In the United States, college graduates experience better employment opportunities, increased income, and greater wealth than high school graduates. Despite the widespread benefits of attending college, universities have traditionally served students from White and middle-to-upper class backgrounds and have unsuccessfully retained diverse students, resulting in the further marginalization of underrepresented populations. In fact, it is estimated that 6 out of 10 Black and Latino/a undergraduates at a four-year institution will fail to graduate (Museus & Quaye, 2009). Recognizing a need for greater inclusion of and support for underrepresented students, universities have turned their attention to the development of diversity programs to both encourage greater diversity within the institution and to provide supportive services to students from traditionally marginalized backgrounds. Although evidence suggests that greater diversity initiatives in higher education fosters students’ academic and social growth (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2002; Hurtado, 2001; Denson & Chang, 2009; Villalpando, 2002), little is known about the establishment and spread of these programs across universities. Therefore, this research seeks to further explore processes and patterns of developing and implementing diversity programs. Specifically, we examine factors related to the adoption of Chief Diversity Offices, programing for women in STEM majors, and programming for first generation college students between the institutions of the Big Ten.

This talk is part of the Inequality Seminar which is a seminar and speaker series that provides a forum on campus for faculty and graduate students who are interested in inequality broadly defined. It is an opportunity for faculty and graduate students to present their research and to hear about other inequality-related work from researchers on the off-campus. These talks are free and open to the public. For more information about the Inequality Seminar, contact Professor Sarah Bruch at sarah-bruch@uiowa.edu.