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Identity Management Among Students of Color at IWU

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Oral Presentation O3.3

IDENTITY MANAGEMENT AMONG STUDENTS OF COLOR AT IWU

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College students of color face various obstacles, which are often times emphasized when they are the only student of color in their classrooms or social settings. Students of color at Illinois Wesleyan University make up less than 25% of the student population, and most have experienced microaggressions or other negative responses. Students of color, therefore, may have experienced negative feelings about their identity, which can affect their academic and social success. The study utilizes of interviews with open-ended questions on racial identity and its impact on students of color at Illinois Wesleyan University. The data shows that despite feeling supported by some staff and faculty, most students of color have been affected by microaggressions on and off-campus, and experience feelings of inferiority and exclusion in social settings. Based on these findings, I argue that there should be enhanced efforts to incorporate diversity into the school's curriculum.