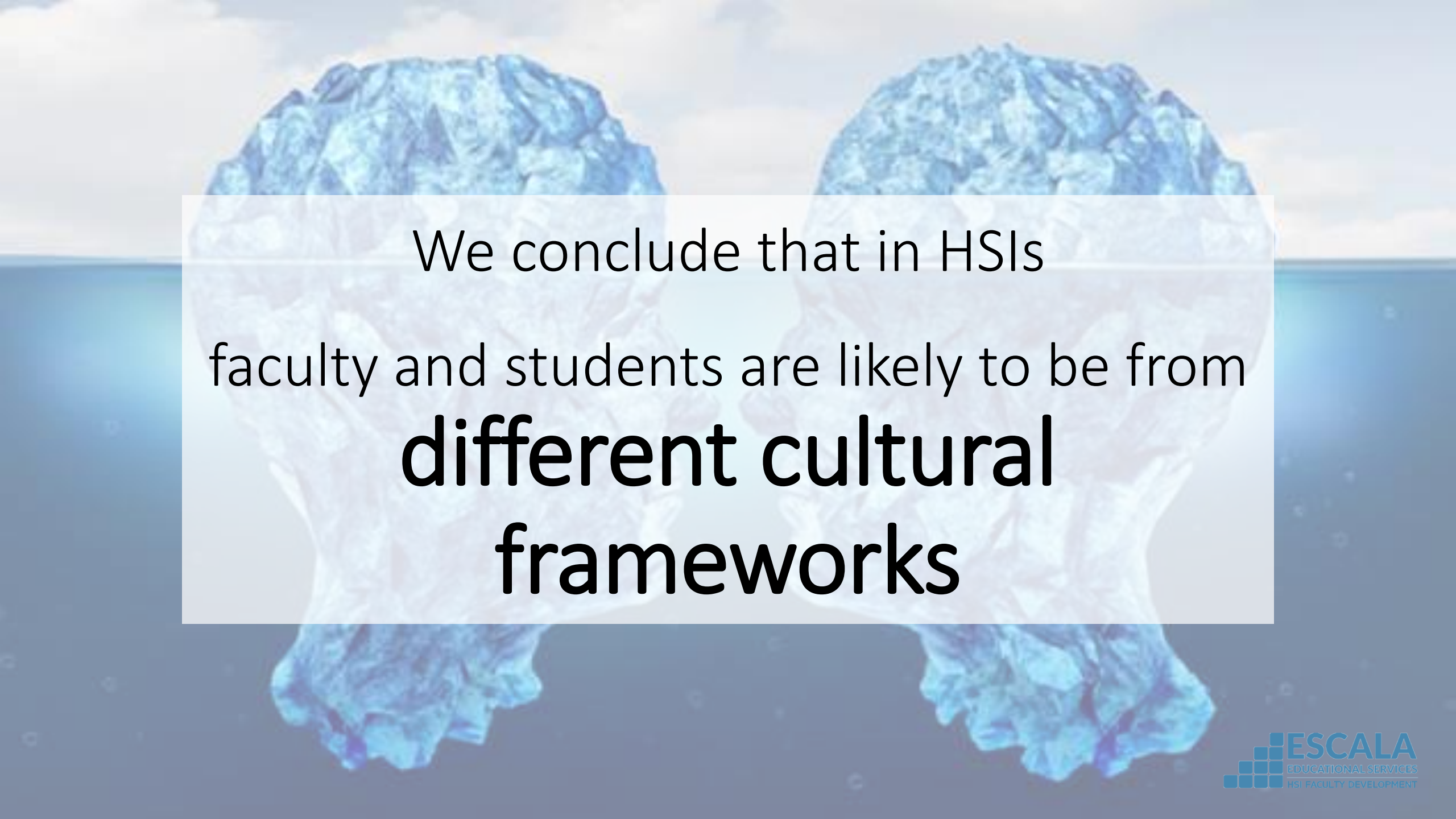
ESCALA Faculty Survey (2015)  
n=146



# HSI Faculty Have Teaching Goals that differ greatly from HSI Students' Learning Goals

ESCALA Faculty Survey (2015), n=146





We conclude that in HSIs  
faculty and students are likely to be from  
**different cultural  
frameworks**





## Cultural Frameworks Are Emotional

They are not  
‘learning styles’ or  
‘preferences,’ they  
are simply part of  
our deep cultural  
training

# Cultural Frameworks train us how to think about and explain the world

Motivation for learning

**Explanations for  
Our Success or  
Failure**

Preference for competition

Ways We Cognitively Organize  
Information

**How we handle  
conflict**

**Indirect or direct  
communication styles**

# Cultural Questions for Faculty

Do you believe 100% of your students will pass your course?

How much help is 'too much?'

Who is to blame if students fail an assessment?



ESCALA's work with faculty shows that these cultural gaps can be partially explained in part by faculty's lack of *intercultural development*.

