Office of Multicultural Services External Program Review
University of La Verne
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Introduction

The Office of Multicultural Services at University of La Verne completed their internal program review on November 22, 2010. The internal program review consisted of a committee of seven individuals including two students, three administrators and two faculty. The committee assessed the following four areas:*

- Cultural club participation assessments
- Workshops/trainings
- First Generation Student Success Program
- Cultural graduation celebration assessments

A copy of the Multicultural Services Administrative Review is available online
http://sites.laverne.edu/multicultural/files/2011/01/Multicultural-Services-Administrative-Review.pdf

To complete the program review process, an external reviewer was invited to appraise: a) the ability of the program or department to deliver its programs and services effectively and b) to identify strength and weaknesses of the overall program.

Dr. Dora Lee served as the external reviewer for University of La Verne's Office of Multicultural Services (OMS). She was invited to serve as the external reviewer because of her experience related to cultural centers and multicultural services and programming. Dr. Lee spent three days at University of La Verne meeting with students, faculty, administrators and staff (March 22, 24 and 25, 2011). She met with Daniel Loera, Director, Office of Multicultural Services; four students from the Multicultural Council; one graduate intern; Ruby Montano-Cordova, Associate Dean, Division of Student Affairs; one member from the Diversity Coalition; five members from the cultural graduation celebration committee; and one alumnus. Questions used in the focus group were also emailed to the stakeholders. Two stakeholders responded to the email. She was also provided with a copy of the Multicultural Services Administrative Review that contained information on the departments' mission and vision statement, department initiatives, description of the department and its programs, budget, assessments, findings from the internal program review and action recommendations and actions plans derived from the internal program review.

The following five areas were evaluated as part of the external program review:*

  I.   Program or departmental goals and objectives

- Has the program clearly articulated its goals and objectives?
- Are the goals and objectives realistic and appropriate?

II. Program capacity
  - Does the program have adequate facilities, equipment, resources, and support services?
  - Is the staff well qualified to perform their duties?

III. Method and procedures to assess program or department effectiveness
  - Has the program clearly articulated and applied its methods and procedures for assessing its goals, objectives, and their effectiveness?

IV. Overall health of the program or department (its strengths and weaknesses)

V. Action recommendations
  - Are recommendations appropriate for program and department needs?
  - How could the program or department be improved over the next five years?

This report summarized the findings and recommendations related to the aforementioned areas.

Assessment Responses

I. Program or departmental goals and objectives

Has the program clearly articulated its goals and objectives?

Two documents were used for the review: The Office of Multicultural Services Administrative Review and the OMS website

Recommendation I.a.: The Office of Multicultural Services Administrative Review and the OMS website have different versions of the vision, mission and goals. While the OMS website is in the process of being updated, OMS needs to decide on the version it plans to use and be consistent with it in all published materials.

Recommendation I.b.: Neither of the documents indicated learning objective/outcomes. Some of the bulleted goals can become learning outcomes. Learning outcomes/objectives need to be clearly outlined. OMS needs to keep the larger institutional educational outcomes in mind when creating the department's learning outcomes.

Below is a list of the goals on the OMS website:

The mission will be carried out by:*

1. Supporting students and the university community by encouraging self discovery and exploration of the relevance of diversity in all its forms to one's life and the life of the community.
2. Providing experiences and knowledge to journey toward becoming culturally proficient.
3. Coaching students and others working with issues of diversity.
4. Advocating for equity of inclusion and participation at all levels.
5. Checking assumptions that must be challenged in order to raise consciousness, and acknowledging that learning is a life-long process.
6. Cultivate relationships and collaborative partnerships with surrounding community, schools and agencies.

7. Cultivate relationships with parents of first generation students and of those involved with cultural clubs.

Are the goals and objectives realistic and appropriate?

The following themes were gathered from the stakeholders in regards to the goals and objectives of the program:
- OMS is responsible for most if not all of the campus diversity related initiatives.
- The stakeholders had a hard time articulating the goals and objectives of the department.
- The director is trying to take on too much for the campus community. The director needs an additional staff member to assist with the workload.
- Students indicated that the director is rarely in his office and that he is always on the run.
- "Daniel" is OMS and is the face of diversity on campus.

Recommendation I.c.: Goals 1-5 are realistic and appropriate for a multicultural office and should be kept.

Recommendation I.d.: Considering the lack of resources, OMS and the administration should consider eliminating goals 6 and 7 to allow OMS staff to focus on other critical goals. While important, these goals cause the program to be spread too thin and in the process become ineffective.

