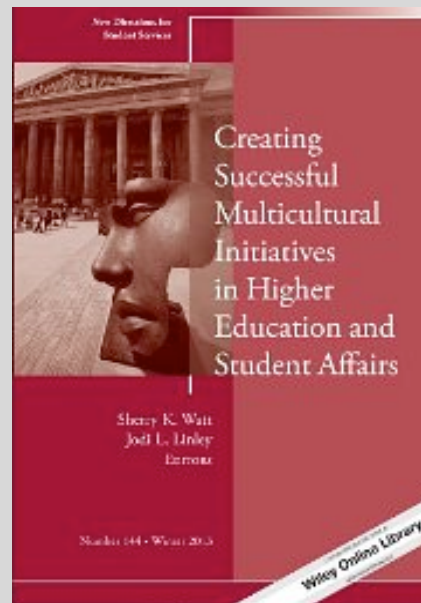


Creating Successful Multicultural Initiatives: Experiences of Seasoned Professionals





Guiding Principles for Designing Effective Multicultural Initiatives

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Assumptions

1. Post-secondary education, in part, fosters good citizens by equipping students with the skills to manage difference.
2. Higher education administrators, student affairs professionals, and faculty (college educators) need to all work together to support the development of students as good citizens. We are all responsible regardless of role on campus or social identity.
3. College educators are continuously learning our own skills for managing difference while providing opportunities for the students to do the same.
4. While there are guiding principles that may increase your likelihood of success, there are no flawless initiatives due to the ever-changing nature of people and organizations.

Defining Multicultural Initiative

- A multicultural initiative is “any type of program and/or a set of strategies that promotes skill development to better manage difference on a personal, institutional, community, or societal level” (Watt & Linley, 2013).

Our goal

- Our goal today, is to invite you into a **conversation** that might spark change on your campus by inspiring your initial thoughts for new initiative on your own campus or thoughts that might reshape a current program or approach to diversity efforts on your campus.

Defining Difference

- *Difference* is having dissimilar opinions, experiences, ideologies, epistemologies, and/or constructions of reality about self, society, and/or identity.
- **Assumption:** How well one manages conflict related to *Difference* is an essential skillset for living in diverse societies.

Making a Shift

- “**A critical multicultural approach** can thus foreground sociological understandings of identity-the multiple, complex strands and influences that make up who we are-alongside a critical analysis of **the structural inequities that still impact differentially on so many minority groups**-in other words, what such groups face or experience.” (as cited in May & Sleeter, p. 11)
- “**Multicultural Student Services** units have historically led college and university efforts to prepare students for our global, diverse and interconnected world. Because these units were among the first to “**interrupt the usual**” by **challenging the institutional culture, norms, and processes that disadvantaged underrepresented students, the play a key role in establishing the institutional context for diversity.**” (Stewart, 2011, p. 201).

Making the Shift

- Actions by “which people from traditionally dominant ethnic and racial groups, and those that have been historically underrepresented, work together to negotiate power, privilege, and oppression to change the environment” (S. Erkel, in process).
- American Council on Education (1998) organizational change can be described as embracing ideas such as **“change is deep, pervasive, intentional, and long term; it is organic and requires holistic and integrated thinking; and it entails new approaches to student affairs, faculty development, pedagogy, assessment, and community involvement”** (as cited in Woodard, Love, & Komives, 2000, p. 61).

Conceptual Lens: Diversity as ‘good’ vs. Diversity as a ‘value’

- *“Some institutions are pursuing these efforts because they are motivated by the basic principle that **‘diversity is good’** which only requires a surface level understanding of systematic oppression.”*
- *“Other institutions are striving to embrace strategies to disrupt systematic oppression on a deeper level where they are shifting their view to considering diversity matters as a central and additive versus required and marginalized part of the college experience. Higher education institutions that are moving in this direction are embracing **‘diversity as a value’**.”*

{Excerpts from Watt Chapter, 2012}

Pondering Question

- Is your multicultural initiative grounded in surface-level outcomes or far-reaching change?

