



CHAPTER 2

Diversity and Inclusion Scholarship: A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective

Carlos Tasso Eira de Aquino

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions around the globe face constant challenges stemming from factors such as societal needs, government regulation, competition and innovation within the educational sector, changes in workforce requirements, and the pressures of a world without borders, shrunk by the forces of globalization. Like companies in any other industry, educational organizations must compete with institutions all over the world. Students in any one part of the globe can opt for not attending classes locally, given the ongoing technological advances in distance learning. Notwithstanding these advances, the survival of institutions primarily depends on developing a competitive advantage by delivering high-quality programs and complying with accreditation regulations. Although these

C. T. E. de Aquino (✉)

Director of Business Development and Community Relations, Bryant & Stratton College, North Chesterfield, VA, USA

e-mail: cciradeaquino@bryantstratton.edu

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C. T. E. de Aquino and R. R. Rojas (eds.),

Diversity and Inclusion in Latin American and Caribbean Workplaces,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-35419-0_2

programs and regulations may show differences when viewed and compared on a country by country basis, the requirement that faculty possess suitable credentials—including proven scholarship—remains a crucial factor. In the USA, for example, both institutional (regional and national) and programmatic accreditors strongly emphasize the importance of scholarship and even define criteria in their standards to enforce that requirement (ACBSP, 2019; HLC, 2019; WCSUC, 2018).

Another emerging trend in higher education is that every year, more international institutions start what is called a “candidacy process” leading to fully accredited by American and European accreditation standards. As a participant of this process, institutions are expected to abide by the scholarship requirements including endeavors related to diversity. Aside from being an accreditation standard, understanding differences and being more inclusive has potential as an institutional competitive advantage and better prepares their students and faculty to face the challenges of a global marketplace (Holden & Hamblett, 2007).

In the next sections of this chapter, a discussion of the relevance of scholarship and its impact on accreditation is addressed. A short discussion of Boyer’s Model—commonly used by universities in the USA and other countries to address scholarship—is also presented. A comprehensive proposal for a pilot scholarship initiative in Latin American and Caribbean business schools aiming to better prepare professionals for Diversity and Inclusion concludes this chapter.

SCHOLARSHIP AND ACCREDITATION

Scholarship has commonly been misunderstood and confused with research, which truthfully is only one of the many forms or subsets of the overall concept of research. Many leaders in the education sector argue that scholarship should only be pursued by students and faculty that are involved with doctoral programs, a belief that is only partially true.

To illustrate, regional accreditation agencies in the USA highlight the importance of scholarship in their standards. More specifically, HLC or the Higher Learning Commission, responsible for the accreditation of higher education institutions located within the middle states of the USA, stipulates in its Policy Book Chapter B: Criteria for Accreditation CRRT.B.10.010 (HLC, 2019), a criterion 3.8.5 that says “The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery

of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission.” Another accreditation agency called the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or WASC—an agency associated with the west coast of the USA—states in its Handbook of Accreditation Revised (WSCUC, 2018), a document published by their Senior College and University Commission, has criterion 2.8 that declares “The institution clearly defines expectations for research, scholarship, and creative activity for its students and all categories of faculty. The institution actively values and promotes scholarship, creative activity, and curricular and instructional innovation, and their dissemination appropriate to the institution’s purposes and character.” This suggests that where appropriate, the institution is expected to include in its policies for faculty promotion and tenure the recognition of scholarship related to teaching, learning, assessment, and co-curricular learning.

Programmatic accreditation bodies in the USA also include specific regulations mandating educational institutions to foster scholarship among faculty members. Consequently, this creates a foundation for preparing and developing professionals capable of dealing with evidence-based approaches, which lead to making a difference in their careers and the way they as professionals mold society and make decisions. To illustrate, the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs—also known as the ACBSP—lists Standard 5, focused on Faculty and Staff, which states the following:

Criterion 5.3.C. Provide evidence that ALL Faculty members are involved in activities that enhance the depth and scope of their knowledge related to their discipline and instructional effectiveness. The faculty members as a unit must demonstrate balanced participation of scholarly and professional activities. (ACBSP, 2019)

Here, the ACBSP follows the Boyer’s Model of scholarship (Boyer, 1990; Boyer, Moser, Ream, & Braxton, 2016) in proclaiming this accreditation standard. In this same criterion 5.3.C., scholarship is defined to include four types of intellectual activity:

- the scholarship of teaching;
- the scholarship of discovery;
- the scholarship of integration; and
- the scholarship of application.

