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"Constantly, Excessively, and All the Time": The Emotional Labor of Teaching Diversity Courses

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Emotional labor accompanying academic work is often gendered and racialized, and such labor may be heightened for those teaching diversity courses. This article reports on interviews with 38 faculty members teaching diversity courses required as part of general education programs at three predominantly White liberal arts colleges in the Southeastern U.S. Findings detail the types and examples of emotional labor performed, as well as faculty members' rhetorical framing of the concept as either an expectation or choice and their attempts to set boundaries around emotional work or opt out of performing it altogether. This study leads to implications for faculty and graduate student training and socialization, as well as implications for institutional leaders to acknowledge, value, and limit emotional labor.

In academic work, faculty members engage in emotional labor and other caring work, which entails managing one's own emotions as well as those of students (Bellas, 1999; Hochschild, 1983), work that often goes unrewarded. In their study of instructors who taught required diversity education courses, Moore, Acosta, Perry, and Edwards (2010) found, "White women, women of color, and men of color showed a richer density of emotional responses" (p. 194) compared to their peers. Other acts of emotional labor include counseling, mentoring, participation in service activities such as committee membership (Harley, 2008; Lechuga, 2012; Turner & Myers, 2000), and even "service with a smile" (Tunguz, 2016, p. 3). However, there is still a gap in understanding what emotional labor entails and how faculty who are engaged in this work relate to this concept. The purpose of this study was to examine examples of emotional labor in faculty work, as well as how faculty members frame the concept of emotional labor. The specific context of diversity courses required as part of general education programs at U.S. higher education institutions provides fertile ground for examining this phenomenon, as faculty of color and women may be more likely to teach such classes and expected to engage in emotional management as controversial topics arise (Moore et al., 2010; Perry, Moore, Edwards, Acosta, & Frey, 2009).

Given this context of faculty members teaching undergraduate diversity courses that fulfill general education requirements at three predominantly White liberal arts colleges in the U.S. South, our research questions include:

1. How do faculty members describe the types and examples of emotional labor in which they engage?
2. How do these faculty frame the concept of emotional labor in their own contexts?

For this study, we define emotional labor as the process of, and behaviors associated with, managing, performing, and evoking emotions for a given job or career — in this case, as a diversity course instructor (Roberts & Iyall Smith, 2002).

Framework and Literature

Emotional Labor

Hochschild (1983) defined emotional labor as emotion management in the labor force whereby one creates or maintains behaviors or norms consistent with social and organizational norms. Workers adhere to these norms, or "feeling rules," that are learned through professional socialization, organizational rules, or codes of conduct. Some of these norms include "acceptable and unacceptable emotions to display at work," called display rules (Mesmer-Magnus, DeChurch, & Wax, 2012, p. 8). Hochschild (1983) described two levels of "professional acting," or emotional labor strategies, in which people engage while working: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting entails people's outward appearance to others, whereby they pretend to hold certain feelings. An example of surface acting in an educational context might be an instructor faking a neutral facial expression in class after a student shares an offensive comment. Deep acting involves a person's "attempt to modify feelings to match the required displays" (Grandey, 2003, p. 87). While engaging in deep acting, people "evoke in ourselves the feelings we need in order to seem to feel the right feeling for the job" (p. 334). An example of deep acting could be an instructor attempting to empathize with a student who said an offensive comment while outwardly appearing amenable to the student's contribution. In summary, surface acting entails people "modify their displays without shaping inner feelings" (Grandey, 2003, p. 87); while engaged in deep acting, people modify "internal

affect so that it matches with outward expressions" (Spencer & Rupp, 2009, p. 429).

The extent to which workers perceive they must conform to organizational display rules has implications for the worker, the organization, and those whom the organization serves. For example, Mesmer-Magnus et al. (2012) found emotional labor constructs like surface acting are positively associated with employee burnout and stress. Although Hochschild's concept of emotional labor is rooted in management and business fields, she posits that in any occupation that interacts with others and must conform to socially prescribed norms, it is probable an individual will engage in emotional labor. In fact, Hochschild (1983) listed college teachers as one of the census occupations that involves a considerable amount of emotional labor.

Emotional Labor in the Academy

The concept of emotional labor is apparent in much of the work professors perform in their various teaching, service, and research roles (Bellas, 1999; Hochschild, 1983; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011). The classroom is a site in which instructors engage in emotional labor by maintaining student interest, managing classroom dynamics, and motivating student learning. Instructors are expected to simultaneously moderate their own emotions, as well as their students', and, in some cases, "exhibit neutrality…in treating students equitably" (Bellas, 1999, p. 100).

