SUPPORTING DIVERSITY IN STEM

Laura McCullough
Professor of Physics
University of WisconsinStout



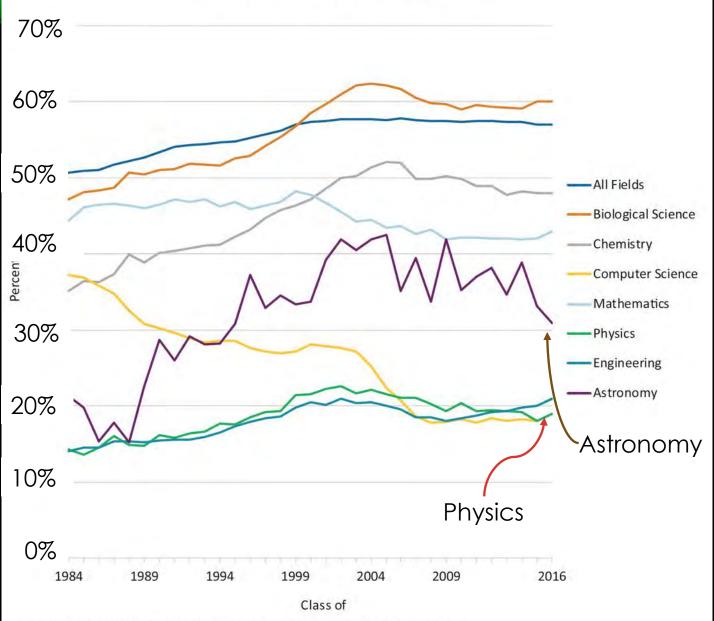
WELCOME!

DISCLAIMERS

- Topic can be uncomfortable
- Learning is uncomfortable!
- Happy to provide sources
- QR code on last slide—my website & these slides
- Focus on gender
- I love this topic = I talk fast!
- My biases

WHY TALK ABOUT DIVERSITY AND STEM?

Percent of Bachelor's Degrees Earned by Women in Selected Fields, Classes of 1981 through 2016



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. Data compiled by AIP Statistical Research Center

Number of African American, Hispanic, and Native American Women Earning Bachelors in Physical Science Fields, 2003 and 2013

| | Total Number of Degrees Earned | | Degrees Earned by African American, Hispanic, and Native American Women | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| | Degrees in 2013 (#) | Change '03-'13 (%) | Degrees in 2013 (#) | Change '03-'13 (%) |
| Earth Sciences | 5,506 | 64 | 223 | 182 |
| Atmospheric Sciences | 760 | 25 | 19 | 111 |
| Chemistry | 14,886 | 50 | 1,307 | 41 |
| Physics | 6,760 | 59 | 118 | 40 |
| Astronomy | 413 | 33 | 11 | -8 |
| Oceanography | 247 | 75 | 13 | 333 |
| Other Physical Sciences | 812 | 23 | 62 | 138 |
| All Physical Sciences | 29,384 | 53 | 1,753 | 54 |

2013 women bachelors physics: 1162 astronomy: 128

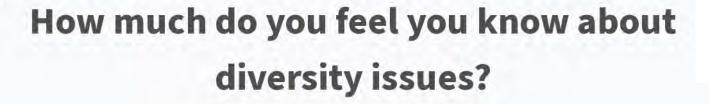
OK, SO

- Waste of talent
 - What ideas have been lost?
 - How slowly have we made progress?
 - How much energy has been diverted from science?
 - How much money has been diverted from science?

- Moral issue
 - Serious inequity in our culture
 - Social justice issue
 - Systemic racism, sexism, etc.

HOW CAN WE CREATE A MORE INCLUSIVE STEM?

- Find out what helps
- Find out what hurts
- Build awareness
- Motivate people
- Offer strategies and actions
- Measure effects





Nothing--yet! A

A little awareness **B**

Familiar with some research and issues C

Been actively looking into it D

DEFINITIONS

• EQUALITY

• DIVERSITY

• EQUITY

• INCLUSION

• JUSTICE

• INTERSECTIONALITY

Equality



The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Justice



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed.

The systemic barrier has been removed.

