

# Making an Impact with Research: Reflections on the Racial Microaggressions Project @ Illinois

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University of Utah

**September 19, 2022**

U of Utah Undergraduate Research Workshop

How will you make an impact with your research?

- Motivation
  - Audience
  - Dissemination
- 



# Racial Microaggressions Research Project @ Illinois

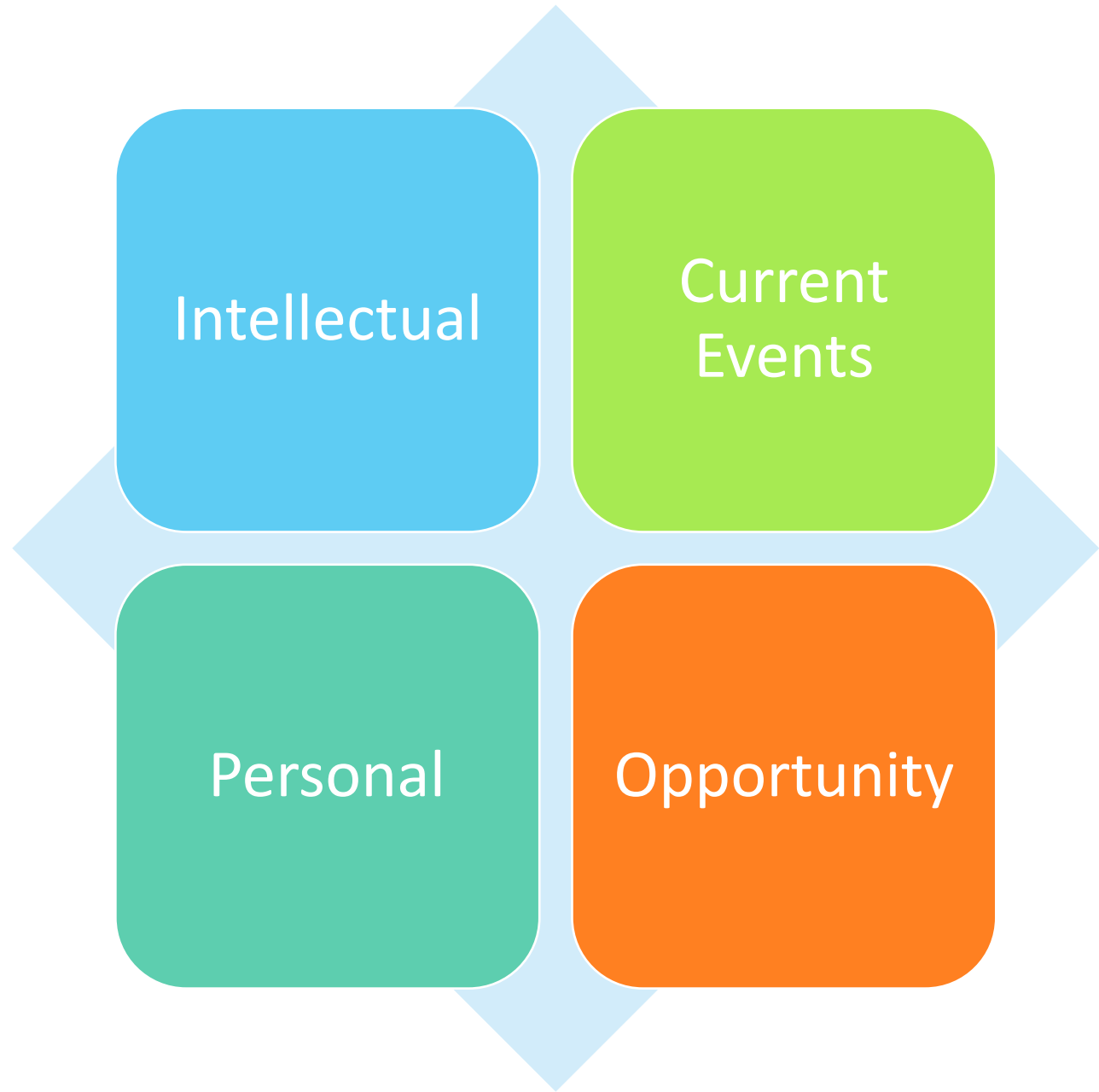
To identify the types of racism (with a focus on subtle forms, racial microaggressions) through the experiences of students of color at a predominantly White institution.

