The Diversity Imperative:

Insights on Racial and Ethnic Diversity from the ATS Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) Initiative and Resources for Member Schools

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Executive Summary

In this quality improvement study, I examine the ATS[1] Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) initiative to provide insights regarding current diversity work at nine participating CEC schools and other interested ATS member schools, which comprise 280 graduate schools of theology in the United States and Canada. The CEC took place between 2018 and 2021 at 18 schools interested in improving their educational effectiveness regarding racial and ethnic students, either via developing capacity to educate racial and ethnic students more effectively or by working on educational practices with white students to prepare them for ministry in a multiracial world (ATS, 2019c). The CEC initiative involved project teams of administrators, faculty, and students at each participating school. The initiative concluded with the Virtual 2021 Dissemination Conference, during which CEC schools shared their strategies with each other and additional ATS member schools, emphasizing good practices that they learned from their projects.

Through the lens of this CEC initiative, I explore whether and how the ATS and its member schools might improve efforts regarding two of the values they espouse: diversity and justice. Recent changes to their accreditation standards (ATS, 2010; ATS, 2020) afford a more general approach to diversity at each school rather than legislating particular expectations regarding diversity. This new approach allows ATS schools to engage with diversity as they feel appropriate for their own contexts, since the schools identify with different dominant racial and ethnic compositions and thus have different histories with and concerns about diversity (ATS, 2020). Nonetheless, the approach risks compromising intentional efforts to support justice work in an industry with increasing demographic diversity and persistent inequities for Black persons, Indigenous persons, and Persons of Color (BIPOC). Meanwhile, alongside accreditation efforts, for more than 20 years the ATS Committee on Race and Ethnicity (CORE) has offered diversity-related programming to support member schools in efforts involving diversity and justice. The CEC initiative is the most recent iteration of that programming, and insights from that work may shape ATS's next related offerings for schools engaging these values of diversity and justice.

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[1] The Association of Theological Schools and The Commission on Accrediting (ATS).

This study examines the CEC initiative from a different angle, asking not what best practices have emerged from school strategies but rather what evidence-based, reflective practices ATS might inspire in CEC schools and other member schools. Utilizing the leading edges of scholarship in management, psychology, higher education, and theological education, I combine two frameworks to examine the initiative, offer findings, and recommend next steps. The literature reveals three overall pertinent themes: that diversity work effects the most change if institutions approach it at the systemic, institution-wide level rather than a siloed, departmental level; that imperatives for diversity work must not include only the instrumental, or what works (viz., success), but also the moral, or what is right (viz., justice); and that current implementation models do not offer a comprehensive approach that involves both institution-wide work and the moral imperative. I thus create a comprehensive approach for this study by combining the four-fold framework for institutional capacity for diversity (Smith, 2020), a framework that offers categories and metrics for success, with the Model for Advancing Racial/Ethnic Diversity (Cascante-Gómez, 2008), a framework that offers categories for justice. As I conclude the study, I encourage schools to aim not only for inclusion but for belonging for all. To that end, I develop a sample resource that ATS could use to build capacity for CEC and other schools to engage in contextual, ongoing, measured progress in diversity and justice.

The two project questions for this study are the following:

- PQ1: In what ways are CEC schools defining and measuring institutional change through their efforts regarding racial and ethnic diversity?
- PQ2: How and why are CEC projects and their institutions engaging with matters of social justice regarding racial and ethnic diversity?

PQ1 is a question of moderators, or the "what" and "when" of diversity efforts; while PQ2 is a question of mediators, or the "how" and "why" of diversity efforts. The study is a mixed methods study focused on the nine CEC schools that identify as predominantly white theological institutions (PWTIs) located in the United States. In the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022, I studied final CEC reports submitted by the schools to the ATS, designed and issued a survey, and offered focus groups by ecclesial family (evangelical and mainline). I

triangulated findings across all three instruments and analyzed results by ecclesial family, resulting in six primary findings:

- F1: CEC schools have unique contexts and opportunities for diversity work.
- F2: In at least some cases, schools lacked intentional alignment between goals and metrics for their CEC projects.
- F3: Beyond their projects, CEC schools are engaging broadly with institution-wide diversity work yet may lack consistent metric definitions.
- F4: CEC schools are engaging broadly with justice concerns yet may not have clear definitions and/or rationale for justice work.
- F5: In some dimensions of diversity work, mainline CEC schools are focusing more deeply on justice concerns.
- F6: CEC schools expressed struggles to mobilize for change and appreciate supports to do so.

I conclude with two recommendations that respond to the project questions considering the findings:

- R1: ATS should develop resources that connect diversity work with justice and help schools measure that work.
- R2: ATS should incentivize use of these new resources via programming such as workshops and grant initiatives.

Figure 1 serves as a map that illustrates connections between the values studied and the two-part conceptual framework, project questions, data instruments, findings, and recommendations. In sum, this study supplements the CEC good practices that emerged via the Virtual 2021 Dissemination Conference with frameworks, findings, and recommendations aimed toward evidence-based, reflective insights and resources that ATS can offer to CEC and other member schools. It includes a sample integrated organizational improvement resource that ATS might utilize in its future diversity work, supporting schools to pursue iterative change that aims for belonging and flourishing for all.

Figure 1: *Map of the Study*

Map of the Study

Success	Justice
Four-Fold Framework (Smith, 2020)	MARED (Cascante-Gomez, 2008)
PQ1: In what ways are CEC schools defining and measuring institutional change through their efforts regarding racial and ethnic diversity?	PQ2: How and why are CEC projects and their institutions engaging with matters of social justice regarding racial and ethnic diversity?
CEC final reports survey (qualitative and quantitative questions) focus groups	CEC final reports survey (qualitative questions only) focus groups
Findings 1-3	Findings 1, 4-6
Recommendations 1 and 2	Recommendations 1 and 2

INTRODUCTION

ATS[2] shapes the industry of theological education, offering accreditation, pursuing research, and providing resources for theological schools. The Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) initiative is ATS's most recent initiative to support theological schools in their diversity work. CEC invited schools to propose and implement strategies by which to educate students to minister in a racially diverse world. The initiative concluded in fall 2021, and ATS wants to learn from the CEC projects in ways that could inform future iterations of that work as well as the broader industry.

This capstone project engages with two values that ATS and its schools hope to embody (ATS, 2021b): diversity and justice. I studied the CEC initiative, examining (a) the ways CEC schools define and measure desired types of institutional change regarding racial and ethnic diversity and (b) how and why CEC schools are engaging with matters of social justice regarding racial and ethnic diversity. I utilized Smith's (2020) four-fold framework to assess institutional capacity for diversity alongside Cascante's (2008)[3] Model for Advancing Racial/Ethnic Diversity (MARED) to describe concerns with justice. The study included content analysis of CEC final reports, surveys of CEC team members, and focus groups with CEC team members divided by ecclesial family (evangelical and mainline). I offer findings and recommendations to ATS regarding their diversity work as seen through the lens of the CEC initiative. Of the 18 schools involved in the CEC initiative, I invited participation from the nine located in the United States that are predominantly white theological institutions (PWTIs),[4] and all nine choose to participate in at least two of the three data collection processes. Because the CEC initiative involved only those ATS schools who chose to participate, and because my

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[2] The Association of Theological Schools and The Commission on Accrediting (ATS).

[3] I refer throughout the paper to Cascante's MARED rather than Cascante-Gómez's MARED; however, note F. A. Cascante and F. A. Cascante-Gómez indicate the same author.

[4]Institutions self-report their primary racial/ethnic composition of their student bodies (ATS 2021a). This study includes all nine CEC schools that identified their primary composition as "White" on the 2020-2021 ATS Data Tables. Those tables identified seven total primary compositions among the 235 U.S. ATS schools: Asian or Pacific Islander (six), Black Non-Hispanic (17), Hispanic (seven), Visa or Non-Resident Alien (nine), White Non-Hispanic (167), and Multiracial (11). Data was unavailable for 18 U.S. schools.

study did not follow a generalizable design, my findings and recommendations do not represent theological schools broadly. However, the CEC schools who contributed to this study and other ATS schools in the U.S. that identify as PWTIs may find this study helpful for ongoing diversity efforts.

Organizational Context

ATS (2021b) comprises 280 graduate schools of theology in the United States and Canada. These schools offer programs for students pursuing professional ministerial roles or academic work in theological subjects. ATS helps improve and enhance theological schools for the benefit of faith communities and the broader public through its two corporations, the Commission on Accrediting and the Association. The Commission establishes standards for accreditation and approves degree programs, while the Association pursues research and provides resources for member schools. As the accrediting body for theological schools, ATS is positioned to encourage accountability commensurate with common goals and values across the industry of theological education. Since the organization also offers the Association, it has the connections to provide related programming or tools. This capstone examined two values that ATS and its schools hope to embody: diversity and justice.

Diversity is one of the four core values that ATS and its schools currently espouse (ATS, 2021b). The others are quality and improvement, collegiality, and leadership. Alongside these core values, ATS and its schools also embrace supplemental values, including a commitment to justice in society and institutions. But the organizational context of ATS is complex, so ATS presently believes it cannot legislate a single set of standards for the value of diversity. Such an approach might involve, for example, advocating for justice regarding racial and ethnic diversity (hereafter "diversity with justice" or simply "justice"). Because approximately 69% of ATS schools in the U.S. are predominantly white theological institutions (PWTIs) and 20% are historically majority-minority theological institutions (ATS, 2021a), ATS must serve schools with different histories and needs with respect to diversity and justice. Further, since 45% of ATS schools are evangelical Protestant and 32% are mainline Protestant (Karnadi, 2020), ATS must navigate different institutional ecclesial commitments that may take different or even opposing theological

and political perspectives on diversity work (Cannon & Smith, 2019; Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013).

Despite the organizational complexity of combining the values of diversity and justice, ATS leads an industry that must increase efforts toward justice. As the United States quickly diversifies, ATS schools are experiencing an increase in the diversity of their student bodies (*Frank Yamada*, 2017). Recent data collected by ATS showed that students of color represented the largest amount of enrollment growth, both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of total enrollment, across ATS schools (ATS Commission on Accrediting, 2012). Meanwhile, as grant-funded studies are noticing the changing demographics and beginning to imagine ways theological schools might respond (Scharen, 2019; Tomlin, 2018; Woodward, 2019), the industry still harbors persistent inequities involving Black persons, Indigenous persons, and Persons of Color (BIPOC). For example, considering industry trends, student populations at ATS evangelical schools tend to overrepresent BIPOC while faculty populations at those same schools tend to underrepresent them. Consequently, students of color at these schools likely are not receiving the role modeling and relationship building they need with faculty of color (J. Deasy & D. H. C. Gin, personal communication, May 25, 2021; Gin, 2018). Even more significantly, across all theological schools, the percentages of Black and Latinx enrollments and graduates continue to be very small compared to demographic realities, and schools often have not created sufficient conditions for scholars of color to thrive (Atwaters & Reyes, 2018). The industry may be starting to move away from its currently dominant, white-mainstream professional approach to theological education (Aleshire in Smith et al., 2018), but it has a long way still to go. Due not only to changing demographics but also to persistent inequities in the field, schools need more support from ATS to help them advance justice.

The challenging, ongoing work of determining how best to help schools combine the values of diversity and justice shows in a recent revision of accreditation standards. In the previous 2010 Standards (ATS, 2010), ATS took a specific approach, asking schools to reflect on awareness, representation, and sensitivity regarding racial and ethnic diversity (Standard 2.5). In the newly-adopted 2020 Standards (ATS, 2020), ATS took a general approach, asking schools to define and pursue diversity in ways consistent with their own contexts (Standard 1.5). These new standards allow schools to

think about diversity in broad ways that may not engage justice, even though ATS provides self-study ideas to prompt reflection on racial and ethnic inequities (ATS, 2020). Schools can satisfy the new standards by focusing on any type of diversity, such as theological or geographical diversity, while overlooking what may be more pressing issues of justice. Because the 2020 Standards are new, ATS does not have data to show how well they help institutions address diversity, including to what extent they do so with justice.

As they work on projects that affect all ATS schools, such as accreditation standards, ATS has come to believe this general approach to diversity will be most constructive. Further, my contacts at ATS for this capstone project have observed that some pockets of ATS may be concerned that wide-ranging efforts focusing on justice will meet with at least some resistance (J. Deasy & D. H. C. Gin, personal communication, June 9, 2021). However, such concern may be unfounded. ATS recently administered a Strategic Priorities survey (Gin, 2019) to the ATS Board of Directors, ATS Board of Commissioners, presidents and deans at all ATS schools, and to a random sample of faculty and non-cabinet administrators, receiving an 83% institution response rate. When asked what diversity topics ATS should emphasize, the top two categories that respondents suggested were race/ethnicity and systemic issues. Only 3% of respondents said ATS should be aware of conservative views on diversity held by evangelical schools due to their constituencies (views that may prefer the general approach to diversity rather than a focus on justice). Perhaps most schools are open to ATS efforts focused on justice.

Through the Commission on Accreditation, ATS has taken a general approach to diversity; but through the Association, it has offered diversity-related programming for more than 20 years focused specifically on race and ethnicity. This arm of ATS's work offers the most obvious way forward for efforts in the industry to advance justice, efforts that the Strategic Priorities survey suggests may be welcome. The Committee on Race and Ethnicity (CORE) offered three phases of programming from 2000-2016. Through this work, ATS learned they cannot simply offer single definitions, strategies, or measurements for diversity work. In their 2016 evaluation of CORE programming (Aleshire et al., 2017), they noticed participants perceived the institutional impact of that programming differently depending upon their race or ethnicity. For CORE Phase 1 (2000-2005), white respondents felt their participation had (a) led to institutional change and (b) led to change that had

been significant and lasting, and they did so to a much greater extent than did respondents of African, Asian, or Latinx descent. For CORE Phase 3 (2010-2014), white respondents and respondents of Asian descent felt programming had led to institutional change, while those of African or Latinx descent felt it had not. At the conclusion of its 2016 evaluation process, ATS determined it may be helpful to establish a definition of success in such diversity efforts (hereafter "success in diversity" or simply "success") and create a related tool (Aleshire et al., 2017). How to define and measure success in diversity, and whether definitions of success involve justice, remains unclear.

ATS hopes to learn more about success in diversity from its newest iteration of CORE programming, Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC; ATS, 2019c; J. Deasy & D. H. C. Gin, personal communication, June 9, 2021; J. Deasy et al., personal communication, June 23, 2021; M. Young, personal communication, June 16, 2021). The CORE CEC initiative, spanning three years, involved 18 schools that proposed and implemented goals related to racial and ethnic diversity (ATS, 2019a). The project did not ask questions about justice per se, though its two emphases converged with such questions. Schools could imagine ways to increase (a) educational effectiveness with racial/ethnic students or (b) multicultural awareness for white students preparing to enter diverse work contexts. Accepted proposals included topics ranging from advancing intercultural awareness to wrestling with complicity with slavery. Schools submitted midterm reports and completed final reports before attending an ATS conference in fall 2021 to reflect on their learnings. This initiative intersected with the work of ATS's ongoing CORE subgroups: one working on definitions of success and one reviewing and revising current ATS resources on diversity (ATS, 2019b).

Organizational Challenge

ATS wants to support schools to work toward common values of diversity and justice even as racial and ethnic inequities persist within the industry of theological education. It is a complex organization, so in its new accreditation standards, ATS allows schools to operationalize diversity in ways unique to their own contexts. Unfortunately, doing so inadvertently may not support schools to notice and address their blind spots regarding justice. Meanwhile, through CORE efforts, ATS continues to engage racial and ethnic diversity in

ways that may intersect with justice concerns. The recent CEC initiative positions ATS to garner insight on work related to at least two institutional issues implicating diversity with justice: educational effectiveness for racial/ethnic students and multicultural awareness for white students.

Though the CEC initiative offers a way forward for ATS's efforts regarding diversity, the CEC final reports offered limited findings, because ATS staff did not design the initiative as a study on justice (J. Deasy et al., personal communication, June 23, 2021). In addition, ATS is not yet aware of conceptual frameworks or evidence-based models that could shape its evaluation of CEC work, but it wants to provide suggestions that can scaffold the next iteration of efforts with these schools and, perhaps, across the industry. ATS is wondering what categories of concern – such as representation of faculty and students, hiring practices, budget, board composition, and institutional location of a diversity office – CEC schools have examined as well as what questions and measures they used to do so (J. Deasy et al., personal communication, June 23, 2021).

In this capstone project, I support ATS's aim to evaluate the CEC initiative, recommending helpful questions and measures and exploring the extent to which CEC efforts engaged diversity with justice. Through qualitative data analysis of CEC school final reports and additional data collected among CEC participants, I offer recommendations that can shape ATS's future diversity work. Because I presumed the contexts for diversity work are different among predominantly white theological institutions, historically Black theological schools, and Asian- or Latinx-serving schools (as does the new ATS Standards, ATS, 2020), I focused this study on the type of institution that still comprises most of ATS and perhaps has the most work to do to alleviate inequities: the PWTIs. In addition, because evangelical and mainline traditions often have approached justice differently (Cannon & Smith, 2019; Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013), I presumed it may be important to track commonalities and differences by these two ecclesial families. My conclusions may be of interest not only to the contributing CEC schools but also to other ATS member schools in the U.S. that identify as PWTIs. Further, my recommendations may inform future ATS accreditation and other programming efforts, such as the new Pathways grant initiative involving over 80 member schools.

Literature Review

This literature review sets up a two-part conceptual framework, comprised of models from Smith (2020) and Cascante (2008), that shaped data collection instruments for this study and inspired key findings. The review is interdisciplinary. It includes literature from management and psychology, two of the first disciplines to develop insight regarding diversity work. Considering the organizational context, it also incorporates research-based and trade literature in higher education and theological education. Overall, the review offers a historical and comprehensive look at the most relevant conversations across disciplines and pertinent to theological education, particularly those pertaining to predominantly white institutions in the United States.

Definitions and Themes

Throughout the review and remaining paper, two phrases serve as shorthand for the two primary constructs of focus: "success" and "justice." First, success in diversity comprises educational effectiveness, as suggested by ATS's 2016 evaluation of their CORE work (Aleshire et al., 2017) and the design of their CEC work. The CEC initiative presumes success emphasizes educational effectiveness with BIPOC and white students (ATS, 2019c; J. Deasy et al., personal communication, June 23, 2021). Success may or may not include engagement with issues of justice. This construct of success aligns most closely in the disciplines of management and psychology with the notion of the business case (Herring, 2009; Holvino & Kamp, 2009; Page, 2007; Roberson et al., 2017). Essentially, "success" signifies what works well from the perspective of the industry. Though theological education discusses educational effectiveness and management the business case, both industries understand success as the bottom-line aim or outcome. In management, that aim is maximizing profits; in theological education, it is maximizing education. Second, justice involves both ATS's core value of diversity and supplemental value of justice (ATS, 2021b). "Justice" signifies diversity work, particularly at the institutional level, that engages with justice by noticing and responding to inequities that affect BIPOC. Some of the CEC projects engaged both success and justice. This construct of justice is reemerging across disciplines as a neglected yet important dimension of diversity work (Cascante-Gómez, 2008; Cascante, 2010; Holvino & Kamp, 2009; Jayakumar et al., 2018; Lang &

Yandell, 2019; Luna De La Rosa & Jun, 2019; Nkomo et al., 2019; Patton et al., 2019; Starck et al., 2021).

Three salient themes regarding success and justice in diversity emerge to guide this study: level of action, value of diversity work, and implementation models. The review leads into the Smith/Cascante framework by following the leading edges of scholarship and practice on each of these themes. The literature suggests an institutional level of action as well as both instrumental and moral values for diversity work. The literature also does not offer a single implementation model that combines both institutional analysis with instrumental and moral valuing; therefore, ultimately, I combine the frameworks from Smith (2020) and Cascante (2008) to do so.