There is a growing body of literature that has considered different aspects of the emotional labor faculty members perform in higher education contexts. Previous studies have detailed emotional labor in faculty life by exploring faculty members' emotion management in college classrooms (e.g. Harlow, 2003; Roberts & Iyall Smith, 2002), positive and negative emotions related to teaching (Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011), women's overrepresentation in service expectations (Bellas, 1999; Hanasono et al., 2018; Misra, Lundquist, Holmes, & Agiomavritis, 2011; O'Meara, Kuvaeva, Nyunt, Waugaman, & Jackson, 2017a; O'Meara, Lubaeva, & Nyunt, 2017b), persistent institutional marginalization of faculty of color who perform emotional labor (Harley, 2008; Lechuga, 2012), women's intellectual work (Gonzales, 2018), emotional labor and professional outcomes (Mahoney, Buboltz, Buckner, & Doverspike, 2011), and faculty experiences of microaggressions (Garran, Aymer, Gelman, & Miller, 2015; Hunn, Harley, Ellitot, & Canfield, 2015; Pittman, 2012) and aggression in the classroom (May & Tenzek, 2018). However, less has been researched about experiences faculty members identify as emotional labor in their practice and how they frame the concept of emotional labor in higher education.

Emotional labor in academe is enacted and experienced in gendered and racialized ways and impacts those with marginalized identities. For instance, research has shown differences in women performing more teaching and service activities than men (Acker & Armenti, 2004; O'Meara et al., 2017a), even though universities have not updated their evaluation policies to recognize this labor (O'Meara et al., 2017b). Faculty of color are more likely than their White peers to perform more service-related duties and serve in "diversity" capacities on committees, which are largely unrewarded in tenure systems and lead to cultural taxation (Baez, 2000; Harley, 2008; Padilla, 1994). In a study of instructors of required diversity courses at a Research I institution, Moore et al. (2010) found a "split academic labor market in which emotional work is a primary marker of gender and racial difference in the experiences of teaching" (p. 196). In the U.S., where universities were built on a patriarchal, Eurocentric structure, much of the emotional labor that includes diversity work in and out of the classroom, service responsibilities, and mentoring falls to underrepresented instructors in the academy.

Instructors may also be targeted by students while teaching on issues of diversity, which in turn may prompt instructors to engage in surface or deep acting. Microaggressions are "everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership" (Sue, 2010, p. 3). Faculty, particularly faculty with minoritized racial or gender identities, may endure microaggressions from students (e.g., Garran et al., 2015; Hunn et al., 2015; Pittman, 2012). Beyond microaggressions, students may target faculty with more aggressive behaviors. May and Tenzek (2018) found inclusion of diversity in class discussions to be one trigger for students to bully faculty, which manifested as accusations that the professor is pushing an agenda, profanity-laced outbursts in class, or departure from the classroom (May & Tenzek, 2018).

Diversity Courses in General Education

As a strategy to address racial inequality, a lack of inclusive curricula in U.S. higher education, and changes in society and culture in the U.S., institutions of higher education have incorporated required diversity courses as part of a general education curriculum for undergraduate students (Chang, 2002). A 2015 survey of AAC&U members revealed 60% of institutions reported their general education programs included diversity courses (Humphreys, 2016).

Research regarding required diversity courses largely center on student experiences and outcomes, including increased understanding of White privilege (Case, 2007), reduction of racial bias or prejudice (Chang, 2002; Denson, 2009), and awareness of structural oppression (Case, 2007) and race-based policies (Radloff, 2010). However, little has been explored regarding the experiences of those who teach required diversity courses and, specifically, their experiences navigating emotional work.

Methods

This paper is based on findings from a qualitative multiple-case study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016) rooted in critical constructivism (Kincheloe, 2008). We view reality and knowledge as socially constructed and recognize that issues of power and (in)equity pervade all teaching and learning environments (Kincheloe, 2008). The study examined three predominantly White, liberal arts-focused higher education institutions in the Southeastern United States. This article focuses on a subset of data from the larger study and examines how faculty at the three institutions engaged in emotional labor as part of their teaching. As we began analysis focused on data relevant to emotional labor, we noticed commonalities in faculty members' approaches to and framing of the concept of emotional labor across the three colleges. Thus, in this paper, we primarily examine themes common across faculty interviews at all three institutions rather than providing a cross-case analysis.