To analyze the impact of racial microaggressions on students of color.

To educate the campus community about racial microaggressions and their impact on the campus.

Why did I  
want to do  
this  
research?  
(motivation)

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1968



1980



UTUC ARCHIVES - LOW-RES PROOF 2000s

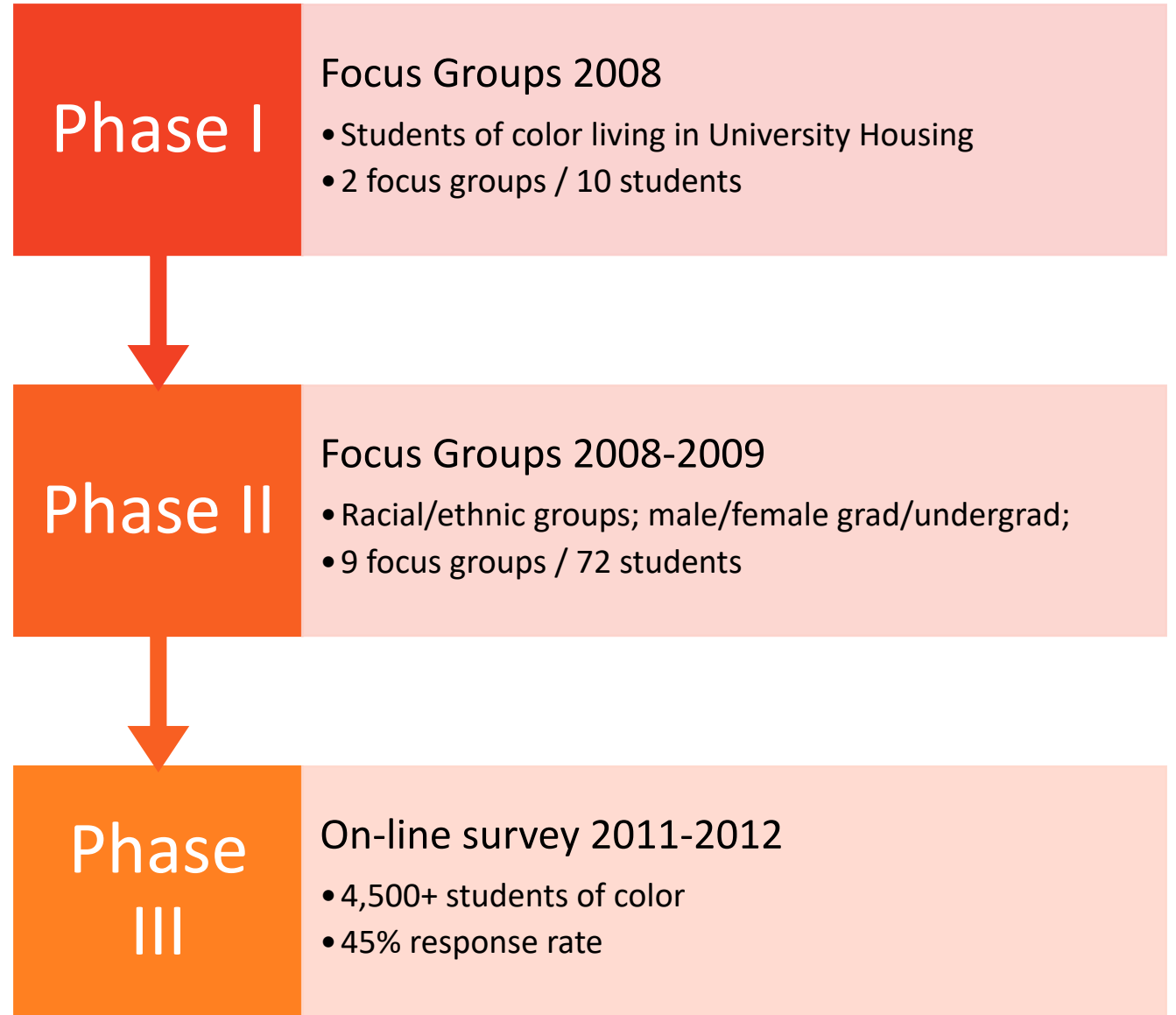


2006

- Why do you want to do research?

