2017 Diversity, Learning, and Student Success

**Voices Leading Change**

March 16, 2017 to March 18, 2017

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville

225 E Coastline Drive

Jacksonville, FL 32202

AAC&U’s 2017 Diversity, Learning, and Student Success: *Voices Leading Change* conference will engage participants in exploring how the individual and collective voices of students, faculty, staff, and community partners can be catalysts for transformative campus and social change. Affirming that people will be the drivers of the institutional and structural transformation needed to support the success of today’s postsecondary students and prepare these students for unscripted challenges, the conference will invite attendees to explore strategies for leading inclusive campus dialogues and strategic visioning that value and embrace diversity of thought, identity, and beliefs. Participants will examine diversity and equity as core values of an educated citizenry, and as critical components of a shared and socially responsible learning environment that promotes student success and engagement.

The conference will focus on several key questions about individual and collective voice: What do students’ stories tell us about the work educators and community partners need to do to help create educational experiences that promote higher levels of learning and engagement? How do institutions value students’ cultural capital and lived experiences when working to advance student success? How can institutions build capacity for educators to ask—and to respond to—questions about diversity, equity, and social justice? How do educators prepare students to be productive citizens in a diverse and inequitable society—and to advance the democratic ideals of our country?

Participants will also explore related questions about institutional change: How are campuses designing curricular pathways and learning experiences that encourage students to be intentional and culturally responsive learners, and that address the barriers to student success? What does the intersection of diversity, learning, and student success mean for how institutions recruit and retain diverse faculty, students, administrators, and staff? What structures are in place to create accountability goals and measures? How can campus climates evolve to reflect and to respect diverse perspectives and identities as vehicles for growth and improvement?

The conference theme *Voices Leading Change* suggests the value of the learning that can emerge from reflection on questions like these and the exchange of ideas in environments where difference, civility, respect, and empathy are present. The conference framing also reflects the reality that multiple voices representing varying identities and experiences are needed to lead a paradigm shift from a focus on “my work” to a collective focus on “our work.” With an emphasis on truthful examinations of the intersections of diversity, learning, and student success, and on what individual and collective engagement means for sustainable campus change efforts, this conference will help participants examine questions and proven strategies that translate the vision of making excellence inclusive into campus practice.

AAC&U invites you to join with colleagues to explore action-oriented strategies for advancing diversity, equity, and student learning based in research and practice, including the LEAP initiative and AAC&U’s framework for Making Excellence Inclusive; and to reflect upon, assess, and design campus-based efforts that seek to prepare all students for full and productive engagement in our democracy and global society.