Data Collection and Participants

We selected institutions meeting the following criteria: location in the common regional context of two neighboring states in the Southern U.S.; bachelor's degree-granting institutions with at least one stand-alone diversity course requirement; a publicly available course schedule with faculty contact information. Elite College is a highly selective, private liberal arts college with about 70% White students. Selective College is also private, highly selective, and 70% White, and it includes several well-regarded professional schools in addition to the undergraduate college. Regional College, a mid-size public institution that began as a teaching college, prides itself on small class sizes and also offers several master's degree programs. Regional College has the most racial diversity, with about one-third African American student enrollment and other students of color and international students at 10%.

This study draws upon semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with faculty members teaching required undergraduate diversity courses. We purposely recruited information-rich cases embedded within each research site by contacting all faculty members who taught courses satisfying diversity requirements. Interviews with 38 participants (see Table 1) lasted 1 hour and 15 minutes on average and addressed topics including teaching methods, course content, and faculty and student identities. Specific to this article, each applicant was asked if he or she felt that he or she performed emotional labor connected to the teaching of diversity courses and to elaborate on their responses. Many shared examples and anecdotes of their emotional labor, as well as their assessment of colleagues' labor (or lack thereof). For participants who were unfamiliar with the concept or asked for a definition, we defined emotional labor as attending to students' needs beyond course content, both inside and out of the classroom, as well as addressing one's own emotional management and displays as a faculty member. Examples given included managing heated discussions in class, meeting with students who want to discuss personal issues, or managing emotional reactions and expressions in and out of class.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Interview transcripts were analyzed using inductive coding, building codes directly from the data. Once the excerpts of manuscripts that addressed emotional labor were identified, the researchers inductively recoded these data, identifying codes such as modeling disclosure, recognition of emotional labor, tone setting, race and gender in emotional labor, and emotional labor as a job duty. These codes were organized and recoded into 39 codes (see Table 2) to group like codes and reduce the total number of codes. Finally, themes were derived from the reorganized codes that reflect the findings presented in this article. Each interview transcript excerpt was coded by one team member, coded again by a second team member to identify discrepancies or missing codes, then verified with all three team members to reach consensus on code applications and, subsequently, themes and results. While the first three themes—emotional labor in teaching, framing emotional labor, and limiting emotional labor—correspond to the results sections presented below, examples from the fourth theme—identity in emotional labor— are included throughout the results section, as the relationship between emotional work and social identities including race and gender appeared across each of the themes.

We engaged in several strategies to promote trustworthiness of the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016). We shared interview transcripts with participants and sought their corrections, additions, and feedback: a member checking strategy. By collecting data at three similarly situated college campuses over the course of one semester and completing 38 interviews, we sought to collect adequate data. As we began analysis for this

Table 1
Participant Overview

Pseudonym	College	Primary position	Discipline	Race/ethnicity, gender
Alexis	Elite	Tenure track faculty	Humanities	African American woman
Allan	Elite	Tenure track faculty	Humanities	Asian man
Alicia	Regional	Tenured faculty	Social science	White woman
Amy	Regional	Non-tenure track, full time	Humanities	White woman
Andrew	Regional	Tenured faculty	Social science	White man
Annie	Elite	Tenure track faculty	Social science	White woman
Bill	Elite	Non-tenure track, part time	Social science	White man
Charles	Regional	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	White man
Chris	Selective	Tenure track faculty	Humanities	White man
Daniel	Elite	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White man
Elena	Elite	Tenure track faculty	Humanities	Latinx woman
Greg	Selective	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White man
Gwen	Selective	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White woman
James	Elite	Tenured faculty	Social science	African American man
Janice	Elite	Administrator	Social science	Asian American woman
Jay	Elite	Tenured faculty	Social science	Asian American man
Jeanne	Regional	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	White woman
Jeffrey	Regional	Tenure track faculty	Social science	African American man
Jess	Regional	Administrator	Social science	White woman
Joe	Selective	Tenured faculty	Social science	White man
Joshua	Elite	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White man
Joy	Elite	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	Asian American woman
Kate	Elite	Tenure track faculty	Social science	White woman
Kathleen	Elite	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White woman
Laurel	Regional	Administrator	Social science	African American woman
Leo	Regional	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	Latinx/White man
Liz	Regional	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	African American woman
Luis	Elite	Tenured faculty	Humanities	Latinx/White man
Mary	Selective	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	African American woman
Michael	Selective	Administrator	Social science	African American man
Nancy	Regional	Non-tenure track, part time	Humanities	White woman
Patty	Regional	Tenured faculty	Humanities	White woman
Priscilla	Elite	Non-tenure track, full time	Social science	White woman
Rita	Elite	Administrator	Humanities	Latinx woman
Roxanne	Selective	Non-tenure track, full time	Humanities	Latinx woman
Sydney	Selective	Tenured faculty	Humanities	African American woman
Veronica	Selective	Tenured faculty	Humanities	Latinx/White woman
Violet	Regional	Administrator	Social science	White woman