According to this criterion, “these four types of scholarship are to be equally recognized, accepted, and respected, and the overall performance of each faculty member is to be carefully assessed and held to a high standard of excellence” (ACBSP, 2019). The context of these intellectual activities and the Boyer’s Model are better explained in the next section of the chapter.

SCHOLARSHIP AND BOYER’S MODEL

In his seminal book, *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, Ernst L. Boyer (1990) argued that scholarship is not restricted to research, but it can be portrayed in four different forms: discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Faculty members, while performing their duties in academia, are encouraged to exercise all four forms of scholarship as a path to professional growth and institutional advancement. Invariably, different levels of higher education programs will naturally lead to activities that would emphasize one or more of these forms. For example, faculty engaged in doctoral programs would be more involved with research than a professor teaching for institutions that only offers associate degrees. Yet it is essential that faculty and students pursue all four scholarship forms suggested by Boyer as a means of learning, professional growth, and institutional development.

Scholarship surely means the discovery of knowledge, as in research, but that is only the beginning of the process. Scholarship, to be complete, also means the integration of knowledge. It means the application of knowledge. And it means the presentation of knowledge, as in great teaching. (Boyer, 1992)

Boyer has defined the *Scholarship of Discovery* as the one involved with the freedom of inquiry and scholarly investigation. This type of scholarship portrays the main focus of this chapter.

We take the position that research is at the very heart of academic life, and we celebrate what we call the scholarship of discovery...(And) as long as scholars are free to pursue the truth, wherever it may lead, there will surely continue to be a flow of new scientific knowledge. (Boyer, 1992)

The primary purpose of the scholarship of discovery is to build new knowledge through disciplined, investigative efforts, primarily by employing the scientific method. Here, this type of scholarship goes beyond what is expected solely of doctoral students. The scholarship of discovery as defined here is important to any degree and educational institution, since it contributes to the intellectual climate of the university, characterizes the creative process that helps scholarship to advance, leads to results that can potentially improve the university's academic standing, and increases the respect of their efforts.

Certainly, doctoral-level studies provide the archetypal environment in which the scholarship of discovery is best exercised. The development of dissertations by students and the mentorship performed by qualified faculty, the expected high-quality content, and the rigid rules of formatting exemplifies this type of scholarship. Both faculty and students are engaged not only in the process of innovating within their disciplines, but their review of the literature, results, and suggestions for future research can be shared in different venues, such as peer-reviewed conferences and journals, in presentations, and publishing scholarly articles. Moreover, faculty in higher education organizations have research interests and, in many instances, are funded by the government and other private organizations, to investigate, develop new knowledge, and create theoretical and practical infrastructures that end up as useful applications society in general or at least provide a foundation for future lines of inquiry. In the fields of medicine and technology, much has been gained as a consequence of the scholarship of discovery.

The second type of scholarship defined by Boyer (1990) is the *Scholarship of Integration*. This form of scholarship is characterized by interpreting the use of knowledge across multiple disciplines. In an information society, it is challenging to separate different fields of knowledge and deal with the boundaries of the human problems of today, since they frequently do not neatly fall within nicely defined disciplines. The scholarship of integration provides a wider lens to the scholarship of discovery or a platform where disciplinary outcomes converge into practical applications, such as the case of institutions that have a practitioner-oriented focus. The value of this form of scholarship resides in making connections across disciplines that magnify these theoretical and outcome developments and, therefore, facilitate the emergence of practical ideas and solutions to everyday challenges.

We need creative people who go beyond the isolated facts; who make connections across the disciplines; and who help shape a more coherent view of knowledge and a more integrated, more authentic view of life...And in our fragmented academic world, this task of integration becomes urgent every single day. (Boyer, 1992)

The third form of scholarship suggested by Boyer is a *Scholarship of Application*, also known more commonly as applied research. Here, scholarship focuses on the responsible application of existing and new knowledge to solve specific problems. This type of scholarship epitomizes the bridge between a field of knowledge and corresponding professional pursuits, predominantly the use of scholarly knowledge to aid society and professions in addressing challenges and solving problems. Consulting activities and governance roles in professional organizations are specific examples where faculty members are able to establish credibility and reputation as experts in their fields of knowledge. The scholarship of application also has the potential to provide faculty members with a better practical understanding of what their knowledge can do to help solve problems affecting different sectors of society.

