Program Assessment: Cupcake Art Student Event

SEPTEMBER 11, 2015
Within the realm of diversity and inclusion in higher education, the topic of identity looms large. More specifically, cultural and personal identity have broader significance because they are inextricably linked to students’ positive and negative experiences inside and outside of the classroom. Association with these experiences ultimately shapes the campus climate at universities and colleges nationwide.

In an article entitled A Little More Every Day: How You Can Eliminate Bias in your own Classroom, Kathleen Tarr – a lawyer and lecturer at Stanford University – writes that the experiences on college campuses have a profound impact on professors and students alike. Tarr also writes that people are less likely to see their own biases and how they contribute to the inequities within their environments. Without such recognition, she says that inclusion cannot be accomplished until bias is first dealt with from the inside-out.

She also says educators can help minimize the effects of personal bias on students’ experiences in academia by:

• Evaluating the work, not the worker
• Acknowledging that bias exists
• Self-assessing
• Actively listening
• Setting realistic expectations

To raise awareness of personal and cultural identity at the College of Charleston, the Office of Institutional Diversity’s (OID) Student Diversity & Inclusion Programming Unit hosted an event in Cougar Mall designed to help their peers see the many levels of diversity on which they can relate and connect with one another. The event was held between classes and lasted for one hour. Cupcakes and a variety of toppings were used to help students express their identities. A list of the toppings and corresponding identities are provided on the next page.

### TOPPINGS

1. Unfrosted cupcakes; vanilla, chocolate, and cream cheese frosting
2. Sprinkles (5 colors; 1 multi-colored)
3. M&Ms
4. Caramel and chocolate syrup
5. Bite-size Snickers, Twix & Kit Kat bars
6. Straw/blue/raspberries
7. Chocolate Chips (dark, milk, white; peanut butter)
8. Chopped peanuts and walnuts
9. Skittles

### IDENTITIES

1. Gender (male/female)
2. Religion (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh, Hindu, No Religious Affiliation, Other)
3. Race (African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Native American, White, Hispanic/Latino, Multi-ethnic)
4. Sexuality (Straight or LGBTQ)
5. Socioeconomic Status (Upper/middle class or low-income)
6. Personality Type (intro/extro/ambivert)
7. Age (Under 18, 19, 20, 21, or older)
8. (Dis)ability (in/visible)
9. Language (uni/bi/tri-lingual, etc.)
Once students designed their cupcakes, they were asked to briefly explain how their creation served as a holistic representation of their personal identity. A sampling of the most unique responses are captured in the next two pages of this report.
Survey Results

A total of 54 cupcakes were provided for this event, and one hour was allotted for participation. Fifty-three participants (mostly students) took part in the activity.

Of the 50-plus surveys administered, 43 were returned. An assessment of the survey responses are provided in this section of this report.
Survey Question 1

I am a College of Charleston...

- Student
- Faculty Member
- Staff Member
- Trustee
- Graduate

RESULTS

Question 1: College of Charleston Affiliation

- Student
- Graduate
- Trustee
- Staff
- Faculty Member
- No response
Survey Question 2

I am...

- African American
- Hispanic American/Latino
- White
- Multi-ethnic
- Native American
- Asian American/Pacific Islander

RESULTS

Question 2: Participant Ethnicity

- No Response
- Asian American/Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Multi-ethnic
- White
- Hispanic American/Latino
- African American

0 5 10 15 20 25
Survey Question 3

I found out about today’s event through...

• Social media
• Word of Mouth
• A flyer
• Email

RESULTS

Question 3: Event Notification
Survey Question 4

I attended today’s event because I...

- Was curious about the topic/activity
- Wanted to learn more about OID

**RESULTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose for Attending</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity about topic/activity</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn more about OID</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>
Survey Question 5

In my opinion, this event helped me see that there are many levels of diversity on which I can connect with my peers.

- I agree
- I disagree

RESULTS

Question 5: Intended outcome of event achieved

- Agree: 76%
- Disagree: 19%
- No response: 5%
Survey Question 6

In what setting are you most comfortable engaging in discussions/dialogues about diversity?

- Intimate workshops
- Large lectures
- Hands-on activities

RESULTS

Question 6: Preferred Diversity Program Format
Survey Question 7

Which diversity topic(s) would you like OID’s student diversity and inclusion programming unit to address through future programs, events, or workshops? (Check all that apply)

• Race, Class & Politics
• LGBTQ Issues
• Religious Diversity
• Disability Issues
• Global Diversity Issues
• Other (briefly explain)

RESULTS

Question 7: Suggested Topics for Future Diversity Programs

Note: Three survey participants listed other topics they’d like to see addressed during future student-led diversity programs, events, or workshops. The list of those topics are provided below:

• Interracial Relationships
• Mental Health Issues
• Veterans
Survey Question 8

Please feel free to share any suggestions you have for improving future programs.

