data, decision-making, & antiracism

equity: from the personal to the institutional level T3D
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data-based decision-making

your boss (& your coworkers) love data!

decision-makers - including administrators, faculty, & academic professionals - use data analysis to justify decisions, take actions, and show results

though how useful is data?

how helpful?

could data-based decisions be harmful?

might this depend on how we "read" data?
institutional data

2014-2015 Portland Community College project on math student placement and grade outcomes

data set from PCC Institutional Effectiveness (useless for project's placement questions)
data include each student's self-reported race and gender, along with their math grade outcomes

curious about disaggregated grade distributions for PCC students, i analyzed

- 41,605 PCC math students (2009-2014)
- 37,113 of those students self-reported their race/ethnicity (USA Census categories)
- 61,640 minimum course grades earned by students who self-reported race/ethnicity in MTH 20, 60, 65, 95, 105, 111, 112, 243, 244, 251, and 25
### Counts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Course Grade*</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Multi-Racial</th>
<th>African-American</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Pacific Islander</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>43468</td>
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### Proportions

<table>
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<th>Asian</th>
<th>Pacific Islander</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Minimum course grades assigned to MTH 20, 60, 65, 95, 105, 111, 112, 243, 244, 251, and 252 students who self-reported race to PCC, 2009-2014*
Comparing proportions of minimum course grades earned by all students self-reporting race with minimum course grades earned by African-American students.

Minimum course grades earned in MTH 20, 60, 65, 95, 105, 111, 112, 243, 244, 251, 252 over past five years.

- A: Total 31%, African-American 14%
- B: Total 26%, African-American 21%
- C: Total 19%, African-American 23%
- D: Total 7%, African-American 11%
- E: Total 17%, African-American 31%
what do these data "say" to us?

- what do you see?
  - trends
  - relationships
- what questions do you have? about these math
  - courses
  - faculty
  - students' course grades and their racial/ethnic identities

please note whatever question(s) arise for you in response to math student outcomes data showing drastic racial disparities
table talk 1: definitions

goal
share as many ideas as you can come up with in a few minutes

structure

- facilitator shares prompts
- facilitator sets a clock for 2 minutes
- participants share ideas in turn, taking no more than 30 seconds each
- not much time, do your best to listen, no need to come to any consensus
- when it’s done, it’s done
table talk 1: definitions prompts

1. What does "racism" mean?

2. What does "antiracism" mean?
DEFINITIONS

RACIST: One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea.

ANTIRACIST: One who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea.
**inaction supports a racist policy**

Data about racial disparities in math outcomes shows that our system has racialized outcomes - our well-intended, so-called "colorblind" math curricula and pedagogy produce racialized outcomes. These data do not give us any clues about which antiracist action(s) we can take to better serve our students of color.

Data-based decision-making processes often leave us in a state of *inaction* (which supports our racialized status quo).

Or we can have curiosity, willingness to learn, make time to organize, listen (especially to our students), and collaborate with students and colleagues to develop antiracist ideas - then data inform our decisions about which action could change our policies for the better.
table talk 2: inaction or action?

goal

as a group, consider questions about racialized grade outcomes data

structure

● facilitator shares questions
● take turns reading each question aloud
● share whether you believe each question leads to inaction or action
● time permitting, we'll discuss a couple of these together
table talk: inaction or action?

some colleagues' questions (paraphrased from memory)

- how can I make space for the voices of students of color in my classes?
- how can we help our African-American students fit in?
- how do my pedagogical choices help & harm students of color in my classes?
- K-12 fails to prepare African-American students for college---it's too late for us to help them once they're here. what can we do?
- could my math courses be more culturally relevant to students of color?
- what can white teachers do? we need to hire more faculty of color!
racist or antiracist?

when data reveal racial disparities

- our data-based questions can reveal our *racist* ideas or our *antiracist* ideas - most of us (especially in the USA) have plenty of *both*
- we most often support racist policies through *inaction*

critical challenge

shift to taking *actions* that develop and support *antiracist* policies and *antiracist* ideas…

… and use data to consider your next action to take!
thank you

- attendees and fellow presenters 💛
- AMATYC Equity Committee for hosting today's Themed Session
- Rachel Bridgewater and her winter 2020 Wayfinding Academy students (for inviting me to develop this discussion for the first time)
- PCC Antiracist Educators, particularly organizer Max Macias, for taking action
- PCC Math Learning Assessment committee in 2014-2015, led by Emiliano Vega, for these data
- Too many students and colleagues to list for helping me continue to learn, change, and grow as a person and a teacher