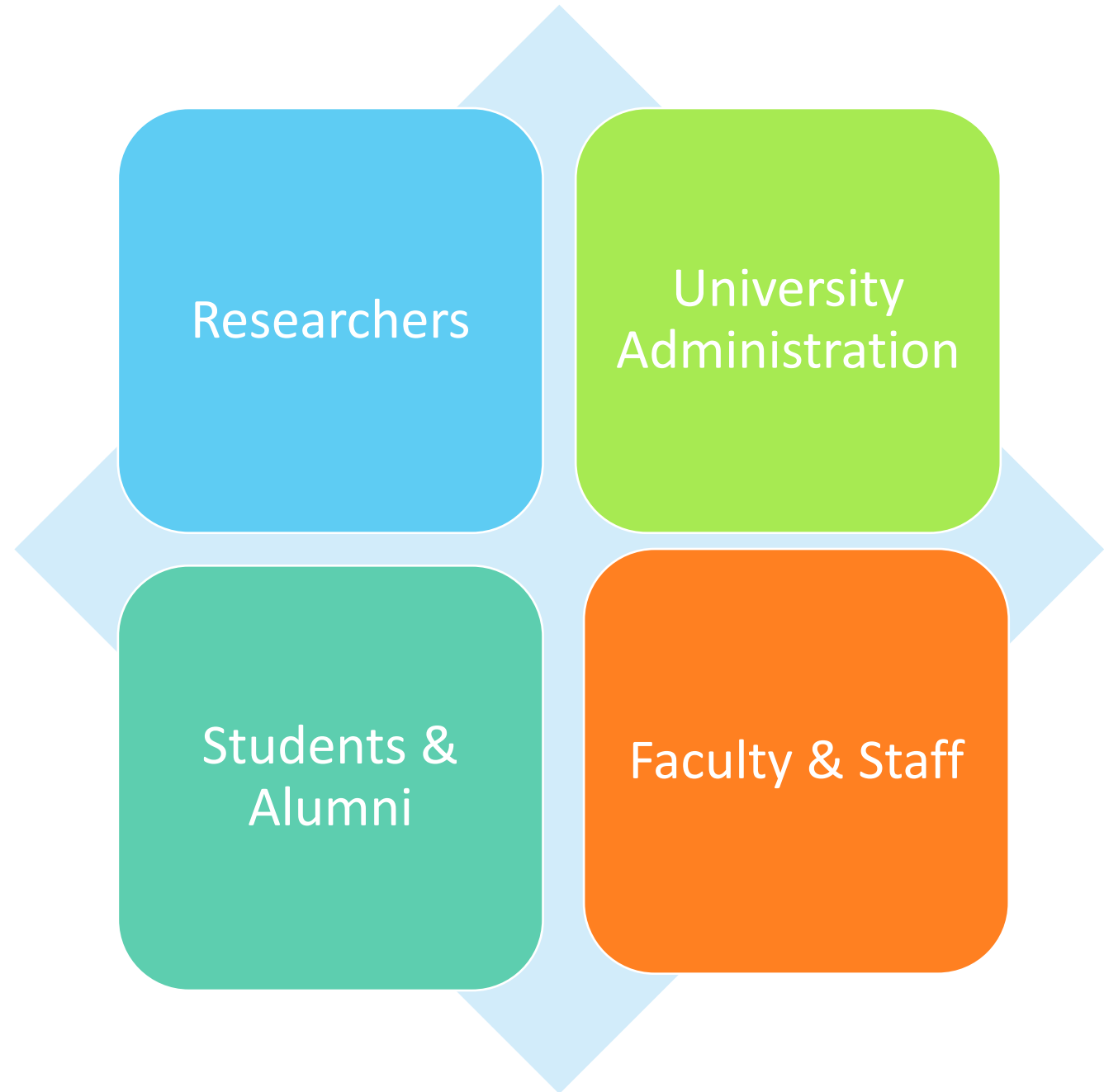


# Data collection



Who is interested  
in research about  
racism in higher  
education  
(audience)?