RESULTS

“I loved this!”
“Thanks!”
“Thanks for the cupcake!”
This event aligned with the following institutional and departmental diversity goals:

**College of Charleston Diversity Strategic Plan**

**Goal 3:** Create a supportive environment that is diverse, inclusive and welcome to all.

**OID Departmental Goal**

**Goal 1:** Promote/facilitate the total integration of diversity into the life of the College by implementing comprehensive educational, cultural, social, and outreach events. This will be accomplished through intentional/sustained all-inclusive programming for students, faculty, and staff (i.e. OID Signature Speaker Series, Diversity Week, Critical Issues in Diversity Series, diversity training workshops, campus-wide inter-group dialogues, and other initiatives).

- **Objective:** Campus diversity climate and multicultural relations
Appendix

This section of this report includes lessons learned, helpful diversity-related definitions, and a list of resources.
Lessons Learned

The student coordinators of this event were asked to detail the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement. Their observations and suggestions are detailed on the following page of this report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRENGTHS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Choice of Event Location</td>
<td>Interactive Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>Popularity of Topping Choices</td>
<td>Use of Photography</td>
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<td>Use of Sandwich boards</td>
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<td>Use of Event Décor and Eye-Catching Flyers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use of Piping Bags to dispense Icing</td>
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<tr>
<td>WEAKNESSES</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Organized Event Layout</td>
<td>Lack of Manpower</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not enough cupcakes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lack of Signage for Event Promotion</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Better Supplies for Application of Toppings</td>
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<td>Weather not ideal for activity</td>
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<td>OPPORTUNITIES</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Allot more time for event prep/set-up</td>
<td>Extra Staffing for Event Coordination/Management</td>
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<td>Create Larger Event banner to draw attention to Event</td>
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<td>Purchase at least 100 cupcakes for 2 hours or at least 65 cupcakes for 1 hour</td>
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<td>Number tables so students know cupcake building process (i.e. steps)</td>
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<td>Hold event during cooler months so toppings do not melt</td>
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Helpful Terms

**Campus climate:** A measure — real or perceived — of the campus environment as it relates to interpersonal, academic, and professional interactions.

**Cultural competency:** A set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding, sensitivity, appreciation, and responsiveness to cultural differences and the interactions resulting from them. The particulars of acquiring cultural competency vary among different groups, and they involve an ongoing relational process tending to inclusion and trust-building.

**Disability:** A physical, mental, or cognitive impairment or condition that qualifies under federal and state disability nondiscrimination laws for special accommodations to ensure programmatic and physical access.

**Diversity:** Includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

**Equity:** The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.

**Source:** University of California, Berkeley [http://diversity.berkeley.edu/glossary-terms](http://diversity.berkeley.edu/glossary-terms)
Historically underrepresented: A limited term that refers to groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination in the United States and, according to the Census and other federal measuring tools, includes African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics or Chicanos/Latinos, and Native Americans. This is revealed by an imbalance in the representation of different groups in common pursuits such as education, jobs, housing, etc., resulting in marginalization for some groups and individuals and not for others, relative to the number of individuals who are members of the population involved.

Other groups in the United States have been marginalized and are currently underrepresented. These groups may include but are not limited to other ethnicities, adult learners, veterans, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals, different religious groups, and different economic backgrounds.

Inclusion: The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

Multiculturalism: An acknowledgment that, as people, we are culturally diverse and multifaceted, and a process through which the sharing and transforming of cultural experiences allow us to re-articulate and redefine new spaces, possibilities, and positions for ourselves and others.

Sexual orientation: The deep-seated direction of one's sexual (erotic) attraction toward the same gender, opposite gender, or other genders. It is on a continuum and not a set of absolute categories. Sometimes it is referred to as "affection orientation."

Source: University of California, Berkeley [http://diversity.berkeley.edu/glossary-terms](http://diversity.berkeley.edu/glossary-terms)
Resources

• Diverse Issues in Higher Education http://diverseeducation.com/
• National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education https://ncore.ou.edu/
• American Council on Education http://www.acenet.edu/higher-education/Pages/Campus-Diversity-and-Inclusion.aspx
• Inside Higher Ed https://www.insidehighered.com/news/focus/diversity
• American Association of University Professors http://www.aaup.org/issues/diversity-affirmative-action
• The Chronicle of Higher Education http://chronicle.com/
• Insight into Diversity http://www.insightintodiversity.com/
• Higher Education Recruitment Consortium http://www.hercjobs.org/jobseeker_tools/diversity_resources/
• Institute for Higher Education Policy http://www.ihep.org/
• Association of American Colleges and Universities http://diversityweb.org/
• Project Implicit https://www.projectimplicit.net/index.html