Level of Action: Systemic

In Management and Psychology

Generally, literature in management and psychology points away from an individual or siloed level of analysis for diversity work toward a systemic level of action. Some diversity management (DM) research and strategies emphasize individual differences, but scholars are calling for an increased emphasis on shared perceptions and systemic analysis involving individual, group, and organizational levels (Dwertmann et al., 2016; Gonzalez, 2010; Holvino & Kamp, 2009). The literature also suggests assessing the influence of external forces on institutional DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) efforts (Gonzalez, 2010; Nkomo et al., 2019). DEI strategy expert Andrés Tapia (Doyle, 2019) guides his firm's organizational clients to consider diversity concerns not only at the vertical or behavioral level (via leaders) but also at the horizontal/structural level (via systems). His firm offers mixed methods analyses to support organizational DEI change.

In Higher and Theological Education

The literature in higher and theological education also now emphasizes the systemic or institutional level as the most impactful level of action for diversity work. Throughout recent history, higher education has navigated several stimuli for diversity work, including the influx of BIPOC into predominantly

white institutions, federal legislation such as the 1965 Higher Education Act, student protests in the late 1960s, and U.S. Supreme Court cases centered on affirmative action (Jayakumar et al., 2018; Patton et al., 2019). The industry initially emphasized siloed efforts (e.g., through student affairs initiatives) but gradually is shifting toward institution-wide efforts. A comprehensive analysis of empirical studies involving Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Justice (DIEJ) initiatives from 1968-2018 suggested most initiatives emphasized siloed efforts, such as curricular initiatives and student support services (Patton et al., 2019). However, scholars simultaneously are tracking the ways in which institutions increasingly are shifting to institution-wide endeavors (Martinez-Acosta & Favero, 2018; Smith, 2020).

The former executive director of ATS, Daniel Aleshire (2009), wrote a historical and reflective piece with observations about the level of analysis for diversity work in theological education that resonate with the literature in higher education. He first articulated the ways theological education has grappled with racial and ethnic diversity since the late 1960s. As ATS membership began to expand to include students and institutions of color, initial compartmental diversity initiatives attempted to rectify the lack of access and support for BIPOC students and faculty. He then noted that, over time, ATS gradually has shifted attention toward institutional-level diversity efforts. Aleshire implied theological schools now are pursuing diversity work in dimensions beyond those of enrollment, hiring, and retention concerns.

Because the CEC initiative aligns with industry trends toward institutional diversity work, this section of the review suggests that resources from within higher or theological education focused on the institutional level will offer the most useful definitions and measures for this study. Though the field of theological education currently includes few examples of institution-wide implementation models, that of higher education includes several. The below sections on models and frameworks elaborate these examples in detail.

Value of Diversity Work: Instrumental and/or Moral

In Management and Psychology

The fields of management and psychology are exploring possible values for diversity work, whether instrumental (what works best) or moral (what seems

right). Though the instrumental imperative has captivated the most attention, scholars and practitioners are calling for increased emphasis on the moral. Dwertmann et al. (2016) identified two buckets of DEI management research that resonate with these imperatives: "increasing synergy" evokes the instrumental imperative and "increased fairness and reduced discrimination" the moral. Page (2007) described a logic of diversity that shows managers how to leverage differences via diverse teams to improve performance. A large body of psychological research established diversity can effect business advantages by enhancing information exchange and decision-making within teams (Roberson et al., 2017). The instrumental imperative drives the business case for diversity, or the presumption that diversity necessarily improves the bottom line.

Despite support for the business case, at least two difficulties face any practitioner hoping to implement it. First, the disciplines of management and psychology cannot specify precisely how the business case works. Empirical research showed neither gender nor racial diversity directly causes either positive or negative outcomes (Kochan et al., 2003); instead, "moderators" suggest *what* and *when* DEI efforts effect particular outcomes. Such moderators can include culture, climate, leadership, strategy, unit design, HR practices, and individual differences (Guillaume et al., 2013). So, if the business case is accurate, it is complex; it involves various moderators which require further practice and study. Second, scholars such as Holvino and Kamp (2009) say the business case is insufficient, suggesting it may achieve diversity (diverse representation in an organization) but not accomplish equity (fairness amidst diversity). These kinds of arguments emphasize "mediators" or "mechanisms," which identify *how or why* DEI efforts will lead to outcomes such as inclusion (Nkomo et al., 2019), success, or justice. Nkomo et al. (2019) traced the history of DEI efforts from affirmative action legislation in the 1960s (based on the moral imperative) through the business case to the current challenges of DEI work. They concluded:

> The turn from efforts to reduce discrimination to the business case, a more palatable approach, focusing on bottom-line profits and on pacifying the resistance against equality and inclusion has been costly. It has left the field underprepared and ill-equipped to theorize about the proliferation of categorical exclusion,

> dehumanizing biases and discrimination, and retrenchment of status-leveling policies. (p. 511)

Roberson (2014) agreed, arguing not for inclusion of diversity, which may not achieve an inclusive workplace, but rather a "fusion" of diversity into the workplace. She advocated for new language and ideas as well as new ways of learning and doing for DEI efforts to work well. Similarly, Davis, a global consultant across various industries, described a theoretical framework that prioritizes the moral imperative: belonging, dignity, and justice (BDJ; 2021a, 2021b).[5] The framework serves as an alternative to the traditional DEI framework. While DEI welcomes "others" into a predetermined normative culture defined by white traditions and expectations, BDJ is an organizational-learning perspective that can help institutions reflect on their status quo and develop concrete procedures that center the dignity of all. Davis (2021a) suggested organizations implementing BDJ assess their current complicity (whether formal or informal) in practices that are racist and dehumanizing, creating steps forward that will allow BIPOC to flourish as well as white peers.

In Higher and Theological Education

As does the literature in management and psychology, the literature in higher and theological education reveals a tension between two possible imperatives for diversity efforts, the instrumental and the moral. Starck et al. (2021) connect the instrumental imperative with the educational benefits of diversity and the moral imperative with intrinsic values such as social justice. Consequently, the former resonates with this study's construct of success and the latter with this study's construct of justice. See Figure 2 for an illustration of the concept relationships between success, justice, and these two imperatives. Unlike the views on level of analysis, these studies show not a clear trend but rather disagreement, with some voices emphasizing the instrumental imperative and some the moral.

[5] Davis since has added joy to the framework (BDJJ; *Our Team*, 2022).

Figure 2: *Concept Relationships for Success and Justice*

First, higher education also has experienced a historical shift from the moral to the instrumental imperative (from emphasizing justice to emphasizing effectiveness; Jayakumar et al., 2018; Patton et al., 2019; Starck et al., 2021). The events sparking siloed efforts regarding access, efforts centered on affirmative action, emerged from the moral imperative; it was a matter of justice to provide access for students of color into colleges and universities. However, for these siloed efforts to remain compelling over time to the white majority on the Supreme Court and within colleges and universities, the instrumental rationale emerged. Arguments became less about social justice for persons of color and more about interest convergence for the white majority. In their DEI efforts, institutions emphasized the ways in which diversity makes education more effective – particularly for the majority. Second, recalling the limitations of the business case, at least one study has shown that demographic diversity may not have wholly positive or wholly negative effects on higher education outcomes such as student retention and diversity of degree completers (Overdyke, 2013). Third, voices within higher education are reasserting the need for the moral imperative. Through a group of empirical studies, Starck et. al (2021) discovered that instrumental rationales for diversity are more prevalent than moral ones among institutions

of higher education and are preferred by white Americans but not Black Americans. They thus argued institutions should adopt both rationales for diversity, instrumental *and* moral, to serve diverse student constituencies. Further, some scholars (Jayakumar et al., 2018; Patton et al., 2019) contend that although institutions may want to maintain the instrumental imperative, they also must embrace the moral imperative as a critical lens to work toward diversity with justice.

Just as some voices in higher education do not see the moral imperative in the rearview mirror, neither do several voices from the industry of Christian higher education – including those from more conservative schools. They argue for the moral imperative as the primary lens for diversity work within their own industry and related industries. For example, De La Rosa and Jun (2019), professors at an evangelical university (Azusa Pacific), asserted that compositional diversity is not enough. Their conclusions challenge the industry of theological education: passive approaches to diversity can overlook and maintain entrenched systemic inequities. Borrowing from Friere (1970), they argued for an "institutional critical consciousness." They articulated several possible diversity approaches along a spectrum of increasing engagement with justice. Ultimately, they suggested institutions grappling with diversity should tap into their theological resources, embrace institutional missions for justice, and audit their current perspectives on diversity with a view toward dismantling a colonized education system. In a similar vein, Lang and Yandell (2019) borrowed heavily from Ahmed (2012) to delineate at least three diversity strategies that are "non-performative," or do not engage justice. Those strategies include commitment to diversity, celebrating diversity, and diversity as public relations. They noted the Christian tradition in America embeds whiteness and inequities as the norm. Calling on all evangelical predominantly white institutions, they also advocated for work at the institutional level that pairs diversity efforts with antiracist efforts.

Within theological education, Aleshire (2009) observed the same historical shift from the moral to the instrumental imperative by identifying the new emphasis on institution-wide diversity work with a move away from the rhetoric of inclusion and justice. ATS's early diversity efforts in the 1970s and 1980s emphasized inclusion, aiming to remove barriers to enrollment and employment for African Americans. Now that ATS schools include significant numbers of BIPOC students and faculty, Aleshire claimed, the work of inclusion

cannot be the only goal; instead, institutions may turn their attention to institutional capacity for diversity. Throughout these reflections, Aleshire seemed to deemphasize the moral imperative and feature the instrumental.

By contrast, some recent efforts within theological education underscore the continued need for the moral imperative. For example, Cascante (2008, 2010) developed models to pursue diversity with justice, one focused on institutional efforts at theological schools and one intended to explore the racial identities of racial/ethnic minority faculty at theological institutions. In addition, Fuller Theological Seminary, an evangelical school, released a 2020-2022 "Strategic Approach Toward Inclusive Excellence" (Abernethy, 2020) that engages the antiracist work of Kendi (2019).

Because the CEC initiative emphasized educational effectiveness, the schools may have aligned their efforts with the imperative most common in the industries of higher and theological education: the instrumental imperative. For CEC evaluation, the most immediately applicable implementation models would feature the instrumental imperative. However, implementation models that also invite the schools to consider the moral imperative would support schools to follow the leading edge of both industries: the resurgence of the moral imperative. For this study, a conceptual framework that engages with both success and justice in diversity offers the most rigorous possible evaluation of CEC diversity work.

Implementation Models

In Management and Psychology

The management literature offers a plethora of possible implementation models for organizations interested in diversity change. Many models emphasize principles, practices, processes, systems, or methods for prescriptive change (Al-Haddad & Kotnour, 2015; Stouten et al., 2018). Some literature describes implementation barriers and adverse side effects involving unrealistic expectations, change resistance, communication outcomes, and intergroup relations outcomes (Deloitte & Touche LLP, n.d.; Gonzalez, 2010). Overall, recent management literature encourages not prescriptive approaches to diversity management but a critically-reflective, evidence-based cyclical process of DEI change (Evans & Glover, 2012; Hamlin, 2016).

In Higher and Theological Education

In this section I emphasize the literature available in higher education, as I could not find comparative literature within the field of theological education. Within higher education, at least two types of institution-wide models currently prevail. Models that emphasize inclusive excellence (IE) align with this study's construct of success, and models that emphasize inclusion with justice align with this study's construct of justice. This section shows that efforts to evaluate CEC with an eye toward both success and justice required combining two complementary models.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) established the IE approach in 2005, and the approach remains its primary perspective on diversity work today (Association of American Colleges & Universities, 2021; McNair & Veras, 2017; Milem et al., 2005; Williams et al., 2005). The approach connects diversity work with quality. It presumes diversity entails "a process toward better learning" (Milem et al., 2005). The approach does not ignore justice concerns, but it restricts them to this goal of educational effectiveness. The IE campus climate framework (Milem et al., 2005), which borrows from the work of Hurtado et al.'s campus racial climate framework (CRCF; Hurtado, 1999; Hurtado et al., 1998), delineates five dimensions of institutional context. It reflects and expands upon internal and external forces that impact institutional diversity work. The IE Change Model offers an even more thorough look at institutions: it attends to external environment, organizational behavior, and organizational culture; offers an IE Scorecard as an assessment tool; and suggests a related IE change strategy (Williams et al., 2005). The IE campus climate framework and Change Model can be resources for institutions hoping to maximize success in diversity.

Emerging models expand the IE approach to fully embrace the moral imperative as well. As did Milem et al. (2005) for the IE campus climate framework, Haynes and Tuitt (2020) combined IE with the Hurtado et al. CRCF (Hurtado, 1999; Hurtado et al., 1998). However, as they did so, they shifted the emphasis toward justice. Milem et al. simply borrowed CRCF categories to describe IE institutional dimensions. By contrast, Haynes and Tuitt studied a traditionally white institution (TWI) that had adopted an IE approach, utilizing CRCF as a critical lens to examine faculty experiences with IE. They reported

on the extent to which faculty engaged with justice, revealing that faculty experienced the campus climate as hostile toward those who engaged more than superficially with IE. Hurtado et al. (2012) created a comprehensive framework they called a Model for Diverse Learning Environments (DLE) that attends to institutional practices, student outcomes, and CRCF. They prioritized the climate as the overarching construct for assessment rather than the institution, and they hinted the model may not go far enough toward advancing diversity with justice. Nonetheless, as did Haynes and Tuitt, Hurtado et al. illustrated the need and the possibility of exploring both success and justice in diversity, through CRCF, simultaneously.

Models that tend to this nexus between success and justice began to suggest a way forward for this study. However, no stand-alone model emerged during the review that would be most relevant for CEC work. Of those models that addressed both success and justice, Hurtado et al. (2012) shifted their level of analysis from the institution to the broader climate, and Haynes and Tuitt (2020) restricted their work to faculty experiences. Therefore, this project instead builds from two of the research-based sources, Smith (2020) and Cascante (2008), to construct a two-part conceptual framework appropriate and essential for evaluating the CEC initiative. The former framework emerges from research within higher education, and the latter adapts a management framework for use in theological education.

Two-Part Conceptual Framework

To assess success in diversity, this project adapted Smith's (2020) four-fold framework for institutional capacity for diversity. To describe diversity with justice, this study adapted Cascante's (2008) Model for Advancing Racial/Ethnic Diversity (MARED). Taken together, the two models comprise a conceptual framework that shaped data instruments and analysis.

Model 1: Smith's Four-Fold Framework

Building from 40 years of historical, theoretical, and empirical research connected to diversity work on campuses across the United States, Smith (2020) developed a four-fold framework to define and measure diversity efforts at the institutional level (see Figure 3 and Table 1). Though focused on

undergraduate education, Smith connected the work with graduate education as well. The four categories of Smith's framework include access/success, climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship, and institutional viability/vitality. Smith observed and articulated metrics for each dimension of the framework (see Table 1), suggesting institutions utilize those metrics to practice ongoing measurement and iterative organizational learning and change. Smith also proposed five general ways to measure change: over time; related to some criteria; compared to national, statewide, or peer institutional data; compared to outstanding performers; or compared to groups or sectors within the campus. One significant empirical study that shaped Smith's framework was the Campus Diversity Initiative (CDI) funded by the James Irvine Foundation in California (Smith, 2020; Smith et al., 2006), a $29-million effort in 2000-2005 that supported 28 independent colleges and universities in California in efforts to improve diversity. I share more detail about the CDI below under recommendations, as an example of an initiative ATS might choose to adapt in their future efforts regarding diversity.

Figure 3: *Four-Fold Framework (Smith 2020)*

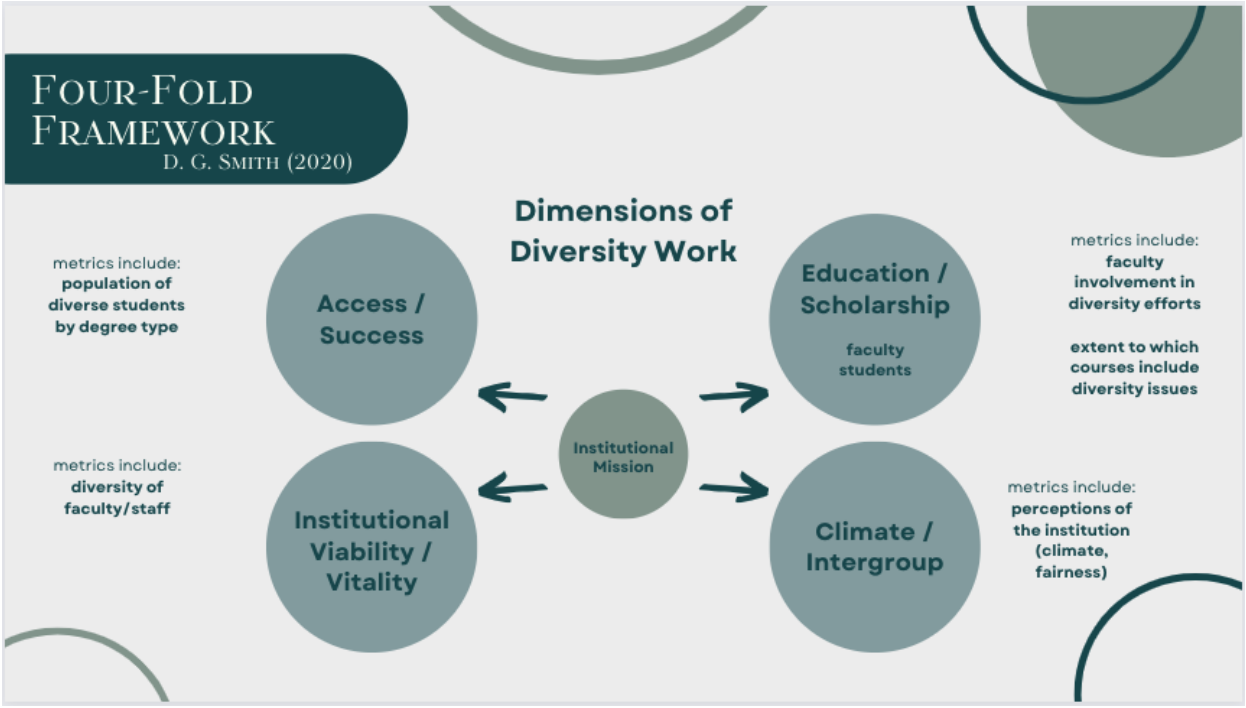


Table 1: *Four-Fold Framework Dimensions and Metrics*

Dimension	Metrics
Access/Success	population of diverse students by type of degree; success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors)
Climate/Intergroup Relations	perceptions of institution (climate, fairness); quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction); type and quality of interactions among diverse groups
Education/Scholarship (Faculty)	faculty expertise on diversity-related matters; faculty involvement in diversity efforts; faculty research and publishing involving diversity
Education/Scholarship (Students)	availability of diversity-related courses and requirements; extent to which courses include diversity issues; student involvement in diversity-related courses; student research that engages the diverse society; quantity and substance of student learning about diversity; student final projects or dissertations related to diversity
Institutional Viability/Vitality	diversity of faculty/staff; board diversity and engagement; institutional history on diversity issues and incidents; institutional strategies and resources for diversity; centrality of diversity in institutional documents and processes; public constituency perceptions of institutional diversity, equity; framework and indicators for monitoring diversity

Smith's (2020) framework meets the first criterion suggested by the literature review: the institution-wide level of analysis. It operates at the institutional level by connecting all diversity work to institutional mission. Further, it offers clear metrics by which to observe definitions and measures of success in diversity at CEC schools and to notice potential gaps or ways forward. Unfortunately, it does not meet the second criterion suggested by the review: a moral value for diversity work.[6] To help CEC schools reflect explicitly on justice, I add Cascante's (2008) MARED framework.

