Award Title
University of Maryland MOSAIC Diversity & Leadership Retreat

Awards Categories
Student Union, Student Activities, Greek Life, Leadership and related

Executive Summary
The MOSAIC: Diversity & Leadership Retreat is a weekend experience focused on exploring the relationships between diversity and leadership. The retreat is an intra-departmental collaboration within the Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center for Campus Life between the Multicultural Involvement & Community Advocacy Office [MICA] and the Leadership & Community Service-Learning unit. The retreat was established to augment student leadership developmental programs by engaging emerging leaders in concepts related to the Social Change Model of Leadership (Higher Education Research Institute, 1996), particularly aspects of the model that engage self-exploration and civility. Interactive sessions and group discussions are designed to create an environment for individuals to examine who they are and how it influences their understanding of and approach to leadership. Goals of the retreat include developing a stronger sense of self-awareness, understanding identity and social inequity, examining how identity influences leadership, and engaging in practical conversations on implementation of these concepts for individuals and for the University community.

Award Description

Positive impact on student learning, transitions, retention, and/or success: As a diverse campus community, the MOSAIC retreat allows students of multiple identities, religion, and nationality to increase their understanding of social inequities through an exploration of their own identity, background and actions. The retreat also introduced leadership for social justice purposes, first addressing general concepts of power, privilege and oppression through interactive sessions and reflections. The greatest learning occurs in the engagement of students in socio-cultural dialogues about difficult issues like racism, discrimination, and economic inequities.

Relevance to Institutional Mission: The University of Maryland’s MOSAIC Diversity and Leadership Retreat seeks to develop student leaders who have the ability to interact with others across the boundaries of difference. Through dialogue and exploration of one’s own and others culture, values and perspectives, students learn the complexities and dynamics of functioning in a diverse society. The MOSAIC Diversity and Leadership Retreat is congruent with the University of Maryland’s values of “Building an Inclusive Community,” and “Taking Responsibility for the Future.” The planners of the Retreat believe and reiterate to students that “we are in a global community where knowledge of others and being able to communicate across lines of difference will be the key to our success individually and collectively.”
Demonstration of Success in Addressing Student Needs and/or Critical Campus Issues: The students need to create spaces where open and honest discussions and dialogues about social justice issues are addressed by Mosaic. Students report an increased understanding and commitment to being a socially responsible leader. They are more confident in discussing major social issues such as peace, human rights and justice, as well as diversity and multiculturalism. Through student behaviors such as avoiding use of language that reinforces stereotypes, challenging others on derogatory comments, and participating in coalitions to address social issues, the campus is better able to address issues of campus climate.

Importance to International, Multicultural, Cultural, Gender, LGBTQ, Spirituality, Disability, and related: The MOSAIC Retreat seeks to bring together a broad cross section of the undergraduate student population to engage in a weekend of activities and dialogue. This includes not only reaching out to students who represent differences along cultural lines of diversity, but also students who differ along lines of campus diversity status such as residential/commuter, Greek/non-Greek, freshman/transfer student. By paying attention to these areas in our marketing, we garner non-traditional students and are able to foster dialogue along multiple lines of difference. Students hear stories from others in both formal and informal settings during the Retreat. These realizations of how their lives and experiences differ from their fellow students and community members can be eye-opening moments. Through these differences empathy and compassion are generated. Our hope is that students can relate these learning experiences and feelings of empathy and compassion to other aspects of their lives in the future and be committed allies and advocates for others. Collaboration with academic affairs and other departments Inherent in the design of the MOSAIC: Diversity & Leadership Retreat is the rich collaboration that is modeled for the student participants. The retreat is designed and implemented through the strong collaboration between Multicultural Involvement & Community Advocacy office and the Leadership & Community Service-Learning unit. These two offices came together at the inception of the program to design its learning outcomes and curriculum to support these learning outcomes. In addition, we have established a rich partnership with the Peer Leadership Council, a trained group of student leadership educators, as well as graduate students in the College of Education’s Department of Counseling & Personnel Services to serve as core-group facilitators for the retreat. In addition, we bolster over 10 different departments and offices on campus that consistently sponsor and pay for students to attend the retreat.

