

University of Puget Sound
Michael Benitez, Jr.
Dean of Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer

Michael Benitez became Dean of Diversity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer at the University of Puget Sound effective June 5, 2013. Before coming to UPS, he was director of the Office of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership at Grinnell College.

Benitez is a national social justice educator and activist-scholar with extensive experience in education and campus diversity issues. A highly sought-after speaker and workshop leader at conferences and colleges across the nation, Benitez has authored book chapters and articles on topics of identity, cultural centers, ethnic studies, pedagogy, and hip hop culture. He often collaborates with leading scholars and activists in the field of anti-oppression and social justice education addressing issues related to diversity and multiculturalism, identity formations, race and ethnic relations, knowledge representation and production, youth and leadership development, and pedagogy and praxis.



Benitez is co-editor of the anthology, *Crash Course: Reflections on the Film “Crash” for Critical Dialogues About Race, Power and Privilege*, a collection of essays by some of the country’s most prominent anti-racism writers, scholars and activists. He has also contributed to *Being Latino On-Line Magazine* (2009), the American Mosaic Online Database (2012), *Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity, Theory, and Practice* (2010), and is featured in *Cracking the Codes: The System of Racial Inequity* (2012), a documentary film that examines systemic inequity and racial inequity in U.S. history, culture and identity.

Benitez completed both his Bachelor and Master degrees at the Pennsylvania State University where he also worked with and helped revive and strengthen the University’s College Assistance Migrant Program. He is a doctoral candidate in educational leadership and policy studies at Iowa State University.

As Director of Diversity Initiatives and Social Justice at Dickinson College, he established the “Diversity Monologues,” an ongoing annual program aimed at highlighting the creative talents of students while addressing diversity and social justice - a program he has helped implement and shape at multiple institutions.

Benitez served as Director of Intercultural Development and the Black Cultural Center at Lafayette College, as adjunct faculty in the Graduate School of Leadership and Professional Advancement at Duquesne University, and as Director of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership at Grinnell College.