

Instructional Outreach and Campus Diversity: Building Partnerships with Multicultural Student Services

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What is “Diversity”?

- In higher education, diversity is a term that typically encompasses efforts to:
 - Recruit and retain students representing identified groups
 - Recruit and retain faculty members representing identified groups
 - Promote an inclusive campus climate for students and faculty representing a variety of cultures, national origins, etc.
 - Develop academic programs that explore the history, language, and culture of a variety of racial and ethnic communities within the United States

Source: El-Khawas (2003); Gainen & Boice (1993); Smith, Wolf, & Levitan (1994);
Wilkinson & Rund (2000)





What is “Diversity”?

- In libraries, diversity is a term that typically encompasses efforts to:
 - Advocate for the improvement of library services provided to members of identified groups and to support efforts to bridge the “digital divide”
 - Provide greater access to information and research relevant to the experience of racial and ethnic communities within the United States through collections and information services
 - Recruit and retain information professionals of color

Source: American Library Association (2005); Cogell & Gruwell (2001); Dewey & Parham (2006)





Diversity Initiatives in Academic Libraries - Achievements

- Establishment of diversity committees
- Establishment of residency and internship positions
- Collection building and access tools
- Information and instructional services designed to support academic programs and/or identified student groups

Source: Burns (1995), Cogell & Gruwell (2001); Dewey & Parham (2006); Diaz (1994), Instruction for Diverse Populations Committee (2004); Munro (2005)





Diversity Initiatives in Academic Libraries - Opportunities

- Promotion of peer information services
 - In the library
 - As part of campus-wide peer educator networks
- Outreach to student service programs serving diverse student communities
 - Summer Bridge
 - TRIO
 - Multicultural Student Centers

Source: Downing, MacAdam, & Nichols (1993); Garcha & Baldwin (1997);
Norlin & Morris (1999); Simmons-Welburn (2001)





Issues to Consider in Designing Outreach to Diverse Student Populations


- Students of color (and other first-generation students) may come to campus from K-12 schools where library services were limited
- Lack of diversity within the library profession may be reflected on service desks, which may affect student willingness to make use of information and instructional services
- Changing terminology and standards for collecting/describing information related to topics of interest to students representing diverse communities may make location of relevant information difficult
- Increasing importance of the Internet in higher education may place an additional hurdle before students already struggling to bridge an increasingly significant digital divide

Source: Downing (1994); Munro (2005), Sax, et al. (2004)





Washington State University


- Founded in 1890 as the land-grant institution in the State of Washington
 - Four campuses
 - Pullman
 - Spokane
 - Tri-Cities
 - Vancouver
 - Student population of 23,241 (Fall 2004)
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Diversity – A Core Value

“We are committed to a culture of learning that challenges, inspires, liberates, and ultimately transforms the hearts, minds, and actions of individuals, eliminating prejudice. Our differences are expressed in many ways, including race, sex, age, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, religion, class, philosophy, and culture. Respect for all persons and their contributions is essential to achieving our mission.”

Source: Washington State University Strategic Plan (2002-2007). Available at <http://www.wsu.edu/StrategicPlanning/core-values.html>



Student Body Diversity at Washington State University

Race/ Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total	% of Student Body (n=23,241)
American Indian/Alaska Native	114	178	292	1.3
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Paci- fic Islander	601	623	1,224	5.3
African- American	272	287	559	2.4
Hispanic	387	507	894	3.8
International	689	541	1,230	5.3
Not Indicated	994	957	1,951	8.4
White	7,833	9,258	17,091	73.5

Source: Washington State University Data Book (2005)



Support for Students of Color at Washington State University

- Office of Multicultural Student Services
 - Mentor Program
 - Leadership Initiatives Program
 - Academic Enrichment Center
- Multicultural Student Center
 - African-American Student Center
 - Asian-American and Pacific Islander Student Center
 - Chicano/a Latina/o Student Center
 - Native American Student Center
- Student Organizations

Source: Office of Multicultural Student Services, Washington State University (n.d.).
Available at: <<http://www.wsu.edu/multicultural/current-students.htm>>