Recommendation I.e.: OMS should identify its target population/stakeholders. More precisely that it intends to serve students vs. faculty/staff/administration. Identifying its target population will bring further focus to OMS.

II. Program capacity

Does the program have adequate facilities, equipment, resources, and support services?

OMS consists of a director, two graduate interns and six student assistants. OMS is located in the Campus Center. The Campus Center is the hub of student activity, a prime location to house OMS. Currently, OMS runs out of the director's office and a student assistant cubicle. The graduate interns do not have a space to work at. The current graduate interns share an office space with the director.

Program capacity themes from stakeholders included:
- There is not enough room to congregate around OMS.
- A few students have never been to OMS because of the location.
- There is not a safe space for students to congregate or have meetings.

Recommendation II.a.: OMS has out-grown its current facilities. OMS requires additional workspace for students and staff, meeting space for students to utilize and congregate and space for a cultural resources library. As space may be an issue for the general campus, it may be worthwhile to look at the shared center space in the Dean of Students office and identify how this space can be made to be more inviting/inclusive for students working with OMS.

In the past, OMS was allocated between $4000 to $8000 a year. In the last two years, the budget increased to $11,190.00 in 2009-2010 and $18,000.00 in 2010-2011. The increase in funding allowed the director to invest additional dollars on programming and services. However, no money was allocated for staff or student salaries.

Recommendation II.b.: Administration should explore consistent funding. While the increases have been important, it is difficult to carry out programs when budget is uncertain.

Recommendation II.c.: OMS should explore collaborative relationships with other departments and programs (i.e. ASULV, Student Life and Housing) that may result in more consistent and secure annual funding.

According to the OMS website, the director is responsible for the following programs and resources:*

- Act as ombudsperson for diversity issues impacting students and campus community
- Direct, advise, mentor, and support cultural clubs on campus
- Direct the First Generation Program (FGP)
- Direct and support Black and Latino Alumni Associations
- Direct and sponsor the cultural graduation celebrations
- Multicultural student leadership program
- Advise the Multicultural Cultural Club Council
- Sponsor students to attend leadership forums and conferences
- Provide diversity training/workshops
- Represent and advocate for diversity on various university committees
- Cultural Resource Library (books, videos, magazines, journals, etc.)

Recommendation II.d.: OMS is understaffed. A program coordinator or assistant director should be hired to alleviate some of the director's responsibilities. In addition, OMS should explore the use of graduate assistants to assist with different programs.

With an increase in student enrollment, OMS requires additional space, human resources and a reasonable budget to carry out its mission and goals. To continue in its current state would only limit what OMS is capable of doing and becoming.

Are the staff well qualified to perform their duties?

The Director, Mr. Daniel Loera has been with the University of La Verne for ten years. He has served in several diversity related capacities while at the University of La Verne. Mr. Loera has a background in human relations training and is respected by his peers that also do diversity work on other college campuses. He is more than qualified to perform his duties as director of OMS.

The stakeholders appreciate and value the work Mr. Loera does on campus. Though they all feel that Mr. Loera allows himself to be pulled in many directions, it is because he cares and is passionate about his work. According to the stakeholders, the campus calls on him because of his competence and ability to speak on diversity. Some stakeholders went as far as to state that

Mr. Loera is the face of diversity at the University of La Verne. The students speak very highly of Mr. Loera and cannot imagine University of La Verne without him.

Recommendation II.e.: One of Mr. Loera's strength is human relations training. With the caveat that additional staff is provided, Mr. Loera should utilize his strength to do more diversity and social justice related trainings and programming on campus.

III. Method and procedures to assess program or department effectiveness

Has the program clearly articulated and applied its methods and procedures for assessing its goals, objectives, and their effectiveness?

OMS assessed four initiatives in the internal program review:*

- Cultural club participation assessments
- Workshops/trainings
- First Generation Student Success Program
- Cultural graduation celebration assessments

In the assessments, participants were asked 1) about the benefits of the program, 2) what was good about the program, 3) what was learned, 4) areas of improvement and 5) general feedback and comments. The assessments that were implemented were basic, yet, it may just be what the department needed to inform their practice. Although participants were asked about what they learned, there were no pre-set learning outcomes/objectives to assess. It is also important to understand that assessing for effectiveness goes beyond satisfaction levels.

In addition, the review committee used results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the College Student Survey (CSS) to assess the overall engagement and climate regarding diversity. However, it is not clear how this was used to assess OMS.