Note: All full-time administrators held non-tenure track faculty appointments.

manuscript, we found that we reached data saturation related to perspectives on emotional labor and that original themes ceased to emerge after coding approximately 20 of the 38 interviews. As mentioned above, all data was analyzed by multiple researchers on the team to surface divergent perspectives. Additionally, we constructed an audit trail for the study (Merriam & Tisdale, 2016), documenting all study recruitment materials, interview and field notes, transcripts, codes, and manuscript drafts.

We also reflected on our positionalities, both individually and as a team, acknowledging the influence of our own subjectivities on all phases of the research process. Reflection on our varied perspectives in terms of professional and teaching experience, as well as our varied racial and gender identities, strengthened our analysis. I (first author) am a White, queer, cisgender man and a tenure-track faculty member with a professional background in student affairs and diversity and in inclusion work in higher education. Students are socialized to avoid seeing a White man as an expected provider of emotional labor; though I keep tissues on my office table, I have

Table 2
Coding Frame and Themes

Theme/meta-code	Code
Emotional labor in teaching	Bringing emotion into the classroom
	Desiring more emotion/passion
	Emotional labor (EL) connected to course content
	Engaging in EL
	Examples of EL
	Giving feedback to students
	Objectivity/subjectivity
	Self-selection of students into/out of classes
Framing emotional labor	Choosing to perform EL
	Discounting ability to perform EL
	EL as job duty
	EL as others' work
	EL as positive
	EL as burden
	EL as pedagogical tool
	EL in administration
	Establishing boundaries
	Individual choice vs. expectation
	Interrupting student expectations to perform EL
	Tension in performing EL
Limiting emotional labor	Effects of EL
	Externalizing EL
	Not taught how to deal with EL
	Recognition/compensation of EL
	Strategies to reduce EL
	Tone setting
	Turning point in approach to EL
Identity and emotional labor	Age in EL
	Gender (one's own) in EL
	Harder for Whites and/or men to perform EL
	Men performing less EL
	Race (one's own) in EL
	Race + gender (one's own) in EL
	Race + gender (others') in EL
	Sexuality in EL
	Sought out by students of color
	Students of color supporting each other
	White guilt
	Women as nurturers

replaced the box only once in two years. I conducted the 38 interviews and acknowledged that the interview process was shaped in part by participants' reactions to me and perceptions of me. For instance, I found it telling that White and/or male participants felt free to share with me that they avoided emotional labor or thought it was better performed by their colleagues. For me (second author), a White, hetero, cisgender woman, I am aware of the cumulative advantages (earned and unearned) that have positioned me to earn a Ph.D. and work in the academy. In my work, I find myself engaging in "closed door" discussions with teaching assistants and assistant instructors about navigating relationships with advisors, about how graduate students may disclose their interest in teaching rather than research to supervisors, and about general advice for other graduate students from my same program, as I work at the same institution from which I earned my doctorate. For me (third author), I am a Black, hetero, cisgender woman. I am a non-tenure track faculty member at a Predominately White Institution. Much of my work comes from a de-stabilized perspective, in

part due to the time-limited nature of my contract. Emotional labor work for me is being the depository of anger and frustration experienced by students. Students feel liberated to approach me in ways that they would not do to White males or females. To a certain extent faculty are the same. These interactions, with students and colleagues, can be positive while at times emotionally challenging. I was told early in my professional career to never have tissues on my desk as it could be perceived as an invitation for individuals to emotionally disclose. I am currently on my third box of tissues that I used to keep in my desk drawer. I think that I am viewed as a safe person for authentic conversations that may include the nuances of persistence and degree completion.

Delimitations of this study include, primarily, the contexts and participants: instructors of courses meeting general education diversity requirements at three predominantly White liberal arts colleges in the Southeastern United States. One key delimitation is that the colleges have relatively low enrollments and small class sizes, which promote student-faculty interactions on a one-on-one basis and may create favorable conditions for high emotional engagement. While this context offers a window into emotional labor and may offer some transferable insights, further research could focus on other contexts. In addition, all perspectives in this study are from faculty members who discuss their own emotional labor and how they perceived students' emotions and reactions. Future research designs could include the perspectives of students, their own emotional reactions and labor, and the ways they perceive their interactions with faculty members, as well as the perspectives of academic administrators who evaluate faculty and help set policy around rewards and recognition for faculty members.

