Special Session: Comprehensive Diversity Student Support Program Discussion

Dr. Bryan Hill, University of Arkansas

Bryan Hill, native of Louisiana, earned a B.S. and M.S. in Industrial Engineering and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Arkansas. Currently, Bryan is the Assistant Dean for Student Recruitment and Diversity, Honors and International Programs at the University of Arkansas College of Engineering. He is also director of UAteach, a secondary math and science teacher education program. Bryan has more than 15 years of experience in engineering student recruitment, retention, diversity initiatives, and K-12 outreach programs. Since becoming assistant dean in 2009, the College’s undergraduate enrollment has increased 92%, female enrollment has increased 157% and minority enrollment 152%. HONORS ENROLLMENT HERE. In addition, he was instrumental in starting the PAPSS program for low-income, rural Panamanian students. Bryan is PI on STEM educational and outreach grants totaling $6.6m. He received recognition as one of the Top 15 Researchers in 2015 on the UA campus, as well as a recipient of 2017 Collis R. Geren Award for Excellence in Graduate Education and a finalist for the Global Engineering Deans Council Airbus Diversity Award in 2014.

Mr. Eric Specking, University of Arkansas

Eric Specking serves as the Director of Undergraduate Recruitment for the College of Engineering at the University of Arkansas. He directs the engineering recruitment office, most of the College of Engineering’s K-12 outreach programs, and the college’s summer programs. Specking is actively involved in the Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management divisions and is the current Chair of the ASEE Diversity Committee. Specking received a B.S. in Computer Engineering and a M.S. in Industrial Engineering from the University of Arkansas and is currently working on a PhD in Industrial Engineering at the University of Arkansas.
Purpose: Institutions of higher learning throughout the United States want to recruit, retain, and graduate more underrepresented engineering students and become a more inclusive campus. The University of Arkansas created the Engineering Career Awareness Program (ECAP), a recruitment to graduation program for underrepresented engineering students, in 2007. This panel session will discuss this successful program, the 2011 publication by the National Academies Press, Expanding Underrepresented Minority Participation: America’s Science and Technology Talent at the Crossroads, and the next phase of ECAP, ECAP 2.0. ECAP is a proven example that applying the best practices outlined in the publication can effectively increase the success of underrepresented engineering students. Participants will learn and discuss successful practices, learn about the program, and discussion tangible outcomes to take back to their home institutions.

Format: This special session will start with a presentation of the current literature followed by a case study and a facilitated roundtable discussion on how to develop and implement a similar program at the participant’s institution.

Learning Goals: Participants will 1) gain insight into literature, 2) review a case study of a successful program, 3) discuss how to develop, implement and evaluate a similar program at respective institutions, and 4) brainstorm outcomes to take back to their institutions to improve diversity recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Content:

1. Background Literature (National Academies, PCAST)
2. What is ECAP? How to build a comprehensive program based on NAE recommendations
   a. Results of ECAP
   b. ECAP awards
3. ECAP next steps
   a. Engineering Math Acceleration Program
   b. ECAP 2.0 expansion
4. Breakout discussions

List of presenters and qualifications:

Bryan Hill, native of Louisiana, earned a B.S. and M.S. in Industrial Engineering and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from the University of Arkansas. Currently, Bryan is the Assistant Dean for Student Recruitment and Diversity, Honors and International Programs at the University of Arkansas College of Engineering. He is also director of UAteach, a secondary math and science teacher education program. Bryan has more than 15 years of experience in engineering student recruitment, retention, diversity initiatives, and K-12 outreach programs. Since becoming assistant dean in 2009, the College’s undergraduate enrollment has increased 92%, female enrollment has increased 157% and minority enrollment 152%. In addition, he was instrumental in starting the PAPSS program for low-income, rural Panamanian students. Bryan is PI on STEM educational and outreach grants totaling $6.6m. He was part of the team that started ECAP in 2007.
Eric Specking is the Director of Undergraduate Recruitment, Outreach, and Summer Programs for the University of Arkansas College of Engineering. He has a bachelor’s degree in computer engineering, a masters in industrial engineering, and currently is working on a Ph. D. in Engineering. Eric has worked in engineering recruitment for 11 years, during which he has focused on recruiting high-achieving, diverse prospective engineering students. He has recruited and worked with the Engineering Career Awareness Program cohorts for 7 years.

Thomas Carter serves as the Assistant Dean for Engineering Academic and Student Affairs. He has been employed in the College of Engineering for the past thirty years. In his role, Thomas is an advocate for engineering students with academic issues (dismissals, suspensions and warnings), the College of Engineering’s liaison for minority affairs and diversity issues, director of scholarships, the university representative for The National GEM Consortium, and the campus coordinator for the Arkansas Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation. He also serves as advisor to the following student organizations: National Society of Black Engineers, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and Theta Tau.