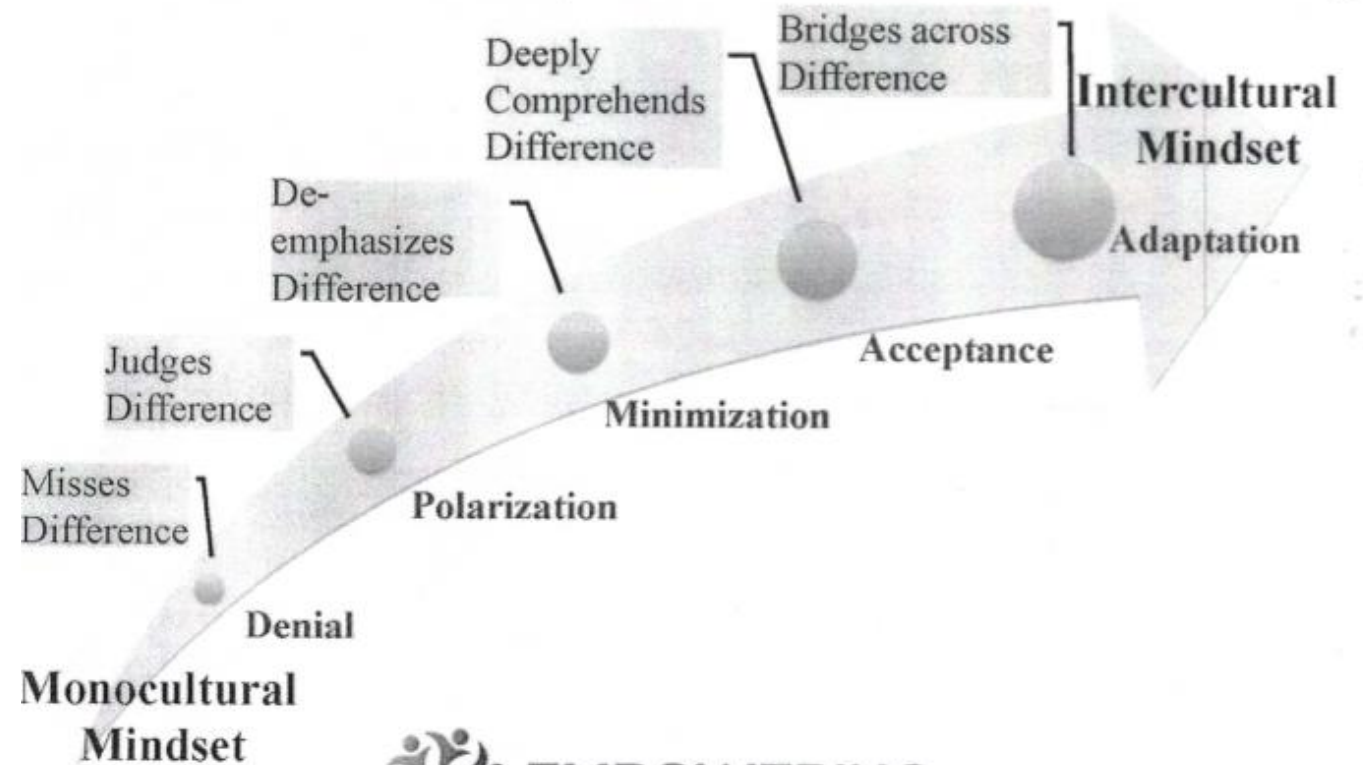
High intercultural development: When you are able to shift cultural perspectives and change behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.

Low intercultural development: You may not notice or acknowledge cultural differences, or withdraw from/overly criticize cultural differences.

Source: *IDI Qualifying Seminar Booklet, Summary of Orientation Descriptions, p.4 (2018)*