Recommendation III.a.: OMS needs to develop an assessment strategy. Do not assess for the sake of assessing, especially if human resources are limited. Think strategically about what OMS needs to know and how the data will be used and disseminated. Establishing a culture of assessment takes time, education and the support of the administration.

IV. Overall health of the program or department

Themes for this section came from the stakeholders, the director and from the external reviewer's observations and review of documents.

Strengths
- OMS is doing a good job at providing the campus community with quality programs (i.e. cultural graduation celebrations, Las Posadas, Diversity Retreat, Diversity Week, Safe Zone, etc…).
- The students enjoy working with the director and having him as their advisor.

- Stakeholders see OMS as vital to the campus mission.
- The director has played a large role in developing a positive image of OMS on campus.
- The director is aware of the need for representation from his office on search committees and campus committees that impact underrepresented students.

Weaknesses
- A lack of human resources.
- A lack of workspace and gathering space.
- OMS is trying to serve too many people and is taking on too many initiatives. It needs to focus on its core goals and most importantly the student population it serves.
- The director does not have the time to develop and enhance existing programs such as The First Generation Student Success Program.
- OMS does not receive consistent funding.
- OMS does not have a clear sense of identity.
- OMS does not have partnerships with other departments under the Division of Student Affairs.
- OMS does not have enough staff and faculty to advise student groups.

V. Action Recommendations as Proposed by the Internal Program Review*

Eleven action recommendations came out of the internal program review. The external reviewer provided feedback for each action recommendation. The following two questions are addressed in the external reviewer's response:

- Are recommendations appropriate for program and department needs?
- How could the program or department be improved over the next five years?

Action Recommendation 1: Cultural Club Participation Assessments: there is a need to improve the ongoing work being done with the cultural clubs and organizations. Assessing them periodically is a means by which we can identify areas for improvement.

Response: Assessing for student club participation is a good beginning to understanding the student experience. An area to consider when conducting future club assessments is to think about what you want to learn from the students and how you will use the data to evaluate and make improvements around student participation in cultural clubs. A needs assessment would be helpful to understand what students need from OMS, from their advisor(s) and what they want to learn from participating in a cultural club. Be intentional about what you assess, creating learning outcomes/objectives, assess learning, make sure your questions are answering the questions you have, and share your findings with stakeholders.

Action Recommendation 2: The OMS in close collaboration with the Multicultural Club Council will create opportunities to bring the leadership of the cultural clubs together for the dual purpose of getting to know each other and to create collaborative programming initiatives.

Response: The collaboration between the Multicultural Club Council (MCC) and OMS is natural and should continue. A suggestion is to expand OMS's collaborative partnerships beyond MCC. OMS programming should collaborate with different campus departments (i.e. Student Life, International Center, ASULV and Housing), both in student affairs and in academic affairs to bring in additional funds and people power to help plan and implement programs. OMS does not and should not be programming alone. Collaborating with different campus partners will increase awareness around OMS, increase funding for programming and increase participation.

Action Recommendation 3: Diversity retreats/human relations trainings: there is a need to raise the level of consciousness surrounding the role that issues of diversity have on individuals and the community. This includes individual and systemic issues of bias, bigotry, and oppression. These trainings need to have clear learning outcomes in order to better assess whether or not the goals are being met.

Response: The diversity retreats and human relations trainings are valuable tools to develop allies and increase campus awareness around issues of diversity and social justice. OMS should think about increasing the number of participants and opening the opportunity up to other members of the campus community at the annual diversity retreat. OMS should also connect with other people on campus that have diversity/human relations facilitations skills to assist with the diversity retreats and other diversity trainings/workshops. Lastly, OMS should identify 1 – 2 hallmark programs a semester that are done annually that focus on social conscious awareness raising.

Action Recommendation 4: First Generation Student Success Program: given the gap of information that first generation students and their families have about the college experience, there is a need to support first generation students in terms of mentoring, offering workshops and parental involvement.

Response: There is a lot of passion and energy around the First Generation Success Program. Programs targeting first generation students are usually housed under Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP). University of La Verne may not have an EOP, but it should consider whether this program should be housed in other areas that focus on student support services. OMS can be a partner, but perhaps not the coordinating body. In addition, OMS does not have the resources to take on a program that has the potential of becoming a department of its own. This program has a lot of potential to grow and serve first generation students if appropariate human resources and funding are available.

Action Recommendation 5: Cultural Graduation Celebration Assessments: currently there are a relatively low number of students participating in the cultural celebrations, this may be due to the lack of information of the existence of these celebrations and for the reason they exist. Data shows the need for improving the cultural celebrations.