Approaches to Diversity Efforts

‘diversity as a value’

- central & additive
- cross-level analysis of systemic oppression
- thoughtful balance between dialogue and action
- dominant group leadership
- Met with resistance; changes ‘how things are done here’

‘diversity as good’

- required & marginalized
- surface-level understanding of systemic oppression
- disjointed efforts and miscommunication
- marginalized group leadership
- Operates within the larger societal systemic structure

Three Guiding Principles for Designing Effective Multicultural Initiatives


- ***Multilevel Transformational Approach***
involving individual and community, institutional and societal, and policy and attitudes.
Sustainable approaches to managing *Difference* on multiple levels require dialogue and
- Action that ***balances the Head*** (intellect/ thought), ***Heart*** (emotion/spirit), and ***Hands*** (practical/real-world application) (Potapchuk, Leiderman, Bivens, and Major, 2005).
- Careful and thoughtful planning to ***Align the Goals with the Outcomes.***

Think, Pair, Share

- Think about 1 multicultural initiative on your campus that you identify as “diversity as a good” and 1 that you identify as “diversity as a value.”
- **How do you know** whether the philosophical underpinnings are “good” or “value” and **so what?**

New Directions for Student Services No. 144

- Designing and Implementing Multicultural Initiatives: Guiding Principles (**Watt**)
- Making Meaning through Multicultural Initiatives (**Elkins**, Morris, & Schimek)
- Building and Sustaining a Campus-Wide Multicultural Initiative (Dodge & **Jarratt**)
- Navigating Difference through Multicultural Service Learning (**Pasquesi**)
- Who I Am Is theText. Who I Become Is the Purpose. (Arbisi-Kelm, Clay, Lin, Horikawa, Clifton, & Kapani)
- Courage in Multicultural Initiatives (Watt, Golden, Schumacher, & Moreno)
- Building Multicultural Residential Communities: A Model for Training Student Staff (Petryk, Thompson, & Boynton)
- Race Caucuses: An Intensive, High-Impact Strategy to Create Social Change (Obear & martinez)
- Spiritual Development as a Social Good (**Hicks** & Tran-Parsons)
- Addressing Underrepresentation in STEM Fields through Undergraduate Interventions (**Linley** & George-Jackson)



Initiatives Addressing Underrepresentation in STEM

Jodi L. Linley

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Defining the Problem

Diversity as ‘good’

- People of Color and women just aren’t interested in STEM & we need to foster more interest
- People of Color and women aren’t prepared for STEM study & need to “catch up” to level the playing field

Diversity as a ‘value’

- Increasing participation is important, and so is assessing and changing the climate
- Systemic barriers may exist making pursuit of a STEM career difficult

Trends & Analysis

Iowa Biosciences Advantage (IBA)

- Shifted from deficiency to difference orientation
- Leveraged institutional data to generate support
- Partnered with education scholars

Project STEP-UP

- Many programs promote dominant culture
- Scientists may lack knowledge of student experiences & institutional oppression

Navigating Difference through Multicultural Service Learning

Kira Pasquesi

REINVENT

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Service Learning

Diversity as 'good'

- Patronizing relationships and us-them distinctions
- Focus on deficits and meeting immediate needs
- Preserve unjust social structures

Diversity as a 'value'

- Authentic relationships
- Focus on root causes of injustice and systems of inequality
- Work to redistribute power

Course Overview

- To equip students with the knowledge and skills to be leaders and public servants in a diverse society
 - Semester 1: explore social identities and notions of difference
 - Semester 2: apply learning to mentoring relationships and public service project

Public Service Project

Students were charged with:

- Educating themselves about positive and negative perceptions across difference related to race, social class, ability, and gender
- Applying a critical multicultural lens while considering their personal identities
- Recommending a course of action to positively influence perceptions across difference that meet the needs of various stakeholder groups

Activities & Assignments

- “How am I like” questions
- Analysis of news articles
- Stakeholder interviews
- Observations
- Policies & history of inclusion/exclusion
- Presenting recommendations

Interfaith Engagement

Mona Hicks, Ed.D.