# The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDI, LLC (2007))

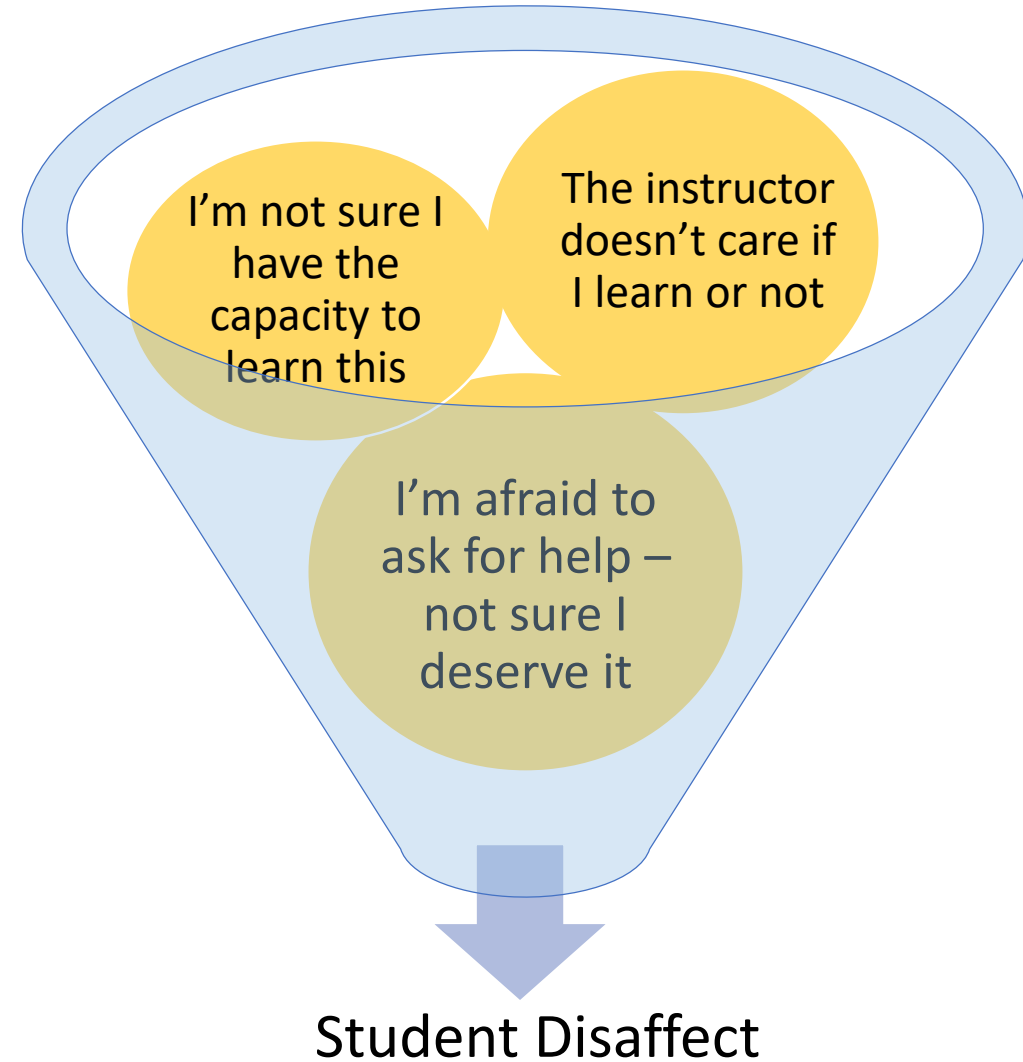
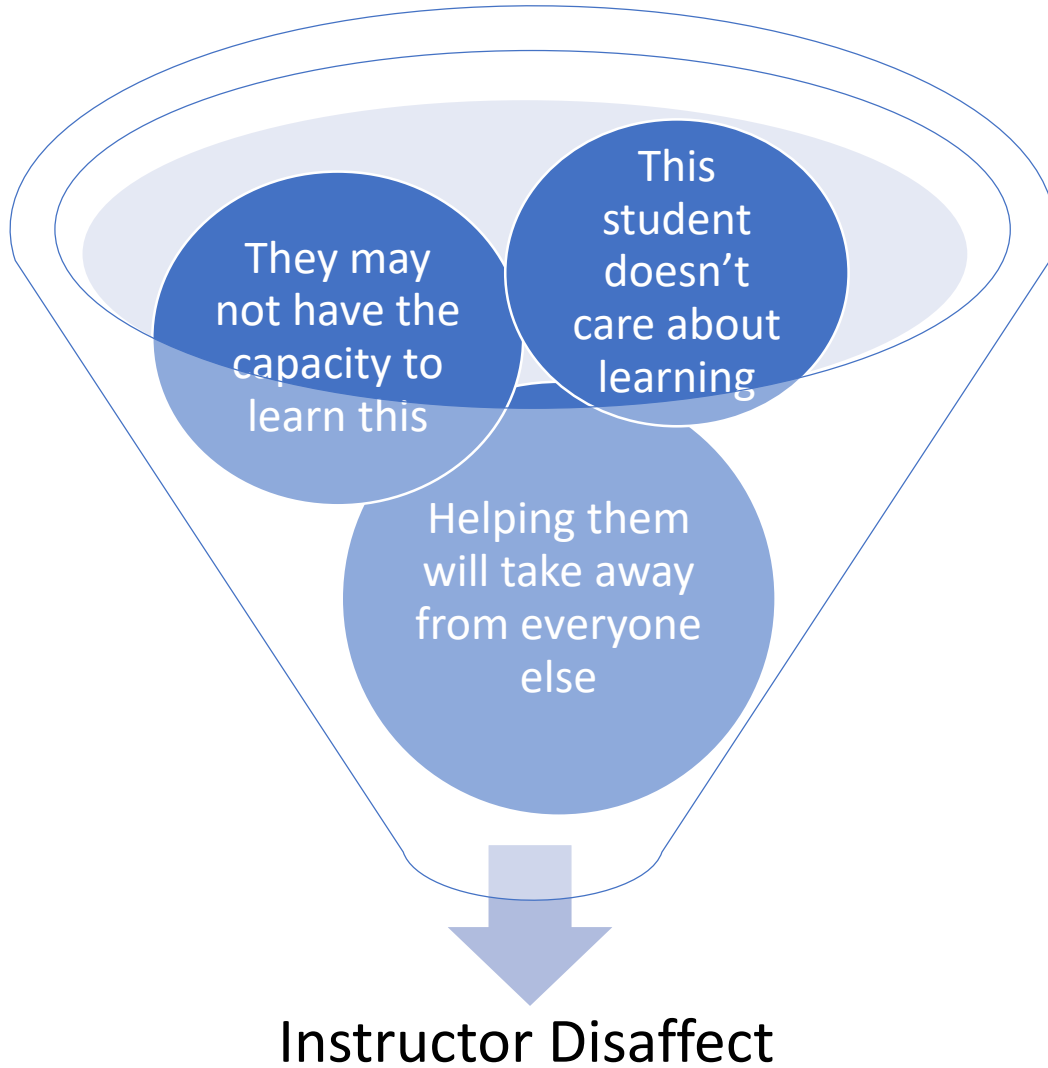
## Intercultural Development Continuum: Primary Orientations



Modified from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), M. Bennett, 1986



