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Main content

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Clifton Conrad and Marybeth Gasman. Educating a Diverse Nation: Lessons from Minority-Serving Institutions. Harvard University Press, 2015. Pp. 320. Cloth, \$35.00; ISBN 978-0674736801.

Concerned that ethnic minority students are not being adequately served by many colleges and universities across the country, professors Clifton Conrad and Marybeth Gasman conducted a three-year national study of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Their book is meant to share what they learned about how MSIs are "enhancing" the education of "underserved" students (10). Based on their research of 12 MSIs, ranging from tribal colleges for Native Americans, Hispanic-serving institutions, historically black colleges, and Asian-American and Pacific Islander serving institutions, the authors argue that the MSIs they studied are effective because they all seek to make the college experience "meaningful" to students and are "committed" to providing extensive support services for students (23-25).

While each of the MSIs under study addresses the needs of minority students in different ways, Conrad and Gasman provide in fascinating detail the programs at each MSI that have been developed for minority students. Several of the MSIs, for example, integrated into their programs components that addressed the ethnic backgrounds of students. For example, at Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, a curriculum has...

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"Educating a Diverse Nation gives us a compelling narrative, filled with robust research, facts, and recommendations to help colleges and universities better educate the growing population of Americans who will comprise the majority of college students in the decades

ahead. Conrad and Gasman have made an extraordinary contribution in studying the work of exemplary minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to educate students for success in all walks of life and professions. "Conrad and Gasman insightfully take us into the living-learning environments of exemplary minority-serving institutions and highlight a variety of nontraditional approaches to effective pedagogy and culturally relevant practices. *Educating a Diverse Nation. Lessons from Minority-Serving Institutions.* Clifton Conrad. Marybeth Gasman. Clifton Conrad and Marybeth Gasman offer an on-the-ground perspective of life at MSIs. Speaking for themselves, some students describe the stress of balancing tuition with the need to support families. Others express their concerns about not being adequately prepared for college-level work. And more than a few reveal doubts about the relevance of college for their future.