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THE ROLE OF PRIEC IN BUILDING COMMUNITY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

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The Politics of Race, Immigration, and Ethnicity Consortium (PRIEC) is an academic forum for scholars of race and ethnicity politics (REP) and REP scholarship. As an ongoing series of meetings, PRIEC convenes REP scholars to present works-in-progress and serves as a welcoming forum for graduate-student mentoring, as well as junior-faculty socialization

and addressing pipeline challenges. The aim of these five features is to facilitate community building and encourage networking in a collegial atmosphere, which counters the deficit in social assets that many first-generation, minority, women, and other underrepresented scholars face as an obstacle to their long-term career success. Collectively, these features distinguish PRIEC as an outlet in which scholars from the full range of research and teaching institutions exchange ideas and advance science.

The inaugural PRIEC in 2005 was hosted by Shaun Bowler and Karthick Ramakrishnan, faculty from the University of California, Riverside. Since then, PRIEC meetings have continued quarterly, organized and attended mostly by scholars in Southern California.

Under Francisco Pedraza's leadership, PRIEC has expanded in a number of important ways. First, despite operating on a "shoestring" budget, PRIEC now boasts a web presence (www.priec.org) and an active social media profile (Twitter: @WeArePRIEC), which are used to archive meeting programs, announce future meetings, and promote the work of scholars

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and advancement. PRIEC welcomes contributions from various perspectives, disciplines, and methods, with the only requirement that the work be related to politics and race or ethnicity.

Five features of PRIEC distinguish it from other conference platforms. First, PRIEC does not require a completed paper—only a proposal—which encourages scholars to present work at any stage in the research process. Second, PRIEC strongly encourages, facilitates, and prioritizes graduate-student participation as presenters. Third, PRIEC distributes the costs and service burden of hosting meetings by rotating among different institutions. Fourth, PRIEC does not charge a registration or membership fee to attend, which is crucial to scholars whose institutional support falls short of the rising costs to fully participate in the major regional and national political science conferences. Fifth, PRIEC traditionally meets on Friday and ends with an informal dinner reception at the home of a senior-faculty colleague from the hosting institution.

These five features reflect broader commitments that PRIEC members share with respect to mentoring, inclusion, networking,

whose research addresses the politics of race, immigration, and ethnicity. The website also lists job candidates in the sub-field, which can serve as a crucial information cue for members of search committees.

Second, PRIEC now integrates pre-PRIEC methodology workshops, such as a hands-on mini-course on how to create survey weights led by Matt Barreto and another taught by Melissa Michelson on the fundamentals of survey experiments. Third, Pedraza, along with Gabe Sanchez, coordinated the first themed PRIEC at the University of New Mexico,

Figure 1

Photograph of Many of the Participants at MSU PRIEC; April 20, 2018.



where they highlighted scholarship focused on Native American politics, an underrepresented area of research at PRIEC conferences. Fourth, in 2019, PRIEC introduced the first full-day undergraduate research showcase, hosted by Brad Jones at the University of California, Davis, to complement the Friday PRIEC meeting and further PRIEC's investments in the REP graduate-training pipeline.

Since its initial founding, PRIEC has expanded to include researchers outside of California and has coordinated more than 50 meetings at 25 different institutions across the country featuring research by more than 200 scholars. PRIEC has now convened at University of Washington, Seattle, University of Oregon, Stanford University, University of New Mexico, Purdue University, Texas A&M, Michigan State University, Wake Forest University, Cornell University, and Boston University—to name a few. In response to growing demand, PRIEC meetings also have increased from three to six or seven per year.

