

Identity, Community and Professional Development: A Multicultural Approach to Learning

MSA | MULTICULTURAL STUDENT AFFAIRS

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CIC | CAMPUS INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY

Divisional Level Learning Outcomes

- Personal Development
- Social Responsibility
- Interpersonal Competence

CIC Learning Outcomes

- ...understand the impact of their identities on their development as leaders
- ...understand their individual and collective responsibility to create safe, equitable and inclusive communities.
- ... acquire skills that will enable them to participate in respectful dialogue across difference and foster an inclusive community

MSA Program Level Learning Outcomes

- ...explore the intersectionality of their identities and how they contribute to personal success
- ... utilize resources in order to navigate the communities and institutions in which they participate
- ... analyze cultural differences to create a more socially just campus community through empathy and understanding

Activity Level Learning Outcomes

MSA Student employees that attend the student staff trainings will be able to...

1. Name three of their salient identities and identify at least one way that these identities impact group dynamic
2. Describe how their strengths influenced their work with others on the collaborative project with other student employees of different focus areas in MSA.
3. Demonstrate skills around bystander intervention and group dynamics.
4. Effectively use social media as professional development and enhancement tool.

CONTEXT

Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) has approximately 25 student employees each year, serving in one of three positions- Office Assistants (OA), Student Interns (SI), and Graduate Assistants (GA). This year, MSA sought to unify the Student Staff experience and maximize the training of these students by addressing four key areas: 1) Identity Awareness 2) Collaboration 3) Social Media 4) Professional Skills.

MOST FREQUENTLY IDENTIFIED SALIENT IDENTITIES

- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender and Sex
- Class



MAJOR FINDINGS

Identity

- On a 4 point scale when asked to identify salient identities and describing how one of these identities impacts one's experience, the average score was 2.56. We interpret from this that the majority of our students can list salient identities for themselves, while understanding how these identities impact their experience is less salient for most.
- Race, Class, and Gender were most often listed as the 3 salient identities for student staff.
- Of those that scored higher (3-4), most identified race & ethnicity, gender & sex, and class as identities that impact group dynamics in their work.
- Some listed class standing as a salient social identity at NU.

Skill Building

When offered a scenario, and asked to list steps for bystander intervention student staff illustrated the following:

- 87% of student staff demonstrated (by a score of 4) the ability to effectively step up in an emergency situation while working in an MSA facility
- 13% of the student staff demonstrated (by a score of 3) the ability to identify and interpret a situation as an emergency and is able to call for help

Social Media

- 77% of students reported an improvement in their confidence in searching for employment with social media
- 44% of students increased their audience (identify)
- On a scale of 1 (not likely)-5 (very likely), students were asked in the post-test how they are likely to use social media in their future job search. Average score was 4.09.
- 55% were able to name 3 new strategies to use social media as a professional development and enhancement tool

Collaborative project

- Four student projects were produced and presented at the End of Year Student Staff Retreat.
- Needs of MSA were identified by student staff and projects were created to address these needs.
- Learning about group dynamics and managing different schedules was expressed.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"How can I build community through the small things I do everyday?"

"(I learned about) Social justice issues, intersectionality and learning how to create spaces for people to openly speak about their identities."

"My online brand is intrinsically tied to my identity"

"how to engage in constructive conversations ...exposure to different resources available for minorities...I wouldn't have gotten that if I wasn't working for MSA"

"team work definitely. It can sometimes be difficult to work with people from different backgrounds and MSA helps a lot with that."

TEACHING STRATEGY

We did this by engaging all student staff in a retreat at the beginning of the year and quarterly training meetings for all of the students, as well as monthly meetings for each of the positions (OA, SI, and GA) separately. We also ended the year with a final retreat. During the End of Year Retreat, learning was assessed using quantitative and qualitative methods.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Formative Assessment

(Workshop Pre-Test and Post-Test)

Student staff were given a pre-test and post-test during the April 1st training on Social Media application to their work in MSA and beyond graduation.

Summative Assessment

(End of Year Online Survey)

Student staff were given an online survey at the End of Year Retreat to capture qualitative and quantitative measures.

Focus Group

(End of Year Retreat)

Each student staff member was evaluated during the focus group using a rubric we developed from our learning outcomes.