Results

Engaging in Emotional Labor: Examples in the Classroom and/or with Students

Participants focused their examples and descriptions of emotional labor to two broad environments: in and out of their classrooms. Classrooms were seen as spaces in which students engaged in discussions with each other and learned by example, especially when instructors were responsible for mitigating contentious topics and assuaging upset students. Participants attributed these interactions as examples of performing emotional labor. Kate, a social science faculty member, believed emotional labor is inherent to teaching: "If you're not emotionally invested, you probably need to get into another line of work." Most participants discussed the work they did to set up inclusive classrooms as emotional labor. This included self-disclosure about their own experiences and being vulnerable about their own identities and beliefs as a way to elicit student engagement in class. Laurel, a social science instructor, stated, "I do feel like I do need to share some things from my background and my experience because I'm expecting them to do that...and [let] them know that I'm a real person and I have challenges." At the same time, Laurel, along with others, were conflicted about how much objectivity they should project in class:

> As a Black woman, I want to make sure that I'm presenting ideas in a very open, objective and perceptive way ... because you know, I feel like sometimes the message can get distorted by the messenger sometimes [*sic*], and I'm realistic about that. I don't say it to them, but I think about that a lot.

Faculty members with minoritized identities, such as Laurel, faced difficult choices about how much of their own opinions and emotions to disclose with students who might use the faculty members' minoritized identities as weapons against them in course evaluations or complaints. In the classroom, participants also spoke about the ways they monitored classroom discussions so that students did not feel attacked or harmed. One social science faculty member, Bill, recalled occasions students have "in essence asked me to protect them from other students who they viewed as hostile to their point of view." Most participants weighed how to appear objective while reconciling their own political and social beliefs, all while eliciting different viewpoints from students in class.

Participants described the ways in which they engaged in emotional labor out of the classroom, which included personal advising, providing emotional support, and serving in supportive roles in organizations or service-oriented activities. Veronica, a humanities professor, said that emotion came up, not around course content, but around students' personal lives: "I get to know students well. We're dealing with, 'How do you feel more confident? How do you feel more secure? How do you manage your time, your discipline?'" Joy, a social science professor, talked about the period of time following the 2016 presidential election when some of her students were "grieving." She spent time checking in on her Muslim students, explaining, "I have to email them, like how are you doing? What's going on?" Several participants discussed the fine line of listening to students' problems and deciding when to refer them to professional counselors. Jeanne, a lecturer in a social science, is accustomed to students speaking with her privately after class, especially after sensitive topics emerge out of their classroom discussions. She explained, "[T]hey'll come to office hours ... [It] is

exhausting." She sympathized with students who valued their relationship and would claim, "I know you, I don't know a counselor," because they did not want to talk to a stranger.

Several faculty saw pedagogical benefits to embracing emotional labor. Jeanne experienced some "emotional exhaustion" from teaching diversity courses and the added emotional dimension to her labor but did not see the experience as difficult. She said she encouraged students' emotional expressions by asking "lots of questions and [giving] lots of space and lots of patience. … If you're not willing to walk that growth journey with them, then you shouldn't be teaching this course." Although Elena, a humanities faculty member, discussed performing emotional labor "constantly, excessively, and all the time," she also said that she has learned to "make more room" for emotion in her classroom and to "harness that energy and use it. … better discussions, more probing conversations, students making more connections." Elena believed that emotion in the classroom could increase student interest and engagement, yet also has a spillover effect in that more students seek her time outside of class as well. She also acknowledged, "[I]t is depleting, so I have to keep it under control." Elena also pointed to the institutional context, a liberal arts college with small class sizes and where faculty-student interactions outside of class are encouraged, which she believed helped set the stage for more emotional labor than in other contexts.

Positioning Emotional Labor as Expectation or Choice: Participant Framing of the Concept

Beyond the examples given by participants of their emotional labor in relation to diversity courses, interview transcripts also provided evidence of how faculty members positioned and framed the concept of emotional labor: an expectation of faculty members or a voluntary activity.