Model 2: Cascante's MARED

Building from a model called Multicultural Organizational Development (MCOD; Jackson, 2014), developed over 40 years ago and currently used to promote multicultural change in higher education institutions, Cascante (2008) created the MARED (see Figure 4 and Table 2). MCOD fuses

[6] Note that Smith aimed to incorporate into the framework a relationship between diversity and equity but that ultimately, on its own, Smith's (2020) framework does not structure categories or metrics for advancing equity.

approaches to organizational change with commitments to social justice, shifting the locus of justice work from a siloed module within change initiatives to an integral part of overall change efforts. MARED adapts MCOD for the context of theological institutions. The MARED framework offers a six-point developmental continuum regarding perspectives on justice. The continuum moves from monocultural through non-discriminating to multicultural. MARED can help faculty and administrators at theological schools articulate what perspectives they have on justice. It can help schools identify their current location on the developmental continuum and determine whether and how they might like to move to a different location. It includes goals and a Readiness Test (a list of open-ended questions), adapted from MCOD, to help institutions assess their current perspectives on diversity (see Appendix A).

Figure 4: *Model for Advancing Racial/Ethnic Diversity (MARED) (Cascante-Gómez 2008)*

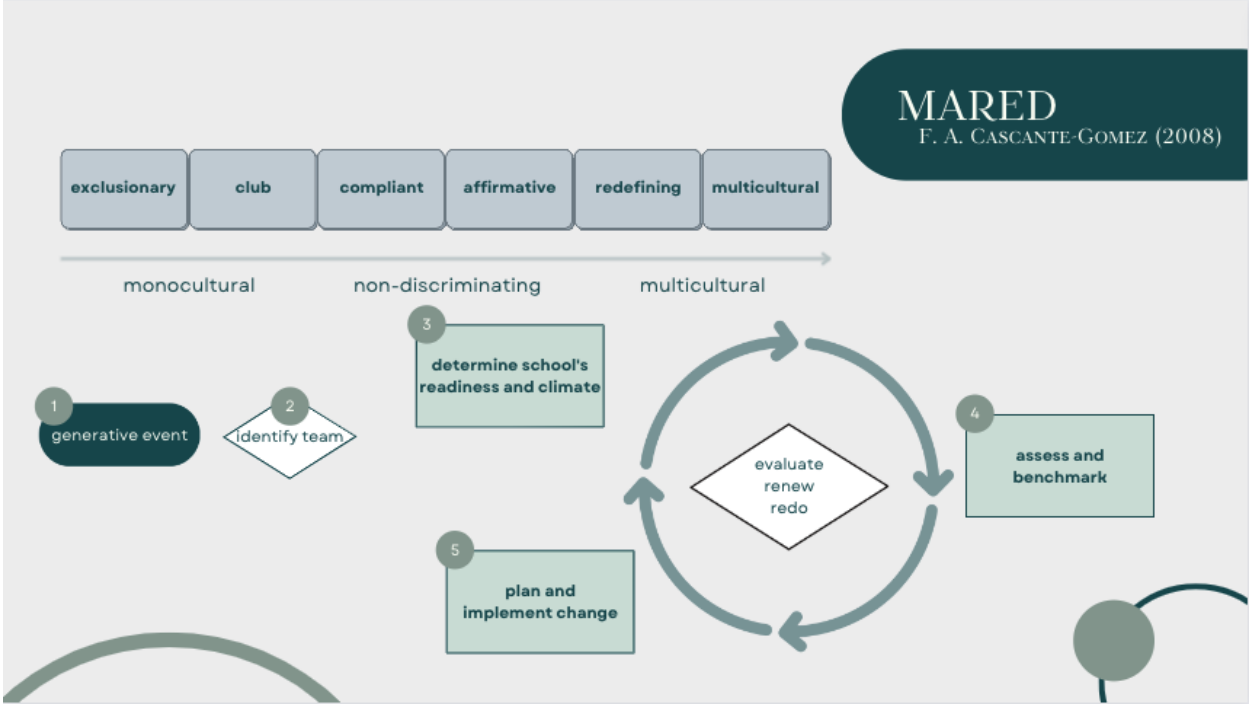


Table 2: *MARED Developmental Categories and Perspectives on Justice*

Developmental Category	Perspective on Justice
Exclusionary	devoted to maintaining majority group dominance and hostile to concerns for social justice
Club	does not openly advocate supremacy of dominant group but implicitly maintains privileges of those who hold power
Compliant	responds to outside pressures regarding multicultural diversity but not fully convinced that social justice issues are of import for the institution or church at large
Affirming	explicitly aware of importance of social justice, grounded on sound theological and biblical principles and reflected in institutional policies and practices
Redefining	not fully content to be nonexclusive and nonoppressive, and works harder to learn from racial and ethnic diversity
Multicultural	embodies the ultimate vision of a multiracial/multiethnic theological institution, and moves beyond internal efforts to support social justice in larger society

Cascante's (2008) model also meets the first criterion of the literature review: it too operates at the institutional level of analysis. Further, unlike Smith's (2020) framework, it also fulfills the second criterion of the review: it presumes a moral value for diversity. It offers clear perspectives on justice through its developmental continuum. Cascante's MARED can help CEC schools determine whether and how their diversity efforts might be congruous with their perspectives on justice.

Combining the Two Frameworks

Smith's (2020) four-fold framework and Cascante's (2008) MARED complement each other, thus forming a coherent, two-part conceptual framework for evaluation of the CEC initiative. Smith's framework assesses success in diversity, providing institutional categories relevant for all institutions of higher education. Cascante's model considers justice, detailing a developmental continuum of institutional perspectives on diversity particularly pertinent to PWTIs. Essentially, Smith's framework focuses on the *what* and *when* of diversity work, through its dimensions and metrics, while Cascante's MARED suggests the *why* and *how* of diversity work, through its

continuum. Smith's framework helps schools notice *what* work they are doing with respect to definitions and measures for diversity efforts. Cascante's MARED helps them notice *why* and *how* they are doing that work with respect to their perspectives on justice. The two-part framework can prompt CEC schools to consider the congruency of their work with their perspectives and the kind of work they might hope to do in the future.

Project Questions and Study Design

Utilizing this two-part conceptual framework, this quality improvement study examined the following project questions: (1) In what ways are CEC schools defining and measuring institutional change through their efforts regarding racial and ethnic diversity?; and (2) How and why are CEC projects and their institutions engaging with matters of social justice regarding racial/ethnic diversity?

PQ1 explored moderators involved in diversity change, or the *what* and *when* of institutional diversity efforts; Smith's (2020) four-fold framework informed this question. Because Smith's framework limits itself to success in diversity (or the instrumental imperative), PQ2 explored mediators involved in diversity change, or the *why* and *how* of institutional diversity efforts. Cascante's (2008) MARED informed this question, emphasizing justice (or the moral imperative). I designed data collection tools and analysis plans that examined the project questions through these frameworks, aiming toward helpful recommendations for CEC schools and potentially other interested ATS member schools that identify as PWTIs in the U.S.

Overall, I designed the study as a comprehensive method for evaluating the CEC initiative, by helping schools notice *what* work they are doing, *why* and *how* they are doing that work with respect to their perspectives on justice, the congruency of their work with their perspectives, and the kind of work they might hope to do in the future. Again, because I presumed the contexts for diversity work are different among PWTIs, historically Black theological schools, and Asian- or Latinx-serving schools (as does the new ATS Standards, ATS, 2020), I focused this study on the type of institution that still comprises most of ATS and perhaps has the most work to do to alleviate inequities: the

PWTIs. Therefore, the study emphasizes the nine CEC schools located in the United States that are PWTIs (maximum n = 9).

This project employed mixed methods, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data via CEC final reports, a survey with open-ended and closed questions, and focus groups. Among the currently most common practices for engaging in mixed methods studies (as portrayed by Creswell et al., 2003, and Fetters et al., 2013), I chose a transformative, concurrent design. The design is transformative, because a conceptual framework shaped it; and it is concurrent, because it collected qualitative and quantitative data within a single phase of the study. Further, this design prioritized the qualitative data across all three instruments as essential context for and elaboration of the quantitative data. I triangulated data to determine findings and recommendations. In what follows, I offer further detail about my design.

Data Collection

In advance of the Virtual 2021 Dissemination Conference hosted by ATS in October 2021, ATS shared with CEC schools that I would be helping them reflect on their CEC work. I spoke during the Conference to explain the project and solicit participation. ATS's endorsement of this project helped recruit participants for all phases of data collection. Data collection commenced in October 2021 and concluded in January 2022. The data collected was kept confidential and deidentified for reporting purposes.[7] See Appendix B for recruitment emails sent to potential participants and Appendix C for data collection instruments. See Appendix D for a table that connects project questions, frameworks, and codes with items in the data collection tools.

Final Reports

One data collection effort (in October 2021) involved the final reports from the CEC projects, submitted to ATS in September 2021. During the Dissemination Conference, CEC team leaders received an email requesting

[7] Analyses and interpretations of ATS data, including institutional characteristics available online and CEC final reports provided to the researcher, are the researcher's and may not reflect those of The Commission on Accrediting or The Association of Theological Schools.

permission to study their final reports for the sake of this capstone project. All nine U.S. PWTIs consented, and ATS shared copies of their final reports with me. I utilized the reports to inform both project questions, though because the ATS designed the questions for the report before I designed this study, the reports offered the least specific source of data for this study.

Survey

Another data collection effort (in October – November 2021) involved a survey of CEC team leaders, administered through a census (entire population), opt-in sample. I constructed the survey in REDCap[8] and sent initial invitations via REDCap to all CEC team leaders at U.S. PWTIs (max n = 18 individuals). I sent follow-up reminders by email. Eight of the nine U.S. PWTIs submitted at least one survey response, and two of those eight each submitted two responses, for a total of 10 survey responses received. I leveraged the survey to inform both project questions, constructing open-ended and closed-ended questions utilizing Smith's (2020) framework and open-ended questions utilizing Cascante's (2008) MARED. The survey offered the opportunity for team leaders to respond to questions designed specifically to reflect on diversity efforts and perspectives through these two frameworks.

Focus Groups

A final data collection effort (in January 2022) involved focus groups among CEC team leaders, again administered through a census (entire population), opt-in sample. I hosted two focus groups via Zoom, placing participants in each group based on the primary ecclesial tradition of their school, either evangelical or mainline. Doing so aligned with my plans for data analysis, to track trends by ecclesial family. Though one of the nine U.S. PWTIs is a Catholic institution and two are Anabaptist, I invited each to participate in the focus group that most resonated with their own ecclesial tradition. In the email that asked permission to study CEC reports, I also invited CEC team leaders to complete a Doodle poll to indicate their availability for a focus group, originally proposed for the fall. Because we could not find a convenient

[8] Available via grant support UL1 TR000445 from NCATS/NIH.

meeting time for all interested participants via the Doodle poll, I followed up with emails and phone calls to determine mutually convenient times for both groups in January. Of the four eligible evangelical schools, three elected to participate in the focus group, with one of those three schools contributing two participants. Of the five eligible mainline schools, four elected to participate in the focus group, with all four of those schools each contributing one participant. I utilized the focus group to inform both project questions, but I especially emphasized questions pertinent to PQ2. I believed the focus group protocol offered the best and most thorough way to learn about engagements with social justice at the CEC schools, since it provided the opportunity to ask more specific questions, dive in more deeply on each question, and invite meaning-making across schools by ecclesial family. The focus group protocol thus centered Cascante's (2008) MARED, containing questions designed to explore levels of engagement with justice more thoroughly than the CEC reports or survey could allow. I consulted with Cascante via telephone to develop questions most reflective of that framework and appropriate for the CEC initiative (F. A. Cascante, personal communication, November 12, 2021).

Limitations

This project entailed at least the following limitations. First, due to the small sample size, I could offer only descriptive statistics and observations immediately relevant for CEC schools and could not generalize beyond this sample. However, I hope nonetheless that the data, findings, and recommendations offer insight for similar ATS PWTIs. Second, because I developed the data collection tools on my own, I risked the possibility of internal invalidity. To reduce that risk, I operationalized the two-part conceptual framework similarly across all three tools, and I triangulated the data across all instruments to clarify and validate my conclusions. In addition, I consulted with Cascante on the appropriate use of the MARED. Third, through the two-part framework, project questions, and study design, I did not examine external influences on institutions or intergroup relations, two other significant angles for analysis of diversity work. It was beyond the scope of this project to utilize the Hurtado et. al (2012) DLE framework that includes all such elements, but such a model could offer insight for future, larger related projects and work. Finally, because my emphasis is the institutional level of analysis, I did not utilize frameworks and tools that build from the

voices of students and faculty of color. A model of Cascante's (2010) geared toward the voices of theological faculty of color could be one way forward for that important angle. The Hurtado et. al (2012) DLE framework also includes tools for such research.

Data Analysis

I began to analyze data from all three instruments in March 2022, concluding analysis in May 2022. I utilized Excel for qualitative coding and quantitative data analysis, beginning with a codebook for reference across all three instruments and developing worksheets to study and summarize data for each instrument. I also used Excel to triangulate data across all three instruments, concluding with findings and recommendations as reported below. Again, because evangelical and mainline traditions often have approached justice differently (Cannon & Smith, 2019; Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013), I presumed it may be important to track commonalities and differences by these two ecclesial families. In addition, I needed to maintain confidentiality for schools and individuals. Therefore, I analyzed data by the ecclesial families of evangelical and mainline.

To examine *what* institutional diversity efforts the CEC schools are pursuing (PQ1), I developed codes from Smith's (2020) framework and applied them deductively. Primarily, those codes represented the four dimensions of that framework: access/success, climate/intergroup relations, education/ scholarship, and institutional viability/vitality. I divided the education/ scholarship code into two codes, one for efforts focused on faculty and one for efforts focused on students. In the findings that follow, I report on those two codes separately. To examine *why* and *how* the CEC schools are doing their diversity work (PQ2), I had planned to use Cascante's (2008) categories of monocultural, non-discriminating, and multicultural, also applying them deductively. However, as I moved through the analysis process, I discovered it was difficult within the short timeframe of this study to apply Cascante's subjective categories reliably. Therefore, I instead decided to track any possible references to justice inductively to build a fuller picture of engagement across ecclesial families. As I did so, even though PQ2 primarily was meant to involve only the Cascante framework, I also utilized Smith categories to help describe emerging insights related to justice. In what

follows, I detail general summary observations by type of instrument. The findings section then offers six specific triangulated, overarching findings that later inform specific recommendations.

Final Reports

PQ1: Success

As a primary dimension of focus, three evangelical schools emphasized education/scholarship (faculty) and one emphasized education/scholarship (student). Secondary dimensions of focus for the evangelical schools included access/success for three schools, education/scholarship (student) for three schools, institutional viability/vitality for three schools, climate/intergroup relations for one school, and a new (non-Smith) category of community (external) for one school (see Table 3).

Table 3: *Dimensions of Focus for CEC Projects at Evangelical CEC Schools*

Dimensions of Focus for CEC Project: Evangelical*

	Primary	Secondary
access/success	0	3
climate/intergroup relations	0	1
education/scholarship (faculty)	3	0
education/scholarship (student)	1	3
institutional viability/vitality	0	3
NEW: community (external)	0	1

*some schools had multiple secondary foci

For their primary dimensions of focus, four mainline schools emphasized institutional viability/vitality, two emphasized climate/intergroup relations, and one emphasized education/scholarship (student). For one of the mainline

schools, the primary dimension of focus was unclear. Secondary dimensions of focus for the mainline schools included education/scholarship (student) for four schools, education/scholarship (faculty) for three schools, access/success for two schools, and community (external) for one school (see Table 4).

Table 4: *Dimensions of Focus for CEC Projects at Mainline CEC Schools*

Dimensions of Focus for CEC Project: Mainline*

	Primary	Secondary
access/success	0	2
climate/intergroup relations	2	0
education/scholarship (faculty)	0	3
education/scholarship (student)	1	4
institutional viability/vitality	4	0
NEW: community (external)	0	1

*some schools had multiple primary and/or secondary foci

PQ2: Justice

Among the four evangelical schools, none focused their entire CEC project on issues of social justice with respect to racial and ethnic diversity. However, two included at least one project goal that intersected with justice concerns, broadening student engagement with such concerns and/or heightening faculty capacity regarding such issues. These schools planned to continue project-related work via strategic school funds and plans, faculty development, and curriculum development. The CEC projects at the remaining two evangelical schools did not intersect with issues of social justice significantly, if at all. One school aimed to identify biases and gaps in faculty cultural competency, and another aimed for "new levels of camaraderie and solidarity" across campus. These schools planned to utilize ongoing assessments of student perceptions to shape diversity work. They planned to

continue related efforts through faculty professional development opportunities or foundation grant opportunities.

Among the five mainline schools, three utilized their CEC project in intentional and significant ways regarding issues of social justice with respect to racial and ethnic diversity. One engaged with various justice concerns in all four of Smith's (2020) dimensions, and two aimed to work toward antiracism across the institution, a goal within the dimension of institutional viability/vitality. The projects at these schools effected deep organizational changes and sparked smaller short-term projects. The schools structured strategic plans or applied for foundation grant opportunities to continue related work. The CEC projects at the remaining two mainline schools did not intersect with issues of social justice as significantly, if at all. One school discussed the topic of bias, and another aimed for a non-specific "culture of hospitality." These schools aimed to diversify faculty, involve diverse constituencies, and construct a strategic plan to continue related work.

Survey

To analyze the survey, I first cleaned the data. Most significantly, I had to make decisions about the two evangelical schools who each submitted two surveys from different respondents. The open-ended questions asked about goals and measurements for CEC projects (per PQ1) as well as CEC project and broader institutional engagement with racial and ethnic diversity (per PQ2). I decided to keep all the qualitative data from all 10 surveys to allow the broadest and deepest possible view on both project questions within a small sample size. The survey also included 20 closed-ended Likert items, inviting CEC schools to indicate the frequency with which their institutions measure the metrics listed by Smith (2020).[9] Possible choices were "I don't know," "never," "seldom," "sometimes," and "often." I converted all responses of "I don't know" to "NA" (only 6 such responses total), "never" to "0," "seldom" to "1," "sometimes" to "2," and "often" to "3." Because one evangelical school with two surveys had responded "often" to every Likert item, I dropped those responses. For the other evangelical school with two

[9] Though Smith suggested 21 metrics, I only included 20 in the survey. I felt that one of the metrics for institutional viability/vitality, framework and indicators for monitoring diversity, might not make sense as a Likert-scale item without further context and explanation.

surveys, I averaged the responses by item to avoid overrepresentation of the evangelical schools in the sample. The difference in item averages between (1) retaining both surveys from the second school and (2) averaging the responses from that school was no more than 0.25 per item and often within 0.10 per item, confirming the second approach as an acceptable one overall. Throughout the quantitative analysis, then, I utilized four total numbers for evangelical schools (including one average) and four total responses for mainline. Because the small number of Likert options and small sample size potentially would result in less variability amidst data, making it more difficult to determine patterns and/or findings, I completed both counts and averages by item to help determine comparisons and contrasts.

PQ1: Success

Open-Ended (see Table 5). Evangelical schools engaged with the following Smith (2020) dimensions when describing CEC goals: education/scholarship (two schools in both student and faculty, one in faculty only), climate/intergroup relations (two schools), institutional viability/vitality (two schools), and access/success (one school). In listing CEC measurements and impacts, evangelical schools implicated these dimensions: access/success (two schools), education/scholarship (one school in both student and faculty and one in student only), and climate/intergroup relations (one school). One respondent indicated they were confident they had met their CEC project goals but did not mention specific measurements.

Mainline schools mentioned CEC goals that resonated with these Smith (2020) dimensions: climate/intergroup relations (two schools), institutional viability/vitality (two schools), and education/scholarship (one school in both student and faculty). For CEC impacts or measurements, they implicated these dimensions: institutional viability/vitality (all four participating schools), education/scholarship (one school in both student and faculty and one in faculty only), and access/success (one school).

Because the question about metrics asked schools to "describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the impacts of your CEC project at your school," it was unclear to what extent respondents emphasized general impacts or specific metrics.