### 3 Primary Areas of Disconnect Between Students and Faculty

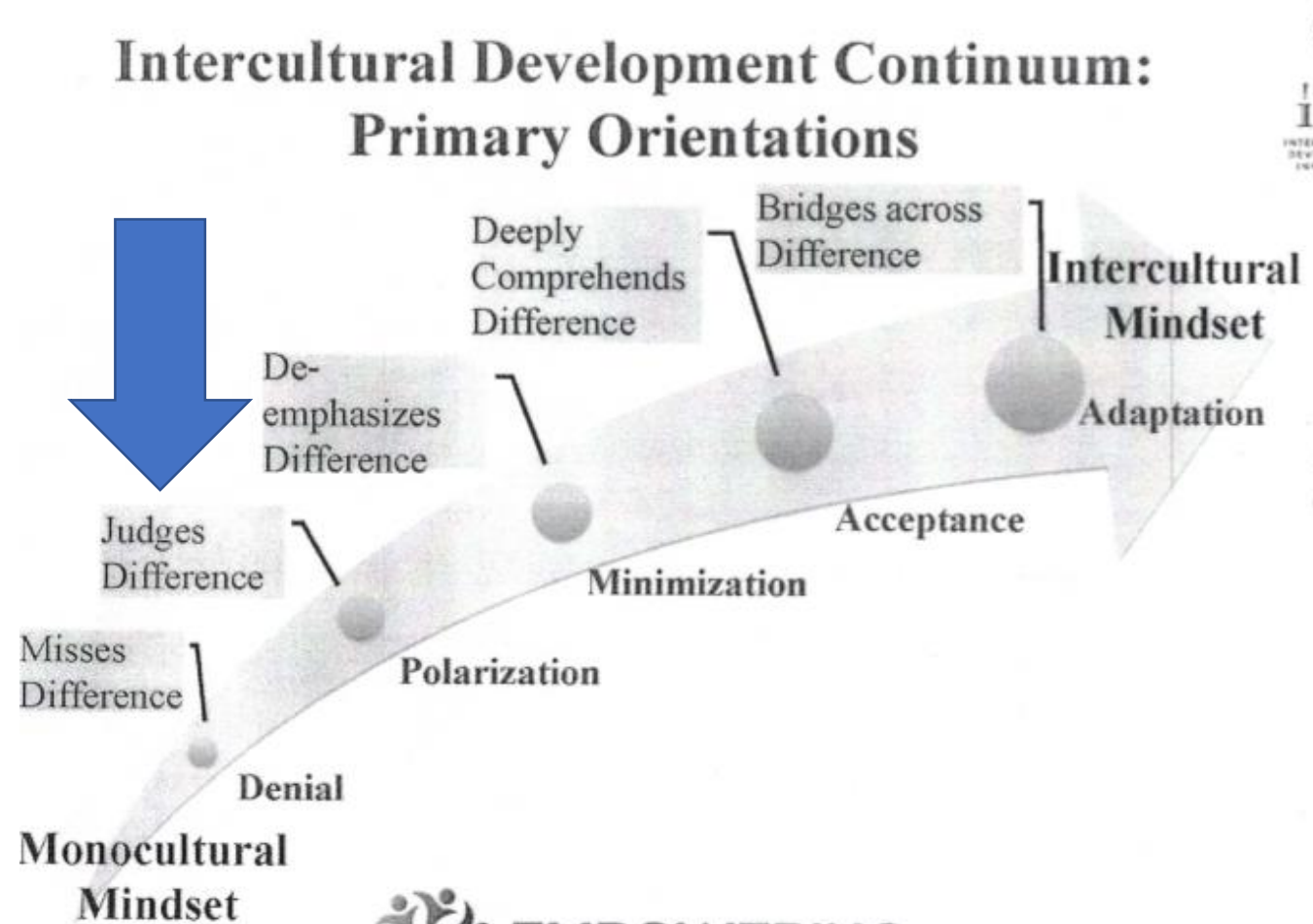




## Difficult Conversation #1: *Discussing Student Potential to Learn*

- I wish we had our 'old' students
- Students just aren't what they used to be
- I would have to lower my standards to get these students to be successful