Participants who saw emotional labor as an expectation and/or job duty of a faculty position also tended to discuss such work as a burden, and as tense and contested. Participants broadly agreed that faculty members with minoritized racial/ethnic and/or gender identities were much more commonly expected or sought to perform emotional labor. Liz saw emotional labor as an expectation that accompanied her identities as an African American woman; she had been warned by her advisor in graduate school that she would be expected to perform emotional labor and teach courses related to diversity issues: "He said … unless you're at an HBCU [Historically Black College/University], you're most likely going to be a minority faculty member there. You'll be called on to do these kinds of classes." Liz and Jeffrey talked about both emotional labor being connected to their personalities and the difficulty of disentangling where expectations ended and their own preferences and choices began. Jeffrey discussed struggling with "how I'm perceived" in an administrative position that focused on diversity and the increased expectation to visibly perform emotional labor. Likewise, Kathleen saw it "as kind of inseparable from doing this work" and teaching courses on diversity, and she described being sought out by both students and faculty as expert particularly on diversity issues.

Faculty members who positioned performing emotional labor as, at least partially, a matter of choice often saw the work as valuable and beneficial to their teaching. Several participants saw their labor as both an expectation and a choice or saw choice in embracing the expectation. Despite the difficulty of engaging in some emotionally draining conversations with students in and out of the classroom, Alicia embraced emotional work and reflected on the following:

> [T]he positive emotions that I have about teaching about diversity. I do not feel usually something like emotional exhaustion from it. … I understand how a lot of people might feel like it's emotionally difficult [but] it is not my experience very much.

Alicia framed her emotional labor as a positive force that kept her enthusiastic about teaching but recognized that some colleagues may burn out from excessive emotional work.

Priscilla also embraced emotional labor but recognized the problematic assumptions associated with who can and should perform it. She noted the following:

> I'm looked to [to perform emotional labor], but I also choose to do it, and it's complicated because I know this is deeply gendered. Here I am a feminist, steeped in feminist theory, and doing a lot of handholding of more young women than young men, I think, just because of the kinds of courses that I'm teaching. I don't want to glorify this labor or to suggest that it should come naturally to us.

She tried to remain attentive to student cues that they might need to talk, such as a student slowly picking up his or her belongings after class as others leave. In one such instance, Priscilla stayed behind and a student discussed academic struggles and a recent disability diagnosis. In this way, Priscilla positioned emotional labor as part of the expected work of faculty members:

> I'm going to defend emotional labor as a really legitimate part of teaching and I think that it gets a really bad rap, in especially this current political climate, all this talk about snowflakes and the millennial generation who've never had to work a

> day in their life and are all spoiled and they all want trophies. That's not really the students that I know. … To me, emotional labor means treating people like people and being aware that the work that I'm being paid to do as a college professor goes, can and in a lot of cases should go, very far beyond factual knowledge and intellectual scope.

While recognizing the problematic distribution of expectations to perform emotional work, Priscilla firmly positioned such labor as expected of academics.

Bounding Emotional Labor—Or Leaving It to Others to Perform

Participants, particularly women, discussed the need to set boundaries around their emotional labor. Laurel began reflecting on who carries out emotional work during a training for mandatory reporters of sexual assault, and she speculated about a gender gap: "I looked around the room … I was like, I bet that guy doesn't deal with that." She said that he "set the tone in a very different way," and she decided that she needed to set a similar tone to reduce the amount of emotional labor she performed. Following advice she had read in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, she did not keep tissues in a visible place in her office so that she did not "even invite the opportunity for students to think they can just make that emotional connection" automatically. Laurel still said she struggled with performing less emotional labor: "I don't want to be insensitive. I'm not trying to be detached completely from people, but I also, I need that boundary, too."

Similarly, Alexis shared that she struggled with the following:

> . . . how to set boundaries while also wanting to be as supportive of a professor, mentor, and just a citizen, as a person. When my students come to me to my office and they're just in tears, like I don't want to kick them out, like I'm not a monster. And yet at the same time, I know that many of my colleagues who are on the tenure track with me do not deal with that as regularly as I do.

Alexis prioritized discussing course content, but still talked with students about other matters within the boundaries of office hours and length of appointments: "Let's talk about your paper first and your work in my class first, and then if we have time to talk about what else is going on in your life, I'm still here for you." Still, students—particularly students holding minoritized identities—wanted to discuss their experiences on campus:

> Because the students who come into my office crying, they're not crying about their papers, or their grades; like it would be refreshing if that was what they were crying about, I think I could handle that. No, they're coming in talking about microaggressions, about things that happen on campus, things people are saying to them: faculty members and students.