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## RACIAL MICROAGGRESSIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

*Diversity, Inclusiveness, Research, & Equity Series*



### VOICES OF STUDENTS OF COLOR LIVING IN UNIVERSITY HOUSING

Stacy Harwood, Margaret Browne Huntt, & Ruby Mendenhall



**CDMS**  
CENTER ON DEMOCRACY  
IN A MULTIRACIAL SOCIETY

- Campus racially segregated; Students refer to specific dorms as “the projects”
- Students of color “steered” toward certain dormitories; racial steering by staff, students, friends & families
- Housing staff unprepared to deal with racism in university housing; staff response to racism problematic

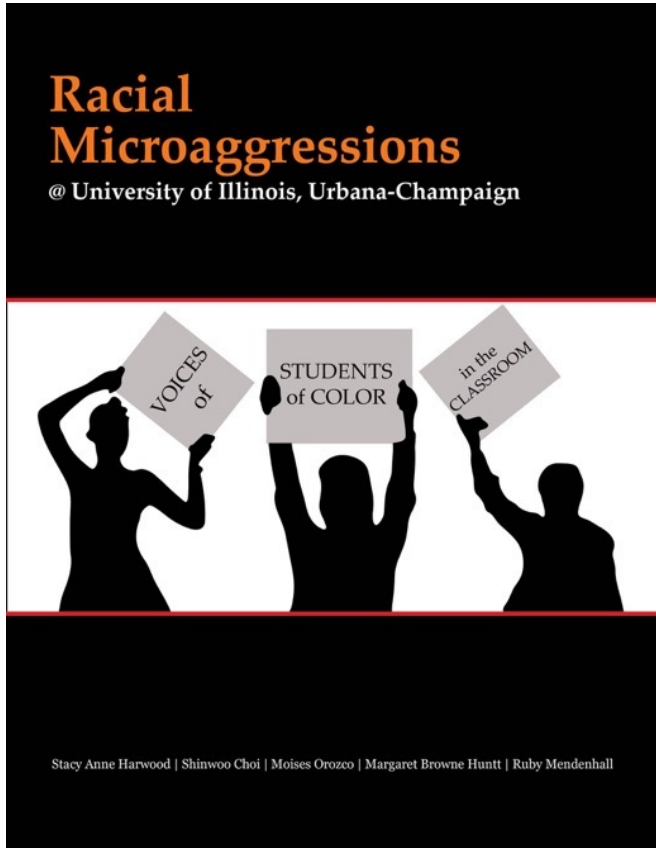
- Who is your research audience?



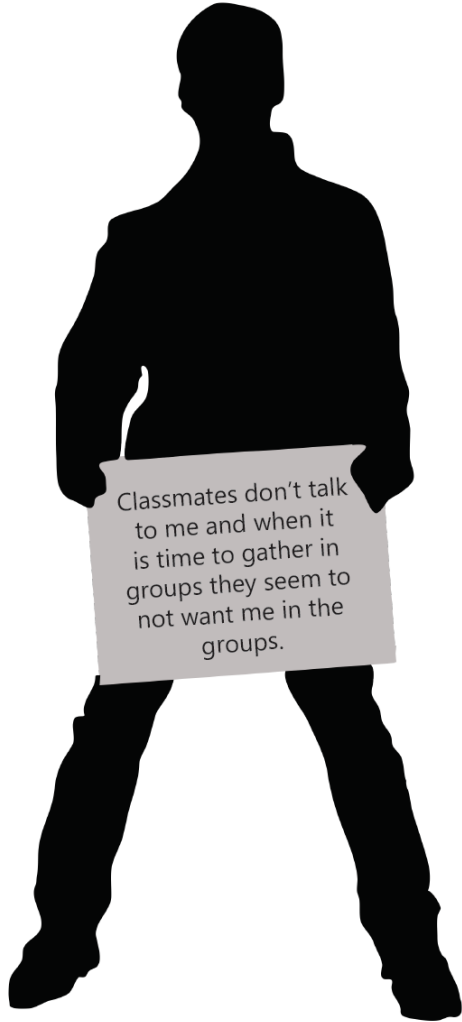
How did we get  
the word out  
about our  
research?  
(dissemination)

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Survey Statement	% yes
I have had stereotypes made about me in the classroom because of my race.	51%
I have had my contributions minimized in the classroom because of my race.	27%
I have been made to feel the way I speak is inferior in the classroom because of my race.	27%
I have experienced not being taken seriously in my classes because of my race.	25%



12/24/2016

Guest commentary: Sobering news about the top party school | News-Gazette.com

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# Guest commentary: Sobering news about the top party school

Special (/[today-day](#))

Weekly Ads (/[circulars](#))

Sun, 02/21/2016 - 7:00am | [The News-Gazette \(/author/news-gazette\)](#)

By Stacy Harwood, Efadul Huq and Ruby Mendenhall

Last year, The Princeton Review ranked the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as the top party school in the U.S. Unofficial St. Patrick's Day contributes to this reputation. Many students get drunk; local businesses make money.