# Discussions of student deficit is a 'polarizing' orientation



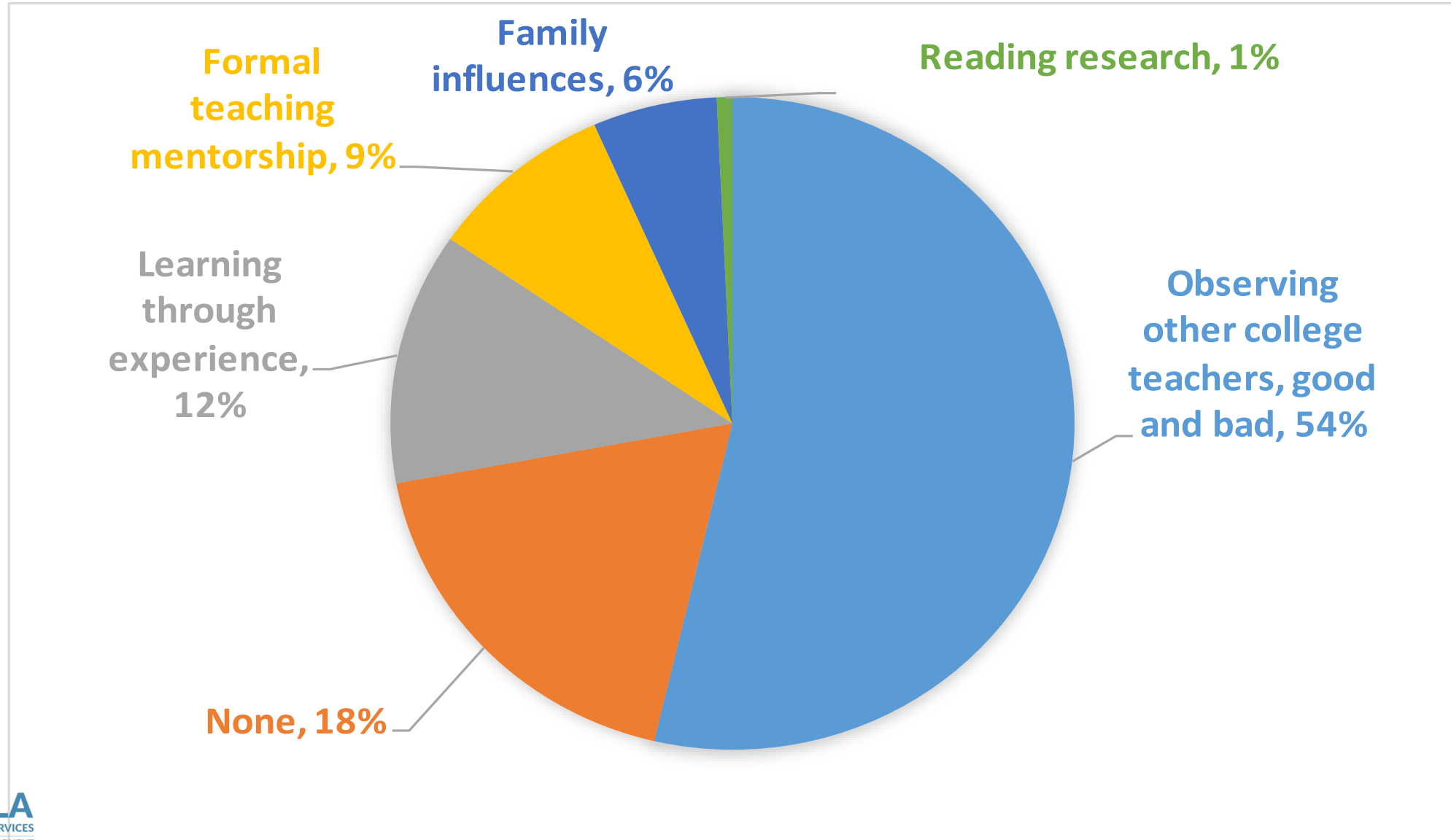
Modified from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), M. Bennett, 1986





# HSI Faculty Have Few Formal Opportunities to Grow as Teachers

What is your biggest influence on the way you teach? ESCALA Faculty Survey (2015)  
n=146