While Alexis did her best to set boundaries and prioritize discussions of course content with students, she recognized that many students, particularly those with minoritized identities, sought her out and felt comfortable sharing their struggles on campus with her. Holding a position of trust was difficult to turn down or escape.

Lastly, several participants (primarily men) discussed awareness of emotional labor but positioned it as work for others to perform and/or discounted their own ability to perform it, thus setting an even clearer boundary by claiming to opt out of emotional labor altogether. James, who said he was "not particularly good at" emotional labor, discussed his detachment from social media, where he believed students expressed themselves emotionally, content which, he said, "I don't read, one, because I don't care, and two because I don't know how, and three, I don't really want to know what their private musings are. I think it's best for our relationship for me not to know." He said that students do not usually approach him to discuss their personal lives. Joshua believed he conveyed he did not have the extra time to engage in emotional work:

> As for myself, I'm usually so busy with grading and designing lectures and discussions that deep emotional engagement is something that in a way there's not time for because I've got a stack of midterms on my desk. … I don't want to imply that it's just a job, but it is a job.

Likewise, as a senior faculty member, Jay focused more on junior faculty of color being "disproportionally approached by students of color" to perform emotional labor than on his own labor.

Discussion

This study examined emotional labor of instructors who teach required undergraduate diversity courses. Our findings elucidated the examples these instructors offered of the emotional labor they perform, both in and out of the classroom, and how they positioned emotional labor related to their own professional contexts. Although many participants viewed expending emotional labor as an inherent component of teaching, they differed on the limits to which they believed they should engage in this work, even if it was seen as a pedagogical tool to advance student learning. This study adds to the literature by identifying

examples of emotional labor in the context of teaching diversity courses and what it means for instructors in their professional—and sometimes personal—lives.

Participants from this study emphasized the potential pedagogical benefits in embracing emotional labor, which often centered on bringing emotion into the classroom. Participants chose if and when they offered their own opinions or personal experiences for the purposes of engaging students and connecting with course content. In line with Gonzales' (2018) work regarding the intellectual work of women faculty, this process was similar to what she called "deploying one's subjectivities," whereby women "drew from their experiences, sense of the world, and their cultural and spiritual intuitions as they went about their work" (p. 16). Rather than shy away from their lived experiences, identities, and epistemologies, the participants in our study who chose to bring their subjectivities into the classroom did so because they believed it was a way to connect to their students and, thus, with their subject matter. Because women constantly perform this kind of intellectual and emotional work, Gonzales (2018) went on to say:

> [I]t seems unproductive and even hostile to ignore the bodies of knowledge that women bring with them into academe, especially when such knowledges—anchored in childhood, family life, or perhaps in experiences of racism and/or sexism—have stirred their intellectual curiosities. (p. 19)

Roberts and Iyall Smith (2002) stated that when instructors disclose experiences that shape their interaction with topics on hand, disclosure "allows students to see that the classroom is a safe atmosphere in which to share information, and that this process might help their peers understand the course materials" (p. 297). In doing so, these instructors related their own lived experiences as way to build an inclusive and more engaged classroom.

Even if some of the participants consciously decided to incorporate their own emotions— including thoughts, feelings, and behaviors—for pedagogical reasons, they also struggled with the extent to which they should convey objectivity. Participants were engaging in emotional labor strategies such as surface acting and deep acting (Hochschild, 1983). In our study, participants referred to instances where they engaged in surface acting, whereby if they believed students perceived them as impartial, they could create a climate more conducive for learning. The consequences of this can be taxing for the instructor, to "take care" of students in order for their entire classroom to be engaged with course content while outwardly projecting a neutral stance. Lechuga (2012) described how underrepresented faculty sometimes must "remain silent" and act inauthentically, which may ultimately "restrict one's autonomy because an individual is compelled to behave inauthentically so as to conform to the feeling rules of academe" (p. 94). Lechuga went on to state that remaining silent "may take a harder toll on underrepresented faculty when derogatory remarks are made about them, their abilities, or other minority faculty" (p. 94).

Participants in this study also discussed emotional labor from the stance of caring for their students' emotions in addition to managing their own. There are differing attitudes regarding the level of care instructors owe students in their learning environments. However, we do know that that positive classroom climates can energize students' learning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Ultimately, an instructor is in a position to create a space for learning and should consider how students' emotional lives interact with course climate, and, thus, learning. This is not to say emotion work in classrooms is easy but considering the climate and how students access course materials, both intellectually and emotionally, has implications for how and to what extent we hope students learn.

