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Use and Awareness of Diverse Curricular Materials at Illinois Wesleyan University

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Oral Presentation O3.2

USE AND AWARENESS OF DIVERSE CURRICULAR MATERIALS AT ILLINOIS WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

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This study examines the desires and challenges associated with including greater racial diversity among curricular materials at Illinois Wesleyan University. In this paper I build upon an established model of multicultural curriculum integration in order to stress the importance of inclusive curricular materials. I explore whether or not students of color place a larger emphasis on diversity than their white counterparts in relation to the curriculum. In other words, do they see it as a need or area of improvement? And do they want their curricular materials to reflect their racial identity? I surveyed students in order to gain a better understanding of their perceptions of diversity and inclusion in the classroom and professors in order to understand some of the challenges associated with creating racially diverse curricular materials. I argue that despite these challenges, it remains essential for curricular materials to actively reflect the racial backgrounds of all students in a positive and respectful manner that does not simply serve to uphold systems of oppression, as this is crucial to the academic success of all students.