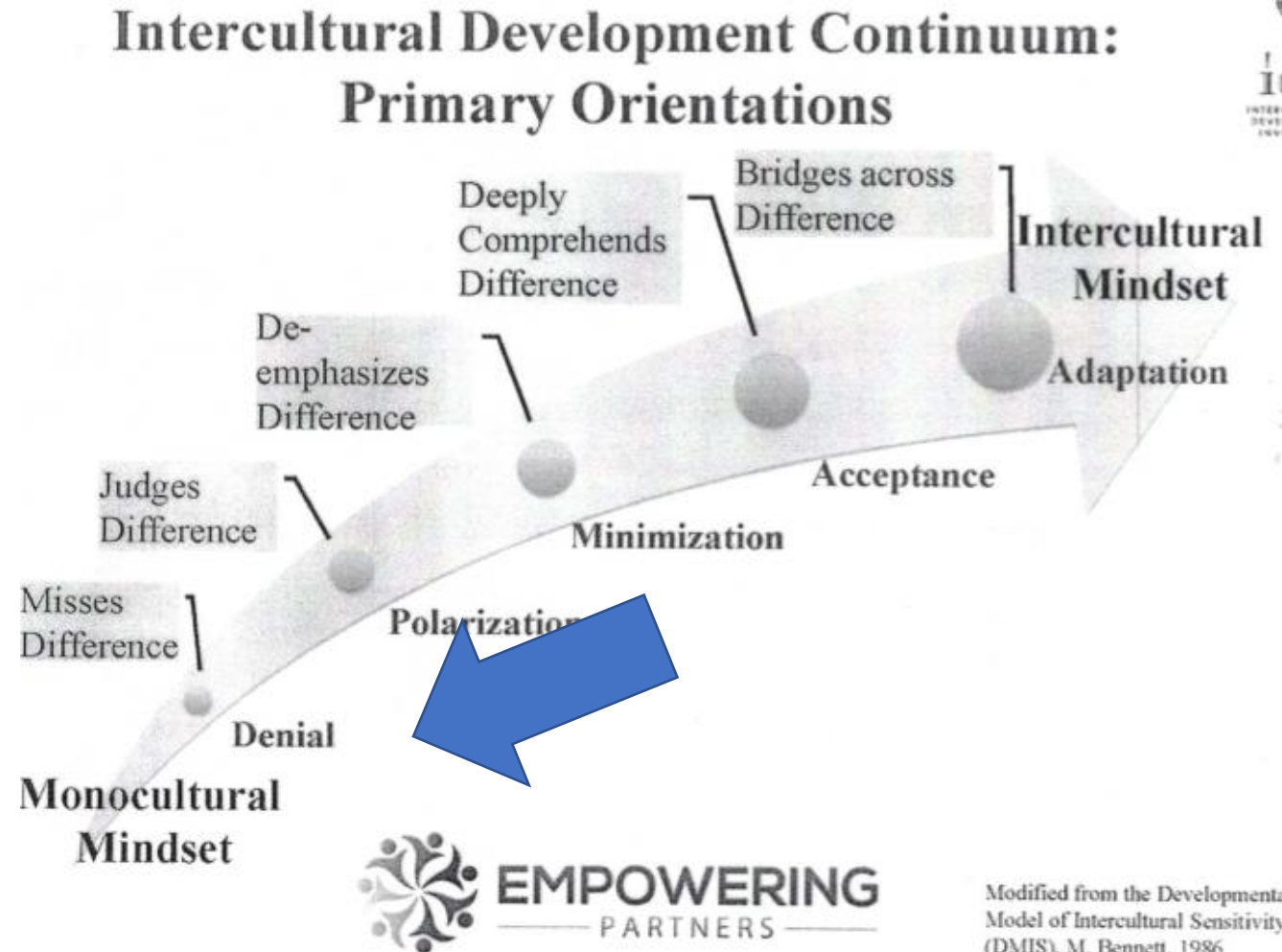




## Difficult Conversation #2: *Students Don't Care About Learning*

- They don't come to class/ participate/ turn in work
- They don't care if they get Fs or Ds because they don't protest
- It's too bad all they care about is getting a job, not the love of learning

# Discussions of “Student Caring” is a Denial of Cultural Difference



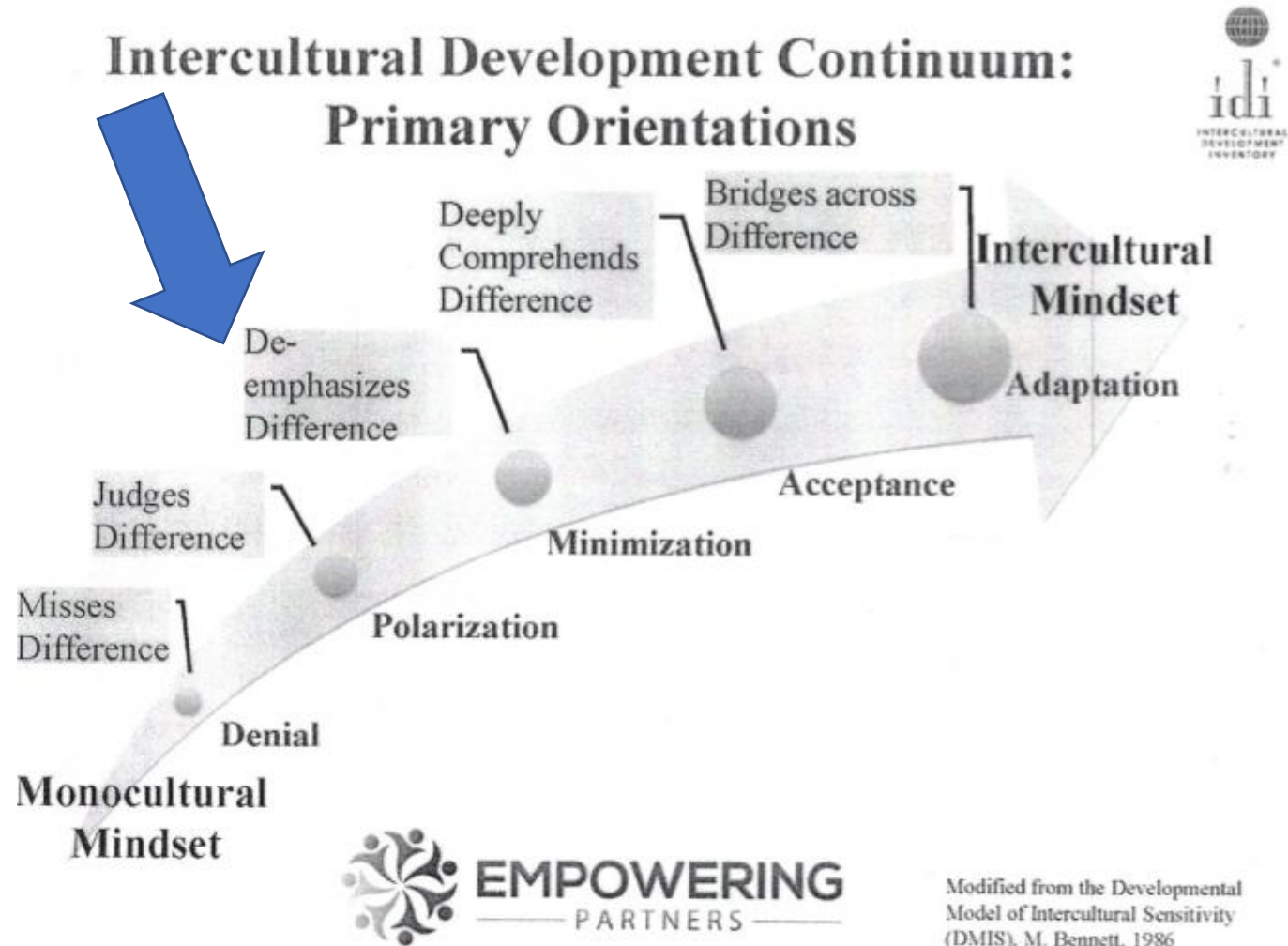
Modified from the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), M. Bennett, 1986



## Difficult Conversation #3: *Students Who Have Needs Don't Deserve To Be Here*

- It's not fair for me to help them more
- It takes away from other students who are more "deserving"
- I'm helping weed out the ones who can't make it as nurses, doctors, engineers, etc.

