



Assessing the Climate for Diversity and Inclusion as an Aid to Institutional Evaluation

Linda Logan, Ph.D.
Dean of Students

Charles A. Graessle, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Research

Olivet College, Olivet, Michigan

2015 MI/AIR Annual Conference, Traverse City, MI Nov 4-6



Overview of our assessment

History

- Small rural college founded in 1844.
- Abolitionists heritage
- Values - based mission
- In the current strategic vision for 2020 and Beyond
 - Culture of diversity and inclusion
 - Inclusion - supported and respected
- Developed committee to assess campus climate



Overview of our assessment

Committees Goals and Charge

1. Charge

- Identifying the strengths, challenges, and opportunities
- Making recommendations as to policy and action

2. Committees

- Working committees appointed by President
 1. Executive committee comprised of 8 members
 2. Committee-at-large comprised of 16 members



Philosophy

Diversity

- Wide range who work/live together
- Knowledge enriches
 - campus life
 - global environment



Inclusion

- Equal participation of marginalized/excluded
- Recognizes & respects uniqueness

Cultural competency

- Meaning, respect, peace → safe, nurturing space
- Developing congruent behavior, attitudes, and continuously thinking critically



Data for a small college

College records

Interviews

Surveys & focus group samples

1. Undergraduate students

- 196 freshmen, 507 others

2. Employees

- 110 responded

3. Focus groups clarify/add to surveys

- Greeks, athletes, residents, genders, races & employees



Designing surveys and focus groups

Selection

1. **Used all constituents (all employees, students)**
2. **Experiences with college**
 - Incidents - all types and levels
 - Engagement – in class and co-curricular
 - Feelings about college and campus
3. **Intercultural**
 - Knowledge and feelings (affective learning)



Designing surveys and focus groups

Sources of inspiration: Affect & types of incidents

1. Integrated with existing assessments, incl.

- Outcomes, incidents, engagement surveys of 1st year and of graduating seniors

2. U Minnesota-Duluth – Campus Climate

http://www.d.umn.edu/chancellor/climate/surveys_summary.html

(See Rankin & Associates Consulting

<http://www.rankin-consulting.com/services>)

3. U Toledo Campus Climate Survey

Office of Equity, Diversity, & Community Engagement at

<https://www.utoledo.edu/diversity/oed/climatesurvey.html>



Survey process

Confidentiality and small Ns

1. Student & employee problems

- FERPA, trust, trivializing & person-orientation

2. Privacy and Technical Assistance Center

http://ptac.ed.gov/sites/default/files/FAQs_disclosure_avoidance.pdf

Collecting data

1. Process

- In classes, residences, advisors,
- Employees on line



Identifying strengths

Overall environment for students

Item	%*
I felt generally safe on campus this year	98
Faculty/staff/ administration were supportive, helpful, and flexible	97

* % highest ratings on 4-point scale & is true for genders, race/ethnicities – See Juran

Actions to continue

1. Continue safety
2. Positive attitudes of personnel



Identifying strengths

Diversity environment

Item	%*
Overall, Olivet College is a friendly environment for people of diverse backgrounds	93
Overall, I personally feel welcome at Olivet College	94
Overall, I feel my personal uniqueness is embraced at Olivet College	89

* % highest ratings on 4-point scale, for genders/race/ethnicities

Actions to continue

1. Personal orientation of small college

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Main challenges

Students

1. GPA, retention, graduation higher for

- Women and non-URMs

2. Student-student interactions

- Esp. URM
- Women → more gender-based incidents

Employees

- Non-traditional → more incidents

Employees & students

- Awareness of college options



Actions being planned

Committee report

Action Teams

1. Admissions

- Women and URMs

2. Human Resource

- Hiring including URMs

3. Reporting Incidents

- Awareness of college options



Three additional actions

Academic

1. 1st year experience

- Revised required Self and Community course

2. Proactive academic engagement

- Three year teaching and learning grant
- Diversity and inclusion training

Cross-campus

1. African-American men's success initiative

- Increased staff, cooperative work



Summary and comments

True climate assessed

1. Slow but thorough

- Intentionally inclusive → more acceptance
- Fair sample; confidential; qualitative; informed and “affective” responses to diversity

2. Results → new knowledge

- Expected – continue or reinforce actions
- Unexpected – new actions

3. The future



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Questions/Comments

llogan@olivetcollege.edu
cgraessle@olivetcollege.edu