We need to relate theory and research to the realities of life...I am convinced that university scholars urgently need to respond to the crises of this century... How can we justify a university that is surrounded by pressing human needs and essentially ignores them? It's a failure not only intellectually, but ethically as well. (Boyer, 1992)

Finally, the *Scholarship of Teaching* represents the most frequent and traditional form of activity in the academic environment, that of teaching and learning. Its relevance as scholarship, however, cannot be minimized, simply because it is the most prevalent form. It is through the dissemination of current knowledge that individuals realize the need for more investigation and inquiry (discovery), more multidisciplinary approaches (integration), and more practical usage of the theory (application). There is a constant need for studying and improving models that facilitate teaching and learning, so the other forms of scholarship can be nurtured in an environment that benefits both faculty and students.

Scholarship means not only the ability to discover, integrate, and apply knowledge; it also means to inspire future scholars in the classroom—a process we call the scholarship of teaching. (Boyer, 1992)

SCHOLARSHIP IN UNIVERSITIES—OVERVIEW

Scholarship, as indicated above, plays a central role in the educational process for any university aspiring to continually increase its standing. Yet universities are also one of the main breeding grounds of professionals entering into the workforce. To be fully prepared for these tasks while at the same time address the demands of accreditation agencies, institutions are encouraged to involve their faculty and students in scholarship undertakings. In higher levels of education, such as the case of masters and doctoral programs, faculty credentials are expected to include activities such as conference presentations and articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Beyond just preparing and defending a dissertation, doctoral students are also encouraged to perform high-quality research and develop scholarly works (Connor & Shaw, 2008).

An increasing number of educational institutions in many parts of the world have among their student and faculty pools that want to take advantage of online education, in addition to the traditional face-to-face approach. Technology today provides educational institutions with opportunities to enhance the learning process by taking advantage of distance education practices. With this technology, faculty can seek professional development by taking online courses or attending conferences and professional events regardless of their geographical location. The same technology allows universities to develop hybrid approaches to scholarship, offering the services of full-featured scholarship centers that both locally and remotely gather participants with same scholarly interest, while providing them with the resources, guidance, and opportunities to develop their scholarship. One of these technologies enhanced centers, which at the same time responds to workforce needs, institutional development, agency accreditation, and societal demands is a center for Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.

For the past years, the author has been engaged in forming and operating two Diversity and Inclusion Centers involving more than three hundred researchers and scholars: The Center for Workplace Diversity Research and the Center of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion. These think tanks dedicated to Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace congregated researchers and practitioners engaged in developing programs and solutions in the various categories, classifications, and social interest groups related to Diversity and Inclusion. In those initiatives, there was also a substantial focus on service to companies and organizations

that embraced or were willing to launch Diversity and Inclusion strategies and development programs among their stakeholders. This connection between academia and the business sector has been the trigger of a broadening interest in seeking opportunities to pursue their scholarship and prospects of their future employability (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2013; De Meuse & Hostager, 2001; Finch, Hamilton, Baldwin, & Zehner, 2013; Holden & Hamblett, 2007; Wickramasinghe & Perera, 2010).

AN EXISTING PARADIGM—A THINK TANK IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Center of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion, currently active in the USA, was created in July 2016 by this author who has also been serving as its leader and administrator. The idea was to develop a collaborative environment to foster academic and professional activities related to D&I.

The center has consistently embraced the four types of Boyer's Scholarship (Boyer et al., 2016). Affiliation with the center was welcome not only for scholars from educational institutions, but also to individuals, companies, and organizations who had expressed interest in making Diversity and Inclusion a priority within their respective organizations.

The original Center of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion was conceived to include not only the traditional categories that result from compliance such as gender, race, and ethnicity, but to embrace a more comprehensive view of Diversity in the Workplace (see Fig. 2.1).

