

Workplace Practices for Collaborative Success

Case Studies and Discussion

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Case Study #1: Meeting Participation

- The 20-member Strategic Planning Committee at ABC College is holding its summer meeting. The committee discusses recommendations for new strategies for Year 5. At the close of the day, Academic Success subcommittee chair Marty Baalman complains to the Community Engagement subcommittee chair Atsuko Onozawa, "Two of the people on the subcommittee didn't say a word the whole time. Why are they even on the committee, if they don't care to participate? We need to hear their thoughts as minoritized persons, but they don't say a thing."
- What issues do you see with this situation?
- If you were Atsuko, what might you tell Marty? How can Marty address the problem?

Case Study #2: Aggregated Data & Collective Terms

- Members of an institutional research team at XYZ University generally avoid naming specific racial groups (Black, Asian, Hispanic, Latino, white, etc.) in reports and instead using collective terms like, "diverse staff members," "under-represented minority (URM) faculty," and "at-risk students."
- When submitting their final report and recommendations, the team pointed to data on outcomes of "under-represented minorities (URM)" and data for outcomes of "non-URM."
- What issue/s do you see with this situation?
- What are some ways to make meaningful improvement?

Case Study #3: Office Housework & Non-Promotable Tasks

- Every time the astronomy department meets, the department's sole female faculty member, Jennifer Robinson, is asked to take minutes, distill them, and share them after the meeting. She is teaching a full load and is also assigned to 12 committees, while her department colleagues are typically on 5-7 committees. As a result of these responsibilities, Jennifer is frequently overwhelmed and unable to find time for her research.
- Why do you think this situation is happening?
- What can Jennifer do? What can others (across the dept, college, university) do, to support her?

Case Study #4: Accommodating Physical Disabilities

- At an institutional presentation on ABC University's economic impact, VP of Finance and CFO Jamie Swift speaks loudly to those in attendance, "Can everyone hear me?" When offered a mic, he says, "It's okay. I have a loud voice," and then proceeds to facilitate the presentation.
- What is problematic about this situation?
- What can Jamie do, instead? What can others across the university do, to prevent this situation?

Case Study #5: Accommodating English Language Learners

- Frida Smith, a relatively new faculty member, is teaching an entry level course in her department. She finds that there are several students enrolled in her course from one of her university's international partner institutions. Although they passed a language proficiency exam, it quickly becomes apparent that they are struggling to understand and participate in the class. Frida feels like she should not be required to make changes to her delivery; she believes the students should come prepared to learn.
- Where does Frida's responsibility fall?
- How should Frida's chair address the situation?

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Resources and References