Findings from this study reinforce a body of research that has already shown that the strictures of the academy that reinforce particular forms of emotional labor are often devalued and invisible, such as mentoring and advising, committee work, and recruiting underrepresented students (Bellas, 1999; Hanasono et al., 2018; O'Meara et al., 2017a). Moreover, this work is more likely to be performed by women, people of color, and those of other marginalized identities (Baez, 2000; Hanasono et al., 2018; Misra et al., 2011; O'Meara et al., 2017b; Tunguz, 2016). In our study, participants spoke about the disproportionate amount of emotional labor they spent in caring for students who shared underrepresented identities, often because they knew there were not others present or willing to do this work. Others spoke about their decisions not to perform emotional labor because they believed they were ill-suited, for whatever reason, to do so; these participants were often White and/or male and less often sought out by students to perform the work. However, scholars advocate that cross-cultural, cross-gender, and cross-race mentoring relationships are imperative in building a diverse and supportive academic climate in higher education (Reddick, 2012; Stanley & Lincoln, 2005). People who have historically been privileged in higher education spaces must do more and better work, which includes lifting the sole burden of emotional labor off of those who "are good at it."

In addition to the study boundaries (delimitations) we noted in the methods section, this study is also limited by several factors, including participant self-selection and institutional definitions of diversity courses. We contacted all instructors listed as teaching

general education diversity courses at the three colleges. Because only some of the instructors volunteered to participate, we cannot determine whether the participants' viewpoints are representative of all diversity course instructors at the institutions. In addition, we only contacted those instructors designated as teaching courses that satisfied diversity requirements, as determined by the colleges. It is likely that other courses not flagged for this purpose still incorporated issues of equity and diversity and, thus, we could not account for the perspectives of instructors teaching these courses.

Implications

Implications from this study relate to the visibility, recognition, and boundaries of emotional labor, particularly in the diversity course teaching context. Though participants shared examples of their own and their colleagues' emotional work, they also frequently noted the near invisibility of discussions centered on this work on campus. Emotional labor was not discussed in official venues or documents such as faculty handbooks and contracts, tenure and promotion documents, or department meetings, but it was instead relegated to hallway conversations and other unofficial venues. Thus, emotional labor must be first be made visible in higher education institutions by academic administrators and faculty members, including within graduate training and programs preparing future faculty.

If emotional labor becomes visible in official venues on campus, it must then be recognized. Academic leaders, departments, and faculty members should discuss how emotional work is recognized and considered within hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions. Though this labor is often considered to be a form of service work—the type of faculty labor least valued or documented compared to research and teaching—institutions must acknowledge how emotional work can also pervade research and teaching environments. Faculty may become mentors to students in their courses or to research assistants, and such work should be documented and valued.

This study highlights that diversity course instructors may be more expected than those teaching other topics to engage in this work, so faculty and administrators must recognize the differential contexts in which emotional labor is expected and performed, as well as the differing expectations students and faculty may place on instructors minoritized by race, ethnicity, and gender. White women faculty and faculty of color of all genders, particularly those who teach courses on diversity topics, may be unjustly expected to perform the bulk of emotional labor on campus or in a given department. This study points to the potential pedagogical benefits of bringing emotion into the classroom, but such work may still be burdensome. Given the likelihood of emotional labor appearing in conjunction with diversity courses, such course registrations might be capped at a lower number than other courses, or additional support might be provided through teaching assistants or release time. Conversations about such changes will inevitably be charged and controversial, but the current *de facto* policy that some faculty perform invisible labor while others opt out is not sustainable if institutional leaders wish to recruit and retain minoritized faculty.

Lastly, if emotional labor is made visible and officially recognized, institutional leaders must also provide resources to help faculty set boundaries around the work. Institutions can assist faculty in strategizing around their emotional work through educational resources and workshops on the topic, offered through faculty affairs offices, teaching and learning centers, and counseling or human resource offices. Faculty members likely do not receive specific guidance or training in graduate school on these topics, aside from conversations with mentors who are attuned to emotional labor or who perform it themselves. Programs for new faculty in particular may be valuable sites for discussing boundaries and strategies. Instructors in this study shared their strategies for setting limits on emotional work, including limiting office hour appointments to a set period of time and committing to discuss course content first and turning to other matters if time remains. Though it may seem insensitive to refer students to counseling services, instructors must be knowledgeable of available campus resources and of the circumstances when a referral is appropriate or mandated. Because this work is, by its nature, emotionally taxing, faculty must also be aware of and utilize resources to assist in maintenance of their own mental health and personal and professional development.

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