REINVENT

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Spiritual development as a social good

Spiritual development

- Ethic of Caring
- Tolerance
- Connected to One Another
- Spiritual Questing

Interfaith cooperation

- One's Faith or Philosophical Tradition offers an Imperative to Engage with Others

National Coalition Building Institute Campus Affiliate

Lindsay Jarratt

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NCBI @ UI

Comprehensive, campus-wide initiative

The University of Iowa

Large, Public, Predominantly White Institution in the Midwest

National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI)

Non-profit organization devoted to elimination of racism and all forms of prejudice

Intentional Goal Alignment

“Skill building leads to empowerment” (NCBI one-day workshop core principle)

Our Goals in Developing Relationship with NCBI at UI:

- Build richly diverse campus coalition that models leadership for equity and inclusion
- Create central infrastructure to support multicultural/inclusion efforts
- Mitigate isolation/resistance experienced by leaders and change-makers
- Develop community-wide knowledge and skills for civility, equity, and inclusion
- Nurture optimism, hope, possibility

Multi-level Transformational Approach

“Building a team around us is the most powerful way to bring about institutional change” (Brown & Mazza, 2005).

- Administrative knowledge of initiative and commitment to its sustainability
- Centrally housed, funded (Office of the President, Chief Diversity Office)
- Coordination of initiative built into job descriptions, new position created
- Campus Team that includes wide representation across *Difference*, committed to ongoing learning and leadership
- Frequent and meaningful learning and skill-building opportunities for all members of campus community
- Outreach, sustained invitation to “get to know NCBI”
- Maintaining relationship with every individual who has experienced NCBI

Making Meaning Through Multicultural Initiatives

Becki Elkins, Ph.D.

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Making Meaning through Multicultural Initiatives

Multicultural initiatives have the capacity to facilitate individual and institutional change (Watt, 2013).

Assessment is necessary to determine the extent to which multicultural initiatives effectively yield their intended outcomes. (Elkins, Schimek, & Morris, 2013).

Making Meaning through Multicultural Initiatives

Institutional Context

- Small, private, liberal arts
- Several incidents/scenarios highlighting oppression and privilege
- Diversity as a social value = fit with mission

Multicultural Initiatives

Each One, Teach One

Inclusion Conversations

Making Meaning through Multicultural Initiatives

Qualitative methods of inquiry...

- Align closely with the program goals
- Detail the contexts in which these programs exist
- Bring to light voices not routinely considered
- Provide holistic, complex pictures

Qualitative methods used...

- Observation
- Informal Interviews
- Triangulation

Questions for Panelists

- Role of facilitator – how do you make sense of your positionality?
- What were the political considerations &/or other challenges you faced?
- Can you identify and discuss any unexpected gifts you received through the process?
- What steps did you take to lay the groundwork for your initiative?
- Where do you get support – personally and for your initiative?

Individual Action Plan

Moving forward with multicultural initiatives on your campus, we invite you to consider:

- What are your next steps?
- What do you anticipate will be your biggest challenge?
- How will you engage your head, heart, and hands?
- Who will support you?

Share with a neighbor, and consider sharing with large group.

Closing Poem

- We Stand at the Edge of a True Wilderness
 - Barbara Rohde, In The Simple Morning Light (1994)



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We stand at the edge of a true wilderness. No one has entered it
nor, worn a path for us. There are no maps.

We look toward great openness in awe of the freedom and
possibility before us. Yet there is also something in us that causes
us to face the unknown territory cautiously and anxiously.

No, in this place, we take time out of time to look back, to see
where we have been and what we have been, to reflect on what
we have learned thus far on our journey.

We gather together to remind each other to seek our True North,
and to encourage-to place courage in-one another.

When we leave this place, we must each find our true path. We
must walk alone.

But now and then we may meet.

When we meet, may we offer each other the bread of our being.
And oh, my brothers, and oh, my sisters, if you hear me plunging
wildly, despairingly, through the thicket, call out to me. Calm me.

And if you find me sleeping in the snow, awaken me, lest my
heart turn to ice.

And if you hear my music, praising the mornings of the
world, then in that other time, in the blackness of the
night, sing it back to me.

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