Table 5: *Dimensions of Engagement for CEC Project Goals and Metrics*

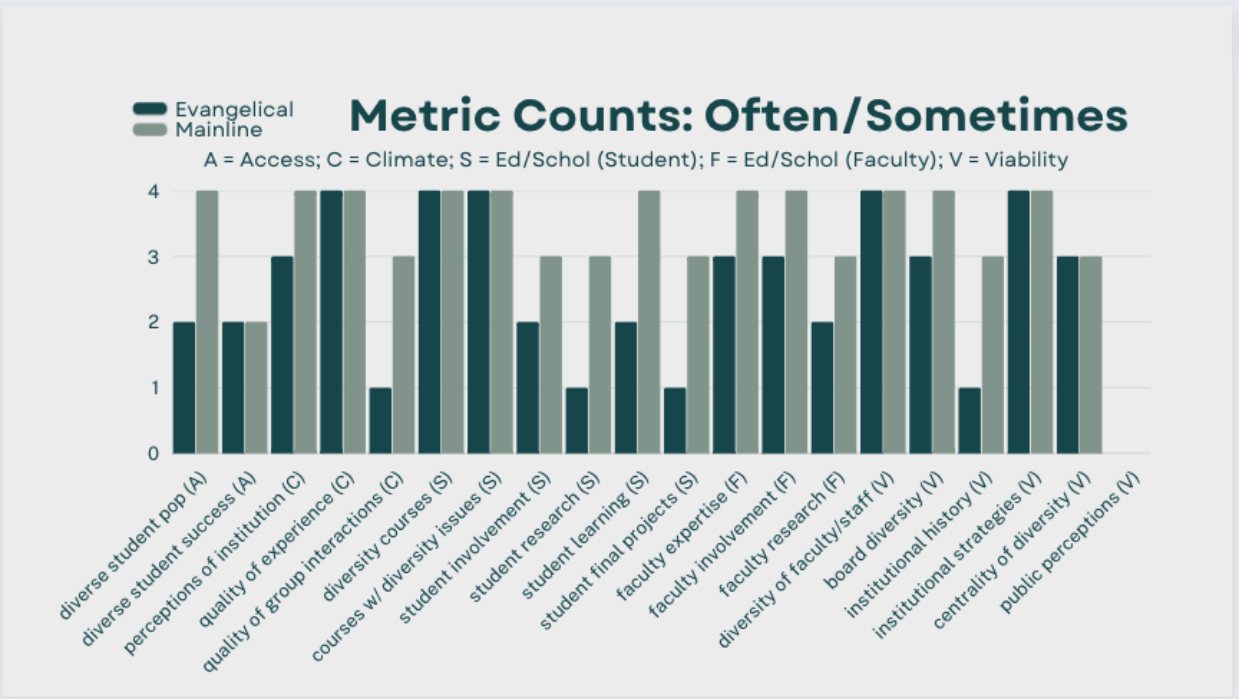
Dimensions of Engagement for CEC Goals and Metrics

	EVANGELICAL: Goals	EVANGELICAL: Metrics	MAINLINE: Goals	MAINLINE: Metrics
access/success	1	2	0	1
climate/intergroup relations	2	1	2	0
education/scholarship (faculty)	3	1	1	2
education/scholarship (student)	2	2	1	1
institutional viability/vitality	2	0	2	4

Counts (see Figure 5). According to counts, five metrics received a frequency of measurement rating of "often" (3.00/3.50) or "sometimes" (2.00/2.50) from all eight schools that completed the survey: the climate/intergroup relations metric of quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction); the education/scholarship (student) metrics of (1) availability of diversity-related courses and requirements in the curriculum and (2) extent to which courses include diversity issues; and the institutional viability/vitality metrics of (1) diversity of faculty/staff and (2) institutional strategies and resources for diversity. All four evangelical schools are prioritizing (measuring sometimes or often) five out of the 20 institution-wide metrics listed on the survey, while all four participating mainline schools are prioritizing 11.

The five metrics that received a rating of often or sometimes from the fewest schools received those ratings from only half (four) of the eight schools. Those metrics include the access/success metric of success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors); the climate and intergroup metric of type and quality of interactions among groups; the education/scholarship (student) metrics of (1) student research that engages the diverse society and (2) student final projects or dissertations related to diversity; and the institutional viability/vitality metric of institutional history on diversity issues and incidents. One metric received neither a rating of often nor sometimes from any schools: the institutional viability/vitality metric of public constituency perceptions.

Figure 5: *Number of CEC Schools Reporting Frequency of Measurement as Often or Sometimes for Each Smith (2020) Metric*



Averages. Calculating measurement averages for each metric revealed additional information about the metrics measured most and least often across both ecclesial families. For markers of access/success (see Table 6), the marker measured most often was population of diverse students by type of degree as reported by mainline schools, with an average of 3.00. The marker measured least often was success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors) as reported by evangelical schools (1.67). Overall, schools measured population most often (2.50). Across all markers of access/success, mainline schools reported the highest measurement average (2.67) compared to evangelical schools (1.83), a difference of nearly 1.00 point. The markers measured most and least often were the same across evangelical and mainline schools. Across both ecclesial families and all metrics within the dimension, schools reported a measurement average for access/success of 2.25, or slightly more often than "sometimes."

Table 6: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Access/Success Metrics*

Metric Averages: Access/Success

	Evangelical	Mainline	All Schools
population of diverse students by type of degree	2.00	3.00	2.50
success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors)	1.67	2.33	2.00
TOTALS	**1.83**	**2.67**	**2.25**

For markers of climate/intergroup relations (see Table 7), the marker measured most often was quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction) as reported by mainline schools (2.50). The marker measured least often was type and quality of interactions among diverse groups as reported by evangelical schools (1.38). Overall, schools measured quality of experience most often (2.38) and type and quality of interactions least often (1.69). Across all markers of climate/intergroup relations, ecclesial families averaged a measurement average within 0.50 point (mainline = 2.17, evangelical = 1.88). Evangelical and mainline schools ranked the frequency of measurement of these markers essentially the same, from highest to lowest. Mainline schools reported the same measurement average of 2.0 for the two markers measured least frequently. Across both ecclesial families and all metrics within the dimension, schools reported a measurement average for climate/intergroup relations of 2.03, or "sometimes."

For markers of education/scholarship (student; see Table 8), the marker measured most often was extent to which courses include diversity issues as reported by mainline schools (2.75). The marker measured least often was student final projects or dissertations related to diversity as reported by evangelical schools (0.75). Overall, schools measured the extent to which courses include diversity issues most often (2.44) and final projects related to diversity least often (1.50). Across all markers of education/scholarship (student), ecclesial families averaged a measurement average within 0.50 point (mainline = 2.21, evangelical = 1.87). Evangelical and mainline schools ranked the frequency of measurement for these markers differently.

Evangelical schools reported the highest measurement average for availability of diversity-related courses and requirements in the curriculum (2.50) and the lowest for student final projects related to diversity (0.75). Mainline schools reported the highest measurement average for extent to which courses include diversity issues (2.75) and the lowest for student involvement in diversity-related courses (1.75). Across both ecclesial families and all metrics within the dimension, schools reported a measurement average for education/scholarship (student) of 2.04, or "sometimes."

Table 7: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Climate/Intergroup Relations Metrics*

Metric Averages: Climate/Intergroup Relations

	Evangelical	Mainline	All Schools
perceptions of institution (climate, fairness)	2.00	2.00	2.00
quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction)	2.25	2.50	2.38
type and quality of interactions among diverse groups	1.38	2.00	1.69
TOTALS	**1.88**	**2.17**	**2.03**

For markers of education/scholarship (faculty; see Table 9), the marker measured most often was faculty involvement in diversity efforts as reported by mainline schools (3.00). The marker measured least often was faculty research and publishing involving diversity as reported by evangelical schools (1.50). Overall, schools measured faculty involvement most often (2.50) and faculty research least often (2.00). Across all markers of education/ scholarship (faculty), mainline schools reported the highest measurement average (2.75) compared to evangelical schools (1.83), a difference of nearly 1.00 point. Evangelical and mainline schools ranked the frequency of measurement of these markers essentially the same, from highest to lowest. Evangelical schools reported the same measurement average of 2.00 for the two markers measured most frequently. Across both ecclesial families and all metrics within the dimension, schools reported a measurement average for

education/scholarship (faculty) of 2.29, or slightly more often than "sometimes."

Table 8: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Education/Scholarship (Student) Metrics*

Metric Averages: Education/Scholarship (Student)

	Evangelical	Mainline	All Schools
availability of diversity-related courses and requirements	2.50	2.25	2.38
extent to which courses include diversity issues	2.13	2.75	2.44
student involvement in diversity-related courses	1.88	1.75	1.81
student research that engages the diverse society	1.83	2.00	1.92
quantity and substance of student learning about diversity	2.13	2.25	2.19
student final projects or dissertations related to diversity	0.75	2.25	1.50
TOTALS	**1.87**	**2.21**	**2.04**

Table 9: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Education/Scholarship (Faculty) Metrics*

Metric Averages: Education/Scholarship (Faculty)

	Evangelical	Mainline	All Schools
faculty expertise on diversity-related matters	2.00	2.75	2.38
faculty involvement in diversity efforts	2.00	3.00	2.50
faculty research and publishing involving diversity	1.50	2.50	2.00
TOTALS	**1.83**	**2.75**	**2.29**

For markers of institutional viability/vitality (see Table 10), the marker measured most often was diversity of faculty/staff as reported by both evangelical and mainline schools (3.00). The marker measured least often was public constituency perceptions of institutional diversity and equity as reported by evangelical schools (0.88). Overall, schools measured diversity of faculty/staff most often (3.00) and public perceptions least often (0.94). Across all markers of institutional viability/vitality, ecclesial families reported a measurement average within 0.50 point (mainline = 2.21, evangelical = 2.02). Evangelical and mainline schools ranked the frequency of measurement of these markers essentially the same, from highest to lowest. Evangelical schools ranked the centrality of diversity in institutional documents and processes (2.00) over institutional history on diversity issues and incidents (1.25), while mainline schools ranked history (2.25) over documents and processes (2.00). Across both ecclesial families and all metrics within the dimension, schools reported a measurement average for institutional viability/vitality of 2.12, or slightly more often than "sometimes."

Table 10: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Institutional Viability/Vitality Metrics*

Metric Averages: Institutional Viability/Vitality

	Evangelical	Mainline	All Schools
diversity of faculty/staff	3.00	3.00	3.00
board diversity and engagement	2.38	2.50	2.44
institutional history on diversity issues and incidents	1.25	2.25	1.75
institutional strategies and resources for diversity	2.63	2.50	2.56
centrality of diversity in institutional documents and processes	2.00	2.00	2.00
public constituency perceptions of institutional diversity, equity	0.88	1.00	0.94
TOTALS	**2.02**	**2.21**	**2.12**

Considering all Smith (2020) dimensions, schools reported the highest measurement averages for access/success (2.25) and education/scholarship (faculty; 2.29). Nonetheless, schools reported measurement averages of 2.00 ("sometimes") or above across all dimensions, indicating a broad variety of diversity work and measurement. Between evangelical and mainline schools, mainline schools consistently reported the highest measurement average across all Smith dimensions; however, both ecclesial families tended to prioritize similar metrics within each dimension, which I will elaborate further below in the findings section.

PQ2: Justice

Open-Ended. Among evangelical schools, three out of four indicated their CEC project engaged in matters of social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity. Of those three, all indicated at least some of the same dimensions of diversity work (per Smith 2020) that they implicated when reflecting on goals and/or measurements or impacts. Taken together, the CEC projects at these three schools offer examples of how a U.S. PWTI might engage with social justice for three of Smith's dimensions (climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship, and institutional viability/vitality). The dimension mentioned most often regarding engagement with social justice at these three schools was education/scholarship (student). Examples of relevant diversity-related activities involved courses (education/scholarship – student), pilgrimage (education/scholarship – student), awareness (institutional viability/vitality), and corrective actions (institutional viability/vitality). Meanwhile, one of these three evangelical schools stated the following:

> *"The CEC project focused on internal matters and did not address ways to engage matters of social justice. The term 'social justice' is a loaded term treated as anathema by many in this evangelical school. ..."*

Among mainline schools that submitted the survey, three out of four indicated their CEC project engaged in matters of social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity. Of those three, two indicated all the same dimensions of diversity work (per Smith 2020) that they implicated when reflecting on goals and/or measurements or impacts. One referenced only one of the same dimensions. Taken together, the CEC projects at these three schools offer

examples of how a U.S. PWTI might engage with social justice for all four of Smith's dimensions. The dimension mentioned most often regarding engagement with social justice among these three schools was institutional viability/vitality. Examples of relevant diversity-related activities involved scholarships (access/success), ministerial placements (education/scholarship – student); and reparations (institutional viability/vitality).

Regarding engagement of school leadership (faculty/staff, board members) with social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity, all four evangelical schools indicated engagement in some way(s). Two schools indicated at least some of the same dimensions of diversity work (per Smith 2020) they had implicated when reflecting on their CEC projects specifically, and the other two schools referenced only other dimensions they had not yet mentioned. One of the four evangelical schools also added the new dimension or theme of community (external). Examples of listed relevant diversity-related activities included courses in native languages (access/success), discussion groups – students (climate/intergroup relations), faculty discussions or meetings (education/scholarship – faculty), personal actions – faculty (education/ scholarship – faculty); and initiatives or projects (access/success and institutional viability/vitality).

All four participating mainline schools also indicated their school leadership modelled engagement with social justice in some way(s). Two schools indicated at least some of the same dimensions of diversity work (per Smith 2020) they had implicated when reflecting on their CEC projects specifically. The other two schools spoke more generally and implicated the new theme of community (external). Examples of listed relevant diversity-related activities included courses (education/scholarship – student), institutional statements (institutional viability/vitality), and HR processes (institutional viability/vitality).

When asked whether their school’s official statements (mission and values, strategic plan, website, etc.) reflect matters of social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity, three out of four evangelical schools indicated they did so. Two referenced their school's vision/mission statements, which implicate the institutional viability/vitality dimension of diversity work (per Smith 2020). One of those two also mentioned a diversity committee, another effort that implicates the institutional viability/vitality dimension. The third school instead

referenced scholarships and financial aid support, which implicates the access/success dimension, as well as HR processes, which implicates the institutional viability/vitality dimension. The fourth school indicated "no direct reference" to matters of justice in official statements.

Three out of the four participating mainline schools indicated their school's official statements reflect matters of social justice. These schools implicated at least some of the same dimensions of diversity work (per Smith 2020) they had referenced when reflecting on their CEC projects specifically. The fourth school suggested their statements reflected matters of social justice only generally. Examples of listed relevant diversity-related activities or documents included education for the Global Church (education/scholarship – student), vision/mission statement (institutional viability/vitality), website statement (institutional viability/vitality), and strategic/annual plans (institutional viability/vitality).

Focus Groups

PQ1: Success

In the focus groups, schools spoke specifically about their CEC goals and more generally about diversity work at their institutions. In doing so, evangelical schools implicated several of Smith's (2020) dimensions, involving access/success, education/scholarship (student), education/scholarship (faculty), and institutional viability/vitality. Goals in the latter dimension included provision of diverse faculty for diverse students, increased awareness regarding diversity, creating and living into institutional documents regarding diversity, and leaning into institutional diversity intentionally. One goal involved the new dimension of communities (external), proposing research amidst constituencies to serve them well.

As mainline schools discussed CEC goals and broader institutional work, they implicated several of Smith's (2020) dimensions, including access/success, climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship (student), and institutional viability/vitality. Unlike evangelical schools, mainline schools included climate/intergroup goals and did not discuss education/scholarship (faculty) goals. Mainline schools also discussed more institutional viability/

vitality goals, including some that related more directly to issues of social justice. Like evangelical schools, they aimed to increase the diversity of faculty/staff. They also aimed to enhance and support diversity, work toward synchronicity in diversity work that keeps a forward momentum, and establish a diversity committee. Goals related more directly to justice issues included engaging with diversity, bias, and/or racism; becoming an antiracist institution; and engaging with institutional racism.

Schools also discussed generative events that had inspired their CEC projects. For evangelical schools, generative events involved changing student demographics (increase of diversity) and interest on the part of the institution. For mainline schools, generative events included desires to increase the diversity of the student body, response to increased denominational diversity, the initial ATS CEC Conference held in 2018, and long-term institutional interests in intercultural work or commitments to diversity and justice.

When asked to name ways their CEC projects have effected institutional change regarding racial and ethnic diversity, evangelical schools engaged with three of Smith's (2020) dimensions: access/success, education/scholarship (student), and institutional viability/vitality. For the latter (largest) category, reported changes included increased diversity on executive boards and/or committees; new or increased momentum for diversity work; new initiatives, documents, and/or strategic plans; formalized efforts toward institutional mission and/or diversity work; and intentional embodiment of institutional diversity. As mainline schools discussed institutional change sparked by their CEC projects, they engaged with two of Smith's dimensions: access/success and institutional viability/vitality. For the latter (largest) category, several changes resonated with those mentioned by evangelical schools. Mainline schools also increased the diversity of executive leaders; supported momentum for strategic diversity work; and began new initiatives, documents, and/or strategic plans. Other reported institutional viability/ vitality changes included increased diversity of faculty, saturation of DEI efforts across the institution, and provision of accountability for diversity work.

PQ2: Justice

When asked questions regarding how their CEC project and/or school has been engaging (or could engage) with issues of social justice involving racial and

ethnic diversity, evangelical schools responded with a wide range of insights. They noted different needs amidst different levels of diversity at their institutions. Descriptions of work relating to justice issues involved each of Smith's (2020) dimensions. Two institutions reflected on access to theological education, articulating ways to better serve their internal (student) and/or external (church) constituencies. Beyond access-related activities, schools described activities ranging from inviting racial and ethnic concord (climate/intergroup relations), to reshaping educational activities and capacities (education/scholarship), to hiring diverse faculty (institutional viability/vitality). In addition, two schools highlighted generally the dominance of the white Western perspective in theological education, reflecting on the possible redesign of theological education to include diverse perspectives, programs, and styles of teaching. One evangelical school observed,

> *"When we get to the point of asking if what we do is really addressing the needs of specific communities, then we find out that, in some ways, the agenda for theological formation has been driven by majority groups [developing programs and curriculum] that [have] been addressing the needs of [the] historically monocultural group. So, who drives the agenda, that I think is the key insight that we got from the CEC. … How would theological formation that is culturally sensitive or aware [look] if you have the power to define what the program is basically about?"*

One evangelical institution mentioned their denominational identity as a resource for social justice work. They noted:

> *"Our denomination, our tradition, arose out of the desire to stand for justice and social justice against slavery, in terms of suffrage and all of those different things. … So, what does it mean for us to live into that faithfully. … [B]ecause the gospel, if you live the gospel truly well, then social justice is part of that. So, what does it mean to be faithful to it? … How do we posture it as a seminary?"*

These conversations regarding the agenda of theological education and the resource of denominational identity involved multiple of Smith's (2020) dimensions. As mainline schools reflected on whether and how their CEC project and/or school has been engaging (or could engage) with issues of

social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity, two implied such engagement is a growing edge for the institution, and two emphasized the long-term interest or commitment of their institution to such engagement. Compared to evangelical schools, mainline schools highlighted several similar topics. They also noted different needs amidst their different institutions. They described work relating to justice issues that involved most of Smith's (2020) dimensions. They discussed access/success of diverse students, educating amidst and for diverse contexts of ministry (education/scholarship – student), and faculty hiring (institutional viability/vitality). In contrast to evangelical schools, mainline schools spent more time discussing diversity work related to climate/intergroup relations, mentioning the provision of resources for conflict regarding racial justice, inclusion and equity for diverse students, and the possible burdens of diversity work for students or faculty of color. Meanwhile, they did not highlight work involving Smith's dimension of education/scholarship (faculty). Mainline schools did not discuss the dominance of the white Western perspective in theological education generally; however, three mainline schools reflected on that dominance in reference to their specific institutions. Finally, while both evangelical and mainline schools mentioned denominational identity as a resource for social justice work, the three mainline institutions connected with a single denomination also spent significant time in the conversation wrestling with that identity as a limitation for such work. One mainline school observed:

> *"We're living out [denominational commitments to peace and justice] out of a very narrow and white understanding, and that is our tradition. And so, how do we think outside of those boxes?"*

Another mainline school agreed:

> *"The denominational dynamics at our school are sometimes a proxy for race. … Because the denomination is so overwhelmingly white, by saying we want a majority school [of that denomination] ... you are essentially asking or saying you want a predominantly white school."*

The focus groups also offered the opportunity to articulate challenges for diversity work that engages with social justice. Evangelical schools shared a variety of challenges. Those included the structure of the institution (whether

embedded or not); scarcity of resources (finances, staff, capacity); inaccurate assumptions about the audiences for social justice work; and resistance to and/or prioritization and intentionality of change.