The mission of the center has been to serve and support all aspects of Diversity and Inclusion across the workplace, academia, and society sectors (Charles, 2009; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Stark, Kirk, & Bruhn, 2012; Taylor & Stein, 2014; Willis, 2010). It has been providing resources, education, assessments, research, solutions, and training to businesses and organizations to originate and sustain Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) initiatives, appropriately aligned with the demands from internal and external stakeholders. Along its years of operations, the Center of Excellence in Diversity and Inclusion has fostered scholarship and the advancement of knowledge and understanding of Diversity and Inclusion through exploration, publications, presentations, discourse, and applications.

A crucial academic outcome was achieved in 2018, when researchers of the center published a book on Diversity and Inclusion (Aquino &



Fig. 2.1 How the center has embraced Diversity and Inclusion (*Source* D&I's dimensions [Aquino, 2017])

Robertson, 2018) titled *Diversity and Inclusion in the Global Workplace: Aligning Initiatives with Strategic Business Goals*. The book was divided into two major areas: Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace—in which different dimensions of diversity were discussed—and Applying D&I in the Workplace, encompassing multiple applications for companies and organizations.

SCHOLARSHIP IN UNIVERSITIES: A PROPOSAL FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In 2018, this author and associated researchers expanded the scope of Diversity and Inclusion scholarship to recognize the relevance of specific regional markets to the topic. The geographic area chosen for this pilot was the one encompassing Latin American and Caribbean countries. In

this new research phase, different experiences related to Latin America, the Caribbean and their people are being consolidated into this new book.

The mind-set used in the creation of an American-based think tank devoted to exploring the different dimensions of D&I served as the basis for proposed pilot centers for the Latin American and Caribbean regions. With the acquired experience, the resulting evolving models and programs will capture and acknowledge the differences in culture, ethnicity, business demands, and educational objectives. Overall, the implementation of centers in Latin America and the Caribbean will recognize that wherever differences are discussed and whenever new solutions need to be proposed, Diversity and Inclusion must be embraced across multiple dimensions.

The new centers will keep Boyer's Model (Boyer et al., 2016) as the beacon for their activities, never restricting scholarship in D&I to one type. Research is important and training is crucial, but integration and application have to be at the core of the center's actions. Since its conception, the centers will consistently support and enable companies, organizations, and the community to strategically work on Workforce Skills and Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) initiatives, focusing on both increasing internal stakeholders' performance and external stakeholders' satisfaction and loyalty and connecting the scholarly knowledge from academia to the demands of the market (Fig. 2.2).

The centers will also foster collaboration with companies to perform Diversity and Inclusion diagnostics and create professional development programs that filled gaps between desired workplace goals and their current circumstances. Inspired by the demands from the organizations previously served, this author developed a framework to address D&I in companies and organizations (Aquino & Robertson, 2018), based on 3 phases: diagnostics, gap analysis, and action plan (Fig. 2.3).

A physical location for a center is relevant, but more importantly, there needs to be a virtual option to reach out to those who are unable to attend the center's location. Also, to maximize resources and minimize costs, the pilot center can start with a virtual footprint, beginning with a Web site as a repository of information and expertise in Diversity and Inclusion. Within this Web site—and with the proper technology support—experiences can be easily added, shared, and debated. The use of a Web site has already proved as a successful technique and is a consideration for institutions, agencies, and organizations among different countries that may

