The Faculty Diversity Snapshot Report:
Development of a Quality Improvement Tool for Medical School Faculty Diversity

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BACKGROUND

The development of systemic processes to transparently communicate diversity metrics become necessary as an institution strives to foster diversity and inclusion. Such practices can facilitate faculty dialogues and promote a culture that values inclusivity. Institutions should conduct regular assessments of collected data regarding diversity and inclusion and disseminate their results as this can provide actionable information to drive continuous change. At Brody School of Medicine, defining metrics, identifying national and aspirational benchmarks, and improving the communication of relevant data to every department chair has required the development of a new tool known as the Faculty Diversity Snapshot Report.

Current practices for recruitment, hiring, promotion, and retention are tribal by departments within the institution. The communication of historical and/or comparative data has not been occurring centrally nor continuously. A preferred practice would be to ensure that decision makers, specifically department chairs, have the relevant data and benchmarks in place when decisions are being made. Barriers to the development of these types of transparent, systemic processes include the traditional culture of the institution and the inherent obstacles present within both academic medicine and science to those that are classically underrepresented.

Talia H Swartz, Ann-Gel S Palermo, Sandra K Masur, Judith A Aberg, The Science and Value of Diversity: Closing the Gaps in Our Understanding of Inclusion and Diversity, *The Journal of Infectious Diseases*, Volume 220, Issue Supplement_2, 15 September 2019, Pages S33–S41.

PROJECT AIM

To increase communication about relevant diversity data, metrics, and benchmarks from the current, limited, de-centralized condition to all 19 departments and the Dean's leadership team by the end of 2019 and annually through the production and delivery of faculty diversity snapshot reports to all department chairs and the dean of the school of medicine.
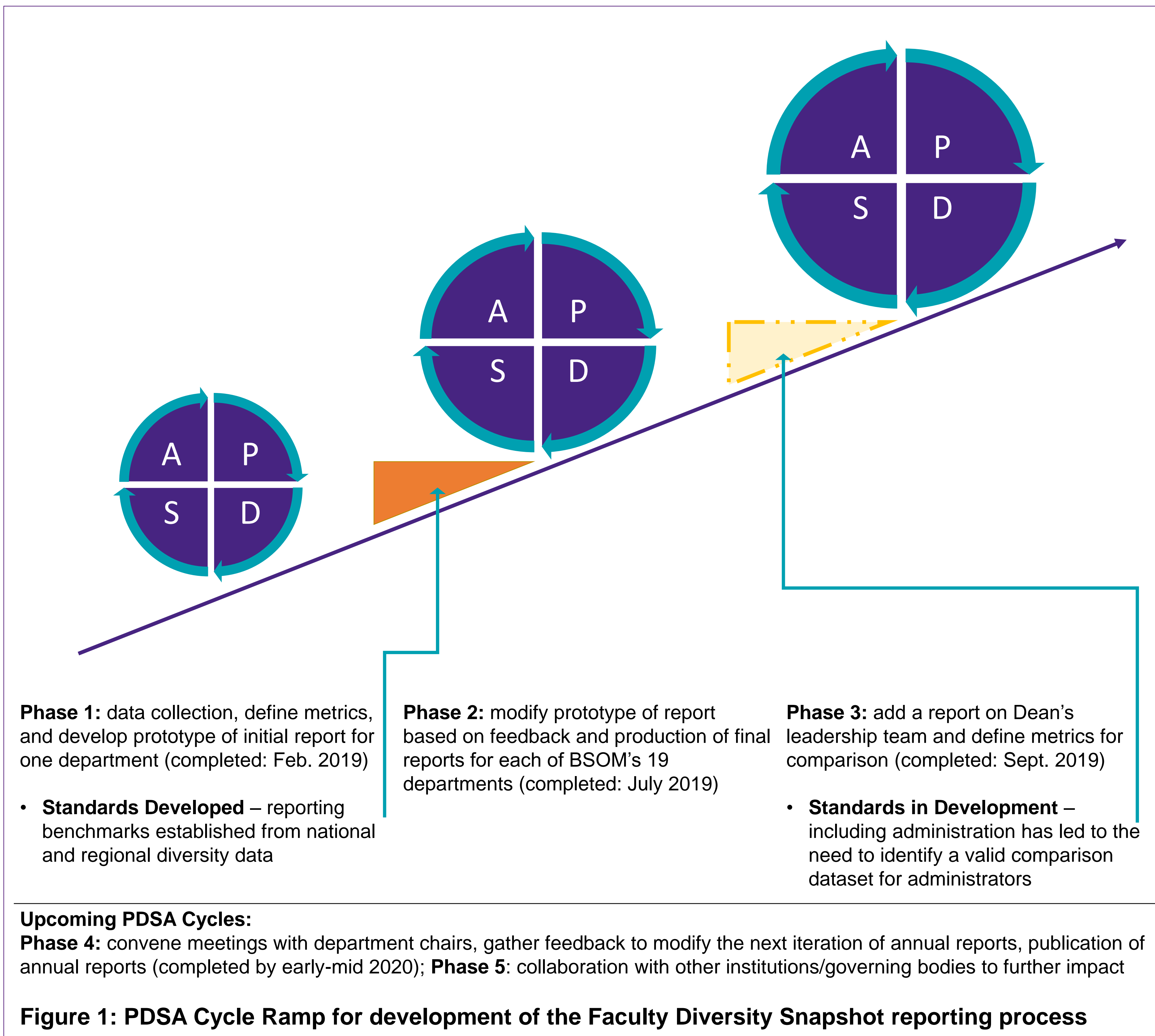
PROJECT DESIGN/STRATEGY

