

# Ph.D. Project Says: National Effort Needed to Diversify College Faculty

Noting the growing number of “go-it-alone” diversity efforts by universities to attract minority faculty, The Ph.D. Project – a national organization founded to diversify business school faculty – called for a coordinated, nationwide approach to the goal of more diversity at the front of college classrooms, across all disciplines.

“It is laudable that several universities have recently launched independent programs to address students’ concerns about diversity on campus,” said Bernard J. Milano, President of The Ph.D. Project. “But they are playing a zero-sum game.”

“Because minorities are severely underrepresented on college faculties, the only possible result of ‘go-it-alone’ efforts by individual colleges will be to relocate minority faculty from one school to another. That may help the schools that ‘win’ the game, but it does not address the country’s interest in a more diverse higher education landscape nationwide,” Milano said.

In recent months, Milano noted, four major universities have announced their own go it alone programs, totaling \$200 million, to attract diverse faculty through enhanced recruitment and increased compensation.

“The schools with resources to attract minority faculty may diversify their campuses further – but at the expense of other schools, and students, lacking those resources,” Milano said. “The nation needs a comprehensive effort by colleges working together on programs that will attract, encourage and support African-, Hispanic- and Native Americans to choose college teaching as their profession – and then populate faculties on hundreds of campuses nationwide.”

Several individual initiatives to increase campus diversity have included professor recruitment because of growing recognition that



Bernard J. Milano  
President of The Ph.D. Project

a more diverse faculty can attract a more diverse student body. As State University of New York Chancellor Nancy Zimpher has noted, “Minority faculty are a magnet for minority students.”

Research shows that minority students do not perform up to their potential when the environment is uncomfortable or unfavorable for them to flourish. Often in these cases there are few, if any, minority faculty or administrators for whom students can reach out. Dr. Claude Steele, Provost at University of California - Berkeley, has said, “Studying this problem of under-performance has morphed into solving the diversity problem. It’s one thing to numerically integrate a setting. It’s another thing to make that place, a place where everyone feels comfortable and can flourish.”

The Ph.D. Project is a national program that has increased faculty diversity at hundreds of colleges and universities. It is the only nationwide program aimed at diversifying university faculty. It attracts and enables African-, Hispanic- and Native Americans to choose college teaching as a career, and succeed in the rigorous process of obtaining a Ph.D., which qualifies them to be professors.

Since its inception in 1994, The Ph.D. Project has been responsible for the increase in the number of minority business professors from 294 to 1,312. An additional 296 minorities are currently enrolled in doctoral programs, and will take a place at the front of the classroom over the next few years.

Milano said, “The Ph.D. Project model was developed for business schools, but any discipline can partner with the appropriate professional organizations in its field to do what we do: market an academic career in that discipline, and pre-qualify, prepare, and support the doctoral students – tomorrow’s professors – we attract.” **S**