

Daniel Tucker

miscprojects.com | dt@miscprojects.com

Statement on Diversity in Higher Education

As a straight white Cis-Gendered man I have attempted to use my position within academia to advance research that centers the work of those who have been historically underrepresented as well as subjects that explicitly consider the role of opponents of diversity in maintaining systems of oppression.

This has manifested in my work most recently with my experience curating “Organize Your Own: The Politics and Poetics of Self-Determination Movements” a 9-venue nationally touring exhibition and event series on the theme of racial justice between 2016-2019. The project featured new work by contemporary artists and poets that responds to the history of the mandate from the Black Power movement to “organize your own” community against racism and drew extensively from social movement media archives. The project is documented in a book and at <https://organizeyourown.wordpress.com>. I should note that the project benefited greatly from the “third place” that campus-based social justice institutes, art galleries, research centers and libraries can provide including University of Pennsylvania’s Kelly Writers House and Slought in 2016.

As a faculty member at Moore College of Art & Design I take quite seriously the disproportionate burden of mentoring often placed on faculty of color as well as queer faculty, female faculty and faculty with disabilities. It has been a priority to both find ways to value and recognize that work of others while also working to extend consciousness of related curricular gaps and mentoring responsibility through campus-wide advocacy. At Moore one of my passionate commitments has been a deep interrogation of the biases and limitations of the conventional critique process, and an incorporation of that concern into the institution-wide dialogue around Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Three years ago this led to my role in designing a campus climate survey, co-developing a workshop for the full faculty at In-Service on rethinking critiques, and one for students as well. One outgrowth of this was a greater recognition that the students wanted out of their departmental bubbles to talk about their work with different people and so my colleagues and I worked to create a cross-departmental critique night for students across every department in the school.

This work has been informed by my participation in AAC&U’s Network for Academic Renewal “Diversity, Learning, and Student Success” conference in 2016, Alliance of Independent College of Art & Design’s 2018 conference on DEI and Critiques, and my participation of the Rockwood Leadership Institute’s Art of Leadership program in 2018 which focused on facilitation techniques for bringing social justice values into the workplace. In the 360 evaluation I was given anonymously by colleagues in the Rockwood process feedback included: “Clear communicator, great at making connections and building bridges, very conscious of their position as a white cis/het male and brings that awareness to conversations and power-building with colleagues and mentees.” Another said “Daniel is a great bridge-builder, able to identify and build relationships with people inside and outside institutional frames that can push his work forward. He knows how to build community and is intentional with structural decisions, understanding that every personnel choice and policy is political and considers every action within that frame. He is a great big picture thinker and planner and his vision is often well-thought out and wide-ranging in its understanding of how societal inequities affect students and the university environment which helps to

Daniel Tucker

build an environment that works for a spectrum of experiences. He has great integrity - that is such a beautiful and important quality to his work.”

Finally, in my own teaching - my commitment to modeling inclusion for students is focused around course content and classroom culture, which I find are addressed through two primary approaches. First there is the course structure and format, which I seek to emphasize multi-modal to support different learners as well as students reflecting back their interpretations and experiences (see my example of a Socratic Mapping lesson plan

<https://danieltucker.files.wordpress.com/2021/02/tucker-lesson-plan-socratic-mapping-1.pdf>). And secondly there is the role of classroom agreements (while they need to be generated as a group, I offer the On Being Podcast grounding virtues of Words That Matter, Hospitality, Humility, Patience, Generous Listening, Adventurous Civility as prompts to students).