

Interactive Case

You have been appointed to a faculty committee charged with suggesting next steps at your institution for *creating a more inclusive learning environment for science, technology, engineering, and math* (STEM fields). Ultimately, you are charged with helping to create a **comprehensive institutional plan** that supports students through the college years in multiple ways (curricular and co-curricular), links people and programs to integrate them efficiently and effectively, relies on institutional strengths – and raises the institutional priority of these issues.

Your institution has been working on this issue for several years and has one “successful” program in place – a summer program for a diverse set of entering students from groups underrepresented in STEM fields. The program structure has stabilized over the past several years. Crude assessment indicates that students really appreciate the relationships they are developing with their peers and the program faculty and staff. The STEM program faculty concur and feel really good about the positive benefits to students. The program has a very academic focus, but little is understood about how the program affects students as they enter into and experience the STEM curriculum.

Your institution is graduating relatively low percentages of students from underrepresented groups (women, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans). It’s also clear that the STEM bridge program students are simply not showing up in large numbers in STEM majors. And, there is a bit of anecdotal evidence that these students are struggling in the introductory STEM courses.

At your tables, discuss the case, focusing on the two points below. **Record your responses on index cards.** We encourage you to weave into the discussion your experiences, solutions, and concrete strategies for moving forward.

1. Bring yourselves into this case and make it more your own by adding one or two other concrete aspects or challenges to this case that connect to issues and circumstances important at your home institutions. [Write responses on one index card.]
2. What are the one or two next steps that your committee recommends to advance the goal of creating a more inclusive learning environment for STEM - and why. [Write responses on a second index card.]

Please write your names and emails on a third index card (one per table) so we can forward you the results of this activity and contact you with clarifying questions, if needed.