Mainline schools also shared a variety of challenges to activities involving social justice. They highlighted different levels of challenge at their different institutions. Like for evangelical schools, some challenges included disagreements across campus regarding whether to engage in DEI work, political associations or presumptions regarding DEI work, resistance to change, relinquishing power and/or using it in new ways, and embodying institutional commitments to racial and ethnic DEI. Mainline schools mentioned additional challenges as well, including the potential limitations of their denominational identities. Those challenges involved balancing specific DEI concerns with intersectionality of identities and related concerns, lack of core faculty who are BIPOC, debate regarding faculty hiring, and partnering with organizations led by persons of color.

FINDINGS

I triangulated the data across all three collection tools by ecclesial family to determine the congruences or incongruences across schools. Six key findings emerged, which I detail in this section. Taken together, these findings lead to recommendations for CEC schools and other interested ATS member schools. This section describes key findings by project question. During the focus groups, one finding emerged (Finding #1) relevant to both project questions. I describe that finding first and then move into additional findings for each separate project question.

PQ1 (Success) and PQ2 (Justice)

Finding 1

CEC schools have unique contexts and opportunities for diversity work. CEC schools are navigating unique opportunities and contexts for their diversity work. Focus group conversations revealed three different categories of variability common across ecclesial families. Those categories included

demographics, definitions of diversity, and needs regarding justice. First, each ecclesial family included one or more schools with diverse student demographics, no longer containing a predominantly white student body despite still identifying as a PWTI. Each ecclesial family also included one or more schools with a majority-minority faculty. These varied demographics even within a small sample illustrate the ongoing increasing diversity of the industry (ATS Commission on Accrediting, 2012; *Frank Yamada*, 2017) and reflect the selection criteria for the CEC initiative, which included school diversity and an increase of 20% or more of racial/ethnic students in the past five years (Young & Porter, 2022). Second, both ecclesial families included one or more schools that identified diversities they are navigating in addition to racial and ethnic diversity. These other diversities involved gender, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, denominational identity, locations of ministry, and/or intersectionalities among multiple diversities. These varied diversities reflect an emerging reality within higher and theological education; as institutions engage in diversity work, they must navigate many types of diversities and relationships among them (Cascante-Gómez, 2008; Smith, 2020).

Third, focus groups also revealed that ecclesial family did not predict particular needs regarding social justice. Both ecclesial families observed that the variability of their unique contexts indicated different needs regarding justice. While I expected the mainline schools may have engaged regularly and more often with justice concerns than had evangelical schools (Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013), in actuality, both ecclesial families reflected on needs related to the dominance of the white Western view in theological education generally or at their specific institutions. In addition, two of the mainline institutions described justice work as a growing edge for their schools. Further, while I expected the denominational traditions at mainline schools would have sparked more engagement with justice work than those at evangelical schools, the focus groups suggested the opposite might be the case in at least some instances. None of the evangelical schools identified resistance to their justice efforts, and one evangelical school referenced denominational identity as a resource for justice work. Moreover, the three mainline schools connected to single denominations discussed the limitations of those identities for their justice work. This variability of contexts for diversity work simultaneously reflects a frequent tendency for mainline institutions to engage more often than evangelical institutions with social

justice (Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013) and the contrasting rise of evangelicals interested in justice work as an underdeveloped yet important element of their faith (Cannon & Smith, 2019). Moreover, evangelical energies for justice work align with calls in Christian higher education for engagement of evangelical institutions with justice issues (Lang & Yandell, 2019; Luna De La Rosa & Jun, 2019). These energies underscore the openness of institutional executives at most ATS member schools for support in their diversity work even amidst conservative views on diversity often held by evangelical schools (Gin, 2019).

PQ1 (Success)

Finding 2

In at least some cases, schools lacked intentional alignment between goals and metrics for their CEC projects. The schools elaborated a variety of CEC project goals that involved most or all of Smith's (2020) dimensions, regardless of ecclesial family. Though any given school may have engaged only one or two dimensions, both ecclesial families engaged with all dimensions via their CEC goals, measurements, and impacts. However, the data across all three instruments suggests both ecclesial families lacked sufficient and aligned metrics for their CEC goals. Schools did not reference the same Smith dimensions when discussing goals as when discussing metrics or impacts related to those goals. Both ecclesial families implicated more of Smith's dimensions as goals than as targets of measurement, indicating they may not be measuring at least some of their goals. Moreover, their responses regarding goals and metrics also may suggest, in some cases, misaligned metrics. For example, in the reports, one evangelical school referenced entirely different dimensions for goals and metrics. Similarly, responses across the surveys and within the focus groups suggest schools are not necessarily engaging with the same dimensions for goals as they are for metrics. This finding illustrates a common challenge across industries and within higher education to embody the methods of improvement science, including intentional and aligned metrics, to advance and scale quality work (Bryk et al., 2015; Langley et al., 2009; Lewis, 2015).

Finding 3

Beyond their projects, CEC schools are engaging broadly with institution-wide diversity work yet may lack consistent metric definitions. Via the survey, CEC schools reported broad engagement with institution-wide diversity work regardless of ecclesial family. In response to the Likert-scale questions for all Smith (2020) dimensions and related metrics, mainline schools reported frequency of measurement as "often" (3.00/3.50) or "sometimes" (2.00/2.50) more often than did evangelical schools (mainline = 67 times, evangelical = 49 times). Further, mainline schools reported higher measurement averages than did evangelical schools across all Smith categories (see Figure 6). These two observations indicate more frequency of measurement across Smith metrics by mainline schools. Nonetheless, at least one school from each ecclesial family reported frequency of measurement as often or sometimes for every metric except public constituency perceptions. In addition, both ecclesial families reported measuring metrics for each Smith category at least "seldom" (1.00) and closer to "sometimes" (2.00) if not more frequently. Further, evangelical schools reported averages of 1.83 or above for every category and within 0.50 point of mainline schools for three categories: climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship – students, and institutional viability/vitality (see Figure 6).

As they reported broad engagement with diversity work, both ecclesial families also reported similar prioritization of Smith (2020) metrics for each category. On average, evangelical and mainline schools ranked the frequency of measurement for the metrics that comprise each category the same or very similarly, with the most variability in education/scholarship (student). In Figure 7, note the similar pattern of peaks and valleys for both ecclesial families across all Smith dimensions and metrics.

However, despite broad engagement with institution-wide diversity work, schools generally seemed not to have consistent definitions in mind regarding Smith (2020) metrics. The survey revealed variability in the Likert rankings for the schools that submitted multiple surveys. Two evangelical schools each submitted two surveys, and in both cases, they disagreed significantly in their rankings. They agreed 7 out of 20 times at one school and 5 out of 20 at the other. Respondents often reported significantly different frequencies of measurement for the same metric.

Figure 6: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Metrics by Smith (2020) Dimension*

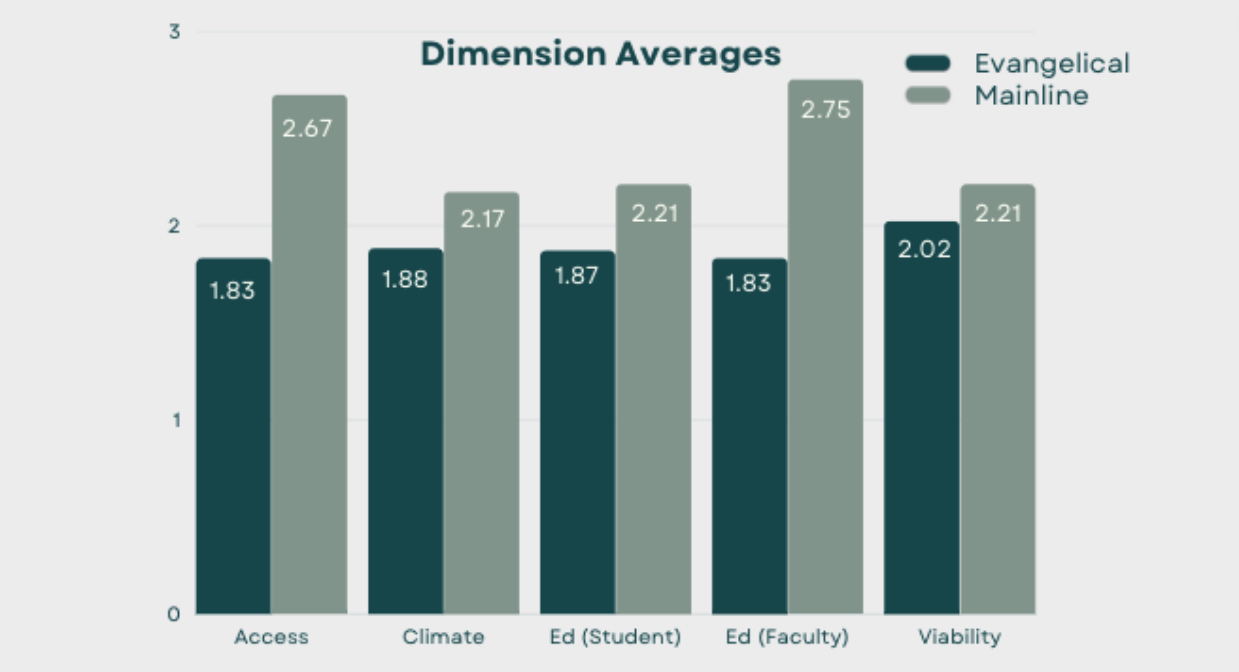
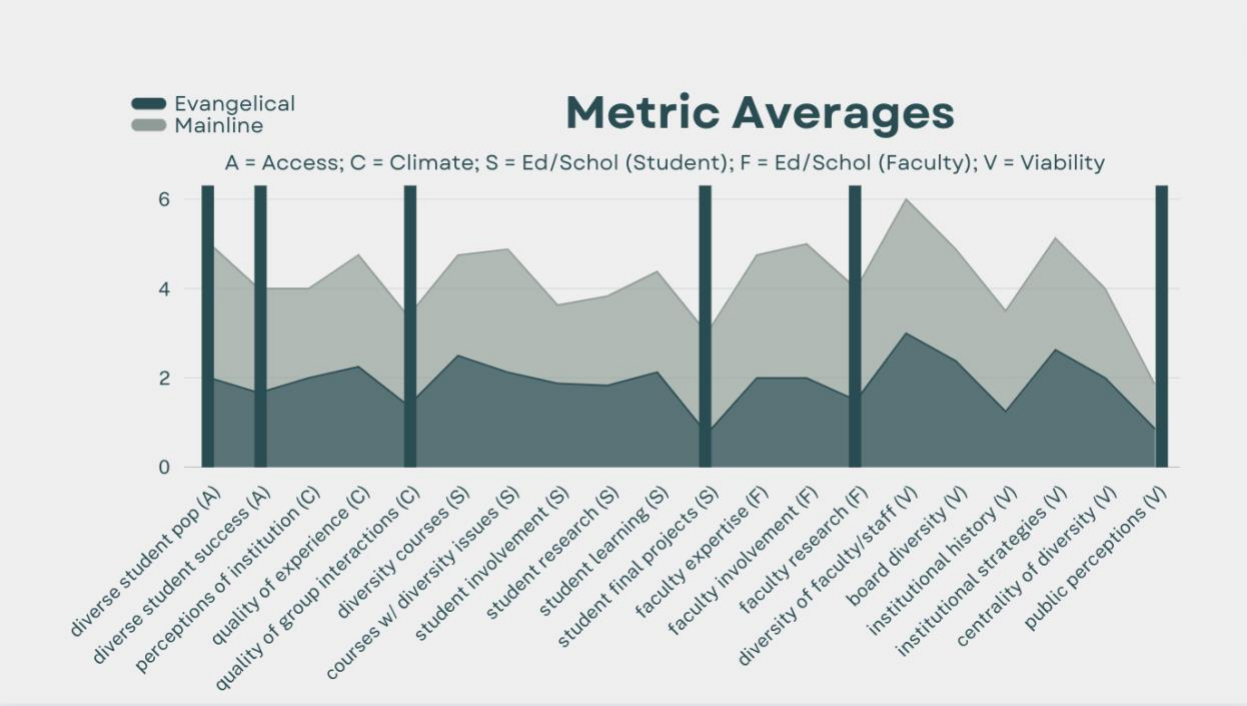


Figure 7: *Average Reported Frequency of Measurement at CEC Schools for Metrics by Smith (2020) Metric*



Further, via the focus groups, schools reported appreciation for efforts such as the CEC initiative that help them clarify and improve their diversity work and metrics. Two mainline schools expressed appreciation for the CEC initiative as one resource that helped prompt ongoing forward momentum in diversity work. One noted:

> *"What was important for me … was that we begin to get some synchronicity that keeps us moving forward, not just starting over and over again."*

Similarly, another mainline school expounded:

> *"On a very basic level, it was for us about accountability to someone other than ourselves. We held ourselves accountable to what we said we were going to do, at least to some degree, and we talked about it publicly."*

More poignantly, one evangelical school implied they would welcome further support to develop useful, ongoing metrics. They asked:

> *"How do we become better at not just taking for granted that we are in the diverse environment, but making sure that it's impacting the students, it's impacting what we do, it's impacting how we operate as an institution, and that those are things that will continue?"*

This need for clarity and support regarding diversity efforts exemplifies the varied meanings of and goals for diversity within organizations and the related challenge of measurement (Roberson, 2006).

PQ2 (Justice)

Finding 4

CEC schools are engaging broadly with justice concerns yet may not have clear definitions and/or rationale for justice work. Both ecclesial families reported broad engagement across Smith (2020) dimensions with

social justice concerns. Utilizing this study's definition of justice, as I coded the CEC reports, I noted which schools implicated justice as a primary focus of their CEC project: 0 out of the 4 evangelical schools and 3 out of the 5 mainline schools. However, via the surveys and the focus groups, most institutions self-reported engagement with justice as connected to their CEC activities and/or as a concern of their institution.

Unfortunately, the open-ended survey questions and focus group protocol regarding engagements with social justice did not shed as much light as I had hoped on the *why* and *how* of diversity work at the CEC schools. The schools did not share sufficient detail to determine their definitions of justice or rationale for self-reported justice-related activities. For example, in the surveys, when asked how their CEC projects or institutions engaged in social justice regarding racial/ethnic diversity, most schools listed various activities rather than described any particular definition of or rationale for justice. Unless the activities implied actions related to representation or discrimination and/or gave more specific details, I couldn't discern how the school imagined the activities involved or advanced justice or to what extent they did so. Moreover, among the evangelical schools that each submitted two surveys, the respondents of one school disagreed as to whether their project engaged with justice, underscoring the probability of different definitions of justice even within a single institution. Though I intended the survey to offer an opportunity to reflect on the extent to which CEC schools engaged with justice, essentially it elicited the equivalent of "yes" or "no" responses (indicating engagement with justice or not) without revealing many details about the shape or depth of engagement. Further, because I asked the survey questions as part of a study sponsored by their accrediting organization, at least some schools may have listed possible engagements with justice because they presumed it would be inappropriate not to do so.

Similarly, though the focus groups offered an opportunity to dive more deeply into definitions of and rationale for justice work, the 90-minute timeframe allowed only a start to a conversation that each individual school might want to revisit and develop, iteratively, over time. Further, I did not have time to ask all the questions I had prepared. Because the mainline group had more participating schools than the evangelical group, the mainline group needed more time to respond to each question. Therefore, I was unable to ask the mainline group as many questions as I asked the evangelical group; the

evangelical group responded to all the same questions as the mainline group plus some additional questions. (See Appendix C for questions asked of each group.) I had written a question for the protocol that asked how CEC schools define or understand social justice with respect to racial and ethnic diversity, but due to time constraints, I elected not to ask that question. I did capture some general insights organically (more indirectly) regarding diversity with justice, as reflected in Findings 5 and 6.

In sum, despite broad engagement in justice concerns and data gleaned via all three instruments, I did not collect sufficient information to utilize MARED categories within or across ecclesial families. I could not identify precise definitions or rationale for justice at least due to lack of time and likely also due to lack of clarity at the schools themselves. The latter presumption seems appropriate, as it also aligns with recent reflections at the 2022 ATS Biennial Conference of ATS member schools aiming to define diversity in just ways. ATS staff and schools were imagining together how to develop and adjudicate definitions of diversity amidst the current general accreditation standards (Tanner, 2022). Further, the presumption aligns with higher education literature that identifies ambiguities in the concept of justice and measurements within the industry (Prinsloo & Slade, 2017; Salinas & Guerrero, 2018; Singh, 2011; Stowell, 2004; Williamson & Kizilcec, 2022).

Finding 5

In some dimensions of diversity work, mainline CEC schools are focusing more deeply on justice concerns. According to the focus groups, in some Smith (2020) dimensions, both ecclesial families seemed engaged with similar thoroughness or intentionality regarding justice concerns. Those dimensions included (1) access/success and (2) education/scholarship (student). Implicating the first of these dimensions (access/success), one evangelical school noted:

> *"We see theological education [and access to it] as a matter of social justice, not only some topic that involves contemporary issues in the community, but having groups around us [have] access that, in the past, they did not have because of cost, because of curriculum, because of level of education and many other things."*

Similarly, a mainline school noted:

> *"[The school] has a long history … supporting Asian students who were in internment camps. There's just been a long history of addressing issues of race and equity."*

Implicating the second of these dimensions (education/scholarship – student), one evangelical school reflected:

> *"When they come in, when we talk about what does ministry look like, being intentional to make sure that they listen well, they understand the way in which their view of ministry may be different from [that of] another person."*

Mainline schools similarly discussed educating amidst and for diverse contexts of ministry. Meanwhile, for two of Smith's (2020) categories, (1) climate/ intergroup relations and (2) institutional viability/vitality, mainline schools seemed more intentionally focused on justice concerns through their CEC project and/or in the institution more broadly. Within the dimension of climate/intergroup relations, evangelical schools engaged with justice by aiming for racial and ethnic concord. By contrast, within that same dimension, mainline schools engaged with justice by constructing resources for conflict amidst diverse groups, aiming for inclusion and equity for all, and alleviating the burdens of diversity work for BIPOC. Similarly, within the dimension of institutional viability/vitality, evangelical schools engaged with justice by increasing awareness regarding diversity, constructing or editing institutional documents related to diversity, and leaning into institutional diversity intentionally. By contrast, within that same dimension, mainline schools engaged with justice by aiming to become an antiracist institution and responding to institutional racism. For example, one mainline school noted:

> *"So, the board has made an antiracism statement. At least three of our strategic initiatives currently are connected in some form to DEI work. And so [we are] trying to think both on the individual level, but also on the institutional level, what this means, including reviews of policies, hiring practices, all of it."*

Another mainline school remarked:

> *"[The school] was interested in engaging its complicity with slavery."*

This finding highlights a complementary point to that of Finding 1, in which I noted that at times mainline CEC schools might not be engaging with justice as often or might be engaging with more resistance compared to evangelical CEC schools. This finding explains that for at least some Smith (2020) dimensions, mainline schools indeed are engaging more intentionally or deeply with justice concerns, as literature on the differences between evangelical and mainline traditions often observes (Compton, 2020; Engebretson, 2022; Houston & Todd, 2013).