DIVERSITY VS. INCLUSION

Diversity is inviting someone to the party. Inclusion is asking them to dance. –Verna Myers







INTERSECTIONALITY





THINGS THAT HELP

- Sense of belonging
- Self-identity as a scientist
- Talking about the topic
- Growth mindset

APS STEP-UP: https://engage.aps.org/stepup/home

THINGS THAT HURT

- Harassment* (3/4 of undergrad physics women!)
- Stereotype threat**
- Fixed mindset**
- Microaggressions***

*Aycock, Hazari, Brewe, Clancy, Hodapp, Goertzen. PHYSICAL REVIEW PHYSICS EDUCATION RESEARCH 15, 010121 (2019)

**https://www.ted.com/talks/russell_mcclain_implicit_bias_stereotype_thre at_and_higher_education

***Barthelemy, McCormick, Henderson doi:10.1119/perc.2014.pr.005





Sexual harassment (come-ons, physical or verbal attention)

Sexual coercion (trade sex for outcome)

Sexist gender harassment (girls can't do science)

Sexual gender harassment (pictures of half naked women)

More than one of these

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BIAS

- Implicit/Unconscious/Unintentional/Unexamined bias
 - Growing up → culturally instilled values
 - Pervasive: everyone has them
 - Separate from explicit biases (can be same or different)
 - May differ from our declared beliefs
 - Tend to favor our own in-group
 - Malleable—thank goodness!

Implicit (Unconscious) Bias

Growing up > culturally instilled values Pervasive: everyone has them Different from explicit biases (can be same or different) May differ from our declared beliefs Tend to favor our own in-group Malleable—thank goodness!

REDUCING BIAS

- Awareness
- Motivation
- Actions

The End of Bias: A Beginning. Nordell, 2021.

ASSUMPTIONS

- Stereotypes and assumptions are mental shortcuts
- Can be very useful
- Can be problematic

Making <u>assumptions</u>...

Which is closest to your thinking?



He's probably on his phone--what a jerk

Distracted driver--stay away from him!

Dude really needs to pull over

This guy is clearly drunk

None of the above

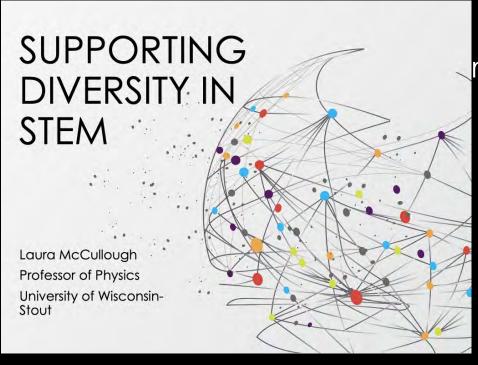
CHANGING OUR LANGUAGE

- Become aware
- Catch yourself afterwards
- Catch yourself beforehand
- Build habit of new words

STOP, DROP, AND...THINK?

- Social media is great at misinformation
- Think about posts/memes/blogs
 - Facts or opinions?
 - Source?
 - Funny at the expense of someone?
 - Unnecessary information/identification?
- Pause before sharing

CHANGING PERCEPTIONS



r in-group



The Physics Teacher Sept 2021 https://aapt.scitation.org/doi/full/10.1119/10.0006470

AUTHENTICITY

- Inclusive environment is one where people bring their true, authentic self
- No need to hide parts of identity
- Changing culture starts with you
- Do you bring your authentic self to school/work?





Defensive

Pissed off

Intrigued

Upset

More than one of these

None of these

PITFALLS/MISCONCEPTIONS

- You can become "woke" and be done
- Depression, anger, frustration without action
- Thinking you are a bad person because of unconscious bias
- Impatience with others
- Assuming intent instead of ignorance
- Focus on past mistakes
- Wanting immediate visible changes

READY, SET, ACTION!

- Think about your daily routine
 - Where are places you are likely to make assumptions?
 - Where are places you are likely to be biased?

 Think about one way you can be more authentic and true to yourself at school/work.

- What is one action your club/study group can take to be more inclusive?
- What is one action to make your classroom more inclusive?
- What is one action to make a process more inclusive (hiring/tenure/performance evaluation)?

KEEP GOING!

- Set a time to meet with others
- Start a reading group
- Find webinars, TED talks, podcasts, research
- Invite others to help
- Ally groups
- Get administrators involved

Your thoughts...



THANK YOU!

Lauramccphd.com

