DECADE: a Program to Increase the Success of Underrepresented Ph.D. Students at UC Irvine

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Council of Graduate Schools Annual Meeting
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Institutional context

- Founded in 1965, UC Irvine is the youngest member of the AAU
- It has been named by Times Higher Education as the top university under 50 years old in the U.S.
- Was a member of the UC AGEP consortium for two funding cycles
- Was awarded a FIPSE Comprehensive grant from the DoEd in 2010 after AGEP support ended
DECADE: Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience

- **Purpose** to transform climate for graduate education by 2020 at UC Irvine.

- **Objectives** include improving recruitment, retention and completion of under-represented minorities in doctoral programs; reach equivalent diversity of graduate and undergraduate programs by 2020.
Lack of Diversity in the STEM Graduate Pipeline

2009: URM students as a % of total US

- **BioSci**
  - 2009 UG: 13%
  - 2009 G: 13%
- **Engineering**
  - 2009 UG: 18%
  - 2009 G: 2%
- **ICS**
  - 2009 UG: 10%
  - 2009 G: 6%
- **PhySci**
  - 2009 UG: 16%
  - 2009 G: 7%
DECADE organizational structure at UC Irvine
DECADE Programming
Institutional Programs

- **THINK**
  - Graduate preparation programming for transfer Honors students.

- **Competitive Edge**
  - Summer pre-entry program for incoming doctoral students.

- **Speaker Series**
  - Regular seminars and workshops by distinguished speakers on issues related to diversity and campus climate.

- **Graduate Council Policy**
  - Addition of statement on importance of diversity as a factor in evaluation of new and existing degree programs.
DECADE Student Councils

- **Central and School-based Councils**
  - Address climate and diversity issues through programming that promotes an inclusive campus culture for graduate students.

- **DECADE Press**
  - Quarterly publication written by graduate students as a resource for fellowships, events, student accomplishments, and networking.

- **Logo Contest**
  - In spring 2012, graduate students submitted logo entries to brand DECADE.

- **DECADE Student Travel Awards**
  - Provides funding to support travel to conferences offering professional development opportunities.
DECADE Faculty Mentors: Roles and Duties

School-based and organized in relation to individual doctoral programs:

- Present data to, and share best practices with, graduate program admissions committee.

- Collaborate with school Equity Advisor and Associate Dean in improving school-wide climate.

- Share professional development programming in their academic units, at the Graduate Resource Center and at the DECADE seminar series and workshops.

- Eligible to compete for DECADE Mentor Graduate Diversity Awards.
Empowering Women for Experimental Research with Fabrication Skills

- Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Dr. Derek Dunn-Rankin
- Created summer program to teach female doctoral students fabrication skills

"An experience such as a fabrication class gives you an opportunity to intertwine the theory with practical applications."

Rosa Padilla, PhD student
Professor of Drama, Dr. Daphne Le

Surveyed and interviewed diverse graduate students about their experiences

Created and performed a play, Diversityville, based on interview transcripts
UCI faculty attitudes and beliefs on diversity

- Attitudes about efforts to improve student diversity: Faculty Mentors 3.4, Student Council 3.75
- Attitudes about efforts to improve faculty diversity: Faculty Mentors 2.9, Student Council 3.25
- Beliefs towards the importance of ethnicity/racial diversity: Faculty Mentors 3.2, Student Council 3.5
- Beliefs towards the importance of gender diversity: Faculty Mentors 3.0, Student Council 3.25
- General attitudes towards ethnicity/racial diversity: Faculty Mentors 3.3, Student Council 3.13
- General attitudes towards gender diversity: Faculty Mentors 3.1, Student Council 3.0

1= Much less Accepting; 2= Slightly Less Accepting; 3= No Change; 4=Slightly More Accepting; 5=Much More Accepting
Increased Diversity in the STEM Graduate Pipeline

URM students: 2013 vs 2009