Library Support for Students of Color and Diversity Issues in the Curriculum

- Liaison to academic program in Comparative Ethnic Studies
 - Collections and online resources in areas including African-American Studies, Native American Studies, etc.
 - Liaison to campus programs housed in other departments, e.g., [Clearinghouse on Native Teaching and Learning](#)
 - Periodic involvement with student clubs
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A New Model for Outreach to Students of Color

- Focus on librarian expertise in information literacy instruction to complement partner program goals
- Extend “liaison” service model to programs outside the academic curriculum to support a “seamless learning environment”
- Build on existing models for peer education and leadership
- Substantive and sustainable collaboration with existing academic support programs

Source: Ender & Newton (2000); Johnson, McCord, & Walter (2003); Kuh (1996)





Foundation for Collaboration – Information Needs Survey


- Rationale for conducting an information needs survey:
 - Setting priorities for service initiatives
 - Positioning the library among its competitors in the information environment
 - Helping staff develop new vision for library services
 - Marketing the library
 - Providing insight into decisions made by non-library users

Source: Westbrook (2001)






Fall 2003 Survey

- Designed in collaboration with staff in the Multicultural Student Center (MSC)
 - Distributed to students affiliated with one of four “cultural centers” associated with the MSC and to students of color affiliated with the Academic Enrichment Center (AEC)
 - 63 completed surveys collected between October 25 – November 10, 2003
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Demographics

- Center affiliation for respondents
 - African-American Student Center (30.2%)
 - Asian-American/Pacific Islander Student Center (23.8%)
 - Chicana/o/Latina/o Student Center (23.8%)
 - Native American Student Center (1.59%)
 - Academic Enrichment Center (20.6%)
 - Academic level of respondents
 - First-Year Student (12.7%)
 - Sophomore (17.5%)
 - Junior (46%)
 - Senior (22%)
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Findings – Reasons for Library Use

Find Articles/Books	74.6%
Use the Internet	58.7%
Group Study Space	47.6%
Retrieve Materials from Other Libraries	23.8%
Research Assistance	20.6%
Attend Workshop/Class	9.52%





Findings – Starting Points for the Research Process


Surf the Internet	66.7%
Ask a Friend	14.8%
Ask a Professor	9.3%
Go to the Library	7.4%






Findings – Desired Library Services

Workshop on Locating Diverse Voices in the Media	3.84
Web Portal to Information on Diverse Population	3.45
Workshop on Finding Government Information on Diverse Populations	3.24
Workshop on Finding Information on Diverse Populations/Multicultural Topics	3.24
Transfer Student Orientation	3.06






What We Learned

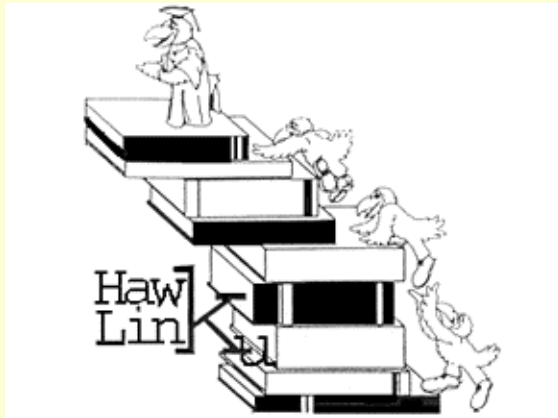
- Development of Web-based resources easily accessible to students of color and germane to diversity research topics is critical
 - Provision of instruction to MRC peer mentors may significantly improve use of library (and Web-based) information resources by students of color
 - Existing resources and services must be more effectively marketed within the multicultural student community
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What We Did

- Developed information literacy workshop for inclusion in the peer mentor program
 - Prepared a section of library and information resources and services for the Fall 2004 edition of the Multicultural Student Center Handbook
 - Defined a set of information literacy workshops to be included in the schedule of programs offered through the Academic Enrichment Center
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Learning from Experience



- Diversity is a common concern across college campuses
- Support for retention efforts is universally appealing
- Outreach efforts informed by national models and local initiatives, e.g., at Kansas:
 - Multicultural Resource Center
 - HawkLink



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For Further Information

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