Originality and Creativity: The originality and creativity of Mosaic is evident in the structure of the program, the dialogues, the reflections and the simulations in the retreat experience that allow for deeper awareness of various social justice issues. Over 80% of the students reported that facilitators, small group settings, and a diverse group of students contributed to their learning. The program is structured to have two, male and female, lead facilitators who play the role of coordinators and synthesizers of the large and small group discussions and topics addressed throughout the retreat. This small to large (6-7 students) and large to small interaction among the group of 40-50 students allows for more intimate communication, relationship-building and personal reflections. The small group facilitators, or core group facilitators, also have active roles of facilitation and mediation of conflict or confusion of complex topics like racism and discrimination. The core group facilitator also develops greater skill in facilitation through these difficult dialogues. The STAR Power simulation gives students the experience of being part of a system that gives leaders unlimited powers to make changes and rules throughout
the simulation. This exercise provokes students’ assumptions of the use and abuse of power. Here is where internalized feelings and experiences are brought to the forefront and may be confronted for the first time. The use of reflective moments and informal dialogues outside of the simulations occur and allow for students to really explore greater assumptions, misconceptions and understandings of others who are different than themselves.

**Effective use of Technology and Other Resources:** While we believe the learning outcomes for the retreat are most effectively developed when students come together to face complex issues with each other, we have incorporated some multimedia applications in the design of the curriculum. We are most guided by the finding from the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership that found the best way to develop students’ capacities for socially responsible leadership is for students to engage in conversations about differences and across differences. Our program has been designed around this finding and the curriculum and resources we utilize support this notion. We have considered for the future how we might incorporate blogs as well as a multimedia video blog component for after the conference.

**Innovative Practical Use of Research and/or Assessment and Linking to Learning Outcomes:** Guided by the work of the MOSAIC planning team over the course of 3 years, learning outcomes have been identified and refined to include the following: Leadership Development; Knowledge of self; Salience of identity; Leadership for social justice; Citizenship; Engagement in socio-cultural discussions; Understanding of social inequality; Engagement in action for social change; Confidence and frequency of taking; Individually focused actions; Other focused actions; Intergroup collaborative actions; Effectiveness of MOSAIC; Pedagogical efficacy of the elements of the experience; Frequency and efficacy of communications processes.

In order to assess these learning outcomes, we implement a pre-post test instrument and examine change over time to see how the retreat may or may not have contributed to learning. To support this effort, prior to the beginning of the retreat, students were given an anonymous survey with a number of likert scale questions as well as open-ended questions. The measures used were as follows: Leadership Perception items (Balón, 2004): These items were based on social cognitive theories of leadership as well as existing identity and leadership models that align with the outcomes for the retreat; the role of culture in effective leadership, the importance of social justice in leadership, acculturation, racial/ethnic identity. Citizenship scale based on the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (NCLP, 2006): These items measure a set of behaviors and attitudes related to an individual perception of equality in society as well as behaviors of addressing inequality. Socio-Cultural Discussions Scale from the National Study of Living-Learning Programs (Center for Student Studies, 2005): These items relate to behaviors involving participation in varied discussions of diversity related topics. Saliency of Identity items taken from the Multiversity Intergroup Dialogue Research Project (MIGR) study (The Program on Intergroup Relations, 2005): These items measure individual’s relative frequency of how they think of themselves in various social identity categories. Confidence and Frequency of Taking Action taken from the MIGR study: These questions measure the confidence of individual taking three types of actions: individually focused, directed toward others, as well as actions taken in coalition with others to address social injustices in society. These items also measured the frequency at which individuals engaged in the aforementioned types of actions. Program Elements items taken from the MIGR study: These items measured the different portions of the
retreat and how effective individuals felt they were and how each component contributed to their learning. Communication Processes items taken from the MIGR study: These items were developed to help measure a variety of communication processes that occur in intergroup dialogues, and in the MOSAIC retreat. These processes were found in other studies to advance Alport (1954) intergroup contact theory, which poses that as individuals are exposed to differing conditions with people of differing social identities, the biases they hold, would decrease. Nagda (2006) found that communication

Evidence of Sustainability What once started as a dream between two offices in 2005 has since developed to be signature collaboration between two campus offices with more than 10 campus offices and departments serving as sponsoring organizations, and a line item budget within the Division of Student Affairs. There is no question the commitment across campus for the MOSAIC retreat, the dedicated funding the program now receives, and the wonderful collaboration between so many different areas. It is this commitment that has now position the MOSAIC retreat to be a sustainable program that will maintain a rich history of success at University of Maryland.