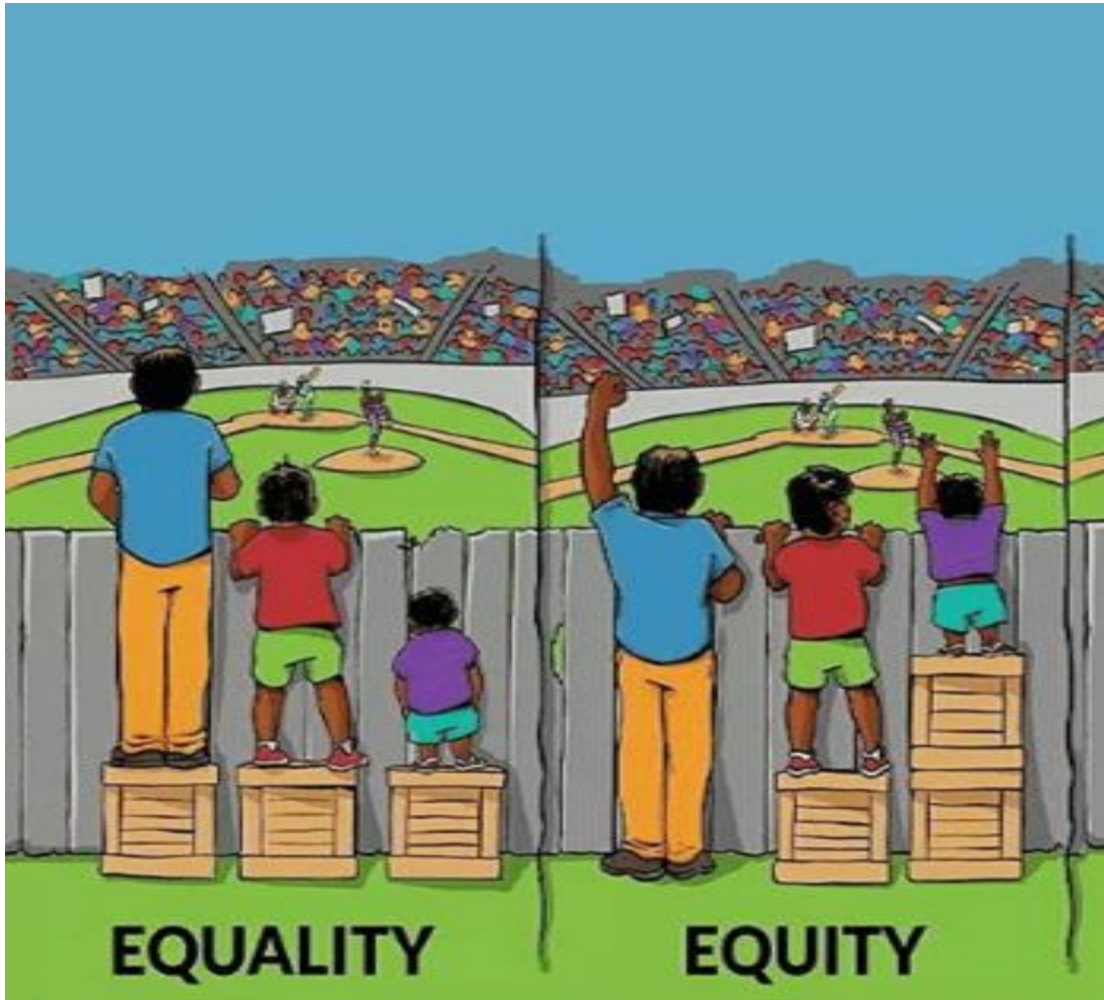
# Discussions of Weeding Result from Faculty Minimizing the Importance of Difference: lack of understanding that addressing 'needs' will diversify instruction and benefit all students



# Why faculty deflect the work

- Lack of pedagogical resources
- Difficulty in changing embedded cultural practices
- Lack of support or push from institutional culture to change





Diversifying instruction sounds like it will take time away from those more deserving...

It's a misrepresentation of equity as "taking away" resources away from others and giving to those less deserving

# Teaching is not a zero-sum game



All students benefit from a more highly skilled instructor who diversifies their cognitive techniques





# Latinx *Ventajas*, or Assets (Yosso and Rendón):

Shifts can occur when faculty see students as having assets rather than deficits. Discussing assets with students creates affirmational environments that counteract trauma.



Many are bilingual



Many successfully juggle work and school



Strong community and family ties



Strong work ethic



Willingness to deal with ambiguity



Ability to work in partnership with others



Spiritual strength



**“You don’t have to change the student population to get results, you have to change the conditions under which they learn.”**

**Pedro Noguera**

A signpost with two directional signs. The sign pointing left is labeled 'PAST' and the sign pointing right is labeled 'FUTURE'. The signpost is set against a background of a cloudy sky.

**PAST**

## IN SUMMARY

Our work with faculty shows that resistance to shifting instructional practices towards equity for Latinx students can be explained in part by HSI faculty's lack of *intercultural development*, or ability to shift cultural perspectives and change behavior in authentic ways.

