

MOSAIC: Teaching Cultural Competence

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Abstract

Emporia State University sponsors a weekend, off-site program, MOSAIC, where participants explore issues of identity development, privilege, social inequality, and discrimination - the tenants of cultural competency. MOSAIC helps participants enhance their worldview and a greater appreciation of cultural competence through a series of large and small group activities. By creating these experiences and opportunities, participants are more apt to work effectively in a variety of situations, with a mix of culturally diverse people such as those found on a college campus. By leveraging these skills the university community can be benefited to have better outcomes.

MOSAIC: Teaching Cultural Competence

Cultural Competence has been defined as the method by which individuals and systems alike respond respectfully to the needs of society, as a whole, without regards to culture and values the contributions that each of the culturally diverse parts of society can offer (NASW, 2001). Emporia State University (ESU) sponsors MOSAIC, a weekend long, off-site diversity leadership program through which participants (students) explore cultural competency through issues of identity development, privilege, social inequality, and discrimination to develop more diverse worldviews and greater appreciation of cultural competence. These experiences and opportunities are designed to challenge and expand participants understanding of cultural competence. The goal is to have participants that are able to work effectively in a variety of situations, with a cross mixture of culturally diverse people such as those found on a college campus (Cross, Bazron, et. al 1989).

Program Dynamics

An open call to participate is made each year to the student body to enroll in the program. The program is conducted off-site in an overnight fashion to ensure low distractions. During the program participants are given opportunities to participate in several group activities that speak to four dominant goals of the program:

*Oppression Theory (Sidanius, Pratto, 2001): this component will allow participants to better understand the difference between diversity and multiculturalism and do some self-identity exercises.

*Action Statement: participants will be able to develop their own impact statement in which they will develop a vision on how they can impact diversity at ESU.

*Social and Interactive Activities: participants from different backgrounds and cultures will get to know each other better and begin collaborative work models.

*Experienced Based Activities: Activities that will help participants understand diversity and multiculturalism and move towards awareness, understanding and appreciation of others at the ESU.

These goals are tied to the assessment instrument (see table 3):

Participants are asked to complete the pre-survey prior to the start of the program. As the program concludes, participants are given the post-survey. Participation in either survey is completely optional.

Measuring Effectiveness of MOSAIC

To measure the effectiveness of MOSAIC both qualitative and quantitative questions were created in two surveys. While quantitative questions were mirrored in both surveys, only qualitative questions were asked in the post-survey.

Quantitative Analysis

The program surveys were designed to capture a robust set of attitudes and norms surrounding cultural competency. Each question, see table 2, was created using a Likert scale, which corresponds to Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Somewhat Disagree (3), Somewhat Agree (4), Agree (5), and Strongly Agree (6).

Data was analyzed using Independent Samples T-Test to determine if there was significant changes in attitudes and perceptions of cultural competence. An analysis of the available program assessment data show that participants have been positively impacted by exposure to the MOSAIC program. In 2012, see table 3, the findings suggest that the 40 participants were most significantly impacted in the areas of Social and Interactive Activities and understanding Oppression (Qu3: $t(77) = -2.544$, $p = 0.013$ & Qu5: $t(77) = 2.179$, $p = 0.015$). In 2014, see table 4, 57 participants were most significantly in the areas of Social and Interactive Activities and understanding Oppression (Qu4: $t(112) = 2.925$, $p = 0.004$ & Qu5: $t(112) = -2.251$, $p = 0.026$). In 2015, 50 participants saw significant changes in significantly in the areas of Social and Interactive Activities, understanding Oppression, and Experience (Qu2: $t(76) = -2.209$, $p = 0.03$ & Qu4 : $t(76) = 2.261$, $p = 0.027$), see table 5.

Qualitative Analysis

The program included four qualitative questions for participant reflection, see table 6. A team of reviewers analyzed, coded, and identified themes from the qualitative responses from the post-survey. Common themes were identified and synthesized into a summary of key participant experiences:

***Openness to Diverse Ideas & Perspectives**

One of the key lessons participants learned from MOSAIC was the importance of cultural competency; being accepting to ideas, perspectives, backgrounds, and life experiences of other people. Several participants identified significant, “eye-opening” experiences during the program. Others realized their own biases and assumptions that influence how they value others. While for some others, MOSAIC represented a first time experience, interacting significantly with people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Participants indicated a more open and accepting attitude of the differences of culture due to the experience of MOSAIC. Participants cited a desire for more proactive approaches in personal accountability for language and behavior amongst peers (and in peer groups) as well as standing up for marginalized participants.

***Deeper Awareness & Understanding of Diversity**

The co-curricular diversity theme of the program that continued to emerge was that the program granted an opportunity to gain deeper awareness of challenges and obstacles faced by their peers who come from underrepresented and underprivileged backgrounds. Participants became more aware of the micro-aggressions that are asserted towards different populations and how those aggressions can marginalize and reinforce the components of the cycle of socialization (Harro, 2000). Other participants developed broader understandings of global differences that cultural competence encompasses, and how much one’s background influences their life experiences and journey. Many gained a deeper realization of their own identity and privileges, their personal experiences and how those experiences have shaped their view of the world.

***Cross-Cultural Communication & Interaction**

The desire to intentionally interact with a more diverse group of people emerged as the final common theme. Participants identified several opportunities to do this, from personal outreach to cultural diverse peers, and connecting across student organizations, thereby creating prospects for personal relationships. Specifically, many domestic participants identified international peers as those they desired to have more interaction with. As the international participants shared their experiences, many came to realize how much the international experience was valued and gained a desire to know them and be actively involved in their communities.