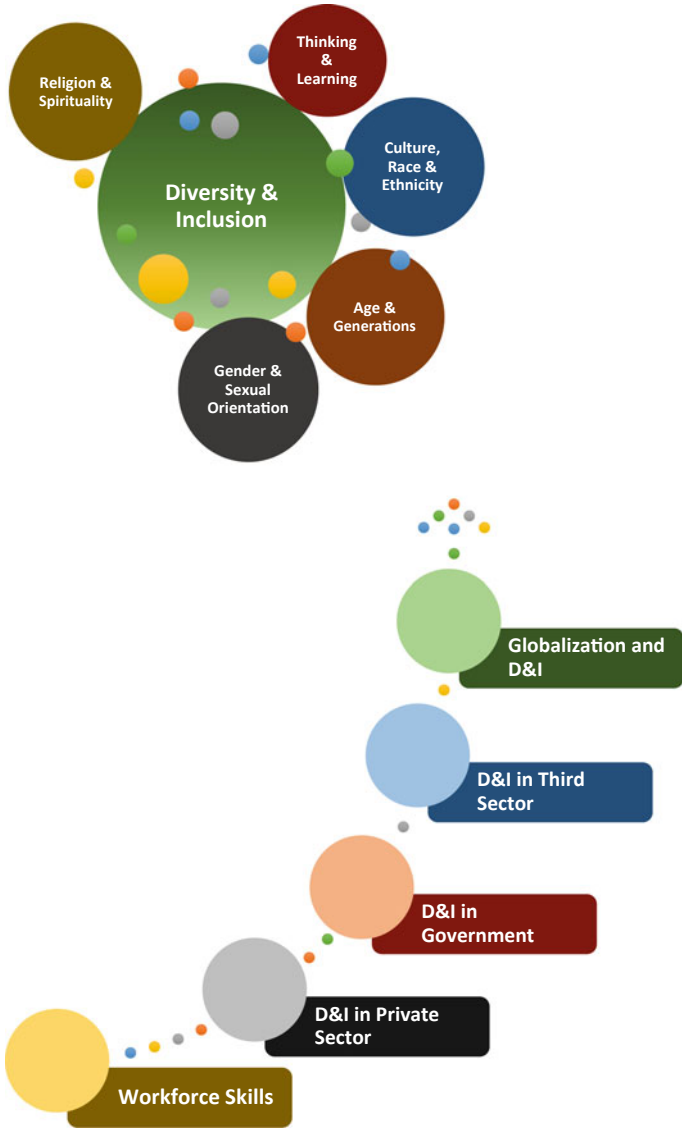


Fig. 2.2 Connecting academia with the market (*Source* D&I management [Aquino, 2018])



Fig. 2.3 D&I framework (*Source* D&I management framework [Aquino, Larson, & Robertson, 2018])

have a shortage of resources to develop an elaborate Diversity and Inclusion project. Here are some suggested elements for those organizations willing to establish a center by means of a Web site:

- Profiles of all individuals (students, faculty, partners) engaged in the scholarship effort,
- Description of all areas of interest and research agenda,
- Scholarship communities and opportunities for funding,
- Repository of scholarly production by members, seminal published works, and training/support materials to enhance the qualification of members and the quality of outcomes,
- Opportunities for sharing scholarship, such as an agenda of call for papers in conferences and journals,
- Communication of outcomes and achievements to academic and professional communities,
- Links to partners and other Web sites that can add value to community members.

Scholarship communities are created to assist in streamlining research and scholarly efforts among affiliates and, at the same time, create clusters of excellence related to layers of depth within the topics being investigated. Under the leadership of one of more members, the scholarship communities should focus on results that can bring benefits to the internal academic community as well to external stakeholders. Those external

stakeholders include organizations and companies that need the outcomes of scholarship to increase performance and become more competitive. The use of blogs and discussion forums inside scholarship communities can help the dissemination of ideas and progress being made in each of the areas of interest, as well as create opportunities for the discovery of new solutions and approaches.

Some of these suggestions have already been initiated in Colombia, where higher education institutions have partnered with the author to start creating a virtual center focused on researching Diversity and Inclusion. Strategically, this center contemplates the possibility of extending its services throughout the Latin American countries. A second initiative is potentially starting in the Bahamas, with its focus on serving the Caribbean region. More initiatives can be started with future partnerships, not only in this region of the world, but also in any country or region of the globe where there are great people that recognize the importance of disseminating knowledge and awareness of Diversity and Inclusion, and are ready to act.

CONCLUSION

Properly understood scholarship remains a significant component as a performance enhancement for many educational institutions. Its relevance is highlighted and required by many recognized accreditation agencies throughout the worldwide educational sector. Diversity and Inclusion is one of the main areas of concern in the current globalized environment, but action should not be restricted to people and initiatives within the walls of the academic world.

This chapter described a successful path adopted in the USA and that can be adapted and implemented to foster and achieve Diversity and Inclusion scholarship in Latin America and the Caribbean region. Partnerships with the public, private, and third sectors are extremely important in this journey to broadening the understanding and increasing individual and company satisfaction and achievement, via the development and implementation of Diversity and Inclusion practices and solutions among different cultures around the world.

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