Finding 6

***CEC schools expressed struggles to mobilize for change and appreciate supports to do so*.** The focus groups also highlighted common challenges across ecclesial families as they engage with justice work. Evangelical schools have struggled with inaccurate assumptions about the audiences for social justice work as well as resistance to and prioritization and intentionality of change. Similarly, mainline schools have struggled with disagreements across campus regarding whether to engage in DEI work, political associations or presumptions regarding DEI work, resistance to change, relinquishing power and/or utilizing it in new ways, and embodying institutional commitments to racial/ethnic DEI. These struggles to mobilize for change exemplify the challenges of justice work within higher education (Dancy et al., 2018; Gorski, 2019; Stein, 2019). Meanwhile, despite these common challenges, both ecclesial families showed appreciation during the focus group for conversation across like institutions that afforded mutual encouragement and ideas for the work. This appreciation for supports in the work resonates with studies intended to support conversation, learning community, and professional development for institutional executives focused on diversity and/or justice in higher education (Cascante-Gómez, 2008; McNair et al., 2020; Smith, 2020).

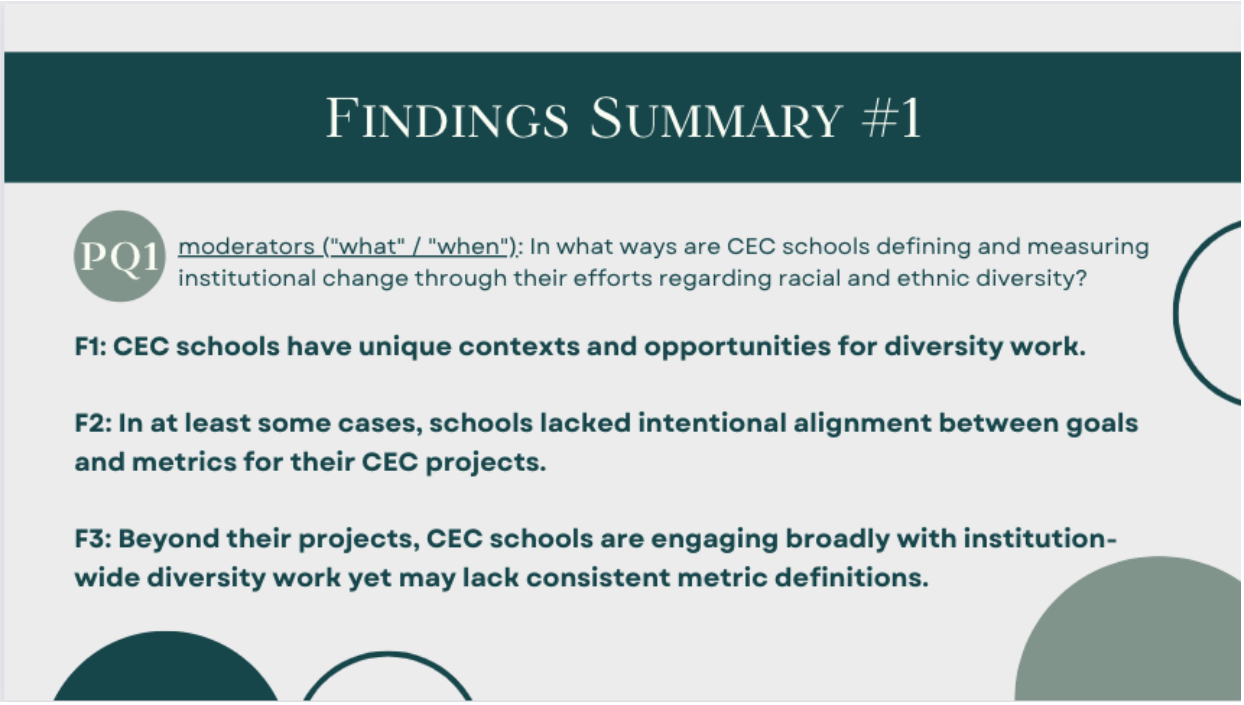
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PQ1 (Success)

Recalling that the first project question asked about the moderators of diversity work at CEC schools, or the *what* and *when* of diversity efforts, this study observes three findings (Findings 1-3, see Figure 8). First, all CEC schools are navigating unique contexts and opportunities for diversity work, regardless of ecclesial family (evangelical or mainline). Contexts involve diverse demographics and definitions of diversity. Opportunities involve varied or unexpected needs regarding diversity, particularly with respect to ecclesial tradition. Second, for their CEC projects, though both ecclesial families engaged with various Smith (2020) dimensions, they did not necessarily align goals with metrics. In some cases, they indicated more Smith dimensions for goals than metrics, suggesting they may not have measured at least some of their goals. In other cases, they implicated different dimensions for goals than for metrics, suggesting they may have misaligned goals and measurements for those goals.

Third, within their institutions broadly, both ecclesial families are engaging with various Smith dimensions and prioritizing similar metrics, but they may lack consistent metric definitions. Mainline schools reported higher measurement averages across all Smith dimensions and metrics, but both ecclesial families reported measuring metrics for each Smith category at least "seldom" (1.00) and closer to "sometimes" (2.00) if not more frequently. Further, on average, CEC schools ranked the frequency of measurement for the metrics that comprise each individual Smith category the same or very similarly, indicating both ecclesial families prioritized similar metrics for each category. However, significant variability amidst the Likert-item data provided by the two evangelical schools that each submitted two surveys, as well as conversations in the focus groups, suggest schools may not utilize consistent definitions for their metrics.

Figure 8: *Findings Summary for Project Question #1*

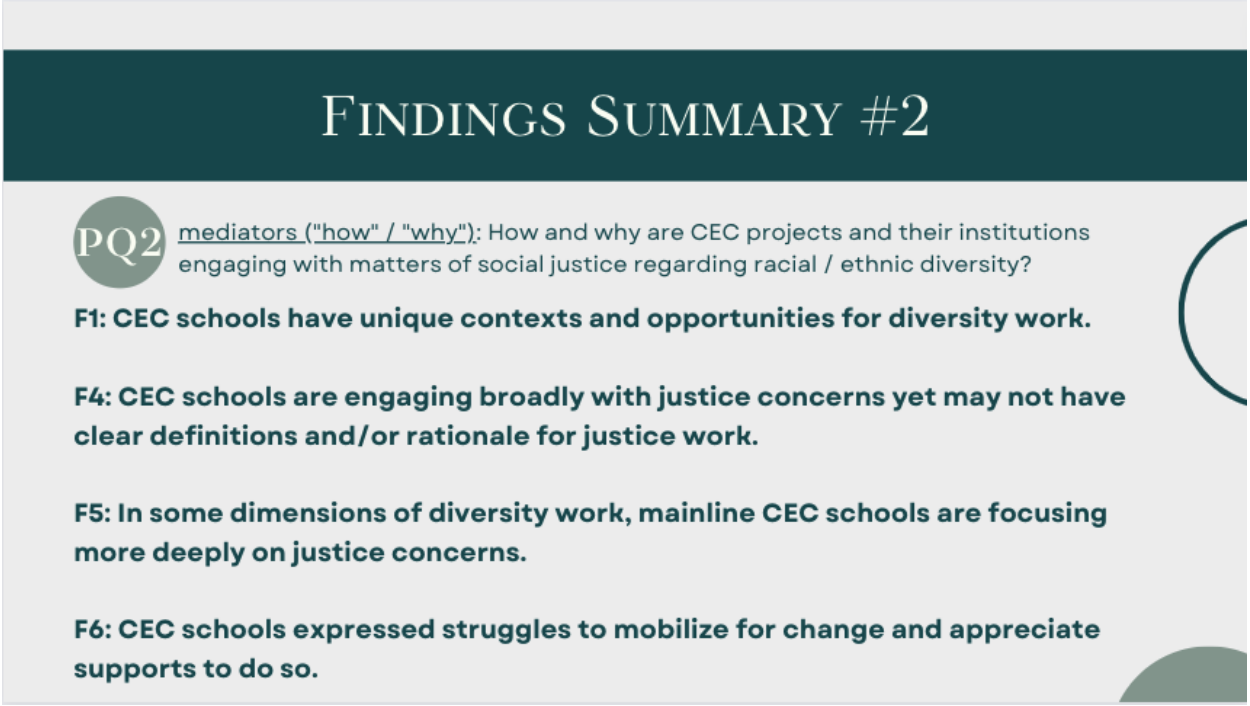


PQ2 (Justice)

Recalling that the second project question asked about the mediators of diversity work at CEC schools, or the *why* and *how* of diversity efforts, this study observes four findings (Findings 1, 4-6; see Figure 9). First, relevant again to this recommendation, all CEC schools are navigating unique contexts and needs for diversity work. Second, though both ecclesial families were engaging with justice across most or all Smith (2020) dimensions through their CEC activities and/or more broadly within their institutions, their definitions and/or rationale for justice remained unclear. I was unable to identify MARED categories for any single institution or ecclesial family. Schools more often listed or discussed activities that they presumed illustrated engagements with justice than articulated sufficient information to discern perspectives on justice. Further, the variability in qualitative responses among the evangelical schools that submitted two surveys illustrated the differences of perspective even within a single institution. Third, the two ecclesial families did seem to engage with justice at different depths for at least some Smith dimensions. Namely, mainline schools seemed more intentionally or deeply focused on justice concerns within the dimensions of (1) climate/intergroup

relations and (2) institutional viability/vitality. Fourth, both ecclesial families expressed similar struggles to mobilize for change regarding diversity and have appreciated supports such as the CEC initiative and the focus groups.

Figure 9: *Findings Summary for Project Question #2*



RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the two project questions and these six primary findings, in this section I elaborate two primary recommendations:

- R1: ATS should develop resources that connect diversity work with justice and help schools measure that work.
- R2: ATS should incentivize use of these new resources via programming such as workshops and grant initiatives.

These recommendations respond to both project questions and presume all six findings as summarized in the above section. The narrative in this section expounds on both recommendations in connection with relevant literature in management, psychology and sociology, and higher and theological

education. It concludes with a sample resource that ATS could use in their future diversity work with member schools, a resource that the Rev. Dr. Mary Young and I shared at the 2022 ATS Biennial Conference in June 2022.

Recommendation 1

ATS should develop resources that connect diversity work with justice and help schools measure that work.

This recommendation aligns with suggestions made by ATS in their accreditation self-study ideas for diversity, which encourage institutions to identify their stances on diversity and illustrate how they are implementing and evaluating those stances (ATS, 2020). The recommendation flips the script on the narrative of the study thus far. Though I first explored metrics and then concepts of justice, here I suggest CEC schools and other PWTIs first must reflect on their perspectives on justice and then improve their related measurements for diversity work. Perspectives on justice must shape diversity goals and metrics. Because the ATS Standards have shifted from numerous best practices to a few consolidated quality principles (Tanner, 2022), schools cannot simply seek to find the best practices that suit their institution but rather need to engage in processes of organizational improvement to develop practices and measurements that suit their unique contexts.

These processes of organizational improvement need not feel unfamiliar to executive leaders of theological institutions, as they embed action-reflection cycles like those involved in efforts at contextual theology (Bevans, 2004; Langley et al., 2009). The praxis model of contextual theology (see Figure 10) involves initial committed action, reflection, and informed committed action or praxis, enacted in iterative cycles. Similarly, the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle (see Figure 11) involves planning the desired action or outcome, attempting that outcome, studying the results, and acting in improved ways for each new cycle. In this section, I will illustrate how to support ATS member schools to connect diversity work with justice and to measure that work, concluding with a sample integrated organizational improvement resource. By "integrated," I mean to say any resource that invites schools to engage with both justice and success in their diversity efforts. By "organizational improvement," I mean to say any resource that supports institutions to develop and assess their own perspectives and metrics.

Figure 10: *The Praxis Model (Bevans, 2004)*

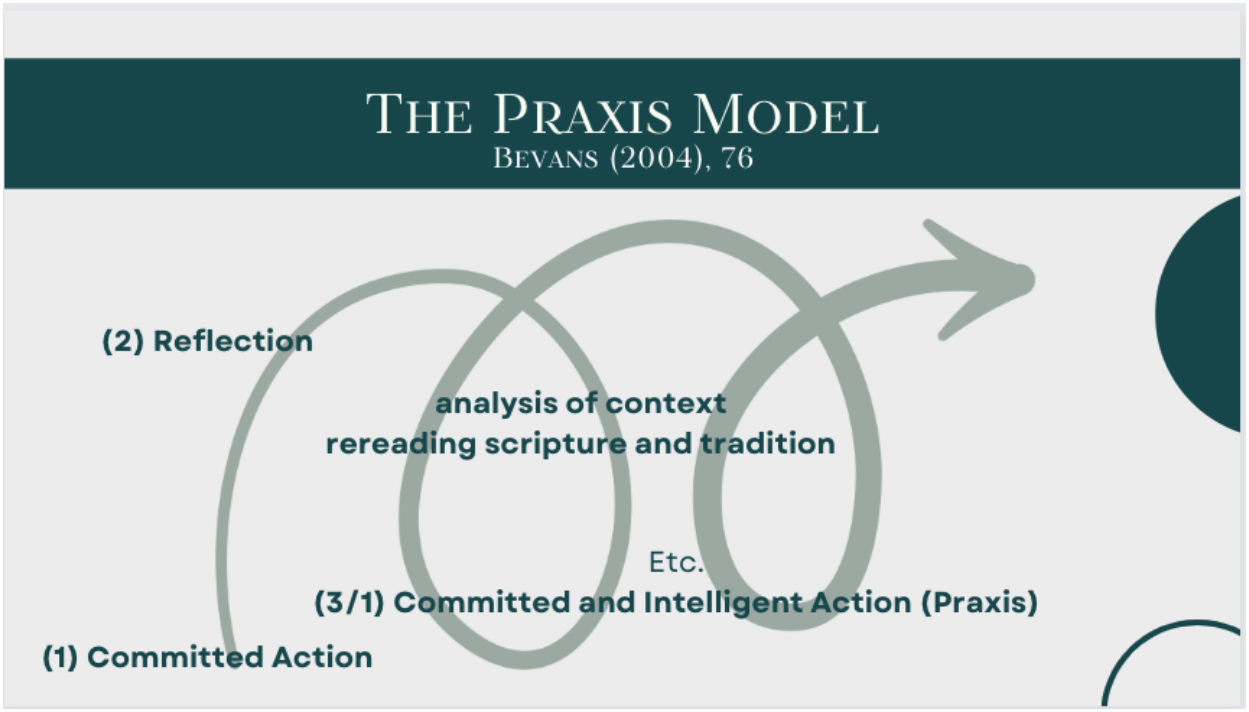
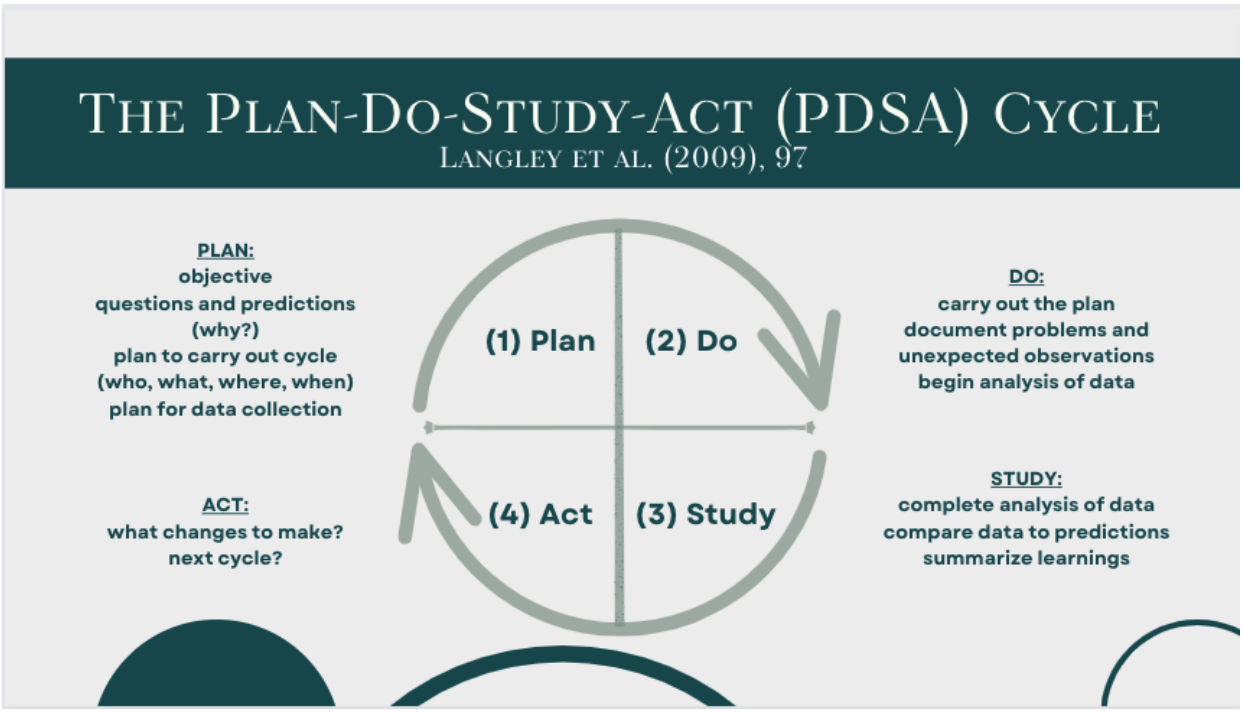


Figure 11: *The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycle (Langely et al., 2009)*



Connecting Diversity Work with Justice

As I observed at the outset of this study, though the ATS and member schools aim to espouse not only a value of diversity but also a value of justice, the industry of theological education continues to harbor persistent inequities for BIPOC faculty and students. W. Anne Joh of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary implored:

> I wonder at the appeal of the term *diversity*: Does its assimilation and acceptance by [theological] institutions signal a loss of critical edge? Might it be possible that the term is much more appealing to institutions because it is far easier to diffuse *diversity* than *social justice*? … Well-meaning institutions tell students from communities of color that they are inclusive and have a commitment to diversity, but they neither cultivate institutional will for justice-oriented diversity nor forge new institutional habits. … If we are genuinely committed to diversity, then it means ultimately offering another vision of the world by changing our structures of learning: how we learn, what we learn, and from whom we learn. (Joh, 2014, paras. 4, 13, 17)

In response to the second project question, or the *why* and *how* of diversity efforts, related findings (see Figure 9, above) suggest that CEC schools need to connect diversity goals with justice concerns more intentionally. Amidst their unique contexts and opportunities for diversity work (Finding 1), these schools need clear definitions and rationale for their justice work (Finding 4), encouragement to focus deeply on justice concerns (Finding 5), and support to mobilize for change (Finding 6). Considering these findings, ATS should enliven conversation about the moral imperative, involving the construct of belonging and the aim of flourishing for all (Davis, 2021a, 2021b; "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)," 2022).[10] Sociologist Yuval-Davis suggested all belonging projects center what Stuart Hall has called the "multicultural question," which asks how people of various backgrounds can "live together in difference":

[10] For some related reflections for the industry of theological education, see the memoir by Willie James Jennings (2020).

> What are the terms for groups of people from different … backgrounds, who have applied to occupy the same social space … to live with one another without either one group [the less powerful group] having to become the imitative version of the dominant one – i.e., an assimilationism – or, on the other hand, the two groups hating one another, or projecting images of degradation? In other words, how can people live together in difference? (Hall, 2004, as cited in Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 213)

These goals of living together and flourishing in difference require something more than isolated diversity projects and initiatives or best practices adapted from other institutions. They require shifts in presumptions about leaders and leadership, which to date across all industries have prioritized white males and not involved BIPOC in the fabric of organizations. Organizations must not view their diverse leaders as tokens that "check the diversity box" but as conversation partners that help reshape the organization to welcome and value all (Adejumo, 2021). ATS thus must offer resources that connect diversity work with justice concerns. ATS especially must do so for historically white institutions with limited time for difficult conversations about entrenched inequities. Such resources could offer the content knowledge and fodder for guided facilitation at CEC schools and other PWTIs without which "DEI work will always be running from the elephant in the room" (Gonzales et al., 2021).