Though most of us have heard or seen the bathroom vandalism, sidewalk vomit, and students passed out in public, fewer recognize that this drinking culture contributes to a hostile racial campus climate. For example, the campus continues to see the proliferation of the now-retired Chief mascot merchandise. Students wear Chief T-shirts and other T-shirts with images and references to the Chief, for example, "Wait in line to get drunk? ... I've got a reservation."

Racism is not limited to Unofficial The University of Illinois Racial Microaggression Research Project gathered data in





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May 14, 2015

## Attention white people: Stop committing 'microaggressions'!

By [Rick Moran](#)

Most of us make an effort to be sensitive to other people's feelings regardless of race. But a study produced by the University of Illinois claims we shouldn't even bother. The fact that you are white causes people of color discomfort.

What a bunch of crap.

Not a very scholarly response but then, studying "microaggressions" has nothing to do with scholarship anyway. Like "white privilege," the beauty of "microaggression" is that it is impossible to prove in any rational way. It is a completely subjective point of view, based on the supposed "feelings" of minorities and their irrational fears of white people - fed by a culture of racials who find instilling fear in minorities a profitable endeavor.

You can tell how idiotic the idea of "microaggressions" are by the nonsensical "definition" by Dr. Wing Sue: "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain individuals because of their group membership"? Just what is a "denigrating message"? If I'm having a conversation with a mixed race group of friends and I mention briefly that I love fried chicken, would that constitute a "microaggression"? Shame on me. I'm a microaggressor. A very, very micro-aggressor.

I really wish the racials would stop inventing stuff to make white people look like ogres. We get it. You're upset that there are still racials in the world and need to find excuses to point that out. But positing that white people can be racist even when there is no intent or conscious effort to hurt a person of color is idiotic on its face.

I think I'll call that a "macroaggression."

## Racial Microaggressions in the Residence Halls: Experiences of Students of Color at a Predominantly White University

Stacy A. Harwood, Margaret Browne Hunt, Ruby Mendenhall, and Jioni A. Lewis  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Students of color often perceive the campus climate more negatively than do their White counterparts. Our study begins to uncover what students of color experience in residence halls. Using focus group data from a larger study exploring racial microaggressions at a predominantly White institution (PWI), we identified over 70 racial microaggressions experienced by African American, Asian American, Latino, and Native American undergraduate and graduate students. Through the use of the racial microaggression taxonomy developed by Sue et al. (2007), four racial microaggression themes were identified: (a) racial jokes and verbal comments, (b) racial slurs written in shared spaces, (c) segregated spaces and unequal treatment, and (d) denial and minimization of racism. Findings contribute to the literature by detailing the types of racial microaggressions that students of color experienced when living in residence halls at PWIs. Implications for diversity in higher education and recommendations for university administrators are discussed.

**Keywords:** racial microaggressions, university housing, residence halls, diversity, campus climate

## Everyday Racism in Integrated Spaces: Mapping the Experiences of Students of Color at a Diversifying Predominantly White Institution

Stacy Anne Harwood, Ruby Mendenhall, Sang S. Lee, Cameron Riopelle & Margaret Browne Hunt

**To cite this article:** Stacy Anne Harwood, Ruby Mendenhall, Sang S. Lee, Cameron Riopelle & Margaret Browne Hunt (2018): Everyday Racism in Integrated Spaces: Mapping the Experiences of Students of Color at a Diversifying Predominantly White Institution, *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2017.1419122>