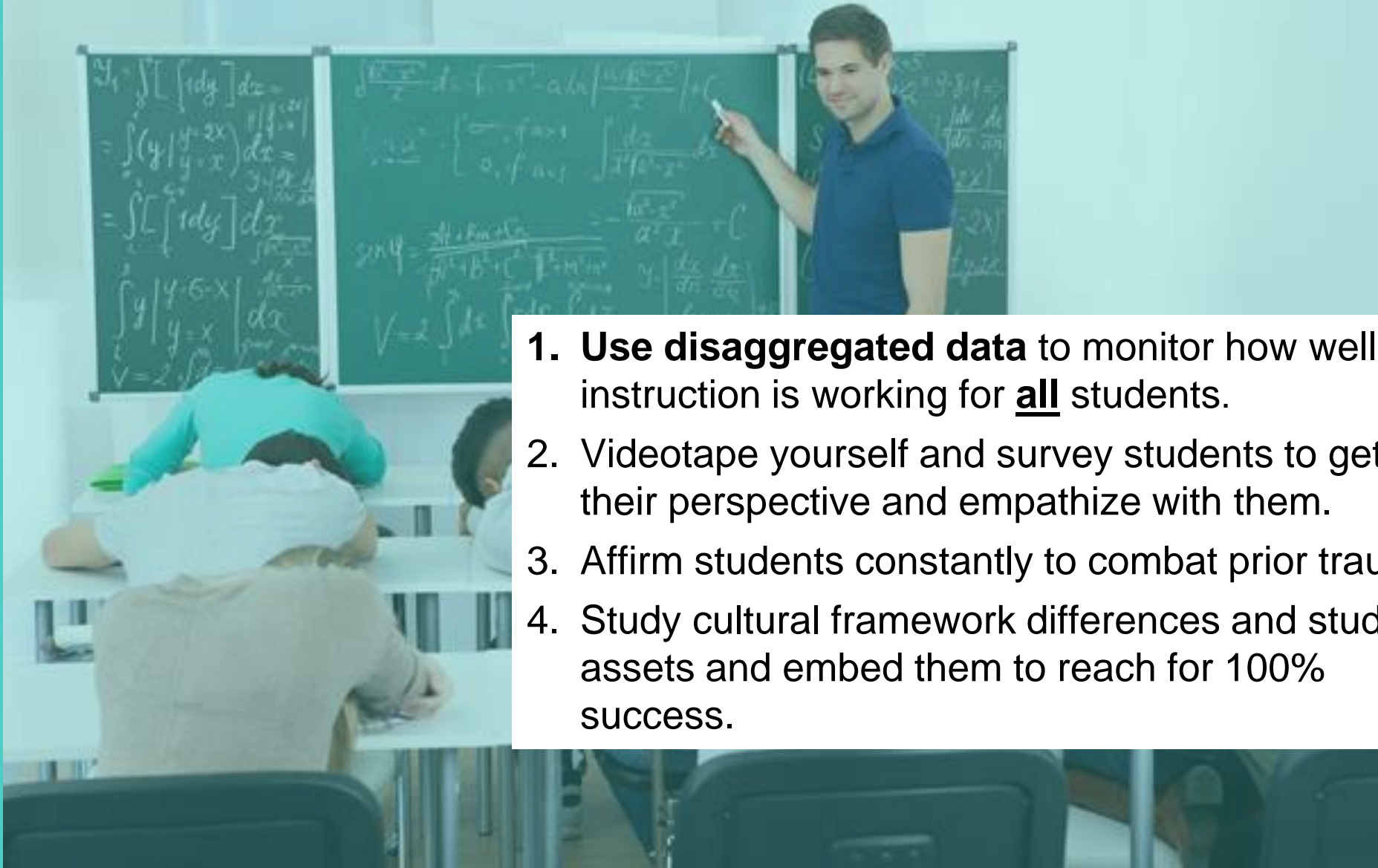
# Helping faculty develop intercultural competence

***Disaggregated course GPA data is key.*** Reflecting and analyzing disaggregated data should be done both privately and then with supportive peers.

***It is impossible to be culturally responsive without knowing your students.*** Faculty must reach out to students to see what matters in instruction, rather than guessing. Latinx faculty and staff should take the leadership role in helping all faculty get to know the assets and challenges of Latinx students.

***Faculty need to feel supported by their institutions as they experiment with changes to their practices to benefit minoritized students.*** The focus must be on reflecting: on what's working, and for whom-- without feeling evaluated or scolded. Institutions must help faculty stay on the path of 100% for all students.

# Instructional Humility: The Work of HSI Instructors



1. **Use disaggregated data** to monitor how well your instruction is working for **all** students.
2. Videotape yourself and survey students to get their perspective and empathize with them.
3. Affirm students constantly to combat prior trauma.
4. Study cultural framework differences and student assets and embed them to reach for 100% success.



## What HSIs can do to help faculty shift away from conversations of resistance

- *Speak of students as asset-based*
- *Create long-term opportunities for faculty to learn and change*
- *Monitor faculty growth and reward it*

“I care a heck of a lot more about what our students can do when they leave, then what they did before they came to our university.”

- Dr. Richard Rush, President of CSU Channel Islands (2001-2015)



Visit our Shindig room and our website to hear more about our faculty institutes in 2020:

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