Measuring the Work

In response to the first project question, or the *what* and *when* of diversity efforts, related findings (see Figure 8, above) suggest that CEC schools need help to measure diversity goals and related progress more intentionally. In their unique contexts (Finding 1), schools need support to align goals and metrics (Finding 2) and to develop consistent metric definitions (Finding 3). Developing and utilizing metrics well are key components of organizational improvement practices (Bryk et al., 2015; Langley et al., 2009). Though the new accreditation standards allow for greater variety in definitions of and approaches to diversity work (ATS, 2010, 2020; J. Deasy & D. H. C. Gin, personal communication, June 9, 2021), ATS could supplement that more general approach with frameworks and resources for schools interested in using them. Member schools like those involved in the CEC initiative may welcome suggested metrics for navigating diversity well within their

institutions, especially if they feel they lack expertise or time to develop such metrics on their own. In the focus groups, at least one evangelical school described scarcity of finances, staff, and capacity as a limitation on their efforts to pursue diversity work with justice.

As the literature review observed, multiple frameworks exist to help schools assess and measure success in their diversity work (Milem et al., 2005; Smith, 2020; Williams et al., 2005). Further, industry literature is beginning to offer some practical resources for schools interested to engage with diversity in ways that emphasize justice by cultivating belonging. For example, McNair et al. (2020) developed a guide for higher education practitioners who are designing next steps to advance equity on their campuses. The Racial Justice and Unity Center (RJUC) is a new collaborative Christian effort creating resources for racial justice and unity in organizations that all ATS schools, and perhaps especially evangelical schools, may find useful (RJUC, 2022). The Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE) is developing a DEIA Scorecard that would offer suggestions regarding how to continue justice efforts via various school departments (P. Reyes, personal communication, March 25, 2022). ATS may want to continue investigating emerging frameworks and resources that may support their schools to do important justice work, seeking resources that highlight not best practices but contextual, flexible organizational improvement processes. In the meantime, because I chose the Cascante (2008) and Smith (2020) frameworks as the most appropriate I could find for this study, and because they embed organizational improvement practices, I utilize them to illustrate how ATS might develop their own integrated organizational improvement resources for PWTIs.

Creating an Integrated Resource

It is beyond the scope of this project to develop a thorough and robust integrated resource for PWTIs who hope to respond to justice concerns regarding racial and ethnic diversity, but the Cascante (2008) and Smith (2020) frameworks can inspire a helpful initial resource. The MARED framework (Cascante-Gómez, 2008) offers possible working theories, or contexts and stances regarding diversity, that CEC schools and other member institutions might select to guide their diversity improvement efforts. Moreover, because the framework has an organizational development model at its core, it embeds organizational learning practices that improvement

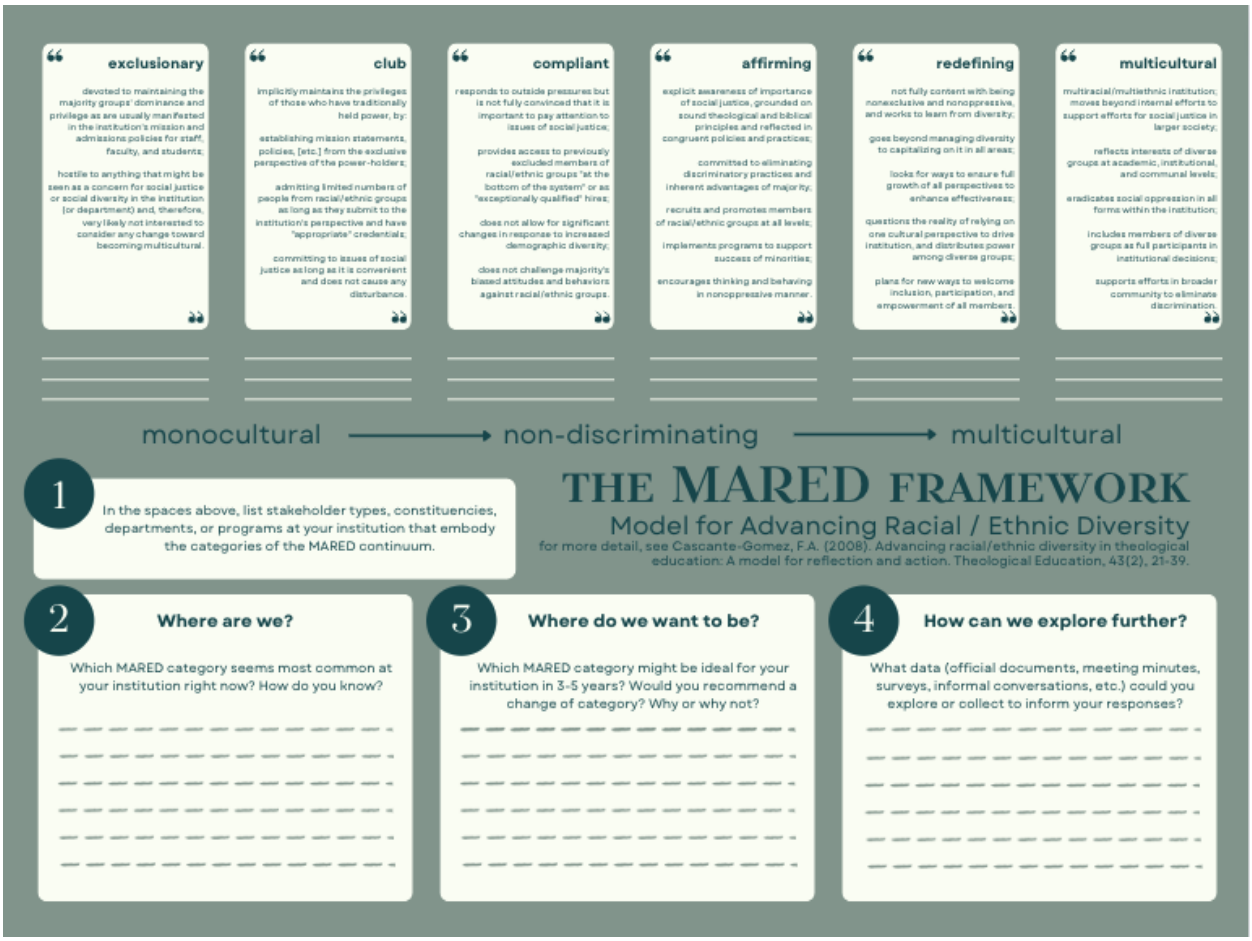
science presumes, including reflecting on the institution's climate, assessing and benchmarking, and implementing change in iterative cycles. Meanwhile, the Smith (2020) framework offers a reliable list of 21 metrics that institutions can utilize to measure their diversity work. Smith (Nussbaum & Chang, 2013; Smith, 2020) suggested coupling the framework with intentional organizational learning, emphasizing three areas for monitoring progress: the context and background for diversity on campus, an overall framework with indicators to track progress and learn from experience over time, and regular reporting practices. As PWTIs pursue improvement in their justice work, the Smith framework can provide the skeleton on which institutions tailor their own appropriate metrics, including immediate as well as longer-range target outcomes (Bryk et al., 2015). Essentially, the Cascante and Smith frameworks intend ongoing experimentation and improvement through action and reflection. The Cascante framework provides perspectives on justice that can reshape the metrics of the Smith framework.

For example, if a CEC school or other PWTI wanted to improve diversity efforts regarding education/scholarship (students), they might choose to assess and track one of Smith's (2020) related metrics, such as diversity courses and requirements in the curriculum. In doing so, they first would need to reflect on which MARED (Cascante-Gómez, 2008) category guides their efforts, imagining *why* and *how* their diversity efforts might advance justice. To that end, my sample resource (see Figures 12-13) begins by asking participants to reflect on the six MARED categories: exclusionary, club, compliant, affirming, redefining, and multicultural. It invites them to list stakeholder types, constituencies, departments, or programs at their institutions that embody the categories of the MARED continuum (see Question #1). Next, it asks participants to notice which category of MARED seems most common at their institutions now and to describe how they know (Question #2). It then asks participants to suggest which MARED category might be ideal for their institutions in 3-5 years, whether they would recommend a change of category, and why or why not (Question #3). Finally, it invites them to imagine how they can explore further by investigating official documents, meeting minutes, surveys, informal conversations, etc. that could inform their responses (Question #4).

The resource continues, on the back side, to engage Smith's (2020) framework. It asks leaders to choose one metric from each of the four

dimensions, such as education/scholarship, and imagine versions of those metrics or related short-term targets that could track progress toward their institution's preferred MARED category. It concludes with an encouragement to imagine one or two next steps for their institution's diversity work.

Figure 12: *Integrated Organizational Improvement Resource, Side 1*



As the conclusion of this study, I co-presented a workshop at the 2022 ATS Biennial Conference in conjunction with one of my capstone organization contacts, Mary Young. For that workshop, Rev. Dr. Young shared about the context of ATS CORE work and described the CEC initiative, and I shared the results and recommendations of this study. We closed by inviting participants to utilize this sample integrated resource. We noticed that participants seemed eager to engage with the frameworks, some asking to take the resource home to use on their campuses. As we concluded our two workshop sessions, Rev. Dr. Young and I discussed whether ATS might want to use this resource or

develop similar ones to address significant interest in diversity resources for accreditation purposes or for diversity-focused work by schools in the new Pathways initiative (M. Young, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Figure 13: *Integrated Organizational Improvement Resource, Side 2*

Recommendation 2

ATS should incentivize use of these new resources via programming such as workshops and grant initiatives.

As indicated above, the invitation of Recommendation 1 is to create integrated organizational improvement resources, such as the sample resource I have developed for this study, as a passive effort to support schools interested to engage more intentionally in diversity with justice. The invitation of Recommendation 2, by contrast, is to increase more active programming

efforts to advance justice within the industry and particularly at PWTIs such as the CEC schools. Even should ATS develop new integrated resources for CEC and other interested member schools, without accreditation requirements as a lever, ATS must seek alternative ways to incentive use of such resources (S. Lewis, personal communication, May 24, 2022). Such efforts could include continued cultivation of learning community among all ATS schools regarding justice through workshops, webinars, and the ATS ENGAGE online platform. They also could include ATS or CORE initiatives comparable to the Campus Diversity Initiative (CDI), an attempt in 2000-2005 by the James Irvine Foundation to support campus diversity efforts at 28 independent colleges and universities in California. I will elaborate both possibilities in this section.

Offering Resources via Workshops, Webinars, ENGAGE

Though the new ATS Standards do not require engagement and measurement related to justice, ATS can seed learning community (Senge, 1990; Wenger et al., 2002, 2009) that encourages CEC and other schools in that work. In doing so, ATS may find it useful to share resources like the sample resource I have created, as well as the slides from the workshop and this dissertation, with interested schools via future webinars or as resources on the ATS ENGAGE online platform. In case ATS chooses to offer my sample resource in a future workshop or webinar setting, here I offer a few clarifications and additional details that may support facilitators of the resource. First, a workshop facilitator could emphasize the advantage of the resource is not that it provides a precise roadmap for the same improvements across all institutions but rather a map key that inspires any number of paths institutions might choose. It can spark ways that CEC and other ATS member schools might make important connections among their diversity efforts, the climate of the institution (including perspectives on diversity), and student outcomes (Hurtado et al., 2008). Next, as the resource invites institutions to reimagine Smith (2020) metrics in light of their chosen MARED category as revised metrics or short-term targets, a facilitator might suggest institutions may progress most quickly and satisfactorily in their efforts if they pursue moderate targets on an ongoing basis rather than targets that are too easy or to challenging to achieve (Bouwens et al., 2017). Institutions also may want to choose whether their theories and processes will focus more internally to the institution or also appeal to external stakeholders (Matthews, 2011). In addition, as institutions develop their diversity-related improvement plans,

they may want to collect not only quantitative but qualitative measurements, benchmark externally, and update and revise their metrics over time (Likierman, 2009).

Finally, institutions may ask facilitators for examples regarding how to translate MARED (Cascante-Gómez, 2008) categories into revised Smith (2020) metrics and targets. Empirical literature implies some ways that CEC and other interested schools might begin to reimagine Smith dimensions in accordance with MARED categories that aim to advance belonging, such as those on the multicultural end of the spectrum. A facilitator could share some of these ideas to spark revised metrics for schools aiming toward the MARED categories of redefining or multicultural. For example, for the dimension of access/success, the emphasis shifts from equity scholarships, various student supports such as appropriate technology and health services, mentoring, learning networks, and community engagement to empowerment, cultural transformation, and positive futures visioning (Gidley et al., 2010). For climate/intergroup relations, the emphasis shifts from concord toward cultural familiarity, collectivist cultural orientations, and holistic support; the Culturally Engaging Campus Environments (CECE) model and related survey offer tangible ideas for assessing and improving climate toward conditions of belonging for all students (Museus et al., 2018).

For education/scholarship, several articles elaborate the concept and related practices of community-engaged scholarship (CES). Generally, CES involves collaborations between campuses and communities to develop knowledge that addresses public issues. However, CES can involve race-conscious analysis and center the experiences of minoritized persons to focus more explicitly on justice work, including on campus (Beckett et al., 2022; Gordon da Cruz, 2017). Despite potential concerns to the contrary, such scholarship can be rigorous, even as it supports action-oriented change (Warren et al., 2018). CES pedagogies and projects could equip diverse theological students as "critical scholar-researchers" (Beckett et al., 2022) with capacities to help decolonize and reshape current paradigms of theological education. CES could be a vehicle that invites diverse students not to assimilate into pre-determined theological knowledge and practices but to help construct both. Finally, for institutional viability/vitality, Cascante (2010) advocates shifting emphasis from increasing demographic diversity among faculty to eliminating practices of exclusion and discrimination against them based on race and ethnicity.

Offering Resources via New Grant Initiatives

Alongside resources provided via workshops, webinars, and the ENGAGE platform, ATS could develop new grant initiatives, perhaps through the Committee on Race and Ethnicity (CORE), that continue to advance not only success but also justice in diversity work at CEC and other member schools. As a possible spark for future CORE RFPs, I elaborate the Campus Diversity Initiative (CDI), a 2000-2005 James Irvine Foundation effort to support diversity efforts at 28 independent colleges and universities in California. The initiative incorporated Smith (2020) dimensions and metrics and invited contextual and flexible participation across the institutions.

The CDI was a large-scale initiative, a $29-million-dollar effort over six years with four primary goals: to increase access/success of low-income and underrepresented minority students (URMs), to increase institutional capacity to engage diversity, to enable institutional capacity to evaluate campus diversity efforts, and to assess the overall impact of the CDI. The first two goals referred to the involved schools, while the latter two referred to the embedded CDI Evaluation Project. The Impact Study of the CDI (Smith et al., 2006) reflected on all four goals through six evaluation questions. Those questions assessed (1) the goals and strategies comprising Irvine-funded efforts; (2) the status of access/success of URMs and low-income populations on CDI campuses; (3) the status of institutional capacity for diversity on CDI campuses regarding climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship, and institutional viability/vitality; (4) the status of overall institutional change; (5) the impact of the Foundation's efforts on campus efforts; and (6) overall lessons learned.

The CDI (Smith et al., 2006) embodied two informal theories held by stakeholders. First, the Foundation presumed a guided self-study process would help participating schools develop the most compelling diversity proposals. Second, the Foundation presumed schools could create their own evaluation plans to best assess their own diversity efforts. With these two theories in mind, the Foundation required all CDI schools to engage in a four-step process: a self-study; a grant proposal; an evaluation plan; and regular, six-month interim reports.

The CDI (Smith et al., 2006) also embodied two established theories as part of its program design. First, it seemed to assume and inform what was at that time Smith's (2020) emerging four-fold framework regarding institutional capacity for diversity. Second, the CDI Evaluation Project operated out of a commitment to organizational learning theory. The Foundation designed the CDI not to elicit static summative measurements of completed activity but rather to inspire ongoing practices of formative assessment particular to each participating school.

The Impact Study (Smith et al., 2006) comprised a mixed methods approach with multiple data sources. Those sources provided initial (pre-CDI) baseline observations through archival data, campus reports to the Foundation on past diversity grants, an institutional written narrative regarding past and present diversity efforts, nationally derived institutional data (from the Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Data System, or IPEDS), and initial interviews and observations conducted by members of the CDI Evaluation Resource Team. The sources also provided concluding (post-CDI) observations through the IPEDS data, institutional indicators linked to the four-fold framework, comparative data on racial and ethnic diversity over time within other California schools and nationwide, six-month reports, liaison field notes, concluding campus visits, and final reports. The Study emphasized case study methodology and cluster analyses. It aimed not to assess causality but rather to suggest progress toward the goals of the CDI while allowing for the different approaches taken by the 28 schools.

The evaluators also developed two instruments to assess change over time and make comparisons among the CDI schools (Smith et al., 2006). The institutionalization matrix, used at the beginning and end of the CDI, involved asking a rater from the research team to evaluate the breadth and depth of diversity efforts on campus. The institutionalization rubric, also utilized before and after the CDI, asked at least two raters to determine the degree to which five items evidenced institutional commitment to diversity. The items included goals, resources, core institutional activities, leadership, and capacity.

The evaluators organized findings and distilled promising practices according to the six evaluation questions (Smith et al., 2006). Overall, the Impact Study evaluators noted progress in diversity efforts, to varying extents across campuses, during the CDI. They observed that some promising practices

approximated work already occurring nationally, and some appeared new. They advocated for continued progress according to the processes of organizational learning the campuses had begun.

The Impact Study (Smith et al., 2006) produced a 119-page document that offered a wealth of information for colleges and universities hoping to improve their diversity efforts. The Study was contextual rather than empirical, so its insights may not translate directly to all other institutions of higher education. However, the Study was rigorous, including several pre-/post- assessments and comparing to data over time at non-CDI institutions. It thus offered persuasive observations about CDI schools while also curating resources that may inspire improved diversity work across the broader industry. Those resources include the Smith (2020) four-fold diversity framework, rhythms of organizational learning, an institutionalization matrix and rubric, findings that may resonate with other schools, and promising practices that schools might borrow for their own efforts.

This Impact Study (Smith et al., 2006) can serve as a partial model for possible future ATS/CORE initiatives supporting diversity work at CEC and other ATS member schools, particularly in terms of its design and part of its structure. It illustrates how to support and drive large-scale diversity change and evaluation across institutions. On its own, however, it does not illustrate how to do so with attention to justice. Because it hinged on Smith (2020) dimensions, it did not engage with the moral imperative. Nonetheless, this capstone project helps fill those gaps for ATS PWTIs. ATS could structure a similar initiative that centers the integrated resource developed in this study or another such resource that ATS develops. Doing so would empower CEC and/or other interested member schools to reflect on Cascante's (2008) categories and utilize them to help drive change for justice within their institutions and across the industry. Such an initiative could compare to the Forum for Theological Exploration's (FTE's) upcoming efforts to share their new DEIA Scorecard with their closed Institutional Doctoral Network (P. Reyes, personal communication, March 25, 2022), a group of theological institutions "dedicated to creating conditions for scholars of color to thrive" (Forum for Theological Exploration, 2022).

Essentially, this second recommendation invites ATS to experiment with more intentionality with its value of justice. Through this study, I have shown that

CEC schools, including typically more-conservative evangelical schools, are interested to advance their justice work. Further, I have illustrated that even CEC schools that are interested to do justice work could use support with connections between diversity efforts and justice (Findings 4-6) and with appropriate metrics (Findings 2-3). Therefore, I encourage ATS to build a diversity initiative that effects large-scale change across the industry, featuring an integrated tool like that developed in this study or another such resource. ATS could build an initiative like that of the CDI Study or connect efforts to currently existing programs, such as the Pathways initiative, an ATS effort to support multiple (currently 84) member schools in their core institutional work. Such an initiative could leverage ATS's position as leader of the industry to shape space for CEC schools and other member PWTIs to imagine new, decolonized theological institutions akin to similar movements within higher education (Crow & Dabars, 2015; paperson, 2017).

One final observation regarding this recommendation is the following: oftentimes, diversity work results in unintended consequences. Though it is beyond the scope of this study to suggest specific related resources, ATS might consider offering support for institutions to notice any negative, neutral, or positive unintended consequences of their work, including negative progress toward goals, undesirable or desirable effects on outcomes other than diversity goals, and improved metrics without true diversity goal progress (Gonzalez, 2010; Leslie, 2019).