Program Website: www.thestamp.umd.edu/diversity/mosaic/2010

Assessment Data

Assessment of the effectiveness of the design or elements of MOSAIC that contributed to student learning yielded positive results. Many elements of MOSAIC included communication processes that have been found to mediate the reduction of bias in intergroup relations programs (Nagda, 2006). These elements and processes were assessed in terms of their frequency of occurrence and educational efficacy at the conclusion of the retreat. On the posttest survey, students responded to likert scale questions ranging from 1 to 7 where 1= “not at all” through 7=“Very Much.” The following results include combined frequencies (in terms of percentage) of responses for the two highest responses on the scale (“quite a bit” and “very much”). On 40 of the 47 measures, students responded within this range. Of particular note: Over 80% of the students reported the following: • Facilitators, small group settings, and a diverse group of students contributed to their learning at the MOSAIC retreat • Communication processes occurred: o Hearing different points of view o Learning from each other o Hearing other students’ personal stories • Communication processes to have contributed to their learning during the retreat: o Hearing different points of view (93%) o Learning from each other o Hearing other students’ personal stories o Appreciating experiences different from my own o Thinking about issues that I may not have before o Understanding how privilege and oppression affect our lives Students responded to open ended questions on surveys distributed at the conclusion of the MOSAIC retreat. These qualitative data were categorized through an open coding procedure (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by utilizing a computer aided qualitative data analysis software, HyperResearch. After an initial open coding procedure, 31 codes emerged from the data. The following are a summary of the most salient codes as related to the intended learning outcomes. Students reported that the content of MOSAIC was interesting and engaging. This theme aligns with learning outcomes of the effectiveness of MOSAIC. The planning committee hoped that students would not only acquire new content information, but that process by which the experience unfolded engaged students and facilitated learning. Some of the voices of the students may offer more depth to some of the
aforementioned communication process results. “It was great; extremely enlightening” “The information was very interesting and relevant” “Everything tied together and it was captivating” Various forms of active learning were utilized during the retreat. These forms of active learning featured the use of varying discussion group size, and the use of experiential learning techniques to present theory. Although the results above quantify the positive elements of MOSAIC, student voices offer more details regarding the design or elements of MOSAIC: “Many of the activities involve everyone to participate w/ each other.” “I loved how we had our [small] groups and then our whole group. The [small] group really helped those who were more shy come out and talk about their experiences.” “I loved how "fun" all of the activities were! I was never bored!” Additionally, students reported an appreciation of addressing difficult topics. Students appreciated both being pushed into areas of discomfort as well as feeling comfortable while engaged. “I'm very glad we did get so personal, and ‘out of our comfort zones’.” “We all have similar fears and when we take chances with opening up about ours, we inspire people to do the same and relax their own fears.” “[it] was intense but I guess it relate[s] to social justice topic.”

Summary Report Page 4 of 4 Data complied and report completed August 1, 2009 by Craig Alimo “I felt comfortable sharing my opinion and listening to others.” By engaging in conversations that might have been difficult for some, many students were able to gain new understanding about people who come from different backgrounds than their own. This emerged as a strong theme and aligns with learning outcomes of leadership development and the effectiveness of MOSAIC. “I gained new perspectives about different issues I most likely wouldn’t have thought about on my own.” “I learned a lot more about the LG[B]T community & about the many differing experiences of others. “I learned about identities such as age and ability that I had seldom ever talked about before.” However students did not just learn about others in a vacuum. Students also reported that they had learned about themselves and their own experience aligning with the leadership development learning outcomes: “I have a renewed appreciation for my race.” “I learned that we must become aware of my prejudices in order to conquer and move on from them.” “Each activity helped us develop our identities even more” A number of students also reported coming away from this retreat having learned new or renewed leadership skills. This theme aligns confidence of taking action, and the effectiveness of the MOSAIC outcomes: “I learned a lot about tracking things happening around me” “My communication skills were also boosted very much.” “I learned how to be a more active listener.” “I believe this workshop left me very equipped to help bring about change.” In sum, the MOSAIC retreat appears to offer promise for engaging emerging leaders at the University of Maryland to learn more about themselves, others, and what it means to be a leader in a diverse world. Educators in the Adele H. Stamp Student Union – Center for Campus Life will reflect on these results in their continuing efforts to create educational programs that capitalize on the presence of human diversity at the University of Maryland in the service of creating future leaders (Gurin, 2007).