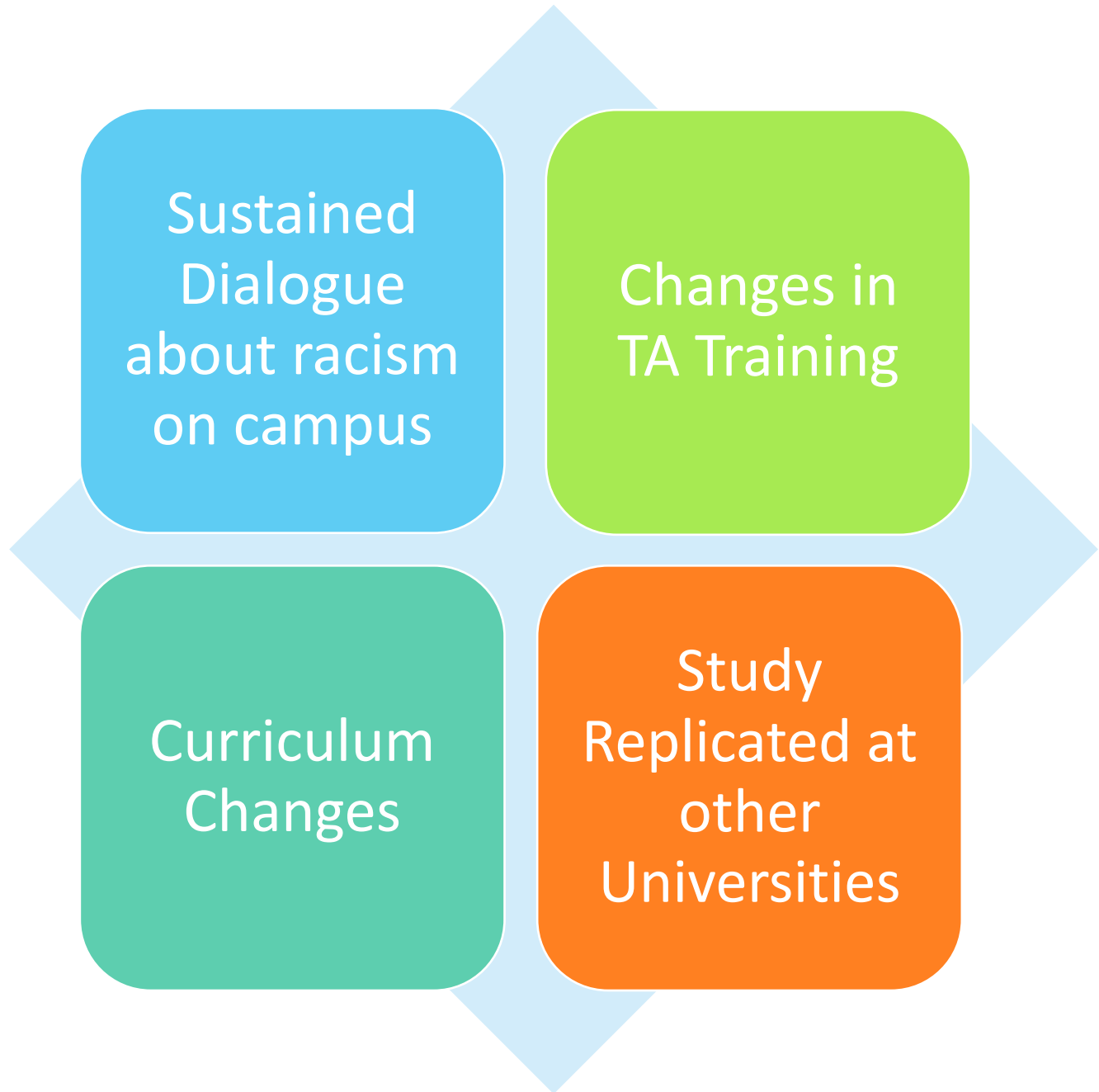
How will you  
disseminate your  
research?

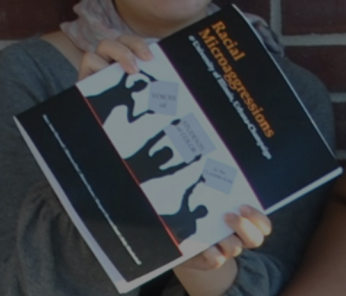
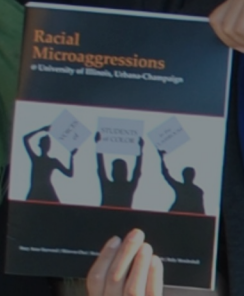




What  
impact did  
we have?

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What kind of impact  
do you want to make  
with your research?