The development of the tool occurred via an iterative approach consisting of four phases outlined in **Figure 1**. Each iteration included at least one PDSA cycle, with each successive cycle increasing in scope and complexity. The current reporting process has developed out of these early phases and includes an annual operational process that will begin implementation in early 2020.

This new annual process consists of the following steps:
- Calculate departmental data based on an annual snapshot of faculty information provided by human resources
- Prepare comparative benchmarks from national datasets
- Analyze current and historical state of each department
- Disseminate report to department chairs and dean
- Conduct meetings between the department chair and deans for diversity and inclusion

CHANGES MADE (PDSA CYCLES)

Phase 1: data collection, define metrics, and develop prototype of initial report for one department (completed: Feb. 2019)
- **Standards Developed** – reporting benchmarks established from national and regional diversity data

Phase 2: modify prototype of report based on feedback and production of final reports for each of BSOM's 19 departments (completed: July 2019)

Phase 3: add a report on Dean's leadership team and define metrics for comparison (completed: Sept. 2019)
- **Standards in Development** – including administration has led to the need to identify a valid comparison dataset for administrators

Upcoming PDSA Cycles:
Phase 4: convene meetings with department chairs, gather feedback to modify the next iteration of annual reports, publication of annual reports (completed by early-mid 2020); **Phase 5:** collaboration with other institutions/governing bodies to further impact

Figure 1: PDSA Cycle Ramp for development of the Faculty Diversity Snapshot reporting process

RESULTS/OUTCOMES

Evaluation is ongoing but early data show a shift in hiring metrics, while early discussions with department chairs and school leadership resulted in positive feedback about the usefulness of snapshot reports.

Future iterations of the process will be evaluated against hiring, promotion, and retention metrics to assess its impact. Additionally, feedback from meetings and dialogues with the Office of Diversity Affairs will be used to evaluate needed changes to the process or with report development.

Perhaps the most important outcome of this project has been the identification of a gap within the current literature and available diversity datasets for dean's leadership teams and/or administrative teams among North American medical schools.

Figure 2: Sample graphic from Faculty Diversity Snapshot Report "Comparison to AAMC benchmarks and local U.S. Census data"

