

▪ Were your project's objectives met?;

The overall objectives for our project were met, with attention to providing undergraduate students a safe space to discuss their thoughts and reflections on the reading material that was provided to them. The winter quarter (2022) was quite challenging, as many students were studying remotely, and so we focused our events in spring quarter (2022). The students who attended had valuable and unique conversations, developed strong bonds, and remain in touch; this was one of the major successes of our project.

In addition to our undergraduate book club, with the approval of the VOICE grants supervisors, we expanded our program to include weekly events focused on diversity-equity-inclusion (DEI) during the Other Worlds Laboratory summer program within the UCSC Astronomy department. This was a very valuable extension of our program, as it was attended by undergraduates, graduate students, researchers and faculty, including from other institutions. These events allowed for important discussions and exchange of ideas among people in STEM at many different levels, and added an important dimension of the OWL program that went beyond the traditional science and research aspects.

▪ Who attended, listened, etc. and how many?**▪ What demographics did attendees represent (students, staff etc.)?;**

For the book club, approximately 7-10 undergraduates regularly attended the book club meetings, as well as 2-3 graduate and postdoc mentors.

For the OWL DEI events, we had an average of 20-30 attendees, consisting of undergraduate and graduate students, postdocs, researchers and faculty.

▪ What was challenging about completing your project?

The most challenging aspect of completing our project was retention of undergraduate students, as well as graduate and postdoc mentors. In speaking with other VOICE recipients during our meetings, as well as meeting with Viviana Marsano (UCSB), we realized that the most powerful incentive for retention of students would have been to structure this project as a class, and to offer them units (as opposed to meals or refreshments). Additionally, coordinating graduate and postdoc schedules over the course of the full year was also challenging, and many people who were initially interested were not able to commit long-term, leaving us with a core group of 3-4 mentors.

For the summer DEI programs through the OWL program, our attendance and retention was much higher, although it was only over the course of the month (four meetings total). We had fewer challenges with advertising these events and attendance, as we were under an umbrella program (OWL) that already has a following, with regular announcements.

▪ What impact do you think your work had on the campus community?

The impact of the undergraduate book club component of our project was significant for UCSC students, particularly those who attended regularly. In particular, it allowed students to question STEM paradigms and challenged them to think beyond the classroom, which were the objectives of the proposed projects. The fact that we had selected The Disordered Cosmos by Chanda Prescod-Weinstein, and that she was a visiting professor in the Spring was particularly impactful, as many students had additional context for viewing and understanding her campus presentations. Finally, in some instances, the students did build and maintain lasting connections.

For the OWL DEI series, given that the attendees were affiliated with both UCSC and other institutions, these events were valuable in facilitating conversation and cross-pollination of ideas among students and researchers from diverse institutions. For the UCSC campus community, it was a unique and valued component of the summer OWL program, and also provided a space for students, researchers, and faculty from Earth and Planetary Sciences, Astronomy and Physics departments to consider issues that are typically not addressed in the classroom or in research pursuits.

▪ **How might the Center change the process moving forward to further support VOICE Initiative awardees' efforts?**

Moving forward, I feel that an informational webinar on the VOICE program prior to grant submission would be very valuable. I think that such an offering would allow prospective grant recipients to hear from prior grantees about their diverse projects, as well as learn about the success and challenges in delivering these programs.

The reason I suggest this informational webinar is because until I learned about Viviana's project, I did not realize that I could have structured my VOICE grant as a class, as I thought that I would need funds to pay the instructor. However, I learned that classes taught by staff (for which I qualify) are unpaid, and so I could use the funds for classroom supplies and programming.