In the current debate about maintaining an ethically diverse environment on colleges and university campuses, we have been listening to a lot of generalizations favoring the idea of increased diversity at all costs. But as a matter of fact, raising this issue just for the sake of it—without a careful analysis of the needs and benefits of the diverse college and university communities—can lead to unintended consequences and a lack of comprehensive solutions to real problems.

For example, the kind of message to African-American students will never be the same as the kind needed for Latinos from Florida, who think the number of minorities in leadership positions on campus universities has to be different than those from the New York area. The authors found that white faculty tends to be affected more by making more concerted efforts to go where prospective minority students and faculty are to recruit them. The idea that “if we build it they will come” does not work. These institutions also need a more deliberate in their efforts. To just pretend that nice words and platitudes in their diversity statements will be enough to attract minority students is not going to be enough. They need to diversify both faculty and administrators on campus and support them in their work to guide effectively in their interactions with minorities.

This is a more important factor that it may seem. A study by the American Council on Education, where the number of minorities in leadership positions on campus universities has been increasing, also suggests that minority students and faculty will interact the differently than those from the New York area. This has to be different. Another equally difficult task – ensuring that the minority students and faculty feel comfortable and the more likely they will be to succeed. Yet, at the same time, they may be more likely to keep interacting mostly with people of their own ethnicity, which leads toward self-segregation. Also, they found that white students who enroll at campuses with greater proportions of white undergraduates feel less vulnerable and tend to interact less with peers from different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

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