**Title:** Development of the Distance from Privilege Measures  
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This session will report on the development and validation of the Distance from Privilege (DFP) measures. These measures were developed to help understand talented women’s persistence (or lack of it) in STEM careers. Distance from privilege, that is, the mainstream or core of societies’ power cents, can impact the talent development of women.


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**Summary of Major Findings:**

1. **DFP: Access to Resources** (11 items)  
a. two clear factors with acceptable internal consistency accounting for 50% of the variance, corresponding to social capital and economic resources.  
b. For less privileged women, scholarships and other support for their education may not, by themselves, provide the necessary social networks that can support and encourage persistence in college and STEM fields.

2. **DFP: Status** (“Ladder Scale”: 10 items)  
a. acceptable internal consistency; measure provides self-perception of one’s status  
b. effectively discriminated between: males and females; minorities and non-minorities; heterosexuals and nonheterosexuals; and levels of socioeconomic status, as well as types of geographic locations as predicted by theory and research on privilege.  
c. students can be vulnerable to stereotype threat and that can affect achievement and persistence in college.

**What we learned:**

- DFP more comprehensive view of status than simple demographic facts of race, class, or gender, or the common, but less descriptive variable of reduced or free lunch.

- DFP may be used as a start of discussion in counseling talented women (e.g., stereotype threat; mentoring opportunities; perceived status and access to resources and the impact of those constructs)  
- engagement with faculty and involvement in the campus are the strongest predictors of persistence

- female student’s perceptions of the college environment and of mentoring accounted for 52% of the variance in persistence (Gagliardia, 2005).

- gender relations (especially at the end of the STEM pipeline) very important for women (Multon, Kerr, Fry, & Syme, 2007)