Multicultural Student Program and the Intercultural Center

Executive Summary
2010-2011

The mission of UNC-Asheville’s Intercultural Center is to create an inclusive and culturally diverse environment on campus while providing academic, extracurricular, and outreach services for underrepresented students. At the Intercultural Center students can identify campus allies and advocates. The Intercultural Center aims to help UNC-Asheville recruit, retain, and support students of color, various gender expressions and religious affiliations. The Intercultural Center has become a home for a community of students who have been traditionally considered marginalized, while maintaining a welcoming space for the campus community at large.

Multicultural Student Programs (MSP) has maintained its reputation of bringing quality programming and events to the UNC Asheville campus despite the absence of a permanent director for the center. Under the direction of an acting director, Multicultural Student Programs and the Intercultural Center have successfully maintained a viable presence on the campus of UNC Asheville. The results can be seen in the following programs, events and programming sponsored by Multicultural Student Programs:

Events:
- Multicultural Student Welcome Dinner – A dinner for new students of color, of various religions and gender expressions. This event welcomes these students to the UNC Asheville community. Student Organizational officers are welcomed to greet students and recruit.
- Donning of the Stoles – The bookend event to the above Multicultural Student Welcome Dinner has repeatedly been successful. This event celebrates the achievements of the senior student of color. Many faculty and staff attend this program.

Programs:
- Ambassadawg Peer Mentoring Program – Designed to support the freshman students of color. This program has shown to be a successful tool for retaining students. The success of the program can be seen in the increased number of applicants and by the number of peer mentor desiring to return to program. The challenge is adjusting the GPA from 2.5 to 2.3 to assist students who want to be a part of this program. Our university has reputation of having a rigorous academic program with the average Black freshmen student enrolling at the university with a 3.9 GPA.
- Safe Zone Program – A program under Multicultural Student Programs, designed to train departments and individuals in the UNC Asheville community to become allies to students who identify as LGBTQIA. This program is developing. It is currently facilitated by a student; however, the discussion to bring a professional “non-student” to UNC Asheville has been discussed and would further enhance the program. Many departments including Central and Senior staff completed the Safe Zone Training by spring of 2011.
Programming:
- MLK Week, Native American Heritage Month, Latino Heritage Month
- Black History Heritage Month, Brawl Tournament, Urban Arts Institute’s Hip Hop for Peach

Success of these events can be seen in the aspect of advertising and marketing. The events were mostly advertised at least a month in advance with flyers in all residential halls and academic buildings. Collaborative partners’ email lists were often utilized. It is important to use collaborative partnerships to insure the successful programming; however, it is also a challenge to work with the timeline of others. This often delayed the marketing process. Most of the larger events (Dr. Eddie Long - Lecturer, The Brawl Tournament, JJ Kent - Performer, Jan Goffney’s African Art Collection in Gallery and Hip Hop for Peace) - performer of each month had and attendance of over two hundred people attending. The smaller events were equally successful with numbers averaging 50 or more attending.

Committees and Boards:
Gallery Committee, DAC Committee, MLK Program Committee, Central Staff, President’s Council, Program Planning Committee, Center for Diversity Education, The responsibility of the director of the center and of Multicultural Student Programs requires participation on a number of boards and committees. With the exception of The Center for Diversity of Education and other academic committees not listed, the acting director participated in the above.

In addition to the accomplishments and successes of Multicultural Student Programs and the Intercultural Center, there have been some challenges. These challenges did not prevent students from being connected to the center but did slow progress on areas that impact student involvement. The lack of permanent professional staff for the Intercultural Center and Multicultural Student Programs presented a huge problem for this area. With the absence of staff, students were not provided with the direction, feedback, guidance and support that result in appropriate staffing. As a result, the student experience and the development of student leaders for this area were impacted.

Second, the Ambassadawg program, a peer mentoring program, was created to serve under-represented students. This program failed to reach as many students as it intended due to a lack of staff and resources that are necessary to appropriately publicize, market, recruit and retain students into the program. There was also a lack of training and development that occurred for students serving in the Ambassadawg program. This was due to a lack of clearly defined and realistic goals for the program, given its current resources. This led to Ambassadawgs being unprepared to serve students in the best manner possible. Furthermore, students did not fully receive the educational experiences that provided them with a clear understanding on the role of being a mentor and a peer educator.