Conclusion

Through this quality improvement study, I have examined the ATS Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) initiative to discover new insights and offer recommendations for the CEC schools and future iterations of ATS's work regarding racial and ethnic diversity. I emphasized the ATS values of diversity and justice, focusing on two possible imperatives for diversity work – the instrumental and the moral – and developing a two-part conceptual framework that tends to both. Through the Smith (2020) four-fold framework for the institutional capacity for diversity and the Cascante (2008) Model for Advancing Racial/Ethnic Diversity (MARED), I asked questions about definitions and measurements for diversity work as well as connections of that work to justice efforts. Through a mixed methods study, I established that

CEC schools could use further support in connection of goals to justice work and alignment of diversity goals with metrics. At the 2022 ATS Biennial Conference, I shared a sample integrated organizational improvement resource that incorporates both frameworks, illustrating one means by which ATS might cultivate capacity for ongoing, evidence-based, reflective organizational learning among member schools hoping to advance diversity with justice. The Conference underscored the interest of ATS schools in such resources for accreditation purposes and for meeting their goals through the Pathways initiative. I invite ATS to utilize the resource for future workshops, webinars, ENGAGE online posts, and grant efforts. Without such efforts, the industry of theological education risks continued inequities for BIPOC, perhaps achieving inclusion but falling short of belonging and flourishing for all.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Additional MARED Detail

Goals of MARED (adapted from Cascante-Gómez, 2008)

- To broaden and deepen the understanding theological schools have of issues related to racial/ethnic diversity inside and outside their institutional context;
- To help theological institutions assess the impact of their present understanding of racial/ethnic diversity in their mission, organizations, policies, practices, academic programs, community life, and teaching and learning dynamics;
- To encourage institutional and individual actions that will move theological schools to become more congruent with their theological, biblical, and pastoral convictions about racial/ethnic diversity;
- To promote the creation of a permanent institutional structure that values and works for the continuous evaluation and development of racial/ethnic diversity within and beyond academic institutions.

MCOD Readiness Test, adapted by Cascante (2008)

- How are instances of racial/ethnic discrimination handled in the institution? Are there policies in place to guide institutional actions?
- Is social diversity valued in the seminary? At all levels? In which ways?
- Is there an explicit commitment to social justice? Where can it be found?
- Has the leadership of the theological school made it known to all its constituencies that social justice is a value supported in the institution? How? To whom has it been made known?
- How well does the leadership model its value for diversity and social justice? For instance, how well does the theological faculty model values for diversity and social justice in their courses and classroom dynamics?
- Is a commitment to diversity and social justice clearly stated in the mission and values of the seminary? Are there other places within official documents of the institution where that commitment can be found?

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAILS

Email #1: Final Reports and Focus Groups

Subject: CEC study: Requests from Vanderbilt student (final reports, focus groups)

Dear [CEC Team Leader(s)],

I hope this email finds you well. I am grateful to the leadership at the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) for helping me connect with you. I am enjoying "meeting" several of you today and tomorrow at the ATS CORE Conference 2021.

As part of my doctoral studies at Vanderbilt University, I am working with the ATS in connection with their Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) initiative. I have designed a study to help CEC schools discern best next steps in their ongoing work to educate students to minister in a racially diverse world. My project also may offer insights for other ATS member schools engaging in diversity efforts.

I am contacting you today with two requests:

- CEC Final Report: I am interested to study your CEC final report as part of this project. Please have one representative from your school reply to this email by Friday, October 29, to let me know whether I may include your CEC final report in my study. There is no need to attach a copy of your report; ATS can provide me with a copy.
- **Focus Group:** I invite you to participate in a focus group as part of this project. **Please complete [this Doodle poll] by Friday, October 29, indicating your interest in and availability for a 90-minute focus group conversation in November or December.** I will host up to four groups total at times when most participants can meet, two for representatives from evangelical schools and two for those from mainline schools.
    - If you have difficulty with the link above, try copying and pasting this link directly into your web browser: [survey link]

The CEC final reports and focus groups are two of three essential components of my study. Tomorrow you also will receive a separate email inviting you to participate in a 30-minute CEC survey.

It is not a requirement to participate in this study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Further, all school and individual names will be kept confidential, and all reports of findings will be deidentified.

I know you likely have a busy schedule, and I am grateful for your consideration of these requests. I hope you will choose to contribute to this important study that could benefit your school, other ATS member schools, and the industry of theological education.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Cynthia Nebel, at cynthia.nebel@vanderbilt.edu.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
Jodi L. Porter
Ed.D. Candidate, Vanderbilt University
jodi.l.porter@vanderbilt.edu

Email #2: Survey

Subject: CEC Study Survey

Dear [CEC Team Leader],

I hope this email finds you well. I am grateful to the leadership at the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) for helping me connect with you and others participating in the Cultivating Educational Capacity (CEC) initiative. I enjoyed "meeting" several of you during the ATS CORE Conference 2021 on October 21-22.

As part of my doctoral studies at Vanderbilt University, I am working with the ATS in connection with their CEC initiative. I have designed a study to help CEC schools discern best next steps in their ongoing work to educate students

to minister in a racially diverse world. My project also may offer insights for other ATS member schools engaging in diversity efforts.

I am inviting all CEC school representatives to participate in an online survey for this project. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. **If you are willing to participate, please complete the CEC Survey [at embedded link] by Friday, November 12, 2021.**

If the link above does not work, try copying and pasting the link below into your web browser: [survey-url]

This link is unique to you and should not be forwarded to others.

The survey is one of three essential components of my project. I also am studying final reports submitted to ATS by CEC schools (if CEC team leaders grant permission to do so) and hosting focus groups by ecclesial family. You already have received a separate email regarding the final reports and focus groups. Thank you for responding to it at your earliest convenience.

It is not a requirement to participate in this study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Further, all school and individual names will be kept confidential, and all reports of findings will be deidentified.

I know you likely have a busy schedule, and I am grateful for your consideration of this request. I hope you will choose to contribute to this important study that could benefit your school, other ATS member schools, and the industry of theological education.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me or my faculty advisor, Dr. Cynthia Nebel, at cynthia.nebel@vanderbilt.edu.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
Jodi L. Porter
Ed.D. Candidate, Vanderbilt University
jodi.l.porter@vanderbilt.edu

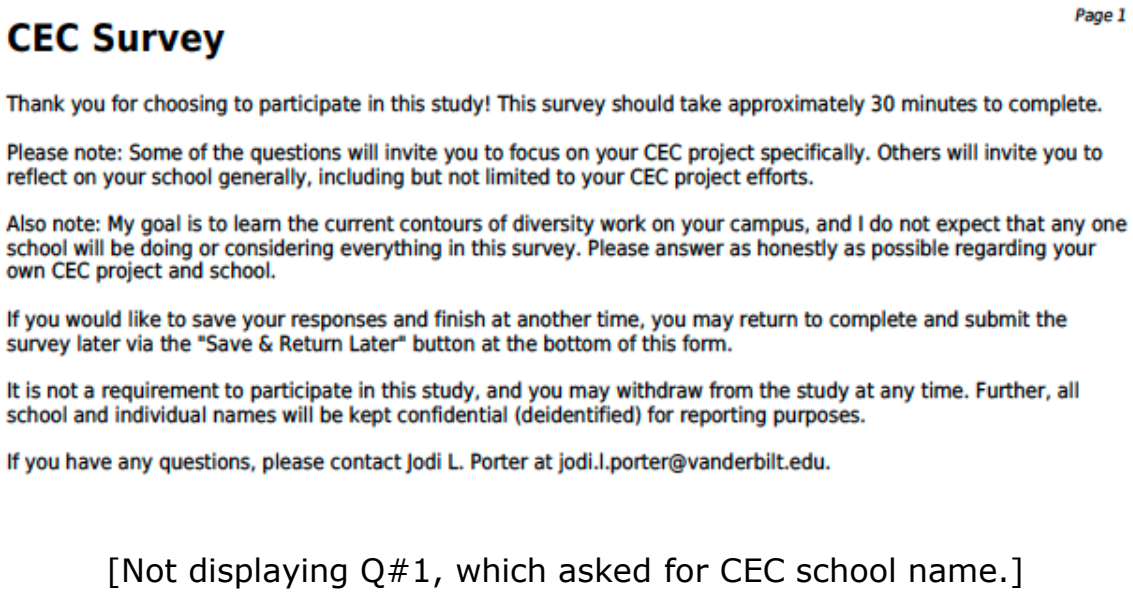
APPENDIX C: DATA INSTRUMENTS

Tool #1: Final Reports

Initial Content Analysis Codes:

- Access/Success
- Climate/Intergroup Relations
- Education/Scholarship
- Institutional Viability/Vitality
- Justice

Tool #2: Survey



Page 1

CEC Survey

Thank you for choosing to participate in this study! This survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Please note: Some of the questions will invite you to focus on your CEC project specifically. Others will invite you to reflect on your school generally, including but not limited to your CEC project efforts.

Also note: My goal is to learn the current contours of diversity work on your campus, and I do not expect that any one school will be doing or considering everything in this survey. Please answer as honestly as possible regarding your own CEC project and school.

If you would like to save your responses and finish at another time, you may return to complete and submit the survey later via the "Save & Return Later" button at the bottom of this form.

It is not a requirement to participate in this study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. Further, all school and individual names will be kept confidential (deidentified) for reporting purposes.

If you have any questions, please contact Jodi L. Porter at jodi.l.porter@vanderbilt.edu.

[Not displaying Q#1, which asked for CEC school name.]

INSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS RE: RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY

2) Please describe the primary goal(s) of your CEC project. (up to 3 sentences)

_____

3) Please describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the impacts of your CEC project at your school. (up to 3 sentences)

_____

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ... access and success of racially/ethnically diverse students?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
4)	population of diverse students by type of degree	○	○	○	○	○
5)	success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors)	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ... climate and intergroup relations for students or faculty/staff who are racially/ethnically diverse?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
6)	perceptions of the institution (climate, fairness)	○	○	○	○	○
7)	quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction)	○	○	○	○	○
8)	type and quality of interactions among diverse groups	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ... education and scholarship that involves racial/ethnic diversity?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
9)	availability of diversity-related courses and requirements in the curriculum	○	○	○	○	○
10)	extent to which courses include diversity issues	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ... education and scholarship among STUDENTS that involves racial/ethnic diversity?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
11)	student involvement in diversity-related courses	○	○	○	○	○
12)	student research that engages the diverse society	○	○	○	○	○

13)	quantity and substance of student learning about diversity	○	○	○	○	○
14)	student final projects or dissertations related to diversity	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ...
education and scholarship among FACULTY that involves racial/ethnic diversity?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
15)	faculty expertise on diversity-related matters	○	○	○	○	○
16)	faculty involvement in diversity efforts	○	○	○	○	○
17)	faculty research and publishing involving diversity	○	○	○	○	○

To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ...
institutional viability and vitality involving racial/ethnic diversity?

		I'm not sure	never	seldom	sometimes	often
18)	diversity of faculty/staff	○	○	○	○	○
19)	board diversity and engagement	○	○	○	○	○
20)	institutional history on diversity issues and incidents	○	○	○	○	○
21)	institutional strategies and resources for diversity	○	○	○	○	○
22)	centrality of diversity in institutional documents and processes (mission statement, planning processes, program reviews)	○	○	○	○	○
23)	public constituency perceptions of institutional diversity, equity	○	○	○	○	○

other indicators

24) Please list any other indicators your school measures involving racial/ethnic diversity.

_____

INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVES RE: RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY

25) How (if at all) has your CEC project engaged in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences)

_____

26) How (if at all) do your school's leaders (faculty/staff, board members) model engagement in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences)

_____

27) How (if at all) do your school's official statements (mission and values, strategic plan, website, etc.) reflect matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences) _____

28) In what other ways (if any) does your school engage in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences) _____

Tool #3: Focus Groups

not asked
asked only of evangelical group

Preamble (up to 5 minutes):

- Welcome. As you know, I'm Jodi Porter, an Ed.D. student at Vanderbilt University, and I'm completing a capstone project focused on the ATS CEC initiative. Thanks for joining this (mainline/evangelical) CEC schools focus group. I'm excited to learn more from your CEC projects, and I'm eager to support your ongoing related work at your schools.

- Just a brief reminder. It's not a requirement to participate in this study, and you may withdraw from the study at any time. All individual and school names will be kept confidential or deidentified for reporting. **I ask that any of you who want to withdraw do so now (before we start our conversation), as I can use data only from focus groups in which all group participants remain in the study.**

- We have 90 minutes to reflect on your CEC projects and on your schools' perspectives regarding racial and ethnic diversity. I invite us to add the names of our schools to the sides of our Zoom names, to remind each other where we currently serve. In addition, in my work as a staff person at the Forum for Theological Exploration (FTE), we often begin discussions like these with Conversation Covenants adapted from the Center for Courage and Renewal. In a similar way, I invite all of us now into a few conversational postures. I hope all of us will speak freely, reserve judgment, and share the floor. I also ask all of us not to share any elements of our discussion with others outside this group.

- Do you have any questions before we continue?
- Do you consent to being recorded?

[RECORDING BEGAN]

Warm-Up Question (up to 10 minutes):

- In October, you shared about your CEC projects at ATS's CORE Dissemination Conference. Could we begin by asking each of you to remind us briefly: What were the primary goals of your CEC project, and what was your role in that project?

Primary Questions, Part A (20 minutes):

- Please could you describe any events that inspired your CEC projects?
- In what ways (if any) have your projects helped your schools begin or continue institutional changes regarding racial and ethnic diversity?
    - *probe 1:* Have your projects supported change in any of the following institutional dimensions: access/success, climate/intergroup relations, education/scholarship, or institutional viability/vitality? If so, how?
    - *probe 2:* In what ways have your projects prompted changes you didn't anticipate?

[comments re: joint meaning-making]

Primary Questions, Part B (up to 45 minutes):

- How (if at all) have your CEC projects helped your schools reflect on matters of social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity?
    - *probe 1*: How do your schools define or understand social justice with respect to racial and ethnic diversity?
    - *probe 2:* Where in your schools (including departments or groups) have you noticed either support for or resistance to conversations that connect institutional diversity efforts with social justice?

- To what extent have your CEC projects helped your schools engage with the following challenge, as described by Mark Taylor of Princeton Seminary: "Under the guise of constructing a shared tradition, groups with privileged access to power, or groups that share a relatively homogeneous cultural identity, often overlook the ways that tradition serves their particular interests and often actually works against the interests of others" (Cascante-Gómez, 2008, p. 22)? Or asked more simply: In what ways (if any) have your CEC projects helped your schools reflect on power dynamics involving their dominant group?
    - *probe 1:* What examples come to mind when you reflect on school leadership? School policies? School practices?

- What have you learned from your CEC projects that could inform future diversity efforts at your schools?
    - *probe 1:* What next steps would you suggest your schools take regarding intersections between diversity efforts and matters of social justice?
    - *probe 2:* What resources could best support your ongoing related work?

Concluding Questions (up to 8 minutes):

- Here is what I have heard you say over the course of our time together today. *[Summarize.]* Does that sound like an adequate summary? What am I missing?

- Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share?

Conclusion (2 minutes):

- Thanks again for your participation today. Your thoughts offer essential insights for my Ed.D. capstone project, and as I conclude that project, I hope I will offer helpful findings for all CEC schools (and other interested ATS member schools).

- This spring and summer I will analyze data from the CEC final reports, surveys, and these focus groups. May I reach out to you if I have any clarifying questions regarding what you've shared on your survey or in this focus group?

- I will offer findings to ATS in August. If you would like a copy of my report, please feel free to let me know. Otherwise, I believe ATS will share at least an abbreviated version via the ATS ENGAGE platform. Again, thanks! And blessings in your continued work.

APPENDIX D: QUESTIONS, CODES, AND DATA ITEMS

+deductive; inspired by Smith's (2020) four-fold framework
++inductive; inspired and/or informed by Cascante's (2008) MARED

PQ	Codes	Survey (census sample; *n* = 10)	Focus Groups (census sample; *n* = 2)
1	Access and Success+	Q2: Please describe the primary goal(s) of your CEC project. (up to 3 sentences) Q3: Please describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the possible impacts of your CEC project at your school. (up to 3 sentences) To what extent does your school measure the following indicators for ***access and success*** of racially/ethnically diverse students? • Q4: population of diverse students by type of degree • Q5: success of diverse students (persistence, graduation, honors)	Q1: In October, you shared about your CEC projects at ATS's CORE Dissemination Conference. Could we begin by asking each of you to remind us briefly: What were the primary goals of your CEC project, and what was your role in that project? Q3: In what ways (if any) have your projects helped your schools begin or continue institutional changes regarding racial and ethnic diversity?
1	Climate and Intergroup Relations+	Q2: Please describe the primary goal(s) of your CEC project. (up to 3 sentences) Q3: Please describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the possible impacts of your CEC project at your school. (up to 3 sentences)	(same as above)

		To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ***climate and intergroup relations*** for students or faculty/staff who are racially/ethnically diverse? • Q6: perceptions of the institution (climate, fairness) • Q7: quality of experience (engagement on campus and/or satisfaction) • Q8: type and quality of interactions among diverse groups	
1	Education and Scholarship+	Q2: Please describe the primary goal(s) of your CEC project. (up to 3 sentences) Q3: Please describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the possible impacts of your CEC project at your school. (up to 3 sentences) To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ***education and scholarship*** that involves racial/ethnic diversity? • Q9: availability of diversity-related courses and requirements in the curriculum • Q10: extent to which courses include diversity issues To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ***education and scholarship*** among STUDENTS that involves racial/ethnic diversity? • Q11: student involvement in diversity-related courses	(same as above)

		• Q12: student research that engages the diverse society • Q13: quantity and substance of student learning about diversity • Q14: student final projects or dissertations related to diversity To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ***education and scholarship*** among FACULTY that involves racial/ethnic diversity? • Q15: faculty expertise on diversity-related matters • Q16: faculty involvement in diversity efforts • Q17: faculty research and publishing involving diversity	
1	Institutional Viability and Vitality+	Q2: Please describe the primary goal(s) of your CEC project. (up to 3 sentences) Q3: Please describe how your CEC team has measured or observed the possible impacts of your CEC project at your school. (up to 3 sentences) To what extent does your school measure these indicators for ***institutional viability and vitality*** involving racial/ethnic diversity? • Q18: diversity of faculty/staff • Q19: board diversity and engagement • Q20: institutional history on diversity issues and incidents	(same as above)

		• Q21: institutional strategies and resources for diversity • Q22: centrality of diversity in institutional documents and processes (mission statement, planning processes, program reviews) • Q23: public constituency perceptions of institutional diversity, equity	
2	generative events++ definitions of justice++ justice activities++ challenges to justice work++	Q25: How (if at all) has your CEC project engaged in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences) Q26: How (if at all) does your school leadership (faculty/staff, board members) model engagement in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences) Q27: How (if at all) do your school's official statements (mission and values, strategic plan, website, etc.) reflect matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences) Q28: In what other ways (if any) does your school engage in matters of social justice involving racial/ethnic diversity? (up to 3 sentences)	Q2: Please could you describe any events that inspired your CEC projects? Q4: How (if at all) have your CEC projects helped your schools reflect on matters of social justice involving racial and ethnic diversity? • *probe 2:* Where in your schools (including departments or groups) have you noticed resistance to conversations that connect institutional diversity efforts with social justice? Q5: To what extent have your CEC projects helped your schools engage with the following challenge, as described by Mark Taylor of Princeton Seminary: *"Under the guise of constructing a shared tradition, groups with privileged access to power, or groups that share a relatively homogeneous cultural identity, often overlook the ways that tradition serves their particular interests and often actually works against the interests of others"* (Cascante-Gómez, 2008, p. 22)? Or asked more simply: In what ways (if any) have your CEC projects helped your schools reflect on power dynamics involving their dominant group?

			• *probe 1:* What examples come to mind when you reflect on school leadership? School policies? School practices? Q6: What have you learned from your CEC projects that could inform future diversity efforts at your schools? • *probe 1:* What next steps would you suggest your schools take regarding intersections between diversity efforts and matters of social justice?