Unit Change Team Campus Climate Initiative Grant Project Summary
Submitted by Joie Acheson Lee, Student Life Change Team
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Abstract
Supporting the Implementation of UMD’s Goal Two through use of the Intercultural Development Inventory with the Student Life Unit Change Team

The Student Life Change Team, consisting of six students and ten staff members, took the Intercultural Development Inventory assessment in late January 2013. The results of each member’s assessment were later interpreted in a private session with a Qualified IDI Administrator. On February 27th, 2013, two QA’s spent two hours with the team in a teaching capacity to present and discuss the Intercultural Development Continuum framework and its implications both personally and professionally; including how individuals respond to cultural differences based on their development orientation. The QA’s lead the team in strategizing on how best to educate peers in the division.

The Student Life Change Team goal was greater awareness of the importance of identifying values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors that affect academic achievement and the health and well-being of culturally diverse individuals; greater awareness and knowledge of the use of “self-as-leader” as an invaluable resource in understanding and implementing intercultural initiatives; gaining knowledge and understanding of the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) framework and its implications on personal, professional and organizational excellence; generating informed discussion among faculty, staff and administration on leadership and intercultural proficiency; providing resources and support for enhancing skills of staff in their work with students and colleagues; and creating an atmosphere of welcome and celebration of differences and similarities among and between administration, faculty, staff and students from all cultural communities.

How project activities contributed to Goal Two: This project has provided individualized training of the six student members of the Student Life Change Team. This has deeply impacted them by contributing to their knowledge and understanding of the developmental aspects of cultural diversity personally as well as for their peers. The effects will then be felt more broadly as these students participate in division-wide social justice / diversity / equity training and policy decisions for staff, faculty and students through their continued involvement on the Student Life Unit Change Team. Ultimately, countless students will be impacted by this project. For the ten staff members on the team, greater awareness and knowledge of “self-as-leader” is an invaluable resource in understanding and implementing intercultural initiatives; gaining knowledge and understanding of the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) framework and its implications on personal, professional and organizational excellence.

Sustainability of the Project: This project will help build capacity for students, staff and faculty within Student Life to create a welcoming, inclusive and socially just climate at UMD. Building capacity at this time will impact all aspects of UMD’s climate change activities. Examples include an increasing number of students and staff who will be:

- exposed to best practices on campus climate;
- helping to identify a successful communications strategy across campus;
- helping to create resources and support for enhancing the skills of students, faculty, staff and administration in their work with students and colleagues.