The overwhelming interest in PRIEC outside of California was confirmed recently at Michigan State University (MSU), where Nazita Lajevardi and Eric Gonzalez Juenke coordinated and managed a one-day meeting consisting of five panels, 26 presentations, and a poster session with 16 posters. Panel presentations were brief and were conducted “Five-Minute-Fiesta” style,¹ including 30 minutes of Q&A for each panel. The afternoon poster session was a roaming happy hour; each poster was assigned a senior scholar as a discussant who commented on the poster in depth. The evening concluded with a dinner at Lajevardi’s home. Together, 75 participants from the REP community at MSU, Michigan broadly, the Midwest, and California attended the one-day meeting (figure 1 is a photograph of participants). To promote their attendance, out-of-state participants were offered between \$150 and \$300 of support to offset travel costs. Similar to the support occasionally offered by hosts at other institutions, this funding came from PRIEC, the organizers’ personal research accounts, Chicano Latino Studies at MSU, and the political science department at MSU. The MSU meeting is illustrative of PRIEC’s commitment to inclusivity, mentoring, and addressing pipeline challenges.

The benefits of attending and hosting a PRIEC meeting are numerous for REP scholars and for their universities more broadly. In addition to creating a welcoming space for junior scholars to access professionalization and mentorship opportunities, PRIEC meetings provide numerous public goods to a university as a whole. For instance, hosting a PRIEC meeting increases the national recognition of a university; supports a university’s diversity and inclusion goals; and provides professional development for assistant professors, graduate students, and even undergraduate students. PRIEC meetings also support faculty of color (who often are REP scholars) and foster a community of race scholars in their own as well as nearby universities. ■

NOTE

1. We adapted the “Five-Minute Fiesta” from the Human Nature Group at the University of California, San Diego, which is run by James Fowler. It is structured so that individuals either provide brief overviews of their research projects and questions or focus on a small part of a project with two or three slides.

INTRODUCING PEOPLE OF COLOR ALSO KNOW STUFF

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Political science has a fraught history with the study of race and the treatment of the people who study race (Ferguson 2016; McClain et al. 2016). This is a long-standing issue that has been discussed at length in many venues. In *PS*, our colleagues have written about the racial climate in political science and the challenges that scholars of color—particularly junior scholars—may encounter while pursuing this path (Alexander-Floyd 2008; Lavariega Monforti and Michelson 2008; Preston and Woodard 1984; Sinclair-Chapman 2019). The underrepresentation of scholars of color, coupled with the climate we may face, has left many without invaluable mentorship and support within their own departments. This has inspired leaders in the discipline—*many of whom are scholars of color*—to confront the lack-of-mentorship problem by outlining best practices for mentors (Alex-Assessnoph et al. 2005; Jordan-Zachery 2004); creating funds to support scholars of color (Michelson 2006); and creating groups that harness the power of social media to address disparities in the field, most notably Women Also Know Stuff (Beaulieu et al. 2017).

People of Color Also Know Stuff

In this context, People of Color Also Know Stuff (@POCAAlsoKnow) was created (figure 2). Our mission is to alleviate some of the issues associated with the “leaky pipeline,” and we concentrate primarily on the recruitment and retention of graduate and early-career scholars. A key aspect of our mission is to be inclusive across intersectional lines. This means that we seek to be cognizant of how gender identities, class backgrounds, sexual identities, and institutional contexts impact the advancement of scholars of color.

Our goal is to serve as a platform for cross-institutional collaboration and provide support through the promotion of scholarship, as a resource for mentoring efforts, and as an amplifying voice for the concerns of scholars of color. We hope to create a space in which we can facilitate the creation of a healthy and sustainable community for POC experts in political science.

Making It Happen

We have taken several actions. First, we created a website (POCExperts.org) with a directory of scholars of color across all subfields in political science. Using this directory, anyone seeking to diversify their syllabus, manuscript, or news story can locate a scholar of color with expertise in various fields. We currently have 179 scholars of color registered.

For 2018–2019, we created a directory of junior scholars of color on the market. As Gasman (2016) discussed in the *Washington Post*, a common reason given for the lack of faculty of color in higher education is that there simply are not enough “qualified” people of color to hire. We reject this notion. We provide a convenient way of finding scholars of color on the market by their subfields and research interests