Response: Cultural Graduation Celebrations provide a unique opportunity to bring communities together to celebrate student achievement, culture and express gratitude to those that believed and supported the graduates. It also serves as a good forum to develop

community relations, an outreach tool to introduce college to future students and to foster alumni relations. Develop new and creative marketing ideas to educate the campus about the celebrations and to increase participation. Continue to utilize committees to help plan and implement the celebrations. In particular, alumni boards may serve as a key body to assist with the planning and implementation of these celebrations.

Action Recommendation 6: Given that there is only one full time staff person to oversee the myriad of initiatives coming from the OMS, there is the need for additional staff. Simply indicating that services rendered must be increased incrementally to meet the needs of students.

Response: The campus administration should make hiring a second person to staff OMS a priority. The many roles the director is expected to play, does not leave him with the capacity to effectively develop existing programs. As noted earlier the director is responsible for twelve programmatic/service areas. An additional staff person can lighten up the workload allowing the director to focus on priorities and new initiatives.

In addition, the director should explore his committee participation and asses if his presence/participation is vital.   Other qualified professional staff and faculty can serve on the director's behalf. For example, the director may not need to be on the following committees: Counseling Network, African American Faculty and Staff Association, Chicana/o, Latina/o Staff and Faculty Association and the Commencement Committee.

Action Recommendation 7: There is a great need to mentor and support the advisors in their role with the clubs. For the last couple of years, clubs have had difficulty in identifying an advisor because there are not sufficient role models and advisors the clubs feel comfortable having as advisors—this is a problem that needs to be addressed.

Response: Identifying proper advisors for student clubs will relieve the director from being the advisor to many of the student clubs. The more clubs with advisors aside from the director the more help the director will get with supporting the student leaders. There should be an annual training for faculty/staff club advisors to inform them of their role and responsibilities. This should be a joint initiative with Student Life.

Action Recommendation 8: There is a need for additional Multicultural Student Leadership training.

Response: The campus benefits from having more people go through diversity and human relations training. The director should not be responsible for all the trainings. OMS should recruit and train students, staff and faculty to serve as facilitators.

Action Recommendation 9: There is a need for a Cultural Resource Library that will allow students ready access to learning tools about various cultures.

Response: Due to limited space within OMS, the director should work with the university library to procure cultural books and resources for the campus to utilize. These resources do not need to be housed within OMS. Another option is to make resources available online.

Action Recommendation 10: There is a need for a readily accessible childcare center on main campus for parents returning to school.

Response: The assessments did not indicate a need for childcare or why OMS should be involved in securing childcare for parents returning to school. While important this is not something that falls under the care of OMS' mission.

Action Recommendation 11: The Office of Multicultural Services needs to visit the Regional Campus Administration (satellite campuses) to acquaint them with support services provided by the OMS.

Response: Outreach to the satellite campuses would be a great idea if there were other OMS staff members. The director needs to spend more time on the main campus. Students commented that the director is never in his office. Asking the director to visit regional campus would stretch him further. More so, a needs assessment should be done to assess how OMS may serve regional campus populations and whether these populations have an interest in OMS services.

Summary of Recommendations

- Develop campus partnerships to assist with the goals of OMS.
- The director should not be the only face of diversity or serve as spokesperson for all matters of diversity at the University of La Verne.
- Diversity is a core value of University of La Verne; however, there is a lack of institutional support in place to support and develop that value. The administration needs to commit to OMS not only in writing but also in action. OMS requires additional staffing and a larger budget to meet the needs of a growing student population.
- OMS learning outcomes need to reflect university-wide learning outcomes.
- Develop a culture of assessment and evaluation. Be intentional with when to assess, what to assess and how to assess. Do not focus solely on satisfaction. Limit assessment efforts to manageable levels.
- Conduct an annual assessment to measure student learning, perceptions and needs. Send this assessment to every student on campus. This will provide OMS and stakeholders with valuable and consistent data.
- A good program to assess is the Diversity Retreat. Create learning outcomes for the retreat and assess for learning afterwards. A pre and post assessments would be very informative.
- The department can use additional space for students to utilize and congregate, a space for a resource library and workspace for student assistants and graduate interns.
- OMS needs an additional full-time professional staff to assist the director with developing and enhancing the department's programming and services, advising student clubs and serving on committees.

- OMS needs to explore collaborative relationships with other departments, and staff/faculty that can assist in carrying its mission and provide support.