Diversity challenges for HE in the era of Covid-19

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Managing students and faculty in the Covid-19 era: Challenges so far

CORONA VIRUS

Diversity Lenses

Students

Staff
Managing students and faculty in the Covid-19 era: Challenges so far

How did Covid-19 and the global crisis affect women and minorities in your organization?

Discuss it regarding one of the following groups:

1. Students
2. Staff, faculty, workers

- Present in short points in the group by using share screen
Challenges for students: at the individual level

- **Economic** hardship due to the economic crisis, for individual / family
- Increased **mental distress**: stress, anxiety, loneliness, depression and fear of the virus
- **Losing community** and social support networks
- **Caring responsibilities**, overload for those who need to care for an elderly / sick / isolated family member
- **Difficulty of learning from home** due to **resource scarcity** (technology, space), **adequate housing** and **food insecurity** (especially for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds)
- **Finding protected residence**: difficulties for students with no family to find a residence
- **Foreign students**: Increasing distress and loneliness, social isolation, loss of community support, borders closure.
- **Asian students**: suffer from micro-aggression / racism
Challenges for students: at the interface with the organization

- **Online learning challenges**: attention and Learning ability, privacy impairment
- **Students with children**: experience significant difficulty in meeting curriculum requirements in the absence of childcare settings, *disproportionately affecting women.*
- **Research delay** due to lab closure, resource access problem
- **Supervisor / Institution Requirements**: conflict between meeting supervisor’s and covid-19 constraints (lack of transportation, need to care for family members, etc.)
Challenges for scientist/faculty: at the individual level

- Increased **mental distress**: stress, anxiety, depression and fear of the virus.
- Lack of community support that the campus provides, especially for faculty living alone.
- **Delays in research**, especially for those who depend on labs and physical resources outside home.
- **Parents of young children** experience increased difficulty in meeting the requirements of teaching, research and administration, in the reality that children are at home.
- **Responsibility for older family members** imposes an increased burden.
- **Staff at risk group**: limits their ability to continue working.
Challenges for scientist/faculty: at the interface with the organization

- **Managing a team during global crisis**: challenging team leadership, organizing work in complex uncertainties, accessibility constraints.
- **Delays in building new laboratories and equipment supply**
- The transition to **online teaching** requires the acquisition of new skills and capabilities in a short time.
- **Challenges to international collaborations**: traveling canceled and research plans delayed.
Research groups that quickly organize around Covid-19 lack gender diversity.

There is initial evidence of the gendered effects of the epidemic on:

- The ratio of articles that women publish compared to their male peers is lower
- The extent of women's participation in seminars and conferences is lower, which means reducing access to the latest knowledge in the field.
- Short deadlines for submitting proposals for Covid-19 related research grants are more challenging for women due to extra burden at home
Opportunities

✓ **Distance Learning**: reflects our institutions flexibility and creativity and creates opportunities for a substantial change in the teaching and learning experience.

✓ **Changing conservative and rigid structures** that have become institutionalized in the academy, and encouraging new collaborations and connections.

✓ **Increased Scientific Collaboration**: the “open science” concept expands opportunities for international scientific collaboration and flattens hierarchies

✓ **Quick access to information**: The acceleration of sharing information at a distance, lectures, seminars and conferences, provides exposure to up-to-date information for those who routinely find it difficult to travel to conferences abroad

✓ **Reducing accessibility and cost worries**: online interactions allow those who don't have resources to attend conferences, workshops, meetings.