"The data below represents how your department's faculty composition for academic year 2018-2019 compares to national data about similar departments (AAMC Benchmarks), as well as how your department fares in representation when compared to the composition of the local area. Parity with the local area is often used in the literature as an aspirational benchmark for faculty composition in higher education."
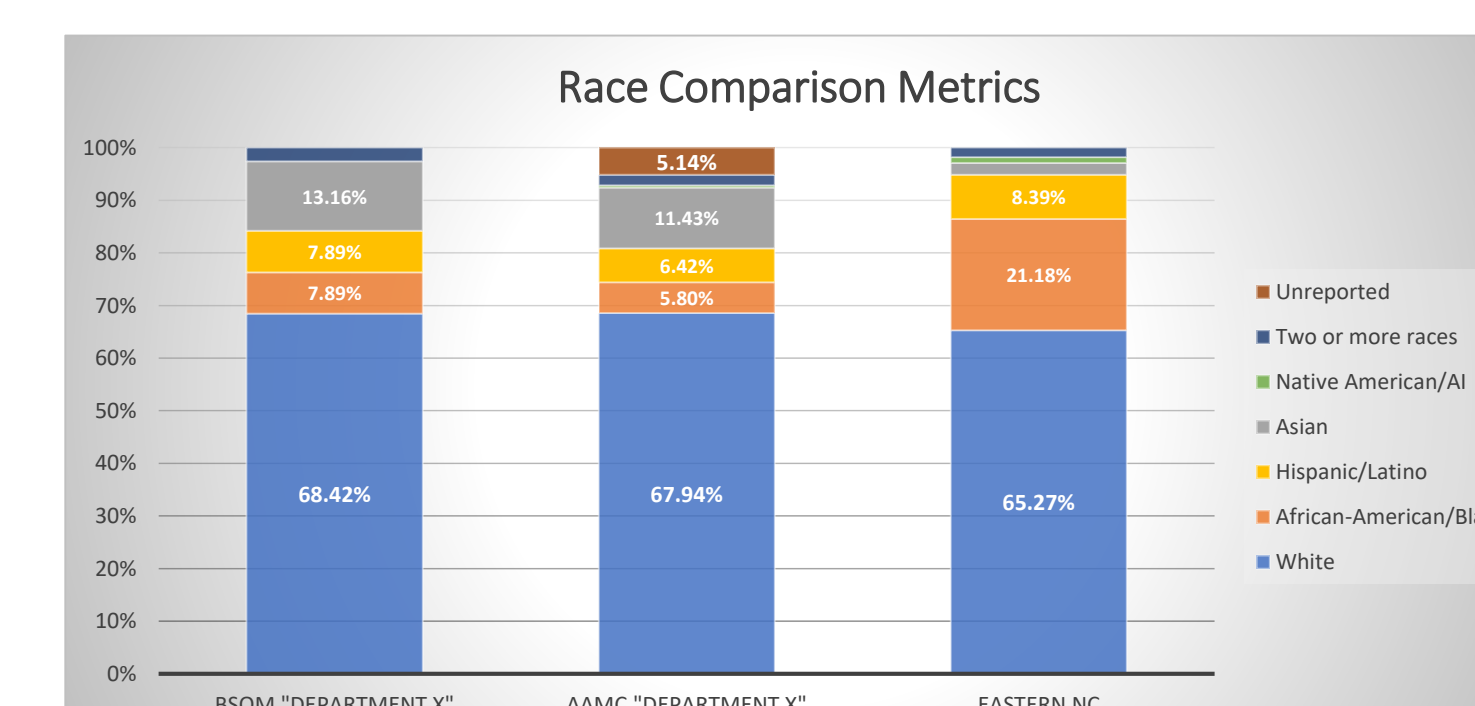
LESSONS LEARNED

The following improvements have been observed as a result of this project's completed phases:
- Development of a departmental faculty diversity snapshot report for the dean's leadership team and for every department within the Brody School of Medicine
- Identification of valid comparative metrics within national datasets
- Implementation of meetings to discuss goals and benchmarks with department chairs
- Communication of relevant data on a continuous basis and in a systematic manner

Cultivating an environment that values openness and data-driven decision-making can improve the current state of faculty diversity and inclusion. The faculty diversity snapshot reports supports the development of a systematic process to communicate results among department deans and the diversity and inclusion office. After conducting literature and database searches, a gap was uncovered for diversity metrics regarding leadership teams among AAMC institutions.

NEXT STEPS

The completion of 2020 Annual Faculty Diversity Snapshot reports for 20 academic departments and teams is scheduled for February 2020. The following months will include a review of relevant hiring, promotion, and retention data to evaluate the impact of this and other efforts on faculty diversity and inclusion.

Additionally, an assessment of the status of progress towards "Vertical Proportional Diversity" is a future step. Currently there are no processes in place to evaluate diversity of all elements of Brody School of Medicine in the context of national or regional diversity metrics. We expect future studies to develop baseline data for students, residents, and staff.

Finally, our team has begun the process of identifying other institutions and governing bodies with whom to partner in an attempt to address gaps within the literature and available diversity datasets for staff members and leadership teams in medical schools.

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