Future Considerations

The program has some opportunities to expand and improve. From an efficacy perspective, follow-up assessment should occur at least several months out from initial exposure to the program to determine if benefits gained from MOSAIC were temporary or longer lasting. Further, having a pool of activities to rotate through the program would enhance the experience for participants (especially those that might attend in multiple years). Lastly, expanding the assessment tools to include activity-specific questions would allow program administrators to more specifically analyze detailed information

about the program.

Conclusions

The data obtained from the MOSAIC program presents highly dynamic and relevant information regarding the way participants perceive themselves as culturally competent individuals. The data strongly suggest that due to their participatory experiences at MOSAIC participants were able to engage in crucial conversations, challenge unconventional beliefs, and forge new identities. The information yielded from MOSAIC provides valuable insight regarding the effectiveness of MOSAIC to promote awareness of various perspectives and a deeper appreciation of cultural competence.

References

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Tables

Table 1: MOSAIC Activity to Survey Mapping

Focus Area(s)	MOSAIC Activity	Description/Purpose	Survey Questions
Oppression	Cycle of Socialization	How our surroundings define our personalities, and our "norms" affect our decisions, actions, and the people we turn out to be.	Qu1
Experience	How Diverse Is Your Universe?	To visually see the types of people you encounter in your daily life	Qu2
Social & Interactive Activities	Values/Plate Auction	Exercises to help people clarify their values, based on Acceptance and Social Constructs	Qu3, Qu5
Social & Interactive Activities	What is Your Color?	True Colors distills the elaborate concepts of personality theory into a user-friendly, practical tool used to foster healthy productive relationships.	Qu5
Oppression	The Clothes I Wear Activity	designed to explore how you view yourself in regards to the roles that you have been assigned and choose in everyday life	Qu2
Experience	Empathy Meals	opportunity to incorporate additional issues related to multicultural education (i.e. low socioeconomic/class issues, disabilities)	Qu3
Oppression	Archie Bunker's Neighborhood	To educate attendees about the damage stereotyping can do.	Qu1
Oppression	Privilege Exercise: The American Dream	Take a Step is an exercise that discusses privilege; the exercise will be conducted with the large group outside.	Qu1, Qu4, Qu5
Action	Personal Action Statement	Participants will be able to develop their own impact statement in which they will develop a vision on how they can impact diversity at ESU.	Qu2

Table 2: MOSAIC Quantitative Questions

Item	Description	Scale
Qu1	Success in life is mostly determined by the amount of hard work and effort from a person.	1 to 6
Qu2	I am aware of how my background influences the way I see the world	1 to 6
Qu3	I can identify aspects of my identity which give me advantages over people who do not share those aspects.	1 to 6
Qu4	For the most part, people start out in life with equal opportunity for success.	1 to 6
Qu5	I can tell a lot about a person from what I see when I look at him/her.	1 to 6

Table 3: 2012 Quantitative Results

2012	Pre-MOSAIC			Post-MOSAIC					
Group	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Sig	df	t-value
Qu1	40	5.45	0.639	40	5.45	0.677	1	78	0
Qu2	40	5.45	0.597	40	5.58	0.636	0.368	78	-0.906
Qu3*	40	4.68	0.944	39	5.15	0.709	0.013	77	-2.544
Qu4	39	3.64	1.513	39	3.18	1.699	0.209	76	1.267
Qu5*	39	3.49	1.275	40	2.73	1.45	0.015	77	2.179

(* & Red colored cells indicate significant findings)

Table 4: 2014 Quantitative Results

2014	Pre-MOSAIC			Post-MOSAIC					
Question	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Sig	df	t-value
Qu1	57	5.04	1.133	55	4.96	0.922	0.716	0.071	0.365
Qu2	57	4.65	1.188	58	4.79	1.267	0.531	113	-0.628
Qu3	57	3.46	1.297	55	2.96	1.36	0.052	110	1.962
Qu4*	57	3.19	1.288	57	2.47	1.338	0.004	112	2.925
Qu5*	57	3.58	1.388	57	4.18	1.441	0.026	112	-2.251

(* & Red colored cells indicate significant findings)

Table 5: 2015 Quantitative Results

2015	Pre-MOSAIC			Post-MOSAIC					
Question	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Number	Mean	Std Dev	Sig	df	t-value
Qu1	28	4.96	1.232	50	5.3	0.953	0.184	76	-1.341
Qu2*	28	4.61	0.916	50	5.02	0.714	0.03	76	-2.209
Qu3	28	3.54	1.503	50	3.16	1.476	0.287	76	1.072
Qu4*	28	3.57	1.501	50	2.8	1.414	0.027	76	2.261
Qu5	28	3.5	1.575	50	4.08	1.496	0.111	76	-1.612

(* & Red colored cells indicate significant findings)

Table 6: MOSAIC Qualitative Questions

Items	Description
Q1	What was this experience like? What part of Mosaic of ESU had the greatest impact on you?
Q2	How does your own cultural background influence the way you view the world and interact with others?
Q3	How has this experience impacted the way you incorporate other people's, or other cultural, perspectives into your worldview?
Q4	How can you apply what you learned from Mosaic of ESU in your daily life?