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## **Brittney Dennis**

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**Podcast link:** <https://soundcloud.com/user-519377288/brittney-dennis>

### **Florida State University as the Number ONE choice to pursue a graduate degree**

I chose FSU to continue my graduate education after a campus visit. The people in the [Sociology Department](#) made me feel welcomed. I also had a generous offer in the offer letter that was competitive and showed that FSU is serious about recruiting top talent.

### **Motivation to pursue a graduate degree**

I was motivated to pursue a doctoral degree in the field of sociology because of the impact that sociological research has on changing our society for the better. I want to become an expert in the skill set necessary to track social patterns that enables sociologists and other social scientists to create the interventions necessary to enact change.

### **Importance and/or impact of research and work**

I research race and gender disparities in society. More specifically my dissertation will focus on racial/ethnic and gender disparities in tracking student success outcomes of individuals attending institutions of higher education. This work is important because generally when we think about students who utilize student success centers, we expect results in terms of success in the university/college setting and success in obtaining a viable career upon graduation. However, this is not always the case. Some groups achieve success at different rates. This calls to mind important factors to pay attention to in how we measure and gather data on student success. For example, in the field of Higher Education, there exists a range of data on these outcomes but research shows that the data is not fully utilized by professional staff and the skillsets needed to properly analyze the data is lacking. This has a direct effect on which students get the help and services they need and the implementation and elimination of programs.

### **Advice for anyone considering graduate school**

The advice I would offer for anyone considering graduate school is to try to figure out your career aspirations before entering a program. The detail of various programs of study for graduate school are not always made transparent at the undergraduate level. It is best to make sure that the graduate program you choose will work for your long-term needs and goals.

### **Accomplishments during academic career**

In 2015-2016, I was awarded the [Leslie N. Wilson-Delores Auzenne Assistantship](#) and inducted into the [FSU Graduate Fellows Society](#). I wrote an article for an academic blog, [Sociology Lens on race and cultural hegemony](#) and a book chapter, [“It’s Appreciation, Not Appropriation! I Don’t Know Why You’re Offended!”: Understanding Exploitation and Cultural Appropriation](#) for an edited volume on Getting Real About Race. I currently serve as a board member for [DIRECTO](#), a student organization that fosters open dialogue about diversity and inclusion in higher education.

### **Career aspirations**

Upon graduating with my doctoral degree, I plan to pursue a career in higher education at an executive administrative level. I will focus my job search on positions that advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion like, Director of Diversity and Inclusion and Senior Assistant Director of Admission for Diversity Outreach.

